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# MAPLE SPRINGS LIFE



## From the Pastor's Desk

### Volume 2024 Issue 11

November 2024

In November our thoughts often go to thanksgiving. Certainly our American holiday of thanksgiving is on our minds. I love thanksgiving; it is my favorite holiday. We have many things to be thankful for at Maple Springs. Sometimes we just hear numbers in terms of the budget – the dollars and cents of operating. If we stop there we can sometimes forget about the many wonderful things happening in the life of our church which we have to be thankful for.

You've likely heard the expression, the numbers don't lie. Here is a sampling of some numbers we experience at Maple Springs. At Vacation Bible School we had 75 children participate. On a typical Sunday afternoon 22 children are active in DIRT, the children's ministry opportunity. The youth program is growing again and we had 7 youth go through confirmation and join the church this past year. We have also welcomed 38 new members during the past 12 months! Additionally 12 children and youth participated in "On the Move" mission camp this summer, as well as others who participated in the youth retreats.



We also tried something new this year with a "back to school bash." On a hot Saturday morning in August we served over 100 children from the community with a fun day where they could also get the necessary school supplies to help them start the new school year. We are reaching our neighbors in a variety of ways – the numbers don't lie, as the expression goes.



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There are other numbers that we need to be reminded of as well. We had 18 participants go on the Henderson Settlement mission trip in September. We are now also the host church for the 3 UMAR houses with residents worshipping with us on a regular basis - sometimes as many as 15 who join us at the 11:00 service. Additionally, the UMAR Sunday School class is also being held with 4 Wake Forest students assisting those with exceptional needs. We are building bridges and fostering relationships.

In February and then again in October we had "connection" groups ranging from book/Bible study to small groups studying the United Methodist Social Principles, to painting, to hiking, yoga and more. The numbers don't lie, as the expression goes.

More numbers – we collected and delivered to our storm ravaged neighbors nearly 300 flood buckets. Over 100 of those buckets you donated. Maple Springs was one of the collection points for our district so the other buckets we delivered came from other area churches. Additionally, you donated over \$20,000.00 to go directly to storm relief from Hurricane Helene! These are numbers to celebrate as we continue to reach out to our neighbors in powerful ways.

Our food pantry continues to serve more and more of our neighbors. We are on pace to serve well over 10,000 of our neighbors this year. The numbers and the need are staggering. (See a separate article from Bill Blackburn about the food pantry). Serving this many people takes people! We regularly have between 30 – 40 volunteers serving in the pantry. It takes a minimum of 16 per week just to make it happen. What a wonderful ministry this is.

And of course, we are known in the area as the pumpkin church. We



have just completed our 46<sup>th</sup> year of selling pumpkins. This year our net income was just over \$17,000.00, which is money that is put right back into helping fund our many mission opportunities.

To make all of this – and much more happen since I just hit the highlights – it takes other numbers. It takes our financial support. This year our giving is up over last year. Thank you! But our expenses have outpaced our giving. In 2024 our operating budget was \$856,000.00. We are on target to meet that budget and to meet all our financial responsibilities. However, we have had several major unplanned expenses in addition to the usual ongoing expenses. Unfortunately, an unplanned roof repair project alone was in excess of \$70,000.00. Other operating expenses continue to increase as well. But thankfully, due to your generosity, we have managed to not only keep up, but fund these repairs and the vital lifegiving ministries that make us the church that we are.

We have much to be thankful for. Let's not forget that in this season of thanksgiving and this season of planning financially for next year. We want to continue to invest in our staff that makes these wonderful ministries happen day in and day out, week in and week out. No, the numbers don't lie.

Thank you for your continued support, your financial gifts, your presence in worship, either in person or online, and other activities. Thank you for taking seriously the words we say when we join the church, that we will “faithfully participate in (the) ministries by our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness.”

We are a wonderful witness to the love of Christ in our community and beyond. For that I give thanks.

Blessings,

Pastor Gary

You should have received an envelope from Maple Springs in the mail containing 2025 Stewardship information. Additional envelopes are available at church if you need one. Please prayerfully fill out your pledge card and return it to the church by Sunday, November 17. You may place your card in the offering plate during the worship services or return it to the church office. You can also click [HERE](#) (if you are viewing this online) or scan the QR code to submit your pledge online.



Our goal is to finalize the church budget by November 19. By returning your pledge card by November 17, we will have a realistic picture of what we can expect for 2025.

## Just 2 Degrees - November Summary

# Just 2°

By adjusting our thermostat by **Just 2 Degrees**, we can align our daily lives with the [United Methodist Social Principles](#). (<https://www.umcjustice.org/documents/124>) This simple act of stewardship, social justice, simplicity and community witness can have far-reaching effects on our church, our city, our world and our electricity bills. Let us remember that even small changes, when made collectively, can lead to significant positive outcomes. As we strive to live out our faith in practical ways, let us continue to take this step together, demonstrating our commitment to caring for God's creation and for one another as we move into winter!



JOIN US FOR

# FRIENDSGIVING

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24TH  
5:30 PM

JOIN US AND BRING YOUR  
FAVORITE DISH TO SHARE  
FOR A POTLUCK DINNER  
AND AN EVENING  
FOCUSING ON ALL WE  
HAVE TO BE THANKFUL  
FOR!



LET US KNOW YOU'RE COMING!



**October 6, 1774. I met those of our society who had votes in the ensuing election, and advised them (1) to vote, without fee or reward, for the person they judged most worthy; (2) to speak no evil of the person they voted against; and (3) to take care their spirits were not sharpened against those that voted on the other side. John Wesley**

## UNITED METHODIST VOTE FOR THE COMMON GOOD

The Social Principles are the official social positions of The United Methodist Church sanctioned and adopted by The United Methodist General Conference, Charlotte 2024. As we consider and discern our voting decisions this election see how important issues align with our social principles.

**“ Social Principles p.32:** *Our involvement in political systems is rooted in the Gospel imperative to love our neighbors, to do justice, and to care for the vulnerable. As United Methodists, we acknowledge that love requires responsible political action and engagement aimed at the betterment of society and the promotion of the common good.*

Political issues are complex; there are no easy answers and no perfect candidates. The gospel challenges us to set aside partisan presuppositions and pray for wisdom to use our sacred vote as best we can towards the common good. We will not all agree on the best ways to better society, but we can all commit to vote as disciples of Jesus Christ, guided by love for God and neighbor.

### CREATION CARE



### COMMON GOOD

**Social Principles p.9:** *We affirm our sacred calling to be responsible stewards and to lovingly tend all that God has wrought. We confess that the degradation and wholesale destruction of the natural environment threatens unprecedented harm, bringing danger to human and nonhuman life alike.*

**As you pray about your vote, will you consider our sacred responsibility to**

- ☐ work to stop pollution, ensure clean water and air for all, and be responsible stewards of natural resources into the future
- ☐ relieve suffering caused by environmental degradation
- ☐ protect the natural environment and respect the interconnectedness of life

### ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY



### COMMON GOOD

**Social Principles p.15:** *In our financial dealings and relationships no less than other aspects of discipleship, we are compelled to serve God and neighbor in all we do. We pledge ourselves to the establishment of just, equitable, and sustainable economies that work for all.*

**As you pray about your vote, will you consider our sacred responsibility to**

- ☐ ensure that all workers have the opportunity to earn a living wage
- ☐ reduce the gap between rich and poor
- ☐ address overconsumption, sustainable practices, and their global implications
- ☐ honor the needs of urban, suburban, and rural communities, and invest in quality education for all



ALL ARE  
SACRED



COMMON  
GOOD

**Social Principles p.29:** We utterly reject laws, policies and social practices that marginalize, discriminate and/or encourage the use of violence against individuals, communities or other social groups based on perceived racial, ethnic or tribal differences.

**Social Principles p. 38:** We affirm the dignity, worth and rights of migrants, immigrants and refugees, including displaced and stateless people. We oppose all laws and policies that attempt to criminalize, dehumanize or punish displaced individuals and families based on their status as migrants, immigrants or refugees.

**Social Principles p.39:** Because all people are of sacred worth and certain basic human rights are due to everyone, we are committed to supporting the equal rights, liberties and protections of all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

**As you pray about your vote, will you consider our sacred responsibility to**

- ☐ protect the civic rights of all, including freedom of speech, religion, movement, due process and fair treatment under the law
- ☐ protect the political rights of all, including voting rights
- ☐ address and dismantle systemic racism, in all its forms
- ☐ prioritize humanitarian concerns in domestic and foreign policy

AFFORDABLE  
HEALTH CARE  
& SAFE LIVING  
CONDITIONS  
FOR ALL



COMMON  
GOOD

**Social Principles p.36:** We affirm health care as a basic human right and vow to work toward expanded access to all forms of medical treatment, including preventative, therapeutic, and palliative care. Additionally, we believe that everyone has a right to decent living conditions, including adequate food and water, safe housing and a healthy environment.

**As you pray about your vote, will you consider our sacred responsibility to**

- ☐ protect and expand access to affordable health care, including prescription medications
- ☐ protect and expand access to affordable mental health services
- ☐ strengthen food assistance programs and address needs for safe, affordable housing
- ☐ enact reasonable gun safety laws and invest in community services to prevent violence

UNITED METHODIST VOTE FOR THE COMMON GOOD



***The church will never endorse a particular political candidate or tell you who to vote for. But we urge you to take seriously your right to vote and make prayerful decisions accordingly.***

## Sermons and Scripture for November

Maple Springs Life

<p><u>November 3</u></p> <p>“For All the Saints”</p> <p>John 11: 28-44</p>	<p><u>November 10</u></p> <p>“Remain Calm and Follow Jesus”</p> <p>Mark 13: 1-8</p>
<p><u>November 17</u></p> <p>“In Truth and Action”</p> <p>1 John 3: 14-18</p> <p>Luke 10: 25-37</p>	<p><u>November 24</u></p> <p>Message by Haley Givens from Wake Forest Wesley</p>

## Charge Conference



**A Charge Conference will be held on Sunday, November 17,  
at 6:30pm in the Cokesbury Room.**



**MAPLE SPRINGS**  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## Chancel Choir Christmas Cantata

Please join us in the choir to sing "Noel: A Celebration of the Nativity" at the 11:00am Worship Service on December 22! Rehearsals will be on Wednesdays starting November 13 from 7:00-8:15pm in the Sanctuary. (No rehearsal on November 27.) Dress rehearsal will be Saturday, December 21 from 11:00am-1:00pm. Please email Heather Schenck at [heather@maplesprings.org](mailto:heather@maplesprings.org) and let her know that you'll be singing with us! All are welcome.!







On October 11, ten members of Maple Springs traveled to the Well of Mercy in Hamptonville, NC for a time of spiritual renewal. This small group experience, Radical Rest, was led by Pastor Gary and Ruth Getz. It was a simple day away from the noise of everyday life. Plans are underway to offer this meaningful experience again next year.

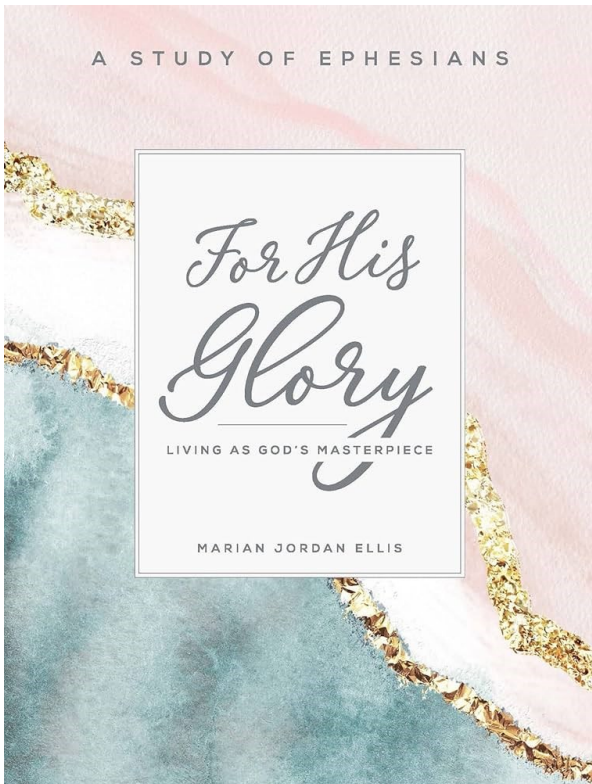




We are really enjoying our time with the three UMAR homes on Sunday mornings during the Sunday school hour. We have named ourselves the “Inspiration Class” and the participants of the class are exactly that – inspirational, joy-filled, story-tellers, and imaginative! While we have a wonderful and gifted lead teacher and WFU students in developmental psychology who assist the participants of the class, we need some additional leadership from our church family. If this aligns with you and your gifts, would you consider rotating as a substitute teacher for the class? If you are interested and inspired to find out more information, please reach out to Erin Moses at [erin@maplesprings.org](mailto:erin@maplesprings.org). Thank you for your prayerful consideration!







The Tuesday morning ladies' study group continues to study *For His Glory*, a video series by Marian Jordan Ellis. This in-depth study of Ephesians helps us to dismantle the lies we've believed about ourselves and to replace them with a new identity built on God's word. Marian invites us on a journey to discover our true worth in Christ, as our status as beloved children of God, and our glorious calling as His masterpiece. This study will conclude on November 12. We will enjoy a social time on November 19, and we will not meet on November 26. All ages of women are invited to join us at 9:30am in the Women's Bible Study room. Please contact SueEllen Thomas at [sthomasrn@hotmail.com](mailto:sthomasrn@hotmail.com) for more info.

## Pat Rothrock Circle

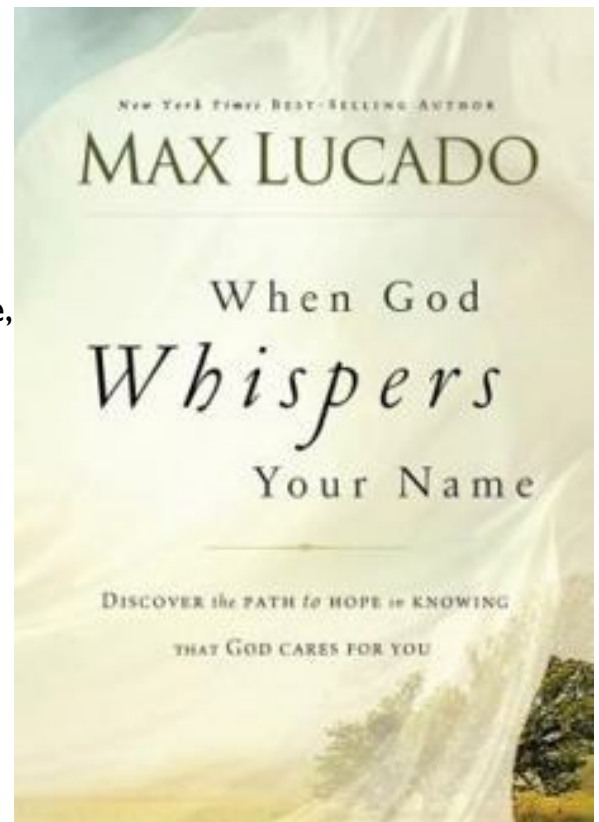
Are you interested in discovering the path to hope in knowing that God cares for you?

Join us in studying *When God Whispers Your Name* by Max Lucado.

Become a part of a caring group that explores scripture, prays for the expressed needs of others, and supports the mission of the church and our senior friends.

We meet the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 9:30am in the Church Parlor.

Are you ready to hope? Is God whispering your name? Contact Pat Craver at 336-972-5809 or the church office for more information.



Join us for our Maple Springers Luncheon on Thursday, November 21 at 12:00pm in Craven Hall. The meal will be catered by Mrs. Pumpkins and will include chicken pie, garden salad, roll, and dessert. The “Fun Fatale Trio” will be there to entertain us with acoustic music featuring guitar, fiddle, bass, and vocals. Call the church before noon on Monday, November 18 at 336-722-7563 to make your reservation.



## Old Town School Coat Drive

Please help us collect new winter coats for the students at Old Town School to help them stay warm this winter. The coat drive will begin on Sunday, November 10 and will run through Sunday, December 8. Collection boxes will be available in Craven Lobby and the Sanctuary Side Narthex.



### **Donations, Prayers, and Kindness Matter!**

Obviously the headline is true but please read on for more details on why those three things matter.

Through September of this year, the Food Pantry has served over 2600 family units (representing 7400 individuals). That's a 29% increase over 2023! What's surprising though is that of those 2600 family units, 70% of them have visited us only once or twice this year. That means that most of our neighbors who visit us are using us as an "Emergency Food Pantry" and that's why most pantries were established over the years...to help families when they have that sudden need. Yes, we are happy to serve those who come every month due to financial hardships but we are also here to serve that "one-time need".

So, why do they come to see us? An obvious reason is our location as we are very visible to the passing public. More importantly are the following: we are a client choice pantry and they choose their foods, our pantry shelves are full due to your donations of food or finances, they feel and appreciate the prayers of our church, and we have a reputation of being a kind place to visit. So THANK YOU to all who help us serve those one-time visitors or those who come every month. We could not do what we do without your donations, your prayers, and your kindness!

Bill Blackburn



MAPLE SPRINGS  
FOOD  
PANTRY



The planning committee is excited to invite all women to participate in our annual Women's Retreat February 8th, 1:00pm - February 9th, 1:00pm at Caraway Conference Center in Sophia, NC. Our keynote will be speaker and author Lara Howard who lives in central North Carolina with her husband Cliff. Together they have 5 teens/young adults- (think *Brady Bunch*). Lara holds a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from UNC Chapel Hill and a Master's in Divinity with Biblical Languages from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. With a desire to bring theology into our everyday life, Lara has a candid way of writing about the deep truths of God with practical application. You can find out more about Lara and her resources at [www.ThinkTrueThings.com](http://www.ThinkTrueThings.com).



Our theme this year will be “The Power of the Thought Life from a Biblical Perspective” giving particular attention to our trust in God. Mark your calendars for this time of rest and renewal. To secure your spot we ask that deposits in the amount of \$25 be paid no later than Sunday, December 10th. Deposits can be paid by cash, check, or online. Checks should be made payable to “Maple Springs UMC” with “Women's Retreat” included in the notes section and deposited in Erin's mailbox in the conference room. Final retreat payments are due no later than Saturday, January 18th. Please fill out the 2025 Women's Retreat Registration here: <https://forms.gle/T9nyvvmMCjEq12FL7>. If you have any questions, please contact Erin at [erin@maplesprings.org](mailto:erin@maplesprings.org).





# MOVIE NIGHT

November 10th | 6PM

Join us for an outdoor  
movie night at church!



please join Maple Springs for a

# couples shower

celebrating  
the upcoming wedding of

# Carlyn & Ryan

November 10, 2024  
2:00 pm - 4:00pm

Craven Hall

light refreshments & punch will be served

Kindly RSVP by November 7th  
~families welcome~



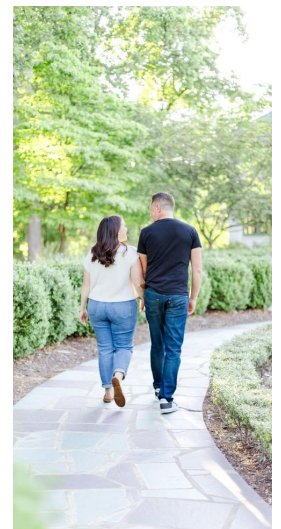


*Please join Maple Springs as we celebrate the upcoming wedding of  
our very own Carlyn & Ryan!*

*Click [HERE](#) (if you are viewing this online) to access their  
wedding registry.*

*We ask that you kindly RSVP by Thursday, November 7th.*

*All are welcome!*





# SIGN UP TO BE PART OF THE NATIVITY!

ALL MAPLE SPRINGS KIDS AND TWEENS  
ARE INVITED TO BE PART OF OUR  
NATIVITY PROGRAM ON DECEMBER 15TH  
DURING THE 11:00 SERVICE.

USE THE QR CODE TO SIGN UP!



**Please sign up by Sunday, November 17!**





# SMALL GROUP SUNDAY

NOVEMBER 17TH AT 10 AM

K - 4th: Children's Assembly Room  
Twins - Tween Room  
Youth - Middle School Room  
Adults - Youth Room

Each of our  
small groups  
will spend time  
focusing on  
gratitude!

## Advent Angel



## Advent Angel Gift Making

All Maple Springs Kids, Tweens and Youth will gather on Sunday, November 17th at 4PM to create their Advent Angel gifts.

This opportunity to connect our young people and senior church members is a favorite tradition!





# Advent Family Workshop

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24TH  
10 AM | CRAVEN HALL



THIS YEAR WE'LL BE MAKING  
TRADITIONAL ADVENT WREATHS  
TOGETHER AS WE PREPARE OUR  
HEARTS FOR THE SEASON OF ADVENT.

BE SURE TO SIGN UP SO WE ARE  
PREPARED WITH ENOUGH MATERIALS  
FOR EACH HOUSEHOLD!

## SPARK's Cozy Bundle Event



November  
24th  
3:30 PM

### TWEENS ARE GOING PAJAMA SHOPPING

Email Carlyn or  
Mary Taylor by  
November 17th to  
sign up!

As we've done before, the tweens are going shopping for pajamas to donate to SPARK's Cozy Bundle Event. The pajamas purchased will be given to local kids that need something warm to sleep in before Christmas!



A festive poster for a 'Breakfast With Santa' event. It features a large illustration of Santa Claus on the left, a green Christmas tree at the bottom left, and a yellow bell with holly leaves in the center. The background is red with white snowflakes and a yellow star. The text is in a playful, bold font.

**BREAKFAST  
WITH  
SANTA**

**SATURDAY, DEC. 7TH  
MAPLE SPRINGS UMC**

**SIGN UP USING THE QR  
CODE FOR ONE OF OUR TWO  
SEATING TIMES,  
8:30AM OR 10 AM.**





## SAVE THE DATE

FOR ONE COMBINED SERVICE  
AT 11 AM IN THE SANCTUARY  
ON DECEMBER 15TH

MAPLE SPRINGS KIDS AND  
TWEENS WILL PRESENT THE  
NATIVITY!

FOLLOWING THE SERVICE WE  
WILL HAVE A COOKIE EXCHANGE  
IN CRAVEN HALL!



## Staff Appreciation

We are blessed with a wonderful staff – they are dedicated to ensuring that Maple Springs is rooted, growing and bearing fruit for Christ every day!

Among our staff we have over 78 years of service – just at Maple Springs! Pastor Gary and Pastor Sylvia bring years of leadership in the UMC to their roles as well. The talent in ministry, music, administration and hospitality that each staff member brings to their role is evident in the quality of the church programs that happen each and every week. The Maple Springs staff members are wonderful shepherds for all the volunteers that make Maple Springs a special place.

As 2024 winds down, please take time to say “Thank you” to our staff!

Staff Parish Relations Committee







**Give thanks for churches that remind us the Earth is the Lord's.** Encourage your church to begin or add to practices, such as recycling worship bulletins, composting after meals, lifting up God's Creation in liturgy and sermons, and other actions that help us be better stewards.

**Give thanks for those who get knee deep in dealing with the mounting litter** in streams, rivers, and oceans. Find a waterway near you and create or join efforts to remove harmful debris.

**Give thanks for those who look beyond their own convenience** and count the cost to God's earth as they make decisions. Examine your own habits: refuse, reduce, reuse, repair, recycle.

**Give thanks for those who are choosing careers and jobs that help the environment.** Researchers, environmental educators, entrepreneurs, lawyers, law enforcement officers, workers in green industries, farm laborers, for example, have a crucial role in protecting and healing this home of ours. Encourage the individuals in your life who are doing this work.

**Give thanks for those who engage their families, friends, colleagues, and students in actions** that help and not harm the earth. People, especially children, learn from trusted sources—people they see who walk the talk. Tell your story.





**Give thanks for those in agriculture and who seek to work in harmony with nature.** Before you eat, ask a blessing especially for all who provide the foods that sustain life. Be mindful of those who labor in the fields especially in high heat; speak up for justice for their health.

**Give thanks for those who see, hear, and stand with marginalized peoples as they endure the brunt of a changing climate.** Respond to disasters, definitely! Also, speak up for the necessary changes to avoid the suffering.

**Give thanks for the laws, regulations, and organizations that protect or restore the natural habitats of God's creatures.** With those protections, numerous marine and land animals have come back from the brink of extinction. Support those efforts so that wildlife can thrive.

**Give thanks for people who donate leadership, time, and money to help organizations that marshal the many for a greater impact** as catalysts of change. Individuals can't do all, but all—together—can. Choose your group(s) to support in some way.

**Give thanks for those people who plant trees and gardens that nourish pollinators.** Fall is a good time for planting many species. Look for places where you can add a tree or three or sow some wildflowers, for example. If you involve children in the event, you will also be sowing seeds of caring for nature.

**The United Methodist Creation Justice Movement is providing these Tips as a tool to equip church members, families, and individuals to respond to God's call to care for creation and do justice with our neighbors.**

**For more about the UM Creation Justice Movement,  
go to [umcreationjustice.org](https://umcreationjustice.org).**



*In memory of Jack Miller  
for the Electronic Sign  
by  
Larry & Susie Gordon*

*In memory of  
Gwynne Nicholaides  
for the Roof Repair Fund  
by  
Martha Long*

*In memory of  
John Reeves  
(Father of Barbara Prestwood)  
by  
Larry & Susie Gordon*

*In honor of the Focus Class  
for the Charles Wesley Society  
by  
Gray & Kay Tuttle*





4 Tim & Tana Wooten

6 David & Lydia Whitt



- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 2 Charlene Porter    | 15 Jordan Ross       |
| 3 Hanna Dohn         | 16 Jack Edwards      |
| 4 Frank Thomas       | 17 Hudson Setliff    |
| 4 Matt Plaster       | 18 Tyler Foster      |
| 5 Chris Halt         | 18 Caroline Setliff  |
| 6 Betty Edwards      | 18 Kwame Nkrumah     |
| 6 Nick Smith         | 19 Chris Douglas     |
| 6 Mike Young         | 19 Gary Whitt        |
| 7 Dan Cornelius      | 19 Tracy Speas       |
| 8 Betsy Jo Thompson  | 20 Mark Cline        |
| 8 Judy Mahathey      | 20 Presley McKinney  |
| 8 Avah Boyles        | 20 Steve Northrup    |
| 9 Carmen Strickland  | 21 Eric Schieve      |
| 11 Gray Tuttle III   | 22 Bailey Howard Jr. |
| 11 Nancy Holliday    | 24 Avery Green       |
| 12 Danny Mitchell    | 30 Eva Venegas       |
| 13 Jennifer Kerrigan |                      |
| 14 Kelly Greene      |                      |
| 15 Monica Dagenhart  |                      |





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Email: [info@maplesprings.org](mailto:info@maplesprings.org)  
Web: [maplesprings.org](http://maplesprings.org)

Church Office Hours:  
Monday - Friday  
8:30am to 4:30pm

Sunday Worship Times:  
8:45am, 10:30am, & 11:00am  
Sunday School - 9:55am

***Rooted, Growing, and  
Bearing Fruit for Christ***

**FIND US ONLINE:  
MAPLESPRINGS.ORG**

