

Covenant Connection



COVENANT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, GASTONIA, NC

April 2024

A Message from Pastor Larry. . .

The Little Lighthouse, a Parable

Once upon a time there was a lonely little lighthouse, set on the edge of a rock at the lip of the sea.

This was a dangerous part of the sea, with many storms and huge waves, and it was very common for ships to get blown off course and crash against the rocks.

The lighthouse was small. It was really just a hut with a tiny light on top. It only had one little life boat and a small crew of just a few men and women. But that didn't matter, because this small lighthouse crew kept constant watch over the sea. With no thought for themselves, they went out day and night, tirelessly searching for people who'd been lost in shipwrecks on the coast.

They were so good at saving lives, in fact, that soon the lighthouse became famous. Some of the people that the lighthouse had saved were so thankful that they joined the lighthouse crew themselves. Others heard about the good work it was doing, and started to support it with their time and money.

One rich man who had a passion for sailing bought some brand-new life boats for the crew, to replace the little dinghy it had been using. Another man, who knew all about sailing, started offering yatching lessons, so that people would know how to use their fancy new boats.

Slowly the little lighthouse grew.

Some of the members were unhappy with the crude little lighthouse hut. They felt that people who were rescued should have a more comfortable place to rest in while they were recovering from the shipwreck.

So they enlarged the building, and added nicer furniture.

Some members felt like there should be something to do when they weren't out rescuing people, so they decided to add a tennis court. Others felt achy and chilly when they came in from rescue missions, so they decided to add a hot tub. Still others wanted their children to enjoy being there, too, so they added a playground.

Soon people from the town started coming out for visits to the lighthouse, on holidays and days-off. It was, after all, a very beautiful spot, with its yatching club and tennis courts, all overlooking the sea like that.

The lighthouse crew was so busy tending to these visitors, that they didn't have time for many rescue missions anymore, so they hired some full time rescue crews. Someone even paid for them to get fancy "Little Lighthouse Rescue Team" uniforms.

One day a very large ship was wrecked, not far from the little lighthouse. The hired hands went out and brought in boatloads of cold, wet, and half-drowned people.

They were very ragged looking.

Some of them were sick.

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The beautiful little lighthouse was considerably messed up, and the regularly scheduled activities were all disrupted as everyone tried to find room for the newcomers.

At the next meeting of the Little Lighthouse Management Board, there was a long discussion. “What should we do about all these shipwrecked castaways?” they wondered.

“They put muddy footprints in the lobby!” said the Head of Lighthouse Décor.

“They’ve thrown the tennis schedule all out of whack!” said the Program Director.

“They’re crowding out the playground!” said the Facilities Manager.

“I think we should get out of the rescuing business altogether,” called out someone from the back.

As the discussion got heated, one small voice in the corner tried to speak up. “I thought we were a lighthouse,” she said. “Isn’t rescuing people from shipwrecks what we’re here for?”

But she was completely voted down. “Saving people is important,” agreed the President of the Little Lighthouse Yatching Club, after the vote. “But if that’s what you want to do, maybe you should start your own lighthouse further down the coast. We’ll even donate some money to help you get it started.”

After the meeting, a small group did try to set up another lighthouse, but before long, the very same thing happened there as what happened at the Little Lighthouse.

In fact, if you visit the seacoast today, you will find a good number of exclusive Little Lighthouse Clubs along the shore. Shipwrecks are still very frequent in those waters, but now, most of the people simply drown. ~ author unknown



Happy Birthday!

- 2 Charlie Anne Merritt
- 3 Caitlin Ramsey
- 7 Claire Merritt
- 11 Emma Kayler
- 12 Trish Bridges
- 15 Larry Taylor
- 19 Holden Raxter
- 24 Declan Meek
- 25 Pat Culver
- 26 Noah Smithers
- 30 Charlie Lowe
- 30 Suzanne Kayler
- 30 Stephanie Lowe



Covenant Women in Faith Giving Hope & Mission

April 8 (2nd Monday)

**10:30 am United Women in Faith Circle
Hostess: Sharon Brendle
Program: Linda Raxter**



March Worship Attendance & Giving



March 3	33	\$1,455
March 10	30	\$1,325
March 17	30	\$2,893
March 24	38	\$1,692



Lenten Challenge - \$2,699!



Covenant Prayer Corner

New/Updated Prayer Concerns

Billy Cochran & Family - Billy's brother, Clint Cochran, recently passed away, he was 59 years old
Ashley Cochran (Billy's niece and Clint's daughter) just a few days following her dad's death, Ashley had a cardiac arrest, delivered a premature baby, and had a partial leg amputated

Elaine Mason* - getting stronger! Praise God! PT is working with her on walking with assistance and she is doing well! Continue to pray for strength and healing.

Jay Raxter - in rehab at Peak Resources following surgery, keep Jay and his family in prayer

Continued Prayer Concerns

Ann Dees & Family **Pastor Janet Dixon*** **Tommy Sue Atkinson** **Jeff & Lisa Casey***

Beverly Cole **Dean Atkinson** **Jerry Smith***

Libby Grose **Mildred McElveen** **Laura McDonald**

**Friends/family of members*

Our Christian Sympathy and love is expressed to Ann Dees and family on the death of her son, Dennis, March 10, 2024. Dennis was 63 years old. We share in your sorrow with love and friendship. Be in prayer for Ann and her son, Randy.

Thank you so much for the cards, prayers, visits, and being the caring people you are. At a time like this, it is a comfort knowing people care.

Love, Ann & Randy

GIVING CHALLENGE

Many of you have accepted this challenge! We have topped our giving by almost \$500 from last year! The boards are in the Narthax for two more weeks, In the Narthex we have three boards. Pick an envelope, or two, any number you would like. The number that is on the envelope, put that dollar amount inside and place it in the offering plate. All that is collected will go directly to our general fund. Let's do this! Take the challenge before it's over!





**Covenant United
Methodist Church**

**801 W. Franklin Blvd
Gastonia, NC 28052**

**Larry Taylor
Pastor**

**LTaylor1@wnccumc.net
828.413.4067**

Church Office

704.865.5055

9:00 am - 1:00 pm

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday

12:00 - 4:00

Wednesday

Administrative Assistant

Tammy Bassett

covenantgastonia@gmail.com

Music Director

Rebecca Brooks

Church Website

covenantumcgastonia.com

April 2024

Weekly Scheduled Activities

Sunday

10:30 am Join us for worship!

Tuesday

10:00 am Covenant Praise Team

Wednesday

6:00 pm Joyful Noise Ringers

Thursday

4:00 - 7:00 pm Kids at Work

**COME
WORSHIP**
with us!

Monthly Activities

First Monday

10:30 am Covenant Women in Faith Circle Meeting

Fourth Saturday of each month

11:00 am - 12:30 pm Community Lunch

April

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
March 29 - April 7 Gaston County Schools Spring Break	1	2 No Choir	3 No Handbells	4	5	6
7 Communion 10:30 Worship	8 10:30 United Women in Faith Circle Mtg	9 10:00 Praise Team	10 6:00 Joyful Noise Ringers	11 4:00 - 7:00 Kids at Work	12 	13
14 9:15 Council Mtg 10:30 Worship	15 	16 10:00 Praise Team	17 6:00 Joyful Noise Ringers	18 4:00 - 7:00 Kids at Work	19	20
21 10:30 Worship	22	23 10:00 Praise Team	24 6:00 Joyful Noise Ringers	25 4:00 - 7:00 Kids at Work	26	27 11:00 - 12:30 
28 10:30 Worship	29	30 10:00 Praise Team				