
AUMC Newsletter – Nov./Dec. 2015

Ayden United Methodist Church * P.O. Box 335, Ayden, NC 28513 * Office – 252-746-6524

Rev. Jim McConnell, Pastor * www.aydenumc.org

From the Pastor: Good Conversations

In recent weeks I've had a lot of conversations with all sorts of people about Ayden United Methodist Church and the one thing I keep repeating is that, in many ways, this is a completely different church than the one I was appointed to four years ago. Over the past year I have seen a growing passion in this congregation: a passion to know and worship God more fully and a drive to serve others and reach out into our community. I have also seen a recognition that if we do those two things well, we will build the sort of Christian community that will more closely resemble the Kingdom of God.

The year has been full of new activity and new faces with several new families (young and old) joining our fellowship. We have received two dozen new members since last charge conference, eleven of which were baptisms and nine of those were professions of faith. Every week we have new faces visiting with us in the congregation and I regularly note that nearly a full quarter of our congregation is under the age of eighteen. All of this is a miracle. All of this is the work of the Holy Spirit.

As I counted off the weeks of ordinary time this year, (the weeks *between* Pentecost and Advent) at some point I began giving thanks that this past year has truly been a year of Pentecost. Just as in Luke's recounting of the early church in Acts 2, the Spirit of God has blown through this place. The Gospel has been proclaimed in word and deed and this church has come alive in worship and in service to the point where we are recognized not just as a building, but as a presence in our community.

We continue to feed under-served youth through our Backpack Buddies program and vulnerable older adults through our partnership with Meals on Wheels. Our members staff the Ayden Christian Care food pantry and others find time to read with children in schools. We have sponsored free family fun days and trunk-or-treat activities and have been an active presence in community events, parades and festivals.

The other thing I keep saying in conversations about our church is how absolutely delighted I am with the ministry going on at AUMC. I am delighted that it is the ministry of the church, and that God is constantly raising up leaders to accomplish the work that needs to be done. I tell people that I am certain that we are merely seeing the first fruits of God's work in this place. It is evident to me that AUMC, as a congregation, is well positioned to grow over the next few years and that if we continue to live into our mission statement, of "Loving God, Serving Others, and Building Christian Community," God will supply all that we need to make that happen.



The Rev. Jim McConnell

Celebrate Advent with AUMC

Advent, which starts Sunday, Nov. 29, is a time of the year when the church remembers the birth of Jesus and anticipates Christ's return as king. During each of the four Sundays of Advent the 11 a.m. service will feature special scripture readings from the Old Testament. These readings will focus on how the prophets looked ahead to the coming kingdom of God. Also each week a new candle on the Advent wreath will be lit accompanied by readings that illuminate the different facets of Jesus Christ: The Way, Hope, Joy and Peace.

On Sunday, Dec. 6 at during the 11 a.m. service, AUMC will observe the Hanging of the Greens. This service celebrates the traditions of the church, including why we hang evergreen boughs and holly and the symbolism behind the Chrismon tree. Special readings and hymns will accompany this service.

AUMC invites all to attend a Christmas Eve Candlelight service on Thursday, Dec. 24 at 7 p.m. This special service includes the observance of Holy Communion.

Save the Date: Cookie Exchange, Dec. 4

Mom's Night Out will meet on Friday, Dec. 4 from 7 - 9 p.m. at the Coffee Shack in Winterville for a Cookie Exchange. Watch the bulletin for more information or see Allyson Meyer.

Have Breakfast with Santa on Dec. 5

The trustees will again sponsor their fourth annual "Breakfast with Santa" on Saturday, Dec. 5 from 9 - 11 a.m. For \$10 children will get to have their picture taken with Santa and for \$5 a person, families can enjoy a pancake breakfast with all the trimmings.

All proceeds from the breakfast will be used to repay the loan on the Underwood property.

Cantata Scheduled for Dec. 13

The AUMC Chancel Choir, under the direction of Tarvick Linder, will perform the cantata "Canticle of Christmas" by Tom Fettke and Camp Kirkland on Sunday, Dec. 13 at 3 p.m. A blend of familiar carols and newer songs of the season will be presented to guide us on a journey to experience the joy of the season. All are invited to attend a reception following the Cantata in the Stroud Building.

Operation Christmas Child Boxes Due Nov. 22

It is again time for the members of AUMC to begin making their purchases in preparation for filling boxes for Operation Christmas Child (OCC). During worship on Sunday, Nov. 22, AUMC will pray over our OCC boxes and ask God to bless the children who receive them.

Complete details on what to include in each box and how to pack them can be found in the Hall of History or the Stroud Building. Finished boxes may be dropped off in the sanctuary. GO boxes, which are easy to assemble and do not need to be wrapped, are available Hall of History.

Each box should also include a \$7 donation to cover shipping costs, which can be placed in the box or paid online. Donating online allows you to discover the country to which your shoebox travels.

As always AUMC's hope is for one more than last year, and our goal in 2015 is for 96 boxes. AUMC has participated in this ministry for 17 years and to date has delivered 1,163 boxes filled with hopes and prayers that each finds its way to the child who needs it most.

Questions? Contact Donna Harris at 746-2297 or Camilla Godwin at 746-6979.

AUMC Presents Lay Person of the Year Awards

Allyson Meyer and Dee Stroud have been selected AUMC Lay Persons of the Year for 2015. Each of these women has made lasting contributions to our church ministry.

Allyson and Dee have been instrumental in sustaining Ayden's youth ministries throughout the last several years. They have volunteered countless hours to teach Sunday School, help with Vacation Bible School, promote camping ministries and facilitate both the Methodist Youth Fellowship and the Elementary Youth Group.

Allyson and Dee have planned bible lessons, service projects, crafts, youth trips and activities in order to provide the youth of AUMC with opportunities for faith and fellowship. Under their leadership, the youth have started and supported Trunk or Treat, an annual AUMC event that provides a fun outreach experience for the children of our community.

Their faithfulness has allowed our youth programs to grow and thrive, and most importantly they have enabled our youth to be faithful witnesses to others. AUMC is truly blessed to have Allyson and Dee as part of our church family.

Youth Glean Sweet Potatoes

On Sunday, Oct. 18, some younger youth, older youth and dedicated parents gathered together to glean sweet potatoes. Working for only an hour, the youth were able to pick up 860 pounds of sweet potatoes that were then given out to local families through the Ayden Christian Care Center (ACCC).

Farmer David Phillips was gracious enough to allow the youth to pick sweet potatoes from his field, and the Bawtinheimer's so kindly welcomed us at their home. After gleaning sweet potatoes, the youth enjoyed riding on the hayride, feeding carrots to the horses and eating delicious tacos. It was a wonderful evening of service and fellowship!

For a complete list of youth activities, visit www.aydenumc.org/youth-aumc, see Taylor Nelson or contact the church office.

AUMC Children's Choir Performs Original Song

Recently during morning worship, the AUMC youth choir performed an original song written by Lauren and Lily Landmark and Nathan Mosely. Choir director Tarvick Linder directed the choir and composed the piano music that accompanied the children's song.

The Cross in My Heart

I love God.
I love God.

He believes in me.

I love God.
I love God.

He believes in me.
He believes in me.

Follow me to the sky,
To the cross in my heart.

Follow me to the sky,
To the cross in my heart.

I love God.
I love God.

He believes in me.
He believes in me.
He believes in me.

Any child age four and up is invited and encouraged to attend youth choir rehearsals at 6:15 p.m. on Wednesdays. For more information on the youth choir, see Tarvick Linder or contact the church office.

Stay in Touch with AUMC

You can find events, news, a church calendar and more by visiting the AUMC web site at www.aydenumc.org.

AUMC Celebrates All Saints Day

During morning worship on Nov. 1, AUMC remembered those saints who have passed from life to life eternal this year. After the reading of each name, a candle was lit in honor of that person.

Names of the Honored Dead included:

- Guy Baxter
- Nancy Bulow
- Bettie Dail
- Dorothy Nett
- Sue Noble

UM Women Present Awards

by Camila Godwin

Congratulations to Jackie Jones and Ashley Watkins, the 2015 recipients of the United Methodist Women (UMW) Special Mission Recognition Awards. Donations have been made to the mission field in their honor. This is the highest honor bestowed by the UMW.

Jackie Jones grew up in this church. She has been a faithful member and upon retiring from her years of teaching school has become involved in many more things - JOY Circle, Backpack Buddies, Ayden Christian Care Center, Worship Team and is the head of our bereavement committee.

Ashley Watkins may have only been a member for a few years but she has made her presence known in that short time, particularly through children's ministries. She has done a fantastic job heading up Vacation Bible School the last few years and has helped us to start feeding the kids each night of VBS. She is head of the education team and works closely with all the teachers and the youth intern. If it involves the children of our church, you will find Ashley right in the middle of it.

Sign Up for AUMC's E-Newsletter

You can sign up on the church web site, www.aydenumc.org, by entering your e-mail address in the sign-up box located in the bottom right corner.

If you have questions, contact Emily McConnell.

Like Us on Facebook

For youth news, event updates and more, be sure to visit and like our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/AydenUMC.

Church Calendar

Nov. 13 – 15, Youth Trip to Pilgrimage, Fayetteville, NC

Nov. 15 – Elementary Youth Group, 4 p.m.

Nov. 22 – Operation Christmas Child Box Dedication, 11 a.m.

Nov. 22 – Methodist Youth Fellowship, 4 – 5:30 p.m.

Nov. 26 – 27 – Church Office Closed / Thanksgiving

Dec. 4 – Mom's Night Out, Cookie Exchange, 7 p.m.

Dec. 5 – Breakfast with Santa, 9 – 11 a.m.

Dec. 6 – Hanging of the Greens, 11 a.m.

Dec. 11–12 – Methodist Youth Fellowship Lock-In

Dec. 13 – Cantata, 3:00 p.m.

Dec. 20 – Poinsettia Pick Up, 12 p.m.

Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve Service, 7 p.m.

Look for weekly updates to the calendar in the church bulletin or visit www.aydenumc.org and click on "Calendar" at the top for the most current information on church events and activities.

If you have an event to add to the calendar, please call the church office.
