

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](http://firstmethodistcherryville.com)

**FEBRUARY 25, 2026**

**Vol. XXXVII No. 3**

Rev. Zack Christy  
Pastor

Teresa Gardo  
Administrative Assistant

Bess Thornburg  
Director of Christian Education

Nancy Catena  
Organist

Cam Alfaro  
Audio Visual Tech.

Trinity Smith  
FUMC Weekday Preschool Dir.

---

March Reflection

**Philippians 1:6** *"I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ."*

Howdy,

On March 8 during our 10:30am worship service we are going to open a time capsule. One that was placed by the saints of First UMC Cherryville, in 1973. Following the worship service we will have a reception in the Fellowship Hall, filled with snacks from the 1970's. Inside the time capsule are the voices, memories, and hopes of another generation of people who worshiped where you worship, prayed where you pray, and trusted God for a future they would never see. And now, **you** are that future.

Moments like this invite us to look both backward and forward at the same time. We remember with gratitude what God has done, and we listen with hope for what God is still doing. The words of the apostle Paul offer a fitting foundation for this moment.

In Epistle to the Philippians Paul writes: "I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ." Those who sealed that time capsule in 1973 were living inside that promise. They believed that God had begun something good in this congregation. They trusted that the work did not belong to them alone. And they were confident that long after they were gone, God would still be at work here.

Their confidence was not in programs, buildings, or even in their own strength. Their confidence was in God. Think about the world they were living in. The early 1970s were not simple or settled times. The nation was divided. Cultural change was rapid. Many institutions, including the church, were facing uncertainty. And yet, in the middle of that uncertainty, this congregation worshiped, served, gave, and prayed. They taught children the stories of Scripture. They sang hymns that carried faith across generations. They cared for the sick, welcomed the stranger, and kept the doors open.

And at some point, they placed items into a capsule and sealed it, trusting that the church would still be here. They were living Philippians 1:6. They believed that the good work God had begun would continue. And here you are. Their faith was not misplaced. Their prayers carried farther than they knew. Their ordinary acts of faithfulness became the foundation of our present ministry.

This is one of the great truths of the church: most of God's work happens through ordinary, steady faithfulness over time. Week after week. Prayer after prayer. Gift after gift. Generation after generation. And now, the promise of Philippians turns toward you. Because opening a time capsule is not only about

honoring the past. It is also about recognizing that you now stand where they once stood—between what God has done and what God is still doing.

The world today is different from 1973 in ways they could never have imagined. Technology has reshaped daily life. Communities have changed. Patterns of church participation look different. Many congregations feel the pressure of uncertainty and transition. It would be easy to feel anxious about the future. But Philippians 1:6 reminds us that the future of the church has never depended on stability, popularity, or cultural influence.

The future of the church depends on God. “The one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion.” Notice the subject of the sentence. God began the work. God continues the work. God will complete the work. This congregation does not belong to any one generation. It belongs to the God who is faithful across generations. The same Spirit that stirred hearts here in 1973 is still moving among you. The same gospel that was proclaimed then still has power to transform lives today. The same Christ who sustained this church through seasons of growth, challenge, change, and renewal is still leading you forward.

Opening this time capsule is a reminder: God has been faithful. And if God has been faithful, God will be faithful. But Philippians 1:6 is not only a comfort. It is also a calling. Because the way God brings the work to completion is through people who trust him in their own time.

Those who sealed that capsule did not see the baptisms that would happen decades later. They did not see the children who would grow up in faith, the families who would be comforted, the lives that would be changed through ministries they helped sustain. They planted seeds they would never see grow. Now it is your turn.

What kind of faithfulness will future generations thank God for? Who are the children and youth today who need a church that believes in them? Who in our community is waiting for welcome, healing, or hope? What ministries, acts of compassion, and risks of faith will become the testimony someone discovers fifty years from now? Faithfulness rarely feels dramatic. It looks like worship offered week after week. Prayers spoken quietly. Meals delivered. Lessons taught. Hands held. Doors kept open. Generosity given. Love practiced.

It may feel ordinary. But ordinary faithfulness is how God carries his work forward. One day, another generation may stand where we stand now. They may open something we leave behind. And perhaps they will say what you can say today: “They trusted God. They stayed faithful. They believed the work was not finished.” Because that is the promise we live under. The work is not finished.

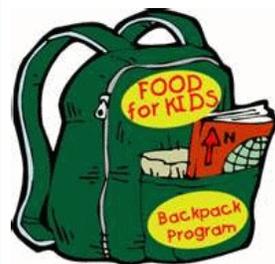
God is not finished with this congregation. God is not finished with your ministry. God is not finished with your community. And the best chapters of God’s work among you may still be ahead. So, as we open this time capsule, we do so with gratitude for the saints who came before us. Give thanks for the good work God began in us. Rejoice in the good work God is doing among us now. And step into the future with confidence—not in your own strength, but in the promise of God: **The one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion. Grace and peace to you as you continue the work.**

Grace and Peace,

Zack Christy



**BIBLE STUDY** with Pastor Zack will continue on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. in the June Medlin Classroom.

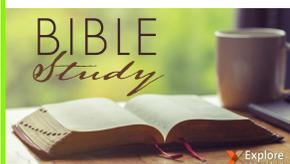


The Backpack Ministry is in need of the items listed below of nonperishable items to put in book bags during the month of March.

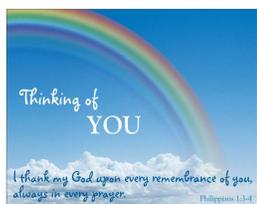
Thank you to all who assist with this program. Your generous donations help this mission to be successful and are very much appreciated by those who receive the book bags.

- Mar. 1 Canned tuna
- Mar. 8 Fruit cocktail
- Mar. 15 Spam
- Mar. 22 Mac & Cheese
- Mar. 29 Chicken & dumplings

Thank you,  
The Backpack Ministry Committee



A new Bible Study will be meeting every other Thursday at the home of Phyllis Thornburg at 10:00 a.m. **Our next meetings will be on Thursday, February 26, March 12 and March 26.** We hope that you will be able to join us for this study.



**"GREETING CARD OUTREACH"**

**Sunday, March 8**

We will have cards available for signing on Sunday, Mar. 8 to send to our church family or members of our church who are sick, or home bound, or who may be struggling. Also, there are many friends in our community who need some love. In an effort to reach out to others, there will be various cards available for you to sign for our shut-ins or members of our church or community on the second Sunday of each month. These cards will be set up on a table in the narthex for you to drop by and sign.



The missions and evangelism committees are hosting a blanket drive. The goal is to

get blankets that will then be given to the police and firemen as they encounter those who need warmth. When you are out shopping if you see a blanket, please pick it up, as it will help keep someone warm during these cold months. If you have any questions please reach out to Crystal Thornburg and Susan Fraley.



Each Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m. we offer coffee and doughnuts before Sunday School for a time of gathering.



Our cereal collection will carry on each month as we continue to partner with St. John's Lutheran Church God's Work Our Hands Outreach Ministry. The collection box will be in the narthex. Our goal is to collect 100 boxes each month. Watch for sales especially at Food Lion.



**CHILDREN'S CHURCH** is held during our 10:30 worship service for all children **3yrs thru 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> 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 **March 2026**. **Acolytes and Crucifers will resume wearing robes.** This has been very well received by both our congregation and the young people. **ALSO PLEASE BE IN THE NARTHEX BY 10:15 a.m. TO GET READY!**

**\*\*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. \*\***

	<u>ACOLYTE</u>	<u>CRUCIFER</u>
Mar. 1	Ella Shuford	Ava Thornburg
Mar. 8	Hunter Brafford	Landry Pruitt
Mar. 15	Emma Pruitt	Grayce Pruitt
Mar. 22	Sophia Williams	Lydia Bradley
Mar. 29	Artimus Shuford	Rosiland Shuford

**\*\*\*NOTE TO ACOLYTES\*\*\*PLEASE WEAR YOUR ROBE WHEN YOU GO BACK TO EXTINGUISH THE CANDLES AT THE END OF THE SERVICE.**



**ACOLYTE/CRUCIFER TRAINING  
MARCH 1 AT 5:00PM**

Hi Guys, First of all, thanks to all of you who have so faithfully served as acolyte and crucifer for the past few years. Your service to your church is so important to our worship services. You have done a great job in presenting the light and the cross and setting the spirit for our worship time together.

It is time to hold a new acolyte training and crucifer class to learn and refresh and practice presentation of the light and cross to our service. You are invited to serve as acolyte and crucifer during the coming year and to attend a training class on **Sunday, March 1 at 5:00 p.m.** in the church sanctuary. Even if you have attended class and have been trained in the past, it is still **very important that you be at this meeting.** We will be working on the acolyte and crucifer working together to **correctly** present and extinguish the light and the cross.

And **NO** you are not too young or too old to do this. It is my hope to use the older, stronger youths to bear the cross and serve as crucifer because the cross is heavy and needs to be carried correctly. Sooooo..... All 4<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> graders are invited to attend this class and serve your church during worship.

Thanks for your willingness to serve FUMC!

See ya on the 1<sup>ST</sup>  
Miss Bess



## MARCH 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 **March**. 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.

Mar. 1 Kristen Freeman  
Mar. 8 Susan Fraley  
Mar. 15 Bobbi Ballard  
Mar. 22 Emily Parris  
Mar. 29 Maria Pruitt



The Pastor Parish Relations Committee is seeking applicants to fill the position of Director of Music Ministries. Primary responsibilities include directing the Sanctuary Choir for Sunday worship:

- Prepare and conduct weekly choir rehearsals
- Work with the Director of Christian Education for Children and Youth to develop and lead music ministry opportunities for K-12 students.
- Recruit, welcome, and train new musicians

Interested applicants may contact Palmer Huffstetler at [palhuf@gmail.com](mailto:palhuf@gmail.com) or the church office.

# Breakfast

On **Saturday, February 28**, we will have our Community Breakfast. Serving times will be from 7:30 - 10:00 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.**

Anyone who would like to volunteer to fill in or help with the breakfast, please contact Bill Moss or the church office.



## Romans 12 SS Class News

The Romans 12 SS Class would like to say a big THANK YOU to everyone who participated in our Annual "Souper Bowl" Soup lunch Feb 8. A special thank you to Renee Allen, Bobbi Ballard, Susan Beam, and Lynn Bowen, for helping out with desserts. Thank you all for the generous donations. With your help, we raised over \$400.00 to use in our church ministries, and community outreach.



## Prayer Breakfast

Prayer Breakfast meets every Thursday morning before school at 7:00 a.m. Start your day off with a time of fellowship and prayer together with other students, parents, grandparents and friends of all ages. Our prayer breakfast is such a blessing to all who attend. It's a great start to our school day, work day or anyday! We are meeting at Homefolks Café at 7:00 a.m. on Thursday mornings 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 or Miss Bess will be there to provide a ride to school for anyone who needs it.



Hello my UMYF Friends.... U.M.Y.F. (United Methodist Youth Fellowship) meets on Sunday nights at 6:00 until 7:30 p.m. downstairs. I have really missed some of you lately! Our group is for all 6<sup>th</sup> thru 12<sup>th</sup> 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, devotions and make plans for the year. You are welcome to invite a friend to join our group.

Our lessons and devotions for the next several weeks will be based on Kyle Idleman's **"NOT A FAN."** We will look closely at Jesus's invitation to follow Him. Not just as an interested "fan" or enthusiastic admirer but a completely committed follower of Christ. We will work with DVD stories and examples and daily scriptures.

We will be working on filling the food box and doing toiletries and participating in the blanket drive and a Lock-In possibly in March. Also, we are working on some new fund raisers in the future. We need your help to plan and your input for our activities!

## fff fit fab fun bunch



### DO YA WANNA SEE ELVIS AGAIN!

Well, you're in luck because on Saturday evening, May 16<sup>th</sup> the FFF bunch will travel to Newton Performing Arts Center in Newton, NC to experience the Elvis tribute by Stephen Freeman. Stephen is from NC and has presented shows all over the southeast including cruise ships as an Elvis tribute performer. The show will begin at 7:30 p.m. doors open at 6:30 p.m. The cost is \$40.00 per ticket for the one night, once in a lifetime show. We will leave from the church at 4:00 p.m.

**VERY IMPORTANT-TICKETS ARE SELLING FAST!! SO PLEASE LET BESS KNOW ASAP IF YOU WANT TO GO SO SHE CAN GET YOUR TICKET AND GET YOUR SEAT!!**

AND of course we will eat on the way to enjoy the show!! You don't want to miss this fun night of dinner and a live show! Anyone 60 and older is invited to be a part of this energetic bunch of Senior adults.

Remember, today is the oldest you've ever been and the youngest you'll ever be again! So, enjoy yourself today!!!!



# UMK's

Our Wednesday night UMK's are going strong for the winter 2026 session. We are meeting in the fellowship hall each Wednesday evening at 6:00 pm for our supper/game time, and at 6:30 move in to 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 back up to the sanctuary for vespers and closing prayers. All 3-year-olds thru 5<sup>th</sup> graders are invited to come and join in the fun with our United Methodist Kids from 6:00 – 7:30pm. For the winter months we will enter at the side door near the kitchen and leave from there also. Our lessons will be based on the stories and scripture

behind connection **6 7 ?!**

## UMK LESSONS FOR MARCH



# PSALM 67

- Mar. 4: Lesson 3 God's Missions Psalm 67:3
- Mar. 11: Lesson 4 God's Guidance Psalm 67:4
- Mar. 18: Lesson 5 God's Praiseworthiness  
Psalm 67:5
- Mar. 25: Lesson 6 God's Provision Psalm 67:6

## UMK Supper Schedule for March

- Mar. 4 Chicken nuggets, tots, Lil Debbies  
June Medlin Class
- Mar. 11 Corn dogs, fries and cookies  
Will & Susan Carswell
- Mar. 18 Taco night  
Renee Allen & M'Shel Bowen
- Mar. 28 TBA

**\*\*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!!**



After many hours of planning and years of fund raising, we have completed our playground upgrades. The total cost for the upgrades were:

- \$70,394.22 - cost for upgrades
- \$62,302.22 - received from donations
- \$8,092.00** - still needed to fund project.

The UMK's, Youth, Preschool and scouts are enjoying the improvements that are already in place. Please remember this fund when making memorials or special gifts to the church.



## KINGDOM KIDS KORNER

It's hard to believe that it is almost March. This year has really been flying by. Our children have been growing in their academics, friendships, taller, and most important their Faith. We started the month with snow and ended the month with sunshine and warmth; which we have really enjoyed. Next month we will start off with "Read Across America" in remembrance of Dr. Suess.

Monday - Cat in the Hat, wear a hat; Tuesday - Fox in Socks, wear crazy socks; Wednesday - Wacky Wednesday, dress wacky or wear wacky hair; Thursday - Horton Hears a Who, dress like your favorite character; Friday - we will end with Cozy up with a book and wear our PJs! We will be posting pictures on our Facebook page so look for those.

We will be learning about Spring, space, weather, St. Patrick's Day, rainbows and Meteorologists.

March 6<sup>th</sup> is Employee Appreciation Day, so we will be having a little gift and breakfast for our amazing Kingdom Kids teachers!

Trinity Smith

### PRAYER LIST (Members)

Linda Alexander, Michael Beam, Steve Bowen, Dennis Bradley, Mac & Jewel Brawley, Mike Burgess, Deanna Daggerhart, Ruth Gaston, Reid Huss, Archie Mitchell, Dave Owens, Vernon & Betty Smith, Amanda Sorenson, Todd Sorenson, Sandra Tate & family, Ron Walls, Wayne & Belinda Watts, and all our homebound and nursing home members.

### PRAYER LIST (Family & Friends)

Connie Blackmon, Will Carswell & family, Mary Crocker, Danny Eaker, Becky Estes, A. J. Henley, Steve Kale, Jennifer Pruitt, 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

### MARCH USHERS:

Johnny Brown, Ethan Beck, Ken Bowen, Stacey Bradley, Chuck Dellinger

### STEWARDSHIP REPORT: FEB. 22, 2026

Received to Date . . . . . \$50,931.90  
Needs to date . . . . . \$70,566.56

### OTHER FUNDS RECEIVED YTD:

Church Building Renovations . . . . . \$1,640.00  
Endowment Fund . . . . . \$50.00  
Backpack Ministry . . . . . \$420.00  
Pastor's Discretionary Fund . . . . . \$160.00  
Playground Fund . . . . . \$1,280.00  
Youth Missions . . . . . \$40.00  
Young Preschool Scholarship . . . . . \$115.00

**BUDGET CATCH UP**

I don't know about y'all but when I miss a Sunday service at church, my week feels somewhat off, almost like there is an itch I can't scratch. Back at the start of February we experienced an unprecedented weather event whereby we were unable to worship for two consecutive weeks. Indeed it was beautiful to witness the snow, but those two weeks have left a hole in our worship life and our giving. While we can't make up for the lost time, we can catch up! That's why on March 29 we are going to have a catch up Sunday. Because this Sunday will be Palm Sunday, we are going to tie our "catching up" into our celebration of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

**2026-2027  
PRESCHOOL  
ENROLLMENT**

We are already enrolling current students, siblings, and church members children for next school year. Enrollment for the public begins March 1. Please tell family members, neighbors, and friends about our preschool program. We are so excited that our school is growing and we have an excellent staff of caring and dedicated teachers !







***MARCH HOMEBOUND***  
***MEMBER TO SEND A CARD***

**Mac & Jewel Brawley**  
**c/o Summitt Place**  
**1001 Phifer Rd.**  
**Kings Mountain, NC 28086**

**Saturday, February 28**

7:30am-10:00am - Community wide breakfast buffet

**Sunday, March 1**

9:00am - Coffee & Doughnuts - time of gathering

9:30am - Sunday School

10:30am - Worship

3:00pm - Community Memorial Service at  
Second Baptist Church

5:00pm - Acolyte/Crucifer Training class

6:00pm - Youth

**Monday, March 2**

6:00pm - Women of Faith Baked Potato  
and salad supper provided at Church

**Wednesday, March 4**

6:00pm - UMK's

6:30pm - Bible Study

**Thursday, March 5**

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

**Sunday, March 8**

**Daylight Savings Time begins**

**"GREETING CARD OUTREACH"**

9:00am - Coffee & Doughnuts - time of gathering

9:30am - Sunday School

10:30am - Worship

11:30am - Reception following worship

6:00pm - Youth

**Wednesday, March 11**

6:00pm - UMK's

6:30pm - Bible Study

**Thursday, March 12**

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

10:00am - Bible Study at the home  
of Phyllis Thornburg

**Sunday, March 15**

9:00am - Coffee & Doughnuts - time of gathering

9:30am - Sunday School

10:30am - Worship

6:00pm - Youth

**Wednesday, March 18**

6:00pm - UMK's

6:30pm - Bible Study

**Thursday, March 19**

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

**Sunday, March 22**

9:00am - Coffee & Doughnuts - time of gathering

9:30am - Sunday School

10:30am - Worship

6:00pm - Youth

**Monday, March 23**

10:00am - Second Harvest Mobile Food Pantry at  
St. John's Lutheran Church

**Wednesday, March 25**

6:00pm - UMK's

6:30pm - Bible Study

**Thursday, March 26**

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

10:00am - Bible Study at the home of Phyllis  
Thornburg

**Saturday, March 28**

7:30am-10:00am - Community wide breakfast buffet

**Sunday, March 29**

9:00am - Coffee & Doughnuts - time of gathering

9:30am - Sunday School

10:30am - Worship

6:00pm - Youth



**Don't forget to set your  
clocks ahead one hour  
before you go to bed on  
Saturday, March 7.**