



Mossy Creek United Methodist Church

April 21, 2023

MOSSY CREEK MESSENGER

Food for thought from J

“You can’t see the forest for the trees” is probably an expression that has been applied appropriately to each of us at one time or another. This saying suggests we are so focused on the details, perhaps the trials, challenges, even the blessings right in front of us, that we are unable to consider the possible existence of a transcendent, bigger picture or purpose. Interestingly, as we consider those first followers of Christ immediately after the resurrection, this seems to be a common condition for them as well.

In Matthew, those first visitors to the tomb were so shocked it was empty and by the appearance of those heavenly beings that greeted them, that they were unable to consider the miraculous possibility that Christ had truly risen and the implications of that fact. Similarly, in Luke’s gospel, those travelers on the road to Emmaus were so consumed with their disappointment that the hoped for redemption of Israel seemed lost, with the death of Jesus, that they failed to recognize Jesus in their midst, even as he revealed to them the secrets of God’s plan of redemption as spelled out in the scripture. Perhaps most famously, John’s gospel tells us Thomas demanded to observe the wounds on the body of Jesus before he would consider the bigger picture possibility of the resurrection of Christ. In each of these cases, it was the fear, the doubt, the frustration, and the disappointment of the moment that caused these disciples to forget that, in the grand narrative of redemption, Jesus himself had foretold not just his death, but also, his resurrection.

How often do we allow our momentary problems, doubts, and even our times of joy to keep us from remembering that we serve a risen savior who is in the world today? When we first receive that bad news or dreaded medical diagnosis, do we turn immediately to God seeking God’s strength and comfort and purpose to help us face the uncertainties ahead? Conversely, how often do we stop while playing with our children or grandchildren or after we receive that clean bill of health or financial windfall and say, “thank you, Lord. I give you all the praise and glory?”

Yes, we live in a world of trees that threaten to block our view of God’s wonderful forest of blessings. Thank God, as we focus our attention on the resurrection during this specific season, it calls us to rise above the mundane and ordinary details of our daily life and consider the immensity of this singular event in our history and what it means for us individually and as a whole. May the resurrection provide us all with a regular reminder of the majesty of Jesus and the big picture of the gospel so that we never again miss the forest for the trees.

Special Thanks...

...to all the artists, musicians, and other special volunteers who helped make our “Finding God in Art and Music” service so successful. Sunday was a powerful reminder of the importance of keeping open minds and hearts about special ways we can worship our almighty, all knowing, and all loving God. We have posted photos of the artwork from Sunday on our Facebook page. Please check out this wonderful artistry and share it with your friends.

WORSHIP NEWS

Resurrection Stories

Christ is risen, now what? As we have officially entered the season of Easter, over the next few weeks, we will be looking at what each of the gospels have to tell us about that time immediately following the resurrection and what we can learn from these amazing Resurrection stories. I hope you will join us each Sunday.

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 4th. 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 38

Day 1	-	Isaiah 64-66, 2 Corinthians 2
Day 2	-	2 Kings 21, 2 Chronicles 33, Psalm 71, 2 Corinthians 3
Day 3	-	Nahum, Psalm 149, 2 Corinthians 4
Day 4	-	2 Kings 22-23, Psalm 73, 2 Corinthians 5
Day 5	-	2 Chronicles 34-35, 2 Corinthians 6

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 early 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 for food and fellowship.

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 16, 2023	103	120
April 9, 2023	138	29
April 2, 2023	82	37
Mar. 26, 2023	110	61

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