



# Piney Creek United Methodist Church & Cemetery Newsletter

February 2016

Piney Creek, North Carolina



## **GREETINGS FROM PINEY CREEK UMC:**

Quite deep snow still covers most of the ground with high snow banks along the sides of the road. Due to high winds Garvey Road was closed by drifts on Saturday night. Today, even though the sun is shining, there is still a cold wind blowing. The seed catalogs haven't come out yet, but we are looking forward to spring because it brings us flowers, warm breezes, and, most of all, our beloved summer residents.

## **DECORATION 2015:**

Decoration weekend was perfect weather-wise, and it was a good time to come home and visit Piney Creek. The grounds were lovely, and the flowers added a beautiful dimension of color to the hillside.

On Saturday, the breakfast attendance broke all records. We were blessed to have a crowd who seemed to enjoy our country food and who were generous in their donations. Thank you for coming and thank you for donating.

As John Wesley once did, Pastor Jack opened the Sunday service on Decoration morning outside while standing

on a monument. He then invited everyone to go inside for the church service. After this unique beginning, Pastor Jack delivered an appropriate and informative sermon for a homecoming weekend. Pastor Jack truly enjoys people – meeting them, talking to them, and interacting with them. Please feel free to come to our service at 8:45 any Sunday morning.

## **A ONE HUNDREDTH BIRTHDAY:**

Our oldest member, Vella Wyatt Parsons, was honored at a birthday party to celebrate her one hundredth year. It was given by her children and was held in our Fellowship Hall. Vella looked lovely and seemed to enjoy greeting the large number who attended.

## **CHARGE CONFERENCE AT PINEY CREEK:**

Our annual Charge Conference to approve paperwork for the upcoming year was held at Piney Creek in November. It was actually a pleasant time. There was a good turnout, nice refreshments, and everyone enjoyed visiting with people from our fellow churches.

**PASTOR'S CORNER:***A Curious Pause*

To me, the time following the start of the new year always seems to mark a pause in the rush of our annual dash through time. The Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year season is over. For most of us the Christmas decorations are put away, we've begun to lose our extra holiday weight, and we have enjoyed at least a little well-deserved rest. The celebration of our Lord's resurrection is not yet upon us, along with

all the excitement of spring activities, and getting ready for school's finish and a busy summer. Although some of us will be working hard all the way through, the cold, sometimes snowy weather drives the rest of us inside to "hibernate."

During this pause in our busy year we celebrate the blessing of something that gives all of it meaning – love. We remember our love for one another on Valentine's Day. I think it is definitely worthwhile to pause for such a reason. After all, love is what draws us together, motivates us to give freely, and sometimes makes us giddy with joy. Love brings flavor to life that makes it a vibrant thing. It is hard to think of someone who loves us without smiling at least a little on the inside.

Yes, we really should pause for something so special.

Another part of this pause is the start of the season we Christians call "Lent." Lent is a different kind of pause, though. We pause to consider our relationship

to the one who died for our sins. We reflect on our own responsibility for what we have done that is displeasing to our God. We do not pause this way to beat ourselves up or feel bad. We take this opportunity to turn from our sins and to renew our commitment to the one who loved us enough to go to the cross on our behalf. Lent, after all, is also about love – God's love. His love motivated him to give his son freely in order to draw us closer to himself. He wants us to know the joy of his salvation and peace in our relationship to him.

This, too, is something to give us pause.

Let me encourage you each to take some time to pause over the next month or so. As you do so, think a moment about each of those people whom you love and those people who love you. Thank God for each of them and pray for them.

Then take a few moments to consider how God has shown you his love. He loves us greatly – so much more than we often recognize. If you are one who likes to do such things, perhaps you might write him a Valentine's Day card or a note of thanks. If nothing else, pause to thank him for his great love for you.

And then see if you can encourage someone else to do the same.

"Let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds" – Hebrews 10:24

It's time to pause!

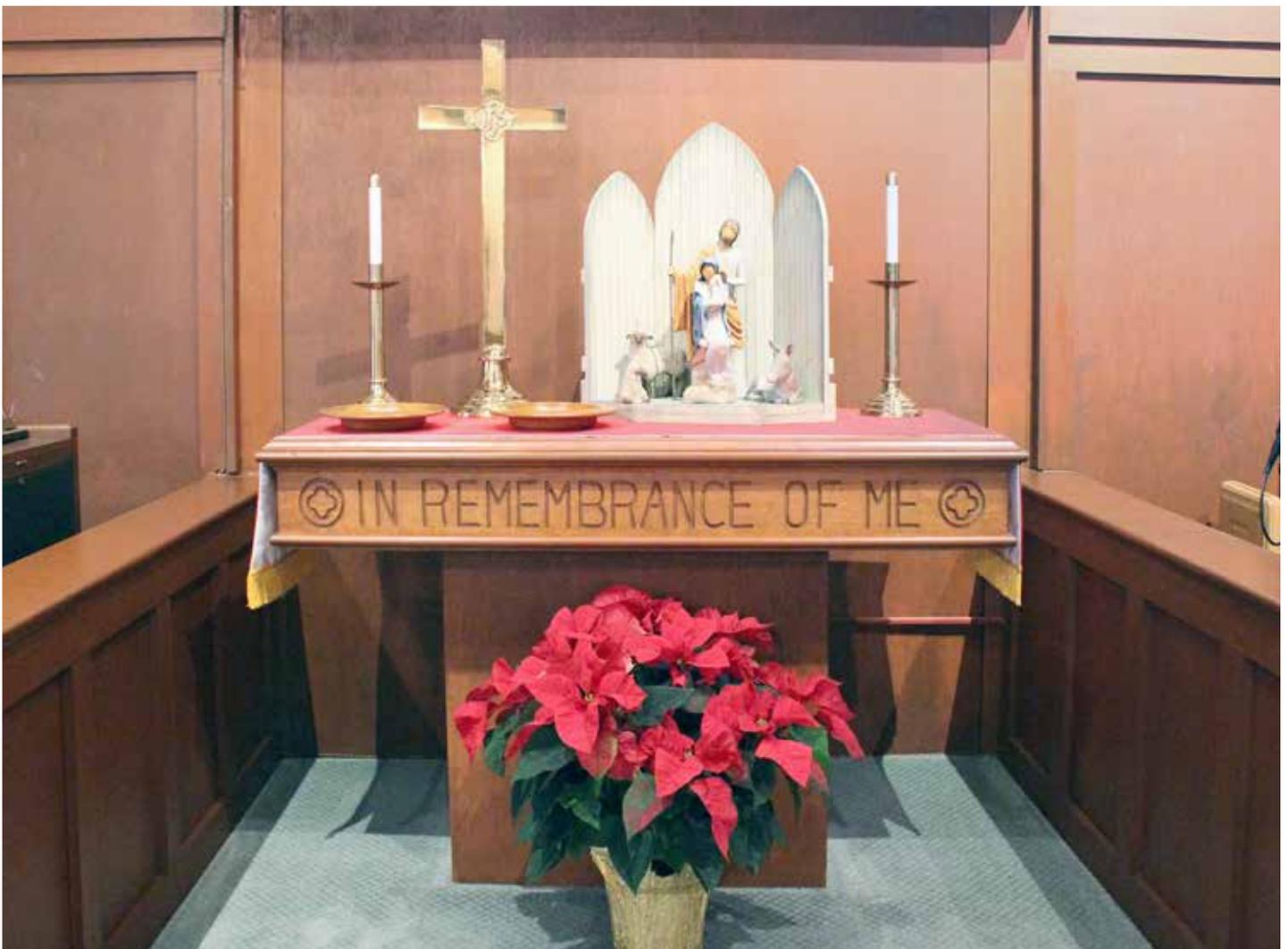
In Christ,  
Pastor Jack

Office Hours: Tuesday 9:00 to 12:00 at PCUMC  
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**CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES:***Decorating the Church:*

One of the highlights of Christmas is our annual evening spent decorating the church followed by a meal of homemade soups, chili, and grilled cheese sandwiches. As seen from the pictures, the men decorated the tree and did a beautiful job. The ladies arranged the greenery, made bows, wrapped gift boxes, and prepared the food. Watch the Fall newsletter for the date for this event in 2016 and come join us.



*Chargewide Advent Service on the Fifth Sunday:*

The first Sunday of Advent fell on the fifth Sunday of November so Pastor Jack held a Chargewide service at Piney Creek. It was an inspirational service made up of scripture reading, prayer, a homily, and absolutely awesome singing by Jack and his lovely wife, Jacqueline. The other thing that made it special was having the members of Cox Chapel and Shiloh join us.

*County wide Advent Service at Sparta:*

Pastor Jack led one of the Advent services held at Sparta Methodist Church, and our Charge served the lunch of soups, sandwiches, and desserts. It was a real pleasure working with the members from the other two churches.

*Visiting the Shut-ins:*

On a brisk Saturday afternoon in December our ladies delivered gift boxes filled with holiday goodies to fifteen families. Doing this gave us pleasure and filled us with Christmas spirit.

*Gifts for Students:*

Our UMW ladies helped three students in Piney Creek School and their families have a happy Christmas by fulfilling their Christmas wish lists. We felt blessed by being able to do this.

*Christmas Eve Service:*

The highlight of our Christmas season, as it always is for all of us who attend, was the Christmas Eve Service held at 10:00 p.m. We join together with Mt. Zion for this special time, and the service was well attended by members of both of these churches and by others. Please consider joining us next year for this time of worship, music, and fellowship.

**OTHER COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES:***Character Ed Breakfast at Piney Creek School:*

Each year our UMW ladies participate in the Positive Pioneer Program at Piney Creek Elementary School. Each month students are recognized for exhibiting the character trait selected for the month. Part of their recognition is to be served breakfast at school. This year we have the month of April and the character trait is courage.



Other things we do in the community are tutoring, coaching athletics, and providing meals for the sick and the bereaved. And, additionally, our Charge takes the month of April to staff the Food Closet.

Thankful for all the volunteer work accomplished: For such a small church we have people, both men and women, willing to volunteer to do any needed tasks whether it is for the community or our church. Our people are willing to cook our fund-raising breakfasts, to deliver food, to shop for and set up a storage building, to put up shelves etc. Since we have people who voluntarily share their skills, we are able to accomplish more with what we have.

**DEATH OF A MEMBER:**

One of our dear and much loved members, Sue Griffith Bledsoe, passed away August 26, 2015. She will be dearly missed by all of us.

We are extremely grateful to the family for requesting memorials be made to our church and are very thankful to those of you who honored their request.





**KITCHEN REMODELING:**

As mentioned in the last newsletter, the kitchen remodeling is completed, and we love it! By removing the storage room wall between the two spaces, the kitchen has doubled in size. Our goal was to have two complete work stations and now we do. We have space to actually turn around without bumping into each other. We initiated the new space at the Decoration breakfast. There were times when we did not think it would be finished for Decoration, but due to the great planning and organization of David Caldwell and his men, we were able to use it.



As part of this project, we purchased a storage building to hold some of the things from the storage room, and we are currently planning to construct a storage wall in one of the Sunday School rooms for the things that need to remain inside. Everything is not back in place yet, but it will be soon.



**MARCH BREAKFAST:**

Our annual end-of-winter breakfast is March 19th from 8:00 a.m. until 10:00 a.m. We will have our traditional meal of country ham, tenderloin, scrambled eggs, sausage gravy, biscuits, grits, hashbrown casseroles, apples, sweet rolls, jelly, juices, and coffee. Please remember it is donations only. We hope to see you then!

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