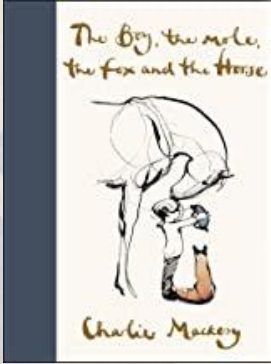


JOY MISSION CHURCH Newsletter

We are a congregation on a mission!



COMING SOON

Spring into Sunday School each week at 9:45 a.m. as we take a walk through Charlie Mackesy's best seller, The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse accompanied by God's all time best seller. This hybrid book and Bible study promises to be refreshing and rewarding. We plan to begin this study on April 3. Bring your own Bible. Mackesy books are provided.



Q. Where will you be on Saturday, 21 from noon-2:30 p.m.?

A. We hope at Advent Lutheran Church in Kings Mountain, NC

Q. Why?

A. To help assemble 300+ hygiene kits with NALC Lutherans from the Carolinas.

The **CAROLINAS MISSION REGION (CMR) SPRING MISSION FELLOWSHIP EVENT** will be **Saturday 21 at Advent at noon**. Our time together will include kit assembly, live music from local praise band Spirit-Driven, a brief worship service, updates from NALC Disaster Response Coordinator, Mary Bates and a delicious lunch prepared by members of Advent. This is our first attempt at something on this scale. Please pray for this event, and come make history as we serve the Lord together! This will be an outdoor event, so bring lawn chairs, sunblock, and bug spray and be ready for fellowship and fun!

Q. What's IS a hygiene kit anyway?

A. A pre-packed sealed storage bag containing basic hygiene items (above right) that people need when they must leave home quickly due to a natural disaster. NALC Disaster Response distributes hundreds, if not thousands of these kits each year in response to disasters all over the United States. The main NALC Disaster Response warehouse is in Ohio, but we have two satellite warehouses here in the Carolinas - one in Statesville, NC and the other in Kings Mountain, NC. Our congregation will be donating 10 bars of soap, 50 XL Ziploc bags, and 200 travel-sized shampoos for the CMR Spring Mission-Fellowship Event.

Please pray for and support our two seminarians from the Carolinas Mission Region.



Kyle Page,
1st year student,
Trinity School for Ministry
(NALS)



Cody Carpenter,
3rd year student,
Gordon-Conwell

We are NOT the mission. Our mission is the Great Commission:

"And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,

baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

And behold, I am with you always, to the end of age." (Matthew 28:18-20)

This is why we exist- to: **Love God. Love neighbor. Serve with joy in Jesus' name.**

JOY MISSION CHURCH

We love God, love neighbor, and serve with joy in Jesus' name through worship, fellowship, and discipleship.

PASTOR'S CORNER

Praying Hard Prayers

So how is your Lenten journey going? Have you been reflecting, repenting, and reorienting your life in Christ? Are you making an effort to fast, give, and pray? Perhaps your prayers include petitions for the people of Ukraine and friends in our own congregation who are in need of healing. I hope so.

But do your prayers also include petitions for enemies, for those whom we have difficulty loving, and for *everyone* who needs to be healed? This is one of the more difficult, and yet also most important disciplines in which we can engage as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Quite honestly, I will admit, it took me by surprise, when at a recent gathering of young people, a colleague from another denomination prayed aloud for President Vladimir Putin. He asked God to soften and change Putin's heart, to stir him to faith and compassion. This prayer should not have come as a surprise to me, but it did.

I began to wonder, "How often do I pray only easy prayers - petitions of intercession for family, friends, and other loved ones for whom I care deeply?" Should our prayers not also and *especially* include those for whom we find it most difficult to pray?

Jesus says, "**But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.**"

(Luke 6:27-28)

O, how these words sting, particularly when wounds are fresh. And yet, praying for our enemies is not only to their benefit, but ours as well. Praying really difficult prayers is often the first, big step toward forgiveness and the wholeness of souls. Like Mother Teresa once said, "If we really want to love we must learn how to forgive."

How did Jesus love us, how did He love *everyone* in the world (even our worst enemies)? He hung on the cross and died for us, for them. And as He did, He prayed, "**Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.**" (Luke 23:34)

As our Lenten journey nears its end, let us disciple ourselves to pray not only the prayers that are easy, but especially those that are not.

Let us pray: Lord Jesus, you love us and so, forgive us. Help us to love as you love, to pray as you pray, and to live as you live. We ask this to your glory and in your holy name. Amen.

In the love and mercy of Christ,
Pastor Paulette



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