



JULY NEWSLETTER

Pastoral Message

As we approach Independence Day, our communities across Western North Carolina fill with celebration—flags waving, families gathering, and gratitude for the freedoms we enjoy as a nation. These moments remind us how deeply we value liberty. Yet as Christians, we are invited to reflect on a freedom that runs even deeper than national independence. Scripture tells us, “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free” (Galatians 5:1). This freedom is not defined by borders or secured by governments. It is a spiritual freedom—freedom from sin, from guilt, from fear, and from the burden of trying to earn our way to God. Through Jesus, we are released from what binds us and invited into a life marked by grace, purpose, and peace.

In a world where many feel weighed down—by anxiety, broken relationships, or the pressures of daily life—Christ’s freedom offers something lasting. It is not the freedom to do whatever we please, but the freedom to become who God created us to be. It empowers us to love more fully, forgive more readily, and live with hope even in uncertain times.

As we celebrate this July 4th weekend, let us give thanks not only for the blessings of our country, but also for the greater gift of salvation. May we reflect on what it means to live as people truly set free—walking in the Spirit, serving others, and sharing the good news of Christ’s liberating love.

May God bless you and your family this Independence Day, and may you experience the fullness of freedom that is found only in Him.

—Pastor Cesar

Announcement

The Social Committee is hosting another church picnic at The Park at Flat Rock on July 18 following the church service. This will take the place of our regular fellowship meal in the fellowship hall, so there will be no potluck at the church that day.

Please bring a dish to share and camping chairs. Drinks and water will be provided.

We hope you can join us for food, fellowship, and fun!

Upcoming Events

- July 12: Women’s Ministry Bake Sale
Auction 3:30–5pm
- July 13: All Board Meetings
- July 13–17: VBS 10–12pm
- July 18: Church Picnic
- July 19: Adventurer & Pathfinder
Outing
- July 21: Men’s Ministry Meeting
6:30pm
- July 25: Sunshine Band 3:30pm at The Laurels
- Prayer Meeting every Wednesday at 7pm
- Food Pantry open every Sunday 12–2pm

Ministry Updates

Adventurers & Pathfinders:

We've enjoyed our summer break and are looking forward to our summer outing! We'll be having lots of fun on a huge inflatable water slide. Then, we'll kick off our new year of activities in August. We can't wait to see everyone!

Men's Ministry:

Our Men's Ministry group enjoyed a fun outing of mini golf and frozen custard! Their next meeting will be on Monday, July 21, at 6:30 p.m. at the church. Please watch *Light Bearers – Conversations*, Season 2, Episode 1, "**Overthinking the Gospel: Don't Let It Kill Your Faith,**" before attending.

Women's Ministry:

Our Women's Ministry had a lovely Women's Ministry Sabbath service. Amanda Blake and all the women involved did a wonderful job. Our next event will be a Bake Sale Auction on July 12 from 3:30–5:00 p.m. All proceeds will benefit SafeLight, a local shelter for women who have experienced domestic violence. Come join us and help support this worthy cause!

Upward Adventist School:

UAS Newsletter July 2026

For the upcoming school year, we have nearly 30 student applications for Upward Adventist School. We invite you to partner with us as we grow to allow more students to experience a Christ-centered education. Many of our students receive the NC Opportunity Scholarship. With your help we can provide scholarship support to the other interested students who do not qualify for the full NC scholarship. Some students cannot pay the full tuition but want to attend Upward Adventist School. You can sponsor anonymous students or make a monthly or one-time gift to the worthy student fund. If you would be willing to discuss this opportunity, please contact Kim Hudgins at 828-606-3529. Thank you for considering this request. Whether you help financially or not we request your prayers. We want to be a true church school, and we deeply value the prayers of our church family. Thank you for your consideration.

Thank you to everyone who attended Katie and Landon's baby shower and to those who sent gifts to their home. Your love, generosity, and support are greatly appreciated!

