

# THE FIRST WORD



The Weekly Newsletter for Members and Friends of First United Methodist Church, Newton, North Carolina  
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## PASTOR'S MESSAGE

James Moore tells the story about a farmer who went to a government bureaucrat who specialized in animal health. The farmer sought help from the "expert" because ten of his chickens had suddenly and unexplainably died. The government expert instructed the farmer to give aspirin to all surviving chickens.

Two days later, however, the farmer returned. Twenty more chickens had died. What should he do now? The expert said quickly, "Give all the rest castor oil." Well, a few days later, the farmer returned a third time and reported thirty more dead chickens. The government expert now strongly recommended penicillin. A couple of days later, a very sad farmer returned. All the rest of his chickens had now died. They were all gone. When the expert learned that, he said, "What a shame, I have lots more remedies!"

The world offers many "remedies" for the tensions and burdens that push us down and pull us apart. But the truth is that most of them don't work. There is only one Great Physician who can give us the comfort and strength we need. There is only one Prince of Peace who can soothe our jangled nerves and save our troubled souls. And that One says to us, "Come to me, all of you who are exhausted and weary and worn and troubled and stressed-out, and I will give you rest."

Along the rural roads of India are posts that are about shoulder high and on the top of each is a strong shelf. These posts are called "Soma Tonga," which means "resting place." People walking along these roads carrying heavy loads on their backs can stop at a Soma Tonga and unload their stuff onto the shelf so that they can rest for awhile.

New Christians in India often refer to Christ as their "Soma Tonga." He is the One who gives them rest, eases their burdens, and renews their strength daily. We don't have to try to escape or endure stress. Instead, we are invited to bring it to Christ trusting that he will somehow work to transform our problems into opportunities.

See you Sunday,  
David

**PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY** are extended to Jean Childs, Nancy Ryan and the Kiser family following the death of their brother, Bruce Kiser, on Friday, January 6.



Mark your calendars for the second annual Woman to Woman Conference, coming February 3-4, 2012 to the Hickory Metro Convention Center. This conference, is specifically for women, and will be a wonderful time of worship, fun, fellowship and learning. Keynote speaker, Lisa Whelchel, Christian author and star of the 1980's hit TV show Facts of Life, will talk about personal connections with God and with people. Some of the regions most respected Bible teachers will lead the breakout sessions.

**TICKETS ARE \$39.99 UNTIL JAN. 15.** They will be \$49.99 after that date. We are so fortunate to have a conference of this excellence here in our county. I encourage you to attend. I have heard Lisa and most of the breakout speakers...and they are fabulous! It is a time of "winter dreary's"— God can brighten and change your life though meeting Him, His Word, and His people at this event. We are hoping that we will have many 3 generations from one family come together. Family won't work for you? Grab a friend or someone and come be with us! For more information call Tommi Anderson @ 459-0123.

## HOSPITAL REPORT:

Catawba Valley Med. Ctr.: Dick Wyatt  
Lois Barringer, Rm. 325

Corinna Driscoll is now at home following treatment at Carolina Medical Center in Charlotte.

Sara Caldwell is receiving treatment at Abernethy Laurels following her release from Baptist Hospital.

Judy Ikerd is recovering at home following surgery last week.

## MEMORIALS RECEIVED RECENTLY:

### Sunday School Department Renovation Fund:

#### Gray Tate

Pen & Robin Waldron

### Current Expense Fund:

#### Dorcas Gomedela

Judy & Max Bolick

#### Bryson Sweezy

Mr. & Mrs. H. C. Abernathy, Jr.

J. W. & Kathryn Abernathy

John & Sally Hardee

Vickie Lytton

### Men's Bible Class—Radio Fund:

#### Elizabeth Wykes & Bryson Sweezy

Hazel Sims

### Youth Fund:

#### Bryson Sweezy

Ann Howell

## STEWARDSHIP REPORT, December 25, 2011

January 1, 2012

Attendance: 8:45 a.m.	90	11:00 a.m.	148
Sunday School	142	9:00 a.m. Praise Service	84
Offering:	Tithes & Offerings		\$8,217.75
	Hunger Fund		10.00
	Sunday School Dept. Renov.		50.00
	Initial Offering		56.00
	Youth Retreat		<u>20.00</u>
			\$8,353.75

## HONORARIUM

Pat Britt has given a donation to the Current Expense Fund in honor of **Joe Beaman and Debbie Rights**.

## STATESVILLE DISTRICT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Sunday, January 29, 2012—3:00-6:00 p.m.

Broad Street United Methodist Church, Statesville

Workshops:

“I Love to Tell the Story” — For all who work with communication in the church

“Too Important to Wait”—Year Round Stewardship — For all stewardship chairs and committees

“Communicating Finances with your congregation—Are You Raising Awareness or Creating Anxiety” — For all Finance Chairs and committees

“Making Meetings Matter”—What it means to be a leader — For all committee chairs

“The Sweet 16—Vitality Indicators and New Resources for Vital Congregations” — For all pastors and vitality teams and anyone interested in the vitality of their church

“When People Don't Get Along” — For anyone interested in resources for conflict transformation in their church setting

“Creative Connecting with Your Community” — For Outreach/Mission Chairs and committees

“Building on STRENGTHS, not Focusing on Weaknesses” — An Introduction to Appreciative Inquiry

“What's New?”—Showcasing Resources for Small Group Study — For any Sunday School teachers and small group leaders

“Youth Leaders! God Bless You!”—This training for youth counselors, staff and volunteers will be led by Amber-Drew Foster

IMPACT Day Coordinators—Getting Ready for Outreach for 2012 — For all Church Impact Coordinators

Camp Carolwood — For all Camp Carolwood Contact People and Parents

“Mixing Politics and Religion the United Methodist Way”—The Faith Challenges of an Election year. — For anyone interested in how to apply the Christian faith in the barrage of election year activity

## First Methodist Children's Ministries

### Renovation Underway!

Freshly painted Sunday School rooms provide a bright, clean space for FAITH QUEST! A huge "Thank You!" goes out to our hard working, volunteer painters – Paul Campbell, Tom Lowder, Harold Robertson, Paulette Moss, Ken Martin, Tom Dixon, Bob Rights and Merv McGee. A Sunday School Open House and Dedication will be scheduled in the Spring.



### FAITHQUEST! — A New Children's Sunday School Program

Come and learn about the Baptism and Temptation of Jesus through storytelling, crafts, games and Bible Study! All Kindergartners through 5<sup>th</sup> Graders are invited to their new Sunday School rooms on the first floor hallway. There are 3 homerooms with signs— (K-1), (2-3) and (4-5). Parents, please drop off and pick up at these rooms each Sunday. Excitement is in the air as we begin our time together in the Children's Wing with faithful teachers, a new program and God's precious little ones!



## first methodist youth ministries

### **Waiting for Winterjam!**

**The Youth Group gathered outside Time Warner Arena in Charlotte on Sunday, January 8, as they prepared to enter Winterjam, Christian Music's largest tour. It was a great evening filled with terrific bands and powerful messages.**

## **WINTER RETREAT**

**A time to connect with God and one another!**

**January 14-16, 2012**

**Please be in prayer for the twenty seven youth and four adult chaperones who will be retreating to Camp Cedar Cliff at The Cove in Asheville. The youth will be connecting with the youth groups from First UMC in Waynesville, Central UMC in Asheville and Morningstar UMC in Charlotte. The weekend promises to be filled with dynamic praise music, strong messages, intentional small group time and of course free time filled with high & low ropes courses, basketball, zip lines and even archery! Thank you for remembering the youth in prayer and for your constant support of the future church.**

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEXT WEEK****\* January 15-21, 2012 \***

SUN.	8:45	Worship Service
	9:00	Praise Service
	9:30	Sunday School
	11:00	Worship Service
	2:15	PPR District Training Event
MON.	7:00	Youth Praise Band
TUES.	9:00	Preschool
WED.	9:00	Preschool
	3:00	Kids for Christ
	6:00	Praise Team
	6:30	Handbells
	7:30	Chancel Choir
THURS.	9:00	Preschool
	1:00	Prayer Shawl
FRI.	9:00	Preschool

**RECENT VISITORS:**

Diane Hain, Betty Jackson

**PRAYER CONCERNS****Pray For:**

Debra Eckard  
 Nina Eckard  
 Fred/Charlotte Craig  
 Sara Caldwell  
 Dick Wyatt  
 Don Webb  
 Jean Childs  
 Eric Lail  
 Scotty Winebarger  
 Fred & Charlotte Craig  
 Harper Cilley  
 Gayle Lowder  
 Barrett Lynch  
 Family of Faith Parsons  
 Family of Bruce Kiser

**Requested By:**

Lynn/Danny Delancey  
 Lynn/Danny Delancey  
 Vicki/Jim Yount  
 The Parker Class  
 The Parker Class  
 Sam Webb  
 Brooks & Melba Nichols  
 Family  
 Kim/Family/Friends  
 Vicki Yount  
 Harris & Vickey Jones  
 Susan Reinhardt  
 Susan Reinhardt

**Out-of-Country Military**—Scott Beal, Patrick Caldwell, Keno Clarke, Brent Cossich, Gary Hogan, Todd Houtz, Tai Orange, Ty Shillito

**In-Country Military**—Andy Blanton, Jacob Campbell, Stan Josey, Eric Krans, Corey Lail, Laird Lambeth, Brad McRee, Kyle L. Sigmon, Ryan Windham, President Obama & leaders