

PASTORAL MESSAGE  
For 4/11/20

Up from the grave he arose! Happy Easter!

When I arrived at Balls Mills, folks jokingly said, “We are not quick to change.” But through the years, I have learned that is only true, in the best sense of the word. Balls Mills is not quick to discard old relationships, old values, respect for older generations.

However, I have also learned that you are easily able to change, when new ways of living the Gospel present themselves. A few examples are:

Long ago Balls Mills worshipped in our 1<sup>st</sup> building. For years we have worshipped in our beloved sanctuary, overlooked by the round window of Jesus in the garden. But we know that church is the people, not the building. During this pandemic, we have made the temporary switch to a new thing. We are gathering remotely, and at different times. Tune in our website for our Easter worship video ([www.ballsmillsumc.org](http://www.ballsmillsumc.org))! He is risen!

Christmas Children’s Pageants were done long ago, and continue today. Children’s Parades celebrating the witness and model of faithful members is relatively new, and widely celebrated!

Long-standing Sunday School classes have been faithful for many years, and continue undaunted. New class structures have been created, to create new connections, and address new realities, and are thriving. Small groups have been active, and we look forward to new opportunities again this summer!

Committees and organizational structures have remained stable, through generations of new visionary leaders coming in, and experienced leaders transitioning back to steady workers. The pandemic has only been a little speed bump for the leadership of Balls Mills. Meetings continue unfazed. The administration of the church continues its visionary leadership!

This past week we welcomed a new secretary, Jynelle Gaines! We welcomed a new treasurer, Angel Hamm! We will find opportunities to thank our faithful outgoing ministry partners (Sherry as secretary, Michelle as treasurer), as soon as possible. In the meantime, thank you!

This week the Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) was introduced to Christopher Weems, who will become the newly appointed pastor of Balls Mills on July 1<sup>st</sup>! I am thrilled to welcome Pastor Chris! God is good!

Balls Mills has a legendary focus on children and youth, and leading upcoming generations into the faith! That has not changed. As our ministry partners and leaders, the Bishop and Cabinet have assigned a pastor and family with a son the same age as so many of our children. We thank them for their gift, and affirmation of our story and hope for the future together. We continue to honor the past, and look with excitement and hope into the future!

As we celebrate the Resurrection of the Risen Lord, let us look forward to the future, with joy! God is good, all the time!

Peace and blessings,  
Pastor Chris