

# St. Andrew United Methodist Church



## November 2023 Newsletter

As I was walking along a sidewalk in early spring of this year, my thoughts were of people who were going through difficult and hard times in their lives along with thoughts of items I needed to do in the office and also thoughts of my to do list I needed to handle at home. As I walked along, I noticed that the sidewalk was broken and uneven in places and one had to be careful not to trip and fall. My thoughts then went to wondering when someone was going to repair or replace the sidewalk. As I walked along my eyes continued to see all the damage to the sidewalk and I continually hoped someone soon would come and repair it. It didn't take long until I noticed the road itself could use some work with patching or paving. I also noticed that someone needed to sweep last winter's cinders that were piling against the curb. It didn't take a long walk to become very discouraged and it didn't take long for my day and my attitude to be held captive by my walk and what I was seeing.

Suddenly a thought came to mind. I saw something a little ways back that seemed out of place. I saw some sort of color and I couldn't remember what it was. It was just color in the mess I was walking along. So, I stopped and looked back and saw something yellow in the middle of the sidewalk. I walked back toward it and saw that it was a dandelion coming up through the crack in the sidewalk. Why didn't I notice it before? I walked right past it, or over it and never saw it. As I stood over the dandelion, I began to wonder what other things I didn't see. I looked around and I saw the trees were greener and fuller than just a day or two ago. I also heard birds singing around me. I saw beautiful flowers sitting on people's porches and their walk ways. I even noticed I could smell freshly cut grass. I love to smell freshly cut grass. I looked up and the sky was a beautiful blue with just a white cloud here and there. I saw a couple of

neighbors visiting and laughing about something. Maybe they were laughing at the preacher who had turned around and was now walking the different direction. Bet they thought he was a little absent minded and was going back to get something he forgot. Wait a minute!! There I go again. Allowing something or someone to take my thoughts off of the beautiful things around me and only see the negative.

Suddenly the Word of God flooded my mind and my heart. "I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living" (Ps. 27:13). I looked back down at the dandelion with a tear in my eye. When I walked past the dandelion, I had ignored the goodness of the Lord in a dandelion. Where everything around me was broken, faded and dirty there was life staring me in the eye. I had allowed something to rob my focus and rob my joy.

Have you ever allowed that to happen to you? Allow something, somebody, a situation to rule over your day, to rob you of your joy where you forget to believe that you will see the goodness of God every day. And you know that part of Psalm 27 which states you will see it in "the land of the living"? God used a dandelion to show Himself to me. A dandelion that most of us do all we can to keep from growing in our yards. We spend money to rid ourselves of dandelions. However, my dandelion showed me the goodness of God. So today the sidewalks still need repaired and the road still needs paved. However even with my dandelion gone, I claim that spot as a special place. It is a place where I saw the goodness of God.

Are you having a hard time seeing God's goodness? Are you only seeing what is broken and lost? Are you only seeing the pain? Take a moment and see if you can see your "dandelion" around you. Look hard, they are easy to miss sometimes.

Last thought; after my dandelion encounter I went to office and read Psalm 27. Verse 4 reads, "One thing I asked of the Lord that I will seek after: to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple".

In just a few days, Zondra and I will arrive to join with you in the work of sharing the Good News of the love of our God and Savior. We are anxious to be with you! We are anxious to know all of you. And I have no doubt that we will see "dandelions" when we arrive.

May Your Life be filled with dandelions. The Good Kind of course. The Goodness of God Kind.

Blessing;  
Pastor Brian



## End of Year Contributions

As we draw near to the end of the year, I would encourage you to review your Third Quarter Financial Statement which was sent via email or mailed to you in the past 10 days or so. In looking at it, some may notice that they still have the opportunity to share financially with the Church in the upcoming couple of months.

Regardless how you plan to financially share with the Church, one thing to keep in mind is that **all donations should be into the Church by December 26 which will give the Finance Team time to process your donation and deposit it in the bank before the end of the year (that way you will get credit for your donation in the 2023 year).** If you are eligible and are required to take an RMD (Required Minimum Distribution) from your IRA or 401K then I would urge you to consider a donation to the Church with a portion of that money. If you are eligible for a distribution and do not take it, then you could be assessed a penalty. You can donate up to \$100,000 from your IRA as a Qualified Charitable Distribution to avoid taxes if:

- Your IRA custodian agrees to transfer the funds to your chosen charity on your behalf. (You can not make the donation directly, it must be made payable to the Church by your Financial Institution.)
- You don't claim that donation as a charitable deduction on your taxes.

RMD contributions to the Church or other Qualified Charitable organization reduce your tax obligation on your RMD by the amount of your donation. If you think you qualify for this option on your 401K or Traditional IRA RMD, please take the time to contact your Financial Institution and discuss this option with them.

IF you would like to speak with someone at the church on the Finance Team about this option, please contact Ernie Downey (Finance Team Chair) or Walter Wood, either of which would be glad to discuss this possibility with you. This donation can be done anytime during the year, and many Financial Institutions will work with you to make these contributions quarterly, monthly, etc. during the year. **The only thing you need to be mindful of is the timing on your RMD gift which needs to be to the church before the end of the year.**

# SHOE and COAT



# DRIVE

Again, this year our church is collecting adult and children's **coats and shoes** (no clothing needed at this time) for Christ Kitchen. Donations can be brought anytime through November and placed in the box in the overflow. Questions contact Lois Downey, 304-545-1852.



It is that time again as we look forward to providing assistance to those in St. Albans who are less fortunate and need help. This year we will again work with the Food Pantry to participate in the annual Christmas Basket Program. IF you, your family, small group etc wish to sponsor a family, please **contact the office by Friday, November 10** and let Brenda know. We will collect your phone number and email and be in contact with additional information.

We anticipate receiving the names from the Food Pantry before Thanksgiving. Once we have that information we will contact those wishing to sponsor a family and provide the families contact information, a suggested food list and schedule for contact and delivering their baskets. With the continued increase in the cost of food again this year the church will offer \$150 to you to assist in the purchase of groceries for each family you sponsor.

Please prayerfully consider your involvement in this outreach ministry that assists families in the St. Albans area.



**Dot Finn will be celebrating her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on December 9. Her daughter is requesting a card shower to show Dot that we are thinking of her. You may send a card of celebration to Dot at: 408 Sleepy Valley Road / Apex, NC 27523**



Tim Priddy/Diana Taylor's small group will meet at the Villager Apartments on Thursday, November 16 at 5:00 PM in their all purpose room. We are preparing and serving a Thanksgiving dinner for the Villager residents and we would love for you to come join us. Come and enjoy turkey and all the fixings while building new friendships.

### **PRAYER PILLOWS**

As of October 31, 2023, our church has created and given away 571 prayer pillows.

### **CHILDREN**

Beginning Sunday, November 5, our church will open and staff the nursery for babies. In the same room

we will have a worship-related activity for children ages 3 to 10.

Please see Bob Lilly if you would like to be a volunteer.

### **BELLS WILL BE RINGING....maybe**

Interest has been expressed in resuming our bell choir. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Megan Bailey at [meganhopewatgmail.com](mailto:meganhopewatgmail.com) or by cell at (304) 654-0461.

## OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

Bring cereal or a box of packets of oatmeal to THE TABLE.

Top five needs at the St. Albans Food Pantry for November:  
pancake mix, variety boxes of oatmeal, cereal, beef stew, Ramen noodles.

Christ Kitchen needs: hot dog chili, small styrofoam bowls, tuna.

The food pantry greatly appreciates getting empty 12 count (not 18) egg cartons.

SNAP is collecting new and gently used blankets for nursing home residents and the homeless

S.N.A.P. enjoyed a busy October! We visited the Air National Guard, prepared a few meals in the church kitchen, surprised Ms Linda with a birthday cake and ice cream, and celebrated another birthday on Halloween.

November looks to be busy, as well. We'll be visited by a WV Extension agent for a discussion of diet and nutrition, and we'll be preparing lunch. We plan to enjoy a special birthday by going bowling, and to share an early Thanksgiving dinner together at Bob Evans. After our Thanksgiving holiday, we'll put up our Christmas tree and draw names for our gift exchange. And we are planning to adopt a resident of a nursing home for Christmas. For more details, please see the upcoming weekly update.

Did you know that we love visitors? If you would like to stop in to visit with us -- to read a story or to share an experience with us, we would love for you to come by!!

As always, SNAP is grateful for your love and support. As a result of the spinoff of SNAP from the church, all donations to SNAP need to be mailed to: SNAP c/o St. Andrew UMC with checks made out to Special Needs Adult Program, Inc.!

Wishing you and yours a Happy Thanksgiving,  
Ms Ruth, Ms Wanda, Ms Linda, and our S.N.A.P. Family

## FROM SHEILA, OUR MINISTER OF CONGREGATIONAL CARE

His name was Bill. He was in his early twenties and had wild hair, and he wore a t-shirt with holes in it, blue jeans, and no shoes. This was literally his wardrobe for his entire four years of college. He was a brilliant student, but kind of esoteric. A very, very bright young man. He became a Christian while attending college.

Across the street from the campus was a church with a very well-dressed, very conservative congregation. They wanted to develop a ministry to the students but were not sure how to go about it.

One Sunday, Bill decided to go there. He walked in with no shoes, jeans, his t-shirt, and wild hair. The service had already started, and Bill started down the aisle looking for a seat. The church was completely packed, and he couldn't find a seat. By then, people were really looking a bit uncomfortable, but no one said anything. Bill got closer and closer to the pulpit, and when he realized there were no seats, he just squatted down right on the carpet. By then the people were really uptight, and the tension in the air was thick.

About that time, the minister realized that from way at the back of the church, a deacon was slowly making his way toward Bill. Now the deacon was in his eighties, and he had silver-gray hair, and a three-piece suit. A Godly man, very elegant, very dignified, very courtly. He walked with a cane. As he started walking toward this boy, everyone was saying to themselves that you can't blame him for what he was doing to do. How could you expect a man of his age and of his background to understand some college kid sitting on the floor in church?

It took a long time for the man to reach the boy. The church was utterly silent except for the clicking of the man's cane. All eyes were focused on him. You couldn't even hear anyone breathing. The minister couldn't even preach the sermon until the deacon did what he had to do. And now they saw this elderly man drop his cane on the floor. With great difficulty, the old man lowered himself and sat down next to Bill and worshipped with him so Bill wouldn't be alone.

Everyone was choked up with emotion.

When the minister gained control, he said, **"What I'm about to preach - you will never remember. What you have just seen - you will never forget. Be careful how you live. You may be the only Bible some people will ever read."**

I know this is not how I normally share anything in the newsletter, but I came across this story years ago, and for a couple of weeks, I kept going back to this and I knew that God was trying to tell me and us something!! St. Andrew has always been a welcoming Church, that was one of the first things that I loved about our Church family! But, I am wondering if we (I am included in this we) are as welcoming as we used to be? When someone comes to SAUMC for the first time, are they greeted and welcomed? Do we

introduce ourselves? If they have children, do we speak to the children also and let them know about the “worship bags in the overflow?

When someone who has returned to Worship for the first time, do we greet them with warmth and love? Are we letting them know that we missed them and that we still love them as our Church family? Do we reintroduce ourselves, if we cannot quite get a name to the face, they will not be hurt, they might even be relieved if they cannot remember a name either!!

We all want St. Andrew to become a growing and thriving Church again and the first way for that change to happen is to continue to be that welcoming and loving Church!! When we tell people we go to St. Andre UMC, I want them to say “Those people love others, just as Christ instructed them to do”!!!!

### October Prayer Concerns

- Unspoken
- Our St. Andrew family
- Our Local, State and Federal Leaders
- Rev. Jarrold and Debbie Lanham
  - Don Nichols
  - Emma Gandee
  - Doug Hardman
  - Alice Baldwin
- The family of Gene Thompson
- The family of Gaye Hager
  - Dick Baier
  - Calvin Treen
- Mike and Tammy Sublette
  - Rev. Janice Odom
- The family of Mary Lawrence
  - The People of Israel
  - Sue Ann Holstein
  - Michael Ashworth
  - Marlene Adkins
  - Maddie

If you have a name for the Prayer Chain you can call or text me at 304-415-0863 and if you would like to Pray for those on the Prayer Chain, we would love to have you join us!!

I leave you with my scripture for November.

*“Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.”*

*Hebrews 13:2 NIV*

In Peace and Love, Sheila Radochio, Minister of Congregational Care



## NOVEMBER CALENDAR

- November 1: SNAP; Amy Loftis and Bob Lilly's small group, 6:30 pm on Zoom
- November 2: Baking fruit cakes; Diana Taylor&Tim Priddy's small group 11 am Zoom
- November 5: 3:00 PM, Church Council; 4:44 PM THE TABLE at the Loop
- November 6: SNAP; boy scouts 6:30 to 8 PM; karate 6:30
- November 7: SNAP; baking fruit cakes;
- November 8: SNAP; Amy Loftis and Bob Lilly's small group, 6:30 pm on Zoom
- November 9: Baking fruit cakes; 11:00 AM Fishermen's small group in Crusaders Class Room; Diana Taylor and Tim Priddy's small group 11 am on Zoom; cub scouts 6:30 to 7:30 PM
- November 12: Charge Conference, St. Andrew and Lakeview at St. Andrew 12 NOON
- November 13: SNAP; boy scouts 6:30 to 8 PM; karate 6:30; SPRC, at 6:30 in the Parlor
- November 14: SNAP; baking fruit cakes; Trustees at 6:30 pm in the Parlor
- November 15: SNAP; Amy Loftis and Bob Lilly's small group, 6:30 pm on Zoom
- November 16: Baking fruit cakes; Tim and Diane's small group preparing Thanksgiving meal to take to Villager at 5 PM, will be using church kitchen in the pm
- November 20-24 Thanksgiving week, no activities scheduled; Church office closed on Thursday.
- November 27 SNAP; boy scouts 6:30 to 8:00 pm; karate 6:30
- November 28 SNAP; baking fruit cakes
- November 29 SNAP; Amy Loftis and Bob Lilly's small group, 6:30 pm on Zoom
- November 30 Baking fruit cakes; Fishermen's small group goes to eat lunch at Christ Kitchen at 11:15 am; cub scouts, 6:30 to 7:30 PM

WE DECIDED TO WAIT UNTIL JANUARY 2024 TO RESUME THE BIRTHDAY  
CALENDAR.