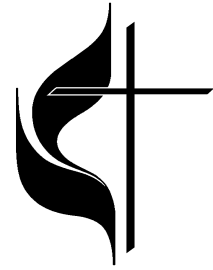


THE

FIRST

WORD



The Weekly Newsletter for Members and Friends of First United Methodist Church, Newton, North Carolina
Phone (828) 464-8422 Fax Number (828) 464-8423

www.fumcnewtonnc.org

THE COMING OF GOD

Our God is the One who comes to us
in a burning bush,
in an angel's song,
in a newborn child.

Our God is the One who cannot be found
locked in the church,
not even in the sanctuary.

Our God will be where God will be
with no constraints,
no predictability.

Our God lives where our God lives,
and destruction has no power
and even death cannot stop
the living.

Our God will be born where God will be born,
but there is no place to look for the One who comes
to us.

When God is ready
God will come
even to a godforsaken place
like a stable in Bethlehem.

Watch ...
for you know not when
God comes.

Watch, that you might be found
whenever
wherever
God comes.

From *Kneeling in Bethlehem* by Ann Weems

YEAR-END GIVING

Our church has been informed, that one of the biggest snares it can fall into is failing to keep an unmistakable dividing line between the old year and the new year. According to the IRS, individuals are allowed to deduct charitable contributions from their income during the year in which the donation was delivered. This means that we will need to receive your contribution for 2009 in the church office by 5:00 PM on December 31st. If a donation is mailed, we will use the postmark date on the envelope to determine whether it will be applied to 2009 or 2010.

Also, be aware that any donations to the church on a company check need to be attributed to that company and not an individual. **The contribution receipt will be issued to the name that appears on the check.**

2009 FINANCIAL UPDATE

Year-End Giving: Remember that all charitable gifts to the church must be received in the church office by 5:00 PM on December 31. As of 12-06-09, we have received \$460,049 which is 14% under budget for the year. Please prayerfully consider how you can help us catch up over the last few weeks of 2009.

2010 PLEDGE CAMPAIGN: Thank you to everyone who has submitted your pledge toward the 2010 Church Budget. To date, 72% has been pledged toward next year's budget by 149 individuals/families. This reflects a percentage that is 4-5% below what has been pledged in past few years. If you haven't made your pledge for 2010, please consider doing so in the next few days so that our Finance Committee can plan accordingly for next year.

CHRISTMAS MUSIC PROGRAM

December 13th is the Sunday for Choir, Hand Bells, Hand Chimes, and Children's Choir to make music to God's Glory and ring in the Christmas season. The Children's Choir and Children's Hand Chimes will need to be in the sanctuary that **Sunday at 10:00 AM** so that we can rehearse with the Chancel Choir. We will be singing two combined pieces! Please let me know if your child will not be able to attend this Christmas celebration. Some parts may need to be re-assigned. THANK YOU! Kristy Smith 465-6160 (home) or 234-5640 (cell)

THE YOUTH DINNER THEATER which was scheduled for Saturday, December 12th has been changed to **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13th at 6:00 p.m.** due to the NCHS football state championship game in Chapel Hill on Saturday.

AT WORSHIP NEXT SUNDAY

December 13, 2009

THE SHARED WORD: Rev Dr. David Greene

"The Gift of Joy"

Philippians 4:4-7

FIRST CHURCH CHRISTMAS CALENDAR

Sunday, December 13

- 8:45 AM Sunday Worship
- 9:00 AM Praise Service
- 9:45 AM Sunday School
- 11:00 AM Christmas Music by Combined Choirs
- 2:00 PM Children & Adults go Caroling
- 6:00 PM Youth Dinner Theater

Sunday, December 20

- 8:45 AM Sunday Worship
- 9:00 AM Praise Service
- 10:00AM Birthday Party for Jesus
- 11:00 AM Sunday Worship
- 2:00 PM Youth and Adults go Caroling

Thursday, December 24

- 6:00-8:00 PM Come and Go Holy Communion
- 9:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

HONORARIUMS

A donation has been given to the Renovation Fund in honor of **Charlie and Tommi Anderson** by Jerry and Martha Sowers.

A donation has been given to the Renovation Fund in honor of **Brooks Nichols and Melba Burgin** by Earl and Louise Barkley.

A donation has been given to the Helping Hands Fund in honor of **Christi and Greg** by Sherrill and Mary Anne Cranford.

A donation has been given to the Garden Fund in honor of **Brooks Nichols and Melba Burgin** by Wanda M. Propst.

ALTAR FLOWERS FOR 2010

A calendar is being prepared for those wishing to furnish altar flowers in 2010. Please fill out the form below and place it in the offering plate or return it to the church office to reserve the Sunday of your choice.

I will furnish altar flowers in 2010 as follows:

Date: _____

In Memory/Honor of _____

By _____

OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEXT WEEK

*** December 13-19, 2009 ***

SUN.	8:45	Worship Service
	9:00	Praise Service
	9:45	Sunday School
	11:00	Christmas Worship by the Choirs
	2:00	Christmas Caroling
	6:00	Youth Dinner Theater
MON.	9:00	Preschool
	6:00	N-C Women's Club
	7:00	Youth Praise Band
TUES.	9:00	Preschool
WED.	6:45	Youth Prayer Breakfast
	9:00	Preschool
	3:10	Kids for Christ
THURS.	9:00	Preschool
	1:00	Prayer Shawl
	6:30	Fellowship Hall Reserved
FRI.	9:00	Preschool
	6:30	United Single Adults—Fellowship Hall

UNITED SINGLE ADULTS (USA) will have a Christmas party and dance on December 18th at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Adam Long will be the DJ for the dance.

WE ARE LOOKING FOR ALL ADULTS INTEREST IN HELPING CHILDREN

I am looking for you to give an hour of your time one day a week to go to lunch with a child at South Newton Elementary School. Even if you work close by, I am sure you can work your lunch around the times listed below. You do not have to eat with them. The most important thing is the time you spend with them. I did this several years ago, and I really enjoyed it. I didn't eat with my little girl, but we sure did do a lot of talking. The Lunch Buddy Plan at South Newton was dropped because of lack of interest. I want us as a church to be the ones that say "All Children Are Important." Please contact me at the church or 336-940-7246. We want to begin when school starts back in January. I want to be a Lunch Buddy and I hope you do too. **Peggy**

The first group goes to lunch at 11:00 a.m. and the last goes about 12:00 noon and finishes up around 12:30 p.m.. Each class has about 30 minutes to get in, eat and get out.

PRAYER CONCERNS

Pray For:	Requested By:
Dawn Buller	Dottie Goble
Jean Childs	M. Burgin & B. Nichols
Irene & O. B. Baker	June Sherrill
Phyllis & Tim Watson	Family
Helen Haynes	Gray Tate
Freida Parrish	Sam Webb
Family of Cecil Kiser	
Family of Stanton Cecil	

Out-of-Country Military—Scott Beal, Jacob Campbell, Brent Cossich, Gary Hogan, Todd Houtz, Rodney Woody and National Guard 626 Maintenance Co.

In-Country Military—Bobby Benson, Andy Blanton, Stan Josey, Corey Lail, Laird Lambeth, Brad McRee, Tai Orange, Kyle L. Sigmon, Ryan Windham, President Obama & Leaders

HOSPITAL REPORT

Catawba Valley Medical Center: Frances Bost, Rm. 316

Karen Windham is recovering at home following surgery last week.

MEMORIAL RECEIVED RECENTLY

Renovation Fund:

Phyllis Brooks

Jerry & Martha Sowers, Reed & Patti Furr

Cecil Kiser

Jerry & Martha Sowers, Ken & Poullette Moss,
Dot Feimster, Forrest Lawing, Doug Griffin

Garden Fund:

Cecil Kiser

Jim, Vicki & Jason Yount

POINSETTIAS placed in the sanctuary but not listed in last Sunday's bulletin are as follows:

- *In memory of Tom Elliott by the family
- *In honor of Frances & Helen Raymer by Mary Bess Lawing, Doris Elliott and family
- *In honor of Granny D by a friend

RECENT VISITORS

Kim Britt, Millicent Crawford, Janice Davis, Martha Robertson, Wille Thompson, Deb Wakefield, Donna Yoder, Rev. John Bell, Molly Pettit, Bill & Kathryn Griffis, Burt Hoage, Kayla Newsome, Matthew Abernathy, Emily Miller, Cody Bolick, Harvey & Jeanette Coulter

ATTENTION FIRST UMC FAMILY!!!!

For Christmas this year, our youth would like to help some young people in our community whose families are in great need. We will collect money through Sunday, December 13. We are asking our youth to bring their change or dollars each week to place in a jar. After we have collected the money, we will divide it to help as many youth as possible. We would like for you as a church family, Sunday School Class, Choir, UMW, UMM to consider contributing to this project. Help bring joy to some youth in our community this Christmas. Contact Peggy for more details.

CONGRATULATIONS to Mike and Jaq DeVos on the birth of their son, Phoenix Chase DeVos, on November 22, 2009. Proud grandparents are Jerry and Laura DeVos.

STEWARDSHIP REPORT, December 6, 2009

Attendance: 8:45 a.m.: 72 11:00 a.m.: 168
Sunday School: 147 9:00 a.m. Praise Service: 90

Offering:	2010 Pledge	\$ 5,017.73
	Tithes & Offerings	12,391.00
	Hunger Fund	310.45
	Preschool Fund	50.00
	Youth Christmas Gift	252.00
	Children's Department	20.00
	Prayer Breakfast	23.00
	Garden Fund	90.00
	Praise Service	500.00
	Children of Vietnam	50.00
	Helping Hands Fund	100.00
	Renovation Fund	<u>165.00</u>
		\$18,969.18

ANGEL TREE

The UMW is sponsoring an Angel Tree for the needy elderly people of our community. The tree is decorated with angels, each with a list of items needed for that person. The tree is located in the hall outside the Gomedela Room. Stop by and choose an angel from the tree, purchase and return the gift **unwrapped** to the church by Wednesday, December 18th.

YOUTH SCHEDULE

ALL YOUTH ARE TO BE IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL AT 1:30 PM SUNDAY, DEC. 13 AND PLAN TO STAY UNTIL EVERYTHING IS CLEANED UP AFTER THE THEATER. PARENTS WE WOULD LOVE TO HAVE YOUR HELP ALSO DURING THIS TIME.

THANK YOU CHILDREN

Our children with the help of Lisa Johnson, Cindy Boger, and Nikki Cavin did a wonderful job telling the Christmas Story. The program was searching for the true meaning of Christmas. The children did great and the music was wonderful. We all found that the true meaning of Christmas is Christ the Lord. Thanks to all who came, for those who brought snacks, and for Santa who visited with the children downstairs. Also, thank you for the many presents that will be taken to ECCCM for the children in our community.

ROTATION SUNDAY SCHOOL-December 13, 2009

"Christmas Messengers"

4 Years: **Cookery** Grades K-1: **Music**
Grade 2-3: **Art** Grades 4-5: **Games**

Teachers: December 6, 2009-January 3, 2010

Storytelling: Caroline Sitzer

Games: Lisa Johnson/Gayle Lowder

Cookery: Cindy Boger Art: Susan Reinhardt

Music: Nikki Cavin/Debbie Bandy

BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR JESUS

We will have a Birthday Party for Jesus on Sunday, December 20, during the Sunday School hour. Due to the renovation downstairs we will have the party in the Fellowship Hall with the help of the Faith and Fellowship Class. Thank you so much Faith and Fellowship for your love for all and your giving heart. All the classes for rotation will meet together. We will have music, storytelling, cake, games and celebrate in a very special way the birth of our Savior.