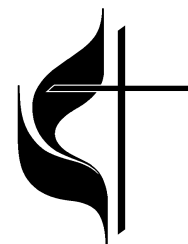


THE

FIRST WORD



The Weekly Newsletter for Members and Friends of First United Methodist Church, Newton, North Carolina
Phone (828) 464-8422 www.fumcnewtonnc.org
Cell Phone Numbers: Rev. Dr. David Greene (828)461-5910; Rev. Lara "Willis" Green (828)461-5918

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

In one of his books, Charles Poole tells about helping his dad out in the huge garden they had behind their house when he was a young boy. In particular, he remembers his dad waking him up on Saturday mornings so that they could go out and till the soil. But that is not the kind of memory in which Charles reflects upon fondly. The reason why, according to Poole, is that they used one of the most unforgiving implements known to the human race: the push plow.

Poole describes what those Saturday mornings were like. He explains, "My father could push-plow a pea-row straighter than a hair-part on a Brylcreem billboard without ever so much as taking a deep breath, while I, on the other hand, would weave my way from one end of the garden to the other, leaving in my wobbly wake a row so crooked that, once, when we ate too many of the peas that grew in my row, they actually made us dizzy and staggering about, unsteady on our feet."

Whenever Charles asked his dad why his rows were so straight and why the rows he plowed were so crooked, his dad would always give the same reply: "Son, when I plow, I look way out to the end of the row and plow to where I'm going, while you, on the other hand, are always looking back to see where you've been. You can't plow straight looking back."

How much time do you spend looking back? Whenever a New Year rolls around I find myself looking back. I ask myself questions like, "How was 2011 to me? Where did I focus my attention and energy during the past year? What did I lose and what did I gain? What would I like to undo or redo or do again?" Do you ever ask questions like those? I dare say that all of us are tempted to look back.

Apparently, Jesus didn't spend much time looking back. On one occasion he said, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God." Those are pretty strong words. However, I don't think that Jesus was suggesting that we can't ever look back. After all, no one grows wiser without remembering the past and learning from it. We can't completely ignore the past. So what did Jesus mean? Maybe Jesus meant that the past is not where life is found.

The late Arthur Gordon told about a time in his life when he got stuck in the past. He had made some poor decisions and felt like his life was going down the tubes. Finally, he went to talk to a counselor who was a longtime friend of his family. Gordon poured out his story. As

Arthur was describing all that had happened, he kept using the words, "if only." When he finished, the counselor suggested that Arthur needed a change of perspective. So he invited Arthur to reinterpret all that had happened by substituting the words "next time" for the words "if only." Instead of looking at what had happened in his life solely from the perspective of the past, Arthur was invited to reinterpret it all from the perspective of the future. It was a shift away from what he regretted about the past to what he'd do differently going forward.

That wise counselor knew the value of looking ahead toward the future. The words "next time" suggest that we have another chance and that we can take what we've learned and do it differently and even better as we move forward. Moreover, these words serve to remind us that some of the very best days of our lives are ahead of us. Remember the message the women received when they arrived at the empty tomb on that first Easter morning? The angel said, "He is going ahead of you to Galilee; so there you will see him, just as he told you."

Where is your Galilee in 2012? Do you trust that Christ is going ahead of you and awaiting you there?

See you Sunday! David

THE LENOIR-RHYNE YOUTH CHORUS will be in concert at First Methodist on Wednesday, January 11 at 7:00 pm, immediately following the Fellowship Dinner. This 60 person youth choir combines the voices of youth from across the country. The chorus regularly performs for churches, civic organizations, and in concerts with the Lenoir-Rhyne A Cappella Choir and the Western Piedmont Symphony. FUMC's own, Erin Killian, is a member of the chorus and we are delighted to welcome them to the Sanctuary on January 11.

UPDATE FROM FINANCE COMMITTEE

Thank you! We asked and you responded. As a result of your generosity over the past several weeks, our congregation was able to pay our bills (including the district and conference apportionments in full) for 2011 and carry a positive balance of a few thousand dollars into 2012. It is amazing what God can do in and through us when we rally and come together as one. Thanks again for all of the ways you serve our Lord through the ministry of First UMC Newton.

NOTE OF THANKS

The ministers and staff of First Methodist Church wish to thank you for remembering us at Christmas with holiday treats and beautiful cards. We are truly grateful!

AT WORSHIP NEXT SUNDAY

January 8, 2011

THE SHARED WORD: Rev. Dr. David Greene**"The Bottom Line"**

John 13:34-35

PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY are extended to Kristy Smith and family following the death of her grandmother, Mary Elizabeth Sigmon, on Friday, December 23. We also remember with prayers and sympathy Treva Swezey and family following the death of her husband, Bryson Swezey, on Tuesday, December 27.

METHODIST WOMEN'S GROUP II will meet on Monday, January 9 at 10:00 a.m. in the Gomedela Room. Rev. David Greene will lead the Bible Study. All are welcome.

METHODIST WOMEN'S GROUP III will meet on Monday, January 9 at 7:00 p.m. in the Gomedela Room.

STEWARDSHIP REPORT, December 25, 2011

Attendance: 11:00 a.m. 196

Christmas Eve: Come & Go 134; Candlelight 212

Offering:	Tithes & Offerings	\$7,568.39
	2012 Tithes	5,720.00
	Community Christmas Party	1,000.00
	Youth Retreat	500.00
	Sunday School Dept. Renov.	35.00
	Renovation Fund	5.00
		<u>\$14,828.39</u>

December 30, 2011

Offering:	Tithes & Offerings	\$9,146.00
	Hunger Fund	20.00
	Altar Flowers	70.00
	Love Labor Corps	150.00
	Helping Hands Fund	25.00
	Renovation Fund	30.00
		<u>\$9,441.00</u>

January 1, 2012

Attendance: 8:45 a.m. 68 11:00 a.m. 121

Sunday School 130 9:00 a.m. Praise Service 32

Offering:	Tithes & Offerings	\$6,841.00
	2011 Tithes	450.00
	Hunger Fund	179.60
	Sunday School Dept. Renov.	25.00
	Initial Offering	64.00
	Renovation Fund	10.00
		<u>\$7,569.60</u>

ATTENTION!!!

We have four Children's Sunday School Classrooms that need painting. We plan to begin this project the week of January 9th. If you would like to help paint these rooms, please call Paul Campbell at 464-8646 or leave your name and number with the church secretary.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEXT WEEK*** January 8-14, 2012 ***

SUN.	8:45	Worship Service
	9:00	Praise Service
	9:30	Sunday School
	11:00	Worship Service
	3:00-9:00	Winter Jam
MON.	9:00	Preschool
	10:00	Methodist Women Group II
	6:00	N-C Women's Club
	7:00	Methodist Women Group III
	7:00	Youth Praise Band
TUES.	9:00	Preschool
WED.	9:00	Preschool
	3:00	Kids for Christ
	6:00	Fellowship Dinner
	7:00	Lenoir-Rhyne Youth Choir
THURS.	9:00	Preschool
	1:00	Prayer Shawl
FRI.	9:00	Preschool
SAT-MON.		Youth Retreat

HOSPITAL REPORT:

Baptist, Winston-Salem: Sara W. Caldwell

Jack Gantt returned home on Tuesday following treatment at Catawba Valley Medical Center.

MEMORIALS RECEIVED RECENTLY:**Sunday School Department Renovation Fund:****Elizabeth "Lib" Wykes**

Frank Cloninger

Dorcas Gomedela

Larry & Frances Hollar

Current Expense Fund:**Dr. Allen Hill Bandy, Sr.**

H. Spencer Caldwell, Jr.

Jim McConnell, Gordon Yount, Martha Yount,**Bill Yount**

Jim, Vicki & Jason Yount

UMW Scholarship Fund:**Boyd Drum**

Frank Cloninger

Men's Bible Class—Radio Fund:**Katheryn Goble**

Myra Jolly

Helping Hands Fund:**Mrs. Irene Robinson**

Jeff & Debbie Carter

RECENT VISITORS:

Greg T. Benfield, Sherry Kirby, Janice Davis, Ernestine S. helms, Larry Gregory, Cheryce Gregory, Stephen, Christie, Lillie & Owen Sims, Howard & Corrine Swofford, Whitney Balts, Harold and Martha Robertson
Denise Zinkeler, Joseph McCorkle, Anita Beverly
Nathan and Colton Smith, Sandra Beal

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

1/1	Bethany Carpenter	1/14	Bray Hunter
1/1	Freddie Cook	1/15	Jennifer Winstead
1/1	Mary Killian	1/17	Kirby Blalock
1/2	Mason Driscoll	1/17	Bill Hasty
1/3	Brandy Burnette	1/17	Forrest Lawing
1/3	Crystal Caldwell	1/18	Nell Cashion
1/3	Jerry DeVos	1/18	Jackie Sigmon
1/3	Kaleb Gibson	1/19	Melissa Natoli
1/4	Janet Cloninger	1/19	Michael Natoli
1/4	Beth Phillips	1/19	Elizabeth Schmitz
1/4	Tim Watson	1/19	Christy Vanover
1/5	Bradley Bollinger	1/20	Caleb Miller
1/5	Lindy Caldwell	1/20	Sara Sherrill
1/5	Jamie Pawlik	1/20	Mandy Simpson
1/5	Johnny Saunders	1/21	Melinda Arndt
1/5	Bill Shillito	1/21	Alan Bohler
1/5	Ray Shrum	1/21	Lori Deal
1/6	Frankie Cooke	1/21	Railey White
1/7	Courtney Brown	1/22	Brett Sigmon
1/7	Lori Mayberry	1/22	Walter Stone
1/7	Staci Miller	1/23	David Lewis
1/8	Brad Byrd	1/23	Elizabeth Rights
1/8	Becky Campbell	1/24	Madyson Fair
1/8	Lucille Yeager	1/24	Virginia Irby
1/9	Pat Britt	1/24	Polly Kelly
1/9	Vance Ervin	1/25	Teresa Coley
1/9	Jamie Hunter	1/25	Linda Kosar
1/9	Nancy Ryan	1/25	Brenda Saunders
1/9	Jeff Wyatt	1/25	Bev Underwood
1/10	Donna Mull	1/26	Katy Griffis
1/11	Mike Caldwell	1/27	Luke Harman
1/11	Helen Clapp	1/27	Maggie Harman
1/11	Kristy Smith	1/28	Lee Burnette
1/12	Sandra Hardin	1/28	Christopher White
1/12	Matt Miller	1/29	Anne Calloway
1/13	Harris Jones	1/29	Brad McLawhorn
1/13	Harold Lynch	1/31	Tom Dixon
1/13	John Trivette	1/31	Michael Laney
1/14	Jo Anne Beiler	1/31	Ed Sain
		1/31	Lori Sigmon

JANUARY WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

1/1	Bob and Barbara McLawhorn
1/2	Clark and Teresa Fletcher
1/14	Tim and Debbie Eller
1/21	Rob and Debbie Rights
1/24	Khampan and KhemKham Chanthakouman
1/26	Pat and Janet Cloninger
1/30	Tony and Jill Philmon

JANUARY GREETER SCHEDULE

8:45 AM Service

1/1	Joe & Nancy Killian
1/8	Charlie & Tommi Anderson
1/15	Mary Yoder
1/22	Harris & Vickey Jones
1/29	Bill & Jo Anne Beiler

9:00 AM Service

1/1	Al Bandy
1/8	Cindy Boger
1/15	Jeff & Beth Foss
1/22	Moe & Susan Peacock
1/29	Shawn Fountain Family

11:00 AM Service

1/1	Pat Britt & Bette Walk
1/8	John and Sara Caldwell
1/15	Tommy & Patricia Howard
1/22	Tom & Gayle Lowder
1/29	Merv & Betty McGee

Please report any corrections or additions to this month's birthday and anniversary lists to the church office.

Volunteer Workers — January 2012

<u>Acolytes</u>	<u>Cross Bearers</u>	<u>Sound System</u>	<u>8:45/9:00 AM Nursery</u>	<u>11:00 AM Child. Ch.</u>
1/1	Zane Andersen	Will Yoder	Frances Hollar	Gayle Lowder
1/8	Olivia Andersen	Alex Yoder	Doris White	Leah Hayes
1/15	Katie Foster	Morgan Butler	Beth Foss	Cindy Boger
1/22	Nick Foster-	Elizabeth Greene	Kristy Harvell	Kim Britt
1/29	Elizabeth Schmitz	Reece Peacock	Tammy Smith	Dot Feimster
<u>9:00 AM Leader</u>	<u>Flowers</u>	<u>Offering Counters</u>	<u>Ushers</u>	
1/1	Moe Peacock	Judy Ikerd/Joe Beaman	Reid Ikerd	Charles Anderson
1/8	Susan Reinhardt	Bill Cable/Ken Lawing	Harold Lynch	Brad Bollinger
1/15	Debbie Bandy	George Wilkinson/Bill Powell	John Caldwell	Ray Shrum
1/22	David White	Beth Foss/Mark Killian	David Hardin	Dale Boger
1/29	Paul Campbell	Paul Campbell/Ken Moss		

Youth Volunteers -- Nursery Workers for January: Annecy White & Kate Morgan

youth!

WINTER-JAM!

This Sunday, January 8

Christian Music's Largest Annual Tour
We're headed to Charlotte to hear Skillet, Sanctus Real, Newsong and other great artists! No tickets required – just \$10 at the door. Meet at the church at 3:00pm, we'll return around 9:00pm. Bring \$10 cash and money for refreshments. Invite a friend! Find more information at www.jamtour.com

Calling all Youth!

You can still register for the **WINTER RETREAT**

A weekend to connect with God
and one another!

WHEN: January 14-16, 2012

WHERE: Camp Cedar Cliff at The Cove in Asheville

WHO: Mid & Sr. High – joining with Methodist youth groups from Waynesville, Asheville and Charlotte!

COST: \$100 per person – includes everything! Scholarships are available.

REGISTRATION: Registration forms have been mailed and extra copies are located on the Information Table in the breezeway.

PRAYER CONCERNS

Pray For:

Don Webb
Vic Vickers
Roger Yost
Patricia Triplett
Fred & Charlotte Craig
Eric Lail
Barrett Lynch
Gayle Lowder
Rosy Davila
Margie Powell
Lois Barringer
Candace Simmons
Family of Ray Searcy
Family of Bryson Sweezy
Ronnie Lewis
Frank Lewis
Family of Sally White
Mike Echard

Requested By:

Sam Webb
Sam Webb
Roy & Kaye Lewis
Vicki Yount
Vicki Yount
Family
Family & Friends
Susan Reinhardt
Susan Reinhardt
Friends
Hazel Sims
Paulette Moss
Paulette Moss

Roy & Kaye Lewis
Roy & Kaye Lewis

Lynn & Danny Delancey

First Methodist Children's Ministries

FAITHQUEST

A New Children's Sunday School
Program Begins this Sunday, January 8
at 10:00am!

A new Sunday School program for K-5th Grade! January's story will be *The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus*. Come and learn about the Baptism and Temptation of Jesus through storytelling, crafts, games and Bible Study! All Kindergarten through 5th 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). Children will begin and end in the same grade appointed homeroom. Parents, please drop off and pick up at these rooms each Sunday. All rooms will be located on the first floor hallway (the hallway with the "T"). 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!

Kids for Christ - K4X!

Begins again on January 4

Kids for Christ is an afterschool ministry for K-6th Grade. Each Wednesday afternoon children have the opportunity to sing God's praises in the K4X Chorus and practice their drama skills through puppets and plays. All children are welcome! To register a child, please contact the church office at 464.8422 or e-mail willis.fumcnewton@gmail.com.

HONORARIUMS

H. Spencer Caldwell, Jr. has given a donation to the **Current Expense Fund** in honor of Mrs. Jackie Bandy.

Dianne Tilley and family have given a donation to the **Love Labor Corps** in honor of Bob Saunders and the men who built her handicap ramp in December 2010.

Tommi and Charlie Anderson have given a donation to the **Current Expense Fund** in honor of Larry & Frances Hollar, Ken & Pat Lawing, Martha & Jerry Sowers Gaye & Ken Keener and Judy & Joe Beaman.

Jerry and Martha Sowers have given a donation to the **Sunday School Department Renovation Fund** in honor of Frances & Larry Hollar, and Tommi & Charlie Anderson.

Randy and Bev Underwood have given a donation to the **UMW Scholarship Fund** in honor of Pat Britt.

Jeff and Debbie Carter have given a donation to the **Helping Hands Fund** in honor of Joe Beaman.

THANK YOU

As you read this, Barrett has finished all of his chemo and radiation treatments as of December 20th. This congregation of The First United Methodist Church, Newton is wonderful.

Thank you all for your prayers, cards, concerns and support you have given Barrett and the Lynch family. We celebrate the birth of Jesus, and we remember Barrett. Keep us in your prayers.

Christian love to all, Harold, Kyle & Barrett Lynch

We would like to thank you and your church family for the donations of coats and warm clothing. They were greatly appreciated. May God bless you and everyone who took part in giving and for the thoughtfulness you've shown! The people who received them thank you and so does our ministry. God bless you all. Keep us in your prayers as well as the people.

The Shepherds Heart,
Stephanie Hernandez and Board Members

2012 OFFERING ENVELOPES are on the tables on the breezeway. Please pick up those that belong to you and your family. We encourage you to use these assigned envelopes so that your contributions will be posted correctly.

Dear Pastor & Church Family,

I want all of you to know just how much our players and coaches appreciate the time, effort, and money spent to feed our team this season. We are so blessed to have a community of people and churches who care and support our young people and for this I want to say "Thank You."

Nick Bazzle, Newton-Conover Football

I want to extend my deepest appreciation to my church family for all the expressions of love to me. I am truly blessed. Hazel Sims

FELLOWSHIP DINNER RESERVATIONS

Wednesday, January 11, 6:00 p.m.

Hosts: Faith Builders Sunday School Class

Menu: Chicken & Dumplings, Slaw,
Green Beans, Bread & Assorted Desserts

Number _____

Name _____