



AUGUST 2023 ISSUE

# THE PINEVILLE CONNECTION

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

## LIVING OUR FAITH



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# Pineville Connection

## FROM PASTOR MARK

### *Remember and Give Thanks*

In February 2022, the leadership of Pineville UMC approved a plan to step forward in faith to follow the mission to make disciples rooted in Christ and community. In November 2022, the church leadership took the bold step to strategically invest financial resources into the vision God has set forth.

Evaluation and accountability are always important when a church takes a leap of faith to invest the prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness of the community of faith into a specific plan of action. Evaluation of ministry is often a tricky endeavor! How do you account for the work of God and to what do you attribute that work? It is not always straightforward. And yet, we do our best.

**Jesus told stories to reveal the kingdom of God.** Jesus used parables about everyday events to open the eyes of anyone who would listen. Jesus engaged in relationships, took risks, met people's needs, dared to cross cultural and religious boundaries. The disciples wrote these stories down for us as a witness to us, as if to say, "This is what following Jesus looks like! This is the Way!"

Following the lead of Jesus, the Storyteller, Melissa McGill, our Communications Director, has brought her passion for storytelling to life through the pages of the Pineville Connection, the weekly bulletin, our social media as well as videos highlighting many of the amazing ministries God is working through here. And we are excited to welcome the newest member of our storytelling team, Meriwether Minnix!

Stories such as how God is working through Martin Dickey, our Music Director relaunching the adult choir, helping to form Pineville Academy and host more than 100 middle schoolers at band camp this summer! How God has been at work through Kelly Chiseck, our Family and Children's Director, whose Family Nights, monthly Family Faith Activities, and most recently our Superheroes VBS 2023! How God has been at work through Jessica Edwards, our Assistant Pastor, whose days are filled with lunches and visits and phone calls as she carries out her calling to be a shepherd.



*Rev. Dr. Mark Curtis*

I WILL CALL TO MIND THE DEEDS OF  
THE LORD; I WILL REMEMBER YOUR  
WONDERS OF OLD.  
I WILL MEDITATE ON ALL YOUR WORK  
AND MUSE ON YOUR MIGHTY DEEDS.  
YOUR WAY, O GOD, IS HOLY. WHAT  
GOD IS SO GREAT AS OUR GOD?  
**PSALM 77.11-13**

# Pineville Connection

## REMEMBER AND GIVE THANKS...

How God has been at work through our Stephen Ministers, our Prayer Ministry Team, our Life Groups, our Outreach Team, our United Methodist Women, our Prayer Quilt Ministry, our Hospitality Team, our Worship Team.

Behind the scenes, and yet so vital to everything that happens in this place, is the work of Sarah Willis, our Administrative Assistant. Every story I just listed every meeting, every event that takes place in this facility,

runs through her office. To watch how God is at work in this church, and to see how Sarah is growing with the job and the responsibilities is a story in itself. A story still being written.

In addition to stories, Jesus taught about the gift of discernment. He used the imagery of a tree bearing fruit. In the church, we rely on numbers at times as a measurement to discern. In August, we will begin printing the attendance and offering in a new format in the weekly bulletin.

Our intention is to provide the information in a more accurate and understandable context. Yet it is always important to remember that numbers are not the mission. Our mission is to make disciples.

**Our average total attendance, in person and online, has increased from 103 as of January 2022 to 141 as of July 2023.** We added a second service in September of 2022. We have continued to livestream our service and have a solid core of regulars.

**Financially, through June 2023, the church is approximately \$40k ahead in giving over this time in 2022.** While we are short of our projected budget, we are \$10k ahead income to expenses.

As a pastor, I have always been more concerned about income to expenses than necessarily making budget. The budget is a guide and a goal. The fiduciary responsibility of the pastor and church leadership is to make sure the church operations are solvent. To that end our staff team and church leaders continue to be faithful stewards of what has been entrusted to the church.

**I invite us all to remember and give thanks.** To call to mind the deeds of the Lord as the Psalmist exhorts. To meditate on the work of God in our midst. To reflect on what God has done, what God is doing, and where God is leading.

And may we have the faith and courage to continue to follow. Grace and peace.

### AVERAGE TOTAL ATTENDANCE (INCLUDING ONLINE):

JAN -AUG 2022: 103 (ONE SERVICE)

SEPT -DEC 2022: 116 (TWO SERVICES)

JAN -JULY 2023: 141 (TWO SERVICES)

## FROM PASTOR JESSICA

I was blackberry picking with my granddaughters. This is something I have done yearly for a long time. However, this time I found myself in awe of the berries' ability to cling to the vine until we plucked them off. The unripe berries shook but they didn't fall off. The red berries were left to ripen and we could come back in a few days and pick them.

I was compelled to think about our lives as Christians. He is the vine

and we are the branches or in this story we are the berries. We cling to the vine, our source of provision, until we are ripe and can be picked. God has put an ability in us to stay connected to him to ripen. The berries don't strain to become mature. Instead, they live in the light of the sun and continue to get nutrition from the vine. This is simple and worth thinking about. Stay connected to the Lord and grow.



*Jessica Edwards*



## NEW SERMON SERIES: LIVING OUR FAITH

The vision the leadership of our church believes God has set for us is one that calls us to be living a faith that is visible, relevant, risk-taking, and multicultural. Join us in the month of August as we uncover what it looks like to live our faith together.





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# MEET OUR NEW STAFF MEMBER: MERIWETHER MINNIX

At the end of June, we welcomed Meriwether Minnix as our new Audio Visual Media Specialist. She is from Fort Mill, South Carolina and currently lives in Rock Hill. She says "I'm really excited to work here and get to know all of you."

### **Tell us a little bit about your background!**

I graduated from the University of South Carolina with a degree in Media Arts in 2021 and I came to this job through Martin Dickey. Mr. Dickey was my band director back when I was in the Nation Ford High School Marching Band.

### **What do you enjoy in your free time?**

I have a bunch of hobbies, such as video games, Dungeons & Dragons and knitting.

### **What are you watching right now?**

Nothing new or exciting, I'm just currently re-watching Modern Family

### **What's on your bucket list?**

I think cave diving would be really cool but it also terrifies me. I want to travel to some northern places as well, like Iceland.



*Meriwether Minnix  
Audio Visual Media Specialist.*

### **Do you have a favorite spiritual practice that helps to strengthen your faith?**

I like to take walks, be out in nature. Anything that one might think of as a mindfulness activity really helps center me.

### **How can the congregation support you as you begin this role?**

Everyone I've met has been so nice and unbelievably welcoming, I can't really ask for more. Just bear with me as I learn names and get a handle on everything.

# A CALL FOR GREETERS

BY DEBBIE GAFNEY, CO-CHAIR WORSHIP MINISTRY TEAM

***“Hello!  
How are you today?  
It’s so nice to see you!  
Good morning!  
Welcome Back!”***

Everyone wants to feel welcome when they walk into church! Everyone wants to see a friendly face and a warm smile! Everyone wants to hear a kind word! Everyone wants to feel at home!



These are some of the very reasons that I decided to worship at Pineville UMC! Twelve years ago, on my first visit to Pineville, I was greeted with such warmth, kindness and love that I immediately felt as if I was home! And not long after, I became a member of this loving, welcoming congregation.

Greeters are a very important part of worship because greeters are the first face a stranger, a visitor or a life-long congregant sees when they arrive at worship on Sunday morning. Greeters, sometimes without words, are saying “We are happy you are here today to join our church family in worship!”

Are you interested in becoming a greeter? We are looking for volunteers who may be interested in doing this important, but very simple job! The time commitment is minimal, only 15 - 20 minutes prior to each of the worship services. You can greet at the 9:00 a.m. service in the Sanctuary or the 11am service in the Crossroads Center; you can greet one Sunday a month or for a month of Sundays.

Please prayerfully consider this opportunity to serve your church. If you are interested, please see me between services or feel free to contact me by phone at (803) 280-5640 or email at [debbiegafney@gmail.com](mailto:debbiegafney@gmail.com).

# CONNECTION TEAMS LAUNCH

Connection Teams are a new/revised ministry to help connect new people to the ministries and fellowship of our church. We are looking for a few members in each service to greet and befriend a new face, We want to give the new person a point of contact and a safe place when they return each week. There is training so you feel equipped to serve. If you are interested, please contact Jessica Edwards at [jedwards@pinevilleumc.org](mailto:jedwards@pinevilleumc.org).



## ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

A MESSAGE FROM THE PUMC EDUCATION TEAM

Prayer, at its core is communication with God, and communication is the foundation of relationship. So, prayer is as important today as it was 2,000 years ago. The Lord's Prayer appears twice in scripture; in Matt 6:9-13 as part of the Sermon on the Mount and in Luke 11 when during Jesus' journey to Jerusalem, he was asked by one of his disciples, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples." In response, Jesus gave us The Lord's Prayer.

Have you ever noticed how much "us" language is in the Lord's Prayer? There are no individual requests in the Lord's Prayer. Everything is communal. The prayer separates us from the tendency to focus on ourselves and assumes that we are praying both with others and for them. Jesus teaches us to pray for God's ways above our own.

### The Lord's Prayer

"Pray then in this way:  
 Our Father in heaven,  
 hallowed be your name.  
 Your kingdom come.  
 Your will be done,  
 on earth as it is  
 in heaven.  
 Give us this day  
 our daily bread.  
 And forgive us our debts,  
 as we also have forgiven our  
 debtors.  
 And do not bring us  
 to the time of trial,  
 but rescue us from  
 the evil one.  
*Matthew 6:9-13*



## ON THE LORD'S PRAYER, CONTINUED...

The 10 lines of the Lord's Prayer teach 5 key themes.

**1. Praise** We recognize God's holiness when we pray. He is close and caring, but he's not our pal, nor our equal. He is God Almighty.

**2. Kingdom** We pray for God's sovereign rule in our lives and on this earth. He is our king. We desire God's Kingdom to be extended to others in our world, and that his creation in the here and now be renewed according to what he originally intended.

**3. Needs** We trust God to meet our needs and the needs of others ("Give us today our daily bread"). It is fine to pray for our own needs, but we must care for the needs of all of God's creation, not just our own. Tomorrow, we will renew our dependence by coming to him in prayer once again.

**4. Forgiveness** We search our hearts and recognize that we need his forgiveness. Just as our Father graciously forgives us, we must grant that same forgiveness to others. This is part of what it means to bear God's image.

**5. Guidance** We are all subject to temptations, and left to our own devices, we will succumb to them. But God doesn't just forgive us. He also helps us. He's given us the gift of His Holy Spirit to strengthen and guide us. We ask that his gift penetrates our hearts so we can receive its guidance and avoid the traps and temptations of the evils around us.

Jesus gave the world a prayer that seems relatively short and simple. Yet, it's packed with beauty, tenderness, and grandeur. A thoughtful reading shows it to contain truths about God, about his plan for creation, about us, and about how we might go about fostering a right relationship with him. Short and simple? Yes, but Jesus meant it to be that way. He was intentional about everything he did and spoke. Sometimes, prayer can feel intimidating. Often, people wonder how to pray or feel like they don't pray well enough. Most of us have had those feelings. But prayer is talking to the God who loves you and wants to hear from you. So don't make it harder than it needs to be. Just start a conversation. And if you don't know where to start, start with the Lord's Prayer.



## Upcoming Mission Opportunities

### **Flood Relief Mission Trip to Haywood County**

Join Pastor Mark on a flood relief mission trip to Haywood County Wednesday, August 30 - Saturday, September 2. Our mission will be rebuilding and construction experience is not required. Cost is \$80, which includes room & board. Contact Pastor Mark at [mcurtis@pinevilleumce.org](mailto:mcurtis@pinevilleumce.org). Register by scanning the QR code with your phone's camera.



### **UMW Pancake Dinner & Silent Auction**

Mark your calendar for August 13 at 5:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Building. Support our UMW mission projects by:

- Donating items to be included in our Silent Auction – to donate items, please contact Sharon Thompson at 704-552-0656 or any UMW member. Or bring them to the Fellowship Building on Saturday, August 12 from 10:30 until noon.
- Attend the Pancake Dinner & Silent Auction – all donations and purchases support our mission projects.

### **Pineville Elementary Volunteers Needed!**

With school starting next month, Pineville Elementary will be in need of help with tutoring, being a mentor and also being a Busy Bee who help with tasks for the classroom. If you are interested in helping, please call Pineville Elementary at (980) 343-3920 after school starts.

### **International Mission Trip Spring 2024**

Are you interested in being part of an international mission trip to Central America in Spring 2024? We're gauging interest for a possible trip with Living Water International ([water.cc](http://water.cc)), an incredible organization committed to providing safe drinking water and hygiene clinics in developing countries in conjunction with sharing the word and love of Jesus Christ. If you are interested in learning more or contributing to the planning process, please contact the church office at (704) 889-2022 or Jeff Mills at [jeff@millsandrea.com](mailto:jeff@millsandrea.com) or Paul Claiborne at [pclaiborne2@gmail.com](mailto:pclaiborne2@gmail.com).



### **Save the Date: Rise Against Hunger**

Our Rise Against Hunger food packing event will be on Sunday, October 15th at 11:00 AM in the Crossroads gym. Please put this date on your calendar. We need at least 80 people to participate. It was a fun time of serving and fellowship last year. Our September Love offering will be for this ministry. We need to raise \$4,000 to cover the cost of 10,152 meals. More information will be forthcoming in the next few months.

# LORD, HEAR OUR PRAYERS

**Prayer Ministry List for Healing:** George Harmon; Larry Warren; Sharon Baucom; Mary Hawkins; Ken Walker; John Dantzler; Denise Mills; Tara Murray; Margaret King; Charlene Marze; Dot Phillips; Bill McGough; Saretta Burns; Mr. Robert; Jan Jankowski; Martha Turner; Joann Parris; Sharon Truesdale; Mary Ann Rippy; Nicole Rippy; Dwight Keller; David Bennett; Larry Gunter; Mary Jo Alms; Dani Morton; Mark Short; Charles and Sharon Gaskins; Robert Quick; Patsy Payne; Jeanne Long; Brittany Alden and parents Holt and Mary Alice Poling; Hannah Claire Calbreath; Lisa Johnston; Gene Pharr; Sylvia Ashcroft; Janice Walker and family; Carolyn Harris; Donna Threewitt; Amanda DeHeaven; Diane Snead; Mike Kish; Barbara McInerney; John Hopkins; Sara Collins; Peter Hodes; Chris Harmon; Vito Banci; Toi Warren.

**On Going Concerns:** Nancy Nyilyk; Sue Weed; Bob Nark; Carl Weatherman; Toni Marquette; Stephen DeCapua; Eve Perry; Joe Thompson; Barbara Anderson; John Rea; Tracie Clark; Teddy Quimet; George House; Glennette Ranson; Glen Walker; Ray Phillips; Christel Short; Ruth Gleason; Sharlene Adams; Prakash Laud; John Racey; Larry Wadsworth; Allen Morris; Gary Short; Lisa Akers; Dr. Bill James; Doris McClee; Bill Hawkins; Mike House; Jackie; LaVon Sigmon; Les Haga; Wyamon Price; Joyce Hunter; Mark Decker; Brian Naylis; Flor Quesada; Judy Workman; Allie Gullledge; Rev. Dean Guest; Gwen Brown.

## **Military Concerns:**

Joey Calbreath; Jerome Menendez; Scott Weeks; Bill Hillis; Adam McClary; Joe Soderlund; Elijah Read; Michael Douglas; Noah Lewis; Chase Lewis; Arielle Aeby; Matt Windisch; Tyler Baucom; Samuel Faulkner; Garrett Rodriguez; Cameron Jackson; Richard Beaman.

### **Share a prayer request:**

**We would love to join you in prayer. You can share a prayer request** by submitting a Prayer request card in the Attendance Pads or by contacting the church office.

### **Join the Prayer Team**

Our Prayer Team meets every Monday at 11:00 in Stacy Hall. Contact Darlis Gross at [Hidol51@aol.com](mailto:Hidol51@aol.com) for more information.



# AUGUST

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



## KEY DATES

- 8.9 - Dorchester Ice Cream Social
- 8.13 - UMW Auction & Pancakes
- 8.20 - Blessing of the Backpacks
- 8.30 - Flood Relief Mission Trip

For the full calendar and more information, please visit [pinevilleumc.org/calendar](http://pinevilleumc.org/calendar).

## August Birthdays

Patti Cribb 8/1  
 Chase Courtright 8/1  
 Rachel Walker 8/1  
 Rob Rose 8/4  
 Larry Walker 8/4  
 Bob Price 8/5  
 Dianne McClure 8/5  
 Zoe Crane 8/5  
 Evelyn Robinson 8/7  
 Tim Shenise 8/7  
 Hattie Townsend 8/7  
 Jason Walker 8/7  
 Dean Guest 8/8  
 Wendi Young 8/8  
 Jenny Weir 8/8  
 Jake Aschenbrenner 8/8  
 Allison Cordero 8/8  
 Marcy Eaker 8/9  
 Stacy Hodes 8/10

Sarah Jane Read 8/10  
 Joel Bright 8/11  
 Jerome Menendez 8/11  
 Hailey Dellinger 8/11  
 Jack Thomas 8/11  
 Patty Mills 8/12  
 Molly Warner 8/13  
 Benjamin Malin 8/13  
 Matt Hoover 8/14  
 Celeste Long 8/15  
 Denise Mills 8/15  
 Angela Adamcik 8/16  
 Kim Wilson 8/17  
 Katie Conradsen 8/17  
 Sarah Vaughn 8/19  
 Charlotte Vaughn 8/19  
 Theresa Smith 8/20  
 Brian Ebert 8/20  
 Donald Earnheart 8/22

Kinsey Bolick 8/22  
 Doris Carter 8/23  
 Mindy Hudson 8/23  
 Lucy Nark 8/24  
 Amberli Young 8/26  
 Bonnie Miller 8/27  
 Barry Bridges 8/27  
 Howard Francis 8/28  
 Teresa Feola 8/28  
 Mary Bova 8/28  
 David Sauls 8/30  
 Penny Potts 8/30  
 Chuck Aeby 8/31  
 George Heelan 8/31  
 Turner Keller 8/31

### A Note About The Pineville Connection:

The Pineville Connection seeks to share the stories of our church as we fulfill our mission. If you would like to submit an article for next month's newsletter, please send it to [mmcgill@pinevilleumc.org](mailto:mmcgill@pinevilleumc.org) by June 15th!

Pineville UMC  
PO Box 3  
Pineville NC, 28134

# FALL STUDY

Long Story Short:  
The Bible in Six Parts

*September 11 - October 29*

**REGISTER:**



JOSHUA M<sup>C</sup>NALL

LONG  
STORY  
SHORT

THE BIBLE IN SIX  
SIMPLE MOVEMENTS

