



First Methodist Church

OF CONOVER

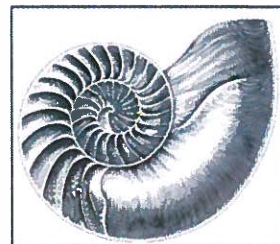
The Weekly Newsletter of First Methodist Church Conover

January 17, 2024

WHISPERS IN THE WOODS — Closing the Door on Your Past

As a former marine biologist, I've always been drawn to sea creatures. One of the most amazing is a sea animal called the nautilus. Now, for some of you, the only nautilus you may remember is Captain Nemo's submarine, the "Nautilus," in a Jules Verne novel. That's not what I'm talking about.

I'm thinking about the little sea creature with the fascinating shell. I've actually seen some of the live creatures. Most folks, though, know them from their cool shell. It's real smooth on the outside usually with stripes on it. I have one in my office.



When you cut a nautilus shell in half, it reveals the life story of the one-time inhabitant. At the center is this circular chamber with a wall around it. That was the original home of a little bitty nautilus. Then there are circular chambers all the way to the outer edge of the shell, and *each chamber is a little larger than the previous one.* **That little sea creature kept outgrowing his shell, so he left it behind and moved on to the next chamber - and chapter - of his life.**

We've got a lesson to learn from that little sea creature. He knows how to close the door on the old chapters of his life and move on to a whole new chapter. For someone reading this, some of those old chapters still define a lot of who you are - past hurts, past failures, past mistakes, past sins. Don't you wish you could do what that nautilus does and just build a wall that closes the door on the old you and grow into the new, improved you? The bad news is you can't. The good news is Jesus can. He's been doing it for 2,000 years. He's done it for me. He can do it for you.

It's the promise of 2 Corinthians 5:17: ***"If anyone is in Christ, he [or she] is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"*** Something miraculous happens when you go from being "outside of Christ" to "in Christ." The guilt of the old is erased, and you no longer have to be defined by the darkness of the past. Jesus makes possible a fresh start, a clean slate, a new beginning.

That's why God says to us in Isaiah 43: ***"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions ... and remembers your sins no more."*** What an awesome possibility! The blotting out of every sin of your past! It took nothing less than the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. You did the sinning but Jesus did the dying so He could close the door on your past and move you into a life that revolves around Him - a forgiven life. A life lived in the purpose for which you were created.

By the way, the same principle is true for our church as well. As we embark on this new year — one without all the denominational drama, disobedience, and damage to our biblical witness, we find we can now leave that "past" in the past and begin a new future (a Global Methodist future) faithfully living into God's plans for us. That's really good news for this new year! Amen!

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:

Mike, Kelly, Laci & Haley Matthews, Robert Matthews,
Robin & Windy Mays, Connie McCoy,
Kevin & Kylee McDuffie, Kim McDuffie.

IN/OUT OF HOSPITAL

None

MEMORIALS

General Fund

In memory of Jim Horst by:
Sylvia Hansmann

Neighbor's Table

In memory of Leta Tucker by:
Beth Bock

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH

LOGO/BRAND

Our First Methodist Church logo/brand is available at Embroidery Heaven in downtown Conover.

Congregation members may provide their own garments (jackets, polo shirts, travel bags or hats) to be embroidered or the shop can special order upon request. Thread color can be changed.

Feel free to reach out to Patricia Hatch with any questions or comments at (910)934-1707.



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THANK YOU

We would like to thank everyone for the bag of treats, cards, and prayers and the folks who came caroling at Christmas.

We miss you all and love you and hope to be back to church soon!

Rev. Dixon & Marg Adams



Gift from the Girls' Small Group

The Girls' Small Group has prepared a special gift to the congregation to be presented at the Contemporary Worship Service at 8:45 on January 28. They used their artistic talents to illustrate one of the songs that the Praise Team will sing that day.

It's inspiring to see their interpretations of this song, so I encourage you to attend or watch the service online that day.

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! Be thinking about the frequency of meetings, location of meetings, types of studies, service projects, and retreats or other trips.

NEWS TO USE



Update on Noah's Ark/Creation Museum Trip

We are still collecting names of anyone interested in going on a bus trip to visit the Ark Encounter in Williamstown, Kentucky, and the Creation Museum in Petersburg, Kentucky. But we have enough interest already to move forward, so I will be working with Burke Christian Tours soon to set a date, itinerary, and price. (Watch for announcements soon!)

One possible itinerary:

Day 1: travel; stop at Museum of Appalachia; lodging in Cincinnati

Day 2: Creation Museum & planetarium; Jungle Jim's International Market

Day 3: Ark Encounter

Day 4: travel; stop at Cumberland Falls State Park on the way home

Feel free to invite friends and family from beyond our church so we can reach our goal of a full bus (that will reduce the price for all.)

I (Beth) have visited the Creation Museum and the Ark Encounter and can wholeheartedly recommend them. Both venues are expertly crafted and Biblically accurate and both will educate and encourage you. They are well-worth the effort to visit!

Price is dependent on the total number of people attending and the final itinerary. The estimated cost is around \$650, which includes transportation, admission to all destinations, lodging, and some meals. If at least 30 people participate, we will have the bus to ourselves. Even if you can't make a firm commitment yet, please let Beth Woods know if you are interested. Contact her at (336) 480-4551; or woods777@aol.com or sign up on Beth's office door.



PASTOR'S QUIZ

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness" was that of

- a. John the Baptist
- b. Jesus
- c. Zacharias
- d. Simeon

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

STEWARDSHIP REPORT By Our Presence January 14, 2024

Sunday School:
102

Worship:
8:45am Service 125
11:00am Service 143
268

God's Tithe & Our Gifts

General Fund	\$ 26,318.00
<i>(Needed weekly for budget: \$12,804)</i>	
Children's Bank	24.26
Local Missions (Tornado Victim)	200.00
Hawk's Nest Food	
Pantry	701.00
Neighbor's Table	30.00
Total	\$ 27,273.26



Soul Sisters Soup Sale

Soul Sisters Circle will be making their delicious soups on Saturday, February 3.

We will offer Cheesy Potato Soup, Chicken with Wild Rice and Vegetables and Hamburger Taco. All soups are \$6 per pint and ready to eat or stock your freezers. We are taking orders on our FaceBook page or you can call Rita Deal at (828) 465-7273 and leave a message to reserve your soup. All orders may be picked up from noon – 2 pm at the church kitchen or after church on Sunday, February 4.

Thank you for supporting our ministries!



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 has changed to the first Monday in the month for 2024. Our next volunteer day will be Monday, Feb. 5th.

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

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

2024 FLOWER CHART

The new 2024 Flower Chart has been posted in the hallway outside the church office.

If you would like to sign up to place flowers in the Sanctuary one Sunday in honor of or in memory of someone, please call the church office at (828) 464-4635 to schedule a date.

Please do not write your name on the Flower Chart but call the church office.

A slide will be shown at both services on the Sunday that you choose with the information given by you.

The following florists have a key so that they can deliver the flowers on a Saturday:

Twigs & Twine - Conover

ABC Florist - Newton

Newton-Conover Florist - Newton

Blooms Greenhouse - Conover



Answer to this week's Pastor's Quiz:

a. John the Baptist
(Luke 3:2-4)

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor

Rev. John Woods
pastor@fmconover.org
(828) 464-4635
(336) 480-4550 - cell
208 2nd St NE, Conover

Office Administrator /
Financial Secretary

Robin Mays
office@fmconover.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@fmconover.org

Lead Nursery Worker

Pilar Tobar

Custodian

Luisa Toro Bryan

Church Office

(828) 464-4635

Website:

www.fmconover.org

MORE NEWS TO USE

What a great night! So much soup! And we're doing it again!

If you missed our Soup and Game night last weekend, you missed a fun and delicious evening!! We had a big crowd and SOOOOO MUCH SOUP! It was all wonderful (at least the 8 or so that I sampled!).

And the fellowship was even better! I had long conversations with several new friends I had never really talked to and was able to "catch up" with old friends I haven't seen in a while.

The overwhelming request was "Let's do this again!" So, we are! More details to come, but mark your calendars for Feb 3. We are planning a "Chili Cook-Off." This time, we'll ask some people to bring chili, others to bring corn bread or biscuits, and others to bring desserts. We're looking at innovative ways to allow you to sample several chilis at once.

Watch next week's newsletter and Facebook to get more details on this event, but mark it on your calendar NOW! February 3!

Beth Woods



Fellowship Meals at the Woods' Home

"They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people."

Acts 2:46-47



Fellowship Meals

Pastor John and Beth are hosting small groups in their home for lunches and dinners over the next few months. The first round of sign-ups went around the sanctuary at both services Sunday. There are a few spaces still available for these meals. (Another set of later dates will be available in a few weeks!)

Dinner: Thurs, Jan 25 at 6:00 pm – 1 spot open

Lunch: Fri, Jan 26 at 12:00 noon – 8 spots open

Dinner: Wed, Jan 31 at 6:00 pm -- Full

Early Dinner: Thurs, Feb 1 at 5:00 pm – 1 spot open

Dinner: Mon, Feb 5 at 6:00 pm – 1 spot open

Lunch: Tue, Feb 6 at 12:00 noon – 6 spots open

Lunch: Sun, Feb 11 at 12:30 – 2 spots open

Dinner: Mon, Feb 12 at 6:00 pm – 5 spots open

To sign up for one of these slots, contact Beth at 336-480-4551 or woods777@aol.com or use the online Sign-up Genius at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C084CAFAC29A7FE3-47259801-meals> (see First Methodist Church of Conover Facebook page for clickable link.)

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

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