



THE BEACON

"Making disciples for Jesus Christ to share God's love."

Newsletter of Mt. Nebo United Methodist Church • September 2025

Last month, we spent several weeks in chapter 12 of the Gospel of Luke. The context of this chapter is set within the broader narrative of Jesus' journey towards Jerusalem where he ultimately faced his crucifixion. These teachings were shared with a diverse audience mostly Jewish, consisting of both disciples and a crowd of people who desired to understand the teachings of Jesus. Two thousand years later, this message is as relevant as when he shared it with his disciples and crowd. We can feel the struggles that he experienced as our Lord, being both wholly human and wholly divine.

As Jesus nears the end of his final journey, his stress and anxiety can be seen in the Gospel account as he proclaims it in Luke 12:49-53, *"I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! I have a baptism with which to be baptized, and what stress I am under until it is completed! Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division!"* Is there anywhere else in the New Testament where we see Jesus so angry and frustrated? Is there another place in the New Testament where his humanness is so glaringly revealed and his words so sharp? It is as though he is giving a wakeup call to those following him with the belief that they would not be subject to judgment because they were God's chosen!

For many today, these statements are shocking coming from our beloved Jesus who is caring, compassionate, and full of love. The Jesus we all love reading about in the New Testament who is merciful and forgiving and always seeking to uplift us, so that we can live out our faith in the way that God created us to live. Maybe we fail to see Jesus as he really is – that we have created an image of him that affirms our beliefs and not his.

As we see his humanness on full display, are we

missing something because we are so used to seeing the divine side of Jesus that we are startled when we see his humanness? Were the crowds equally surprised? At that time most people regarded the Messiah as a conqueror and king. One that would vanquish all of the enemies of the people of Israel. A Messiah that would restore the past glory of King David's reign. Instead, they were seeing one that was willing to give up his life by the baptism with which he said that he must

be baptized – crucifixion on a cross. The one that would take on the sins of the world, so that those who believe in him will have eternal life. How do you see Jesus? Maybe the one to pray to for success in your life or for an ailing relative or friend. Prayers when needed, not an ongoing relationship. Only when times are tough and nothing else is working. A Jesus that could wait until you are

ready to accept him.

Jesus made it very clear that there would be judgment for the lack of faith and obedience to the Word of God and for all of the divisiveness over true belief in him. Like the Pharisees seeking to end his ministry by bringing charges against him. Like the Romans who were becoming increasingly concerned about the risk of insurrection that could possibly come about due to his radical teachings. And like how families had been divided by his presence. An occupied nation divided between those who followed and believed in him and those that sided with the orthodox religion and Romans – both seeing him as a threat. Has it changed any in our world today? We have 21st Century Pharisees who are more focused on rules and regulations that they willfully proclaim, often times ignoring the true will of God. We have seen families turning away from the church.

His message was clear to those that failed to believe in him and to be prepared. We see the warning in



EPISTLE & CHURCH INFO

EPISTLE CONTINUED....

Luke 12:39–40, *"But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour."*

As professing Christians, are you fooling yourself about what Jesus expects from each and every one of us – obedience to our heavenly Father, love and compassion for our neighbors? We see this mandate in Mark 12:30-31, *"Love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength and to love your neighbors as yourself."*

So, when the time comes, how would you like God to find you? Will it be with your work completed? Jesus himself said in John 17:4, *"I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do."* When it is your time, will the work that has been given to you by God be complete? Will you be at peace with those around you? In Ephesians 4:26, the Apostle Paul, instructs us: *"Do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not make room for the devil."* When anger rules you, your heart becomes chained to the act of the offense, and your heart becomes controlled by the poison of the past. Choose to let the offense go. Choose to forgive and let God wash away the pain of the past. Lastly, let God find you at peace with him. Are you going to be a stranger or an enemy or fall asleep in the arms of God? Have you listened for his quiet voice guiding you? Have you been in regular prayer with our Lord – maintaining a close connection, not just praying when the need arises? Are you guided by what is found in scripture? If not, then maybe you should be fearful of the fire brought upon the earth from Jesus. Because no matter how much you may want to eliminate the element of justice from the message of Jesus, it remains stubbornly and unalterably there! Amen.

Pastor Bob



SEPTEMBER LAY READERS:

Sept 7 — Ecumenical Service @ Shafer Park
Sept 14 — Skip Kauffman
Sept 21 — Toni Wetzel
Sept 28 — Dianna Basile

CHURCH INFORMATION

Church Office Hours:

Monday – Friday 9 a.m.—1 p.m.

Office Phone: 301-432-8741

Mt. Nebo Email: mt.nebo@myactv.net

Website: www.mtneboumc.com

Sunday Event Times:

9:00 a.m. Worship Service
with Children's Church

Pastor:

Pastor Bob Ruggieri

443-994-9505

Email: pastorbob2017@gmail.com

Staff:

Administrative Secretary – Brandi Puzonia

Minister of Music – Rose Gamblin

Finance – Patty Watson & Shana Wolfe

Sextons/Maintenance – Sky Cleaning
and Sara Halbritter

Mt. Nebo Christian Learning Center

Hours: Monday – Friday 6 a.m.—6 p.m.

301-432-6042

www.mtneboclc.org

Director – Kim Kelly

director@mtneboclc.org

Communications Team:

Toni Wetzel, Katie Smith, Pastor Bob,
Glenn deShazo, and Brandi Puzonia

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SEPTEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS



BIRTHDAYS

Sept 3 Shelley Breeden
Sept 9 Pam Walker
Sept 10 Lisa Riner
Nancy Robinson
Sept 14 Travis Riner
Sept 20 Trevor Deatrach

ANNIVERSARIES

Sept 5 Don & Jenni Dorsey
Sept 10 Gary & Brittany Harding



BOONESBOROUGH DAYS ECUMENICAL SERVICE

On **Sunday, September 7**, there will be no worship service in the sanctuary. Join Mt. Nebo at Shafer Park to participate with the community in attending the Boonesborough Days Ecumenical Service. Start time will be **10 a.m.** Bring your own chair. There will be water and cookies given out. The offering will go toward the *South Washington County Emergency Fund*.



CHILDREN'S CHURCH/SUNDAY SCHOOL

We look forward to offering Children's Church/Sunday School again at Mt. Nebo.
It begins **Sunday, September 14th** right after the children's message.
Please make sure you have emailed your Flat Jesus photos to share with the congregation.
Thank you for all the volunteers that have signed up.

THANKS-GIVING FOR THANKS-LIVING

Special thanks to Rose Gamblin, Pastor Bob, Donna Snyder and Candy Smith for filling in for the Praise Team.

To Rose Gamblin for organizing the Christmas in July program which reminds us that the work of giving goes on all year long.

To everyone who helped with the funeral luncheon for Charlotte Leach.

Thank you to Cindy Kauffman and Patty Watson for representing Mt. Nebo at the National Night Out.

To each person who carried Flat Jesus with them on their vacation and took pictures to share.

Many thanks to those who have shared their garden produce with others, yum!

And to Katie Smith for gathering the newsletter articles from all who contribute.

CHURCH NEWS

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Thank you to everyone who attended the United Methodist Women's annual breakfast at the Red Byrd Restaurant! It was a lovely time of fellowship and yummy food! Our regular monthly meetings will resume on **Wednesday, September 17 at 10:00am**. We hope you will join us as we begin planning for a new year of serving women and children.

Alyssa Berg

MUSIC MINISTRY

🎵 The Music Season is Here! 🎵

Get ready—our musical activities are starting up again! Whether you're a seasoned musician or a total beginner, there's a place for you.

Ukulele Club

📅 Begins: **Tuesday, September 2**

🕒 Time: 5:00—6:00 PM

📍 Location: Music Room, Mt. Nebo United Methodist Church

For families and all skill levels—come strum and have some fun!

Chamber Choir

📅 Begins: **Thursday, August 28**

🕒 Time: 6:00—7:00 PM

Inviting all community singers. We'll be preparing *Battle Hymn of the Republic* for **Boonesborough Days on Sunday, September 7 at 10:00 AM**.

Performance location: Shafer Park in front of the gazebo, with risers set up so everyone—including those in wheelchairs or unable to stand—can participate. Invite your friends!

Bell Choir

📅 Begins: **Thursday, September 4**

🕒 Time: 5:00–6:00 PM

We're looking for more members! Bell Choir requires dependable attendance, so please confirm with **Rose at 301-988-0359** if you'd like to join. Recruiting will open again after our December program.

Praise Team

We're forming another praise team to fill in when Travis Riner's Praise Team is away. We're looking for:

*Bass guitar

*Drums

*Vocalists

Practice times will be set once the team is complete.

MUSIC MINISTRY Continued

Private Music Lessons

Rose Gamblin is still teaching music lessons—space is limited, so reserve your spot soon for yourself or your child! Let's make this music season our best yet! 🎵

Rose Gamblin

FROM YOUR LAY LEADER

This month I have something exciting to report! As many of you are aware, the groundbreaking television series about the life of Jesus has been airing for several years. Beginning on **September 21**, after the worship service, we will meet in the parlor/conference room to delve into Season 1 and find out "What it means to be Chosen?" This study parallels each episode and will connect readers to the Bible. It will include script excerpts, quotes and illustrations from the show. We will be taking a deeper look at Isaiah 43 and its fulfillment in Jesus and the lives of his followers. The study will end on **November 9**.

- If you have not already, it will be helpful to watch each lesson's corresponding episode before going through the material. There are ten discussion questions and scripture citations with each lesson. Maps and timelines are also included in the book.

- There is a signup sheet in the gathering room for those who wish to attend, and books are available in the church office. Please consider joining us as we learn more about our Christianity!

- Whether you are new to the series or have been following along since the start, this is a wonderful opportunity to grow in faith and community. Each session promises lively conversation, new insights, and a chance to reflect on how ancient truths resonate in our modern lives. Feel free to invite friends and family—everyone is welcome to take part in this journey of discovery. We look forward to seeing you there and exploring together what it means to be chosen.

Cindy Kauffman



CHURCH NEWS Continued

FINANCE REPORT

Wow! Where did summer go? Now it's time to get back into the routine of school, work, church, and other things that we put "on the back burner" for the last few months. I want to emphasize the "church" aspect. While we were doing other activities, Mt Nebo has always been here for us. Come back and support it with your time, talents, gifts, and faith. God is kind and patient. Please get more active and help to spread our ministry in the community. Mt. Nebo needs all of us.

God bless, Skip Kauffman, Finance Chair



WEEKLY FINANCIAL REPORT

(Actual vs Budget)

Week of 8/10/2025 totals:

Regular Offering needed weekly - \$3,200.00

Last Sunday collected - \$2,367.18

YTD collected - \$90,451.06

YTD budgeted - \$102,400.00

Short of budget - \$11,948.94

Building Fund needed weekly - \$577.00

Last Sunday collected - \$75.69

YTD collected - \$22,827.08

YTD budgeted - \$18,464.00

Ahead of budget - \$4,363.08

YOUTH NEWS

YOUTH SURVEY RESULTS

As you may know, the Youth Survey concluded in August, and the insights gathered will help shape the future of our youth program.

We're already making adjustments to better meet the needs of both our Church and our youth. Your feedback is invaluable, and we're committed to creating a program that reflects the voices and visions of our community.

Stay tuned—survey results will be shared in The Happenings later this September!

JUMP KICKING OUR YOUTH!

It's time to bring back the laughter, love, and the joy of sharing God's Word together as we embark on the next chapter of Mt. Nebo's youth program.

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our youth, the Clopper House has been enhanced to provide a fresh and inspiring learning environment. This new space will offer a unique opportunity to engage with our youth—encouraging open dialogue, personal reflection, and deeper understanding of Scripture.

Each year, Mt. Nebo offers a college scholarship to active youth participants. Involvement in the youth program strengthens your eligibility for this scholarship, so we encourage all youth to take part!

YOUTH Continued

As we begin this new season, if there are any youth who would like to attend church but are unable to find transportation, please contact Don Dorsey. We will gladly make arrangements to ensure everyone has the opportunity to join us.

Don Dorsey

Welcome to our new member

It's time to welcome the newest member of our youth group—Levi Young!

We're thrilled to have Levi joining us this September, and the entire youth community is excited to embrace our newest middle schooler. Levi brings a big heart, not just for people, but for animals of all kinds—and we can't wait to see the joy and compassion he'll share with us.

Welcome, Levi! We're so glad you're here!

Don Dorsey



CHRISTIAN LEARNING CENTER NEWS

CHRISTIAN LEARNING CENTER

This fall we have around 161 children enrolled! In preparation for our fall program, our amazing teachers and staff set up their rooms and finalized all the special details that will help their students experience the magical feelings of being expected, welcomed, and loved as we start the new school year. All children will absolutely know they belong in their classroom, and that they are a cherished child of God!

For our 2025–2026 school year we will continue our strong Christian Education program and maintain our high-quality academics using MSDE Approved Creative Curriculum for all children. We will continue to provide nutritious snacks and lunch. We are so excited to start this new year!

As every parent knows, it only takes the smallest change to throw a child's day out of whack—A rough night of sleep, smaller-than-usual breakfast, a visiting relative to disrupt a child's natural sense of order and routine. We ask our parents to please let us know when anything different is happening in their child's life and this information helps us to better respond to the child's individual needs. No piece of information is too small.

CHRISTIAN LEARNING CENTER Continued

We also require parents to check their child in and out through our Pro-care app by scanning the QR code or selecting the sign in/out option on their phones. One of our important policies stated in our parent handbook is that all children **MUST** arrive no later than 9 am each day! This policy will be strictly enforced this school year to ensure that there are no disruptions to our program.

Back to School Night was held on **Thursday, 8/28**. We met with parents in the sanctuary for a short presentation, distributed updated parent handbooks, discussed changes in policies, important dates to remember and they met all our wonderful staff members. They then got to see their child's classroom and heard from the teachers regarding routines, schedules, etc.

We will be honoring our grandparents/grand friends on **Friday, September 5th** with light refreshments in our gym.

On **Thursday, 9/11**, we are asking that children wear red, white and blue clothing. Boonsboro's 9/11 Remembrance Day Parade 6:30 pm is that evening as well and we will NOT be participating this year so that families can watch this great cause!

Hugs and High Fives, Ms. Kim, Director

OUTREACH MINISTRY NEWS

BOONESBOROUGH DAYS SEPT 6 & 7

We are desperately looking for Boonsborough Days volunteers to assist us at our Annual Boonsboro Days food booth.

Boonsborough Days will be **September 6th and 7th** with setup occurring September 5th in the late afternoon/evening. This event has been our best fundraiser for our church where last year we raised approximately \$4,700, which was distributed to the United Methodist Men's, Women, and Youth accounts. Please help us to raise and support all of our church groups for this once-a-year fundraiser! Due to the popular request, we will be switching from steak and cheese subs to hamburgers with all the fixins.

Other items we sell include sausage breakfast sandwiches/sausage gravy over biscuits, nachos with cheese, ice cream, cobblers, brownies, and floats! A sign-up sheet is being passed around at church and is also on the bulletin board in the Gathering Room for

BOONESBOROUGH DAYS Continued

individuals to donate supplies and to sign up for various shifts. Reach out if you are unable to access the sign-up sheet and we will mark you down!

Please save the date and know you are making it possible for our church to continue to provide its ministry to the community. There are a wide variety of needs from setting up/breaking down, cooks, bakers, preparing plates, cashiers (we accept credit cards), ice cream servers, and many other jobs.

For more details, please see Patty Watson or Don Dorsey.

Don Dorsey



OUTREACH MINISTRY NEWS

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY, OCT 5

We give because God first gave to us. On this Sunday our special offering goes to celebrate the diversity and unity of the Christian community. It is an opportunity to celebrate our unity with Christians around the world. Have you ever attended a worship service in another country or in a church from a different denomination? If you have you noticed differences in the way the service was presented. Guess what? Each service worshiped the same God that we worship, just the way of worshiping is a bit different. Today we honor this diversity and unity by sharing in a special offering that will go to fund scholarships for students. Mt. Nebo has had a number of students benefit from this scholarship program. Let us each give something so that the program can continue. Thank you.

MISSION MOUSE

Mt. Nebo folks, let's come together and support the work of Boonsboro Days. Mt. Nebo's presence at Shafer Park is very important for the Boonsboro Community. We will be serving hamburgers, ice cream, cobblers, brownies, nachos and breakfast items. It is fun to work at the booth and be of service to the community. Take time to check out the sign-up sheets and give an hour or two of your time to help. Help is needed with baking brownies, cobblers, setting up and taking down as well as serving at our booth in Shafer Park.



MICAH'S BACKPACK

Mt. Nebo will begin packing backpacks for Micah's on **Wednesday, Oct 1st** for the 2025-2026 school year. The day will no longer be on Thursdays and it will take place each month on the first Wednesday at Trinity Lutheran Church at 1 p.m. Schedule with dates will be posted soon.

CROP WALK

CROP Walk is on **Sunday, October 12**, and we'd like to start raising money now. There are donation jars at the entrance of the sanctuary and in the gathering room. Please spare any change you can each Sunday to put in them.

CROP WALK Continued

We are working on giving away t-shirts to those who walk and 25% of the donations will go to the *South Washington County Emergency Fund* which supports *Micah's Backpack*. If you are unable to walk, you can give your donation to someone who will be participating.



LET'S FILL THE JARS SO WE CAN FILL SOME STOMACHS! It's time to stop world (and local) hunger.

Patty Watson

VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION

While the Tri State Hope Builders were serving in Kentucky late last September, Hurricane Helene was devastating the area around Asheville, North Carolina. We joined the efforts of the Hindman Methodist Church as they sent supplies to the areas affected by Helene.

This year we will be serving in those areas. They received over 30 inches of rain resulting in significant destruction, fatalities, and infrastructure damage.

We will be working with ASP (Appalachian Service Project) as we did last year. They are very well organized and are one of the easiest relief organizations we have worked with over the years.

The team will be staying at the Gilmer Retreat Center in Elk Park, North Carolina. The facility has housed teams like ours for many years and the facilities fit our needs. I called them several weeks ago and the response was excellent.

Our dates of service are from **Sept 7th—Oct 10th**.

OUTREACH CONTINUED

VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION Continued

We may be involved in every aspect of building from the foundation up, to installing and finishing the trim and paint work.

The team feels the Lord is the one who chooses our destination. We ask our supporters for your prayers for the team's success in serving, safe travels and safety as we work. We have been blessed with excellent support for the cost for fuel, food, housing and building supplies, as these are all needed to serve God's people.

Please consider supporting your VIM Team as we work to help those who have been hurt by Hurricane Helene. All donations can be mailed to Mt. Nebo or placed in the offering plate on Sunday morning. If you write a check be sure to put "VIM" in the note area. If you give cash put it in an envelope and mark your name and VIM on the envelope.

Thank you, Cliff Wright

SHOEBOXES FOR OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

This holiday season, our church is partnering with **Samaritan's Purse** for **Operation Christmas Child**, a global outreach that delivers gift-filled shoeboxes to children in need across more than 170 countries. Each box is a tangible expression of God's love and often the very first gift a child has ever received.

SENDING THE GOSPEL
TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH



Since 1993, over **232 million shoeboxes** have been distributed, and each one opens the door to share the Gospel through local churches. Many recipients also participate in *The Greatest Journey*, a 12-lesson discipleship course that helps children grow in their faith.

What Can You Pack in a Shoebox?

Each shoebox should be packed with **fun, useful, and heartfelt items**. Choose a gender and age group (2-4, 5-9, or 10-14 years), then fill your box with a mix

SHOEBOXES Continued

of suggested items such as:

- **WOW items:** Soccer ball (deflated with pump), doll, stuffed animal, musical instrument
- **Toys:** Puzzles, jump ropes, cars, action figures, building blocks, yo-yos
- **School supplies:** Pencils, pens, crayons, notebooks, erasers, rulers
- **Personal care:** Toothbrush, washcloth, comb, hairbrush, band-aids
- **Accessories:** Socks, hats, t-shirts, jewelry, sunglasses
- **Extras:** Flashlight (with batteries), reusable water bottle, small tools (no blades), photo and personal note



Items NOT Allowed

To ensure safe and smooth delivery, **please do NOT include** the following: candy, gum, chocolate, food, toothpaste, soap, lotions, liquids, medications, vitamins, war-related toys (guns, knives, military figures), breakable items (glass, snow globes), aerosol cans, seeds, fruit snacks, drink mixes, used or damaged items, matches or anything combustible, Bibles (each child receives a Gospel booklet in their language).

How to Get Involved

- Pick up a shoebox at church or use a standard-sized shoebox
- Pack your box and pray over it
- Include a \$10 donation for shipping (online or in the box)

Return your filled box by **November 9, 2025**.

Let's come together to bless children with the joy of Christmas and the hope of Christ.

Every shoebox is a seed of love that can grow into a life transformed by the Gospel.

Patty Young

PICS AROUND MT. NEBO

UMM BREAKFAST



**BLESSING OF THE
BACKPACKS**

PICS AROUND MT. NEBO



PICS AROUND MT. NEBO Continued



**Welcome new members:
The Snyders and The Carters**



SEPTEMBER 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Labor Day Office Closed	2 6p Pickleball	3 6p Pickleball	4 6p Girl Scouts 5p Bells 6p Choir	5 530p B. Days Set-up	6 9a Pickleball 9a-5p Boones- borough Days
7 9a-5p B. Days 10a Community Worship Service @ Shafer Park	8 630p Trustees Meeting	9 6p Pickleball	10 6p Pickleball 6p SPRC Meeting	11 6p 9/11 Remembrance Parade 5p Bells 6p Choir	12	13 830a UMM Breakfast No Pickleball 11a FLC Reserved
14 9a Worship Children's Church Begins	15 630p CLC Advisory Mtg	16 6:30p Council Mtg 6p Pickleball	17 10a UMW Meeting 6p Pickleball	18 6p Girl Scouts 5p Bells 6p Choir	19	20 9a Pickleball
21 9a Worship 10:15a Bible Study	22	23 6p Pickleball	24 Church Conference Forms Due 6p Pickleball	25 5p Bells 6p Choir	26	27 8-9a SHARE Pickup 9a Pickleball
28 9a Worship 10:15a Bible Study	29	30 6p Pickleball				
						

Autumn
Vibes

Mt. Nebo United Methodist Church
134 S. Main Street
Boonsboro, MD 21713

Change Service Requested



*I can do all things
through him who
strengthens me.*

Philippians 4:13