

 **MUNSEY**

FEBRUARY 2025

MESSENGER

A monthly publication for family and friends of Munsey Memorial United Methodist Church



Ministry Spotlight

Mike and Angie Eastridge tell us what Munsey means to them in our February Ministry Spotlight found on page 6.

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR KIP



Jurgen Moltmann is one of the most engaging theologians of our time. Moltmann was born in Hamburg, Germany in 1926. His German upbringing was thoroughly secular. At sixteen, he idolized Albert Einstein and anticipated studying mathematics at the university level. He took his entrance exam to proceed with his education but went to war instead. He was drafted into military service in 1944 and became a soldier in the German army, though he never identified with the Nazis. Ordered to the front lines, he surrendered in 1945 to the first British soldier he met. For the next few years (1945-48), he was confined as a prisoner of war and moved from camp to camp, first in Belgium, then Scotland, and finally England.

Moltmann lost all hope and confidence in the German culture when he found out about the true horrors of the death camps at Auschwitz and Buchenwald. His remorse was so great, he often felt he would have rather died along with many of his fellow soldiers than live to face what his country and people had done. At this point Moltmann was utterly disillusioned.

And then, one day, a well-meaning American chaplain came by, handing out English-language New Testaments to German POWs. Imagine that! German soldiers receiving English-language Bibles. Talk about a gracious, but seemingly hopeless gesture.

Fortunately, Jurgen knew just enough English to make some sense out of one of these New Testaments. There in the prison camp, under the influence of this English-language New Testament, Moltmann became a disciple of Jesus Christ. He would later sum it up like this, "I didn't find Christ, he found me."

After his release in 1948, Moltmann abandoned his field of physics and went on to study theology. Now he is a theologian whose works are studied all over the world. He is best known for his ground-breaking book *The Theology of Hope*. Moltmann passed away in to the eternal arms of God on June 3, 2024. To his dying day he carried that same New Testament with him as a reminder of how God continues to speak to us through the pages of sacred scripture. Moltmann is one of those spiritual heroes whose image should be hung in the "hall of fame" of God's faithful.

Throughout month of February we will continue our sermon series for the start of 2025 entitled **The Power of the Plus Factor** as we continue our walk through the "hall of faith" in the eleventh chapter of the Book of Hebrews in the New Testament learning about people like Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah and a host of others.

These courageous heroes and heroines of the faith provide us the foundation of real hope in a world that so desperately needs it. I need it, and you need it. We all need to know of God's sustaining hope and grace.

I look forward to seeing you in worship each Sunday, either in person or through the livestream, and as always, it is a privilege to serve as your Senior Pastor.

Pastor Kip

LEADERSHIP DEDICATION

We're grateful to begin a new year of leadership with our 2025 Church Council and all who serve through leadership at Munsey. We have such a wonderful group of servant leaders who help guide the ministries of Munsey Church, and we look forward to recognizing them in worship on **Sunday, February 16**. All who serve in leadership roles (committee chairs and members, small group leaders, Sunday School teachers, nursery workers, ushers, greeters, and all others) will be invited to come forward in the service they attend.

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING DATES

Church Council meetings are open to any Munsey member, and each is at 6:00pm in the Christian Life Center Meeting Room on the following dates this year: March 27, May 15, July 17, September 18, December 4. To learn more about our teams and committees, you can find a list of them in the brochure racks and at www.munsey.org.

CAMP BAYS MOUNTAIN

Camp Bays Mountain summer camp registration is open! We hope to have several campers from Munsey attend again this summer and are offering partial scholarships to Munsey children or youth who register for summer camp at Bays Mountain. If you're interested in registering for camp with a Munsey scholarship, please contact Amanda Onks (amanda@munsey.org).

OFFICE CLOSED

Just a reminder that the church office is closed on **February 17** for Presidents' day.

LADIES' LUNCH

All ladies are welcome to join us on **Monday, February 10, at 12:00pm** at Ole's Guacamoles, and we look forward to lunch and fellowship together. Please let Amanda Onks know (amanda@munsey.org) if you plan to be there so we can save you a seat.

WOMEN'S STUDY GROUP

Our Women's Study Group meets on Monday mornings from 9:30-11:00am in the Parlor, and we're studying *None Like Him: 10 Ways God is Different from Us (and Why That's a Good Thing)* by Jen Wilkin. All women are welcome, and please let Amanda Onks (amanda@munsey.org) know if you have questions or would like to join us!

WAYNE ANDERSON PRAYER GROUP

The Wayne Anderson Men's Prayer Group meets **Thursday mornings at 6:30am** in the Christian Life Center Meeting Room. We invite all men of all churches to join us for study, prayer, and fellowship. For more information, please email Bill Darden (billdarden7@aol.com).

FROM THE PARISH NURSE

Did you know.....

As the Parish Nurse, I am happy and privileged to visit members who are nursing home residents, homebound, or those currently hospitalized. But did you know that you can also make a Parish Nurse appointment? If you need help with your diet, blood sugar control or simply want to stop by to check your blood pressure, feel free to make an appointment! Please reach out if I can be of help. Emily Ham, RN (Parishnurse@munsey.org)

WEDNESDAY NIGHT PROGRAMS

We have programs for all ages from 6:00-7:15pm each Wednesday! If you would like to bring your dinner with you before programs begin, tables are available around the gym floor from 5:30-6:00pm. We have these studies for adults:

- *The Cross & the Crescent: Understanding the Differences and Commonalities Between Christianity and Islam* led by Rev. Dr. Kip Laxson
- Women's Community Group led by Gwen Sitsch and Amanda Onks: a group of women in various stages of life who are looking deeply into the life of Jesus and encouraging one another to recognize the presence and movement of God in the day-to-dayness of life (Gathering Place)
- Men's Community Group: a group of like-minded Christian men from diverse backgrounds wanting to strengthen their faith through weekly discussions and fellowship (Parlor)

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather, we follow Johnson City Schools' schedule for church programs. If schools dismiss early or close on a weekday, we won't have evening activities at Munsey that day. The church office will be open on weekdays, as staff are able to safely travel to the church. Sunday morning schedules will be adapted and shared via social media and email as needed for weekend snow.

DEMENTIA SUPPORT GROUP

Are you caring for someone with Dementia? If so, we would like to care for you! This group is a wonderful opportunity to hear from others who share the same struggles and have the same questions. Our next meeting is **February 10, at 2:30pm** in the Parlor. For more information, please contact Emily Ham at parishnurse@munsey.org.

A LOOK AT YOUR WEEKLY GIFTS AND ATTENDANCE

	1/5/25	1/12/25	1/19/25	1/26/25
Weekly Budget Offering	\$14,404	\$20,932	\$33,410	\$36,735
Weekly Budget Requirement:	\$29,970			
Missions Offering	\$3,982	\$1,841	\$977	\$1,300
Worship Attendance	228	No Service	222	290

MESSENGER DEADLINE

The deadline for March Messenger submissions is **February 21, 2025.**

MISSIONS UPDATES

HURRICANE HELEN RECOVERY UPDATE

Munsey Memorial has joined the Rebuild Embreeville Campaign (REC), a new local connectational ministry. Other partners are Colonial Heights UMC, Jonesborough UMC, First UMC Johnson City, Mafair UMC, the ETSU Wesley Foundation, and Camp Bays Mountain. The REC is working in partnership with Appalachia Service Project to rebuild homes for families who are members of Embreeville UMC. The original goal of \$150,000 has been exceeded – enough money has been raised to build four to five homes! Financial and physical donations will be needed to help these families move into their homes by providing furniture, appliances, home goods, and kitchen essentials.

Donations can be mailed directly to the Rebuild Embreeville Campaign at Colonial Heights UMC, PO Box 6027, 631 Lebanon Road, Kingsport, TN 37663. (Be sure to add “Embreeville Flood Relief” to the memo line.)

VIRGIL ANDERSON SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS LEADS BY EXAMPLE

The Virgil Anderson Sunday School Class (VASSC) makes financial gifts each year to various organizations and ministries through their Christmas Projects fund. In 2024, they collected \$15,656! The list below outlines where their donations went:

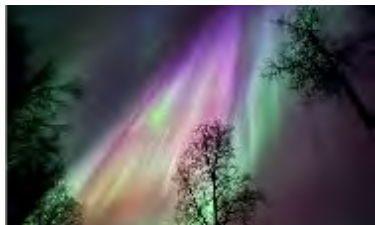
ETSU Wesley Foundation: \$1,000	Willow UMC (Willow, Alaska): \$1,500
Embreeville UMC (Flood Relief): \$3,000	Choir Scholarship Fund: \$1,000
UMCOR (Flood Relief): \$3,000	Family Promise: \$500
Appalachia Service Project: \$2,000	Ministers’ Discretionary Fund: \$2,156
The Melting Pot: \$1,500	

Their generosity, along with gifts from other groups, families, and individuals at Munsey, will make a difference in the lives of so many people. The VASSC shared the love of Jesus “with action and truth.” ~1 John 3:18

NEWS FROM WILLOW UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The Redmond family – John, Denise, Eli, and Ada – are settling into their new home at Willow UMC, a church serving the Alaska Missionary Conference. Willow, a small town of around 2,000 residents, is about a 90-minute drive from Anchorage. Poverty and food insecurity are issues faced by more than 20% of the population. To address these issues, the church runs the Willow Community Food Pantry. The Pantry hosted a Thanksgiving meal (turkey and all the sides!) for more than 180 families. In addition, the Pantry provides food for more than 200 families each month. You can learn more about Willow UMC and make donations to them at www.willowumc.org.

Pictured below: a view of the Northern Lights from the Redmonds’ house, a tent distribution point for food and firewood, and the Redmond family with Denali in the distance



ASP SUMMER MISSION TRIP

We’re organizing an intergenerational summer mission trip with Appalachia Service Project and hope you’ll join us! We’ll spend the week of **June 22-28** serving with Appalachia Service Project, and all students who are 7th grade or older and adults are invited to join us. We’re grateful to have such a meaningful relationship with ASP through Munsey and to partner with them throughout the year to make a difference in our community. We’ve asked to be placed at center in our local region so we can help with much-needed flood recovery. Please let Amanda Onks (amanda@munsey.org) know by **February 23** if you’d like to join the team and register by paying \$50 to reserve your spot (by noting ASP Mission Trip in memo).

SHEPHERD’S BREAKFAST COMPANIONS (Serving Breakfast 7:45am - 9:15am on Saturdays)

February 1: Maggie Belamy, Alexis Taylor, Zachary Cale (volunteers needed)
February 8: Women’s Hiking Group
February 15: ETSU Health Bridge
February 22: Anthony, Liz, Dick and Karen (volunteers needed)

To serve or learn more about our Saturday morning ministry for our downtown neighbors, contact Anthony Jackson at anthony.jackson@munsey.org or Sharon Pickering (423-491-4616 at sharonpickering520@gmail.com) or go to www.munsey.org/meltingpot to sign up.



To sign up for Open Door worship or Shepherd’s Breakfast, go to munsey.org/meltingpot or scan QR code.

NORTH SIDE ELEMENTARY - A GREAT PLACE TO BE

John F. Kennedy once said, "Partnership is not a posture but a process—a continuous process that grows stronger each year as we devote ourselves to common tasks." Munsey has been in a partnership with North Side since 2013. It was the brainchild of former pastor, Patty Muse, and then principal and Munsey member, Sharon Pickering. Our goal has been to provide financial, material, and volunteer support throughout the school year and to assist with educational and administrative needs, student clothing needs, and supplies.

In addition, we have given teacher recognition and support via our biannual Teacher Appreciation Luncheon. After our last luncheon, we received a thank you note from 25 plus teachers and staff. Below are some of the comments on that card:

"Thank you so much for your kindness, giving, and shining light!
We love and appreciate all you do."
~Sincerely, Carmen Cross

"Thank you for always taking care of North Side."
~Ms. Shay

"Thank you for everything you do for North Side!
Lunch was amazing"
~Ashleigh Cardwell

"Thanks guys! You are so awesome."
~Judy Reynolds

"Thank you so much for lunch...it made my day!"
~Faith Burton

"We love you all! Thank you for all you do!"
~Megan Scott

As we approach a new year, please keep in mind how much our partnership means to the students and staff at North Side. Please help this partnership keep North Side a great place to be! ~ *Susanna Chinouth*

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES - Charity Damrau, Director of Children's Ministries (charity.damrau@munsey.org)

KIDMIN FAMILY VALENTINE'S BASH

All children and their families are invited to join us in the Christian Life Center Gym from 6:00-8:00pm on **Friday, February 14**, for our KidMin Family Valentine's Bash! We'll have music, dancing, food, and activities and can't wait to party together. This event is for parents, guardians, and grandparents to stay and join the fun rather than drop off, and please RSVP to Allie Greer (allieisaiah@gmail.com) by February 9. We hope to see you there!

HWY 56 FELLOWSHIP

5th & 6th graders are invited to join us on **Sunday, February 23**, at Just Jump from 3:00-4:30pm, and friends are always welcome! Each student will need \$10 cash to jump and for a parent or guardian to sign the online waiver at www.johnsoncity.justjump.com. Everyone needs grip socks, which you can bring from home or purchase for \$3.25 there. Please let Amanda Onks (amanda@munsey.org) know by February 19 if your HWY 56er plans to go.

NEW DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Our Staff-Parish Relations Committee is pleased to share that Charity Damrau will join our Munsey Staff as Director of Children's Ministries. Please extend our warm Munsey welcome to her as she gets her bearings and joins the rest of our staff, clergy, and laity in serving the children of Munsey in their spiritual growth. Here's a note from Charity to our congregation:

Hello, Munsey family! My name is Charity Damrau, and I am thrilled to have been selected to be the Director of Children's Ministries!

I am a lifelong local girl, residing in the same Bowmantown community where I grew up. My husband of 27 years, Matt, and I have a very small farm where we have a few chickens and a garden. We are the proud parents of five young adults – Zeb, Adelaide, Beatrice, Abigail, and Ezra – all either in school at ETSU or working locally.

As a child, I was blessed with parents who understood the importance of bringing kids to church, and we were there any time the doors were open. When I was 12, I began volunteering in the church nursery, and I was hooked. Teaching kids about Jesus became a calling, and serving each week helped anchor me to the church body.

In 2008 when my children were young, I was hired to lead the Children's Ministry at Blountville Christian Church, and in 2020 I became the Kids' Director at First Christian Church of Greeneville. Through first-hand experience, I have become convinced that teaching children about the love of God is the most important ministry within the church. This is why I am honored to serve the children and families of Munsey as your Director of Children's Ministries. I am excited and eager to meet you soon!



YOUTH MINISTRIES

YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

Our February Youth Fellowship is on **Sunday, February 16**, from 3:00-4:30pm, and all 7th-12th graders are welcome! We'll meet in Munsey's gym for food, fun, and games. Feel free to invite friends, and we hope to have lots of students there!

MIDDLE SCHOOL PICK-UP

Middle School Pick-Up for 7th & 8th graders is on **Wednesday, February 26!** We'll pick up from Liberty Bell and Indian Trail, have pizza on the Youth floor, and then head to Quantum Leap from 4:00-5:30pm. Students from other schools are welcome to join us at the church or Quantum Leap. Each student will need \$15 cash to jump and for pizza and a parent or guardian to sign the online waiver at www.quantumleapjc.com/waiver. Friends are always welcome, and please let Amanda Onks (amanda@munsey.org) know by February 24 if you plan to join in the fun.

SUMMER MISSION TRIP

Save the date for our summer mission trip, which will be an intergenerational one for our whole church! We'll spend the week of **June 22-28** serving with Appalachia Service Project, and 7th-12th graders can sign up individually or with a parent or their whole family. We're grateful to have such a meaningful relationship with ASP through Munsey and to partner with them throughout the year to make a difference in our community. We've asked to be placed at center in our local region so we can help with much-needed flood recovery. Please let Amanda Onks (amanda@munsey.org) know by **February 23** if you'd like to join the team and register by paying \$50 to reserve your spot (by noting ASP Mission Trip in memo).

WEEKLY OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

- Sunday School: Sundays on the Youth Floor weekly from 10:00-10:45am, with fellowship and snacks from 9:45-10:00am
- Life Groups: Wednesday nights on the Youth floor from 6:00-7:15pm
- Prayer Breakfast: Thursday mornings from 6:30-7:00am at the W. Market St. Chick-fil-A for high school; transportation is not provided to school, and students need money for breakfast

MINISTRY SPOTLIGHT (FEATURED ON THE COVER)

Munsey Memorial Church United Methodist Church has served as a "touchstone" for the Eastridge, Phillips, and Browning blended family.

After graduating from law school in 1994, Mike Eastridge moved to Johnson City and joined the Rev. Vance, Carlene and Brad Eastridge as members of Munsey Memorial United Methodist Church.

A few years later, Wayne and Evangeline Anderson invited a family friend, Nancy Phillips, to the Virgil Anderson Sunday School class one Sunday to hear Mike teach Sunday School. Their ulterior motive proved to reach its ultimate success when Mike and Nancy got married at Munsey, and the membership of Munsey grew with the addition of Nancy and her children, Hannah and Ben. After practicing law for several years, Nancy heeded God's calling on her life into ministry, so the family picked up and moved to Atlanta so that Nancy could complete her Seminary studies at Candler School of Theology at Emory University. Upon her graduation from Seminary, the family was surprised by her appointment back to Munsey to serve as Associate Pastor in 2007. Nancy inspired the congregation as she preached, taught and served as Executive Pastor – all while battling an aggressive cancer. Nancy died in 2010, and her funeral service was held in the same sanctuary where she served.

God smiled on Mike once again and proved that love has no limits and cannot be diminished when 4 years later he was introduced to Angie Cullop – this time by his conniving sister-in-law, Joy.

In 2018, Mike and Angie were married in the small chapel at Munsey. Angie and her children, Blake and Emorie moved to Johnson City. Their mindset was that their "new family" needed a fresh start and began looking for a new church home. They visited several other local churches as well as attending Munsey. The other churches were fine but somehow felt like being in the home of strangers. When visiting Munsey, the congregation extended warm hospitality to Mike's new family. Emorie was invited to youth events and immediately fell in love with the youth leaders and new friends. Within a few short months, it became obvious that the new Eastridge family did not need a new church but instead needed to embrace the family history within the walls of Munsey and participate in the ministries that were started many years ago.

1 John 4:19: We love because he first loved us

RESURRECTION 2025



RESURRECTION 2025 (CONTINUED)



JOB POSTING

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MIINISTRIES

Munsey Memorial United Methodist Church seeks a full-time Director of Youth Ministries to serve in ministry to students in grades 7-12, also assisting with grades 5-6, alongside the Director of Children's Ministries. Desired applicant will focus on programs and relational ministry with students. A Bachelor's degree is required, with a degree in Education or Religion and previous youth ministry experience preferred. Submit resume, cover letter, and statement of faith to: employment@munsey.org. Job description is available upon request.

WORSHIP AT MUNSEY- FEBRUARY SERMON SCHEDULE

FEBRUARY 2

"How Do You Spell Faith?"

11:00am Sanctuary
Rev. Dr. Kip Laxson
preaching

11:00am Journey
Rev. Beth Sullivan
preaching

9:00am Open Door
Anthony Jackson
preaching

FEBRUARY 9

"Doubting Your Doubts"

11:00am Sanctuary
Rev. Dr. Kip Laxson
preaching

11:00am Journey
Rev. Beth Sullivan
preaching

9:00am Open Door
Abraham McIntyre
preaching

FEBRUARY 16

"A Basket Case"

11:00am Sanctuary
Rev. Dr. Kip Laxson
preaching

11:00am Journey
Rev. Beth Sullivan
preaching

9:00am Open Door
Anthony Jackson
preaching

FEBRUARY 23

"The Final Four"

11:00am Sanctuary
Rev. Beth Sullivan
preaching

11:00am Journey
Rev. Dr. Kip Laxson
preaching

9:00am Open Door
Anthony Jackson
preaching

WORSHIP SERVICES AT MUNSEY

- ◆ The 11:00am Traditional Worship in the Sanctuary features traditional music with the Chancel Choir.
- ◆ The 11:00am Journey Worship in the Christian Life Center Gym features contemporary music with the Praise Band.
- ◆ The 9:00am Open Door Worship is held in the Melting Pot and is our most informal service. Coffee and pastries will be available from 8:30-9:00am.

Holy Communion is traditionally offered the first Sunday of the month in all worship services.

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Parish Nurse: parishnurse@munsey.org