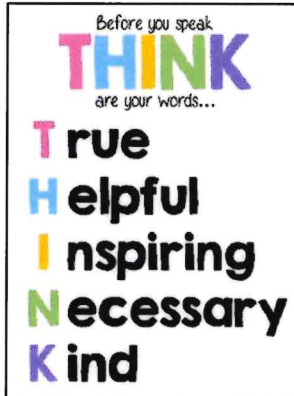


THINK Before You Speak (or Post)

Have you ever regretted something you said—or something you posted online? Words have power. They can lift someone up or tear them down in an instant. Philippians 4:8 reminds us to



focus on what is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and praiseworthy. That same wisdom can guide how we communicate, whether in person or on social media. A simple way to do this is by using the acronym **THINK**: *Is it True? Helpful? Inspiring? Necessary? Kind?*

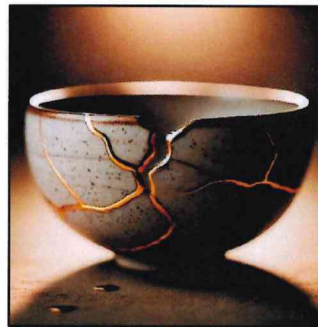
A few years ago, a woman in our area shared an excited post about her new job. But instead of congratulations, a former coworker left a harsh comment, criticizing the company and questioning her abilities. The words stung. She later admitted it made her second-guess herself and took the joy out of her good news.

Contrast that with another story: A young father was struggling with parenting and posted online about feeling overwhelmed. Instead of judgment, he received messages of encouragement—friends offering prayers, advice, and reminders that he wasn't alone. Those words helped him push through a tough season with renewed strength.

In a time when division and negativity seem to dominate conversations, our words can be a powerful force for unity and grace. Before we speak or post, let's **THINK**—filtering our

words through truth, kindness, and purpose. What we say matters, and as followers of Christ, we have the opportunity to speak life and encouragement into the world. So, let's choose words that build up, not tear down.

From Brokenness to Wholeness: A Journey of Healing and Hope



Life doesn't always go as planned. We all experience moments when things fall apart—whether it's relationships, dreams, or even

our sense of purpose. In those moments, it's easy to wonder: *Can anything good come from this? Is healing really possible?*

The good news is that God specializes in restoration. No matter what has been broken in your life, God is able to bring healing, purpose, and wholeness. This Lent, Monroe UMC invites you to join us for *From Brokenness to Wholeness*, a message series about how God meets us in our hardest moments and helps us rebuild.

Each week, we'll tackle real-life struggles—guilt, loneliness, feeling lost, and broken relationships—and explore how God's love leads us toward renewal. If you're longing for hope, searching for peace, or just wondering if faith still has something to offer, this series is for you.

(continued pg. 2)

No matter where you are on your journey, you don't have to walk alone. Bring your hurts, hang ups, habits, broken pieces, doubts, and questions. Come and see how God is still making all things new.

Join us Sundays at Monroe UMC, beginning March 9. Invite a friend or family member to share this with you. It's time to take your next step toward wholeness.

- 3/5, Ash Wednesday: *What's the Point of this Struggle?*
- 3/9, Sunday: *Lost in the Wilderness of Life*
- 3/16, Sunday: *Why Does Love Feel So Hard?*
- 3/23, Sunday: *When Life Feels Empty*
- 3/30, Sunday: *Who's Searching for Me?*
- 4/6, Sunday: *Can Church Really Be Different?*
- 4/13, Sunday: *What Good Can Come From This?*

Electronic Giving Options for Monroe UMC

You can give online at <http://MonroeUMC.org/Give> or by scanning this QR code with your phone. Online giving allows you to give one time or to automate your giving so that you never have to remember. Automated giving is not only convenient for you, it also helps the church by providing more regularly scheduled income. You can also give one time by text; send \$amount to 513.547.9908. You might also check with your bank to set up a scheduled ACH transaction directly from your account to the church, saving you time, eliminating fees, and give the church steady income. Please consider the electronic option for your giving. And thank you for supporting Jesus' ministry through Monroe UMC.



Financial Year in Review: 2024

Submitted by Jerry Michael, Chair, Finance team



Achievements:

- Collected over \$57,000 for AC replacements and fire detection system.
- Retired an old, old IRS debt that was accumulating interest charges, \$8,000.
- Changed Church Management and electronic contribution portal, both a savings.
- Changed Church credit card management, streamlined input, automatic pay, and get rewards. No more processing delays nor interest charges.
- \$13,000 donated to missions such as food pantry, UMCOR, Lenten, etc.

Total income less expenses was a net loss of \$12,000. Total income was below budget while expenses were on budget.

Expenses were \$30,000 for the AC repairs + \$18,000 for the fire system (mandated by Insurance) = \$48,000.

Forecasted needs for 2025:

- Sanctuary AC repairs – est. \$22,000
- SS rooms AC making serious noises – TBD

Concerns:

- The UMC recommends that personnel costs be in the range of 45% to 55% of the budget; ours is 60%. (Nationally, churches typically spend 40-60% of budget on personnel costs.) 10% more income would put MUMC in range.
- Although we requested and received contributions for the AC repair, it looks like that was at the expense of the operating budget – in other words, some may have shifted their giving from operating budget (which keeps

(continued pg. 3)

the church and ministries going day-to-day) to this capital need, rather than making an *additional* offering.

- Comparing 2023 to 2024:
 - Operating Income in 2024 was \$23,000 less than in 2023
 - Expenses in 2024 were \$26,000 more than 2023
- To continue operations at present levels in 2025, about \$27,000 a month in giving to the general operating budget is needed.

Questions or comments? Please contact a member of the Finance team (Lori Cobb, Arlene Horton [treasurer], Elaine Kuth, Anne Lapham [financial secretary], Jerry Lapham, Jerry Michael, Pastor Jeff Motter, Ellen Osterman, Stan Seagle [asst. treasurer]).

Encouraging thoughts and quotes....

Be careful how you shine your light, 💡 the glow can attract bugs that bite. (from fb)

When you feel like you are drowning in life, don't worry -- your lifeguard walks on water. (from fb)

When we work, we work. When we pray, God works. (James Hudson Taylor)

God isn't asking you to figure it out. He's asking you to trust that he already has. (from Pinterest)

In our waiting, God is working. (from Christian quotes online)

A life of purpose can only be fulfilled when we put God first and make him the center of our lives. (from Pinterest)

At the end of the day, what really matters is what God thinks of me. (from Pinterest)

When God speaks, mountains move. (from Pinterest)

In all my choices, I will remember to include Jesus. (from Upper Room)

No matter my trials, I am in God's hands. (from Upper Room)

The happiest people don't have the best of everything.... They just make the best of everything they have. (from Funny Sarcastic Lady on fb)

Repetitive complaining will attract things for you to complain about. Repetitive gratitude will attract things for you to be thankful about. (from fb)

We can't always choose the music life plays for us, but we can choose how we dance to it. (from fb)

I won't give up; God is by my side. (from Upper Room)

Your strength is found at the end of my rope. (from Lauren Daigle song O Lord)

What you are is God's gift to you. What you become is your gift to God. (from Hans urs von Balthasar)

Give thanks.... The more you give thanks, the harder it is to worry.

Favorite saying of my brother Joe Chase... Better to be quiet and thought a fool, than to speak and prove it. (Abraham Lincoln / similar quote from Mark Twain)

Closing thoughts..... 🙏
Let us wake up praising the Lord, no matter what, and strive to live as it was our last day on earth. What would YOU do differently?

If God is with us, who can be against us?
Romans 8:31

Submitted by Monica Bolton

Thank You

A big thank you to the church from the Bolton and Short families in allowing us to use Atchley Hall for our daughter-in-law Erin Bolton's baby shower February 8th. It was a wonderful time of family and friend fellowship. Thank you so much.

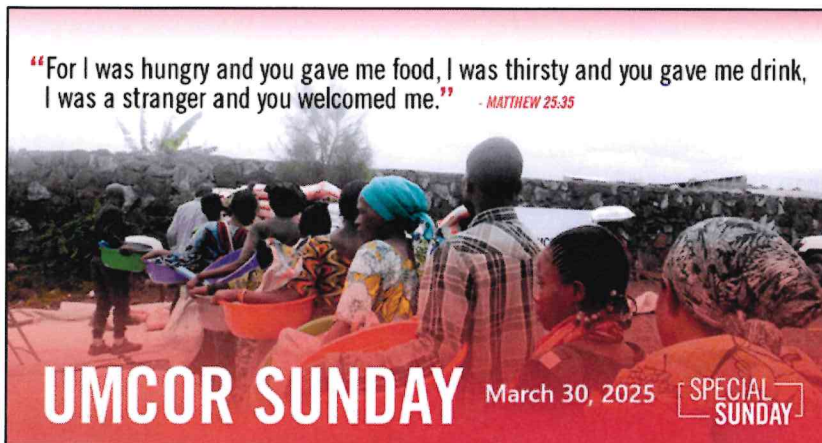


Make a Difference on UMCOR Sunday

Shortly after Hurricane Helene inundated communities in Western North Carolina with 12 inches to nearly three feet of rain in just a few days late in September, Spruce Pine United Methodist Church in Spruce Pine, North Carolina, became a hub for disaster relief. It wasn't their plan, but God needed a way to send help to this

community, and this congregation provided that way. Though the church had neither electricity nor water, it was spared severe water damage, and on the third day after the storm, members of the congregation joined their pastor, Rev. Holly Cobb McKim, at the church, assessing their own situation and turning to help others.

In the weeks following Hurricane Helene, every square foot of Spruce Pine UMC was in service to the community. It offered a food pantry, water, a clothing closet, and baby supplies. The Western North Carolina Disaster Response office asked if the church would be willing to host Early Response Teams (ERTs) already making plans to travel to



the region to serve. Within days, the United Methodist Committee on Relief sent the conference a grant to help with relief efforts.

Your gifts on UMCOR Sunday, March 30, 2025, help support the foundation for the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) to share God's

love with communities everywhere.

The church set up dormitories in children's ministry rooms and constructed a temporary shower facility outside for what turned out to be literally hundreds of UMCOR-trained ERTs coming from conferences across the country. They visited for a week at a time to serve the people in this area of Western North Carolina who have seen tremendous devastation, loss of property and natural habitat and worst of all, loss of family members.

On Friday Sep. 27, Trinity UMC in Greenville had no power or water, but the church was in good shape. Pastor Sara Varnell said she didn't know what to do, but members of her congregation called and were certain they should do something. She connected with another UMC and asked a lot of questions.

People from the wider UMC connection started showing up with water, food, diapers – and people from the community soon learned where they could find these things they desperately needed. Before long, the church was a major hub. UMCOR sent clean-up supplies, volunteers from churches within and outside the conference showed up with supplies and stayed to help organize and distribute them.

Spruce Pine and Trinity churches were two paths God found to reach people after Helene



Debris caused by Hurricane Helene's floodwaters fills the fellowship hall to within inches of the ceiling at Pensacola UMC in Burnsville, N.C. (Photo: Mike DuBose, UM News)

struck. This scenario was repeated in other communities and churches, in other states affected by Helene's broad reach. Today, as the relief operations wind down, United Methodist disaster coordinators in the affected conferences are planning recovery strategies for weary communities.

As 2025 unfolds, three hard-hit United Methodist conferences are working with UMCOR to assess recovery needs and set-up long-term disaster management programs. Western North Carolina Conference, South Carolina Conference and Holston Conference are each receiving grants averaging \$100,000-\$200,000 to begin this assessment, which includes fact and resource gathering to discover where needs are already being met by government and nonprofit agencies and which communities have not received what they need. Finding these gaps in services and resources is an UMCOR objective.

The role of the UMCOR is to help fund disaster response efforts, train volunteers and provide the expertise and resources that empower annual conferences across the nation to respond to disasters. UMCOR's real strength, however, is found in the hands and feet of local church members who bring help directly to their communities.

One of six churchwide Special Sundays with offerings of The United Methodist Church, UMCOR Sunday calls United Methodists to share the goodness of life with those who hurt. Your gifts to UMCOR Sunday lay the foundation for the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) to share God's love with communities everywhere. The special offering underwrites UMCOR's "costs of doing business." This helps UMCOR to keep the promise that 100 percent of any gift to a specific UMCOR project will go toward that project, not administrative costs.

Will you consider giving generously to this important work here in the U.S. and around the world? Mark your offering envelope or check memo for "UMCOR Sunday" and place



Katie Hills, UMCOR's director of Disaster Response, assesses the situation in Boone, NC, while pitching in with ERTs to clear debris from Valle Crucis UMC. (Photo: Ben Rogers, WNCC).

it in the offering basket or plate. Or visit <http://MonroeUMC.org/Give> and choose "Fund 8413-Special Sundays" for your gift. Thank you for partnering to help people recovering from disasters and other dire circumstances through UMCOR.

Article adapted from "UMCOR Sunday provides hope on road to recovery," <https://www.umc.org/en/content/umcor-sunday-offering-provides-hope-on-road-to-recovery-umcor>. Accessed 02/19/2025.

Begin a Holy Lent on Ash Wednesday, March 5th

The season of Lent begins with a special Ash Wednesday worship service at 7:00pm on Wednesday, March 5th. The service will be held in the Sanctuary and ashes will be imposed. The service will also be streamed live on Facebook and YouTube. Join us to begin this holy season of Lent in prayer, confession, and worship with your church family.



No Longer Receiving Emails? If you had previously received emails from the church and are no longer receiving them and would like to, please send an email to support@breezechms.com and ask to be resubscribed to Monroe United Methodist Church. We cannot do it in our office – you must contact the company to request this.



March Birthdays

7 – Lori Cobb
10 – Susan Childers
12 – Jo Ann Kuhlman
14 – Jennifer Moak
15 – Tom Leeds
17 – Connie Wesner
22 – Ellen Kinsey
29 – Don Garver
31 – Lowell Barrett
Judy Johnson
Norma Reed

April Newsletter
Deadline
Wednesday, March 19th



Sunday
March 9th

SPRING
FORWARD



MARCH 17TH



March 5th
Worship Service at 6:30pm

MONROE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
206 East Avenue, PO Box 310
Monroe, OH 45050

REQUESTED RETURN SERVICE

Mission Statement:

*Shining the light on the hill by connecting with Jesus Christ,
connecting with each other and connecting with the world.*



MONROE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Phone: 513.539.7290

E-mail: monroeumc@cinci.rr.com

Website: www.monroeumc.org

Monroe UMC Staff

Rev. Jeff Motter, Senior Pastor: revjamotter@gmail.com

Edna Miller, Office Manager: monroeumc@cinci.rr.com

Gina Craft, Children's Ministries: gmatcraft@gmail.com

Larry Daniel, Choir Director

Melanie Flower, Organist

Linda Larkin, Nursery Attendant

Arlene Horton, Treasurer

Jerry & Anne Lapham,
Financial Sec'y

MINISTERS: CONGREGATION

OFFICE HOURS: TUESDAY-FRIDAY 9:00AM-4:30PM



FACEBOOK: *Monroe United Methodist Church*



C/*MonroeUnitedMethodist*



TWITTER: @MonroeUMC



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>23 11:00am -12:00pm Liturgical Dance Practice 4:30pm -8:30pm Emmaus Gathering/AH</p>	<p>24 Church Office Closed 6:00pm Yoga/AH 7:00pm Scouts/AH</p>	<p>25 10:00am Share Group/Parlor</p>	<p>26 11:30am -12:15pm Yoga/Nartheex 1:00pm -3:00pm Bible Study/AH 6:00pm Youth Group 7:00pm Praise Team/AH</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28 10:00am Exercise/AH 11:00am Yoga/AH</p>	<p>1 MacDonald Baby Shower/AH</p>
<p>2 Holy Communion 11:00am -12:00pm Liturgical Dance Practice</p>	<p>3 Church Office Closed 6:00pm Yoga/AH 7:00pm Scouts/AH</p>	<p>4 10:00am Share Group/Parlor</p>	<p>5 11:30am -12:15pm Yoga/Nartheex 1:00pm -3:00pm Bible Study/AH 6:30pm Worship Service</p> 	<p>6</p>	<p>7 10:00am Exercise/AH 11:00am Yoga/AH</p>	<p>8 Baby Shower/MacDonald/AH</p>
<p>9 11:00am -12:00pm Liturgical Dance Practice</p> 	<p>10 Church Office Closed 6:00pm Yoga/AH 7:00pm Scouts/AH</p>	<p>11 10:00am Share Group/Parlor 7:00pm Emmaus Board Meeting/AH</p>	<p>12 11:30am -12:15pm Yoga/Nartheex 1:00pm -3:00pm Bible Study/AH 6:00pm Youth Group 7:00pm Praise Team/AH</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14 10:00am Exercise/AH 11:00am Yoga/AH</p>	<p>15</p>
<p>16 11:00am -12:00pm Liturgical Dance Practice</p>	<p>17 Church Office Closed 6:00pm Yoga/AH 7:00pm Scouts/AH</p> 	<p>18 10:00am Share Group/Parlor 1:00pm Finance Committee/AH</p>	<p>19 11:30am -12:15pm Yoga/Nartheex 1:00pm -3:00pm Bible Study/AH 6:00pm Youth Group 7:00pm Praise Team/AH</p> 	<p>20 7:00pm Trustees/Library</p> 	<p>21 10:00am Exercise/AH 11:00am Yoga/AH</p>	<p>22</p>
<p>23 11:00am -12:00pm Liturgical Dance Practice</p>	<p>24 Church Office Closed 6:00pm Yoga/AH 7:00pm Scouts/AH</p>	<p>25 10:00am Share Group/Parlor</p>	<p>26 11:30am -12:15pm Yoga/Nartheex 1:00pm -3:00pm Bible Study/AH 6:00pm Youth Group 7:00pm Praise Team/AH</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28 10:00am Exercise/AH 11:00am Yoga/AH</p>	<p>29</p>
<p>30 11:00am -12:00pm Liturgical Dance Practice</p>	<p>31 Church Office Closed 6:00pm Yoga/AH 7:00pm Scouts/AH</p>	<p>1 10:00am Share Group/Parlor</p>	<p>2 11:30am -12:15pm Yoga/Nartheex 1:00pm -3:00pm Bible Study/AH 6:00pm Youth Group 7:00pm Praise Team/AH</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4 10:00am Exercise/AH 11:00am Yoga/AH</p>	<p>5 Emmaus Team Meeting/AH</p>