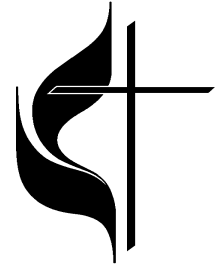


THE

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

This year's Super Bowl drew more viewers than any other program in the history of television. It was a great game. Wasn't it nice to see the Saints' fans smile and celebrate after all of the sorrow they've experienced in the last few years? My only complaint about this year's game was all of the entertainment that surrounded it. Halftime seemed to last forever. Every year there seems to be less and less football played during the Super Bowl.

Recently the *Wall Street Journal* wanted to find out how much actual playing time of a NFL game is covered on television. For their study, a group of reporters broke down every frame of the television broadcasts for four games on four networks on one weekend last December. Each shot in every broadcast was timed and logged. What they discovered was that there's very little actual football in a televised football game.

The reporters found that in a three hour broadcast of a NFL game there was only about eleven minutes of actual playing time. Just eleven minutes. The rest of the broadcast was devoted to commercials, shots of the players huddling and lining up, replays, crowd shots, coaches' antics, cheerleaders, etc. The article concluded that if you tally up everything that happens between the time the ball is snapped and the play is whistled dead by the officials, there's barely enough time to prepare a hard-boiled egg.

Eleven minutes is not a great deal of time. Thinking about this reminds me that our lives are a lot shorter than most of us would think. Recently I drove over to Shelby and went by some of my old stomping grounds. I can't believe it has been almost thirty years since I left home for college. In many respects it seems like just yesterday.

When I was a little boy I would often say, "I can't wait until ..." I was always longing for something like Christmas or my birthday or the next weekend. One Sunday morning on the way to church my grandmother Greene heard me saying this and she reprimanded me. "Stop wishing your life away!" she exclaimed. Now I know what she was talking about. It goes by fast enough without wishing for it to.

In one of his books, psychologist Mark Gerzon explains that one of his major discoveries revealed that the rules for the second half of life are different from those of the first half. He says, "The rules of the first half are by and large

inherited, while the rules of the second half are ones we have to discover for ourselves, anew." Gerzon admits that during the first half, his life was focused externally. His identity was based on how other people accepted, evaluated, or responded to him. Coming into mid-life, he realized "that there is something going on inside, and that I'd been so busy watching the movie going on around me that I didn't pay attention to the inner story."

Time goes by fast. So it's important to pay attention to the inner story, to our true identity. How do we find it? How do we claim what God has in store for us? The apostle Paul once wrote, "But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ" (Eph. 2:4-5). We find our identity when we are awakened to the life God offers us in our creation and rouses within us in Jesus Christ. Our true identity is not something we attain on our own. It is a gift that God gives to us.

The book, *Letters to Marc About Jesus*, is a collection of personal letters that the late Henri Nouwen wrote to a nephew in Holland. In the opening chapter, Nouwen describes how his studies and work with the church have taken him all over the world to associate with all sorts of people. He explains, "In every phase of my search I've discovered that Jesus Christ stands at the center of my seeking. If you were to ask me point-blank, 'What does it mean for you to live spiritually?' I would have to reply, 'Living with Jesus at the center.'"

Nouwen admits that there were times when he struggled and questioned. But then he states, "Despite this, when I look back over the last thirty years of my life, I can say that, for me, the person of Jesus has become more and more important ... my personal relationship with Jesus is the heart of my existence."

Nouwen concludes his book with a prayer for his nephew that seems to speak, I believe, to the essence of what it means to find our identity in Christ Jesus. In the prayer Nouwen states, "Living with Jesus is a great adventure. It's the adventure of love. When you admit Jesus to your heart nothing is predictable, but everything becomes possible. I pray that you will venture on a life with Jesus. He asks everything of you, but gives you more in return."

See you Sunday, **David**

AT WORSHIP NEXT SUNDAY

February 21, 2010

THE SHARED WORD: Rev Dr. David Greene
"Monarchy I"
 I Samuel 8:1-9; 19-22

SIMS BBQ AT DUDLEY SHOALS

Once again it is time to kick up our heels and eat some delicious barbecue at Sims BBQ in Dudley Shoals. We will be going Saturday, February 27th at 5:30 p.m. You can just pay at the door, but we ask you to RSVP to the church office or on the church website. We will need to know how many tables to reserve. The meal is all you can eat port and beef BBQ and fixins and the prices are: adults, \$10.75, children age 4-11, \$4.25, and under age 4 are free. Beverages are extra. After the meal, a bluegrass band will be playing for square dancing. This event is for the entire church family, and everyone is welcome to bring a friend! Call Al Bandy at 464-4870 if you need directions. The address is 6160 Petra Mill Rd., Granite Falls.

STEWARDSHIP REPORT, February 14, 2010

Attendance: 8:45 a.m. 90 11:00 a.m. 144
 Sunday School 132 9:00 a.m. Praise Service 88

Offering:	Tithes & Offerings	\$7,991.50
	Prayer Breakfast	26.40
	Pregnancy Care Ctr.	5.00
	Renovation Fund	<u>175.00</u>
		\$8,197.90

Weekly Budget Needs	\$10,963.00
Budget Needs as of 2/14/10	\$76,741.00
Contributions Received as of 2/14/10	62,266.00
Under Budget for Year	-\$14,475.00

NEEDED!! A FEW GOOD MEN

We are in need of a few good men who are willing to spend an hour or two with some male youth. The young men need a positive male in their lives. You could take them bowling, fishing, to the mall or whatever the two of you decide together. It may be just going to get ice cream. Would you please contact Peggy at 464-8422 or 336-940-7246 if you are interested. These young guys really need you in their lives. I have been praying about this and I hope you will join me. If I don't hear from you soon, I may call on you. Thank you for all your support and help in our youth ministry here at First UMC.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEXT WEEK

* February 21-27, 2010 *

SUN.	8:45	Worship Service
	9:00	Praise Service
	9:30	Sunday School
	9:30	Blood Pressure Check
	11:00	Worship Service
	12:45-2:30	Youth Bible Study & Bowling
	4:30	Finance Committee
	5:30	Administrative Council
MON.	9:00	Preschool
	7:00	Youth Praise Band
TUES.	9:00	Preschool
	6:30	Griefshare
	7:00	Disciple I
WED.	6:45	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
	7:00	United Single Adults (USA) Bowling
SAT.	9:00-12:30	Gomedela Room Reserved
	5:30	Sims-Bar-B-Q Family Outing

BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS will be available this Sunday, February 21st in David and Willis' offices from 9:30-10:00 a.m. .

PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY are extended to Sherrill and Mary Anne Crawford following the recent death of their brother-in-law, Dr. O. J. Freund of Denton, NC.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION!!!

On Thursday, February 18th the power and telephone service to the church will be disabled from 2:00-4:00 p.m. If you have an emergency, please call one of the pastors on their cell phones (David 336-971-3137 or Willis 336-971-4251).

HONORARIUM

Donations have been given to the **Renovation Fund** in honor of **Melba and Brooks Nichols** by Jean and Bill Childs and by Dick and Harriett Wyatt.

RECENT VISITORS:

Janice Davis, Billy & Kathryn Griffis, Martha Robertson, Madelyn & Liza Grace Robertson, Dale Ramseur, Brianna Vanover, Kristen Symonds, Libby Hall, Jim Mauney, Somer, Maisy & Addie

HOSPITAL REPORT:

—Sam Irby remains in the clinic at Abernethy Laurels.
—Lorene Martin is recovering at home following surgery last week.
—Christy Vanover is also recovering at home following surgery on Tuesday.

PRESCHOOL CHILD

Ms. Julia, our Preschool Director, received a call last week from the Children’s Resource Center. They had a single mother with a two year old child who needed help. The mother has cancer and she needed a place for her child to attend, but she did not have the money. We accepted this child and he started Preschool on Monday. We are asking individuals or classes to consider sponsoring this child. The fees are \$125.00 a month for three days which is what he will attend for a while. If it can be worked out, he may be coming five days a week, and the cost is \$175.00 a month. The mother needs our help so that she can get her medical treatment during the time the child is at Preschool. If you can help, please contact Peggy.

HELP NEEDED!!!

The trustees want to have a tree trimming work day on this Saturday, February 20th (weather permitting). We need to trim the Bradford Pear trees between the church and parking lot. If you can help, please be at the church by 8:00 a.m. (9:00 a.m. if it is extremely cold) and bring your chain saw and tree pruners if you have them. We need a lot of people so that this is not an all day job.

PRAYER CONCERNS

Pray For:	Requested By:
Jerry McGee	Merv McGee
Faye Sigmon	Pat Matthews
Faye Howse	Hazel Sims
Emily Jones	Don & Carolyn Scronce
Jerry Canipe	Don & Carolyn Scronce
Douglas Walters	Harris Jones
Jack Matthews	Pat
Johnny Brown	Carolyn Perdue
Johnny Goforth	Jean Childs
Ryan Fitzgerald	Peggy Correll
Kaye Matthews	Vickey Jones
Family of Randy Transou	

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

MEMORIALS RECEIVED RECENTLY

- Renovation Fund:**
Dr. Allen H. Bandy, Sr.
 Dick & Harriett Wyatt
- UMW Scholarship Fund:**
Cecil Kiser
 Joe & Nancy Killian

THE 2010 CHURCH DIRECTORY may be found on tables at the entrances to the sanctuary. One is available for each family.

UNITED SINGLE ADULTS (USA)

Friday night’s beautiful blanket of snow was that “Beautiful.” It was necessary to postpone our bowling night out at Pin Station until February 26th at 7:00 p.m. For those who need directions, Kenny will wait at the church from 6:30 until 6:45 p.m. and drive there with you.

YOUTH MEALS

PLEASE CALL AND SIGN UP TODAY!

- Sunday, Feb. 28: Hot Dogs Donna Mull
 Sunday, March 7: Lasagna Dewayne Setzer
 and Treva Sweezy
 Sunday, March 28: Taco Salad_____

YOUTH SCHEDULE

SUN., Feb. 21 12:45-2:30 PM Bowling at Pin Station
(We will meet at the church to do Bible Study first and then go to bowling. Parents, pick up at Pin Station.)

SUN., Feb. 28 & SUN., March 7: Regular Youth

March 12-14: Camp Hanes (No Youth that Sunday)

March 21 12:45-2:30 PM Bowling
(Bible Study first and then bowling at Pin Station.)

March 28 Regular Youth

MIDDLE SCHOOL PARENTS, PLEASE PICK UP YOUR YOUTH AT 5:30 P.M. ON REGULAR MEETING DAYS!!!

LUNCH BUDDIES AT SOUTH NEWTON

I would like to thank everyone who signed up to be a Lunch Buddy. We have 20 people going to South Newton and having lunch with the children. The children love it and so do the adults. Susan Hunsucker said last week, she had many more children come up to her asking for a lunch buddy. If you still would like to sign up, just let Susan or Peggy know.

ROTATION SUNDAY SCHOOL-February 21, 2010

"Occupations In Bible Times"

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

Teachers: January 10-February 28, 2010

Storytelling: Caroline Sitzer Art: Susan Reinhardt

Drama/Games: Lisa Johnson/Gayle Lowder

Cookery: Cindy Boger/Terra Butler

Music: Debbie Bandy

Movie: Rhonda Pawlik Computer: Gina & Scott King

Science: Michelle White/Amy White

CAMP HANES—MARCH 12-14

I know this date seems far away, but I need to know by **Sunday, March 7** if your youth is planning on attending this retreat. Your cost will be \$50.00 and the church will pay the remaining amount. I will be the speaker for the weekend and the theme is **"Who Is Jesus?"** We are going to learn together who Jesus is and what he means to us. **PARENTS, PLEASE LET ME KNOW ASAP IF YOUR YOUTH IS GOING OR IF THEY ARE NOT GOING!!**