



First Methodist Church OF CONOVER

The Weekly Newsletter of First Methodist Church Conover

December 31, 2024

I'm not saying that I have this all together, that I have it made. But I am well on my way, reaching out for Christ, who has so wondrously reached out for me. Friends, don't get me wrong: By no means do I count myself an expert in all of this, but I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward—to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back.

—Philippians 3:12-14 (The Message)

Here we are at the tail-end of 2024. Can you believe how fast it's gone by? I think for all of us it's been a full year. Some of it has been really great and some....well, maybe not so much so. But through all the highs and lows, I have held fast to the truth that Jesus Christ still reigns!

Maybe this has been an eventful year for you or your family. Certainly, it has been for us here at First Conover. What an amazing year 2024 has been for our church family!

Our ministries have expanded in new and exciting ways this year, and the vitality of our church has grown even more. Did you know that in 2024, we welcomed 32 new members (and 10 children) into our church family!? Sadly, we also said goodbye to nine of our members who are now part of the Church Triumphant.



2024 was filled with activity (more than ever!), and a growing diversity of ways that the good news of the gospel is shared here at First. We continue to be a hub in this community — a place for worship, fellowship, education, mission, and community service. In many ways we are ***“pressing on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus has taken hold of [us].”***

As you wrap up this year, why not take a few minutes to pause and reflect a little on what this year has meant for you? Here are a few thoughts to ponder on as we turn the calendar to 2025:

1. How (specifically) has the Lord blessed you this year? How has God granted you joy or maybe carried you through some challenging times? How might you thank God for His abundant blessings? (Gratitude is one of the foundations of the Christian faith.)
2. How have you answered God's call to serve Him and others on His behalf?
3. How has your faith grown over this past year?
4. To what spiritual practices (including acts of service) will you commit yourself in 2025?

Every week, First Conover touches lives with the light and love of Christ. Beth and I continue to give thanks for God's call as we walk with and serve Christ together. It is truly a blessing to be a part of Jesus' redeeming, renewing work here among us. I'm excited to see where 2025 will take us as we serve Jesus and His Kingdom.

In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. Philippians 1:4-6

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:

Armando & Joyce Lagunas, Stan & Judy Lail,
Leonard & Julie Lawing, Jeanne Laws,
Brad & Kim Little, Chip, Dana, Aaron & Mack Little.

THANK YOU

Many sincere thanks to our loving church family for all the kindness and generosity shown to Rick during this Christmas season and his birthday. He is very thankful for all the cards, calls, the beautiful blanket, the huge bag of goodies with so many nice items and lots of candy - his favorite meal!

We are also deeply thankful for the carolers who visited and blessed us with the Christmas music which we truly enjoyed. We are blessed and very thankful for our loving church family.

Linda Parker

IN/OUT OF HOSPITAL

Nancy Clarke at CVMC (at home)

January 5, 2025

8:45am - Please call Harold Thornburg if you are available to help.

11:00am - Jean Slate, Jackie Lowdermilk & Gaye Hoke

Anyone who wishes to be a greeter, call Harold Thornburg at (828) 312-1953 - cell; or home number (828) 464-6826.



LOST & FOUND

A pink insulated water bottle with stickers all over has been turned in to the church office. It was left in the Sanctuary on the window sill. You may pick it up on Sunday or during office hours next week.

THE COVENANT PRAYER OF JOHN WESLEY

"I am no longer my own, but thine.

Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt;

put me to doing, put me to suffering, let me be employed for thee or laid aside for thee,

exalted for thee or brought low for thee; let me be full, let me be empty;

let me have all things, let me have nothing;

I freely and heartily yield all things to thy pleasure and disposal.

And now glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. thou art mine and I am thine. So be it.

And the covenant, which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen."

Why not join in praying this prayer right now as we begin this new year together?

We at First Methodist Conover can't think of anything that would make our Heavenly Father any happier.



NEWS TO USE

ASHURE NEWS

The Ashure Ministry food **request for January** is **canned soup and broth**. All canned food is useful and appreciated, but cans with pop top lids are important for our homeless clients. These may be placed in the red bins in the hallway between the CFLC and Beth's office along with grocery bags.

FMCC volunteer day at Ashure Ministry is Monday, January 6. Hope to see you!



JUST A FRIENDLY HEALTH REMINDER....

that in this cold and flu season, please be respectful of those around you during church activities and worship.

If you have symptoms of a cold or the flu (fever, sneezing, cough, running nose), avoid some of the friendly contact many of us like to share (like shaking hands, hugs, etc.) until those symptoms have been gone for at least 24 hours.

Though we would miss you, it may even be a more loving gesture, for your own health and the health of all those at church, for you to stay home to rest and recuperate until "all clear."



PASTOR'S QUIZ

When Joseph, returning with his family to Israel, selected Nazareth, this choice served to

- erase his unpleasant memories of Bethlehem
- place him close to the border
- put him in touch with influential friends
- fulfill what had been spoken by the prophets

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

STEWARDSHIP REPORT

By Our Presence December 22, 2024

Sunday School:
115

Worship:
8:45am Service 148
11:00am Service 149
Total 297

God's Tithe & Our Gifts

General Fund	\$ 19,532.00
(Needed weekly for budget: \$12,804)	
Children's Bank	41.00
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	100.00
The Nest	100.00
Total	\$ 19,773.00

Christmas Eve Attendance:

4:00pm	252
6:00pm	162
Total	414

By Our Presence December 29, 20249

Sunday School:
89

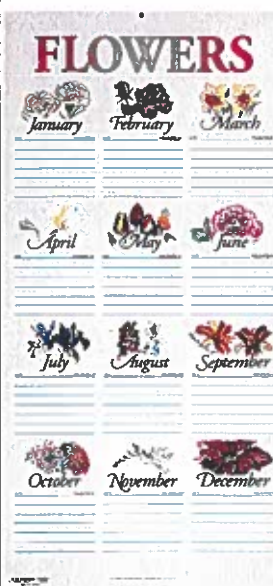
Worship:
8:45am Service 130
11:00am Service 92
Total 222

God's Tithe & Our Gifts

General Fund	\$ 20,573.00
(Needed weekly for budget: \$12,804)	
Children's Bank	17.07
"Hoops for Christ"	300.00
Total	\$ 20,890.07

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

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

Newton-Conover Florist - Newton

Blooms Greenhouse - Conover

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

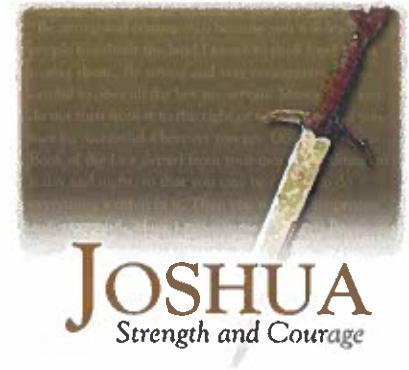
Answer to this week's Pastor's Quiz:
d. fulfill what had been spoken by the prophets
(Matthew 2:19-23)

New Bible Study: JOSHUA

8-weeks (plus intro session)

Tuesdays, 7-8:15pm

Wednesdays, 10:30-11:45am



❖ Does it feel like the future ahead of you is a bit scary and uncertain?

❖ Has there ever been a time you had to follow God's lead into unfamiliar territory?

Welcome to the world of Joshua!

His name – "Joshua" is the same name as "Jesus" (in Greek - "*Jeshua*"). In Hebrew that name means "savior" or "helper," which is what God asked Joshua to do following the death of Moses. Becoming Moses' successor meant his role was to lead Israel across the Jordan River and take possession of the Promised Land, driving out the enemies who dwelt there.

Famous for his leadership as he led God's people into a new and exciting chapter of their history, Joshua is remembered especially for his final address to the Israelites, in which he challenged them to serve God faithfully. He closed his address with the memorable words, "**As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.**"

Beginning **January 14th/15th** Pastor John will start a new Bible study on the Old Testament book of Joshua. This short-term (8-weeks) class **will meet on Tuesday evenings from 7:00-8:15p.m and then again on Wednesdays from 10:30-11:45am.** (Wednesday sessions will cover the same material as Tuesday sessions - you may choose either time each week.)

Absolutely no previous Bible study background is necessary to attend this class!

The cost for the class workbook is \$10.00.



Join us as we explore this fascinating Old Testament hero, and learn real-life lessons to help us in our own faith-journey today.

Contact the church at (828) 464-4635 to let us know you would like to be a part of this study!

YOUR CHURCH COUNCIL LEADERSHIP FOR 2025

Each year the coordinators for our various ministry areas begin their work afresh in January. Some persons continue in the same area they worked with the previous year, sometimes they take up another yoke of ministry, and sometimes they even take a break and a new person comes into leadership.

Please look at the following list of names. If you are interested in helping them with a part of or all of their ministry, please give them a call and find out what's planned and how you can help. And above all, keep them in your prayers throughout the year that their ministry may be the ministry of God through us!

Chairperson	Will James
Vice Chairperson	Adam Johnson
Council Secretary	Donna Ross
Church Lay Leader	Lee Moritz, Jr.
Lay Member to Conference	Gerald Loftin
Alternate Lay Member to Conference	Bob Goodson

Ministry Team Chairpersons

Children's Ministries	Amber Hendren
Community Outreach-Engagement	Ralph Hatch
Men's President	Harold Thornburg
Missions/Outreach	Lois Goodson
Nurture Ministries	Kim Reed
Sunday School Director	XXXXXXX
Worship Committee	Jeanne Laws and Anthony Price

Administrative Team Chairpersons

Finance	Mike Stewart
Financial & Membership Secretary	Robin Mays
Staff/Parish Relations	Ryan Garrison
Treasurer	Mark Murphy
Trustees	<i>elected by committee</i>

Members At Large

Gerald Loftin, Donna Ross, Tony Martin, David Workman, Bob Goodson, Beth Travis, Sharon Hendricks, Patsy Isaac, Gary Little

Ministry Staff

Robin Mays, Julie Robinson, Jon Rogers, Shannon Rogers, Beth Woods, Pastor John Woods

LET'S GIVE AN EXTREMELY GRATEFUL THANKS

for our outgoing 2024 chairpersons & leaders!

These men and women have given extensively of their time, energy and prayer for our ministries and we are profoundly grateful for their devotion to our church and their Lord. The next time you see one of these people, give them a pat on the back and a heartfelt word of thanks for their service!

Margaret Allen — At-Large Member

Cindy Clark — At-Large Member

Kim Connor — Sunday School Secretary

Ginger Doub — Nurture Ministries Chair

Jenny Harris — Staff/Parish Relations

Scott Little — Trustees Chairperson

David Morrow — At-Large Member

Julie Patterson - Co-Sunday School Director

Andrea Little - Co-Sunday School Director

Jeff Thornburg — Men's President

Kent Walker — Finance Chair



HEY, MORE NEWS TO USE

HOOPS FOR CHRIST YOUTH BASKETBALL LEAGUE

Our Hoops for Christ Youth Basketball ministry still needs YOU!

We need a few more people willing to provide encouragement and witness to the spectators by sharing a short (3-5 minute) devotional during half-time for each game. (4 games per Saturday – but you can split these with someone else.) Would you be willing to do this one Saturday? Be the face and voice of Christ for our community?

Devotionals needed for Saturdays: January 18 and 25, and February 1.

We also need people to provide refreshments (and make coffee – supplies provided) for a couple of our games. This can be as simple as doughnuts or cereal bars or a homemade treat. (Plan for about 80 servings.)

Refreshments needed for Saturdays: January 25 and February 1.

We'd love to have you come cheer for these players at a few of their games! It's the best free fun you can find on a Saturday morning! (Games on Saturdays Jan 11-Feb 1.) Most of all, pray for this ministry... the coaches, players, families, and all who will be impacted.

Please let me know if you are willing to help. Beth (336) 480-4551 or woods777@aol.com



Sun, Jan 12, 5:00-7:00 Special game night with 4th & 5th graders-- Includes dinner – youth room

Sun, Jan 26, 5:00-7:00 Regular meeting; Includes dinner – youth room

Mark your calendars and invite a friend!

EVEN MORE NEWS TO USE



prayer, visits, cards and phone calls. But sometimes, concerns are not known, so don't get the support needed.

Romans 12:15 encourages believers to "Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn." The church is the best place to find comfort and strength in the face of life's difficulties. Personal stories of God's provision can inspire and encourage. Knowing that others are walking the journey with you or have walked it ahead of you brings hope and comfort. Our church family is a community in which this happens daily. You are faithful to support your brothers and sisters in Christ through

In late January, we will be launching a group of new ministries (Heartfelt Ministries) to help improve communication of prayer needs and to provide additional means of support to all our family. More information will be given in the next few weeks, so be watching for that. Initial plans include a regularly meeting prayer group, areas in the church building designated for prayer and for leaving prayer requests, some online or telephone options for prayer requests, a grief support group and other support ministries.

Right now, we would like to hear from you... what would YOU like this ministry to look like? Would you be interested in participating in some part of it? Most of all, would you please PRAY? Pray that God will call and equip those who will be providing leadership. Pray for discernment about what experiences will help participants to grow in their faith. Pray for GOD to be honored and glorified in all that we do!

Churchwide Fellowship Meal Soup & Bingo

Saturday, January 11 at 5:00 in the Connor Family Life Center

Please join us for a chance to expand our fellowship and get to know each other better. Wear your nametag! (Please!) If you don't have one, we can make one for you!

We will enjoy fellowship and a warm meal. If you are able, please bring soup, bread or a dessert! BUT, PLEASE, come even if you can't bring something... we ALWAYS have plenty of food!!!

After dinner, we will mingle and play Bingo. It's always a lot of fun and it's a great opportunity to meet a new friend.



DON'T FORGET OUR MEMBERS IN NURSING FACILITIES AND OUR HOMEBOUND

Rev. Dixon Adams - TerraBella Newton (Room B7)
1088 Radio Station Road, Newton, NC 28658

Dottie Aycock-Harris - Terra Bella Newton (Room A5&6)
1088 Radio Station Road, Newton, NC 28658
(704) 460-4919 - Ron's cell phone
noghost@bellsouth.net - email address



James Davis - Abernethy Laurels (Memory Care Center)
Mail to: Jeanette Davis
210 Leonard 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

Robert Matthews - Heritage Care (Room 16)
3430 Lester Street, Conover, NC 28613

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

Mary Ann Simpson - Kingston Residence (Room 214)
904 2nd Street NE, Hickory, NC 28601

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



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.