

Our Vision:



“By knowing Him, we Seek to make Him known to all people Through the love and Grace of Jesus Christ.”



The Weekly Newsletter of First United Methodist Church, Conover

February 21, 2023

FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN

“The Problem with Looking at Yourself.”

It was one of those early spring days when we look out the window and see all kinds of beautiful birds. I remember once I saw this one bird that was interesting to watch. It was a bluebird and he was hovering near one of the side-view mirrors of our car, just fluttering back and forth, running into the glass over and over again. He was obviously confused and somewhat combative toward my car. He was just fluttering, chattering, and crashing into the glass. It took a minute to figure out that he saw himself in the mirror, and that's what's got him acting crazy.

Poor bird. When he just kept looking at himself, he got all confused and disoriented, and he kept running into things. Which can be a lot like us when we get all focused on ourselves. And maybe that's where you are right now. The stress, the hurt, the load, it's gotten you all focusing on yourself, maybe without even realizing it. And you may actually be fluttering around emotionally, feeling disoriented and discouraged, maybe even upset and crashing sometimes.

It reminds me a little of the pattern we see in the Bible. In 1 Kings 19, the great prophet Elijah has just come off the most powerful spiritual victory of his life - his showdown with 450 prophets of the idol Baal, where God proved who is Lord by consuming the sacrifice on the altar with fire from heaven. But then the wicked queen, Jezebel, ordered a “hit” on the prophet - and, man, has he changed.

The Bible says, **“Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba...he went a day's journey into the desert. He came to a broom tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die.”** What?! How does such a strong leader get so low so fast? Here's a clue in what he says to God: **“I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have...put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too!”** Did you notice? Suddenly, for Elijah, it's all about “me.”

This is in real sharp contrast to Elijah's focus when he prayed on the day of his showdown with those false prophets. There he said, **“O Lord...let it be known today that You are God...that I am Your servant...so these people will know that You, O Lord, are God.”** See, when it's all about God, I'm on top of things. When it's all about me, things are on top of me.

Fear, discouragement, being all stressed – those aren't signs of being focused on the Lord. That's a bird who's looking at himself or herself and then fluttering all over the place, crashing into things. Isaiah 26:3 says that God will keep in “perfect peace” the one who is “stayed on” Him.

Colossians 3:15 tells us to **“let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts.”** Self-pity, self-centeredness, self-promoting, self-reliance, the harder it gets, the more that “self” stuff starts to take over, and the more out of control we become.

If you've been looking at yourself too much, maybe it's time to fly to a higher place where you can get your perspective back; to refocus your eyes away from your great load and back up to your great Heavenly Father. There's a great praise hymn we sing sometimes. The lyrics say: “Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace.”

Such powerful words. I hope they help you (or someone you care about) this week!

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:

Elbert & Lee Ann Parris, Jerry & Julie Patterson, Courtney Patterson, Ray & Pam Penley, Gilda Pennell, Mark, Faith & Saryn Pennell.

NOTES OF SYMPATHY

Jason William Crooks, 53 of Claremont and father of Jessie Crooks, died Saturday, February 11, 2023 at his residence.

A memorial service to celebrate Jason's life was held on Saturday, Feb. 18, 2023 at 3pm at Mt. Olive Lutheran Church in Newton, The family received friends prior to the service.

Memorials may be made to Carolina Caring, 3975 Robinson Road, Newton, NC 28658.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Jessie and the family during this difficult time.

Ronald Lee Robinson, 81, of Newton and father of Pete Robinson, died Friday, February 17, 2023.

A celebration of life service will be held at Willis-Reynolds Funeral Home Saturday, February 25, 2023 at 2:00pm with Pastor Charmaine Van Rooyen officiating.

The family will receive friends from 3-5:00pm following the service.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to First United Methodist Church of Conover.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Pete, Phyllis and the family during this sad time.

Etta "Ruthie" Thornburg, age 77 of Conover and wife of Harold Thornburg and mother of Jeff Thornburg and Laurie Cashion and grandmother of Lee Thornburg, died Monday, February 20, 2023 at Catawba Valley MC.

A celebration of life service will be held Thursday, February 23, 2023 at First United Methodist Church in Conover at 4:00pm. The family will receive friends from 2:30-3:45pm.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Harold, Jeff, Kim, Lee, Laurie and Michael during this difficult time.

 IN OUR 
Thoughts and Prayers

IN / OUT OF HOSPITAL

None

MEMORIAL

Preschool Fund

In memory of Yvette Bumgarner by:
Natalie Dugan

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

Ash Wednesday is the official beginning of the season of Lent. Come out to this service as we meditate, pray, hear a short message on the meaning of Ash Wednesday and then have ashes imposed on our foreheads.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 22
7:00pm
Sanctuary

Sunday, FEBRUARY 26, 2023

CHURCH MEETING

at 2:00pm in the CFLC

A NOTE FROM THE CORNER TABLE

Dear Church Family,

We would like to thank you for your continued support of The Corner Table. Your recent donation is appreciated! As our numbers continue to increase, we thank you for your care and concern for those who are less fortunate.

Blessings,

The Corner Table

**Thanks
for Your
Help!**

NEWS TO USE



ECCCM NEWS

In February, ECCCM is requesting donations of canned or boxed pasta, pasta sauce and macaroni. Of course, any donations are much appreciated!

Please leave any food donations and plastic bags in the red bins in the hallway between Pastor Charmaine's office and the CFLC.

Coming soon! March Madness is almost upon us! Of course, there is the sports version of this competition, but there is also the ECCCM version of March Madness.

Food and monetary donations designated for your favorite team can be given to ECCCM during the month of March. Each pound of food will count as 2 points and each \$ will count as 3 points.

See next week's newsletter for more details.

Anita Deal



Girls' Life Group Begins March 7

All girls 2nd-5th grade are invited to the beginning of an exciting new group. Older girls are also welcome to come and be junior leaders. The girls will enjoy fellowship, service projects, Bible study and food! We will share a meal each week.

The group will initially meet at the home of Pastor John and Beth Woods and will be led by Beth and other volunteer women of the church. Anyone interested in volunteering to spend some time with some awesome young ladies (even just for one meeting!) please contact Beth. (For safety reasons, we plan to always have at least two adults present, plus there may be some meetings when we will need transportation to service projects.)

The first meeting is Tuesday, March 7 from 5:00 – 6:30. The first part of each meeting will be gathering and fellowship, so come on even if you can't be there right at 5. The address is 208 2nd Street NE, Conover (right by the Downtown City Park).

For questions or more information, please contact Beth Woods at 336-480-4551 or woods777@aol.com.

Girls do NOT have to be members or attendees of First Methodist Church. All are welcome!



PASTOR'S QUIZ

James and John joined Jesus as disciples

- when Jesus called them
- as soon as they saw Him
- because their father, Zebedee, told them to
- at the insistence of the first two disciples, Simon (called Peter) and Andrew his brother

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

STEWARDSHIP REPORTS

By Our Presence February 19, 2023

Sunday School:

82

Worship:

8:45am Service 107

11:00am Service 113

Live streaming 31

251

God's Tithes & Our Gifts

General Fund \$ 11,714.00

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

Children's Bank 10.16

Disaffiliation Fund 7,000.00

Preschool Fund 25.00

UMCOR 845.00

Total \$ 19,594.16

THANK YOU

We would like to thank our church family for the lovely cards, gift cards, delicious candy, your thoughts and prayers that you expressed to us on Valentine's Day.

Your sweet gestures were so appreciated.

We love you all!

Pastor John
Pastor Charmaine
Robin



First United Methodist Church
410 First Avenue North
Conover, NC 28613
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EASTER 4 KIDS

Calling all Children ages 2 through 5th grade!
You, and your family, are invited to a very
special **EASTER CELEBRATION** on:

Saturday, March 25, 2023

10:00 am – 12:00

Connor Family Life Center

Children will learn about Jesus' journey through Jerusalem, from His entry on Palm Sunday to His resurrection. There will be stories, crafts, snacks and activities. This celebration will be a blessing to all children and their families. You won't want to miss it and be sure to invite friends, grandchildren, and neighbors!!

Bring Baskets for the Easter Egg Hunt!!



Answer to this week's Pastor's Quiz:

a. when Jesus called them
(Matthew 4:21-22)

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor	Rev. John Woods (pastor@fumconover.org) (828) 464-4635 (336) 480-4550 - cell
Associate Pastor of Faith Development	Rev. Charmaine Van Rooyen (pastorcharmaigne@gmail.com) (781) 913-4415 - cell
Office Administrator / Financial Secretary	Robin Mays (fumcc@fumconover.org)
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 (ps@fumconover.org)
Lead Nursery Worker	Pilar Tobar
Custodian	Luisa Toro Bryan
Church Office	(828) 464-4635
Website:	www.fumconover.org

March 2023

March 2023							April 2023						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
							30						

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Feb 26	27	28	Mar 1 10:30-11:45am Acts Bible Study (CFLC) 1pm Hand & Foot (Scout Room) 7pm Choir practice	2 6:30pm - Hand & Foot (Scout Room)	3 7pm Dominos (Faithbuilders classroom)	4
5	6	7 09am-Vol. Day at ECCCM 1pm-Prayer Shawl Ministry (Parlor) 7-8:15pm Acts Bible	8 10:30-11:45am Acts Bible Study (CFLC) 1PM - Queen Esther's 1pm Hand & Foot 7pm Choir practice	9 6:30pm - Hand & Foot (Scout Room)	10 7pm Dominos (Faithbuilders classroom)	11
12	13 2pm - Circle #2 Meeting (Conference room)	14 7-8:15pm Acts Bible Study (CFLC)	15 10:30-11:45am Acts Bible Study (CFLC) 1pm Hand & Foot (Scout Room) 7pm Choir practice	16 6:30-9pm Methodist Men (CFLC) 6:30pm - Hand & Foot (Scout Room)	17 7pm Dominos (Faithbuilders classroom) St. Patrick's Day (United States)	18
19	20	21 7-8:15pm Acts Bible Study (CFLC)	22 10:30-11:45am Acts Bible Study (CFLC) 1pm Hand & Foot (Scout Room) 7pm Choir practice	23 6:30pm - Hand & Foot (Scout Room)	24 7pm Dominos (Faithbuilders classroom)	25
26	27	28 7-8:15pm Acts Bible Study (CFLC)	29 10:30-11:45am Acts Bible Study (CFLC) 1pm Hand & Foot (Scout Room) 7pm Choir practice	30 6:30pm - Hand & Foot (Scout Room)	31 7pm Dominos (Faithbuilders classroom)	Apr 1

Birthdays

Who = (everyone except removed); Filter = Birthday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5 Christopher Koenig	6 Andrea Long Chloe Thompson	7 Gilda Pennell Blaire Putzer	8 Steven Heafner	9 Chelsea Puga-Luna James Weaver	10 Brian Kelly	11 Rita Deal Martha Johnson Randy Porter
12 Nancy Clarke Tina Hudson Lee Thornburg	13 Tara Brackett Patrick Morrow David Stedman	14 Coulton McGinnis Faith Pennell	15 Chip Hennessee John Van Rooyen	16 Lauren Spencer	17 Ashley Sierzenga	18 Jayden Kimsey
19 Michael Connor Kelly Little	20	21 Lisa Johnson	22 Chase Connor Debi Sprague Lynn Watson	23 Laci Matthews	24 Elizabeth Pullen Rachael Simmons	25 Mary Beth Hennessee Mary Hornick Janet Morrow Don Shook
26 Sue Dwiggins	27 Parker Garrison	28 McCoy Keisler Morgan Williams	29 Eric Connor Alexander Copeland Trevor Monk	30	31 Debbie Royals	

Wedding Anniversaries

Who = (everyone except removed); Filter = Wedding

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13 Danielle and Josh Sigmon	14 Chip and Mary Beth Hennessee	15	16 Mark and Faith Pennell	17 Jeffrey and Jennifer Hefner	18 Steven and Brenda Heafner Adam and Melissa Johnson
19	20	21 Ryan and Angela Garrison Evan and Sydney Matson	22	23	24	25
26	27 Ron and Ginny Ward	28 Finley and Carole Cloninger	29	30	31 Karl and Vickie Stryker	