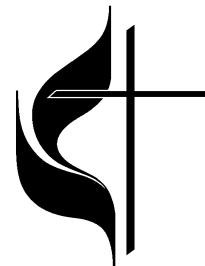


THE

FIRST

WORD



The Weekly Newsletter for Members and Friends of First United Methodist Church, Newton, North Carolina
Phone (828) 464-8422

Fax Number (828) 464-8423

www.fumcnewtonnc.org

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

I'd like to offer a big thank you to everyone who has completed and returned their 2010 Estimate of Giving card. If you haven't done so yet, please prayerfully consider how you will support the work and ministry of Jesus Christ in the coming year and return your card as soon as you can.

Years ago, Dan Martin and I had a conversation about the work we do as pastors. Dan said something that has stuck with me ever since. He said, "You know it's all the little things we do over time that eventually add up and make a big difference in the life of the church." I've witnessed this reality again and again in the congregations I've served over the years. However, what I have discovered is that it's not just the little things that a pastor does. It is those small faithful deeds that every member does no matter how insignificant they may seem at the time.

Max Lucado writes about this in a devotional I ran across recently that I would like to share with you.

God Does Big Things with Small Deeds

Do not despise these small beginnings, for the Lord rejoices to see the work begin. (Zech. 4:10)

Begin. Just begin! What seems small to you might be huge to someone else. Just ask Bohn Fawkes. During World War II, he piloted a B-17. On one mission he sustained flak from Nazi antiaircraft guns. Even though his gas tanks were hit, the plane did not explode, and Fawkes was able to land the plane.

On the morning following the raid, Fawkes asked his crew chief for the German shell. He wanted to keep a souvenir of his incredible good fortune. The crew chief explained that not just one but eleven shells had been found in the gas tanks, none of which had exploded.

Technicians opened the missiles and found them void of explosive charge. They were clean and harmless and with one exception, empty. The exception contained a carefully rolled piece of paper. On it a message had been scrawled in the Czech language. Translated, the note read: "This is all we can do for now."

A courageous assembly-line worker was disarming bombs and scribbled the note. He couldn't end the war, but he could save one plane. He couldn't do everything, but he could do something. So he did it.

God does big things with small deeds. Against a towering giant, a brook pebble seems futile. But God used it to topple Goliath. Compared to the tithes of the wealthy, a widow's coins seem puny. But Jesus used them to inspire us. And in contrast with sophisticated priests and powerful Roman rulers, a cross-suspended carpenter seemed nothing but a waste of life. Few Jewish leaders mourned his death. Only a handful of friends buried his body. The people turned their attention back to the temple. Why not?

What power does a buried rabbi have? We know the answer. Mustard-seed and leaven-lump power. Power to tear away death rags and push away death rocks. Power to change history. In the hands of God, small seeds grow into sheltering trees. Tiny leaven expands into nourishing loaves.

Small deeds can change the world. Sow the mustard seed. Bury the leaven lump. Make the call. Write the check. Organize the committee.

Moses had a staff.
David had a sling.
Samson had a jawbone.
Rahab had a sting.
Mary had some ointment.
Aaron had a rod.
Dorcas had a needle.
All were used by God.
What do you have?

God inhabits the tiny seed, empowers the tiny deed. He cures the common life by giving no common life, by offering no common gifts. Don't discount the smallness of your deeds. (by Max Lucado from [Cure for the Common Life](#))

David

RECENT VISITORS

Newton: Robert & Tiffany Abernethy

PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY are extended to Wayne and Faye Swofford and family following the death of her mother, Thelma Pressley, of Kings Mountain on Monday, November 16.

Our prayers and sympathy are also extended to the Rev. Fred Thompson and family following the recent death of his mother, Arrie K. Thompson.

AT WORSHIP NEXT SUNDAY

November 22, 2009

THE SHARED WORD: Rev Dr. David Greene

"Come Before Winter"

2 Timothy 4:6-13,21

**CARE MINISTRY
OPPORTUNITIES**

Share the joy at Christmas time by showering the church's homebound & nursing home members with Christmas cards! Simply pick up a list of names from the table located in the entrance to the Education Building; prepare the cards and then return them to the marked gift bags. The cards will be delivered during Christmas Caroling on December 6, 13 and 20th.

Parents of children: This is a wonderful opportunity for your children to touch the lives of church members by creating homemade cards!

COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING SERVICE

Wednesday, November 25

7:00 pm

Episcopal Church of the Epiphany

Preacher: Rev. Lara "Willis" Greene

CORNER TABLE FUNDRAISER

Sunday, November 22, 3:00 p.m.

It's time again to make CANDY for the annual CORNER TABLE FUNDRAISER. If you'd like to help, please meet in the kitchen at 3:00 p.m. November 22. We'll be dipping pretzels!

Thanks, Gayle Lowder (cell) 261-5627; (work) 464-0604

STEWARDSHIP REPORT, November 15, 2009

Attendance: 8:45 a.m.: 108 11:00 a.m.: 126

Sunday School: 161 9:00 a.m. Praise Service: 99

Offering:	Tithes & Offerings	\$6,731.43
	Preschool Scholarship	25.00
	Poinsettias	155.00
	Christmas Decorations	176.25
	Children's Department	20.00
	Singles Ministry	75.00
	Helping Hands Fund	50.00
	Renovation Fund	115.00
		<u>\$7,347.68</u>

OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEXT WEEK

*** November 22-28, 2009 ***

SUN.	8:45	Worship Service
	9:00	Praise Service
	9:45	Sunday School
	11:00	Worship Service/Children's Church
	3:00	Kitchen Reserved
	4:00	Children's Play Practice
	4:00-5:15	All Youth Play Practice
MON.	9:00	Preschool
	7:00	Youth Praise Band
TUES.	9:00	Preschool
	6:30	GriefShare
	7:00	Disciple I
WED.	6:30	Adult Handbells
THURS.		CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED
FRI.		CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED
	6:00	USA Singles Thanksgiving Meal at Aunt Bessie's, Lincolnton
SAT.	9:30	Hanging of the Greens

UNITED SINGLE ADULTS (USA) will meet on Friday, November 27 at Aunt Bessie's Restaurant in Lincolnton at 6:00 p.m. for their Thanksgiving meal.

HANGING OF THE GREENS

We will begin decorating our sanctuary for the Christmas season on Saturday, November 28th beginning at 9:30 a.m. Plan to help as we place the new Chrismon tree and decorations in our church for the first time.

YOUTH CHRISTMAS DINNER THEATER

Our youth will present a Christmas drama, "Christmas at the Cricket Cafe" on Saturday, December 12th beginning at 6:00 p.m. This will be a dinner theater. The menu will be steak, baked potato, salad, bread and dessert. We will also have hot dogs for those who do not want steak. The cost is \$10.00 for the steak meal and \$5.00 for the hot dog meal. Please call the church office as soon as possible to reserve your place or use the reservation form below. Deadline for reservations is **Wednesday, December 2nd**. You may pay at the door.

Number of steak dinners: _____

Number of hot dog dinners: _____

Name _____

PRAYER CONCERNS

Pray For:

Jerry McGee
Megan Starnes
Heather Clontz
John Riggs
Robbie Caskey
Freddie Cook
Frank Cloninger
John Eckel, Jr.
Betty Lynch
Family of Thelma Pressley

Requested By:

Mervin McGee
Kyle Drum
Michelle White
Janell Riggs
Hazel Sims
family
Steve Cloninger
Ken & Pat Lawing
Wadine Smith

Out-of-Country Military—Scott Beal, Jacob Camp-

bell, Brent Cossich, Gary Hogan, Todd Houtz, Rodney Woody and National Guard 626 Maintenance Co.

In-Country Military—Bobby Benson, Andy Blanton, Stan Josey, Corey Lail, Laird Lambeth, Brad McRee, Tai Orange, Kyle L. Sigmon, Ryan Windham, President Obama & Leaders

HOSPITAL REPORT

Catawba Valley Medical Center: Betty Lynch

Frank Cloninger is recovering at home following surgery at Baptist Hospital, Winston Salem last week.

CORRECTION!!!

On November 8, the altar flowers were given by John Smith in memory of Mrs. Wade V. Martin.

MEMORIALS RECEIVED RECENTLY

UMW Scholarship Fund:

Phyllis Brooks
Susan Hunsucker

Preschool Scholarship Fund:

Phyllis Brooks
Wayne Dellinger Family

David and Willis Greene have given a donation to the **Singles Ministry** in honor of **Kenny Campbell**.

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM WITH OUR CHILDREN

You are invited to come on Sunday, December 6 at 5:00 PM in the sanctuary to see our children in action. They are practicing and working hard to bring to our church the message of Christmas. After the program we will go downstairs for snacks and a visit from Santa. Our children and leaders give up their time to share the true meaning of Christmas, please come out and give them your support and love.

ATTENTION FIRST UMC FAMILY!!!!

For Christmas this year, our youth would like to help some young people in our community whose families are in great need. We will collect money through Sunday, December 13. We are asking our youth to bring their change or dollars each week to place in a jar. After we have collected the money, we will divide it to help as many youth as possible. We would like for you as a church family, Sunday School Class, Choir, UMW, UMM to consider contributing to this project. Help bring joy to some youth in our community this Christmas. Contact Peggy for more details.

CHRISTMAS IS COMING

Yes! Christmas is coming! December 13th is the Sunday for Choir, Hand Bells, Hand Chimes, and Children's Choir to make music to God's Glory and ring in the Christmas season. Please mark your calendars now and plan to attend the **11:00 a.m. Worship Service on Sunday, December 13th**. We are working on several pieces of beautiful music, and two pieces will be sung as a combined choir; children and adults. Come and let us pronounce *Joy to the World!*

Please let me know if your child will not be able to attend this Christmas celebration. Some parts may need to be reassigned. **THANK YOU!**

Kristy Smith 465-6160 (home) or 234-5640 (cell)

ANGEL TREE

The UMW is sponsoring an Angel Tree for the needy elderly people of our community. The tree is decorated with angels, each with a list of items needed for that person. The tree is located in the hall outside the Gomedela Room. Stop by and choose an angel from the tree, purchase and wrap the gift and return it to the church by Wednesday, December 23rd.

POINSETTIAS

Orders are now being received for poinsettias to be placed in the sanctuary during Advent and Christmas. Orders may be brought or mailed to the church office or placed in the offering plate. Please include your payment of \$9.00 per plant. Deadline for ordering is Wednesday, November 25th.

In Memory of _____

or

In Honor of _____

By _____

(Please use a separate form for each plant ordered.)

YOUTH SCHEDULE

**SUNDAY, NOV. 22-ALL YOUTH 4:00-5:15 PM
(no meal) Play Practice**

**SUNDAY, NOV. 29-ALL YOUTH 4:00-5:15 PM
(no meal) Play Practice**

**SUNDAY, DEC. 6—ALL YOUTH 12:30-2:00 PM
Play Practice (Time change due to Children Program.) This will be the Youth's last play practice. BE HERE! We will serve lunch!!!**

LIGHTS OF LOVE

Our Youth will once again sponsor a Lights of Love Tree. This tree with white lights will be in place on the front lawn of the church and will come on each night during the Advent Season. The cost to place a light in memory or in honor of someone is \$2.00. We will publish a booklet on Sunday, December 13th with all the names listed. **DEADLINE FOR THE LIGHTS WILL BE SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6TH.**

**LIGHTS OF LOVE
\$2.00**

In Memory of _____

or

In Honor of _____

By _____

(Please use a separate form for each name.)

ROTATION SUNDAY SCHOOL-November 22, 2009

"Daniel In The Lions Den"

4 Years: **Drama** Grades K-1: **Cookery**
Grade 2-3: **Music** Grades 4-5: **Art**

Teachers: October 11-November 29, 2009

Storytelling: Caroline Sitzer
Drama/Games: Lisa Johnson/Gayle Lowder
Cookery: Lori Sigmon/Cindy Boger
Music: Kristy Smith Art: Susan Reinhardt
Science: Gina & Scott King Movie: Rhonda Pawlik
Computer: Michelle White/Amy White

ATTENTION PARENTS OF CHILDREN!!

Only two practices remain before the Children's Program. Practice will be at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 22 and again at 4:00 p.m. Sunday, November 29.

We need **ALL** our children. Parents please encourage and work with your child to learn their parts. Please make play practice for the church's Christmas Program a commitment in your family.

KIDS FOR CHRIST

Kids for Christ meet each Wednesday at 3:10 to 5:00 PM. We have play time, snack, story time and music. We ask that each child bring \$1.00 per week to help pay for snacks.