

First United Methodist Church
Cherryville, North Carolina

THE MESSENGER
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
601 NORTH PINK STREET
CHERRYVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA 28021
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MARCH 26, 2025

Vol. XXXVI No. 4

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Organist

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Andrew Harmon
Handbell Director

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Audio Visual Tech.

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FUMC Weekday Preschool Dir.

April Reflection

Jeremiah 29:5-7 "Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf."

Which would you rather hear first, the good news or the bad news? It's a difficult question, and I can find pros and cons for both options. I have a theory, you can challenge it all you want, but I honestly believe it is better to get the bad news first. If you hear the bad news first then the good news takes some of the sting out of it. If you hear the good news first then you are thinking oh goodness what is the bad news. Of course maybe that is just how my mind works, maybe I just want to hear the negative before the positive. I wish that it could be all good news all the time, but that is not the way it is in life, is it? Life is not all honkey-dory all the time. Our actions really do have consequences and for every bit of good news it seems like there is an equal part of bad news. Perhaps that is just the way the world balances out.

I guess the old saying is true, we would not really know how good the good news was if we did not know how bad the bad news was. Hearing the good news in conjunction with the bad news makes the good news sound better and the bad news sound not as bad, at least in my mind.

To me it seems that Israel is in a good news/bad news place in this text from Jeremiah. Israel has been invaded by Babylon, the entire tribe of Judah was taken into exile, the temple was demolished, the Ark of the Covenant is taken away, and the people are forcibly removed from their land. They are enslaved, and made to worship the god's of the Babylonians, many perish when they are walked in shackles from Judah to Babylon. To say this is bad news, is quite the understatement. It is hard to find anything redeeming about this time for the people of Israel.

In this time of desperation God puts his words on the lips of Jeremiah. You might think that in this time of fear and desperation a word of comfort might come. You would be wrong. It is a horrifyingly realistic message that God gives to the people: Thus says, the Lord, "Build houses and live in them, plant gardens, take wives, have sons and daughters, multiply."

I can say with great confidence, this is not the news that the Israelites were hoping to hear. Because essentially what Jeremiah says is, "settle in you are going to be in exile for a while, not only will you have kids, but you will have grandkids in exile." God doesn't tell the people of Israel they are coming home soon. In fact, those who were adults when they were taken captive, those who had grown up on their families land, land that had been passed down generation, after generation. Well Jeremiah tells them they are never going to see that land again, and they are going to die as strangers in a strange place.

As if this news were not already bad enough, if you were thinking there is nothing worse than the sinking knowledge that you will never see your home again, Jeremiah also says, “seek the welfare of the city where you have been sent into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf for in its welfare you will find your welfare.” In other words love your enemies, love these people who have forcibly taken you away from your home, the people who burned down the temple, who killed your friends, pray for them, and do good for them.

Which would you rather hear first, the good news or the bad news? The bad news for Israel here is pretty bad, Jeremiah says, you are not coming home anytime soon, and you are to love your enemies, that surely seems like bad news. But what about the good news, where is the good news here for Israel, for us?

For so long Israel had lived under the assumption that because they were chosen, because they lived in the promise land, because they had the temple they were good they were safe. All that came crashing down with the invasion of the Babylonians, all those assumptions were thrown out of the window. Now the good news for Israel is that those assumptions were not true.

The good news is that God is not contained within a geographical location, God is not constrained by land, by sea, by sky, God is able to redeem God’s people even when they are under the thumb of a vicious and ruthless enemy, stranded in a foreign land surrounded by foreign people. God’s love knows no bounds, that is good news, God is in control that is good news, and God hears the cries of his people even when they are separated from all that they hold dear, even when they have spent centuries turning their back on God, God hears the cries of his people.

If you ask me, the good news in this passage far outweighs the bad news. Because the good news tells us, no matter where we are, no matter what we have done, no matter who we think that we are, God is in control, and God is faithful even when we are not, God’s love does not stop when we leave the comfort of our homes, or the comfort of our church.

Of course it is important to recognize, that very same love does not promise us that we will be spared from hardship in our lives. Even Israel can be sent into exile, but no matter the hardship that appears, know this God is with you, and there isn’t a single place on this earth that you can hide from the love of God. Brothers and sisters this is very good news, and it is news that has been transforming lives and communities, since Babylon.

Grace and Peace,

Zack Christy



The Cherryville Ministerial Association has planned for the **Holy Week services to be held April 14-18, 2025.** These services are held daily at First Presbyterian Church. Service times are 12:05-12:35. There will be a luncheon to follow each day.

We will have a **Community Maundy Thursday service**, on April 17, at 6:00 p.m. at St. John's Lutheran Church.

On Good Friday, April 18, a Cross Walk will be held immediately following lunch. Please meet in front of the church at 1:15. We will follow a route to the City Memorial Cemetery with scheduled stops along the way.

An Easter Sunrise Service will be held on **Sunday, April 20, at 7:00 a.m.** at the City Memorial Cemetery. In case of rain, the service will be held at the FUMC.



On **Saturday, March 29,** 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 April. 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!**

	<u>ACOLYTE</u>	<u>CRUCIFER</u>
April 6	Riley Shuford	Henry Shuford
April 13	Landry Pruitt	Emma Pruitt
April 20	Grayce Pruitt	Rosiland Shuford
April 27	Mikki Jane Emerson	Ella Shuford

****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.****



APRIL 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 **April**. 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.

- April 6 Maria Pruitt
- April 13 Bobbi Ballard
- April 20 Chrystal Harmon
- April 27 Kaci Beck



We are in need of the items listed below of nonperishable items to put in book bags during the month of April. 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.

- April 6 Macaroni and Cheese
- April 13 Green Beans
- April 20 Canned Corn
- April 27 Canned Peaches

Thank you,
The Backpack Ministry Committee

LET THE GAMES BEGIN!!!!

"BE A HOMERUN HITTER IN YOUR CHURCH ATTENDANCE"

SUNDAY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE RAFFLE AND DRAWING!



Beginning April 6th, the first Sunday in April, the Education committee will sponsor a Sunday School and Church Attendance Raffle! This is not your ordinary raffle! You don't have to buy a ticket, you earn one. Every time you attend a church function you will earn a ticket! Your name will go on a ticket and it will go in the prize box. There will be 4 Grand Prizes given away on Sunday May 4th between SS and worship at our **FIELD OF DREAMS** coffee and doughnut inning stretch. You can earn a RAFFLE ticket by coming to Sunday School, Bible Study, UMKs, or UMYF. And as an added bonus, you can earn an extra ticket for every friend or visitor you invite and bring with you! Tickets and game envelopes will be placed in each SS room for you to put your name in when you attend and it will be placed in the prize box for the drawing. The more you attend church the more chances you have of being a winner!!



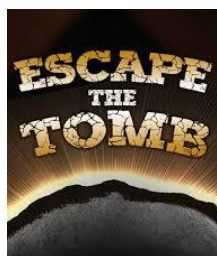
So Let the Games Begin and have ALL-STAR ATTENDANCE!

APRIL 6 * IT'S GAME ON!!! *** HIT A HOMER FOR JESUS! ***STEP UP TO THE PLATE*****



UNITED METHODIST KIDS / UMKs

Our Wednesday night UMK's spring 2025 session is a great place to be. We meet in the fellowship hall each Wednesday evening at 6:00 p.m. for our supper/game time, and at 6:30 move into the sanctuary for object lessons, skits, singing and offering. Then from 7:00 to 7:25 we will have bible study and lesson time down stairs. Then we head outside to the playground for vespers and closing prayers. All 3-year-olds thru 5th graders are invited to come and join in the fun with our United Methodist Kids from 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. For the spring months we will begin on the playground, weather permitting, and leave from there also.



ESCAPE THE TOMB

- Apr. 2 "Stick Together". Mark 14:43-50,
Mark 15:6-15 / Disciples Flee
- Apr. 9 "Doomed" Mark 15:21-47
The Crucifixion
- Apr. 13 10:30 a.m. Wave Palms during
Palm Sunday worship**
- Apr. 16 "Free" Mark 16:1-8
Jesus is Alive
- Apr. 19 10:00 a.m. EASTER EGG HUNT**
- Apr. 20 10:00 a.m. UMKs sing during
EASTER SUNDAY worship**
- Apr. 23 NO UMK'S EASTER HOLIDAY**
- Apr. 30 UMK's last meeting - cookout and fun day

UMK Supper Schedule for APRIL

- Apr. 2 Corn Dogs, Tots, dessert
Members of UMW / Susan Beam
- Apr. 9 Pizza, Chips and dessert
Men's Bible Class / Tim Pruitt
- Apr. 16 Chicken Nuggets & Mac n cheese & dessert
Pam Anthony Cannon
- Apr. 23 NO MEETING - EASTER BREAK**
- Apr. 30 Hot Dogs / Hamburgers, chips & ice cream
FUMC and UMK Parents

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

If anyone would like to volunteer to prepare and serve UMK Suppers please let Bess know! Thanks to all those who have so willingly served and provided supper during the year!!



EASTER EGG HUNT CELEBRATION

This year's Easter Egg Hunt and celebration will be Saturday morning, April 19 at 10:00 a.m. here at the church. We will begin our Easter festivities in the fellowship hall with refreshments. Then we will do crafts, Easter story time and games fun. The egg hunt will then move outside for the Easter Egg Hunt and Golden Egg challenge. All children up to 5th grade are invited to join in the "eggs-citement." Please bring your easter basket and be ready to fill it with eggs and prizes. We should be finished around 11:30. **Pray for no rain that day!!**





IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN!!!

We are planning for our annual Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 19th, to be held here at the church.

WE NEED EGGS - PLEASE !!!

The pre filled plastic eggs work great for our children or even the empty plastic eggs will do and we can fill them with candy and surprises.

Our SS classes and FUMC Church members are always so generous to help provide candy and eggs and that is always appreciated!!

The eggs need to be at the church by Sunday, April 13th.

You can bring them to Bess or leave them in the box outside the church office.

THANKS AGAIN FOR HELPING!!!!



Hello my UMYF Friends....U.M.Y.F. (United Methodist Youth Fellowship) meets on Sunday nights at 6:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. 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 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 April will be "TABOO" and continuing our study on 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 have been enjoying the game "TABOO" now we will look at what the Bible teaches us is really "taboo."



Also, our ever-popular **LOCK-IN** plans were postponed until a summer night. We will be locked in together from 8:00 pm until 8:00 am. As always fun and games, devotions and shenanigans will go on all night!!! Watch for our new date and details.

The UMYF will be helping with the Easter Egg Hunt and preparations on April 19th. We need everyone's help to decorate, hide and stuff our Easter eggs.

We will also have UMYF summer adventure days this summer some will be fun, some will be work, some will be missions and some learning what God's word means to us every day!

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!!!



Prayer Breakfast

NOTE: Prayer Breakfast will not meet on Thursday, April 24th due to Easter Holiday. We will resume

meetings on May 1. Our prayer breakfast is such a blessing to all who attend. It's a great start to our school day, work day or any day! We are meeting at Homefolk's Café at 7:00 a.m. every Thursday morning to feed our tummies, our souls and our hearts with friendships, devotions and prayer time before school. Everyone of all ages and all denominations are invited to join the prayer breakfast group! Our church van will be there to provide a ride to school for anyone who needs it. BUT Buckle UP! There may be a BUMP in the road!!!



KINGDOM KIDS KORNER

Even though the calendar says it is spring, it seems as if Mother Nature keeps trying to confuse us. We have enjoyed being able to spend some time outside on the playground. We do have to remind ourselves that we have only April and May left in this school year.

We have seen growth in the students — physically, of course, but also emotionally and academically. The children share so much love with our staff. What a blessing it has been for me to be a part of this great program for so many years!

We are looking forward to Easter and our spring break, and are already working toward our graduation program which will be on May 20th.

We truly appreciate those of you who show support for our preschool program. Continue to pray for our program as we close out this school year and plans move forward for the upcoming year.

Ms. Millie

FFF: FIT FAB FUN BUNCH

FFF BUNCH MARK YOUR CALENDAR!



Trust me you do not want to miss this!!!!

The Fit Fab Fun Bunch will have a blast laughing and learning as we enjoy the new hilarious production of “Ain’t Got No Men!” The Fun Bus will leave at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, May 10th for the 12-noon lunch and show at the Narrowway Theater in Fort Mill, South Carolina. The tickets are \$53.00 each and I have reserved 12 tickets for now. We can get more if needed.

We should be home around 3:30 ish. PLEASE LET BESS KNOW ASAP IF YOU PLAN TO GO.

PRAYER LIST (Members)

Kent Ballard, Michael Beam, Steve Bowen, Dennis Bradley, Mac & Jewel Brawley, Mike Burgess, Deanna Daggerhart, Ruth Gaston, Andrew Harmon & family, Reid Huss, Ken Mayhew, Dave Owens, Dave Plake, Rev. Harry Queen, Vernon & Betty Smith, Todd Sorenson, Jim Tate, Ron Walls, Wayne & Belinda Watts, and all our homebound and nursing home members.

PRAYER LIST (Family & Friends)

Alan Cannon, Tim Chambers, Mary Crocker, Becky Estes, Rick & Gail Ford, Steve Kale, Wayne Messer, Marcus & Katherine Moss, Parks Peak, Keys Pendleton, Jennifer Pruitt, Leslie Queen, Carson Reed, Carolyn Summer, Carmen Sumner, Rick Webb, Matt Williams, Greg Yount and our loved ones in the military.

LOVED ONES IN THE MILITARY:

#Ethan Beck, Edward Blackburn, Caleb Dickerson,
*Hunter Haire, *Jessica Lovell, Paxton York.
Church Member, *Deployed



The Cherryville Area Ministries and the Second Harvest Food Bank will sponsor a **Mobile Food Pantry** on **Thursday, April 10,**

at 10:00 a.m. in the St. John’s Lutheran Church Dixie Street parking lot. Volunteers are needed to distribute the food and to unpack the trucks and food boxes and need to be there by 9:00 a.m. If you can help, please let Bess Thornburg know at the church office.



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

BONNY ALEXANDER

Bruce & Chris Barrett
Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown
Gail & Jeff Jenkins
Rob & Chelsi Thomas
Danny & Teci Webb

ERIC CARPENTER

Steve & Susan Beam
Sandra Carpenter (Playground Fund)
Sylvia Norton (Playground Fund)

BETTY CLONINGER

Jack & Judy Bingham (Playground Fund)
Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown

RYAN DELLINGER

Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown

BOB FAIRES

Jack & Judy Bingham (Playground Fund)
Chad, Crystal & Leslie Thornburg

CHARLIE HARMON

Linda Barger
Steve & Susan Beam
Ben & Robin Blackburn
Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown
Nancy Catena
Richard & Martha Cornwell
Juanita Gunnell
Dave & Pam Owens (Playground Fund)
Mr. & Mrs. Vee Thornburg
Danny & Teci Webb

LINDA LEWIS HELMS

Jack & Judy Bingham (Playground Fund)

LAURA KEY

Jack & Judy Bingham (Playground Fund)
Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown

JEFF LINGERFELT

Pam Anthony
Linda Barger
Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown
Juanita Gunnell

BRENDA LOWE

Jack & Judy Bingham (Playground Fund)

ELOISE MAUNEY

Jack & Judy Bingham (Playground Fund)
Jeff & Cynthia Cash
Richa Clark
Clarice Harrelson
Chad, Crystal & Leslie Thornburg

RAY MCSWAIN

Pam Anthony (Playground Fund)
Steve & Susan Beam
Jack & Judy Bingham (Playground Fund)
Nancy Catena
Charles & Sandra Childers,
Debbie Gantt (Backpack Ministry)
June Medlin Sunday School class
Danny & Teci Webb

DONNA SMITH

Chad, Crystal & Leslie Thornburg

JERRY DALE WHITE

Jack & Judy Bingham (Playground Fund)
Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown

STEPHANIE WILLIS

Jack & Judy Bingham (Playground Fund)
Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown
Tad Huffstetler



April Birthdays

- 1 Nancy Catena
- 2 Mallie Emerson
- 2 Terry Young
- 3 Gail Beam
- 3 Elizabeth Austell Shuford
- 3 Vernon Smith
- 4 Molly Whitworth Carpenter
- 7 Carol Metzger
- 7 Emily Grace Nytko
- 10 Linda McQuaige Dellinger
- 11 Nick Brown
- 12 Molly Wright
- 14 Linda Kale Barger
- 14 Suzanne Day
- 14 Mike Wallace
- 15 Colton Ballard
- 16 Mitchell Bowen
- 18 David Baity
- 18 Ephie Beam
- 18 Mary Etta Stephenson
- 19 Todd Sorenson
- 20 Mabry Freeman
- 20 Mary Wiles
- 21 Wesley Anthony
- 21 Linda Brittain
- 21 Chrystal Harmon
- 22 Dawn Moss
- 22 Holly Skibo
- 23 Travis Dellinger
- 23 Susan Fraley
- 25 John Dimiceli
- 25 Eddie Ledford
- 27 Grayson Cushman
- 27 Dartha Stroupe
- 28 Tricia Beall
- 28 Sam Dellinger
- 29 Scott Beam
- 29 Madison Moss Dellinger
- 29 Dylan Freeman
- 30 Seth Harmon



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



APRIL HOMEBOUND
MEMBER TO SEND A CARD

Mr. Ken Mayhew
507 Spring Street
Cherryville, NC 28021

Sunday, March 30

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

Wednesday, April 2

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

Thursday, April 3

7:00am - Prayer Breakfast @ Homefolk's

Sunday, April 6

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

Wednesday, April 9

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

Thursday, April 10

7:00am - Prayer Breakfast @ Homefolk's

Sunday, April 13 (Palm Sunday)

9:30am - Confirmation Class
9:30am - Sunday School
10:30am - Worship
6:00pm - Youth

Monday - Friday, April 14 - April 18

12:05 - Holy Week Services
at First Presbyterian Church

Wednesday, April 16

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

Thursday, April 17

7:00am - Prayer Breakfast @ Homefolk's
6:00pm - Community Maundy Thursday service
at St. John's Lutheran Church

Friday, April 18

Following Holy Week services
1:15pm - Cross Walk to City Cemetery from
First Presbyterian Church

Saturday, April 19

10:00am - Easter Egg Hunt

Sunday, April 20 (Easter)

7:00am - Easter Sunrise Service at City Memorial
Cemetery

9:30am - Confirmation Class

9:30am - Sunday School

10:30am - Worship

Wednesday, April 23

No UMK's

No Adult Bible Study

Thursday, April 24

No Prayer Breakfast @ Homefolk's

Saturday, April 26

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

Sunday, April 27

9:30am - Confirmation Class

9:30am - Sunday School

10:30am - Worship

6:00pm - Youth

Wednesday, April 30

6:00pm - UMK's last meeting / cookout & fun day



We will adorn the Easter Cross again this year with flowers on Easter Sunday, April 20, prior to Worship. As you enter the church for Worship, the cross will be located in the Narthex for placing your flowers. We will also have time at the end of the service to place flowers if the cross is moved to the front of the church when you arrive.