

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 26, 2025**

**Vol. XXXVI No. 3**

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.

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March Reflection

*John 14:22-23 - Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will reveal yourself to us, and not to the world?" Jesus answered him, "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them."*

It used to be a running joke in the Christy household that we were going to sign my Nana up for the television show Hoarders. If you haven't seen Hoarders, it is a show all about people who never throw anything away, and they keep just about every single item that they have ever owned. All these items stack up around the house, and eventually people get called in to clean out the house. Watching the show one is struck by a sense of disgust and amazement that people could allow their homes to descend to such states.

We used to joke about the show hoarders, because my Nana was a hoarder. Now certainly her house never looked like the houses on the show, she kept a very clean home, but Lord help you if you opened the basement door. Because her basement was more or less floor to ceiling boxes most of them crushed, molded, and containing nothing but trash.

In fact, when Eric Rudolf was on the run, my Nana and G-Dad lived in Murphy and the joke was that when they moved they would find Eric Rudolf trapped under boxes smothered by years of unused Christmas decorations. I say we joked about it, but yet no one would have been surprised if he was under boxes because I'm not kidding you could not walk down there.

Even though no one touched those boxes for four years Nana always knew exactly what was in each box. And every single box meant something to her. I remember specifically when Nana and G Dad were moving back to Lake Junaluska he was pleading with Nana to throw away some boxes, and she said if there were any she didn't need they would throw them away. G dad grabbed a box that was sitting at the bottom of the stairs and said, "How bout this one." It was a box that simply contained odd sized pieces of ribbon, and Nana refused to throw it away because she felt that it might come in handy down the road, never know when you are going to need to make a mouse a scarf, and besides as she said, "we cut those ribbons tying on bows for the bags that we sent to the orphanage in Africa, I can't throw them away."

You see I saw, G daddy saw, I'm pretty sure everybody saw just a box of junk a box of trash, Nana saw the children that she met in Africa. It wasn't just a box to her.

Now I don't want you to think that I am giving you an excuse to go out today and start hoarding, but I think it is amazing how differently we can see and perceive things. To some people a box is simply a box, to others that box contains memories that they fear will be lost without a physical reminder.

We find ourselves today in the very appropriately named Farewell Discourse in John. This discourse begins in chapter 13 and ends in chapter 17. This is a time when Jesus really seems to let his guard down, and he speaks openly to the disciples. So often when the disciples go to Jesus with questions they are met with parabolic answers, or redirections, often they are told that they are not asking the right question. However, the teaching capacity of Jesus' ministry is quickly coming to an end, and he does something in these chapters that he does not typically do, he begins to offer responses to the disciples questions.

Our Scripture today contained one of these burning questions and the question that is posed by Judas is one that I would suggest carries more weight and more relevance today than it did even in the first century. Judas, who John is very careful to tell us is not Iscariot, asks a question of Jesus, he says, "Jesus, how is it that you will reveal yourself to us and not to the world." I have to give Judas his due, he does have a point: How is it that some can so clearly see who Jesus is while others' vision remains clouded? Right before the farewell discourse the Pharisees cornered Jesus and said, "Tell us plainly are you the Messiah?" and Jesus says, "You have seen me you have heard me, what do you think." How could they not see that Jesus is the Messiah? Why is it that some can see Jesus for who he really is, living and active, for the life that he brings, and for the ways that he changes our lives, for the ways that Christ breaks into our lives and calls us to himself, while others will see Jesus simply as a historical figure, someone who has no bearing on their lives whatsoever today?

I think the answer to this question lies in the response that Jesus Christ makes to Judas, "Those who love me will listen to my voice. Whoever does not love does not keep my word." I believe the reason that you can put two people in a room and they will have two completely different reactions to the name Jesus Christ is because we have failed to do our job as disciples. We have stopped listening to the voice of Jesus and we have sunk to speaking about Jesus on the world's terms. We talk about Jesus as if we can prove Jesus, as if our faith is only rooted in empirical evidence. We think that if we can prove Jesus, everyone will listen.

But that is where we have gotten it wrong, and in fact this plan has backfired in a big way. For today the church is known more for what we are against as opposed to what we are for. Arguing, screaming, yelling, those things don't create disciples. We don't have to prove Jesus; Jesus has already proven himself through the resurrection. This is why Jesus doesn't say, those who love me will argue best for me, he doesn't say you will know my disciples by their rhetoric and their debate skills, and there is a reason we don't sing they will know we are Christians by the way we prove our evidence, by the way we prove our evidence, by the way we prove our evidence.

No Jesus says those who love me will listen to my voice. How do we do that? I honestly think it is as simple as being attentive to what Jesus calls us to do. By loving the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind, and our neighbors as ourselves. By loving others as Jesus Christ loves us, by feeding the hungry, giving water to the thirsty, visiting the sick and imprisoned, clothing the naked. By taking communion, by living lives shaped and formed through prayer, and by regularly gathering as a body to worship. If we are listening to the voice of Jesus, this is what we do. I said it was simple, I didn't say it was easy.

But the good news is if God didn't think you were up to the task of discipleship he wouldn't have called you as his child. As we prepare for this season of Lent beginning on Wednesday, may we not simply hear the words of Jesus, may we not simply think about the words of Jesus, may we **Listen to** his words, and may our lives bear witness to the goodness, grace, and mercy of God.

Grace and Peace,

Zack Christy



**Ash Wednesday Service** will be held on March 5, at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary.



The **Special Events Committee** met in January and have made plans for several events in 2025.

These events include:

- **"Pancake Supper"** for the Church family will be held on Wednesday, **March 5**, at 5:30. Sign up sheets are in the narthex. Menu will include pancakes with yummy syrup, bacon and sausage. You don't want to miss this evening.

**OTHER EVENTS INCLUDE:**

- **"Summer Kick off"** with Homemade Ice Cream and "Yard games" including corn hole, volley ball, and others. tentatively set for **June 8**.
- **"Fall Fun time Event"** Lunch and Entertainment for our church family will be held in **late August or Early September**.
- **"Holiday lunch for the beginning of advent"** Sunday, **November 23**, following worship.

Please mark your calendar to join your church family for these fun fellowship events.



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 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. 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>
Mar. 2	Emma Pruitt	Lawson Walls
Mar. 9	Hunter Brafford	Ava Thornburg
Mar. 16	Zach Harmon	Seth Harmon
Mar. 23	Amber Grace Brittain	Henry Shuford
Mar. 30	Mallie Emerson	Allie Anthony

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



## UNITED METHODIST KIDS / UMKs

Our Wednesday night UMK's winter 2025 session is a warm 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 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 – 7:30 p.m. For the winter months we will enter at the side door near the kitchen and leave from there also.

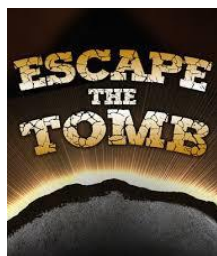
**“SOME  
ASSEMBLY  
REQUIRED”**



Mar. 5 “Ash Wednesday”UMK's meet downstairs

Mar. 12 “Finish the Build” Genesis 6:9-7:5

Mar. 19 “Making Something New”  
Genesis 28:10-22



**ESCAPE THE TOMB**

Mar. 26 “Solve the Riddles” Isaiah 53

### UMK Supper Schedule for March:

- Mar. 5 Pancake supper / Ash Wednesday  
Special events and Family life committee
- Mar. 12 Meatballs, bread sticks and dessert  
Chrystal and Andrew Harmon
- Mar. 19 Chicken Nuggets and Mac n Cheese & dessert  
Pam Anthony Cannon
- Mar. 26 Subs, chips and cookies  
Roman's 12 Class

**\*\*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!!**

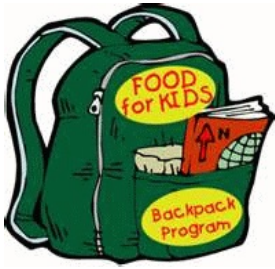
### MARCH NURSERY WORKERS



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. 2 Kristen Freeman
- Mar. 9 Teci Webb
- Mar. 16 Bobbi Ballard
- Mar. 23 Emily Parris
- Mar. 30 Chrystal Harmon



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

- Mar. 2 Chicken Helper
- Mar. 9 Tomato Soup
- Mar. 16 Macaroni & Cheese
- Mar. 23 Canned Chicken
- Mar. 30 Canned Peaches

Thank you,  
The Backpack Ministry Committee



Hello my UMYF Friends.... U.M.Y.F. (United Methodist Youth Fellowship) meets on Sunday nights at 6:00 pm until 7:30 p.m. down stairs. 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 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 March will be # “LEARNING TO THINK LIKE JESUS” #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 fun and wild trip down the slopes at Jonas Ridge tubing. I seemed to have noticed a “green blur” and heard the screams !!!! If you know you know!!



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. Right now, the date is Friday night March 14<sup>th</sup>! 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 6<sup>th</sup> thru 12<sup>th</sup> graders are invited to be a part of UMYF. And **yes, you can Invite!!!**



### Prayer Breakfast

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 am 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

How can it be almost March already? That means we have only three more months of this school year! What a good year it has been!

I was so proud of the Kingdom Kids who sang for us during the service on February 23<sup>rd</sup>. A big "Thank You" to the parents for bringing them to participate, as well as to all those who stayed for the spaghetti lunch. We are especially thankful for those who prepared the food and helped to serve.

I cannot say enough about how thankful I am for the truly great teachers we have for our preschool. They are the best! And, we all are blessed to work here at First United Methodist with Pastor Zack and the wonderful people who work so hard to make this church what it is.

Ms. Millie

## FFF: FIT FAB FUN BUNCH

**FFF BUNCH IT'S BEEN A WHILE....**

**BUT MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

**FUN FISH NIGHT:  
TUESDAY, MARCH 18<sup>TH</sup>  
AT THE CAPTAIN'S CAP**

We will leave from the church at 4 p.m. to go enjoy a night of fun while grazing at the salad bar, eating fish and fellowshiping together... just to "Gather".

The cost is how much you choose to eat!! We should be home around 6:30 or 7:00 p.m. Come join the FFF as we get FIT eating FABULOUS fish and just have FUN!!!



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 10<sup>th</sup> 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.



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

**RICK BOWMAN**

Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown (Backpack Ministry)

**RAYMOND DAUER, SR.**

Wayne & Belinda Watts

**RYAN DELLINGER**

Linda K. Barger

**BOB FAIRES**

Linda Alexander  
Pam Anthony  
Steve & Susan Beam  
Ben & Robin Blackburn  
Ken & M'Shel Bowen  
Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown (Pastor's Fund)  
Sandra Carpenter  
Nancy Catena  
City of Seneca Light & Water Plant  
Debbie Gantt (Backpack Ministry)  
Ruth Gaston  
Gail Jenkins  
David & Louanna Kiser  
Bill & Quita Moss  
Sylvia Norton  
Ernie & Betty Parker  
Shirley Smith  
Phyllis Thornburg  
Phyllis Thornburg  
Mr. & Mrs. Vee Thornburg (Playground Fund)  
Wayne & Belinda Watts  
Danny & Teci Webb  
Robin & Melissa Yates

**BRAD KELLY**

Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown (Backpack Ministry)

**LAURA FORD KEY**

Linda K. Barger  
Nancy Catena

**JEFF LINGERFELT**

Bill & Quita Moss  
Mr. & Mrs. Vee Thornburg (Playground Fund)  
Danny & Teci Webb

**BRENDA LOWE**

Gail V. Jenkins (Endowment Fund)  
Jerry Thornburg (Backpack Ministry)

**ELOISE MAUNEY**

Linda Alexander  
Stan & Martha Allen  
Lola Allran Circle  
Pam Anthony  
Libby Ballard  
Linda K. Barger  
Joyce Baxter  
Loretta Beam  
Steve & Susan Beam  
Ben & Robin Blackburn  
Doug & Toni Bookout  
Michael & Ronnie Bookout  
Ken & M'Shel Bowen  
Steve & Lynn Bowen  
Johnny, Kelly & Nickolas Brown (Pastor's Fund)  
Glenn & Cindy Burgess  
Cindy Burgin  
Sandra Carpenter  
Nancy Catena  
Richard & Martha Cornwell  
Cotton & Pam Crowder  
Barry & Wanda Dellinger  
Dianne Dixon  
Debbie Gantt (Playground Fund)  
Ruth Gaston  
Juanita Gunnell  
Teresa Hopper  
Janice Hovis  
Rita Huffman  
Tad Huffstetler  
David & Louanna Kiser  
Don & Melba Lawrence  
Linda Mauney  
June Medlin Sunday School class  
Bill & Quita Moss  
Hazeline Moss (Youth Missions)  
Sylvia Norton  
Ernie & Betty Parker  
Roger & Brenda Poplin  
Harold & Goldie Queen  
Betty Jane Robinson  
T. L. & Miney Saine  
Shirley Smith





**MARCH USHERS:**

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

**STEWARDSHIP REPORT: FEBRUARY 23, 2025**

Received to Date . . . . . \$48,898.27  
Needs to Date . . . . . \$67,156.96

**OTHER FUNDS RECEIVED YTD:**

Church Building Renovations . . . . . \$2,110.00  
Endowment Fund . . . . . \$645.00  
Backpack Ministry . . . . . \$170.00  
Pastor's Discretionary Fund . . . . . \$180.00  
Playground Fund . . . . . \$4,017.00  
Youth Missions . . . . . \$400.00



**SPRING SONGFEST**

**SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 2025**

**6:30 P.M.**

**AT FIRST WESLEYAN CHURCH**

**CHERRYVILLE, NC**

Come join us for a night of fellowship and community praise to the lord!! We have many talented voices to be heard from our town and neighboring towns around us!

Cherryville Area Ministries Board of Directors will be hosting the 11th annual Songfest! Let us all come together as God's children and enjoy a night of praise and worship!

Admission is FREE. However, we will be taking up a "Love Offering" to help with the Building Fund at CAM.

Sponsored by Cherryville Area Ministries  
Board of Directors

**HOTDOG  
FUNDRAISER**

**The First Baptist Church is hosting a hotdog fundraiser on Friday, March 7, from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. in the COC.** This is a donation only event for the family of Carson Reed.

They will take orders in advance by calling (NOT REQUIRED) (704) 435-3796 or you may stop by!!! Also; large orders available for pick up.

*Hotdogs will include your choice of chili, slaw, mustard & ketchup.* Comes with chips, dessert and a drink. **All proceeds will be donated to the family of Carson Reed.**



## March Birthdays

- 1 Ella Christy
- 1 Clarice Harrelson
- 1 Alex Smith
- 2 Janice Metcalf
- 5 Spencer Blackburn
- 5 Landon Hudson
- 5 Kay Moths
- 5 Eric Stroupe
- 5 Jim Tate
- 6 Michael Moss
- 7 Crystal Christy
- 8 Robin Blackburn
- 8 Stephanie Elmore
- 8 Vee Thornburg
- 10 Brent Burlison
- 11 Leah Griffin O'Connor
- 11 Lacey Spangler
- 13 Deanna Daggerhart
- 14 Joe Dismukes
- 14 Steven Gunnell
- 14 Doris Huss
- 16 Mildred Young
- 17 Brent Goforth
- 17 Chapel Moss
- 17 Caleb Narron
- 19 Michael Smith
- 20 Jewel Brawley
- 20 Steve Buff
- 20 David Hovis
- 21 Chuck Dellinger
- 22 Amy Tallent
- 24 Barbara Crews
- 26 Heidi Cash
- 26 Carla Eaker
- 26 Brooks Gunnell
- 29 Ryan Costner
- 29 Van Dellinger
- 29 Grayce Pruitt



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



**MARCH HOMEBOUND  
MEMBER TO SEND A CARD**

**Mrs. Ray McSwain  
Carolina Care Health & Rehab.  
111 Harrilson Rd.  
Cherryville, NC 28021**

**Sunday, March 23**

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

**Wednesday, March 26**

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

**Thursday, March 27**

7:00am - Prayer Breakfast @ Homefolk's

**Saturday, March 29**

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

**Sunday, March 30**

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

**Sunday, March 2**

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

**Wednesday, March 5**

5:30pm - Pancake Supper for all  
6:00pm - Chancel Choir  
6:00pm - UMK's  
6:30pm - Ash Wednesday Service

**Thursday, March 6**

7:00am - Prayer Breakfast @ Homefolk's

**Sunday, March 9**

**(Daylight Savings Time Begins)**

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

**Monday, March 11**

6:30pm - Church Council meeting

**Wednesday, March 12**

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

**Thursday, March 13**

7:00am - Prayer Breakfast @ Homefolk's

**Friday - Saturday, March 14-15**

8:00pm - 8:00am - Youth lock-in

**Sunday, March 16**

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

**Tuesday, March 18**

4:00pm - FFF Bunch to Captain's Cap

**Wednesday, March 19**

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

**Thursday, March 20**

7:00am - Prayer Breakfast @ Homefolk's

