



Dear Members and Friends of Union Presbyterian Church,

It's an age old question... which is better- reading a great book, or seeing a great movie? For some of us there is no comparison. You love one and don't care for the other. But for some of us, the ones who love both curling up with a good book in front of the fireplace AND dimming the lights and watching a movie with a bucket of popcorn, the choice is a little more difficult.

It's kind of hard to understand why anyone would ask the question to begin with. Other than the fact that both tell stories, books and movies actually have very little in common. With a book you have tons of time. Authors can take as long as they want to tell their story (they just add more pages). As the reader, you can read and reread the parts you like, you can skip the parts that don't interest you, you are invited to fill in details with your own imagination, and even in a fiction book you have all the time in the world to ponder the themes the author is presenting and how they fit with your own worldview.

A filmmaker on the other hand has generally 1 1/2- 3 hours to tell his or her story. Rather than imagine, during a movie your brain is much more passive as music, words, and pictures are weaved together succinctly, so film makers can attempt to make you feel something about their story. Comparing them for myself, I am struck by how much more time I've spent thinking about the themes in books (even fiction ones) than the movies I've seen. But I'm also struck by how many more movies have made me cry.

Recently, a church member asked me why I mostly write about movies in my blog. The answer is easy. I still remember a student in seminary once sharing in a film and theology class. She said, "If film makers are trying to stir our hearts on certain subjects and themes, and if our hearts can either be drawn closer to God (through the Spirit) or away from God (due to sin), is that why we have an obligation to reflect on what we experience in movies... just to make sure that our hearts are being pulled the right way?" As someone who was working at a movie theater at the time, seeing a whole bunch of free movies, and just being entertained by them (letting them wash over me), I was challenged by this student. Since then, I've worked hard to reflect on and write/talk about the movies I watch.

But after doing this for over 10 years now, I've found out something interesting about movies. When I watch a movie, even movies I didn't like or movies that had themes that couldn't have been much further away from traditional Christian faith, I've found that most films still usually have something spiritual in them to reflect on. Since movies primarily attempt to make people feel something they often convey universal emotions: things like praise, yearning, lament, anger, confession, reconciliation, redemption, and joy. And that means they almost always have something spiritual that is worth meditating on.

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Inserts:

Ash Wednesday

Elders for February

Tammy Biddix
Kim Lee
Billy Jordan

Elder Ordination & Installation

February 9

Congregational Meeting

February 16

Valentine Luncheon

February 16

Stated Session

February 16

Kirkin' of the Tartans

February 23

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In his book "Movies are Prayers: How Films Voice our Deepest Longings," Josh Larson argues that these "universal emotions" are the same ones we use in prayer when we praise God for being God, when we thank him for what he's done, when we confess to God how we've failed, when we ask God for help, or when we are honest with God that we are hurting. Further, Larson argues that these same themes are also directly linked to God's big story in Scripture; a story about Creation (praise), the Fall (yearning, lament, anger), Redemption through Christ (confession, reconciliation, forgiveness, obedience), and Christ's promised Return (restoration, joy). I believe books aren't all that different. Both not so great books and movies have ideas that can direct our thoughts back to God, Scripture, Prayer, and Christian love of neighbor.

I have come to believe that a movie (and a good book) have a lot to offer us if we let them. If we take the time to really listen, we can hear that story and use it as we reflect on God's big story of grace verses sin and redemption & restoration through Christ. That movie or book, just might also aid us in our prayer life... helping us better voice to God some of the things that are sometimes hard for us to put into words.

May we all find a few good books or movies this year!

Sincerely in Christ,
Pastor James

SPECIAL OFFERINGS THIS MONTH

Super Bowl Offering

You have the opportunity to give in a special Super Bowl of Caring offering as you leave the Sanctuary on Sunday, February 2. This offering will be used specifically to help those in need in our community. The youth will inform us where this offering is being used next Sunday.

Congregational Care Offering

On February 23, there will be a special offering taken to allow the church to continue to provide care for members and friends of our congregation with need



DATE	NURSERY	CHILDREN'S CHURCH
February 2	Sarah Elliott & Mickie Nelson	Eddie Moton & Pam Moton
February 9	Jan Painter & Amanda Viola	Jenny Cabe & Mickie Nelson
February 16	Vicky Holeman & Sue Lewis	Faye Harrell & Amanda Viola
February 23	Tammy Biddix & Kimberly Morrison	Sally McGinnis & Leslie Harris

PAINTING THE SANCTUARY

The painting of the Sanctuary is done! Thank you for your patience. Our place of worship is beautiful and freshly painted walls and ceiling just highlighted that! Thank you, Ron Laird for the pictures and for coordinating this high effort!



February is looking to be an exciting month at Union. We will begin the month with a new sermon series, based on the lectionary and looking at the Sermon on the Mount. On February 16, there will be a short Congregational Meeting followed by the Youth Valentines Day Luncheon. On February 23 (Transfiguration Sunday) will we have our Kirkin' of the Tartan (followed with another luncheon). Then on Ash Wednesday we will start a special new series on the book of the Judges that connects to the season of Lent! What a month!!!

Lectionary Series on the Sermon on the Mount: Some Hard High 5's

February 2- Matthew 5:1-12

Celebration of the Lord's Supper

February 9: Matthew 5:13-20

February 16: Matthew 5:21-37

President's Day Weekend; Congregational Meeting; Youth Valentines Day Luncheon

February 23: Matthew 17:1-9; "Transformed.... Sort of"

-Transfiguration Sunday; Kirkin' of the Tartan

New Series: Opening Our Messy Lives Up to God: A Lenten Look at the Book of Judges

Ash Wednesday Service- February 26; 1 John 5:5-2:2: "Dark Days Ahead.... And Behind"

March 1; Judges 2:1-5, 16-23; 3:1-5: "Unspectacular Evil"

-Celebration of the Lord's Supper; 1st Sunday of Lent

GAP NEWS (Gaston Area Presbyterians)

Robinson Pancake Supper

Robinson Memorial Presbyterian Church (3106 Union Road, Gastonia, 28054) is hosting a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on Tuesday, Tuesday, February 25, 4:30-7:30 PM. The cost is \$5.00 per person.



Kirkin' 'O' the Tartans



On Sunday, February 23, 2020, at 11:00 am, our church will be celebrating the Kirkin' O' The Tartans! It's purpose really is to remind us of the "ALONES" of our faith: how our relationship with God is grounded in Scripture ALONE, by faith ALONE by God's grace ALONE through the work of Christ ALONE. This year the event is on Transfiguration Sunday, a wonderful day for us to remember how Christ was transformed and how we are called to be transformed too. The Kirkin' O' The Tartans features bagpipes, a procession and blessing of family/clan tartans, Gaelic liturgy, traditional Scottish music and more!

Immediately following the service, enjoy a Scottish-themed pot-luck luncheon, music, and a special look at some traditional Scottish children games. Whether Scottish or not, join the fun and be "Scottish for a Sunday!" You'll enjoy this celebration of heritage and be blessed in Christian fellowship!

Here's how you can help make the Kirkin' happen!

1. Is your family of Scottish Ancestry? Please contact Nancy in our office, and let her know
 - A. Your Scottish family name for us to print in the bulletin and to be included in the Scottish blessings!
 - B. If you are planning to be part of the processional (entering with other Scottish families at the beginning of worship to bagpipe music). Please remember, the only thing you need to be part of the processional is you!
 - C. If you are planning to be part of the processional, do you have a flag that we need to provide a stand for?
 - D. Please let Nancy know if you have a child or youth who wishes to carry one of our processional items during the processional (cross, Scripture, water, sword, etc.)
2. For the fellowship time following worship, the Worship & Commitment Committee is providing chicken, tea and rolls and ask that you bring the sides and desserts to share.
3. Come dressed to impress! Kirkin' of the Tartan is a wonderful opportunity to come to worship wearing a little plaid. For those of you with a Scottish background, we encourage you to come wearing your family's Tartan. You could wear a kilt, or maybe have it on a tie, scarf, or wrap. Sometimes people will just buy a small square of their Tartan's fabric to display by pinning it on their clothes that day. Don't forget to wear your church tartan lapel pin if you still have it!



NEWS & UPCOMING EVENTS

Keeping you up to date with our church Announcement, Events and Latest News.

Super Bowl Party

Sunday, February 2 at 6 PM, the Union Youth will have a Super Bowl party for the whole church at the Youth Building. Come, enjoy lots of fun and food and pull for your favorite team!

2020 Annual Report

See what the Lord has done here at Union and through His people in 2020. We will have the Annual Report available on Sunday, February 9 for the congregation to pick up, review, enjoy, and marvel at the great things our God has done!

Ordination & Installation of Elders

As part of our February 9 worship Service, we invite you to join us at 11:00 AM for the ordination and installation of our new class of Elders.

Valentine Luncheon

The Union Youth will have a fundraiser Valentine's Dinner on Sunday, February 16 immediately following the service. Please come out and enjoy a great luncheon while supporting our young people.

Congregational Meeting

A Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 16 immediately after worship. There are three reasons for this meeting. It is our annual meeting of the corporation with the Trustees, the 2020 budget and annual report will be presented and there will be an opportunity to vote on changes in the pastor's call. Please join us for this very important meeting.

Happy Years

Come join us for lunch with Happy Years on Wednesday, February 19 at 12 PM. The meal is prepared (donations accepted) and will include country style steak & gravy, rice, green beans, other fixings plus desserts. Bring a friend/neighbor and please join us for good food and fun fellowship no matter what age you are. Contact Kathy Kytly if you have any questions.

Bingo at Terrace Ridge

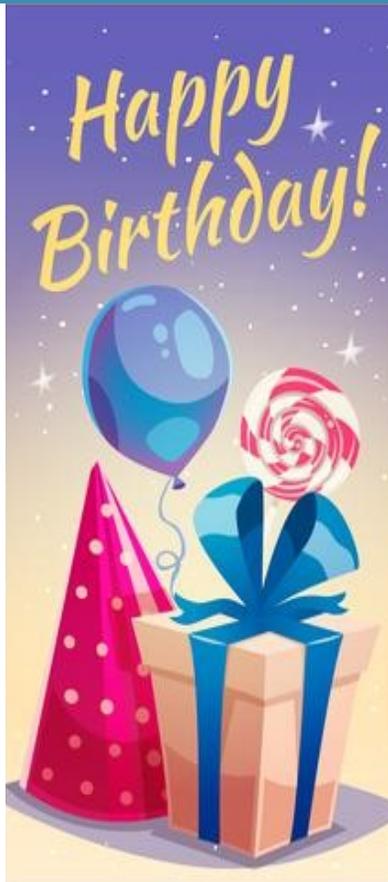
Thursday, February 20 at 4 PM, we will be playing bingo at Terrace Ridge. The residents look forward to this time of fun and games and we get blessed by just being a part of this time with them. If you would like to be a part of this ministry, please contact Nancy Gardner. Volunteers are always needed and welcome!

Ash Wednesday

On February 26, Ash Wednesday, there will be 2 unique opportunities for you to start off the season of Lent right. Join us and maybe even invite a friend a two.

1) On Wednesday Night, we invite you to join us for a special **Ash Wednesday service** starting at **7:00 PM** in the Sanctuary. The service will be a time of reflection and prayer and culminate in the disposition of ashes. 2) If you cannot make it that evening, consider stopping by the church in the morning for "**Ashes On The Go.**" As a service to the community, Pastor James will be at Stephens Stump from 6:45-8:00 AM, to offer brief prayers and dispense ashes for folks on their way to work. Witness and Service will be blessing all those who come by with a donut. There is a flyer about Ash Wednesday included in this newsletter to share with friends and family.





FINANCIAL REPORT
December 31, 2019

	<u>December</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Revenue	\$33,209	\$216,840
Expenses	<u>28,728</u>	<u>214,796</u>
	4,481	2,044

Monthly Budget Requirements \$18,601

If you have any questions regarding the financial information of the Church, please feel free to contact Martha Simmons, Disbursing Treasurer, or any member of the Finance Committee. Martha is responsible for disbursements only. Questions regarding your financial giving to the Church should be

**PRESBYTERY
PRAYER
CALENDAR**



February 2

Unity
8210 Unity Church Road
Denver, NC 28037
unity@unitypres.org

February 9

Vians Valley
P.O. Box 202
Bakersville, NC 28705

February 16

Waldensian
109 Main Street East
Valdese, NC 28690
office@waldensianpresbyterian.org

February 26

Walnut
254 Barnard Road,
Marshall, NC 28753
genelinton@live.com

"FOR GOD
SO LOVED THE
WORLD THAT HE GAVE
HIS ONLY
BEGOTTEN
SON, SO
THAT WHOEVER
BELIEVES IN HIM
SHALL NOT PERISH
BUT HAVE ETERNAL
LIFE."
♥ JOHN 3:16



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<p>Each Sunday 9:45 AM Sunday School 11 AM Worship</p>	<p>Each Sunday 4 PM Kids of the Kingdom & Union Youth</p>					1
<p>2 9 AM SOS Council</p> <p>Communion 2:30 PM SOC Super Bowl Party</p>	<p>3 1 PM Golden Girls Fellowship</p> <p>7 PM Soul Sisters Fellowship</p>	<p>4 10 AM Bible Study</p> <p>6 PM C & T 7 PM B & G</p>	<p>5</p> <p>7 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p> <p style="background-color: #90EE90; text-align: center;">YOUTH 180 Weekend</p>
<p>9 9 AM W & C</p> <p>Elder Ordination & Installation</p> <p>2:30 PM W & S</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p> <p>10 AM Bible Study</p>	<p>12</p> <p>5:30 PM Finance</p> <p>7 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p>
<p>16 Congregational Meeting Valentines Luncheon by Youth 2:30 PM Session</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p> <p>10 AM Bible Study</p>	<p>19</p> <p>12 PM Happy Years</p> <p>7 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>20</p> <p>4 PM Bingo at Terrace Ridge</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>
<p>23 KIRKIN' OF THE TARTANS</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p> <p>10 AM Bible Study</p>	<p>26 ASH WEDNESDAY</p> <p>7 PM Service</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>

Union Presbyterian Church

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Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 8
Return Service Requested

Reverend James Holeman
Pastor

Sherry Maples
Music Director/Accompanist

Nancy Newman
Administrative Assistant

Church Hours
9:00 AM—1:00 PM
Tuesday—Friday
Office Closed Monday and Saturday

SAVE THE DATES

February 16	Congregational Meeting
February 26	Ash Wednesday Service
March 14	Lawnmower Blade Sharpening Vehicle Safety Check
March 15	St Patrick's Day FFF
March 21	Building & Grounds Workday