



First United Methodist Church Cherryville, North Carolina

THE MESSENGER
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
601 NORTH PINK STREET
CHERRYVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA 28021
Phone (704) 435-6732 Fax (704) 435-4468
firstmethodistcherryville.com

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Rev. Zack Christy
Pastor

Teresa Gardo
Administrative Assistant

Bess Thornburg
Director of Christian Education

Nancy Catena
Organist

Linda Barger
Chancel Choir Director

Andrew Harmon
Handbell Director

Cam Alfaro
Audio Visual Tech.

Mildred Young
FUMC Weekday Preschool Dir.

February Reflection

Romans 4:2 "For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God."

When I was in forth grade, I was watching T.V. and a commercial came on. In the commercial a man held up a 100 dollar bill, I don't know why he did it, but in that moment I made a decision, I wanted to have a 100 dollar bill, and I decided that I was going to do whatever it took to earn it. Well in forth grade I had chores that I had to do each week, if I did all my chores each week at the end of the month, I was given a 10-dollar bill.

So, I worked out a plan with my dad, I would work a whole year without getting paid and at the end of the year, my dad would give me a 100-dollar bill. Now I know what you are thinking, "Zack 10 dollars a month x12 months is 120 dollars" but I believe I have established math is not my strong suit. I did it though for an entire year, I did all my chores each week, and at the end of the year I was given that 100-dollar bill.

I had worked so hard for it; I truly felt that I deserved it. But I had a problem, I had worked so hard for that 100-dollar bill, that I didn't want to use it. It was too precious to me. I had earned that money I could have spent it any number of ways, but I wasn't going to break that bill no matter what. So I put it in a bank and I never took it back out.

I don't think it is uncommon for us to treat our salvation like that 100 dollar bill, even well formed Christians that we are, we need to be reminded that salvation is a gift, not something due. In no way shape or form is God obligated to do anything for us. Yet, God breaks into our lives comes to us, sheds his love all around us, because that is how amazing God is.

God condescends to us, no matter how righteous we think we are we do not ascend to God. No matter how many amazing things we do in this world we will never be worthy of the love of God. Yet, we are made worthy, we are redeemed, we are restored in relationship to God through Jesus Christ. In the church we have a really fancy word to describe what it means for us to be restored and renewed in relationship to God, are you ready for it? We call God restoring us to right relationship with him, grace.

For Paul the proof of grace as a means for salvation, is on full display in the life of Abraham. Paul uses Abraham because Abraham is this towering figure of faith. Abraham is the first person in Scripture to directly make a covenant with God, which he does on several occasions. Abraham is the first to be given law to follow, the law of circumcision, which marks him and all those who are with him as a distinct people. Abraham is a very, very important person. Throughout Scripture Abraham continues to pop up as a hero of faith, and there is very good reason for that.

God makes a covenant with Abraham that through his lineage all nations on earth will be blessed. What Paul does in this Romans passage is reinterpret the story of Abraham in light of the grace we now know through Jesus Christ. Paul says, "If Abraham was justified by works he has something to boast about, but what does Scripture say? Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. A person who works is given wages as something due, but to one who without works trusts God such faith is reckoned as righteousness."

The grace of God came to Abraham free and without strings attached, but Abraham had to make a response, he had to step out in faith to follow where God was leading him. From the story of Abraham we see grace comes first, but then we have a choice to make, a response to that grace, the question we are presented with by the grace of God is will we move in faith towards God's calling on our lives or will we move away from it? Do we choose to live into the grace that God has so freely bestowed upon us by walking in faith? Or do we choose to reject the grace of God and walk our own way trying to justify ourselves?

In order to set us straight, Paul gives us an odd instruction in verse 16, Paul calls for us as Christians and as disciples to "rest in grace." Now, I don't know about you but I find so much comfort in that image. For through the grace of God we are set free from trying to earn the love of God, we are set free from trying to be perfect, we are set free from trying to be good enough, and instead we are called to trust fully and completely in the grace of God, and to move out in faith trusting that God's grace is sufficient. I know we would all be blessed if we took a few moments each and everyday to simply rest in the grace of God, and to celebrate the joy of God's grace.

What would the world look like if we all took a few moments and just rested and celebrated the wondrous love God has wrapped us in. Much like Abraham, much like Paul's point in Romans, I believe we must first rest in the grace of God before we seek to determine how God is calling us to walk out in faith. So I encourage you to rest in the love of God to celebrate grace on this day. But I also hope that you get your walking shoes ready, because we don't rest in grace to twiddle our thumbs, we rest in grace to become renewed in order that we might go out and shine the light of God's love.

Grace and Peace,

Zack Christy

Breakfast

On **Saturday, February 22**, we will have our Community Breakfast. Serving times will be from 7:30 - 10:30 a.m. Come join us for a time of fellowship and a delicious all you can eat breakfast buffet. Cost will be by donation. Our profits have gone toward assisting our local community by giving to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund, to the local "Handy Man's Ministry" for helping with minor repairs to homes, and to our youth for retreats and mission trips. **We hold this event the last Saturday of every month.**



CHILDREN'S CHURCH is held during our 10:30 worship service for all children **3yrs thru 3rd grade**. The children will leave from the sanctuary worship service following the children's sermon and go to a classroom on the educational hall for lessons and crafts. Parents can pick-up their children at the end of worship. A packet will be available outside the sanctuary in the Narthex for children 4th-5th graders or older with pencils crayons and coloring pages and Children's Worship bulletin. Again... **volunteers are needed for Children's Church teachers and helpers.** Please let Bess know if you are willing to help with children's church.



THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR ACOLYTES AND CRUCIFERS

Thanks so much for serving your church as Acolyte and Crucifer. You are an important part of our worship service each week. Please see the below Acolyte/Crucifer schedule for the month of February 2025. As you may have noticed the Acolytes and Crucifers are wearing robes now. This has been very well received by both our congregation and the young people. **Boys are asked**

to please wear long pants under your robe on your week to assist in worship and nice shoes!!!

ALSO PLEASE BE IN THE NARTHEX BY 10:15 A.M. TO GET READY!

ACOLYTE

CRUCIFER

Feb. 2	Riley Shuford	Henry Shuford
Feb. 9	Mallie Emerson	Mikki Jane Emerson
Feb. 16	Zach Harmon	Seth Harmon
Feb. 23	Landry Pruitt	Ava Thornburg

****If you cannot serve on your Sunday, PLEASE contact Bess @ 704-435-6732, cell: 704-836-6803 or 704-435-5185 or switch with one of the other people on the list.****



We are in need of the items listed below of nonperishable items to put in book bags during the month of February. Your generous donations help this mission to be successful and are very much appreciated by those who receive the book bags. We can always use these items, but sometimes the list may change based on the supply of goods we have on hand.

- Feb. 2 Plastic containers of grape jelly
- Feb. 9 Beef Stew
- Feb. 16 Chicken noodle soup
- Feb. 23 Canned peaches

Thank you,
The Backpack Ministry Committee



FEBRUARY NURSERY WORKERS

We are proud to offer an infant nursery, provided each Sunday morning, for our sweet babies during the 10:30 worship service. Our nursery is located at the end of the hall and to your right just below the church office. **A BIG THANK YOU** to all who have agreed to help in the Nursery. Below is the Nursery Workers list for February. You will receive a reminder card and text on your given Sunday. Please let Bess or Susan Beam know if you cannot be there on your Sunday.

Feb. 2	Renee Allen
Feb. 9	Karen Freeman
Feb. 16	Robin Blackburn
Feb. 23	Dawn Whitworth



"4th ANNUAL SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY" FEBRUARY 9TH

The Roman's 12 Sunday School class will be hosting a "Souper Bowl Sunday" lunch following our worship service on February 9 at 11:30 a.m. in the fellowship hall. The cost is donation only. There will be various soups: chili, taco, potato and chicken noodle, with breads, crackers, drinks and desserts! Plan now to enjoy a hearty bowl of soup prior to the Super Bowl LIX event on Super Sunday, February 9th.



RSVP ON THE SIGN-UP SHEET ON THE TABLE IN THE NARTHEX OR IN THE HALLWAY.



Hello my UMYF Friends.... **U.M.Y.F.** (United Methodist Youth Fellowship) meets on Sunday nights at 6:00 pm until 7:30 pm down stairs. I have really missed some of you lately. Our group is for all 6th thru 12th graders. We have been planning for our winter/spring activities. We gather in fellowship each week and of course play games, have our snack suppers, lesson and devotions and make plans for the year. Our lessons coming up in February will be # “LEARNING TO THINK LIKE JESUS” #School #Friends #money #love: **Romans 12:2 - “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – His good, pleasing and perfect will.**

We had a wonderful trip to **The Edge Conference at Ridgecrest!** Thanks to all those who supported our fund raisers and gave contributions to the youth fund so that we could experience such a wonderful weekend in the Spirit! Thanks also to Chrystal and Andrew Harmon for going with us on the trip!

The UMYF will not meet February 9th. Everyone can have a great time enjoying the Super Bowl with your family and friends.

We will meet on the snow tubing slopes on February 23rd. We will again brave our annual **Snow Tubing** trip to **Jonas Ridge Snow Tubing Park** on Sunday afternoon, February 23rd, leaving at 1:00 p.m. from the church. We should return around 6:00 p.m. We will eat at the church before we leave and head up the mountain for a day of fun in the snow. The cost is \$32.00 per person for 1 hour on the tubing course. Our appointment is for 3:00 p.m. There are also drinks and snacks available at the tubing place. Please dress to stay warm and dry! We have learned that dressing in layers is best! Plan to come with us and bring a friend!

Also, our ever-popular **LOCK-IN** plans are in the works for March. We are working on a date to be together from sundown until sunrise and breakfast. The hours of our lock in will be 8:00 pm until 8:00 am. As always fun and games, devotions and shenanigans will go on all night!!!

We will hold several more fund raisers for a summer Mission activity or camps, possibly Carolina Cross Connection or Tekoa Missions camp or FUGE. All of this is TBD as we plan on Sundays! We need everyone’s help and every one’s attendance to get these activities going for our youth group! All 6th thru 12th graders are invited to be a part of UMYF. And **yes, you can Invite!!!**



KINGDOM KIDS KORNER

Well it's hard to comprehend that February is almost here! This year is passing by so quickly. The children sure are missing being able to use our playground! We need some outdoor time!

The only scheduled day off for February is on Monday, February 17th for Presidents Day. Of course, Mother Nature may provide other days off. During this month we will celebrate Groundhog day and Valentines Day.

The children are growing in so many ways and it makes me happy to know that most of them have discovered that **LEARNING IS FUN!** The teachers are working hard to prepare them to move up to their next level.

Early registration for the next school year at Kingdom Kids is encouraged for current students or siblings, as well as our church members. We do tend to fill up quickly. Any spaces not confirmed will be opened to the public on March 1.

Thank you to all who continue to support us at Kingdom Kids!

Ms. Millie

February Birthdays

- 1 Sam Smith
- 2 Amber Grace Brittain
- 2 Hayden Rupard
- 5 Jedidiah Sneed
- 5 Jennifer Wilent
- 5 Paige Yount
- 6 Martha Allen
- 6 Freida Clawson
- 6 Kathy Panton
- 6 James Putnam
- 7 Jacob Ross
- 11 Dennis Bradley
- 11 Hunter Brafford
- 12 Johnny Brown
- 13 Melanie Ross
- 14 Maria Pruitt
- 14 Bobby Putnam
- 14 Justin Winter
- 16 Will Elmore
- 18 Cindy Dellinger Swisher
- 20 Kay Bumgarner
- 20 Terry Moss
- 21 Aiden Sneed
- 22 Lauren Carnes
- 22 Martha Cornwell
- 22 Bennetta Dellinger Dunning
- 22 Rita McGinnis
- 23 Chad Thornburg
- 24 Shaina Anderson
- 24 Aidan Harmon
- 24 Haley Wilent
- 26 T. L. Saine
- 27 MeKenzie Drum
- 27 Morgan Morrow
- 27 Katie Walls
- 28 Kathy Craft
- 28 Zack Fraley
- 29 Hudson Beam
- 29 David Smith

If your birthday is in February and not listed, please contact the church office.



FEBRUARY HOMEBOUND MEMBER TO SEND A CARD

**Mrs. Deanna Daggerhart
2038 Lincolnton Hwy.
Cherryville, NC 28021**

Sunday, February 2

- 9:30am - Sunday School
- 10:30am - Worship
- 4:00pm - Easter Cantata rehearsal
- 6:00pm - Youth

Wednesday, February 5

- 6:00pm - Chancel Choir
- 6:00pm - UMK's
- 6:30pm - Adult Bible Study

Thursday, February 6

- 7:00am - Prayer Breakfast @ Homefolk's

Sunday, February 9

- 9:30am - Sunday School
- 10:30am - Worship
- 11:30am - Souper Bowl luncheon

Wednesday, February 12

- 6:00pm - Chancel Choir
- 6:00pm - UMK's
- 6:30pm - Adult Bible Study

Thursday, February 13

- 7:00am - Prayer Breakfast @ Homefolk's

Sunday, February 16

- 9:30am - Sunday School
- 10:30am - Worship
- 4:00pm - Easter Cantata rehearsal
- 6:00pm - Youth

Monday, February 17

Church Office closed

Wednesday, February 19

- 6:00pm - Chancel Choir
- 6:00pm - UMK's
- 6:30pm - Adult Bible Study

Thursday, February 20

- 7:00am - Prayer Breakfast @ Homefolk's

Saturday, February 22

- 7:30am - 10:30am - Community wide breakfast buffet

Sunday, February 23

- 9:30am - Sunday School
- 10:30am - Worship
- 11:30am - Preschool luncheon (fundraiser)
- 1:00pm - Youth snow tubing at Jonas Ridge
- 4:00pm - Easter Cantata rehearsal

Wednesday, February 26

- 6:00pm - Chancel Choir
- 6:00pm - UMK's
- 6:30pm - Adult Bible Study