

**The Heavenly Gaze**

*“While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven...”* Acts 1:10a (NRSV)

There is a stark difference between “looking” at something and “gazing” upon something.

- One might look left or right to see if any traffic is oncoming before pulling out onto the highway...  
 ...but gaze upon the beautiful sportscar you’ve dreamed of having your whole life.
- One might look at a sonogram of a pregnancy nearing an expected birth...  
 ...but a mother will gaze upon the beauty and miracle of a healthy newborn baby.
- One might look at a brochure for a luxury island vacation resort...  
 ...but one can gaze upon the endlessness of the sea for hours on end.
- A groom might look at a catalog of wedding dresses with his fiancé...  
 ...but he will gaze upon her beauty as she walks down the aisle on their wedding day.

So, in this same manner, one might look at the pages of the Bible to learn the stories of Jesus, but what are we “gazing upon” spiritually? Where can we find ourselves enraptured by the splendor and glory of God in a world where all the descriptions of these glorious events of old are simply in black and white in the pages of our beloved Bible?

It is easy for us to envy the disciples’ experiences in these moments. We wish we could be there to see the magnificent things. They had already been witness to some pretty incredible sights. For the last 40 days or so they had multiple encounters with Jesus who had been crucified, buried, and was now alive and teaching and leading them once again. This moment at which Jesus ascends into heaven had to be an unforgettable and emotional moment. No wonder the disciples weren’t simply “looking at” Jesus moving skyward. We would have been right there beside them, “gazing up toward heaven.”

In our daily life, it can be difficult to find a way to “gaze upon” the beauty, majesty, love, and grace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We find ourselves more often stuck with our eyes “looking” at the problems or difficulties of the day rather than finding time to focus a spiritual “gaze” upon the wonder and glory of God.

Join me today as we attempt to carve out a few minutes to look upon the awe and glory of our risen Lord. Engaging with our faith is not only about education, but also inspiration. Perhaps we need to learn nothing today, but maybe we might come before the Lord to “gaze up toward heaven” and let ourselves experience God’s mighty love.

In Christ,



**OUR CHURCH STAFF**

Children’s Ministry Director .....Lindsey Fossa  
 Choir Director.....Lyn Pharris  
 Church Administrator ..... Susan Snider  
 Contemporary Music Director ..... Kayla Moss  
 Custodians .....Martha Conklin & Barbie Webb  
 Interim Youth Minister.....Kristii Daniel  
 Media & Communications .....Dawn Wilson  
 Music Director .....Bob Lee  
 Nursery Worker..... Martha Conklin  
 Pastor.....Tony G. Crosby

The sanctuary flowers are given to  
 the glory of God and in honor of all mothers  
 and in memory of Mary Conklin  
 by the Conklins.

**CONTACT US**

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 Church Office (706) 322-6973  
 www.epworthumc.com

**THIS COMING WEEK & BEYOND**

**Sunday, May 13**

10:00 a.m. Mother’s Day Pastry Breakfast  
 4:00 p.m. Confirmation Class

**Monday, May 14**

6:30 p.m. New Life UMW Meeting

**Tuesday, May 15**

10:00 a.m. Fellowship Hall Reserved  
 6:30 p.m. AA Group Meeting  
 6:30 p.m. Youth Meeting

**Wednesday, May 16**

6:00 p.m. Greeter & Usher Training  
 6:00 p.m. Worship Team Rehearsal

7:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

**Thursday, May 17**

12:00 noon Prayer Team Meeting

**Sunday, May 20**

Confirmation Sunday (11:00 service only)  
 9:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship  
 10:00 a.m. Sunday School  
 11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship  
 12:00 noon VBS & Safe Sanctuary Meeting

**Monday, May 21**

6:30 p.m. Growing Christians UMW Meeting  
 7:00 p.m. Fellowship Hall Reserved

## SUNDAY SCHOOL AT 10:00 AM

### **The Children's Class**

Kindergarten - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade: Margaret Gosden

### **The Youth Class**

6<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> Grade: Kristii Daniel

### **The Friendship Class**

Study: No Class

Teacher: None

### **The Genesis Class**

Study: Have You Ever Seen a Hearse...

Teacher: Leslie Morris

### **The Joy Class**

Study: O' Say Can You See?

Teacher: Class

### **The Nathan Patterson/Wesley Class**

Study: Genesis 19

Teacher: Bobby Smith

### **The New Connections Class**

Study: 40 Days of Community

Teacher: Doug Franks

### **The Pathfinders Class**

Study: Wired Word

Teacher: Suzy Revell

### **The Questors Class**

Study: Class Discussion

Teacher: Class

### **The Seekers Class**

Study: Wired Word

Teacher: Lillian Wooldridge

## PASTORAL COUNSELING

Our church partners with The Pastoral Institute to offer counseling for individuals and families at deep discounts. Call the church for more information or give our church name when scheduling an appointment at 706-649-6500. Hours are Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m. - 9 p.m., Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

## MEMORIAM

Tree of Life leaf in memory of Annette Tate by Patsy & John Redmond and Susan & Larry Harden.

## THOSE WHO SERVE

### MAY 13, 2018

### **9:00 a.m. Worship Service**

Greeter: Barbara Stubbs

Usher: Randy Morris

Acolyte: Usher

Children's Church: Lindsey Fossa

### **11:00 a.m. Worship Service**

Greeter: Lillian Wooldridge

Ushers: James Faircloth, Steve Whittington

Acolyte: Ema Cherai, Emma Knight

Children's Church: Janet Cherai

Nursery Volunteer: Lindsey Fossa

Financial Secretary: Shawn Jandreau

Turn Key: John Daniel

## OUR STEWARDSHIP

May 6, 2018

Tithes & Offerings:	\$10,636.20
Received To Date:	\$96,293.19
Needed To Date:	\$114,225.84
Building Fund:	\$400.00

### **ATTENDANCE:**

Sunday School	87
Worship: 9 a.m.	48
Worship: 11 a.m.	75
	123

## CHILDREN & YOUTH

### **Youth & Children Sunday School Classes -**

For a great lesson and wonderful fellowship in a Safe Sanctuaries approved environment, classes are by age/grade beginning at 10 a.m.

### **Confirmation Class - Saturday, May 12,**

10:00 a.m. and Sunday, May 13, at 4:00 p.m., in the youth room.

### **Youth Meeting - Tuesday, May 15, at**

6:30 p.m., in the youth room.

### **Confirmation Sunday - May 20, at the**

11:00 a.m. service.

## MISSIONS

**May Mission Focus** - The Mission Committee is asking for monetary donations to support the 2018 youth mission trip to Indianapolis, IN. Mark your offering envelope "youth missions."

**The League of the Good Samaritan** - Sunday, May 13, we are collecting donations for Magnolia Manor. You may give in honor or memory of a special woman in your life. For more info, see the insert in this Sunday's bulletin or [www.magnoliamanor.com](http://www.magnoliamanor.com) to make a donation online. If you are interested in volunteering at the Columbus campus, contact Theresa Mullican.

**Tree of Life Memorial** - Memorials can be made for members of the Epworth UM or Hamp Stevens UM churches. Fill out a form and return it with your gift made out to Epworth UMC. The minimum donation for an engraved leaf is \$50. Forms are in the information rack in the foyer or on our website.

**Bench Project from Recycled Plastic** - Collect clean and free-of-metal caps and lids to obtain a bench for the playground. We are now collecting to make a second park bench. Place them in the container on the Mission Cart or in the kitchen. Thanks to all who participated.

**Epworth Volunteers Needed** - Positions available: Greeters. Turn Key, Usher, Nursery helper, Children's Sunday School teacher, Children's Church teacher. If you feel led to volunteer, please contact the church office for more information. We will help you find your talent and add you to the schedule.

**Epworth To-Do List** - The Trustees have a list of projects needing attention posted on the information board. If you are interested or have the needed skills, contact John Daniel.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

**Social Second Sundays** - People of all ages are on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and more. We encourage everyone to share something from church, a ministry you participate in or any church activity today. Let's let our friends and family know that we are excited about what God is doing at Epworth in us and through us.

**Upper Room Devotionals** - May/June issue is available in the welcome center. Price as noted.

**Mother's Day Breakfast** - Pastries will be served Sunday, May 13, at 10 a.m. All mothers are invited. Sponsored by the children.

**New Life UMW Meeting** - Monday, May 14, as early as 4:00 p.m., at Theresa Mullican's river house. We will have a hot dog supper at 6:00 p.m. Carpool available and for directions, call Theresa.

**Greeter & Usher Training** - Wednesday, May 16, at 6 p.m. We will be conducting an updated greeter and usher training. Supper will be provided. Please RSVP to the church office.

**VBS Volunteer & Safe Sanctuary Meeting** - Sunday, May 20, following the 11:00 service. Please join us to discuss VBS plans and annual Safe Sanctuary training. Lunch provided.

**Fellowship Hall Reserved** - Monday evening, May 21, through Tuesday, May 22, for a community elections site.

**Growing Christians UMW Meeting** - Tuesday, May 21, at 6:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall.

**Graduate Breakfast** - Sunday, May 27, at 8:00 a.m., in the fellowship hall. All graduates and their families are invited. Please RSVP by calling the church office. Sponsored by the UMM.

