

Ecclesia

DECEMBER 2022



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YouTube Channel
FUMC Salisbury



Sermon Podcast
Salisbury Sermons
on Anchor; Apple Podcasts;
Google Podcasts;
Pocket Casts;
RadioPublic; and Spotify



Facebook
@fumcsalisbury
Instagram
@fumcsalisbury



704.636.3121 | 217 South Church Street Salisbury, NC 28144



EXPERIENCE ★

Christmas Eve

PAPER BAG PAGEANT

4:00 PM

Christmas Eve worship designed especially for families with young children, and the young at heart

CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION

7:00 PM & 11:00 PM

Christmas Eve worship with candlelight communion

(7:00 will be livestreamed)

REMARKS

Zechariah is an important (and frequently-overlooked) person in the biblical story of Jesus' birth. Let's remember who Zechariah was & wonder more deeply about his significance. With the popularity of movie & television prequels, we can appreciate going further into the "back story" of Jesus' extended family. Instead of dropping right into the manger scene, we can take a few steps backwards in the story. After all, that's exactly what Luke the Gospel writer does!

Zechariah was a priest with top shelf lineage (Luke 1:5-7). He and his wife, Elizabeth, both were righteous people, known for their faithful living. In those days, becoming parents to a baby was frequently seen as a reward for obeying the Lord. However, this never was the case for Zechariah and Elizabeth during their younger days. They likely went about their days with a level of self-doubt, questioning if they were in God's favor or not. "Why not us? What's so wrong about us that we cannot become parents, too?" they probably thought. Nonetheless, Zechariah and Elizabeth remained loyal to each other and followed through on their religious commitments.

One day, while fulfilling his priestly duties in the temple, the angel Gabriel appeared to Zechariah with a remarkable message (Luke 1:8-20). Gabriel's message was a preview about what would soon happen: Elizabeth would indeed bear a son. And not just any little boy. Theirs would be extraordinary, with the spirit & power of Elijah, bringing many of the Lord's people back in repentance, and in so doing, he would "make ready a people prepared for the Lord (Luke 1:17)." It was John the Baptist.

For Zechariah, this message was literally UNBELIEVABLE. He could believe! Because of this, Zechariah was struck mute – he could not speak. The Gospel writer Luke is very clear about the cause-and-effect here. Zechariah's inability to believe Gabriel's message caused his inability to speak. Surely this consequence impacted his marriage, his role as a priest, and likely brought about shame upon him and his family. Let me note at least two important points:

1. We must resist a moralistic lesson here. Do not think, "If a person does not believe correctly, then that person will be mute, too." That punitive approach is self-centered and misses the story of Jesus' birth.
2. Just because this biblical story happened long ago does not make it normative for your life today. Again this sort of "take away" narrowly makes the story about us instead of God.

Yet, do our struggles with belief render us unable to speak? At times, we try to imagine the future God would have for us, and because we cannot see it clearly we cannot describe it. An architect needs to see the building in order to draw the schematic. The playwright must imagine the story to write the script.

If broken relationships challenge our belief, then no wonder we can't talk about them. If we cannot imagine making sacrifices for the sake of loving others, that's why continue to experience divisiveness and cannot speak words of peace. If we do not own our Christian faith, that's why we never invite other people, pray for others, or speak about of faith in public.

This Advent & Christmas, may God grant us a fresh belief – and the words to share it!

In Christ,

Mark Conforti

RESILIENT PEOPLE OF GOD

#BeUMC

UMC.org/BeUMC

Core Value: Resilient

We are experiencing all kinds of trouble, but we aren't crushed. We are confused, but we aren't depressed. We are harassed, but we aren't abandoned. We are knocked down, but we aren't knocked out.

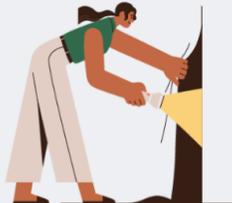
2 Corinthians 4:8-9

It is easy to feel disheartened in our world. A global pandemic, racial injustice, climate change, economic worries, political divisiveness, family heartbreak, and so much more threaten to steal our joy every day. Yet as people of God, we are people of hope, a hope that gives us strength to rebound even from the most difficult of circumstances. Our faith makes us resilient.

We persevere through trials and face tomorrow with God at our side.



Having realistic sense of control over one's choices, and an understanding of limitations over such control.



Seeing change as an opportunity or challenge.



Secure attachments with others, and the ability to engage their support.



Personal goals.



A strong sense of humor.



Patience.



A high tolerance of negative affect.



An optimistic outlook.



A high level of adaptability.

Characteristics That Resilient People Embody

BetterUp

#BeUMC

WE ARE THE PEOPLE OF GOD

The #BeUMC campaign reminds us of who we are at our best. As people of God called The United Methodist Church, we're faithful followers of Jesus seeking to make the world a better place.

CHURCH HISTORY

"looking back... moving forward"

Christmas is a season of gift giving and receiving. One of the best gifts we have already received are the Articles of Religion found in paragraph 104 of The Book of Discipline. Forming the solid core of English Protestant theology, they were originally composed during the reign of Queen Elizabeth the first. John Wesley edited them to fit America's culture. They have remained virtually unchanged for over 200 years.

These articles define our faith in a triune God, the divinity of Christ, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. They outline the biblical books we consider holy scripture, the doctrine of free will, and the meaning of church. They speak of justification, the sacraments, and sanctification. In short, they identify Methodism's theological unity with most other Protestant denominations.

These Articles of Religion fall under what our Methodist constitution calls "restrictive rules." They can only be changed by a 75% vote of the General Conference followed by the ratification of 75% of the aggregate delegates to all annual conferences. That means any change in our theology must receive overwhelming approval by the annual conference delegates. Half are clergy and half are laity.

Vote tabulation occurs this way. When all annual conference delegates all over the world cast their ballots, their votes are collected and counted at a single location. It takes a three quarters super majority to change any of our Articles of Religion. I have never seen that many Methodists agree on anything. Our core beliefs are secure.

Some splinter groups have recently charged that The United Methodist Church is changing its theology. THAT IS SIMPLY NOT TRUE. If anyone says differently, they are misinformed.

The Articles of Religion outline the essentials of John Wesley's faith. He also followed a time-tested approach to theology: "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; and in all things, charity."

Methodists must have unity in the core doctrines, but we have liberty to understand those core doctrines in different ways. Even when we disagree, we do it in love.

For example, Methodists believe in God, but our individual understanding of God can and should change as we grow in grace. Methodists can believe in God and be a fundamentalist, a traditionalist, a moderate, a liberal, or a progressive. We each have that theological freedom. What we are not free to do is reject a belief in God. An atheist or an agnostic, might be a good person deserving our love, but they are not a Methodist.

What is an essential and a non-essential doctrine is not the same for everyone. Opinions differ. Individual Christians draw the line at different places. That is why we need the Articles of Religion. They clearly define the starting point of Christian faith. They establish a common theological core. You may read that document in Part III of our Book of Discipline. It is the faith you professed when you joined the Methodist church and reaffirm each time you repeat The Apostles' Creed. It is what it means to be a United Methodist.

N. Fred Jordan, Jr., *Church Historian*

COMMUNITY MEAL, FIRST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH

COMMUNITY MEAL DECEMBER 7

Menu:

*Chili & cornbread
with dessert*

Program:

'Cards for a Cause,'
Advent Prayer Stations



Wednesday, January 4, 6:00pm
All are welcome!

ADVENT PRAYER STATIONS



FOLLOWING THE DECEMBER COMMUNITY MEAL, YOU'RE INVITED TO JOURNEY THROUGH A SERIES OF PRAYER STATIONS

what are prayer stations?

they're interactive stations set up with scripture readings, reflections, and activities - kind of a progressive worship experience

what makes them advent prayer stations?

they're designed to follow along with Advent themes and the devotional book we're recommending this year: Fully Human, Fully Divine by Whitney R. Simpson

where do I go?

prayer stations will begin in the Carter lobby as soon as you're finished eating, and wind through the sanctuary

Methodist Connection

Welcoming all 50-year olds and above for a special
Holiday Methodist Connection
Tuesday, December 13
12 noon
in the fellowship hall
Turkey and dressing and ham will be provided. Bring your favorite side and/or dessert. Our wonderful Josh will lead us in holiday songs which we all love. Bring a friend and enjoy this Christmas celebration!

HYMN OF THE MONTH: COME THOU LONG-EXPECTED JESUS

Advent is such a beautiful season of the church year. (It's actually my favorite, as opposed to Christmas or Easter.) Often compared to a "Winter's Lent," the austere season of Advent isn't simply intended as a warm-up for the festivities of the Christmas Nativity, but ultimately points us to the Second Coming of Christ, which we affirm and profess every Sunday in the Apostles' Creed with Christians around the world: "...He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; *from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead...*" (emphasis added).

For many Christians around the world, "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" marks the beginning of the Advent season. This beloved carol was first published as a prayer by Charles Wesley in 1744, reflecting upon Haggai 2.7: "And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts" (AKJV). Though written in 1744, the hymn wasn't widely recognized and popularized until renowned Baptist preacher Charles Spurgeon referenced the hymn text in his 1855 Christmas sermon, which he preached at the age of 21. It was then regularly included in future hymnals after 1875. (In 1978, Mark E. Hunt published 2 additional stanzas, we sing as verses 3 and 4 in the middle of the carol).

Though today this hymn is typically sung to the familiar 1844 Welsh tune "Hyfrydol" by Rowland Hugh Prichard (which is also used for Wesley's "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"), it was likely first sung to the 1716 tune "Stuttgart" by Christian Friedrich Witt. During the season of Advent, we will sing this carol to a variety of tunes! In the United Kingdom, the carol is often set to the tune "Cross of Jesus," by John Stainer, which he wrote as part of his 1887 oratorio, The Crucifixion.

– Joshua Starnes, *Director of Music Ministry*

TITLE
COME, THOU LONG-EXPECTED JESUS

HYMN WRITERS
C. WESLEY & M. HUNT

♪ *Born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious kingdom bring...* ♪

Charles Wesley's words, first penned as a prayer, and later transformed into hymn lyrics...

Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us;
let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear Desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a king,
Born to reign in us forever,
now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all-sufficient merit,
raise us to Thy glorious throne!

Listen to a modern arrangement here



For more information about this hymn, please visit



1744

CHARLES WESLEY PUBLISHES THE PRAYER THAT WOULD BECOME THE HYMN TEXT



1855

CHARLES SPURGEON REFERENCES THE HYMN WHILE PREACHING



1978

MARK HUNT WRITES THE TWO ADDITIONAL VERSES WE KNOW & SING TODAY

"Come, Thou Long Expected, Jesus"
Words: Charles Wesley, 1744 (sts. 1 & 4); Mark E. Hunt, 1978 (sts. 2 & 3), ©1978 InterVarsity Christian Fellowship.
Lyrics reprinted with permission under CCLI Copyright License No. 1433553. All rights reserved.



EXPERIENCE ★

★ Advent & Christmas

worship with us this season

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
HANGING OF THE GREENS
NOVEMBER 27 (8:30 AM & 11AM)

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 4 (8:30 AM & 11AM)

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
CHILDREN & YOUTH LEADING IN WORSHIP
DECEMBER 11 (8:30 AM & 11AM)

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
LESSONS & CAROLS
DECEMBER 18 (8:30 AM & 11AM)

"THE LONGEST NIGHT"
DECEMBER 21 (6 PM)

CHRISTMAS EVE
DECEMBER 24 (4PM, 7PM, & 11PM)

CHRISTMAS DAY, ONE SERVICE
DECEMBER 25 (10 AM)

EPIPHANY SUNDAY, ONE SERVICE
JANUARY 1 (10 AM)

BAPTISM OF THE LORD SUNDAY
JANUARY 8 (8:30 AM & 11AM)

EXPERIENCE

Advent & Christmas

grow with us this season

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL: FULLY HUMAN, FULLY DIVINE

BY WHITNEY R. SIMPSON

PODCAST PRACTICES

LIMITED SERIES PODCAST FROM FUMC, NEW EPISODES DROP EACH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

COOKIE BAKING WITH

JEN & BAILEE, ALL AGES!

DECEMBER 6 (5:30PM—7:30PM)

COMMUNITY MEAL & ADVENT PRAYER STATIONS

DECEMBER 7 (6PM—7PM)

CHRISTMAS ON CHURCH STREET

DECEMBER 16 (6PM—8PM)

serve with us this season

GIFTS FOR ISENBERG

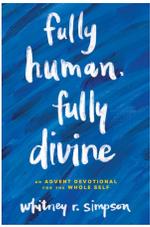
SHOP FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS AND THEIR SIBLINGS RECOMMENDED TO US BY THEIR GUIDANCE COUNSELOR
CONTACT BAILEE@FUMCSALISBURY.ORG

ROWAN HELPING MINISTRIES FOOD PACKING

ONCE A MONTH OUR CHURCH PACKS FOOD FOR OUR NEIGHBORS, TYPICALLY ON THE 4TH WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH
CONTACT JENNI@FUMCSALISBURY.ORG



ADVENT RESOURCES



DEVOTIONAL BOOK RECOMMENDATION

Fully Human, Fully Divine

by Whitney R. Simpson is a devotional book filled with a variety of spiritual practices designed to engage your whole self



SOUNDTRACK FOR THE SEASON

Shadow & Light Advent Playlist

created by author Tsh Oxenrider, this playlist of Advent music is one of our favorites this time of year!



LIMITED SERIES ADVENT PODCAST

from Salisbury Sermons

the church is producing our own podcast that coordinates with the devotional book for this year. Episodes are very brief (5 min), and are released every Monday



**FIND MORE ABOUT ADVENT &
CHRISTMAS AT
FUMCSALISBURY.ORG/ADVENT**



Cookie
BAKING

December 6th  5:30 - 7:30 pm

Join us in the Fellowship Hall for a night of cookie baking and learning about the history of St. Nick!
Dinner will be served.
Bring \$5 to cover cost of supplies.
Sign-up required

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
SALISBURY, NC
EST. 1783

CHRISMONS - MONOGRAMS OF CHRIST

Our church sanctuary is most beautiful at Christmas when tall, majestic Christmas trees flank the altar and are adorned with gold, pearl, and crystal ornaments representing the birth and life of God's son, Jesus Christ.

These special ornaments have a unique history, originating in 1957, when they were first made by Mrs. Frances Kipps Spencer, for use on the Christmas tree of Ascension Lutheran Church in Danville, Virginia. The original ornaments were made of out of Styrofoam and other craft supplies. Mrs. Spencers named them "Chrismons," or Monograms of Christ, and offered classes to crafters who wanted to use them for decorating their churches at Christmas. Interest in the Chrismons spread, especially in the South. At FUMC Salisbury, Mrs. Claudia Sellers (mother of Anne Koontz) led our initial Chrismon group.



Beverly Poole (right) and Bob Poole have a Christmas tree filled with Beverly's hand-made Christian Symbols ornaments and that stays up all year long.

After the Chrismon founder passed away and Chrismon materials became scarce, the Chrismon materials supplier in Salisbury created a second generation of ornaments – called Christian Symbols. Longtime church member Bobbie Melton was drawn to these intricate, beautiful designs and their meanings and joined with Beverly Poole and Jeanne Maynard to use them in church ministry. For about 15 years, these three ladies met regularly in Christian fellowship to make ornaments for the church and to give them to special friends or family. Once completed, the ornaments are not to be sold, only donated or given as gifts.

Once the sanctuary trees had enough ornaments, Bobbie, Beverly, and Jeanne found another way to use the sparking beaded ornaments in ministry. Ornaments were made and hung on a third tree in the Carter Lobby to honor or memorialize special people. The donor made a gift to the church to cover the cost of supplies for that ornament.

Bobbie, Beverly, and Jeanne each say that this ministry has brought them great joy over the years. They continue to make ornaments, but at a slower pace. Bobbie and Beverly make them for family members, while Jeanne adds ornaments to the Carter Lobby tree to honor babies baptized in our church. And each of these ladies are mentoring three new crafters – Deneen Jones, Gloria Matthews, and Kris Mueller – to help continue this long church tradition. Thank you Bobbie, Beverly, and Jeanne for showing the love of Christ through your special talents and gifts!

Editor's Note: Some of the original Styrofoam Chrismon ornaments have survived over the years and continue to be hung on the sanctuary Christmas trees. This year, take a peek at the trees up close and see if you can find some of the original Chrismon ornaments!



Looking over new ornaments are (left to right) Jeanne Maynard, Bobbie Melton, Gloria Matthews, Kris Mueller, and (seated) Deneen Jones



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Join us for Kids Connection!

We meet in the Nest (Room B101) from 10:30 - 10:50. We will be practicing our singing and speaking parts, preparing the children to lead during worship on December 11th.

DECEMBER

10 - Preschool Playdate @ 11AM

11 - Gingerbread House Making & leading in worship

18 - Club 45/ Youth Christmas Party @ 5PM

24 - Paper Bag Pageant @ 4PM



INTERESTED IN ADOPTING AN ISENBERG FAMILY FOR CHRISTMAS?

SIGN UP IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL BY THE CHRISTMAS TREE BY

DECEMBER 4TH. GIFTS ARE DUE DECEMBER 14TH.

(PLACE IN FELLOWSHIP HALL ON STAGE OR UPSTAIRS IN THE OFFICE.)

FOR QUESTIONS, REACH OUT TO BAILEE VIA TEXT (704-754-0436) OR

EMAIL [BAILEE@FUMCSALISBURY.ORG](mailto:Bailee@FUMCSalisbury.org)

**ALL PRE-K & KIDS CONNECTION
FAMILIES ARE WELCOME!**

**DECEMBER 17
10AM - NOON
FELLOWSHIP HALL**

**PLEASE REGISTER SO WE
KNOW YOU ARE COMING
& HAVE ENOUGH SUPPLIES!**

**COCOA,
COOKIES &
CHRISTMAS
ORNAMENTS**

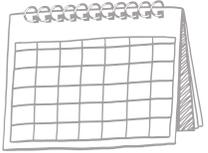


**FIRST
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH**
SALISBURY, NC
EST. 1783

YOUTH MINISTRY

Salisbury Youth 6-12 GRADE MINISTRY

Newsletter



YOUTH GROUP CALENDAR FALL/SPRING 2022

DECEMBER

4 - YOUTH GROUP

11 - YOUTH GROUP

18 - CHRISTMAS
PARTY

25 - no youth group
(Christmas Day)

JANUARY

1 - no youth group
(New Year's Day)

8 - YOUTH GROUP

13-16 - WINTER
RETREAT (BOONE)

22 - YOUTH GROUP

29 - YOUTH GROUP



WINTER RETREAT

January 13-16, 2023

youth 6-12 grade

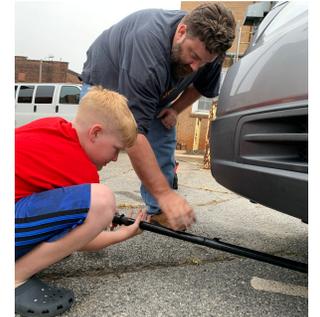
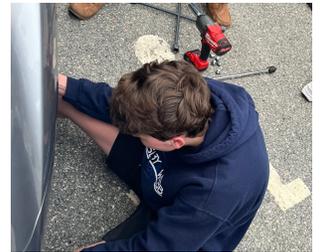
Salisbury Youth Group annual Winter Retreat is happening over MLK weekend in January. Our retreat house is near Boone this year, and we're looking forward to winter fun!

\$170+ (skiing optional)

sign up by December 18

JESUS & CARS

Recently at youth group we took a night to learn a couple of basics about cars - namely, how to change a tire. Church members Chris Foote and Ben Weisensel visited to lend their expertise. We had a great time trying out new things! During our devotion that night we talked about some similarities between showing up for church and car maintenance. Our relationships with God and one another benefit when we come regularly. God set it up that way because it's good for us!



YOUTH & CLUB 45 XMAS PARTY

FLANNEL & FLAPJACKS CLUB45 & YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY



Sunday December 18, 5:00-7:00pm

Dress Code: Flannel!

The Shaffer's House, 612 South Jackson Street

SCOUTING AT FUMC

October was a very busy month for both Pack and Troop 442. The Cub Scouts spent the weekend at Camp Barnhardt as part of Family Fest Camporee. The Cubs participated in learning several skills, including cooking their own "Hobo" dinner. Then they went trick or treating among the many campsites. The scouts hiked 10 miles on the Appalachian Trail and Overmountain Trail. Our female unit invited the girls from 448 to join them on their trek. It was a tough but beautiful hike. Cubs and Scouts, along with leaders and parents, spent a Saturday morning cleaning up around FUMC. They trimmed bushes, trees, pulled weeds, and raked leaves. A huge pile of debris was left out front of the Church for the City to pick up. It was a tough job but we were glad to do it! In November the scouts will be hiking in South Mountain State Park.



THE "X" IN XMAS

Are we taking Christ out of Christmas?

Maybe you've heard someone say "keep Christ in Christmas," or "Jesus is the reason for the season," in reference to using 'Xmas' in place of the word 'Christmas.' Perhaps over the last several years you've even heard someone say there's a "war on Christmas." *Are they right?*



Would it surprise you to hear it was an 11th century Anglo-Saxon scribe who first to abbreviate Christmas in this way? His reasoning lies in the etymology of the word.

Using the letters 'XP' as shorthand for Christ, comes directly from the New Testament. The Greek word for Christ is "christos," and in Greek, it looks something like this: **Χριστός**. Notice the first two letters? They're the Greek letters 'chi' (X) and 'rho' (p). Early Christians would draw Chi-Rho's on their homes, adding them to artwork, as a monogram for Christ. When Emperor Constantine put it on his military banners in the early-300s, the popularity of Chi-Rho's really took off.



"Christmas" is a compound word, coming from the words "Christ" and "mass" - naming the day on the liturgical calendar - Christ's Mass. December 25 has been the day the church celebrated Jesus' birth since as early as AD 221, but Christmas was typically a small affair. Good Friday and Easter were a much bigger events throughout the first several centuries of Christianity.

During the Middle Ages, sometime in the 9th century, the Church begins to develop liturgies used to celebrate Christmas, and write them down. It was during this time when books were all still hand written, and parchment paper was expensive, that a scribe in 1021 saved himself some space by abbreviating "Christmas" to "XPmas."

There was a group in the 17th century who actually tried to cancel Christmas... the Puritans. In 1644 English Puritans were fed up with how so many people (who called themselves Christians) just wanted to drink and party during Christmas, and didn't care about worshipping the Christ in whom they claimed to believe. The Puritan government demanded shops stay open on Christmas, nobody got a day off; and there are even stories of town criers being sent out to ring the bell and shout "No Christmas!," reminding everyone *not* to celebrate. Happily for us, the Puritans war on Christmas only lasted until 1660 when the monarchy was restored in England.

So, when it comes to our 11th century friend - he wasn't erasing Christ from Christmas at all. He was pointing to the ancient practice of monogramming (and saving a little paper). After his abbreviation to "XPmas," it turned into "Xmas," and the abbreviation stuck.

You'll see Chi-Rho's throughout centuries of Christian art, including several in the Chrismons that decorate the trees in our sanctuary each year. The next time you're looking at a Chrismon tree, see if you can find one!



Sources

Vox.com The X in Xmas literally means Christ. Here's the history behind it. By Brandon Ambrosino

Britannica.com Christmas by Hans J. Hillerbrand

Introducingmedievalchristianity.wordpress.com The Church Year by INTRODUCING MEDIEVAL CHRISTIANITY

Youtube.com Figgy Pudding | A Victorian Christmas Tradition by Tasting History with Max Miller

AFTER SCHOOL CHILD CARE

The students in the Afterschool Child Care continue to work hard and impress us with their work. We have been working on activities centered around the holidays, completing Halloween rotations and Thanksgiving. We have also started a new outreach process for our shut ins and home bound members. Our students are making cards to send to them letting them know we are praying and thinking of them. It continues our focus on prayer. The students have also been participating in student led prayer walks around our campus praying about current issues.

We appreciate all of the support you have given us. If you know of anyone looking for afterschool care, please have them contact us at 704-433-6679.

Scotty Adcock,
Director of After School Child Care & Summer Day Camp



PRESCHOOL



STAFF SPOTLIGHT ON COURTNEY BOST

PRESENTED BY STAFF-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

What is your role on staff?

I am the Director/Lead Teacher of the Child Development Center.

How long have you served at FUMC?

I began working at FUMC in July 2020.

Tell us about your family: I am married with 3 children. In October my husband and I celebrated 16 years of marriage. My three children keep me busy with their sports schedule. Chanse, 14, plays football, basketball and baseball. Courtlyn, 10, plays softball and basketball. Cade, 5, enjoyed his first year of T-ball in the spring. We have two dogs, Mugzy and Ace.



Tell us about your call to ministry: I have always worked with children. It was one of the goals that I listed as a future plan when I completed high school. I knew in some way, I wanted to work with children. I have always enjoyed interacting and encouraging them. At my church, New Faith FGFC in Lexington, I am the Children/Youth Ministry Leader.

Where were you before you started working at FUMC? Before working at FUMC, I worked at St. John's CDC for 18 years. It was my first job, I was in high school at the time. I started out in the classroom and later became Director. I obtained my Bachelor's degree in Birth-Kindergarten from Catawba College while working there.

Tell us a little more about what you do: I oversee the Child Development Center. I make sure that the center is in compliance with the North Carolina state guidelines, rated license standards, and other agencies that fund our program. I am responsible for ensuring that the children, and families receive quality care/education. I also work with staff and encourage them to grow professionally. I am currently enrolled at UNC-W obtaining a Master's degree in Leadership, Policy and Advocacy in Early Childhood Programs.



OUR CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER STAFF

Top Row L-R
Patricia Sturdivant
Dawn Lomax
Deannia McCauley



Bottom Row L-R
Rachel Smith
Ernishia McCauley
Annie Stockton



2022
**HARVEST
PROCESSION**



FINANCE COMMITTEE UPDATE

FUMC Finance Committee
December 2022 Update

Merry Christmas. By the time you read this Thanksgiving will have past and we will be in the midst of the Holy Season as well as anticipating a visit from Santa Claus. On a personal note, my Sister and I are creating a self-published book about our memories from the 50s and 60s when we grew up. It is over a 120 pages as of now and near completion. It reminds us of happy and sometimes sad times of our youth as well as a baseline to appreciate our later years. It truly is special to recall these memories and of course create new ones for the future. It may be read by only two people, Mary Janet and myself, but it has been a fun and interesting experience. Enough about nothing, now to our report to you on the Church's finances...

First United Methodist is a robust institution but as we have shared since the early part of the year, 2022 is an especially difficult year financially, viz:

2022 Operating Accounts thru October	Actual Tithing/Gifts
	\$569,055
	Expenses
	730,870
	Net Shortfall
	(\$161,815)

We attribute this result from COVID and changing attendance habits, the negative economy causing us to be cautious with giving, the passing of members over time which has a cumulative effect, the increased costs of maintaining our facility and increased overtime from Staff who are asked to do more with less, to name some of the more significant factors. Perhaps our circumstance was somewhat hidden from the Paycheck Protection Plan payments the Church received in prior years. We received \$138,000 in 2021.

Looking at past year trends we forecast this November to come in at less than our running monthly expenses but December is traditionally a very good month for tithing. Nevertheless, unless forces overwhelm these negatives, we will finish the year somewhere from \$150 to \$170 thousand short of expenses. AND we hope we are wrong!

We will have voted on the 2023 Budget by the time you read this article. We anticipate the Church Council approving a Budget recommendation from the Finance Committee that embraces necessary accuracy to recognize some of the expenses that are impacting the Church; for example, the Building costs. In the November Trustees Meeting, the Trustees voted to stand behind any necessary shortage in 2023 to continue services. Of course, we hope there are none but must perform a practical exercise.

We are not taking this on the chin though. As you know, we engaged Wesley CDC to help us understand best use of our facility and potential revenue opportunities. We expect their findings soon. We also are investigating the impact of the School Programs on the Church with hopes that there are opportunities to earn grant monies. There are also moves to identify and adapt some of our expenditures to save monies. Pennies make nickels...

In closing the year, I want to thank the dedicated members of the Finance Committee and provide best wishes to the two that are leaving us because of rotation, Dave Collins and Kris Mueller. We welcome Jeff Daye and Van Kelly.

We are transparent on our financials. If you have curiosities, please contact Becca Blackmon at the Church or me at phillipfloyd1776@gmail.com.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1 Doug Miller | 11 Jenna Robinson
Craig Johnson | 23 Anna Maphis |
| 2 Harrison Banish | 12 Eddie Nicholson | 24 |
| 3 Libby Hollowell
Diana Storey
Will Bivens | 13 | 25 |
| 4 Isabella Banish
Austin Hedrick | 14 Chris Sherrill | 26 Al Carter
Brianna Brinkley |
| 5 Angie Fansler
William Austin
Max Foote | 15 Jay Hughes | 27 Nelson Robertson |
| 6 Steven Anderson | 16 Bob Roakes
Bret Busby | 28 Phillip Floyd |
| 7 Bud Mickle
Julia Howard
Phil Cooley | 17 | 29 Joe Steinman
Judy Beymer |
| 8 | 18 Regan Roakes
Mason Lentz | 30 |
| 9 Meg Bivens
Joe Hall
Carole Schall | 19 Faye Hollar
Henry Austin | 31 Wes Fazia
Celeste Ward
Patrick Howard |
| 10 Lincoln Howe
Carolyn Gresham | 20 Davis West
Samantha Hensley
Michael Rimmer | |
| | 21 Delaney Fisher | |
| | 22 | |



STAFF CHRISTMAS LOVE OFFERING

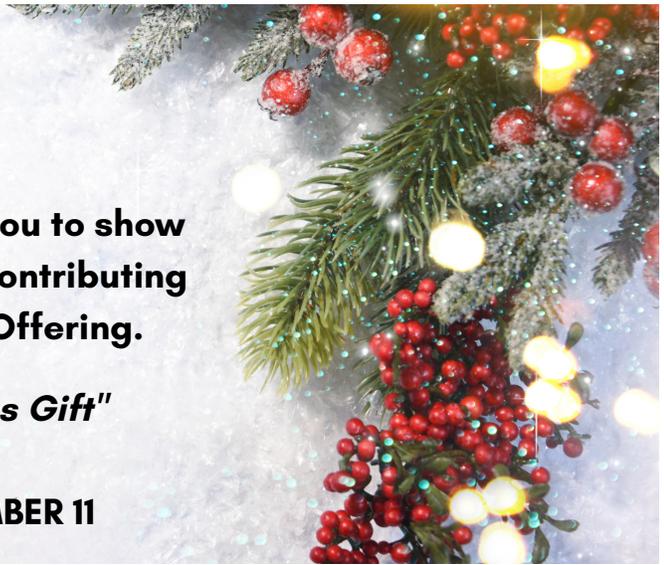
Staff Love Offering

The Staff-Parish Relations Committee invites you to show your love and support for our church staff by contributing to the Annual Church Staff Christmas Love Offering.



Please designate "Staff Christmas Gift" on your gift.

COLLECTIONS THROUGH DECEMBER 11



2023 CALENDAR MEETING

CHURCH LEADERS

**2023 CALENDAR MEETING
SATURDAY, JANUARY 7
10:00AM**

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS, PROGRAM LEADERS,
ANYONE WHO PUTS THINGS ON THE CHURCH
CALENDAR; PLAN TO ATTEND!**



COMING UP...

**Staff Retreat
DECEMBER 1-3**

The church office will be closed while the church staff is away on a retreat

**Church Office Closed
DECEMBER 26-27, JANUARY 2**

The church office will be closed Dec. 26-27 and Jan. 2 as holidays

**Souper Bowl of Caring
EARLY FEBRUARY**

Our Scouts will be collecting non-perishable foods to "tackle hunger"

**Do you have an article
for the Ecclesia?**

Send them to Jenni@fumcsalisbury.org with "(Month to be printed) Ecclesia" in the subject line.

Articles can be submitted by the first Friday of the month prior to when you would like it printed.

**Access the Church
Calendar Any Time**

Access the church calendar any time! Just go to fumcsalisbury.org and look under the Connect tab. There you can also find a digital version of the Ecclesia.



FUMC FAMILY & EXTENDED FAMILY TRANSITIONS

IN REMEMBRANCE

Please keep these families in your prayers.

MAUDE LEE MORRISON DEGROTTE

Mother of Janice Applewhite

January 6, 1924 - October 31, 2022

MARLA ELLER LOWERY

Mother of Mo Culler

August 14, 1948 - October 31, 2022

ROBIN LEE AGNER

Father of Alisha Mastro

November 7, 1952 - November 3, 2022

MARJORIE ANN SINGLETON BASS

Wife of The Rev. Billy E. Bass (Former Pastor)

August 3, 1934 - November 11, 2022

HENRY ARLYN BUNCH

Father of Melissa Conrad

September 28, 1946 - November 19, 2022

"The Lord is near to the brokenhearted..." ~ Psalm 34:18



**ORDER CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS BY
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11**

\$15 each

**Make checks
payable to:
FUMC Salisbury**



DIRECTORY UPDATES



Access the online directory anytime by going to fumcsalisbury.ctrn.co, following the link on our website (under 'Connect'), or downloading the Online Member Directory app on your smartphone or tablet. Enter the access code **fumcsalisbury** and your unique username and password.

You can update your information at any time, if you would like assistance in updating your information please contact the church office.

ECCLESIA

NEWSLETTER OF FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



*making and nurturing Christian disciples
through the presence and power of God*

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