



First Methodist Church OF CONOVER

The Weekly Newsletter of First Methodist Church Conover

December 27, 2023

WHISPERS IN THE WOODS — New Beginnings

"You live life looking forward, you understand life looking backward." Søren Kierkegaard

The New Year is the time a lot of people make all those wonderful resolutions. It was the Babylonians of 4,000 years ago who had the notion that a new year ought to be a time for personal renewal and self-improvement. Their new year began in the spring.

We have the Romans to thank for setting the calendar with which we are familiar. They named the first month after the Roman god, *Janus*, who had two faces—one looking backward and one looking forward. Which is what we tend to do at this time of year.

The news shows will be full of lists of the Ten Best movies, or the most important people of the year, and of course the most important stories of the year.



FOR ALL OF US HERE AT FIRST, 2023 WAS A MONUMENTAL YEAR!

① 22 NEW MEMBERS JOINED OUR CHURCH FAMILY IN 2023.

How blessed we are by so many new members. They have brought a lot of vibrancy, enthusiasm, and faithfulness with them, and if you haven't had a chance to get to know them yet, you've short-changed yourself. [BTW, you have a chance to meet some of them with our church-wide meals that are planned for this next year. See this newsletter for more information.]

② **WE SEPARATED FROM OUR UNITED METHODIST ROOTS AND BECAME A GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH CONGREGATION.**

This involved a mountain of work, continual prayers and shouldering a hefty financial obligation, all in the name of being faithful to the Lord and his Scriptures. Many, many of our leaders helped steer us through this convoluted and sometimes confounding process.

- We had to **legally change our name and logo** and all the accompanying signage.
- We had to **pay a \$196,202 "disaffiliation fee."** In a remarkable answer to this requirement, our congregation (you!!) have not only kept up with our regular operating budget **but also raised \$204,676 to meet this need** and begin paying ourselves back for the additional costs we incurred in this process. WOW!!

③ **2023 ALSO SAW SIGNIFICANT STAFF CHANGES FOR OUR CHURCH.**

We **released Pastor Charmaine** from her ministry here to help meet the needs of this new GMC denomination. She is now pastoring at Bethel Global Methodist Church in Oak Ridge, NC and is making significant differences in her new congregation. Late this fall, to help with our ministry needs, **we welcomed Beth Woods** onto the ministry team as our COORDINATOR OF LAY MINISTRIES. She is helping us move forward in some terrific new ways and will help us take next steps into the future God has for us.

Someone once said: "Forget the past, it's gone, but glance back occasionally to remind yourself where you came from and where you are going." This is the "glance back." Next week, I want to think about where we're going, because that's where the Lord is leading us.....into a great future! Happy New Year!

Grace and Peace,

Pastor John

PRAYERS, PRAISES AND NEEDS

Let Us Pray...



As an ongoing part of our Nurturing Ministry, we are asking all members of our church to pray for six specific families. Each week we will list a different group of six families as we work our way through our church roll. The families for this week are:

Leonard & Julie Lawing, Jeanne Laws,
Brad & Kim Little, Chip, Dana, Aaron & Mack Little,
Gary & Kelly Little, Scott, Andrea, Sady & Chase Little.

A NOTE OF SYMPATHY

Peggy Currie, age 85 and a member of First Methodist Church of Conover, died Tuesday, December 26, 2023 at Carolina Caring in Hickory, NC.

A service to celebrate Peggy's life will be held at Catawba Memorial Park on Thursday, December 28, 2023 at 6:00pm. Visitation will be at 5:00pm.

Our thoughts and prayers are with her family during this sad time.

IN OUR
Thoughts and Prayers



CONGRATULATIONS!!!

We would like to congratulate Dana Abernathy Little for being named "Baker of the Year" and for raising more than \$8,000 for The Corner Table.

She, along with 10 other women raised over \$37,000 for The Corner Table's hunger programs.

We are so proud of each of you, especially Dana, and we thank all of you for your hard work and commitment to this mission.

IN/OUT OF HOSPITAL

Mary Ann Cooke at Trinity Village (Room 123)

A Note of Very Grateful Thanks to our Church Family

Words can hardly express our profound gratitude for all of you. What an amazing joy to be a part of this church staff. We want to thank you for the incredible outpouring of love and support you have given to each of us. We especially want to thank you for the abundant generosity you have shown us during Christmas. From Christmas cards and candy to baked goods and your wonderful staff love offering, you were all extremely generous in your love to us.

God has richly blessed us through you and we are so grateful to be part of this First Conover family!

The Staff of FMCC

Pastor John	Beth
Robin	Jon
Julie	Shannon
Luisa	Kevin
Pilar	



MEMORIAL Local Missions (Neighbor's Table)

In memory of Leta Tucker by:
Jean Slate

HONORARIUM General Fund

In honor of Pastor John Woods by:
Beth Hair and family

NEWS TO USE

GOODTIMERS - SAVE THE DATE!

As of now, the Asheville trip to see the Gingerbread House Display, the Fresco, and The Cathedral of All Souls has been rescheduled to Thursday, Jan. 4th. Eddie will do an "All Call" on Jan. 2nd to verify the trip. There will be a Sign-up sheet on the Go-See-Do bulletin board! Please be at the church at 9:00am to ride the van.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call Eddie Warren at (828) 464-9643.



AN INVITATION TO JOIN THE LADIES "5:30 A.M. TRIBE" EXERCISE CLASS

So who are we? We are a diverse group of women with differing abilities and exercise goals who meet together to MOVE and ENCOURAGE one another in Christ. A little history... The 5:30 a.m. Tribe Exercise Class was initiated by Kara Osborne in July of 2014 and originally met at Woodlawn Baptist Church gym. We have had members as young as 5 and as old as 85! Since Covid, we have alternated between an indoor location in the colder months, and outdoors at Conover City Park in the warmer months.

First Methodist of Conover has graciously hosted us the past two years. Yes, 5:30 a.m. is EARLY! But what a rich blessing to begin our day together, to strengthen and move physically for 30 minutes, and to focus our minds and spirits on the Word of God for a ten minute devotion. That's right- 40 minutes and we are moving on with our day's activities!

In Kara's words, "The workout is really the warm-up. The real work happens at the end when we allow the Lord to train our hearts."

We meet on most Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 5:30-6:10 a.m. in the Connor Family Life Center. We welcome any ladies of the church that are interested. Join us- what a great goal for the New Year. Hope to see you soon!

In Christ,
Michele Moritz

For more info, call or text Michele- (828) 612-6747



PASTOR'S QUIZ

Mary wrapped her baby in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because

- a. it had so been prophesied
- b. there was no room for them in the inn
- c. they were too poor to lodge in the inn
- d. the three wise men were coming to the manger

(The correct answer is on the back of the newsletter.)

STEWARDSHIP REPORT

By Our Presence December 24, 2023

Sunday School:

80

Worship:

8:45am Service 132

11:00am Service 112

244

God's Tithe & Our Gifts

General Fund \$ 22,746.00

(Needed weekly for budget: \$12,716)

Children's Bank 13.00

Disaffiliation Fund 600.00

"Hoops" for Christ T-shirts 30.00

Local Missions Fund 25.00

Total \$ 23,414.00

Attendance Christmas Eve:

4:00pm Service 132

6:00pm Service 161

Total 293



ECCCM
Eastern Catawba Cooperative Christian Ministry, Inc.

The **January food request** is canned soup and broth. These items along with any grocery bags may be placed in the red bins in the hallway between the CFLC and Beth's office. Thank you.

Volunteer day for our church will be changing to the first Monday in the month for 2024. Since ECCCM is closed Monday, January 1st, we hope to see you there on Tuesday, January 2nd.

First Methodist Church
410 First Avenue North
Conover, NC 28613
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Conover, NC

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Facebook.com - search for First Methodist Church of Conover.
"Like" to add to your profile.



Answer to this week's Pastor's Quiz:

b. there was no room for them in the inn
(Luke 2:7)

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor	Rev. John Woods pastor@fmccconover.org (828) 464-4635 (336) 480-4550 - cell 208 2nd St NE, Conover
Office Administrator / Financial Secretary	Robin Mays office@fmccconover.org
Coordinator of Lay Ministries	Beth Woods woods777@aol.com (336) 480-4551 - cell
Music Director/Choir	Jon Rogers jsrogers99@gmail.com (828) 244-7019
Music Director/Praise Team/ Pianist	Shannon Rogers srog101@gmail.com (828) 244-6124
Organist	Kevin Haney khaney01@gmail.com (704) 914-6510
Preschool Director	Julie Robinson (828) 466-3158 preschool@fmccconover.org
Lead Nursery Worker	Pilar Tobar
Custodian	Luisa Toro Bryan
Church Office	(828) 464-4635
Website:	www.fmccconover.org



JOIN US IN PRAYER THIS YEAR!

If you attended any of our Dec 24 services, you may have noticed the large January 2024 calendar in the narthex. I want to explain why it's there. It's our New Year's Resolution challenge! We know you are already dedicated to praying for our church and we greatly appreciate that! But we thought it would be good to put a united focus on those prayers as we start a new year. We have accomplished so much over the past year with a new church name and identity and all the transition that has happened, so we want to spend time together in prayer to get 2024 kicked off right.

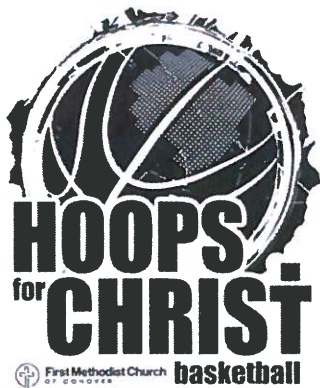
The way we're doing that is to give you a chance to commit to praying for our church, specifically for God to lead us as we set goals and priorities. I'm just asking you to sign your name on at least one day and commit to praying for your church on that day. I think we'll all be amazed at all that God

will do through a congregation that prays and listens! So, if you are willing to join this challenge, sign your name on a date. It's fine to have multiple people on one day, but I hope to have at least one name on every day. Thank you!

If you would rather sign up online, go to:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C084CAFAC29A7FE3-46980604-january>

I will transfer online sign-ups to the paper calendar. If you sign up online, you will get an email reminder a few days in advance,



NEED REFRESHMENTS JAN 6, 13

We're still looking for hosts to provide coffee/water and light snacks for Hoops for Christ parents during the games on Jan 6 and Jan 13. This is an opportunity to show hospitality to friends who may not have a church home and this gesture has been well received at the first two games. Ideally, we would love to have you set it up and have a few people stay throughout the games to keep it fresh. (And the games are fun to watch!) You could volunteer in shifts if that works better.

COME WATCH GAMES JAN 6, 13, 20, 27

Churchwide fellowship! Soup and Game night

Saturday, January 13 at 5:30
in the Connor Family Life Center

Special guests: all new members who have joined in 2023. Please join us for a chance to expand our fellowship and get to know the wonderful members who have joined recently.



We will enjoy fellowship over warm bowls of homemade soup (spoiler alert: Pastor John makes a delicious chicken and wild rice and Beth's specialty is Brunswick stew...). We can't wait to try everyone's creations! **Please bring soup or stew if you can.** We'll provide crackers, paper products, and drinks.

After dinner, we will mingle and play board games or cards (or dominos... or any other type of game... puzzles, maybe?) Bring a few of your favorites! Whatever we play, we will be enjoying making new friendships and building stronger bonds of fellowship. (Second spoiler alert: this is a kick-off to Pastor John's next sermon series... come back on Sunday, Jan 14 to hear more!)

Parents of preschool-high school! I need to hear from you and your kids!

I will be having two meetings in January to hear the wishes and ideas for ministry from parents and kids of all ages. Parents and children/teens are welcome to attend. Both meetings will address the whole range of ministry for these ages, so feel free to attend either one or both. If you can attend both, you will be able to be more involved in the discussions. If you cannot attend either, I still want to hear from you, so please contact me individually to set up a time to talk. (Beth Woods 336-480-4551 or woods777@aol.com)

Meeting date & times:

Wed, Jan 17 6:30-7:30

Mon, Jan 22 6:30-7:30

Location: conference room (we'll move if we need more space!)

Please come and give input about what you want your ministry to be in 2024 and beyond!



MORE NEWS TO USE

DON'T FORGET our members in Nursing Facilities and our Homebound

Rev. Dixon Adams - Abernethy Laurels North Manor (Room 1035)
102 Leonard Avenue, Newton, NC 28658

James Davis - Abernethy Laurels (Memory Care Center)
255 Geitner Avenue, Newton, NC 28658



Nell Johnson Kingston Residence
904 2nd Street NE, Apt. 109, Hickory, NC 28601
(828) 328-9962 - landline (828) 228-7396 - cell

Margaret Kilpatrick, Abernethy Laurels (Memory Care) (Room 2010)
102 Leonard Avenue, Newton, NC 28658

Connie McCoy - The Greens (Room 211)
3031 Tate Blvd., SE, Hickory, NC 28602

Rick Parker - Catawba Valley Living at Rock Barn (Room 107)
4174 Shook Road, Claremont, NC 28610
(828) 381-4988 - Rick's cell (828) 381-7328 - Linda's cell

Mary Ann Simpson - Abernethy Laurels (Room 138)
102 Leonard Avenue, Newton, NC 28658

Sybil Windsor - TerraBella Newton (Room C13)
1088 Radio Station Road, Newton, NC 28658



Dottie Aycock-Harris - 1449 Brookstone Drive, Hickory, NC 28602
(704) 460-4919 - Ron's cell phone
noghost@bellsouth.net - email address

John & Betsy Hemmings, 2537 Birdie Lane, Conover, NC 28613
(828) 459-9444

Jim Horst, 317 8th Ave. NE, Conover, NC 28613
(864) 640-1235

Lee Moritz, Sr., 103 County Home Road, Conover, NC 28613
(828) 464-3383

Dolores Setzer PO Box 1237, Conover, NC 28613
(828) 256-1421

If you know of any members that should be added to our list, please contact the church office at
(828) 464-4635.