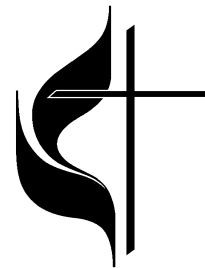


THE

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

In one of my favorite Peanuts comic strips, Lucy is moping around feeling sorry for herself. She complains, "My life is a drag. I'm completely fed up. I've never felt so low in my life."

Linus, her little brother, tries to cheer her and says, "Lucy, when you are in a mood like this, you should try to think of things to be thankful for. In other words, count your blessings."

To that, Lucy responds, "Ha! That's a good one! I could count my blessings on one finger! I've never had anything and I never will have anything. I don't get half the breaks that other people do. Nothing ever goes right for me! And you talk about counting blessings! You talk about being thankful! What do I have to be thankful for?"

Linus replies, "Well, for one thing, you have a little brother who loves you." With that Lucy runs and hugs Linus as she cries tears of joy. And while she is hugging him tightly, Linus says, "Every now and then, I say the right thing."

Over the next few days, we will all have the opportunity to count our blessings. Isn't Thanksgiving a wonderful time to pause and express our appreciation and gratitude for all the blessings of life?

Now I realize it may be a bit harder to express thanks this year given all that we've been through economically. It has been a rough year and many people are still looking for work and a job that will provide for their family. Given all that this region has been through, I suppose we should be filled with doom and gloom.

But I believe that there's much to be thankful for. Babies are still being born. The sun continues to rise. Crops are being nourished by the rain. Good friends still gather for a cup of hot coffee. Neighbors are taking care of neighbors. And diehard fans gather together in community to root for their favorite teams on Friday evenings and Saturday afternoons.

Yes, it has been a tough year for our nation. But we're still here and that fact alone should be enough to make us very, very grateful.

One of my favorite Thanksgiving hymns is *Now Thank We All Our God*. I love the powerful words contained in this hymn: "Now thank we all our God, with heart and hands and voices, Who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices; Who from our mothers'

arms has blessed us on our way, With countless gifts of love, and still is ours today."

This hymn was written in the 1630's by Martin Rinkart, a minister in the town of Eilenburg, Germany. He wrote this hymn during a period in which his town was caught in the midst of the terrible and bloody Thirty Years War. To make matters worse, in 1637 the Great Plague swept across the European continent and eventually hit Eilenburg. Over 8000 people died, including Martin Rinkart's wife. On some days, he conducted as many as 50 funerals.

Yet, Martin wrote this hymn of thanksgiving in the midst of it all. Apparently, he wrote it because he knew that God was with him, that God's grace was sufficient for all, and that the future belonged to God.

Happy Thanksgiving,
David

"Remembering Our Story"

Sunday, November 29

2:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Gomedela Room

Led by Dr. David Greene

Come and spend an afternoon sharing your memories about all that's happened in this congregation across the years. This will be a wonderful opportunity for new and longtime members to share your stories about what God has done in our church. As we get ready to enter into 2010, come and help your new pastors learn the story of this place so that we can begin dreaming about the next chapter of our church's story. We'll finish in time for you to walk downtown for the "Light Up the Square" Christmas celebration.

RECENT VISITORS

Janice Davis, Billy & Kathryn Griffis, Martha Robertson, Ashley, Bobby & Carter Watson, Frances Whitener, Harvey & Jeanette Coulter, Millicent Crawford, Ann & Ben Rawls, Rachel & Rebecca May, Pamela Schmitz

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.

AT WORSHIP NEXT SUNDAY

November 29, 2009

THE SHARED WORD: Rev Lara "Willis" Greene
"The Gift of Hope"
Psalm 42

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!

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

STEWARDSHIP REPORT, November 22, 2009

Attendance: 8:45 a.m.: 94 11:00 a.m.: 164
Sunday School: 146 9:00 a.m. Praise Service: 91

Offering:	Tithes & Offerings	\$14,199.79
	2010 Tithe	500.00
	Poinsettias	361.00
	Youth Christmas Gift	150.00
	Prayer Breakfast	118.00
	Renovation Fund	105.00
		<hr/>
		\$15,433.79

ALTAR FLOWERS FOR 2010

A calendar is being prepared for those wishing to furnish altar flowers in 2010. Please fill out the form below and place it in the offering plate or return it to the church office to reserve the Sunday of your choice.

I will furnish altar flowers in 2010 as follows:

Date: _____

In Memory/Honor of _____

By _____

OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEXT WEEK

* November 29-December 5, 2009 *

SUN.	8:45	Worship Service
	9:00	Praise Service
	9:45	Sunday School
	11:00	Worship Service/Children's Church
	2:00	Remembering Our Story
	4:00	Children's Play Practice
	4:00-5:15	All Youth Play Practice
MON.	9:00	Preschool
	2:00	Decorate Fellowship Hall
	7:00	Youth Praise Band
TUES.	9:00	Preschool
	6:30	GriefShare
	7:00	Disciple I
WED.	6:45	Youth Prayer Breakfast
	9:00	Preschool
	3:10	Kids for Christ
	6:00	Praise Team
	6:30	Adult Handbells
	7:30	Chancel Choir
THURS.	9:00	Preschool
	1:00	Prayer Shawl
FRI.	9:00	Preschool
	6:30	Preschool Christmas Program
SAT.		Poinsettias in Sanctuary

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.

YOUTH CHRISTMAS DINNER THEATER

Our youth will present a Christmas drama, "Christmas at the Cricket Café" 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 _____

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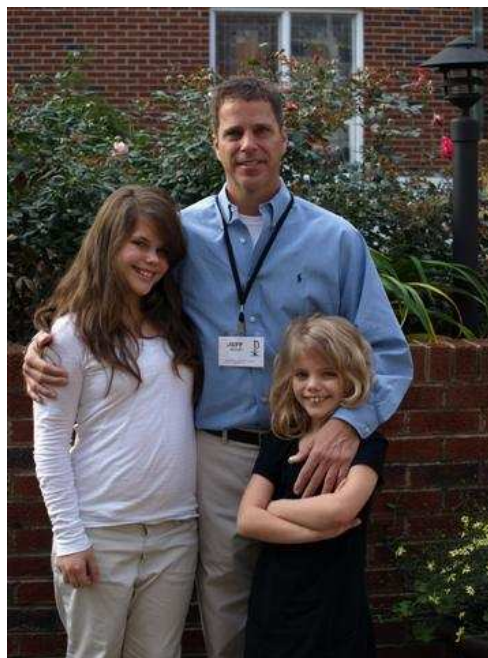
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NEW MEMBERS

On Sunday, November 22, we welcomed Jeff Kelley into our church family. He is pictured with his daughters, Parker who was a member of this year's confirmation class, and Erin who was baptized and placed on our Baptized Member Roll.

PRAYER CONCERNS

Pray For:

Jerry McGee
 Mark Denton
 Jeff Wyatt
 Cecil Kiser
 Sally White
 Dean and Jane Reavis
 Ernie Stevenson
 Kimberly Dillard Burns
 Heather Clontz
 Horace Jordan
 Jean Hasty
 Family of Thelma Pressley
 Family of Irene Elkins

Requested By:

Mervin McGee
 DeWayne Setzer
 Harriett Wyatt
 Jean Childs
 Buck Calloway
 Vicki Yount
 Vickey Jones
 Mary Bess Lawing
 Michelle White
 Joel & Mary McCombs
 Paulette Moss
 Shannon Sherfey

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

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)

YOUTH SCHEDULE

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 29, 2009

"Daniel In The Lions Den"

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

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!!

Our last practice before the Children's Program will be at 4:00 p.m. Sunday, November 29.

NEWTON-CONOVER FOOTBALL GAME

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27!!!

We are still winning!!!! The game Friday night is at East Lincoln. I have reserved the church van for anyone who would like to ride with us. **First call, first seated.** Please call me at 336-940-7246 to reserve a place on the van. We will leave the church at 5:30 PM. If the van fills up we will have a caravan to East Lincoln. **Peggy**