

First United Methodist Church
264 North Main Street
Rutherfordton, NC 28139
www.fumcrutherfordton.org
Vol. 7, No. 4

The First Word

Sharing Christ's Light
...on Main Street & beyond

CELEBRATE ADVENT AT FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, RUTHERFORDTON

Sunday, December 2nd - First Sunday of Advent

***8:45am— Early Service
11:00am—Morning Worship***

Monday, December 3rd

***Service of Hope and Healing
6:15pm in the Sanctuary***

Sunday, December 9th - Second Sunday of Advent

***8:45am—Early Service
11:00am—Morning Worship***

Sunday, December 16th - Third Sunday of Advent

8:45 & 11:00am—Choral Cantata: Sing the Songs of Bethlehem

Sunday, December 23rd - Fourth Sunday of Advent

***8:45am—Early Service
11:00am—Morning Worship***

Monday, December 24th - Christmas Eve

***5:30pm—Family Service of Communion and Candlelight
11:00pm—Communion and Candlelight Service***

THINGS TOO WONDERFUL FOR ME
— A Pastoral Word from Sydnor

Advent 2018

As we enter the season of Advent, we look to the arrival, the appearance of God in our lives. God's arrival has long been portrayed as violent and chaotic, as disrupting the current world order. Mark 13:25 foretells, "And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken."

Of course the coming of God will disrupt the order of this world! Surely we never imagined that our current political and economic systems were in any sense eternal! The season of Advent challenges us to acknowledge that our personal and corporate enterprises must eventually fail—that behind them is something much greater.

What is that greater something? I believe it has less to do with power as we usually think of it—e.g., political rule or military might. The power that undoes the world and brings us to our knees is more like a rose blooming in winter, a child born to a poor immigrant couple, a heart of stone becoming a heart of flesh. As Angelus Silesius wrote, "If in your heart you make a manger for his birth, then God will once again become a child on earth."

Do not underestimate such power, as small and tenuous as it may seem. It is a power fully capable of upending the existing order. The love of God in Jesus Christ can topple the mighty from their thrones and bring hope and healing to the lost and outcast. Thanks be to God for the Advent season. Thanks be to God for the promise of his coming. Thanks be to God for the victory of his love in Jesus Christ.

Advent blessings,



First Church has the opportunity to help the less fortunate by supporting the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots program. The program is collecting new, unwrapped toys to distribute as Christmas gifts to needy children in Rutherford County. Please consider donating a new, unwrapped toy to the Toys for Tots program. Place your toy donation in the box outside the Church office on or before December 15, 2018.

Thank you for your support!

INASMUCH CARD MINISTRY

Before you know it, Inasmuch will be here. One mission is the Card Ministry where we write a word of encouragement and address a card ready to be mailed, one per month, to members who need to hear from our church family. We also send Christmas cards and birthday cards. We need your UNUSED spare cards (with envelopes if possible). We can use birthday, seasonal, thinking of you and holiday cards. There is a basket in the office ready to receive your donations.

WINTER COAT COLLECTION

With the drop in temperature it is a reminder that cold weather is coming. We will be collecting coats for our Welcome Table guests. Please place coat donations in the tote in the church office. Thanks for all that you do for our community neighbors.

MUSIC NOTES

The Chancel Choir will present the sacred cantata **Sing the Songs of Bethlehem**, A Service of Lessons and Carols, by K. Lee Scott on Sunday, December 16, 2018. The growing popularity of *The Service of Lessons and Carols* is easy to understand considering the wealth of carol-based musical settings and the special chemistry which is created when these settings are laced together with the scriptural passages which inspired them. In this cantata, the group of carols, though arranged or composed by one composer, provide a variety of moods, textures and compositional effects for needed contrast. The prayers and scriptural passages follow rather closely the renowned service form from King's College, Cambridge, England, with slight adjustments. Accompanying instruments for this presentation of **Sing the Songs of Bethlehem** include organ, flute, violins, viola, and cello. (**Sing the Songs of Bethlehem**, Performance Notes, Morningstar Publishers, copyright 2006)

The Voices of Truth will sing on December 2 for the early and 11:00 services. On Monday evening, December 3, the Chancel Choir will sing for the Hope and Healing service. The Handbell Choir will play for both services Sunday, December 9, and the children will sing for the 11:00 service, also on December 9. Plans are to fill the Christmas Sunday service, December 23, with spoken message and music. It is our prayer that although the season is busy that each one will come to the services and allow the true meaning of Christmas to wash over each filling each heart to overflowing.

THANK YOU to the Tot Learning Center Preschool for their generous donation to the Fellowship Center Roof Fund. The roof on the Fellowship Center needs to be replaced and the TLC donation towards this fund is appreciated.

CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE

Sydnor and Kelly would like to invite our church family for a drop-in Christmas Open House at the church parsonage at 194 Honeysuckle Dr. in Rutherfordton on Saturday, December 15, 2018 from 2:00 to 5:00 pm. Come celebrate the season with your pastor and his family!

NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY

Our Evangelism & Membership Care Committee is working hard to make our new Church Directory one of the best ever. There will be many opportunities to schedule an appointment to have your picture taken. We hope that everyone will be able to participate.

Appointments for pictures can be scheduled by signing up each Sunday in December and on January 6th after the Early Service and before and after the 11:00 Service.

Pictures will be taken in December as follows:

- Wednesday, December 19, 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm
- Saturday, December 22, 8:30 am - 1:30 pm
- Sunday, December 23, 8:30 am - 1:30 pm

Pictures will be taken in January as follows:

- Wednesday, January 9, 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm
- Saturday, January 12, 8:30 am - 1:30 pm
- Sunday, January 13, 8:30 am - 1:30 pm

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

CONGREGATION PICTURE

We will take a group picture of our entire congregation on December 16th. We will meet at 10:30 in front of the Church (weather permitting) or in the Sanctuary. Please make every effort to be there!

First, I would like to say thank you to everyone who has helped my wife and I during our transition to this church. We have had a blast so far and we are looking forward to a very bright future here at First United Methodist Church of Rutherfordton.

As this is my first newsletter and there may still be some who I have not had the pleasure of meeting yet I will use this opportunity to tell everyone a little about my wife, Aubree and me. I grew up in Maiden, North Carolina, and have had the opportunity to work with many churches in that area of various backgrounds. Later, I attended Gardner-Webb University where I received my Bachelor's Degree in Religious Studies. I hope to continue my education to receive my Master's Degree as I continue to work with the youth and children here at FUMC Rutherfordton. I hope to use everything I have learned to propel the youth and children's ministry forward to another level. My wife, Aubree, grew up in Bessemer City, North Carolina, where she has also had experience working with youth and children as she grew up in church. She attended Gardner-Webb University as well where she earned her Bachelor's degree in Psychology. She hopes to continue her education to receive her Master's in Mental Health Counseling with a focus in College Counseling.

We are enjoying getting to know all of the youth and children here, and we have big plans for the future. We hope to not only see these ministries grow, but to also see them have a positive effect on the community and surrounding areas. We look forward to getting to know everyone and gaining your support as we embark on this journey together.

Blessings,

Gary and Aubree

Get to know us



Contact Information

If anyone would like to get to know us better, my office hours are posted on my door in Neon Youth Center, and I try to be available for anyone who would like to talk. Also you can contact me by phone, text, or email any time.

Email: gwilliams@fumcrutherfordton.org
Call or Text: (828) 578-4578



YOUTH NEWSLETTER

In Neon, for the month of November we have been covering the topic of identity. We have learned the importance of understanding that we are loved and forgiven no matter where we have been or what we have done. We have learned that God loves us and sees us as valuable even when we cannot see that in ourselves. This is an important lesson for many of us to learn whether we are youth or adults. It is so easy to fall into the trap of basing our value on our circumstances, when we should be basing our value on what God says about us. God says we are loved and forgiven. He has adopted us into His family and given us the ability to live like His children. All we must do is embrace God's view of ourselves, and realize we are valuable, and loved. It is so important for our youth to understand that they are not what they see around themselves everyday, or what anyone says about them, or even what they say about themselves sometimes. We all have the ability to embrace what God says about us. In Neon, we have covered these topics extensively through scripture, games, and fellowship. So, just as our youth have learned from this series, we hope that anyone reading this would be impacted, and agree to embrace what God says about them rather than what the world says.

Blessings,
Gary Williams



We need volunteers to help with Neon on Sunday nights as well as volunteers to help with upcoming youth trips. If you are interested please contact me at gwilliams@fumcrutherfordton.org.



In First Kids, throughout the month of November, we have been covering the topic of Cooperation. The children who have been in Sunday School have learned the importance of helping others, and how we can do much more together than we can do alone. As the church, it is important that we all remember we can accomplish much more together than we can accomplish alone, and we should be willing to work with each other to spread the love of Christ into the world around us.

Blessings,
Gary Williams



VOLUNTEERS

We need volunteers for First Kids! If you are interested in volunteering to help out with Sunday School or Children's church, please send me an email at gwilliams@fumcrutherfordton.org.

THE AGAPE CIRCLE will celebrate Christmas at the home of Brenda Gibson at 6:30 PM on Tuesday, December 11th. Please bring a new unwrapped toy for the Mini Mission project. If you were not at the November meeting and didn't sign up for a dish, please call Brenda or Joyce Mercer to let them know what type dish is needed. All ladies of the church are invited to join us.

THE FOLLOWING MONETARY GIFTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED:

In memory of Donna Carver, by Lu Hamlin, designated for Friendship Club; by Shirley Koone, designated for the Audio Visual Fund; by Marian & Michael Kelly, designated for Soul Food; by Vanessa Harbison, Jane Waters, designated for the General Fund.

In memory of Lucy Daniel, by Betty Gabriel, designated for the General Fund.

In memory of Eric Gibson, by Betty Gabriel, designated for the General Fund.

In memory of Regina Link, daughter of Peggy Hamrick, by Betty Gabriel, designated for the General Fund.



Are you looking to serve others through the love of Jesus Christ? Are you a compassionate person willing to help others through life's difficult journeys?

We are having a training class for Stephen Ministry, starting in January. Please speak to a Stephen Leader if you are interested and look for more information in December. Stephen Leaders: Sydnor Thompson, Susie King, Donna Harrison, Kim King, and Rick Furse

CHURCH OFFICE NEWS

2018 contributions must be received in the church office or postmarked by December 31st to be credited to 2018.

Contribution envelopes are available for anyone that would like a box. The envelopes are located on the table in the hallway between the main offices and the sanctuary. The envelopes are no longer numbered or dated and may be used on any given Sunday.

The church office will be closed on Friday, December 21st for vacation time.

The office will be closed on December 24th and 25th for Christmas and on January 1, 2019 for New Year's Day.

CHRISTMAS MISSION ORDER FORM

I (we) would like to participate in the Christmas Mission and give the designated amount of \$15.00 in honor or memory of a loved one or friend.

In Honor of _____

Given By _____

In Honor of _____

Given By _____

In Memory of _____

Given By _____

In Memory of _____

Given By _____

The list will be shared in the Sunday morning bulletin on December 23rd and in the email update on December 20th.

Please include your money with this order form and return it to the church office or place it in the offering plate. All orders must be received **NO LATER** than Sunday, December 16th.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

8:45 Service

- Dec. 2 Will & Susan Taunton,
Olivia & Maggie
- Dec. 9 Chris & Barbara Deese,
Charity, Dakota & Aiden
- Dec. 16 Adam & Tami Myslinski,
Hannah & A. C.
- Dec. 23 Ken and Diane Sanford

11:00 Service

- Dec. 2 Michael & Michelle Yelton,
Jackson & Ryan
- Dec. 9 David & Misty Rogers,
Maris & William
- Dec. 16 Gene & Jane Shuford
- Dec. 23 Drs. Scott & Stacey Griffith,
Laurie, David & Amanda

Christmas Eve Services

- 5:30 pm Dr. Brian & Stesha Pienkos,
Ebbie & Bennett
- 11:00 pm Jeep & Johnnie Martin

YOKEFELLOW

First Church has been asked to donate Instant Potatoes in December. Please leave donations in the Yokefellow bin located next to the Front Room in The Donation Station.

If you have questions, please contact our Yokefellow Representative, Andrea Harmon at 828-429-3880.

Thank you

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

December 14 at 12:00 noon

SUNDAY BULLETIN DEADLINE

Every Monday at Noon

Send information for Newsletter & Bulletin
to pcraft@fumcrutherfordton.org

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

Our Sunday worship each week is enriched by the participation of members of our congregation. We appreciate your prayerful consideration in being a part of the Worship Assistant ministry in 2019. Sign-up forms will be available in the church bulletin on December 9 & 16.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

DECEMBER WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Greeters (8:45)

- 1st Sunday Jim & Sheila Cuthbertson
2nd Sunday Dan Smith & Earl Furbish
3rd Sunday Ken & Diane Sanford
4th Sunday John & Deb Vincent
5th Sunday Eric & Terri Wells

Greeters (11:00)

- 1st Sunday Scott & Stacey Griffith
2nd Sunday Jean Schuck & Betsy Woolridge
3rd Sunday Pete & Pam Pryor
4th Sunday Dillard & Carolyn Morrow
5th Sunday Grant & B. J. McRorie

Sound System

- 1st Sunday Eric Wells
2nd Sunday Don Suttles
3rd Sunday Pete Pryor
4th Sunday Ed Bosgra
5th Sunday Don Harris

Ushers (8:45)

Rory Kiser, Earl Furbish,
Russ & Linda Armentrout

Ushers (11:00)

Glenn Deck, Jimmy Dancy,
Mel Bunch, Greg Hodge,
Jeff Powell, Ralph Hier,
David Rogers

Bread Makers

- 1st Sunday Naomi Yelton
2nd Sunday Nancy Smith
3rd Sunday Margaret Britt
4th Sunday Jennifer Carver
5th Sunday Helen Rogers

Acolytes

- 1st Sunday Maris Rogers
2nd Sunday Meg Prevatt
3rd Sunday Dee Dee Majors
4th Sunday Campbell Powell
5th Sunday Johannah Deese

Communion Stewards

- 1st Sunday Ken & Diane Sanford

First United Methodist Church
264 North Main Street
Rutherfordton, NC 28139



We're on the Web!
www.fumcrutherfordton.weebly.com



Find us on Facebook!

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH STAFF

Phone: (828) 287-3704

Sydnor Thompson, Ext. 102
Pastor

sydnor@fumcrutherfordton.org

Gary Williams, Ext. 106
Director of Children's & Youth Ministry
gwilliams@fumcrutherfordton.org

Kathy Watson, Ext. 103
TLC Preschool Director
kwatson@fumcrutherfordton.org

Pam Craft, Ext. 100
Administrative Assistant
pcraft@fumcrutherfordton.org

Patricia Harrelson, Ext. 114
Director of Music
pharrelson@fumcrutherfordton.org

Glenda Fuhrmann, Ext. 115
Organist
gfuhrmann@fumcrutherfordton.org

Sandra Turner, Ext. 101
Receptionist
sturner@fumcrutherfordton.org