Englewood United Methodist Church Newsletter

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Rev. Nathan Wittman Lead Pastor nwittman@englewood-umc.com

Rev. Savanna Becker Minister of Christian Education sbecker@englewood-umc.com JULY 1, 2023

300 S. Circle Drive Mail: P.O. Box 7128 Rocky Mount, NC 27804-0128 Phone: (252) 443-2926 Church Email: nporter@englewood-umc.com Web Site: www.englewood-umc.com

Christian Davenport Office Administrator cdavenport@englewood-umc.com Nancy Porter Secretary nporter@englewood-umc.com

Our Mission Together

Video games have come a long way since the days of Super Mario jumping on goombas and breaking bricks with his head. These days, developers have created vast worlds for players to inhabit and go on lengthy adventures. Most recently, I've been playing Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom and, the truth is, it's easy to get lost in. Spinning the camera around you can see vast landscapes filled with mountains and castles, grassy fields and caves. More than once you'll ask yourself, "What am I going to do next?" It's fine to play in such a way where you simply explore, but I sure am appreciative of the objectives you view with a press of the start button. Objectives, of course, are goals that gently guide you in the journey, pointing you to the next place of interest or person you need to speak to. These mission objectives become vital, then, to get you from the beginning of the story to its conclusion.

Why am I talking to you about video games today? It's because I want to talk about how important it is to have those mission objectives, especially when it comes to ministry. Sometimes our churches can get stuck. In the beginning we had a clear purpose and clear goals we set to guide us in living out that purpose. But over time we get too comfortable where we are or yearn for the familiar over the unexplored to keep growing. Sometimes, we forget the mission that drives us and gives us something to strive for. Suddenly we're focused more on the how and when, the what we are doing, but we have forgotten why we're doing these things.

We are starting our second year together and I cannot stress enough how excited I am at spending more time with you in ministry. That first year together was very good and I give thanks daily for the ways you've affirmed me as pastor and guided me as I made the transition. Now I'm ready to take everything we've learned, our pondering sessions, our one on one conversations, and our hopes and dreams, to begin mapping ahead what's next. I want to spend some time having honest conversations about what we want to be as a church, who we want to reach for Christ, and how we'll go about doing that. In other words, I'm ready to reclaim that why and begin setting up those mission objectives that will guide us through the rest of our story and, eventually, to become what God has called us to be.

On July 31st we will hold a meeting where those interested in shaping our vision can taste and see if this is a calling they want to answer. Just like our Witness Team orientation this will be a place where you can hear the goals of the group, the vision for how we'll chart the mission of Englewood UMC, and decide if it's a group where you can be effective. The plan is to spend the rest of the year forming our why, our vision for the church, to be announced and implemented at Englewood UMC in 2024. Though I cannot tell you what the exact vision will look like, I can tell you that I know it will stem from this congregation's amazing ability to make friends and build new relationships.

The future continues to be unclear for us as United Methodists. We're nearly through the season of difficult disaffiliations and all eyes are focused on our General Conference in 2024 and 2026. I have no crystal ball to predict what new things await us or what changes might be made. What is before us is not all that different from the landscape of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom, vast, open, and mysterious. But I am ready to put an objective marker on the map. I'm ready to start the journey towards where God calls us to be the church.

Within this newsletter is an excellent report by Peter Varney, our Lay Leader and Lay Member to Annual Conference, that outlines all of the happenings when our Annual Conference gathered last week. Many of you have heard that our bishop ordained someone in a same sex union. I know that some receive that news with joy and thanksgiving and some receive that news with fear and concern for what happens next. As Adam Hamilton shared during our time together, what is left for us to decide is are we willing to be in ministry with brothers and sisters that don't agree with us on this specific topic? Will we keep our focus, not on the issue that divides us, but on the vision that unites us? Hamilton hopes that we will continue on, not as a conflict driven church, but as a mission driven church.

It is my firm belief that there is room for all of us in The United Methodist Church. As your pastor, I am focused on being present for every one of you, no matter where you land on your interpretation of scripture. Remember the words of Paul to the church in Corinth, that no matter where we might stand on the aisle of this issue, "Christ is their Lord and ours." Ultimately, I continue to focus on the objective marker before us of "Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world"; by making friends, practicing generosity, and healing our community. Please take a moment to read Peter's thought filled words and know that I am available to talk through any questions you might have.

Pastor Nathan

A Report on the 2023 Annual Conference

I attended the 2023 Annual Conference last week (June 15-17) and I would like to report on the major actions of the Conference. As background, remember that the North Carolina Conference is one of 54 conferences of the United Methodist Church in the United States. It encompasses 56 counties in eastern North Carolina from Elon to the coast and from the South Carolina border to the Virginia border.

Disaffiliation: The Conference approved disaffiliation agreements with 59 churches. Some of the churches in our area that are disaffiliating include Sandy Cross, Scotland Neck, Rich Square, and Norlina. These agreements are effective as of July 31, 2023.

Remember that the North Carolina Conference approved 249 disaffiliation agreements in November 2022. Some of the churches in our area that were approved for disaffiliation then include Nashville, Hornes Chapel, Conetoe, Elm City, Woodland, Seaboard and Severn.

The Conference has scheduled a Special Called Meeting for October 7, 2023. The purpose is to approve the disaffiliation of churches who began the inquiry process by the April deadline, have had a church to leave, and are able to pay the costs associated with disaffiliation. As of right now, it is too late for any new churches to begin the disaffiliation process and the paragraph of the Book of Discipline that permits churches to disaffiliate expires after this year.

The exit process requires a written petition by at least 10% of the membership, charge conference approval by a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority, a written agreement that addressed disposition of property, settlement of any debts, and an agreement to pay apportionments for the twelve month period following the effective date of the disaffiliation agreement.

2024 General Conference: The General Conference is scheduled to meet in Charlotte, N.C. April 23-May 3, 2024 hosted by the North Carolina Conference and the Western North Carolina Conference. The General Conference represents all United Methodist Churches across the world.

One of the items on the agenda for consideration by the General Conference is a proposal for regionalizing. Under this proposal, there would be a U.S. Regional Conference, an African Regional Conference, a European Regional Conference, an Asian Regional Conference, etc. Each Regional Conference could then determine its position on the matter of same sex marriages and ordination of gay pastors.

The North Carolina Conference adopted a resolution affirming a resolution that had been adopted by the Southeastern Jurisdiction in 2022 supporting a proposal for a U. S. Regional Conference. This resolution calls for "structural parity across the U.S. and global regions of the United Methodist Church, allowing for flexibility in ministry for each region's particular context".

Remember that the General Conference last met in 2019 and by a vote of 53% to 47% affirmed the provisions in the Book of Discipline since 1972 stating that marriage can only be between a man and a woman, prohibiting ordination of gay pastors, and prohibiting same sex marriage in the United Methodist Church.

Ordination: The Conference approved the ordination of eight pastors, one of whom is in a same sex union. Of the eight who were ordained, five are female, three are male, and the average age is 38.

The ordination process is summarized as follows:

- Recommendation of a candidate by a local church
- Approval of the candidate by the charge conference of the local church
- Educational requirements
- Approval by the District Committee on Ordained Ministry
- ³/₄ vote by the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry
- ³/₄ vote by the Executive Clergy Session

<u>Adam Hamilton's View of Where We Are</u>: The Friday afternoon session began with a message from Rev. Adam Hamilton, author and pastor of The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Kansas. Rev. Hamilton offered his view of where we are as United Methodists in the United States and where we are heading.

First, Hamilton shared statistics about the current state of The United Methodist Church. His vision for the future of The UMC is mission-driven rather than conflict-driven. He gave several examples of how the loss of churches through disaffiliation is leading to exceptional growth in churches remaining United Methodist and the birth of many new faith communities.

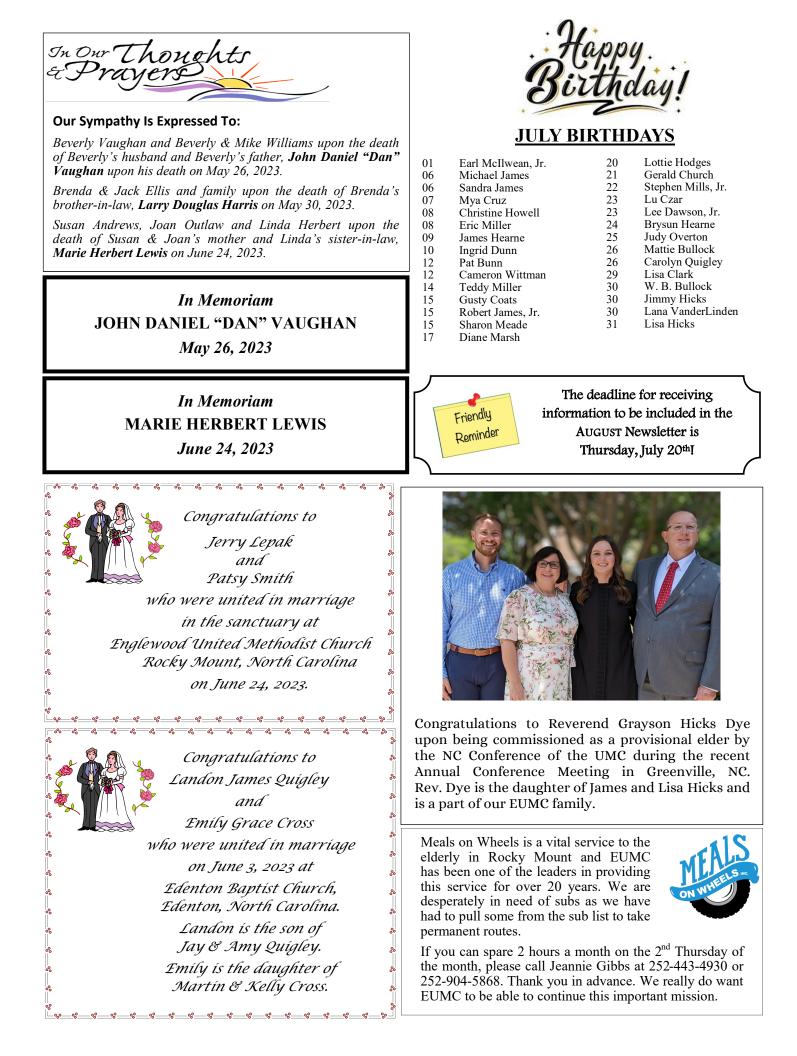
Hamilton believes the conflicts we've experienced have helped us to clarify what it means to be United Methodist. Leading us in reciting the Apostles' Creed, Hamilton challenged those who claimed that United Methodists are changing their historic doctrines. He affirmed the values that make us United Methodist - critical thinking, living both the evangelical and social gospel, and faithful biblical interpretation that considers the Bible's historical and cultural context in the light of other principles of scripture, reason, tradition, and experience.

Hamilton also shared his thoughts on what might happen at General Conference 2024. He believes we will approve a regionalization plan, ultimately remove the language related to the "practice of homosexuality" from *The Book of Discipline*, agree to disagree, and all agree to love all people.

The Church of the Resurrection has taken surveys that reflect this belief. We took this same survey, and the results were similar. The vast majority (94%) of the North Carolina Annual Conference can be in a church with others who hold different interpretations of scripture related to same-sex relationships. The survey also showed that almost everyone affirmed the major tenets of Christian theology. Hamilton reiterated that we don't want anyone to leave, all are welcome here, and welcoming churches are better poised to be a church home for those in the larger culture.

<u>Conclusion</u>: My purpose in offering this information about the Annual Conference is to update our congregation on what is taking place around us. I am glad to share my copy of the Conference Agenda book with anyone interested in other business conducted at the Conference. As always, anyone interested can visit the website of the North Carolina Conference at <u>nccumc.org</u>.

Peter Varney Lay Leader and Lay Member to Annual Conference





United Women in Faith

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH NEWS

Candle Burning



Candle Burning is a special service observed each year by the United Women in Faith. Its purpose is to make the congregation aware of the total budget it takes to conduct United Women in Faith missions work in the local, national, and world communities. This money that is donated by each unit is sent in to the North Carolina Conference for missions. The money is distributed as needed in mission fields worldwide. In the Fall, we will participate by burning the candle in honor or in memory of our loved ones.

This year the United Women in Faith invites you, all members of Englewood United Methodist Church, to participate in Candle Burning. There will be an insert in the bulletin on June 18, June 25, July 2 and July 9 for you to fill out and make a donation in honor or memory of your loved one. Forms are also available in the church lobby and on the table outside the church office for your convenience. You may place your donation along with the completed form in the offering plate on Sunday during worship. Forms and donations will also be received in the church office during the week. We appreciate your participation in this important mission work.

The deadline for receiving donations for Candle Burning is July 10, 2023.



SENIOR ADULT FELLOWSHIP

The Senior Adult Fellowship will meet in the Fellowship Hall for Bingo

at 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 19th.

Senior Adult Fellowship will not meet on Wednesday, July 5th.

TRUSTEES REPORTING PROGRESS!

Trustee's shout out!!! Thanks to so many who step up to help our church, Blaine, Lee, Terry, Adam, each see what they can do or say yes and do it!! Shout out to those who do and we do not know!!! It takes a whole congregation to oversee EUMC facilities and an excellent loving office staff to keep us rolling. We never take anyone for granted!!



UPDATES: You may have noticed the ice maker is not working and Davis Refrigeration told us it must be replaced. By the time you read this, it will be installed!

The ARK is coming to the courtyard!!! The foundation has been prepared and we are waiting for the

next step. Stay tuned for a Rainbow Dedication when it is ready to be boarded! Gather up your favorite stuffed animals to join us!!

The Church sends a BIG THANK YOU to our youth, adults and Savanna for the beautiful Adult hall transformation!

REMEMBER - This is our Church, so if you see something that we need to attend to, please use the Trustee's Books in the Narthex or the office area to record suggestions or repairs needed. Thank you!

Please let Barbara Batts or other trustees know of you willingness to serve as a Sunday Volunteer.

Trustees are: Jack Ellis, Lea Ann Nichols, Lee Pullen, Jerry Lee Ezzell, Lisa Hicks, Terry Woodley, Brian Collins, Janet Hagan and Barbara Batts.



We want to give an EUMC shout out to our member Bill Dove who spearheaded our idea of Assistance Rails! Bill's friend, John Sykes built and installed the assist rails at the chancel area.

A big THANK YOU to John for the great work and donating the labor and materials!

FAITH CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES OF NASH COUNTY - JULY NEEDS

Faith Christian Ministries continues to serve all who need them in Nash County. They are so grateful for the monthly food donations that this church provides. Remember hunger is still thriving for so many due to our economy and increased prices



on food. Faith Christian Ministries is doing its part, with your help, to aid those in need.

Starting Sunday, July 2nd, the "<u>Meals of</u> <u>the Month</u>" donation will be **Spam and Mac & Cheese.** So when you shop for your family's groceries this month, just throw an extra box or three in your cart. Then bring them to EUMC and drop them in the LOVE Can under the name tags in

the church lobby.

This is one easy way that we, as a church, can continue to serve others by providing food for those in need.

Sharon Roth



2023 FLOWER CALENDAR

There are still dates available for you to reserve that special Sunday to provide flowers for worship in the sanctuary in memory/honor of your loved ones or in honor of a special event in your family.

The following Sundays are available:

July 2, July 16, July 23, August 6, August 20, August 27, September 24, October 8, October 15, October 22, October 29, November 26, December 3, December 10, December 31

The 2023 Flower Calendar is now online on the church website (www.englewood-umc.com or you may call the church office to reserve your special Sunday.



Class of 2023 Graduates

Emma Cadence Davis

Rocky Mount Classical Conversations Will attend Barton College

Elias Lee Hicks

Northern Nash High School Entering the Workforce

Andrew Cartner Parks

Nash Central High School Plans to Enlist in the Navy

Alaina Grace Boyd

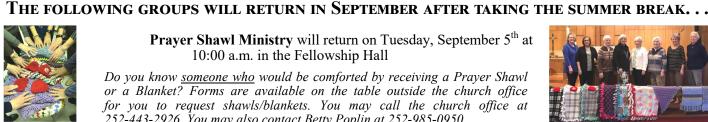
Nash Community College Associates Degree in Science

Scott Howard Boyd

Appalachian State University Bachelor of Science in Political Science with a Concentration in Public Administration and a Minor in Community and Regional Planning

Kayla Noreen Davenport

Appalachian State University Bachelor of Science in Biology with a Concentration in Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Biology and a Minor in Psychology



Prayer Shawl Ministry will return on Tuesday, September 5th at 10:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall

Do you know someone who would be comforted by receiving a Prayer Shawl or a Blanket? Forms are available on the table outside the church office for you to request shawls/blankets. You may call the church office at 252-443-2926. You may also contact Betty Poplin at 252-985-0950.





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Nomen

in Faith

Englewood United Methodist Men will return on Tuesday, September 12th at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall



Women of The Way Circle will return on Tuesday, September 19th at 10:00 a.m. in the Aldersgate Classroom

Lydia's Sisters Circle will return on Tuesday, September 19th at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall



OUTREACH - "Christmas In July"

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The Outreach Committee would like to invite you to participate once again in our "Christmas in July" collection of toys for the Peacemakers Toy Store. These toys will be used by Peacemakers for distribution at their annual "Toy Store" held the first Friday and Saturday in December. This event allows Parents/Guardians to purchase toys for their children at a reduced price who may not otherwise have the means to provide a "Special Christmas" for them.

We are trying to spread our Mission work out and at the same time give everyone a chance to participate in those projects dear to their heart. So if you would like to contribute a <u>new</u>, <u>unwrapped</u> toy for this mission, please bring to the church during the month of July. There will be a box located in the church lobby area for these collections.

Thank you for your continued support of our EUMC Missions!

This year we would like to dedicate this Toy drive to our friend, Wilma Rundell. Last year Wilma headed up this project for us and had already begun working on ideas for this year at the time of her passing. Let's make this extra special in her memory.

Thank you for your continued support of our EUMC Missions.

To the EUMC Flower Ministry, EUMC Prayer Shawl / Blanket Ministry, Thank you so much for the love and gift of flowers for It was such a blessing to receive the prayer blanket for Earl. He loved fresh flowers and I know he smiled. my husband, Steven Langley, during his illness. He used it many times. Thank you so much for your Blessings to All, Т labor of love and friendship. Judy Overton Paula Langley H Members of Prayer Shawl / Blanket Ministry, Dear Church Family, I received your beautiful blanket after having surgery I want to once again thank you for your visits, cards, A on May 8. It has been warmth and comfort. I felt your flowers, and phone calls. It means so much to us prayers as I "covered up". shut-ins to be remembered in these special ways. Thank you for your wonderful ministry. I send special thanks to the "Bingo Girls" who come N to Brekenridge every Friday. I am sure I speak for all Brenda Respess the residents who love to play bingo. I am so blessed in many ways especially to belong to \mathbf{K} such a caring Church family. Sending my love and may God bless each of you. Englewood Church Family, Alda Fountain My heartfelt thanks and appreciation to each of you for your many acts of kindness and caring during my Y recent surgery and recovery. I appreciate the prayers, calls and especially the sweet cards of well wishes. I read them over and over again every day as they Englewood Church Family, comfort me, give me strength, and remind me what a Ο Thank you for all the cards, food, phone calls, visits, special church family I have. and flowers during our time of grief of losing our A special thank you to Janice for your visit, the flowers Dad. He was the "Rock" of our family and will be from your yard which are so beautiful, and your greatly missed. U delicious banana pudding. It was beyond yummy. Please continue to keep our mom in your prayers as we transition her to an assisted living facility. Blessings, The Vaughan Family **Betty Poplin**

Vacation Bible School

We had an out-of-this world adventure at Stellar VBS on June 12-15! We had 20 children who experienced the love of God through the help of our 19 incredible adult and youth volunteers. Together we explored God's awesome creation and discovered how we can "Shine Jesus' Light" no matter what! Thank you to everyone who helped make VBS possible this year - it really take the whole church! We can hardly wait until next summer's Scuba VBS (under the sea theme) in June 2024!!



Breaking the Bread, Building the Body A gathering of the Body of Christ n across the Rocky Mount commu **Community Worship** 821 Word Plaza featuring Scon-Curl, prea





Englewood UMC will join with our friends from other Rocky Mount churches for a Summer Community Worship event on Sunday, August 6th at 6:00 p.m. This event will be hosted by Word Tabernacle Church (821 Word Plaza, Rocky Mount, NC 27804). We are looking forward to sharing in worship and fellowship with our neighbors and hope you'll make plans to join us!

Children's Sunday School

Children 5th grade and younger are invited to join us on the children's hall for a time of learning, fellowship, and fun on Sunday mornings at 9:30! Our younger children will have a special activity in our nursery, while our older children journey through the Bible one week at a time. Our theme for July is BIBLE! Here's what we'll be learning about each week:

| Date | Торіс | Helper |
|---------|--|---------------|
| July 2 | Noah (Genesis 8:1-22; 9:7-17) | Jeannie Gibbs |
| July 9 | Jonah (Book of Johan) | Rita Vickers |
| July 16 | Daniel Chooses (Daniel 1:1-21) | Debbie High |
| July 23 | Shadrach, Meschach, and Abednego (Daniel 3:1-30) | Linda Pridgen |
| July 30 | Fifth Sunday Fellowship | |



Children's Church

Our children and adult leaders are having such a wonderful time learning about God's Word in Children's Church during worship on Sunday mornings! Children are invited to join us in worship with their families at 10:30 a.m. After a special children's message just for them, our children can go back to the children's hall for more awesome activities! Parents can pick up children on the children's hall after worship ends.

Children's Church Schedule

This year in Children's Church we're going on a Bible Hero Adventure, focusing on a different hero in the Bible each month and what they teach us about God. These imperfect people will point us to our perfect Savior, Jesus, who loves us all and can use all of us to serve God's kingdom! In July we're learning all about DAVID!

| Date | Торіс | Leader |
|---------|---|-------------------------------|
| July 2 | God sees our hearts! | Savanna Becker |
| July 9 | God gives us strength to face our giants! | Savanna Becker |
| July 16 | Godly friendships are a gift! | Phyllis Woodley & Kenan Mills |
| July 23 | Mercy is better than revenge! | Jessica Ezzell |
| July 30 | Grace is a gift we didn't earn! | Beth Ezzell |

Blessed ART the Children Art Camp July 24-26 | 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

We're already so excited for the third year of our children's art camp: Blessed ART the Children! This is a wonderful chance for our children to explore their own creativity and feel connected to the creativity of God. Throughout the week we'll have a variety of art projects for our kids to enjoy, and at the end of the camp we'll have an art show where everyone is invited to come and see all that they've created!

Children who are between 3 years old and having completed 5th grade are welcome at Art Camp! We'll have the children in groups by age, with projects designed just for them. Registration is open for Art Camp online, so you can sign up today, and don't forget to invite your friends!

Register at www.englewood-umc.com/art-camp.



SUMMER COMMUNITY WORSHIP





UMYF JULY SCHEDULE

| Sunday | July 2 | 9:30 am 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm | Sunday School & Worship Youth Group |
|-----------|---------|------------------------------|--|
| Sunday | July 9 | 9:30 am 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm | Sunday School & Worship Youth Group |
| Wednesday | July 12 | 8:00 am - 4:00 pm | Workday Wednesday at MERCI Center |
| Sunday | July 16 | 9:30 am 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm | Sunday School & Worship Youth Group |
| Wednesday | July 19 | 9:00 am - 5:00 pm | Workday Wednesday at Joyland Preschool |
| Sunday | July 23 | 9:30 am 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm | Sunday School & Worship Youth Group |
| Wednesday | July 26 | 9:00 am - 5:00 pm | Workday Wednesday at EUMC Art Camp |
| Sunday | July 30 | 9:30 am 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm | Sunday School & Worship Youth Group |

UMYF Dinner Signups

Our UMYF meets on Sundays from 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. for dinner, Bible study, games, and fellowship. If you are able to provide a meal for our UMYF one Sunday evening, our group would really appreciate your help! You can either bring the meal or donate financially toward our meal fund. The sign-up list is in the church lobby. Thank you for your ongoing support of our UMYF!

| Date | <u>Theme</u> | Provided By |
|---------|------------------|-------------|
| July 2 | No Meal Needed | |
| July 9 | Pasta | |
| July 16 | Picnic Food | |
| July 23 | Baked Potato Bar | |
| July 30 | Pizza | |



Workday Wednesdays are going strong for our EUMC Youth this summer! For 6 Wednesdays our youth are participating in mission projects right here in eastern North Carolina. This year we'll be partnering with Joyland Preschool and The MERCI Center, as well as working on projects here at Englewood UMC. These are the dates for our remaining Workday Wednesdays this summer:

| July | 12 |
|------|----|
| July | 19 |
| July | 26 |

MERCI Center & Round-A-Bout Skating Rink Joyland Preschool & Pool Party EUMC Art Camp & Bowling

There is no cost for our youth to participate in Workday Wednesdays, thanks to the generous support of our congregation and our fundraisers, but we ask that youth sign up ahead of time to let us know who will be participating in each week's workday. Youth can sign up using this link to sign up by Monday of each week: https://www.signupgenious.com/go/10C0D44AEAB2FABFFC16-workday1