

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

November 30, 2022

Vol. XXXIII No. 11

Rev. Zack Christy
Pastor

Teresa Gardo
Administrative Assistant

Bess Thornburg
Director of Christian Education

Nancy Catena
Organist (Interim)

Linda Barger
Chancel Choir Director

Andrew Harmon
Handbell Director

Mildred Young
FUMC Weekday Preschool Dir.

Luke 15:4;7 "Which of you, having one hundred sheep and losing one of them does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? I tell you there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over the ninety-nine righteous people who need no repentance."

This parable from Jesus is one of the more famous ones that he tells. A shepherd having 100 sheep notices that one of them is gone, lost from the flock. Well you know that sort of thing happens, sheep after all are notoriously dim-witted animals, they are slow, fairly lazy, and they tend to just go towards whatever catches their eye at a given time. Jesus says, who among you wouldn't leave the ninety-nine, but the answer is no one would leave ninety-nine to go search for one that is lost. Lord have mercy you probably wouldn't leave sixty to go search for forty. Yet, Jesus tells us God is like that shepherd, and he is out looking for the lost.

Now very often when you hear that statement it sounds like good news, but sometimes even good news can be a bitter pill for us to swallow. When I was twelve, my grandfather retired from preaching for the second time, after his first retirement, five years prior he was sent to two tiny rural churches in Murphy North Carolina, where no one else wanted to go. But that year he had told them it would be his last, he was preparing to retire for his final time and go to Lake Junaluska to live among all the other retired Methodist preachers.

We traveled way up to the Smoky Mountains to hear his final sermon, the whole family in tow. As the service began in little Ranger United Methodist Church, the choir, just a few folks, might have been four in all began to sing his favorite song, "The Ninety and Nine." It's a song about the Lost sheep: "There were ninety and nine safe in the fold." I don't think I have heard it since that service. It's an old, old, hymn.

After they sang, he preached. Before he sat off for Lake Junaluska, John Christy preached. His Scripture, was from Romans 8, about the height and width of the love of God. It was Father's Day, so he talked a little bit about how fathers all love and cherish their children. God loves us even more than that, he said.

Then he spoke about the man who was about to die in the electric chair in South Carolina the next day. His picture had been on the news for a few days leading up to that point. Someone had held a service of remembrance for this man's victims and their families. He had killed a couple of people, maimed others, in his rampage of terror. The preacher at that service had declared that he wished they would let him "throw the switch on this piece of refuse who destroyed these innocent lives." John Christy went into lurid details describing the crimes of this man.

"And yet," he said, "today's scripture, as well as the sweet song we have heard, says that God loves that man on death row, values his soul just as much as God values us." The congregation got real quiet.

“Why, according to Jesus’s story of the lost sheep God will gladly leave us ninety-nine gathered here in the fold this morning and go to Columbia to death row just to get hold of that one lost sheep. And when God finds him, God’s happier to have him than to have all of us safe ones here in church.”

Well after the service, I remember that the folks seemed a whole lot more willing to let granddaddy go off to Lake Junaluska so he could retire with all the other Methodist preachers. There were even some whispers out by the old Oak tree that stood in front of the church that John was too old, maybe a bit too far past his prime. I remember an old man who looked cautiously out the side of his eye as my family walked by who said just loud enough for me to hear, “That was the worst dang (he didn’t say dang) sermon I have ever heard, I came to hear about Jesus, not some stark raving liberal.”

Advent is a season of preparation and a season of waiting. A season in which we are reminded that God shows up in ways we did not expect, and through his intrusion in our world brings about a salvation we didn’t deserve. We are reminded during this season that God continues to show up in strange and amazing ways, and just when we think that we have God all figured out he does the unexpected. As we prepare ourselves to journey once again to Bethlehem, may we be humbled by a love so profound, by a grace so redeeming that even sinners like us have been found by the love of God. Praise be to God!

Grace and Peace,

Zack Christy



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 December. 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.

Dec. 4	Kenan Fowler	Will Fowler
Dec. 11	Sophia Williams	Lydia Bradley
Dec. 18	Bella Thornburg	Ayden Canipe
Dec. 24	Amber Grace Brittain	Zack Harmon
Dec. 25	Landry Pruitt	Grayce Pruitt



CHILDREN’S CHURCH

CHILDREN’S CHURCH during our 10:30 worship service is for all children **3yrs thru 3rd grade**. The children will leave from the sanctuary worship service following the children’s sermon and go to the classroom on the educational hall for lessons and crafts. Parents can pick-up their children and the end of worship. **REMINDER:** A packet will be available outside the sanctuary in the Narthex for children 4th-5th grades with pencils crayons and coloring pages and a Children’s worship bulletin as you learn to remain in the sanctuary for worship. Please let Bess know if you are willing to help with children’s church.



We will have our annual **Christmas Eve Service of Lights** on Thursday, December 24, at 6:00pm.



UMK's



Hello everyone, AND MERRY CHRISTMAS!!

Our UMK's will be singing and presenting our Christmas program: **"Journey to Bethlehem"** at the **10:30 a.m. Worship service on Sunday, December 11. The kids are asked to be there at 9:30 am** to practice and get set up to sing. No costumes are necessary, they are asked to just wear a pretty Christmas outfit. Those that need costumes will have them here at the church. Everyone should have their parts.?? I hope you have been working on them!! They do not have to memorize their parts unless they want to or cannot read it. But I hope they will be very familiar with their **Narration** part so they can clearly deliver it.

*****We will be meeting next Wednesday night, December 7th, at 5:30** to prepare for our program **AND Friday, December 9th, at 3:30** (right after school to practice). This gives us only a few practices before the performance. Also, we will have our **UMK Christmas Party on December 14th** at our regular time 6:00 pm. We will eat, have games and a lesson and have a special treat for all good boys and girls! **We will NOT meet on December 21st, December 28th. or January 4th, but will resume our regular meetings January 11th.**

If anyone has any questions, please call Ms. Bess at 704-435-6732 or 704-435-5185 or 704-836-6803

I hope all of you have a very Merry Christmas and Blessed New Year!!



God Loves You and So Do I!!
Miss Bess

UMK SCHEDULE

Dec. 7 **THANK YOU GOD PSALMS 138**
5:30 **Play Practice Dress Rehearsal for**

"Journey to Bethlehem"

Dec. 14 **CHRISTMAS PARTY /VISITOR FROM**
THE NORTH POLE

UMK Supper Schedule for December:

Dec. 7 subs, chips, cookies

Bess Thornburg, Debbie Gantt, Carol Roberts

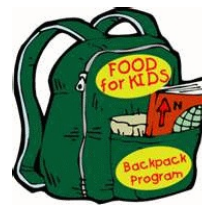
Dec. 14 Breakfast at night, Christmas Party!!

Chrystal and Andrew Harmon

NOTE: UMK SUPPER MENU IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.....



Our UMK Christmas Play "Journey to Bethlehem" will be presented **Sunday morning December 11 at our 10:30 worship service.** Come experience the journey with, Jacob, Joseph, Gabriel, Mary, the Wisemen, Shepherds, Ralphie (a talking sheep), Bible readings and a host of singers and songs to celebrate the arrival of Our Savior Jesus.



The Backpack Ministry is taking another break from shopping in December. The schools have not supplied us with many families in need of backpacks. We have enough supplies to get us through December and we will shop again in January.

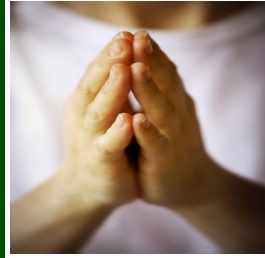
Thank you to all who assist with this program. Your generous donations help this mission to be successful and are very much appreciated by those who receive the book bags.

Thank you,
The Backpack Ministry Committee



UMYF: Regular UMYF meetings are happening at the church, downstairs in the youth room at 6:00 pm until 7:30. We have a great time together eating, studying God's word and of course playing hide and go seek, sardines' style!!! We are planning for the year's activities with our UMYF - "FUMCY" characters! We are continuing to work on our Bible Scavenger Hunt lessons, games and crafts. Our group is growing and we welcome all 6th thru 12th graders!

We have many activities and **Mission Possible** opportunities for the group in December. December 4th we will be decorating the fellowship hall and putting up the tree and working on our Christmas Play. We will also do the **Advent Coffee Bar fund raiser again on December 4.** ALL YOUTHS ARE ASKED TO BE AT THE CHURCH BY 8:30 AM! Proceeds will go for our projects and future retreats. December 11th, the UMYF will be participating in the **"Journey to Bethlehem"** Christmas presentation. Please be here by 9:30 am. Then, we will meet right after church 11:45 and go out for lunch and shop for our Christmas family this year! We should be home around 3:30 ish. December 18th is our Christmas Party! We will meet here at the church at 6:00pm until 7:30. We will be making shut-in gifts and sending Christmas greetings and playing Christmas games. UMYF is for all middle and high school youths. Please read and follow your FUMCY text for more details.



Thursday Morning Prayer Breakfast

The Thursday morning prayer breakfast will continue every Thursday morning at 7:00 am at Homefolks Café. Everyone is welcome! Especially students and parents and grandparents are invited to share a good healthy breakfast before school and food for the soul as you go about your day. A devotion and prayer time is offered for all those that wish to begin their day in fellowship and prayer with other Christians in the community. **THERE WILL BE NO PRAYER BREAKFAST ON DECEMBER 22, DECEMBER 29 OR JANUARY 5.** Please NOTE: Miss Bess will drive our church van and will take any middle school or high school students that need a ride to school. **BUT watch out for the BUMPS!!! LOL ☺**



Breakfast

On **Saturday, December 31**, 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 and also to the local "Handy Man's Ministry" for helping with minor repairs to homes.



KINGDOM KIDS KORNER

It is truly hard to comprehend how quickly this school year is passing! November brings us Thanksgiving, with the promise of Christmas to look forward to. We all have much to be thankful for! We at Kingdom Kids are especially blessed by the families willingness to share their precious children with us! What a joy it is to see the changes in them from day to day and to hear the laughter and singing; to be constantly surprised at how much they are learning. I am also so very thankful for the wonderful staff we have at Kingdom Kids, and for the support we receive from our church family.

We are already practicing and preparing for our Christmas program which is scheduled for Tuesday, December 20th at 7:00 p.m. The children are excited and working hard. Mark your calendars — I can promise you will be blessed by this program.

Ms. Millie



We gratefully acknowledge gifts presented to the church in loving memory of:

BILLY ALEXANDER

Tommy & Renee Allen
Ben & Libby Ballard
Bruce & Chris Barrett
Gail Beam
Steve & Susan Beam
Ben & Robin Blackburn
Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown (Backpack Ministry)
Nancy Catena
Etheleen Dover Sunday School class
Debbie Gantt (Backpack Ministry)
Clarice Harrelson
Janice Hovis
Larry & Barbara McGinnis
Dave & Pam Owens
Ronnie & Jill Puett (Chancel Choir Fund)
T. L. & Miney Saine
Chad, Crystal & Leslie Thornburg (Pastor's Fund)
Jerry Thornburg (Backpack Ministry)
Danny & Teci Webb

NEWELL ALEXANDER

Eddie & Cindy Eaker

CARYL AUSTELL

Billy & Linda Alexander
Stan & Martha Allen
Tommy & Renee Allen
Pam Anthony
Ben & Libby Ballard
Linda Barger
Bruce & Chris Barrett
Gail B. Beam & Ephriam, Jr.
J. L. Beam Men's Bible Class
Steve & Susan Beam
Bob & Cheryl Billinger
Jack & Judy Bingham
Ben & Robin Blackburn
Ken & M'Shel Bowen
Steve & Lynn Bowen
Mac & Jewel Brawley
Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown (Backpack Ministry)
Marsha & David Brown & Sara & Dan Brogerg
Glenn & Cindy Burgess

CARYL AUSTELL

- Continued -

Cindy Burgin & Dianne Dixon
Sandra Carpenter (Backpack Ministry)
Jeff & Cynthia Cash
Nancy Catena
Alan & Cathy Cloninger
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Cornwell
Cotton & Pam Crowder
Chuck & Julie Dellinger
Barry & Wanda Dellinger
Carl & Linda Dellinger
Joe & Sandy Dismukes
Etheleen Dover Sunday School class
Eddie & Cindy Eaker
Kent & Renee Farmer
David & Mary Ferguson
Debbie Gantt (Backpack Ministry)
Milton & Jennifer Gold
Juanita Gunnell
Clarice Harrelson
Jerry Helms
Frank & Danna Henley
Don & Ann Holmes
Steve & Cindy Homesley
Robert & Connie Hoops
Janice Hovis
Palmer & Mary Ann Huffstetler
Gail Jenkins & Jeff Jenkins (Backpack Ministry)
David & Louanna Kiser
Rosaleen & Owen Lennon
Art & Susie Lewis
Eloise Mauney
Harold & Kim Mauney
Linda Mauney
Ken & Darlene Mayhew
Hubert & Pam McGinnis
Larry & Barbara McGinnis
Bill & Quita Moss
Sylvia Norton (Backpack Ministry)
Dave & Pam Owens
Ernie & Betty Parker
Ronnie & Jill Puett
Tom & Judy Randall
T. L. & Miney Saine
Charlie, Clare & Wilson Smith
Shirley Smith
Vernon & Betty Smith
Mary Etta Stephenson
Amy Tallent
Paul & Lynette Taylor
Rob & Chelsi Thomas (Backpack Ministry)
Chad, Crystal & Leslie Thornburg (Pastor's Fund)

CARYL AUSTELL

- Continued -

Jerry Thornburg (Backpack Ministry)
Phyllis Thornburg
Vee & Melanie Thornburg
Larry & Kay Turner
Ron Walls & Family
Danny & Teci Webb
Edward & Marci White

LINDA BEAM

Eddie & Cindy Eaker

ROCKY BENNETT

Billy & Linda Alexander
Tommy & Renee Allen
Ben & Libby Ballard
Linda Barger
Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown (Backpack Ministry)
Eddie & Cindy Eaker
Phyllis Thornburg

PHILLIP BRADLEY

Billy & Linda Alexander

ROBIN DEVENNY

Debbie Gantt (Backpack Ministry)
Juanita Gunnell

EMIL FIELDS

Jack & Judy Bingham

JOY GARREN

Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown (Backpack Ministry)

JUDD HARRELSON

Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown (Backpack Ministry)

RON HOVIS

Billy & Linda Alexander
Gail B. Beam
J. L. Beam Men's Bible Class
Bob & Cheryl Billinger
Glenn & Cindy Burgess
The Chancel Choir
Alan & Cathy Cloninger
Michael & Mary Alice Colo
Barry & Wanda Dellinger
Eddie & Cindy Eaker
David & Mary Ferguson
Frank & Danna Henley
Steve & Cindy Homesley
Eloise Mauney

RON HOVIS

- Continued -

Scott & Frances Mauney
Bill & Quita Moss
Harry & Goldie Queen
Betty Jane Robinson
Mike & Becky Ross (Youth Fund)
Shirley Smith
Jim Summitt
Chad, Crystal & Leslie Thornburg (Pastor's Fund)
Vee & Melanie Thornburg
Ron Walls & Family
Mike & Sarah Young

JOEL MAUNEY

Eloise Mauney

JIM MAXEY

Pam Anthony
Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown (Backpack Ministry)
Donald & Linda Childers
Clarice Harrelson
Chad, Crystal & Leslie Thornburg (Pastor's Fund)
Terry & Mildred Young

WILL MILLWOOD

Jack & Judy Bingham

STEVE MORGAN

Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown (Backpack Ministry)

CINDY PRUETT

Linda Barger
Steve & Lynn Bowen
Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown (Backpack Ministry)
Chad, Crystal & Leslie Thornburg (Pastor's Fund)

MARIE SIGMON

Jack & Judy Bingham
Jerry Thornburg (Backpack Ministry)
Vee & Melanie Thornburg

LARRY SUMMER

Ben & Libby Ballard
Jack & Judy Bingham
Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown (Backpack Ministry)
Larry & Barbara McGinnis
Phyllis Thornburg

JAMES WOOD

Eddie & Cindy Eaker

ELAINE YOUNT

Jack & Judy Bingham
Steve & Lynn Bowen
Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown (Backpack Ministry)
Juanita Gunnell
Gail Jenkins
Phyllis Thornburg



IN HONOR

We gratefully acknowledge gifts presented to the church in honor of:

EPHRIAM BEAM, JR.

Gail Beam

GAIL BEAM

Ruth Gaston

JUDY BINGHAM

Ruth Gaston

M'SHEL BOWEN

Ruth Gaston

THE CHANCEL CHOIR

Ruth Gaston

REV. ZACK CHRISTY

Ruth Gaston

BOB FAIRES

Ruth Gaston

SUSAN FRALEY

Ruth Gaston

TERESA GARDIO

Ruth Gaston

DORIS HUSS

Ruth Gaston

THE PRAISE BAND

Ruth Gaston

BESS THORNBURG

Ruth Gaston



December Birthdays

- 1 Tommy Allen
- 2 Kacee Buff
- 5 Steve Beam
- 5 Robert Smith
- 6 Reid Huss
- 6 Riley Shuford
- 9 Karley Powell
- 10 Fin Beam
- 10 Violet Wallace
- 11 Pierston Elliott
- 11 Tracy Lyles
- 11 Mary Beth Wyatt
- 12 John Warlick
- 15 Stacey Bradley
- 15 Jennifer Mauney Cushman
- 15 Quita Moss
- 17 Gary Freeman
- 18 Dean Starling
- 19 Kelly Brown
- 19 Bryan Flynn
- 20 Carolyn Abernathy
- 20 Scott Aldridge
- 21 Palmer Huffstetler
- 23 Angela Jones
- 24 Rob Elmore
- 25 Harold Mauney, Jr.
- 26 Sara Baity
- 26 Chad Bingham
- 26 Dwight Stroupe
- 27 Sophie Williams
- 28 Angie Anthony
- 28 Jimmy McGinnis
- 29 Will Fowler
- 29 Emily Whitworth Parris
- 30 Carroll Sneed
- 30 Kyle Wilent



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



Mr. Jim Eaton
139 Cricket Creek Dr.
Cherryville, NC 28021

STEWARDSHIP REPORT, NOVEMBER 27
Total Giving To Date \$340,530.13
Needs to Date \$382,580.16

Sunday, December 4

9:00am - Youth Coffee bar
9:30am - Sunday School
10:30am - Worship
? - Cantata Rehearsal
6:00pm - Youth

Tuesday, December 6

7:00pm - Pastor Parish Relations Committee meeting

Wednesday, December 7

5:30pm - UMK's

Thursday, December 8

7:00am - Prayer Breakfast at Homefolk's Café

Friday, December 9

3:30pm - UMK's Christmas program rehearsal

Sunday, December 11 (Children's Program)

9:30am - Sunday School
10:30am - Worship
11:45am - Youth lunch & Christmas shopping
4:00pm - Cantata Rehearsal

Wednesday, December 14

6:00pm - UMK's Christmas Party

Thursday, December 15

7:00am - Prayer Breakfast at Homefolk's Café

Saturday, December 17

4:00pm - Cantata Rehearsal

Sunday, December 18 (Christmas Cantata)

9:30am - Sunday School
10:30am - Worship
6:00pm - Youth Christmas Party

Tuesday, December 20

7:00pm - Preschool Christmas Program

Wednesday - Friday, December 21 - 23

Church Office Closed

Saturday, December 24

6:00pm - Candlelight Service

Sunday, December 25

10:30am - Worship

Saturday, December 31

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

Sunday, January 1

9:30am - Sunday School
10:30am - Worship

Stewardship update: Our 2023 pledge campaign is underway and a special thank you to everyone who has turned in their pledge card. We have received 35 cards totaling \$155,796.00. The finance committee invites all church members to turn in a pledge card. You may bring it by the church office or you may place it in the offering plate on Sunday morning.

DECEMBER USHERS

Gary Freeman, Danny Webb, Reid Huss, Guy Eaker, Vee Thornburg

PRAYER LIST (Members)

Linda Alexander & family, Pam Anthony & family, Bob Austell, Betsy Baity, Dennis Bradley, Mike Burgess, Janet Carter, Deanna Daggerhart, Sandy Dismukes, Jim Eaton, Ruth Gaston, Ken Mayhew, Larry McGinnis, Ray McSwain, Rev. Harry Queen, Phyllis Thornburg, Earlene Williams, and all our homebound and nursing home members.

PRAYER LIST (Family & Friends)

Courtney Bradley, Shirley Fisher, Windy Kirby Gibson, Whitney Ledford, Vicky Clawson Porter, Carolyn Summer, Shayne Turner, Rick Walker, Rick Webb, Greg Yount and our loved ones in the military.

LOVED ONES IN THE MILITARY:

#Ethan Beck, Edward Blackburn, Aron Dickerson, Caleb Dickerson, Jessica Lovell, Cody Spiker.
Church Member