



First Methodist Church OF CONOVER

The Weekly Newsletter of First Methodist Church Conover

December 12, 2023

A lot of us just about have it memorized - that Christmas classic, "A Charlie Brown Christmas." Maybe you even hear that familiar piano theme in your mind now. Charlie's efforts to find the meaning of Christmas are, of course, repeatedly frustrated by Lucy's big mouth and Snoopy's garishly decorated doghouse. But then there's Linus on stage, in the spotlight, reciting the story of the first Christmas from the Bible.



And there's also Charlie Brown's memorable Christmas tree! The last tree on the lot - bedraggled, broken, and pitiful. But Charlie insists on giving that miserable little tree his tender loving care. And by the end, that tree, fully decorated, has become the beautiful center of the whole gang's Christmas celebration. It's amazing how a broken tree can become special with some tender, loving care.

That's true for broken people too. With all the joy of the Christmas season, it could also be a time that reopens old wounds; a time that intensifies the loneliness and highlights the broken parts of your life.

And yet there's hope in that simple birth announcement the angels made the night Jesus arrived on earth, "**A Savior has been born to you.**" A savior! It's been a source of hope for 2,000 years, and it's an invitation He offers to you.

His invitation is recorded in Matthew 11:28, and it is hope for a hurting heart. Jesus said, "**Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.**" "**Come to Me.**" That's still Jesus' gentle invitation to you this Christmas. Come to Him for things that no one else has ever been able to do for you.

Like beginning the healing of your broken heart. The Bible says of the Lord, "**He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.**" His unconditional love for you, the value He places on you, the emotional power He provides - they offer a spiritual "safe harbor" for you. Jesus' "Come to Me" invitation is also an invitation to come and be forgiven.

That's why that baby came to Bethlehem. That's why Jesus went to that horrific cross to die. He was paying the penalty for every wrong thing you and I have ever done. So He might forgive you and erase every sin. He loves you so much He gave His life so you could be with Him forever. And then He came back from His grave to prove He's got the power to deliver on all His promises.

Charlie Brown's love made something special out of a broken tree. Jesus' love for a broken you led Him to be broken on the tree where He died, so you could have a brand new beginning. By the way, this is a great time of year to give yourself to the One who gave Himself for you; to find the One you've been looking for your whole life. Or, perhaps, to recommit yourself to Him and His hopes for your life.

Like Charlie Brown and that little Christmas tree, Jesus and His love have the ability to turn something bedraggled and broken into something eternally beautiful. Which really is the greatest Christmas present of all!



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:

Nickolas Joyner, Corey, Lindsay, Jeb & McCoy Keisler,
Brian Kelly, Margaret Kilpatrick,
Clyde & Carol Kistler, Dennis & Jo Ellen Knecht.



ECCCM
Eastern Catawba Cooperative Christian Ministry, Inc.

The **December food request** is the reverse Advent calendar boxes. These items along with any grocery bags may be placed in the red bins in the hallway between the CFLC and Beth's office.

In order to help provide food for those in need, ECCCM is sponsoring a "Reverse Advent Calendar" food drive. Beginning December 1 and continuing until December 20, you are asked to place a certain food item in a box. You can then bring the box to the church or deliver it to ECCCM. Boxes and the food list are available at the church. This is a wonderful mission for an individual, family or group. Thank you for helping make someone's Christmas a little merrier.

Anita Deal, your ECCCM Representative

UPPER ROOMS

The January / February "Upper Room" devotional books are available for pick-up. They are located on the sofa table outside the Conference Room and upstairs by the water fountain. You can read the same daily devotional that is in the book each day by going online to this web-site:

<http://www.upperroom.org/devotional/>



IN/OUT OF HOSPITAL

Don Shook (at home)

MEMORIAL

Disaffiliation Fund

In memory of H.A. Slate on his
December 17th birthday by:
Jean and family

A NOTE OF SYMPATHY

Charles Brinkley, brother of Beverly Swithenbank, died Thursday, December 7, 2023.

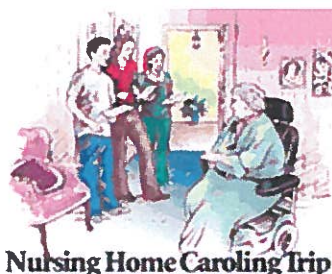
A private family service will be held at a later time.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Beverly, Gene and the family during this difficult time.

Here We Come a-Caroling

First Methodist is going Christmas caroling and we need you to join us. There are four different opportunities and you can be a part of one or all four groups. Below are the details with some tweaks on time and location. Please consider being a part of spreading Christmas joy and the light of Christ during this special time of the year.

Date	Time	Meeting Place
December 13	1:30	Terra Bella in Newton
December 19	5:30	TBD
December 21	1:00	The church parking lot
December 21	6:30	Abernethy Laurels North Manor



Nursing Home Caroling Trip

NEWS TO USE

CHANGES IN ADDRESSES

Robert & Cathy Choppa
PO Box 759
Conover, NC 28613

Ralph & Patricia Hatch
PO Box 126
Conover, NC 28613

Don & Cheryl Hedrick
PO Box 542
Claremont, NC 28610

Dianne Hollar
4018 Grady Williams Lane
Maiden, NC 28650



PASTOR'S QUIZ

Elisabeth and Zacharias' child was named

- a. Zacharias
- b. David
- c. John
- d. Elisabeth

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

STEWARDSHIP REPORT

By Our Presence December 10, 2023

Sunday School:
87

Worship:
8:45am Service 80
11:00am Service 124
204

God's Tithe & Our Gifts

General Fund \$ 11,987.00

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

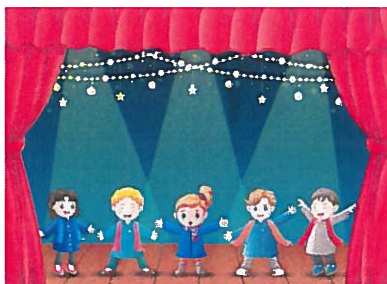
Children's Bank	55.00
Disaffiliation Fund	150.00
ECCCM	100.00
"Hoops for Christ"	90.00
Poinsettias	12.00
Staff Love Offering	<u>1,375.00</u>
Total	\$ 13,769.00

PRESCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Mrs. Julie and all the preschool teachers would like to invite everyone to the Preschool Christmas Program to be held in the CFLC on Wednesday, December 20, 2023 at 10:30am.

The children are excited and have been planning their program for weeks. Please come and support the children and the teachers for all their hard work.

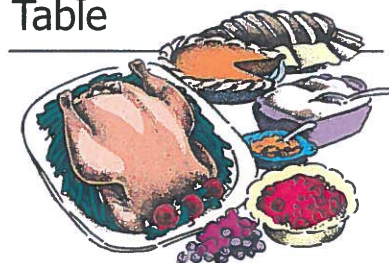
Refreshments will be served after the program and everyone is invited to stay and enjoy this time with the preschool children and teachers before taking a break for the holidays.



NEIGHBOR'S TABLE

This Saturday, December 16, 2023, the Clark Bible class will be providing the meal for the Neighbor's Table in the CFLC beginning at 5:00pm. Please help to spread the word in our community that this meal is open to everybody. If you want to help serve, please contact Lois Goodson at (828) 465-2005.

Neighbor's Table



First Methodist Church
410 First Avenue North
Conover, NC 28613
Return Service Requested

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Conover, NC

JOIN US ONLINE VIA:

Youtube.com - search for First Methodist Church of Conover.

By subscribing you will be able to find our channel easily every week.

SUBSCRIBE by clicking on the red subscribe button.



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



Answer to this week's Pastor's Quiz:

c. John
(Luke 1:57-63)

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

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024!



MONTH OF PRAYER

As we begin the new year, you will have the opportunity to sign up for a day when you will commit to praying for our church and how we will live out our calling to Christ in 2024. Maybe you will choose the day that matches your birthday or anniversary. We will have a calendar for sign up in the narthex and online.

VISIONING MEETINGS WITH PARENTS OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN

Parents and volunteers working with youth and children... be thinking about what you want our ministries in these areas to look like in 2024. Then, please attend one or both of the meetings or share your thoughts with me (Beth).

WED. JAN 17 6:30-7:30
MON. JAN 22 6:30-7:30

**PLANNING FOR
EASTER 4
CHILDREN WILL
BEGIN SOON!**

MEALS AT THE WOODS' HOME

We (Pastor John and Beth) will be hosting a series of informal meals at our home so that we can spend time with small groups of people, sharing visions of ministry and hearing your stories in a relaxed setting. Sign-ups will begin in January.

Watch for it!

DIRECTORY UPDATES

We are trying make sure our contact information is correct so you get messages in a timely fashion. Please let us know if any of your information has changed!

GAME NIGHT AND CHURCHWIDE FELLOWSHIP

We've planned a night of fellowship, homemade soup, and playing games! It will be a lot of fun! Details will be announced later.

SAT. JAN 13
AT 5:30

**WHAT WOULD
YOU SUGGEST
FOR 2024?**

COMMITTEES AND LEADERS

Please pray for and support the people making decisions for our church!

**PLANNING FOR
PRAYER WALK
WILL BEGIN
SOON!**

Beth Woods
(336) 480-4551
woods777@aol.com

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

Lee Moritz, Sr., 103 County Home Road, Conover, NC 28613

(828) 464-3383

Dolores Setzer PO Box 1237, Conover, NC 28613

(828) 256-1421

Leta Tucker 1108 Mayfield Circle NW, Conover, NC 28613

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