



Mountain Messenger

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

MCCONNELL BAPTIST CHURCH | APRIL 2023

EASTER SERVICES

The Friday before Easter is called **Good Friday**. It is a day to reflect and commemorate Jesus' willing sacrifice and terrible suffering on the cross to bear the fury of God's wrath and remove the guilt of our sins from us. Join our pastors on **Friday, April 7th, at 6 pm** in the Worship Center for this special service with the Lord's Supper.

On **Easter Sunday morning, April 9th, at 7:00 am**, celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ with our community at the annual **Sunrise Service** at Hamilton Gardens. This early morning, outdoor service will be hosted by Hiawassee United Methodist Church with the message by Rev. Fred Whitley. This is a great way to start this Easter Sunday! Come enjoy uplifting music and an encouraging word as we praise & honor Him! A love offering will be taken and all proceeds will be donated to a local charity serving this community.

Following the sunrise service, McConnell will continue the celebration at the **10:15 am morning service**. The choir & band, under the direction of Chris Adams, will present special music.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

Church Events

- **Apr 2—Senior Over 60 Breakfast, 8:00 am, FLC**
- **Apr 4—Alzheimer's & Dementia Support Group, 1:30 pm, FLC-219**
- **Apr 5—Spring Break, No services or activities on Wednesday evening.**
- **Apr 7—Good Friday Service, 6:00 pm, Worship Ctr.**
- **Apr 9—Sunrise Service, 7:00 am, Hamilton Gardens**
- **Apr 11—Blood Drive 1:00 pm, FLC**
- **Apr 16—First Steps Class, 11:45 am, The Lodge**
- **Apr 18—Thrive Moms, 6:00 pm, The Lodge**
- **Apr 23—Men's Ministry, 6:00 pm, The Lodge**
- **Apr 28—Mountain Community Chorus Concert, 7:00 pm, Worship Center**
- **Apr 29—Mountain Community Chorus Concert, 3:00 pm, Worship Ctr**
- **Apr 30—Family Worship Service, 10:45 am, Worship Ctr**

Church Vans *by Pastor Jeremy Pearson*

We are excited to announce that our church has recently purchased two new Ford Transit High Roof vans to help us better serve our members and community. These vans are spacious, versatile, and reliable vehicles that are perfectly suited for our needs. With their high roofs, they offer ample headroom, making it easy for passengers to get in and out comfortably. They are also equipped with advanced safety features to ensure the safety of our passengers and drivers.

These vans will be used for a variety of ministry purposes, including transportation for our youth and Senior adults, delivering food and supplies to those in need, and other outreach efforts. We are grateful for the generous donations and support from our members, which made it possible to purchase these vehicles. We are confident that these vans will be a great asset to our church community, allowing us to expand our ministry outreach efforts and better serve those in need. We look forward to the opportunities that these vans will bring and are excited to see the positive impact they will have on our church and our community.

We are also happy to announce that the two old vans were donated to Camp Hosanna, right here in Hiawassee. This gospel-centered summer camp is completely free for children & youth and we are delighted to support their mission in this way.

We also want to thank our volunteers who will be driving and maintaining these vans. Your dedication and commitment to serving others are greatly appreciated. Van drivers must be on the church's approved driver's list so please contact the church office for more information on becoming an approved driver. We are truly blessed to have such a wonderful church family.

First Steps Class

If you are new to the church or want information on joining the church, please join Pastor Steve & Pastor Danny as they share information about McConnell, who we are and our vision. We meet in The Lodge immediately following the morning worship service on **April 16th**. A light lunch will be served. This class is a prerequisite for joining the church. Please call the church office to register.

Give blood. Help save lives.

There is a continual need for blood & blood products in our nation. To help meet this need, McConnell Church will host a Red Cross Blood Drive on Tuesday, April 11th, from 1 pm - 6 pm in the Family Life Center. This drive is open for scheduling now at:

www.redcrossblood.org/

Just enter our zip code, 30546, and then click on the blood drive at McConnell Baptist Church.

Welcome



Starr Bogle



Tom & Sharon
Harmon

Mission Team—Honduras

Please pray for these leaders & students as they minister to the people of Honduras on their Spring Break:

*Jeremy Pearson, Joseph Pope, Reace Hampton,
Andrew Brinson, Brittany Cabrera, Bella Rose
Childs, AJ Edwards, Annessa Guyette, & Elisha
Labagh*



Steve Awtry
Associate Pastor
Children & Discipleship

Are you a counterfeit Christian?

Throughout my life, one thing I've found to be true is that most of the people I've shared the gospel with believe they're going to heaven. This is not because they have turned from their sin and placed their faith and trust in Jesus Christ. The reason is because of their works or good deeds. They take their works and place them on a scale and believe their good far outweighs their bad. They keep eight or nine of the ten commandments most of the time, so surely they must be going to heaven when they die. They are in church at least 3 out of every 4 weeks, give 10% of their money to the church and even bow their heads and pray before they eat. In fact, deep down, they believe a good, loving God would never allow someone like them to spend eternity in hell, right?

You might ask how do I know this to be true? The reason I know this is because I used to be one of these people who believed this way. I was at church every Sunday and Wednesday. I knew most of the popular Bible stories. I was even able to go knock on someone's door and explain the gospel as good as anyone my age. So, what does this mean? It means I had religion but not a relationship. I was a **counterfeit Christian**. I looked, talked and acted like a follower of Jesus Christ. People that knew me would have said, there goes a devoted follower of Jesus, but there was no relationship, and I was as lost as last year's Easter Egg. In fact, my own mother was shocked when

she found out that I had committed my life to Christ on a youth mission trip. I had fooled everyone, except myself and God.

The Bible says in **Ephesians 2:8-9** that we are actually saved, not by works but by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. We can't boast or brag about anything we've done because it has nothing to do with us. In fact, it's all about what Jesus Christ did for us on the cross!

Romans 3:23 tells us that we've all sinned and fallen short of God's glory. We've all blown it, and no matter how hard we try, we can never do enough to restore our broken relationship with Christ. **Romans 6:23** tells us that the wages or cost of our sin is literally death, but His gift to us is eternal life in Jesus Christ.

So, I have a couple of questions for you. **Are you a counterfeit Christian like I was? Do you have religion instead of a relationship?** Only you know if you have truly committed your life to Jesus Christ or you're just playing the game. I pray right now the Holy Spirit speaks to your heart and reveals the true nature of your heart. If you only have religion, then bow your head right where you are and **Admit** you're a sinner, **Believe** that Jesus is Lord and died on the cross for your sins, and lastly, **Commit** your to life to Jesus and ask Him to forgive your sins and save you. I promise you this will be the greatest decision you'll ever make! Please let me or someone know if you prayed that prayer or have any questions about what it means to have a relationship with Jesus Christ! We would love to talk with you!

Remember it's not about religion, it's all about a relationship!

Steve A.



Vacation Bible School
June 19th through June 23rd
Registration opens on April 2nd. Check
your Sunday Bulletins for more info.

SERVANTS IN MINISTRY

April 2

Welcome Desk - N. Dearborn, C. Nitzsche
Cart Drivers - Captain - G. Wright
S. Casey, B. Grimsley, B. Westberry
PEAK Kids - L. Williams
PEAK Jr - P. Estrada, M. Adams

April 9 (Easter)

Welcome Desk - K. Long
Cart Drivers - Captain - D. Rabon
G. Denton, D. Willrich, G. Osborne
PEAK Kids - TBD
PEAK Jr - V. Awtrey, A. Awtrey

April 16

Welcome Desk - C. & R. Larson
Cart Drivers - Captain - J. Nichols
C. Nicholson, T. Folmar, D. Rudder
PEAK Kids - E. Blair
PEAK Jr - C. Chastain, D. Armstrong

April 23

Welcome Desk - J. McConnell, D. Harrison
Cart Drivers - Captain - D. Rabon
J. Hyatt, R. Parker, W. Benson
PEAK Kids - N. Altman
PEAK Jr - S. Dyer, G. Wilson

April 30

Welcome Desk - L. Shook, M. Stickeler
Cart Drivers - Captain - P. Anderson
W. Nelson, B. Cone, D. Rabon
PEAK Kids - Family Worship Sunday
PEAK Jr - TBD

Sympathy to

Libby Dayton & Suzanne Moore, at the death of their mother, Mattie Hall.

Allen Saylor & Sybil Davis, at the death of Allen's son & Sybil's nephew, Travis Saylor.

Theresa & Gary Fowler, at the death of Theresa's brother, Mike Dowda.

Amy Markham & family, at the death of Amy's Grandfather, John Willis Cochran.

Anne Wilburn & family, at the death of her husband, Sam Wilburn.

Mountain Community Chorus Concerts at McConnell

by Wayne Hundley, President of the Chorus

Friday, April 28th at 7 pm & Saturday, April 29th at 3 pm

Mountain Community Chorus, Inc., established in 1974, is now about 70 singers who love to make music and who live in north Georgia and western North Carolina, directed by Terry Hooper, assisted by Laura Stookesbury.

The concert theme this Spring, *"Let my Spirit Sing!"* reveals a wide variety of powerful & enjoyable styles from Classic to Black Spiritual, from soft & serene to Broadway.

The concerts are free and open for everyone to enjoy. Small or generous donations are truly appreciated and are also tax deductible. Both concerts are in our Worship Center so mark your calendar, bring some guests and *"Let my Spirit Sing!"*.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, May 7

Senior Over 60 Breakfast

Thursday, May 11

Preschool Graduation

Tuesday, May 16

Thrive Moms (offsite)

Thursday, May 18

Awana Banquet & Awards

Sunday, May 21 (note date change)

Men's Ministry (offsite)

Monday, May 22

Deacon Meeting