



First Methodist Church OF CONOVER

The Weekly Newsletter of First Methodist Church Conover

December 19, 2023

A Cake for Christmas

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

—Isaiah 9:6 (ESV)

It always seems to be this way...the beautiful and terrible always live side-by-side. It's a strange reality.

Poet Maggie Smith described this truth on the first Christmas after her divorce. Her two kids spent the night at their dad's house, and Maggie woke up with the heaviness and dread of an empty home on what should be a special day. Then, the doorbell rang. A neighbor stood on her doormat with cake in hand. She remembered that Maggie would be alone on Christmas morning and wanted to remind her she wasn't forgotten.

Our lives can come apart in a million tiny ways. Try as we might, we can't often engineer our own happiness. There are certain realities we have to live with - like the loss of someone we love, the gut-punch of a doctor's report, or parents who have to share kids on Christmas.

But, somehow, joy can meet us right in the depths of our can't-make-it-work humanity.

Which is, of course, the very story of Jesus. Jesus was born as all infants are, shivering and protesting loudly. Yet on those tiny shoulders rests the basis of all that is most solid, most true, most trustworthy: love. A love that is for us - for me, for you - and for the whole world.

This is how joy comes to us, full of surprises in the middle of our beautiful, terrible realities. Just like Maggie's neighbor was God's love in human form, cake and all.

Merry Christmas to you all!

Pastor John Woods

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning; Jesus, to Thee be all glory giv'n!

Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!

O come, let us adore Him; O come, let us adore Him;

O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!

— O Come All Ye Faithful (John F. Wade, ca.1743)



Christmas Eve
SERVICE

Christmas Eve — Candlelight Communion Service

Sunday, December 24th, 4:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.

You are invited to bring your family (*come as you are*) on Christmas Eve, as we will celebrate the coming of the Christ child with two special candlelight communion services at **4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.**

These services will be a time of prayer, reflection and meditation. Familiar Christmas music and candles will help provide an atmosphere of reverence as we ponder the miracle of this holy night.

PLEASE NOTE: *If you would like to come to the service but aren't comfortable driving after dark, please call the church office. We will be offering door-to-door service for anyone needing it.*

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:

Katie Knecht, Sara Knecht,
Cheryl Krantz, Armando & Joyce Lagunas,
Stan & July Lail, Terry, Christy & Jacob Lail.

A NOTE OF SYMPATHY

Leta Margarette Tucker, age 81, the mother of Kelly Matthews and a member of First Methodist Church of Conover, died Saturday, December 16, 2023.

A service to celebrate Leta's life will be held on Saturday, December 23rd at 11:00am at First Methodist Church of Conover. Pastor John Woods will officiate. The family will receive family and friends prior to the service from 10:00 to 10:45am at the church.

Memorials may be made to "The Neighbor's Table Mission at First Methodist Church of Conover, 410 1st Avenue North, Conover, NC 28613.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Kelly, Mike and the family during this difficult time.

IN OUR
Thoughts and Prayers

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 CVMC (at home)
Mary Ann Cooke at CVMC (ICU-507)

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

Margaret Leigh Baucom was born on December 8, 2023 at 9 pounds even. Proud parents are Alex and Hiley Baucom and big sister, Jolie, of Taylorsville. Grandparents are Danny and Sandy Baucom and Leigh Davis of Conover. Also very proud of Miss "Maggie" are Aunt Ashley Baucom Drum and Uncle Hunter Davis. We praise God for our new little one.



It's a Girl!

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 21	1:00	The church parking lot
December 21	6:30	Abernethy Laurels North Manor



Nursing Home Caroling Trip

NEWS TO USE

CHANGE IN ADDRESS

Peggy Currie
144 Promenade Court
Louisville, KY 40223-2988



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 & Joseph went from Nazareth to Bethlehem for taxation (enrollment) of Joseph, because

- a. it had been the city of David
- b. Micah had foretold Bethlehem as the birthplace of Israel's ruler
- c. the three wise men had come there
- d. everyone had to go to his own birthplace

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

STEWARDSHIP REPORT

By Our Presence December 17, 2023

Sunday School:
85

Worship:

8:45am Service	120
11:00am Service	161
	<u>281</u>

God's Tithe & Our Gifts

General Fund	\$ 17,131.00
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(Needed weekly for budget: \$12,716)

Children's Bank	131.95
Disaffiliation Fund	100.00
Local Missions Fund	5.00
Youth Fund	<u>100.00</u>
Total	\$ 17,467.95



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.

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

Once again, thank you, church family, for your awesome support of ECCCM during the recent Reverse Advent Calendar food drive. If you still have one of the boxes, you may drop it off at the church or at ECCCM this week. Your donations are appreciated now more than ever with our increase in the number of clients due to serving the entire county.

Anita Deal, your ECCCM Representative

Answer to this week's Pastor's Quiz:

a. it had been the city of David
(Luke 2:4-6)

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

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.

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

January 2024

January 2024

February 2024

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Dec 31	Jan 1, 24 0-OFFICE CLOSED 0-Preschool Closed 6pm Handbell Practice New Year's Day (United States)	2 09am-Vol. Day at ECCM 0-Office Closed 0-Preschool Closed 7-8:15am Bible Study	3 10:30-11:45pm Bible Study Orientation 1pm Hand & Foot (Prayer Shawl Room) 7pm Choir practice	4 1-9:00am Van - Goodtimers 6:30am-9:30am J.T. Russell (Classroom - 6:30pm - Hand & Foot	5 5-8pm Girl Scouts (Crossroads class) 6:30pm Dominos (Faithbuilders classroom)	6 0-7:30am-1pm "Hoops" games (CFLC)
7 4pm - "The Chosen" Video-View (Clark)	8 6pm Handbell Practice	9 7-8:15pm Bible Study (CFLC)	10 10:30-11:45am Bible 1PM - Queen Esther's 1pm Hand & Foot 5:30-8:30pm "Hoops" 7pm Choir practice	11 6:30am-4pm J.T. Russell (CFLC classroom work mtg. & training) 6:30pm - Hand & Foot (Prayer Shawl Room)	12 6:30pm Dominos (Faithbuilders classroom)	13 0-7:30am-1pm "Hoops" games (CFLC) 5pm Churchwide Meal & Game Night (CFLC)
14 4pm - "The Chosen" Video-View (Clark) 6pm MLK, Jr. Service (Sanctuary - 1st Conover)	15 0-Office Closed 0-Preschool Closed 1:30-3:30pm 6pm Handbell Practice Martin Luther King Day	16 7-8:15pm Bible Study (CFLC)	17 10:30-11:45am Bible 12pm Goodtimers' 1pm Hand & Foot 5:30-8:30pm "Hoops" 6:30-7:30pm Parents'	18 6:30-9pm Methodist Men (CFLC) 6:30pm - Hand & Foot (Prayer Shawl Room)	19 6:30pm Dominos (Faithbuilders classroom)	20 0-7:30am-1pm "Hoops" games (CFLC) 5:30-6:30pm Neighbor's Table (CFLC & Kitchen 4-7pm)
21 4pm - "The Chosen" Video-View (Clark) 4pm Finance Mtg. (Conference room) 5pm Church Council	22 6:30-7:30pm Parents' planning mtg. (Conference room) 6pm Handbell Practice	23 7-8:15pm Bible Study (CFLC)	24 10:30-11:45am Bible Study (CFLC) 1pm Hand & Foot 5:30-8:30pm "Hoops" 7pm Choir practice	25 6:30pm - Hand & Foot (Prayer Shawl Room)	26 6:30pm Dominos (Faithbuilders classroom)	27 0-7:30am-1pm "Hoops" games (CFLC)
28 4pm - "The Chosen" Video-View (Clark)	29 6pm Handbell Practice	30 7-8:15pm Bible Study (CFLC)	31 10:30-11:45am Bible Study (CFLC) 1pm Hand & Foot (Prayer Shawl Room) 7pm Choir practice	Feb 1	2 Feb 1	3

12/18/2023
01:51 pm

First Methodist Church of Conover

January 2024

Birthdays

Who = (everyone except removed); Filter = Birthday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Eric Clark	3 Pam Lowdermilk	4	5	6
7	8 Carolyn Ball	9 Tommie Hall	10 Loni Barbersek Sierra Goble Donna Mull	11 Evelyn Brooks Carole Cloninger Dennis Knecht	12 Wayne Thornburg Brandon Vigue	13 Roxxi Slaughter
14	15 Cole Cushman Bradley Yount	16 Wendy Price	17 Laurie Cashion	18 Mark Pennell Sydney Roberts Reese Rockett	19 Taylor Carter Jacob Scott	20 Michael Greco Jaunita Whisnant
21 Layla Deal Haley Matthews	22	23 Robert Matthews	24 Elizabeth Hornick	25 Andy Briggs	26 Michele Moritz Debbie Wike	27 Lucas Hernandez
28 Tony Garrison Jonathan Myers	29 Anne Calloway Greta Induni Carolyn Whitlock	30 Nancy Wall	31 Linda Birchfield Wende Briggs Lori Schulze Lori Sigmon			

12/18/2023
01:51 pm

First Methodist Church of Conover

January 2024

Wedding Anniversaries

Who = (everyone except removed); Filter = Wedding

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 Andy and Wende Briggs	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16 Jimmy and Cindy Clark Gerald and Sandy Loftin	17	18	19 Dave and Cheryl Markland	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27 Ann and Fred Cook
28	29	30	31			