



Mossy Creek United Methodist Church

April 12, 2023

MOSSY CREEK MESSENGER

Food for thought from J

HE IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED!

As Christians we proclaim boldly these words affirming our belief in the resurrected Christ. Subsequently, we are changed by our faith in Christ's victory over death. We draw strength and comfort from this greatest event in history and acknowledge that, in his resurrection, we have the same hope and promise of resurrection into eternal life, now and in the world to come. The apostle Paul may have said it best in Romans 6:4-5:

...just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

Yet, despite this wonderful promise, as we discussed Sunday, the desire to deny the resurrection goes back to that first Easter morning, and it continues today. In the 1980s and 90s, a group of so-called biblical scholars calling themselves the Jesus Seminar, concluded that, despite centuries of tradition and study from the greatest theologians of history, the resurrection was neither a probable nor a necessary component of our faith. More remarkable is the number of professing Christians who agreed with this group. In fact, a 2017 BBC poll found that 25% of professing Christians shared these conclusions and did not believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ. How can this be?

For sure, some honestly struggle with the supernatural concept of a bodily resurrection. It is a challenge to their sensibilities to accept something so clearly beyond the scope of the normal, scientific world in which we live. But I believe most reluctance to accept the full truth of the gospel message, including the resurrection, stems from the same source that motivated those Jewish leaders from Matthew's gospel to concoct the story and tell the community that Jesus was not resurrected, but rather, his disciples had stolen his body. From the beginning of his ministry, those first century leaders recognized and feared the existential threat to their power and control over the people that was posed by Jesus. Furthermore, they knew this threat would be overwhelming if he was proven to be who he claimed to be by virtue of something as remarkable as rising from the dead, and they were not willing to take that chance.

As Christians, we face this same perceived threat to control over our own lives by the authority and lordship of Jesus that is so apparent in the resurrection. When confronted with the reality that Christ was truly victorious even over death and we are not changed completely by what this means about his legitimate claim to lordship over our lives, we also demonstrate denial of the gospel, the lordship of Christ, and yes, even the resurrection. In our society that places such emphasis on personal freedom and liberty, it is understandable that we are reluctant to relinquish our self-rule in exchange for serving a risen savior. But the sooner we embrace the reality and the cosmic implications of the resurrection, the sooner we will find the courage to live the lives of radical love and self-sacrifice exemplified by the one who defeated death itself. The risen Christ. Hallelujah.

Thanks

...to everyone who participated in our special Holy Week events. There is no more appropriate time for our church to gather as a family for worship, prayer, and fellowship than during Holy Week, and our Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunrise services were all well attended. Plus, the support of our Thursday dinner and Easter breakfast was fantastic. Special thanks to the Tuesday Bible Study group for hosting the Thursday evening dinner, and for all who brought breakfast foods and helped with cleanup on Sunday.

WORSHIP NEWS

Experiencing God in Art and Music

Join us for a special worship service this Sunday as we explore the presence and nature of God in the beauty of art and music. Several of our talented church members will be presenting examples of their own artistic creations along with testimony about how God speaks to them through their art, and our musicians will lead us in song. Come and experience this fresh expression of worship during our normal worship time at 10 a.m.

Never Miss a Sunday

If you can't worship in person, you can watch our worship services on the Mossy Creek UMC Facebook page. Simply click on the link below to worship live or watch later at your convenience. **Be sure to introduce your Facebook friends to our church and the gospel message by sharing our online worship with them.**

<https://www.facebook.com/mossycreekumc>

CHURCH BUSINESS

Check out our Updated Website

Our Mossycreekumc.org website is being upgraded, complete with a fresh, new look and important updated information about our church. We hope you will take a minute to look over the website and then utilize it as an important resource for keeping up with church activities and events or referring friends and neighbors who might want to know more about our church. You can click on the link below to view:

<http://www.mossycreekumc.org>

DISCIPLESHIP/FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

2023 Confirmation Classes

Confirmation classes will begin on Sunday, April 30th. The classes will be held during the Sunday School hour each week and they will run through June 4th, with the actual confirmation being held during our worship on Sunday, June 11th. More details will follow about location and a special road trip. If you or someone you know has a child who would like to participate, please call the church office or speak with J.

Children are our Future...

...but we need volunteers to work with our children on Sunday mornings and throughout the year, as we seek to grow disciples for the future of the church and God's kingdom. If you have a gift for working with and teaching children, don't wait to be asked to use your talent for God's kingdom. Call the office or talk to J to volunteer.

Read the Bible in a Year

Week 37

Day 1	-	Isaiah 45-48, 1 Corinthians 13
Day 2	-	Isaiah 49-52, Psalm 69, 1 Corinthians 14
Day 3	-	Isaiah 53-55, Psalm 128, 1 Corinthians 15
Day 4	-	Isaiah 56-59, Psalm 70, 1 Corinthians 16
Day 5	-	Isaiah 60-63, 2 Corinthians 1

Gifts

Supporting the church with our tithes and offerings is necessary for the life of the church and as an important spiritual practice for growing as a disciple and exercising our faith in God's providence. Fortunately, there are several ways for you to give at Mossy Creek. In addition to weekly offering during worship, contributions can be placed in the box outside the office marked "Sally," they can be mailed to the church at PO Box 557, Cleveland, GA 30528, and they may be made electronically by clicking the "**donate here**" button of the church web site. Thank you for your continuing financial support of our church.

Christian Education Opportunities

Sunday School – 9:00 AM every Sunday

We have classes for children of all ages that focus on providing age appropriate and foundational lessons about the Bible, its main characters, and the fundamental life lessons they hold for us today.

Our Choir Room class is currently reading C. S. Lewis's *Mere Christianity*. We would love to have you join us Sunday mornings at 9:00 A.M in the choir room.

The Fellowship Hall class offers an opportunity for group prayer, fellowship, and spiritual devotion using such resources as the Upper Room. The class welcomes anyone wishing to engage in these important spiritual practices.

The Young at Heart class meets in the room adjacent to the church office and follows the traditional Cokesbury Sunday School curriculum.

Bible Studies and Small Groups

The Tuesday Bible study group will begin a brief study of Paul's letter to the Galatians on April 25th at noon. Everyone is invited to join us as we take a short but in-depth look at this very important work of the apostle Paul.

Our United Methodist Women are currently studying Shannon Bream's book, *The Mothers and Daughters of the Bible Speak*.

The United Methodist Men meet for breakfast on the second Sunday of each month to share food, fellowship, and a time of spiritual devotion.

Our Ladies Fellowship Group meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Their next meeting will be April 19th at 11:30 a.m. at Rib Country

BUILDING UPDATE

New Building Available for Limited Use

Our new building is now available for ***limited*** use by our members. If you would like to reserve the building for an event or activity, please contact the church office to inquire about availability.

FACTS AND FIGURES

Financial Report

General Fund – Through March 2023

- 2023 YTD Receipts	\$58,454.00
- 2023 YTD Expenses	\$56,973.00
- Net income/(loss)	\$ 1,481.00

Building Fund – Through March 2023

- 2023 YTD Receipts	\$ 29,957.00
- YTD Balance	\$ 57,236.00

Recent Attendance

	<u>In-person</u>	<u>Facebook views</u>
April 9, 2023	142	73
April 2, 2023	82	37
Mar. 26, 2023	110	61
Mar. 19, 2023	89	44

April Birthdays

4/2	-	James Nelms
4/6	-	Evy Owens
4/8	-	James Crowe, Sid Crowe
4/12	-	Reid Murphey
4/14	-	Ashley Miller, Josh Adams, Cooper Adam
4/15	-	Donna Fitzpatrick
4/16	-	Jessie Meaders
4/28	-	Brenda Parson, Juanita Lanham
4/29	-	Solomon Dadd
4/30	-	Jeff McAvoy

April Anniversaries

4/4	-	Keith and Christine Horn
4/28	-	CJ and Haley McDonald

NEW PRAYER NEEDS AND CONCERNS

- Ronnie Fain
- Helen Dorsey
- Onzell Moore
- Ronnie Dorsey
- Emogene Stover
- Johnny Crumley
- Alsteen Family
- Terri Sims
- Gloria Showalter
- Family of Michael Skelton
- Family Isaiah Baker