

# *THE MESSENGER*



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# Finding God in the Ordinary Days of Summer

Submitted by Rev. Jill Rhinehart

There is something different about July.

The rush of spring has passed. School is out. Vacations begin. Gardens are producing tomatoes and squash, children are chasing fireflies, and many of us find ourselves lingering on a porch a little longer in the evening as the sun slowly sets. Summer has a way of inviting us to slow down.

Yet even in July, our calendars can remain surprisingly full. We move from one activity to the next, planning trips, attending family gatherings, hosting visitors, or simply trying to keep up with the ordinary demands of life. Sometimes we forget that God is not waiting for us only in Sunday worship or in the extraordinary moments of faith. God delights in meeting us in the ordinary rhythms of everyday life.

Jesus often taught outdoors. He pointed to birds, flowers, seeds, vineyards, fishermen, and fields because He knew that creation itself speaks of God's love. If we are willing to pay attention, every season offers reminders of God's presence. This month, I invite you to practice noticing.

Notice the sunrise before the day begins.

Notice the laughter of a child.

Notice the cool shade beneath a tree.

Notice the gentle rain that nourishes the earth.

Notice the kindness of a neighbor.

These are not interruptions to our spiritual lives—they are often where God is speaking most clearly.

Psalm 46:10 reminds us, "Be still, and know that I am God."

Being still does not necessarily mean doing nothing. It means becoming aware that God is already with us. Sometimes the greatest act of faith is simply paying attention to the One who has been walking beside us all along.

As you travel this summer—or even if your vacation is simply sitting on your front porch with a glass of iced tea—I hope you will make room each day for prayer, Scripture, and quiet conversation with God. Those moments have a way of restoring our hearts in ways that busy schedules never can.

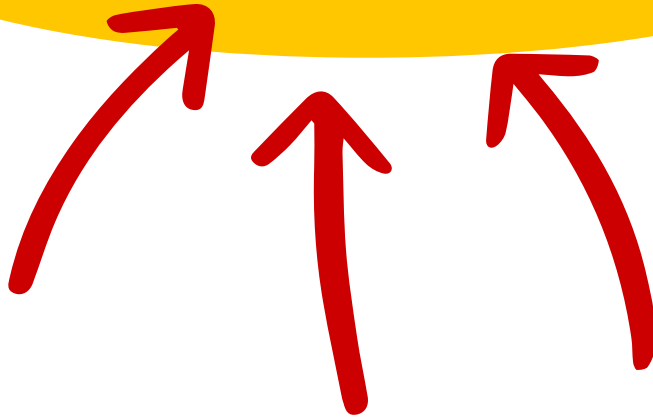
At Groce United Methodist Church, summer is also a season of ministry. We continue to worship together, serve our neighbors, and invest in the next generation through our Music Camp, and in the future of our youth with the support of their mission trip. Thank you for the many ways you give your time, prayers, and generosity to make ministry possible. Every act of kindness, every volunteer hour, every prayer offered becomes part of God's work in our community.

My prayer for each of you is that this July will not simply be a month that passes by quickly, but a season in which your soul is refreshed, your faith is renewed, and your eyes are opened to the countless ways Christ is present in your daily life.

May you find moments to rest. May you find reasons to rejoice. And may you discover, once again, that God's grace is never on vacation.

# IMPORTANT!

The time for the performance of the Summer Camp musical on July 17th has CHANGED.  
The performance will now start at 7pm!



## WARRIOR CANINE UPDATE

SUBMITTED BY TRUE MORSE

We learned of the upcoming closure, effective July 3rd, the week of June 15th, and I spoke to Mr. Yount at length on June 22nd. It has been a very difficult decision for Warrior Canine Connection but through their other locations, as well as volunteers in the Asheville area, they are committed to making sure that veterans needing service dogs are supported. In collaboration with WCC, The Home Depot, and Interior Painting of Asheville, we were able to make significant improvements to the lower level of the Epworth Building. Leadership is already working on ways to utilize the space to support God's work at Groce.

“Warrior Canine Connection wishes to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the entire congregation of Groce UMC for the many years of support! By allowing us to serve Veterans in the space provided by Groce UMC, many Veterans have benefited in significant ways. Due to recent staffing and funding challenges, we had to make the very difficult decision to discontinue our therapeutic service dog training program in Asheville. We hope to continue to support the Asheville Veteran community utilizing our special pups and amazing volunteer puppy raisers.

With extreme gratitude,

Rick Yount  
Founder and Executive Director  
Warrior Canine Connection”



*“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.”*

2 CORINTHIANS 3:17



*“So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.”*

JOHN 8:36



WELCOME TO OUR  
NEWEST MEMBERS OF  
THE GROCE CHURCH  
FAMILY:

- CALEB FRENTZ
- ELLA HOFFART

*"THEREFORE WELCOME ONE ANOTHER AS CHRIST HAS WELCOMED YOU, FOR THE GLORY OF GOD." – ROMANS 15:7*

# A Prayer for All People

Submitted by Will Troxell - From May 17, 2026 Worship Service

Creator of all people,  
We come before You carrying the weight of a restless world.

Where there is war, bring peace.  
Where there is hunger, bring provision.  
Where there is hatred, bring understanding.  
Where there is fear, bring courage.  
Where there is loneliness, bring companionship.  
Where there is corruption and greed, awaken truth and justice.

We pray for children growing up amid violence,  
for families displaced from their homes,  
for those suffering from poverty, illness, disaster, and grief.  
Comfort the brokenhearted and strengthen those who have lost  
hope.

Guide the leaders of nations with wisdom and humility.  
May power be used to protect, not destroy,  
to heal divisions, not deepen them.  
Teach humanity to value compassion over pride,  
truth over deception,  
and unity over division.

Help us care for the Earth and for one another.  
Remind us that beyond borders, languages, and beliefs,  
we all share the same human dignity.

Give us hearts willing to forgive,  
hands willing to serve,  
and minds willing to seek peace.  
May kindness spread faster than anger,  
may hope rise stronger than despair,  
and may love overcome fear in every corner of the world.

For all mankind —  
for every nation, every family, every soul —  
we pray for healing, wisdom, mercy, and peace.

Amen.

## JULY BIRTHDAYS

07/06 Janet Parkerson  
07/07 Kathy Cole  
Kadence Gates  
Allen Holden  
07/10 Bruce Robinson  
07/11 Gail Baylor  
Kim Berlage  
Judy Sexton  
07/12 Janie Hill  
07/13 Eddie Taylor  
07/15 Malinda Day  
07/17 Kirsten Burdick  
Jane Davis  
07/19 Rachel Conway  
Tina Stovall  
07/21 Ella Woehl  
07/21 Mary Ledbetter  
07/24 Pat Leonard-Kirschner  
Danny Owenby  
Nathan Rhein  
07/25 True Morse  
Marge Ottofy  
07/26 Carolyn Ariail  
07/27 Stan Boyd  
07/29 Jodie Hamrick  
Gail Rogers



## JULY ANNIVERSERIES

07/05 Carolyn & Jim Ariail (57)  
07/06 Mark & Maro Slaughter (36)  
07/12 Doug & Laura Jones (46)  
07/24 Jim & Nancy Creel (61)  
07/25 Debbie & Fred Bailey (34)  
Michelle & Will Troxell (28)

# MINISTRY SPOTLIGHT

The **East Asheville Welcome Table** is an important and vibrant ministry of Groce UMC. They provide free weekly meals to the community, as well as opportunities for fellowship and devotion. Dinner is served Thursday evenings from 5:00–6:15 pm. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to join them for dinner every week. We are so grateful to our volunteers for all the hard work they put in to make this program possible!

While most of the food for the meal is donated by local organizations, the Groce Church Family is responsible for the dessert every week. And we currently have very few people signed up to help with this part of the meal. **Please prayerfully consider signing up to bring a dessert and give our feast a sweet ending!** You don't have to bake – store bought is fine! There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board outside of the office and we need two desserts per week. Thank you!

- Is there a ministry or volunteer at Groce UMC that you think deserves a “spotlight” in an upcoming newsletter? Send your submissions to Mariah Wright ([secretary@groceumc.org](mailto:secretary@groceumc.org)).



## TABLE OF 16

Submitted by Linda Lankton  
Table of Sixteen met in June to break bread and share in fellowship. We love seeing our Groce Church Family connect and build relationships!

See the sidebar for upcoming dates to join this fun group. For more information, contact **Linda Lankton** ([lanktonlinda53@gmail.com](mailto:lanktonlinda53@gmail.com)).

## REMINDER

THE FOLLOWING GROUPS WILL NOT BE MEETING IN JULY:

- CHANCEL CHOIR
- MEN'S CHOIR
- HANDBELLS
- NURTURE
- OUTREACH
- TL3
- PARKINSONS SUPPORT
- BEEKEEPERS
- CUB SCOUTS
- GIRL SCOUTS

UPCOMING DATES FOR TABLE OF 16:

- JULY 22
- AUGUST 12
- SEPTEMBER 23
- OCTOBER 14
- NOVEMBER 4
- DECEMBER 16 (NEW DATE)

MEETS MONTHLY -  
11:30 AM AT LONGHORN  
STEAKHOUSE OFF  
TUNNEL ROAD  
EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

# ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Get ready for a great time as we bring you an Ice Cream Social like no other! Join us for an afternoon filled with laughter, delicious flavors, and a sprinkle of joy.

Ice cream will be provided, but feel free to bring homemade to share!

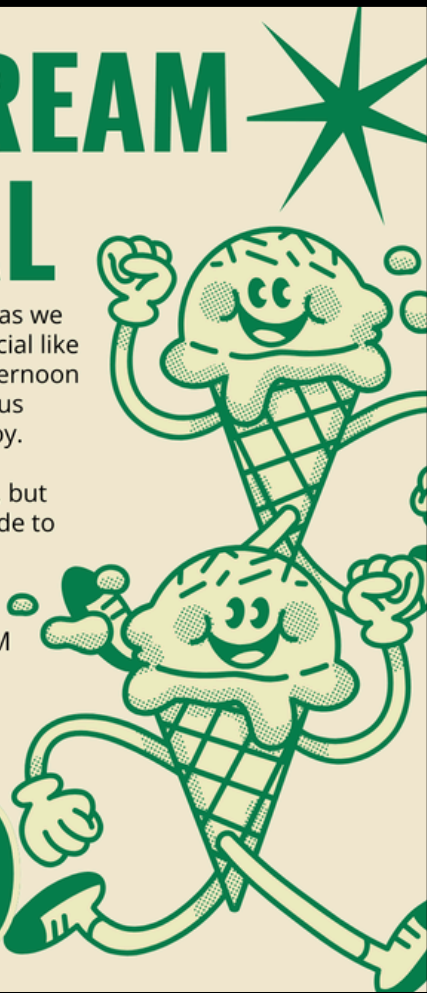


SUNDAY  
AUGUST 16 AT 3PM



GROCE UMC  
ASBURY HALL

LET'S MAKE IT A  
SCOOP-TACULAR DAY!



## COMING SOON!

Groce UMC is having a rummage sale on September 12 to benefit the congregation. And we need YOUR stuff to make it happen.

**Donations will be collected the week prior to the sale.**

We will be accepting home decor, dishes, sporting goods, toys, books, small furniture and appliances, and more!

Please donate only gently used, clean, and working items.

To ensure a successful sale, please no computers, mattresses, recalled items, or heavily damaged goods.

**NO CLOTHES PLEASE!**

More information about drop-off dates, times, and locations to follow, but go ahead and mark your calendar. And start setting your best treasures aside now!

**“CARE AND SHARE” SUNDAY - SEPTEMBER 20  
ON THIS SUNDAY, WE GO OUTSIDE OUR CHURCH  
WALLS TO BE THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD.  
DETAILS COMING SOON - SAVE THE DATE!**

## Updated Details on 2026 Apportionments

Submitted by Gayle Decker

Apportionments Balance	31,627
1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr Payment	(4,180)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr Payment	(5,393)
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Balance Remaining	22,054

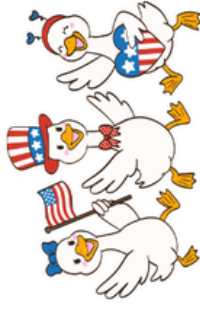
We have paid a total of \$9,573.00 which completely paid off the balance owed of District funds.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter payment includes \$2K received from the United Methodist Men.

The breakdown of our remaining balance is:

Conference Funds	11,533
General Church Funds	10, 521
	<hr/>
Balance Remaining	22,054

# July 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
AH - Asbury Hall AL - Asbury Lobby CH - Charter Hall JB - Jack Bass Room PR - Prayer Room			1 6:00 AA Meeting	2 10:30 Isaac Group (JB) 1:30 Tai Chi (CH) 5:00 Welcome Table (AH) 6:30 UMM (JB)	3 3:00 Tailgate Market	4 <i>Happy Birthday America</i>
5 9:00 Agape (CH) 10:30 Worship	6 OFFICE CLOSED 11:00 Prayer Group (PR) 1:00 Canasta (AL)	7 10:30 Crafters (CH) 11:00 Staff Meeting (JB) 1:30 Tai Chi (CH)	8 5:15 UMM @ VRQ 6:00 AA Meeting	9 10:30 Isaac Group (JB) 1:30 Tai Chi (CH) 5:00 Welcome Table (AH)	10 3:00 Tailgate Market	11
12 9:00 Agape (CH) 10:30 Worship	13 11:00 Prayer Group (PR) 6:00 Guitar League (AH)	14 10:30 Crafters (CH) 1:30 Tai Chi (CH)	15 10:00 Sarah Circle (JB) 6:00 AA Meeting	16 10:30 Isaac Group (JB) 1:30 Tai Chi (CH) 5:00 Welcome Table (AH)	17 3:00 Tailgate Market 7:00 Camp Musical and Ice Cream Party (AH)	18
19 9:00 Agape (CH) 10:30 Worship 11:30 Worship Witness Committee (JB)	20 11:00 Prayer Group (PR) 1:00 Canasta (AL)	21 10:30 Crafters (CH) 1:30 Tai Chi (CH) 3:00 Miriam Circle (AL) 7:00 HCCA Green (CH)	22 11:30 Table of 16 6:00 AA Meeting	23 10:30 Isaac Group (JB) 1:30 Tai Chi (CH) 5:00 Welcome Table (AH)	24 3:00 Tailgate Market	25 10:00 Guitar League (AH/CH)
26 9:00 Agape (CH) 10:30 Worship 6:00 HCCA Potluck (AH)	27 11:00 Prayer Group (PR)	28 10:30 Crafters (CH) 1:30 Tai Chi (CH)	29 6:00 AA Meeting	30 10:30 Isaac Group (JB) 1:30 Tai Chi (CH) 5:00 Welcome Table (AH)	31 3:00 Tailgate Market	

**MUSIC CAMP**

**Youth Mission Trip**