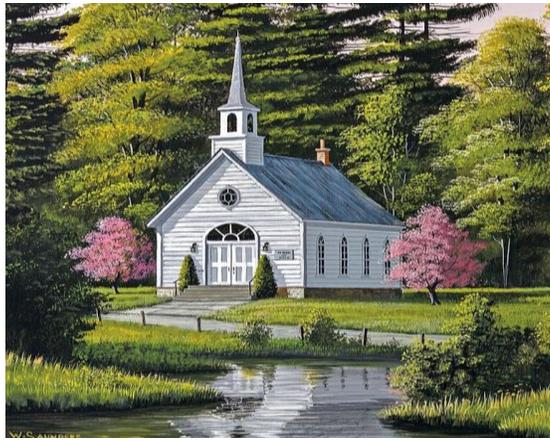


*The
Kresge
Kourier
May
2021*



ANNA KRESGE MEMORIAL
UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH
15 BOOGER HOLLOW
ROAD
CEDARTOWN, GA 30125
Rev. Ed Dickens
OFFICE 770-748-4308

Kresge Family,

April 29, 2021

As I write today my heart is heavy and my head about to explode.

The burdens of the world are upon me, my mother is nearing the end of her earthly life – how much longer, we do not know. Many of you know the pain and anguish of watching a loved one, previously full of life, dwindle to a moaning groaning heap in their bed. It is hard to watch.

Similarly, The United Methodist Church, on a slow decline for decades in the United States is faster and faster going downhill. Our Conference, just a few years ago had over 1000 congregations, that number is now reportedly less than 800; hundreds of thousand of members have been lost. Some of that loss may be from local congregations and pastors actually conducting required annual membership audits and removing those who have neglected the membership vows and refuse to return to compliance.

“When persons unite as professing members with a local United Methodist church, they profess their faith in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; in Jesus Christ his only son; and in the Holy Spirit. Thus, they make known their desire to live their daily lives as disciples of Jesus Christ. They covenant together with God and with the members of the local church to keep the vows which are a part of the order of confirmation and reception into the church:

1. To renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of the world, and repent of their sin;
2. To accept the freedom and power God gives them to resist evil, injustice, and oppression;
3. To confess Jesus Christ as Savior, put their whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as their Lord;
4. To remain faithful members of Christ’s holy church and serve as Christ’s representatives in the world;
5. To be loyal to Christ through The United Methodist Church and do all in their power to strengthen its ministries;
6. To faithfully participate in its ministries by their prayers, their presence, their gifts, their service and their witness;
7. To receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.”
(Para 217, The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, 2016, pg. 157)

Great expectations are placed upon us when we join the Church and a local congregation. Likewise, each of us should have great expectations for ourselves and others as we continue to grow and develop spiritually. Spiritual formation, growing in grace with Jesus and others is a lifelong process that happens moment by moment each and every day. Faithful membership, as covenanted to is essential for personal growth and deepening one’s commitment to the will and grace of God. In love, we are to hold each other accountable to live faithfully into the covenant of baptism which is the covenant we make when received into the membership of a local congregation.

Very simply that is the issue in The Church as a whole. Over a very long period of time, fifty years or so, we have forgotten what we stand for, what defines us as Methodist/United Methodist, we get mad because things don’t line up with our personal version of the way the world should be. We get mad, we separate ourselves from God and each other, we demand our own way. All while our suffering Savior asks us to die to self and live for and with Him. As does our Discipline: “*Mutual Responsibility* – Faithful discipleship includes the obligation to participate in the corporate life of the congregation with fellow members of the body of Christ. A member is bound in sacred covenant to shoulder the burdens, share the risks, and celebrate the joys of fellow members. A Christian is called to speak the truth in love, always ready to confront conflict in the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation.” (Par 219, The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, 2016, pg. 158)

What can we do as individuals? Take some time, pray, pray and pray some more. Then sit down and honestly write out how you have faithfully participated in the ministries of Anna Kresge UMC by your prayers, your presence, your gifts, your service, and your witness. Do this as if you were asked to give testimony in front of our congregation – the friends and family you are in covenant with.

I am positive many fine examples will come to our minds; I am also sure that all of us will find ways where we’ve fallen short and can improve. Praise God we have the opportunity for do overs: “To renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of the world, and repent of their sin; to accept the freedom and power God

gives them to resist evil, injustice, and oppression; to confess Jesus Christ as Savior, put their whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as their Lord; to remain faithful members of Christ's holy church and serve as Christ's representatives in the world; to be loyal to Christ through The United Methodist Church and do all in their power to strengthen its ministries; to faithfully participate in its ministries by their prayers, their presence, their gifts, their service and their witness; to receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments."

I thank God for the opportunity and responsibility to serve this congregation, I take seriously and attempt to live out this sacred covenant with God and our congregation. Forgive me when and where I've fallen short. I am very thankful for the Lay Leadership of this congregation that has supported me, held me accountable, walks with me and allows me to walk with them.

O the things we are about to accomplish as we live not our covenant vows! Come – faithfully participate. Love God, love others as God loves!



SAMARITAN
*Hope, Healing,
 and Change. house*

Please remember to bring supplies for the Samaritan House the first Sunday of each month. The Samaritan House is open on Tuesday and Thursday. Volunteers this month are: May 11 - Diane Minshew May 13 – Anna Parker

DEAR KRESGE FAMILY,
 MR. & MRS. KAM ANDREWS
 REQUEST THE HONOUR OF YOUR PRESENCE AT THE MARRIAGE OF THEIR DAUGHTER

Kamlyn Ashley
 To
Joseph Prentiss
 SON OF DR. AND MRS. JOHN DELOACH, JR.

ON SATURDAY, THE TWENTY-NINTH OF MAY
 TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-ONE
 AT HALF PAST FIVE O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING

DARLINGTON SCHOOL MORRIS CHAPEL
 1014 CAVE SPRING ROAD SW
 ROME, GEORGIA

Reception
 IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE CEREMONY ;

FORREST PLACE
 436 BROAD STREET
 ROME, GEORGIA

KINDLY RESPOND TO
 CATHY ANDREWS
 770-546-1034

WITH THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE ATTENDING BY MAY 8TH

