



## Groce UMC's "The Messenger"

Happy New Year! It seems so strange to say it, even hard to write it on checks, reports, or correspondence. Yet we approach a new year with a unique blend of anticipation and fear. New beginnings can bring both joys and challenges to us. As we sang in worship on the 7th, "O God our Help in ages past, our Hope for years to come," we acknowledge our journey in life is sustained by our Lord who is faithfully with us through all life's circumstances.

Howard Thurman was a poet, mystic, philosopher and theologian of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. One of the poems he wrote I shared on the 7th, "The Work of Christmas." In his book, "Meditations of the Heart," he speaks to the universal human experience that comes with the changing of the calendar, entitled, "This is a New Year."

*"... For many, this will be a New Year. It may mark the end of relationships of many years' accumulation. It may mean the first encounter with stark tragedy or radical illness or first quaffing of the cup of bitterness. It may mean the great discovery of the riches of the human heart and the revelation of the secret beauty of one's own. It may mean the beginning of a new kind of living because of marriage, of graduation, of one's first job. It may mean an encounter with God on the lonely road or the hearing of one's name called by Him, high above the noise and the din of the surrounding traffic. And when the call is answered, the life becomes invaded by smiling energies never before released, felt, or experienced. "In whatever sense this year is a New Year for you, may the moment find you eager and unafraid, ready to take it by the hand with joy and with gratitude."*

May the peace and presence of God find you ready and alive in 2018!



## Events / News

### **“A Daily Dose of Faith, Hope and Love”**

Debbie Ross will be teaching this online course through bedisciple.com. It's based on curriculum written by Debbie and will be taught **February 5-9**. Cost of the course is \$45. For more information and to register, go to bedisciple.com. You can also contact Debbie with questions.

### **Family Fun Night**

Come join the FUN on Saturday, February 3, at 6pm in Asbury Hall. We will have a night of games, karaoke and delicious soups and chili. Drinks will be provided. Donations of desserts and/or snacks are welcome. Grab your family, your favorite game, and come ready to play and have fun together.

### **Lenten Study**

A Bible study, led by Gerald, will be offered beginning on Ash Wednesday (Feb. 14). The book is entitled, “*Embracing the Uncertain: A Lenten Study for Uncertain Times*,” by Magrey de Vega. The class will meet for 7 weeks on Wednesdays during Lent at 10am (place TBA). Books cost \$9. If you're interested in being part of the group, contact the church office, 298-7647.

Celebrating a special occasion?  
Honoring a loved one?

Say it with  
**FLOWERS**

Sign up to provide flowers for the altar

- ◆ There are still many dates available to sign up to provide flowers for the altar on a Sunday.
- ◆ You may purchase flowers from a retailer of your choice, e.g. a grocery store, Walmart, a greenhouse or another establishment and bring that arrangement to church.
- ◆ Or you may design your own arrangement of cut flowers from your garden, or bring a blooming potted plant. Silk flowers are also acceptable.
- ◆ We also have two flower shops in the area that have keys to the church, so they will take care of delivering your order.
- ◆ The Altar Flower Calendar is posted on the large bulletin board in the front hall. There is a reference card posted by the calendar with information.



Adult Sunday School

**A NEW class is coming for  
Senior Adults in February!**

**Watch for more information!**

### **Devotional by Max Lucado**

Arthur Hays Sulzberger was the publisher of the New York Times during the second World War. Because of the world conflict, he found it almost impossible to sleep. He was never able to set aside worries from his mind until he adopted as his motto these five words... “one step enough for me.” He took the words from the old hymn, “Lead Kindly Light.”

*“Lead, kindly Light. . .*

*Keep thou my feet; I do not ask to see  
The distant scene; one step enough for me.”*

Friend, God isn't going to let you see the distant scene either, so you might as well quit looking for it. God promises a lamp to our feet but not a crystal ball into the future. We don't need to know what will happen tomorrow. We only need to know that Hebrews 4:16 promises that “we will find grace to help us when we need it!”



### **Thank You's**

A BIG thank you to everyone who helped take down the Christmas decorations in the Sanctuary and Narthex areas. Everything was put away to perfection and things were left in pristine condition. You all are a wonderful team!

— Liz Ream

Altar Guild Chair

Thank you for your prayers, calls, cards and other expressions of concern during my recent surgery.

— Rebecca Todd

Excerpted from a letter received from Group Cares (the missional organization Vacation Bible School donations supported last year).

Dear Groce United Methodist Church,  
Thank you so much for your donation of \$683 to the Clean Water for Peru Effort. We rely on people like you to continue this ministry. During 2017 we hosted over 130 home repair and community service mission trips across the United States and served in over a dozen countries around the world. Over 18,000 people served and repaired over 1500 homes and brought hope to communities through service to the elderly, poor, and homeless. We are honored that you would trust us with these funds and commit to using them wisely as we share the love of Jesus.

— Tim Gilmour, President

### **Groce UMC's Inclement Weather Policy**

When a measurable snowfall occurs on a Sunday check WLOS News 13 for closing information.

When the Asheville City Schools are closed because of inclement weather, activities scheduled for that day will usually be canceled. However, leaders of the affected activities may decide to hold their activity, provided they notify the church office and the members of their group.

Also, please keep in mind – if you don't attend church because of bad weather (or other reasons), it is important to still send in your regular offering. The church depends on these monies to keep God's work going! You can mail or drop by your contribution to the church office.

### **How much do you know about the Facility Improvement Fund?**

When contributions are given to this fund, they help to pay for repairs and improvements that would exceed the annual church maintenance budget. It takes a lot to keep our facilities and grounds maintained and looking good for all who come through our doors. Here are some of the many items that couldn't have been done without using monies from this fund:

- Conversion of lights in all buildings to LED (this has already saved us money in the constant replacement of fluorescent bulbs and ballasts and in savings of energy costs)
- New water heater for Epworth Building
- Upgrade of Carillon system to digital when old system stopped working
- Air conditioner replacement and repairs of other air conditioners
- Repairs to Charter Hall storage room after large area of ceiling collapsed two years ago
- Spot light installed for Asbury Hall entrance and stairs
- Non-skid and illuminated coating applied to steps by Asbury, Sanctuary and sidewalk to front entrance
- Drain work done by Asbury Hall side steps and handicapped entrance created to sidewalk at end of Asbury Hall
- Removal of fallen trees and stumps and removal of tree limbs overgrown on property
- Boiler repairs
- Gravel for back parking lot two years ago and mulch for needed playground areas that turn into mud pits
- Repairs and upgrades needed to bring items up to code per Fire Marshal
- Repairs/upgrades concerning fire extinguishers and kitchen stove hood exhaust
- Repairs to sewer lines (this was before new lines were installed in conjunction with the Epworth Apartment sewer lines)
- Monies from this fund are used to pay Mike Reynolds, who takes care of the majority of our church maintenance and repairs.

So please know ... your contributions to this fund do matter!!

*"..... How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."*

— Genesis 28:17