



Meadville Messenger

Grace and peace to you in the Blessed name of Christ our Lord!

There is so very much I'd like to share with you in this brief newsletter article. There's not enough room. But let me just start by saying "thank you." Thank you for welcoming this stranger into this loving, body of Christ that is Meadville United Methodist Church. You have welcomed me as Christ welcomes and it has put this pastor at ease and peace. I am humbled and honored to be at Meadville. I could not be happier!

In the United Methodist Church, we've become accustomed to pastors moving on at some point. But we never expect to lose a beloved pastor to death. I've spent this afternoon reading the September issue of our newsletter the Meadville Messenger. It was the issue that included Rex's obituary and the many fond remembrances that church members shared about him. It touched my heart and brought a tear to my eye. It is obvious how much you loved that special man. We continue to grieve his loss and are reminded of that loss every Sunday he is not in the pulpit.

But something transformational has happened over these last few months since his passing. You have proven that ministry in the Church begins and ends with the commitment of its lay members. Not only has this church continued regular mission and ministries, but you have added new ones! I want to say thank you for the many and varied ways you have stepped up to make mission and ministry continue to happen. This isn't a church that simply survives. Meadville UMC thrives! I believe that Brother Rex is proud of your hard work.

Having said this, it is important to also say that I recognize how tired many of you are right now. Many of you have overextended yourselves as you've cared for the church. My invitation to those of you who may be feeling weary right now is to pause and hit the reset button. Just breathe. Pray. You've been without a pastor for five months, but you have one now. And though my time with you is limited, we are going to celebrate the crucified and risen Christ in our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service, and our witness! We're going to study together, take some risks together, and have some fun while we're at it! Just breathe. God's got this!

In the next few weeks you'll be invited to participate in a "28 Day Challenge for Lent." We will take the 28 days leading up to Easter to commit to prayer, fasting, study, and invitation. Our focus will be on where God is leading Meadville UMC at



Office Hours

Tuesday-Thursday
9 AM-3 PM
Friday
9 AM -12PM

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MUMC

P.O. Box 548

101 First St. S.

Meadville, MS 39653

601.384.2936

office@meadvilleumc.com

www.meadvilleumc.com

time and where God may be leading you personally. You'll also be invited to participate in helping us think about our current strengths and areas for growth by taking a Healthy Church Assessment. The results of the assessment will be compiled and shared with the whole church. We need as many of you as possible to complete the assessment. It's easy and fun. Finally, I'd love for you to join me on Wednesday nights as we break bread and fellowship together and then go into a Lenten study of the hard sayings of Jesus.

If you were in church on my first Sunday you heard me read this passage from the gospel of John 15: 12-17: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me, but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another."

Let us be mindful that even when we have not chosen Jesus, Jesus has chosen us...let us be mindful that we were not chosen to do nothing, but chosen to bear fruit...and let us always, in all ways, continue to love one another.

Deep peace,

Heather

St. Patrick's Breastplate



I arise today
 Through the strength of heaven;
 Light of the sun,
 Splendor of fire,
 Speed of lightning,
 Swiftmess of the wind,
 Depth of the sea,
 Stability of the earth,
 Firmness of the rock.

I arise today
 Through God's strength to pilot me;
 God's might to uphold me,
 God's wisdom to guide me,
 God's eye to look before me,
 God's ear to hear me,
 God's word to speak for me,
 God's hand to guard me,
 God's way to lie before me,
 God's shield to protect me,

God's hosts to save me
 Afar and anear,
 Alone or in a multitude.

Christ shield me today
 Against wounding
 Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind
 me,
 Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
 Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
 Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,
 Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me,
 Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of
 me,

Christ in the eye that sees me,
 Christ in the ear that hears me.
 I arise today
 Through the mighty strength
 Of the Lord of creation.

Hymnology 101

"Be Thou My Vision"

Versified by Eleanor Hull

The United Methodist Hymnal, No. 451

*Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me save that thou art.
Thou my best thought, by day and by night,
Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.*

Sometimes hymn singing invites us to connect with the saints who have gone before. Such is the case with the famous Irish hymn, "Be Thou my vision." The original poem, found in two Irish manuscripts in the library of the Royal Irish Academy, may be dated as early as the 8th century.

Quite often, older hymns come to us as a collaborative effort before we are able to sing them from our hymnals. The Irish text, beginning "Rob tu mo bhoile, a Comdi cride," was translated into literal prose by Irish scholar Mary Byrne (1880-1931), a Dublin native, and then published in *Eriú*, the journal of the School of Irish Learning, in 1905. Byrne was also known for her academic publications, including *Old and Mid-Irish Dictionary*, *Dictionary of the Irish Language*, and a treatise, *England in the Age of Chaucer*.

The original prose translation comes to us in 16 couplets.

The first is: Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart. None other is aught but the King of the seven heavens.

And the last is: O heart of my heat, whate'er befall me, O ruler of all, be thou my vision.

It is at this point that Eleanor Hull (1860-1935) enters the story. Born in Manchester, England, she was the founder of the Irish Text Society and president of the Irish Literary Society of London. Hull versified the text and it was published in her

Poem Book of the Gael (1912).

Following the original publication in Ireland, the hymn was included in a number of British hymnals. After World War II, the hymn came to the attention of hymnal editors in the U.S. and it has become a standard hymn in most hymnals today.

Irish liturgy and ritual scholar Helen Phelan, a lecturer at the University of Limerick, points out how the language of this hymn is drawn from traditional Irish culture: "One of the essential characteristics of the text is the use of 'heroic' imagery to describe God. This was very typical of medieval Irish poetry, which cast God as the 'chieftain' or 'High King' (Ard Ri) who provided protection to his people or clan. The lorica is one of the most popular forms of this kind of protection prayer and is very prevalent in texts of this period." The original chieftain language of the "High King of heaven" has given way to the more inclusive "Great God" in the UM Hymnal.

When Hull's versification was paired with the lovely traditional Irish tune SLANE in The Irish Church Hymnal in 1919, its popularity was sealed. The folk melody was taken from a non-liturgical source, Patrick Weston Joyce's *Old Irish Folk Music and Songs: A Collection of 842 Airs and Songs hitherto unpublished* (1909).

"Most 'traditional' Irish religious songs are non-liturgical," says Dr. Phelan. "There is a longstanding practice of 'editorial weddings' in Irish liturgical music, where traditional tunes were wedded to more liturgically appropriate texts. This is a very good example of this practice." It was on Slane Hill in County Meath around 433 CE that St. Patrick lit candles on Easter Eve, defying a decree by High King Logaire of Tara that no one could light a fire before the king signaled the beginning of the pagan spring festival by lighting a fire on Tara Hill. King Logaire was so impressed by Patrick's devotion that, despite his defiance, he was permitted to continue his work as Ireland's first Christian missionary.

Dr. Dawn is director of the sacred music program at Perkins School of Theology.

28 DAY CHURCH CHALLENGE FOR LENT, MARCH 20-APRIL 17

Fasting, Prayer, Study, and the Great Commission

We all want our church to be vibrant and alive. Sometimes, we let other things distract us from the focus of Jesus Christ. This 28 Day Church Challenge is designed to help the church, as a whole, and the individual members of the congregation to make The Main Thing (Jesus Christ) be the main thing. To help jump start our renewed focus on Jesus Christ and the future of Meadville UMC we invite you to volunteer to take part in the following daily disciplines. Sign-up sheets will be available each Sunday for the following week.

Fasting – At least 5 people agree each week to fast a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 28 days from something. The point is for it to be sacrificial for you. Be mindful of any medical conditions or limitations before you undertake any food based fasts. Make sure that all days of the week during the Challenge are covered by fasting.

Prayer – During an 8 hour span each day, one person picks an hour in which to stop and pray for the church, revival and God's people (other church members, persecuted Christians in the world, our leaders). At least 3 members (Church Prayer Team) also agree to meet once per week at the church and spend one hour in prayer for the church and its members.

Study – At least 1 person per week agrees to study a Bible based topic or person and come back to the church members and share what they learned. Sharing can be done briefly during the Wednesday night activities.

The Great Commission – Each member of the church agrees to invite one person to church some time during the 28 Day Challenge.



Worship & Ward WEDNESDAY

Opportunities to Serve:

- PROVIDE SNACK SUPPER AND DESSERT
- KIDS ACTIVITIES & MUSIC
- WORSHIP LEADING
- SPEAKING

**Contact: Stephenie Sullivan
or Cindy Jones**

5:15PM
DINNER
FELLOWSHIP HALL

6:00PM
YOUTH/KIDS
DOWNSTAIRS

WORSHIP
SANCTUARY

JESUS SAID, "LET THE LITTLE CHILDREN
COME TO ME, AND DO NOT HINDER THEM,
FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
BELONGS TO SUCH AS THESE."



MEADVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

www.meadvilleumc.com

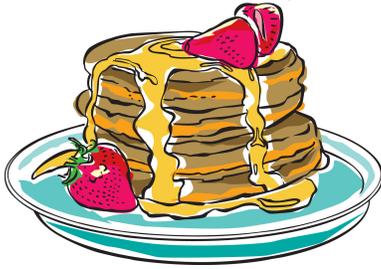
The image shows the cover of the book 'The Last Supper on the Moon' by Evi Luske. The cover features a large, detailed illustration of the moon against a dark, starry sky. A ladder is positioned against the moon, suggesting an ascent. The title 'THE LAST SUPPER ON THE MOON' is written in bold, white, sans-serif capital letters. The author's name 'EVI LUSKE' is at the bottom. A handwritten-style signature 'LightSource Students' is written across the top of the moon. The background of the entire section is dark blue with white stars.

Five week
Series

Beginning
March 9

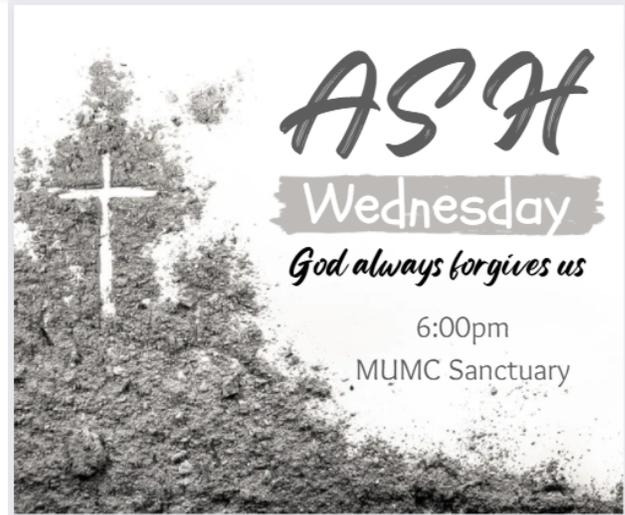
See Samantha
Sivils for more
details.

Shrove Tuesday



Join us, Tuesday, March 1 at 6 PM for our annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper. This is always a good time of fellowship, and

we hope to see you there!



MARCH 22— MEADVILLE

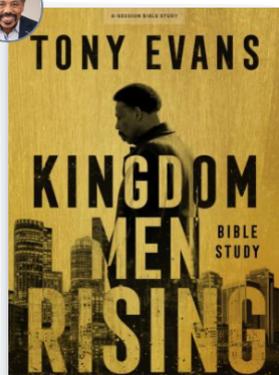
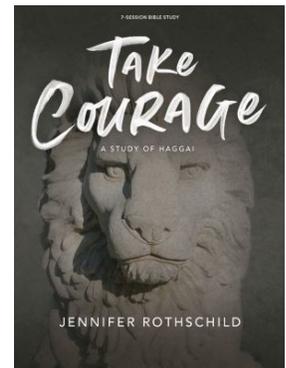
ST PATRICK PARADE

More information coming soon about MUMC participation

Online Resources to Deepen Your Walk with God

Ladies,
This spring you can study Take Courage—a 7-session study by Jennifer Rothschild—starting on Thursday, March 3. You'll be able to watch the weekly teaching videos for free!* All you'll need is a copy of the Bible study book to follow along with the discussion. So join us!

*Videos will remain up for free until April 28, 2022.



Men,
This March, Lifeway presents Kingdom Men Rising—an 8-session Bible study by Tony Evans. It begins on Tuesday, March 1.

You'll be able to watch the weekly teaching videos for free! All you'll need is a copy of the Bible Study Book to follow along with the discussion.

To register for either, visit:
<https://onlinestudy.lifeway.com>

Study guides can be purchased at your discretion. They are useful but not necessary to benefit from these online studies!



March 2022

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		6 PM Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper	6PM Ash Wednesday Service	5 PM Prison Ministry (Meadville)		
10:00 AM Sunday School 11 AM Morning Worship		10 AM - Jolly Elders 12 PM - Grief and Loss Support Group	6 PM • LightSource Students • M2 Kids	5 PM Prison Ministry (Meadville)		
10 AM Sunday School 11 AM Morning Worship 12 PM Admin Council Lunch			6 PM • LightSource Students • M2 Kids	5 PM Prison Ministry (Meadville) <small>St. Patrick's Day</small>		
10:00 AM Sunday School 11 AM Morning			6 PM • LightSource Students • M2 Kids	5 PM Prison Ministry (Meadville)		
10:00 AM Sunday School 11 AM Morning Worship	5:30 PM Auxiliary League Meeting					

March Birthdays and Anniversaries

- | | | | |
|----------|------------------|----------|-------------------------|
| March 02 | Jimmy Jones | March 21 | Shelly Cowart |
| March 04 | Dixie Clay | March 22 | Stephanie McCormick |
| March 04 | Caecillia Colson | March 22 | Emily Smith |
| March 16 | Ky Freeman | March 24 | Myra Herring |
| March 18 | Charlie Herring | March 25 | Dain & Morgan Poore ♥ |
| March 18 | Landon Furlow | March 29 | Eddie & Libby Shelton ♥ |
| March 18 | Kyle McCormick | March 30 | Jody Herring |
| March 19 | McRae Clay | | |
| March 19 | Vista Herring | | |
| March 20 | Betty Youngblood | | |

May the Lord show you the greatness of his goodness,
that you overflow with thanks every day.



Meadville United Methodist Church

YOU BELONG HERE

Chosen by God to Proclaim Christ through Worship, Study, and Service

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