


Ecclesia

February 2024




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

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Season of the Church Year

February 4

February 11

Ash Wednesday
February 14

February 18

February 25

Ordinary
Time

Lent

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YouTube Channel
FUMC Salisbury



Sermon Podcast
Salisbury Sermons



Facebook
@fumcsalisbury
Instagram
@fumcsalisbury



704.636.3121 | 217 South Church Street Salisbury, NC 28144

Re:Marks

Do you know the United Methodist Church's stance on gambling? What about the death penalty? On marriage and divorce? There is – believe it or not (literally, whether you believe in it or not) – an official denominational stance on many topics. You can read about them in “The Social Principles.”

Our faith compels us to see God's love in the world, for the world, and that this is an active love. We see God making an impact in our own lives and for others. Meanwhile, we cannot sit back as passive observers. Our baptism calls us to participate in God's saving love. This means sharing the Good News so that people can repent of their sins, experience forgiveness, and receive the gift of new life. This also means that we care about other people's lives, too; we care enough to take a stand, including when injustices prevail, even with perplex social matters.

When we get outside of Salisbury, Rowan County, and even the United States, we begin to see how many different kinds of people and communities exist. It's really remarkable! God loves a big world. It's one thing to see the Christian faith where we live. But what about how the Christian faith is embodied by other people in different contexts?

We celebrate the universal truths of the Gospel that transcend culture, language, or preference. At the same time, we humbly recognize just how enormous this world is. As such, The Social Principles of the United Methodist Church are a prayerful and thoughtful effort of the General Conference to speak to the issues in the contemporary world from a sound biblical and theological foundation. You may agree wholeheartedly with the precise articulation of one particular principle, and simultaneously disagree with the wording of another. At the same time, a fellow United Methodist church member may hold a different perspective than you, and we can all be part of the same church. As one pastor friend says, “We won't kick you out for buying a lottery ticket.”

What are the chances of every United Methodist church member being in complete agreement with each other, let alone all of The Social Principles? You know the answer: zip! Or how about another question... What are the chances of a married person being in complete agreement with his or her spouse? And yet, despite the high divorce rate, an uncountable number of married couples stay married. They learn how to live together, to raise a family together, to remain faithful to one another as they grow old together.

The Church is old! It goes all the way back to when Jesus called those first fishermen. They dropped their nets, followed Jesus, and learned how to fish for people. Since then, the story of the Church consists of beautiful moments of devout commitment to the gospel, and other times when the ugliness of sin rips apart people, families, and communities.

If you're like me, then you are excited to be part of Jesus' continuing Church. It consists of people whose commitment matches or even surpasses yours. Some gladly share the same perspective as you; others take a different view. Yet we are all saved by the same grace of Jesus Christ, who calls us to share His love with the whole world.

Mark Conforti

Pastor Mark



TRANSITIONS

FIVE-WEEK STUDY

WITH WHITNEY CASSELL

MONDAYS @ 7PM
STARTING FEBRUARY 12 ON ZOOM

Register for TRANSITIONS

Sign up for this 5-week study with Whitney by following the QR code below or visiting the church website at

<https://www.fumcsalisbury.org/transitions-study.html>

An email will be sent to participants with the link to join in on Zoom!



Around the Table

nurturing people
in body & spirit



Community Meals

connect with the
community around us

(returning APRIL 3)

FEBRUARY 7

Pot Luck Covered Dish Meal

participate in feeding people in body & spirit

Fellowship Hall - 6:00pm

(Next: March 6)

FEBRUARY 21

Fellowship Meal

foster fellowship among church members

Fellowship Hall - 6:00pm

(Next: March 20)

Fellowship Meal Reservations

\$8 per adult, (children & youth eat free)

reservation required by
Monday, February 19

reservations and payment can be made
online or reserve your spot by calling the
church office volunteers, 9am - 3pm (Mon-Fri).



coming up in...

LENT & EASTER

FEBRUARY 14
-
MARCH 31

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

February 14, 6:00pm, Chapel

SUNDAYS IN LENT

Seven Deadly Sins, Sermon Series

HOLY WEEK

March 24 - 30

EASTER DAY

Ecumenical Sunrise Service

6:45am, Bell Tower Green

Worship Service

8:30am, Sanctuary

Breakfast

9:30am, Fellowship Hall

Easter Egg Hunt

10:30am, Front Lawn

Worship Service

11:00am, Sanctuary



DONATIONS NEEDED

*individually wrapped candy &
plastic easter eggs needed for
the Easter Egg Hunt*

AND

*Egg My Yard fundraiser for
Camp Discovery*

*donations can be dropped off in the
Fisher Street Lobby until March 17*

Church History

Saint Valentine's Day turns our hearts to love. We celebrate with boxes of candy, cut flowers, ornate greeting cards, and/or the cook's night out. It is an occasion to say: I love you.

Love also stands at the heart of Methodism. The theological word is GRACE. It means God loves us. Hate has no place in our church. We believe we are loved by God, and God wants us to love everyone. This idea of God's grace permeates every aspect of our faith including our music.

John Wesley's brother Charles is best remembered for his hymns. They often capture our grace filled theology. One of his best-known hymns is "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling." It identifies Christ as "pure, unbounded love," and prays that God's love might "enter every trembling heart." My wife and I used it as the processional hymn at our wedding.

Surprisingly, scholars believe this hymn had a secular beginning. The 17th century English poet, John Dryden, included in his play King Arthur, a

"Song of Venus." The opening line begins, "Fairest Isles, all Isles excelling, Seat of Pleasures and of love." It goes on to celebrate Venus the Roman goddess of passionate love. Charles Wesley knew this poem and adapted its lines to proclaim God's perfecting love.

Like many of his hymns, "Love Divine" was constantly edited. Its most controversial line occurs in the second verse. Later editions omitted it. Verse two asks God to "Take away our bent to sinning." Early Methodists argued that if humanity loses its "bent to sinning," it will lose its free will. Our very humanity would be diminished by not having the freedom of choice. Some later versions changed the line to "take away our love of sinning."

This hymn beautifully praises the Methodist doctrine of Christian perfection. Methodists don't believe we can make ourselves perfect in love. That is humanly impossible. However, the Wesley brothers strongly felt we should want God to make us perfect in love. It should be the desire of every Christian's heart and something we earnestly seek. Anything less than perfect love leaves room for improvement. If we are to be "changed from glory into glory" it must be by God's gracious gift that we both seek and accept.

John Zundel (1815-1882) composed the music for this hymn. He was a native of Germany who began his career as an organist in St. Petersburg, Russia. After seven years, he moved to America. For thirty years, he lived in New York and is best known for his long association with Henry Ward Beecher at Plymouth Church, Brooklyn. He later returned to Germany where he died in 1882.

As we enter a New Year, it is a good time for Christians to ask God to "Finish, then thy new creation, pure and spotless let us be." Growing in God's grace is the perfect path to a heavenly joy where we can be "lost in wonder, love, and praise."

Fred Jordan, *Church Historian*

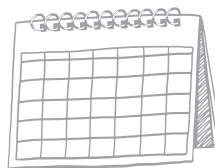


Charles Wesley's Organ
Wesley's Chapel, London

Youth Ministry

Salisbury Youth 6-12 GRADE MINISTRY

Newsletter



YOUTH GROUP CALENDAR

2023-2024

WINTER RETREAT 2024



Winter Retreat was a little rainy this year, but we had a great time, and had some good conversations about wisdom! Thank you to Pastor Mark for making meals for us, and hanging out!



FEBRUARY

4 - YOUTH GROUP

11 - no youth group
(*Superbowl*)

18 - no youth group
(*Pres Day wknd*)

25 - YOUTH GROUP

MARCH

3 - no youth group
(*RSS spring break*)

11 - YOUTH GROUP

**15-17 - IgniteUs
RETREAT**

24 - YOUTH GROUP

31 - no youth group
(*Easter Day*)



Confirmation Classes continue as we prepare for our Confirmation Camp retreat, and look ahead to Confirmation Sunday on May 19!

Pray for our Confirmands

Join me in praying for the youth in our Confirmation Class as they explore and grow in their faith. May 19 is Confirmation Sunday where we will celebrate this growth with them!

**Mia, Declan, Dudley, Mason, Gracie,
Mason, Raleigh, & Lucas**

Confirmation

Confirmation Classes
will be hosted at
Milford Hills
in February and
FUMC in March.

February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				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		

March

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					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						

Childcare Programs

After School Child Care & Child Development Center

The Child Development Center and the After School Child Care joined together on December 22 for a Make and Take Event with our students and their families. We had younger students and older students working together to spread Christmas cheer, enjoy a good book and have lunch together.

We began with all students gathering around the digital “fireplace” to enjoy a wonderful story, Room for a Little One, by Martin Waddell. They then make a handprint nativity ornament to take home to their family. Next, they make a bracelet to share the Christmas story, made reindeer food and finished with a delicious lunch. The students had a wonderful time together and it was so fun to watch our children interacting together. We look forward to doing activities such as this in the future with our families!



Tidying Up After Christmas



Thank you to everyone who stayed after the covered dish meal in early January to help tidy up the Sanctuary and Lobby areas. With many hands, we were able to make light work of putting away many of the Advent & Christmas decorations!



Children's Ministry



Egg My Yard

BENEFITTING CAMP DISCOVERY

Let us do the work for your egg hunt

2 DOZEN EGGS/ \$35.00
4 DOZEN EGGS/ \$60.00

FIND MORE INFORMATION OR ORDER
TODAY AT FUMCSALISBURY.ORG/EGGS

PHILIPPIANS 4:13
CAMP DISCOVERY
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
SALISBURY, NC
EST. 2003

Children's Sunday School

February 04 • February 11
February 18 • February 25

10:00 – 10:45 am

Taught by Susan Cooley

Upstairs in Education Building
Pastor Mark Conforti will teach
a class for the parents in the
room next door.



Camp Discovery 2024

**FOLLOWING JESUS
CHANGES THE GAME**



CAMP DISCOVERY

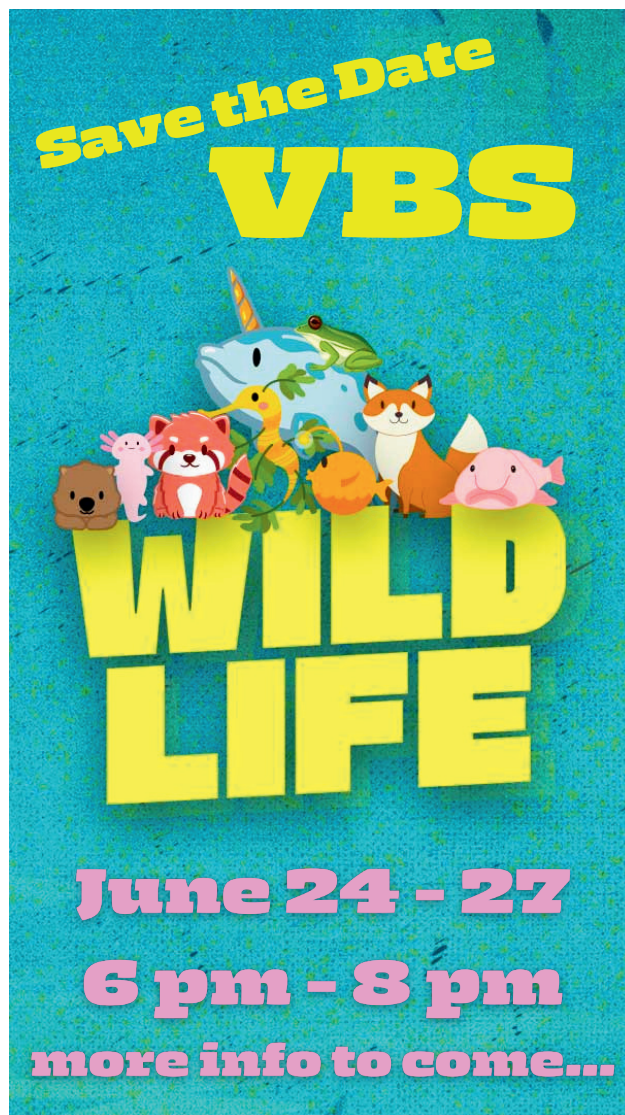
JUNE 9-14, 2024

PHILIPPIANS 4:13
CAMP DISCOVERY
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
SALISBURY, NC
EST. 2003

Camper applications are being delivered to
guidance counselors & fundraising has begun!

APPLY TO BE A MENTOR

contact Claire at campdiscoveryfumc@gmail.com



Save the Date

VBS

WILD LIFE

June 24 - 27

6 pm - 8 pm

more info to come...

Rowan Helping Ministries This Month



The need for food at Rowan Helping Ministries is high, and our monthly food packing parties are needed! If you can volunteer to pack food for an hour, or want to be on-call for emergency packing parties, contact Jen.

PASS THE PLATE

*Dinner, Drinks,
Entertainment,
Silent Auction*

Presented by
FOOD LION FEEDS Greg and Missie Alcorn

Tickets \$70

benefitting
Rowan Helping Ministries

APRIL 6, 2024
6:00-9:00PM
F&M TROLLEY BARN

Serving Meals in Jeannie's Kitchen

February: Discovery Class

Dinner, February 8 & Breakfast, February 9

March: Seekers/Adam & Eve classes

Interested in your group serving a meal? Contact Taffy Jordan!

Food Packing

Fourth Wednesdays, during the school year

Next Packing Party:

February 28, 2:00-3:00pm

Interested in coming to a packing party? Contact Jen Fogt!

SCOUT SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4

SCOUTING FOR FOOD DRIVE FEBRUARY 3

Our Scouts annual food drive, Scouting for Food, is on Saturday, February 3 from 8:00-noon. Food donations can also be brought with you to church on Sunday morning. Particular current needs from Rowan Helping Ministries food pantry are listed below.

EAGLE SCOUT AWARD PRESENTATION

Also part of Scout Sunday, we celebrate with and recognize Scouts who have done the work to receive their Eagle Award! Scouts will participate in leading different parts of the worship service including serving as acolytes, and lectors.



Food Pantry Requests from Rowan Helping Ministries:

peanut butter, jelly, canned meat, rice, pasta, instant potatoes, canned fruit, granola/protein bars, tomato products (sauce, paste, diced), and salad dressing

Register Your Church Keys

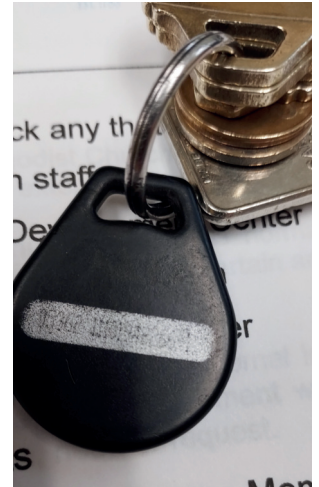
The Board of Trustees is working to update our records regarding those who have key cards, key fobs, or keys to First United Methodist Church.

Individuals are asked to fill out a quick form listing the identifying numbers on keys they have in their possession - some of which provide access to the building, while others involve interior doors and cabinets.

Members can obtain the forms at the Volunteers Desk in the Carter Lobby or at upcoming meetings and activities. Completed forms should be left at the Volunteers Desk or with a staff member.

Members having keys they no longer need or use are encouraged to turn them in at the Volunteers Office so they can be re-issued to others who may need them.

After March 1, key cards or fobs which have not been registered (updated) are subject to being deactivated from working.

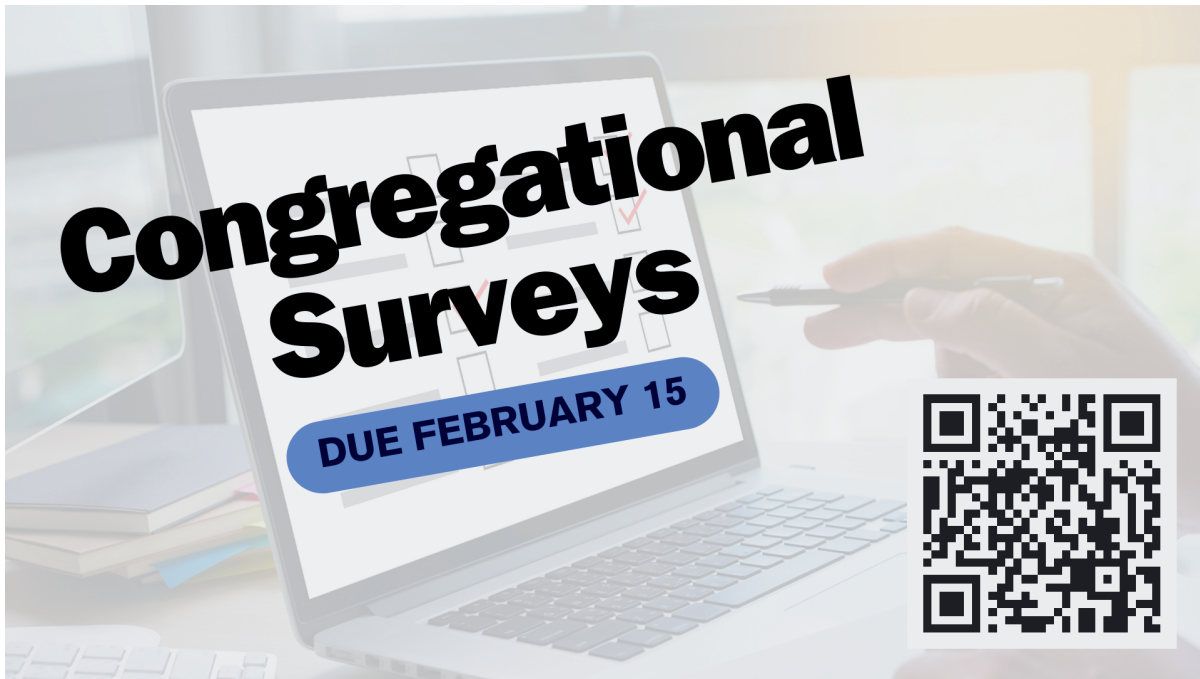


Roof Repair Project Complete




The Trustees approved a project in the fall to make significant repairs to a section of the roof. This work has been completed, and Aaron was even able to capture Mike on the roof inspecting the work as the crew was finishing the project. In Mike's words he was, "trying to get a higher position in the church." 😂

Church-Wide Survey



Everyone in the congregation is invited to complete a brief survey on how you're interested in learning, serving, and making plans with FUMC in the next few months! Please complete the survey by Thursday, February 15. Follow the QR code above, or visit <https://forms.gle/iimZ9mRnP9dp5Ch9A>.

Lenten Sermon Series



Seven Deadly Sins

A sermon series through Lent
& continuing after Easter

Pride February 18	Sloth March 10 <i>Rev. David Hollis preaching</i>
Envy February 25 <i>Rev. Beth Crissman preaching</i>	Greed March 17
Anger March 3	Gluttony April 7 <i>Whitney Cassell preaching</i>
Lust April 14	

A Cappella Sunday



February 18th is the First Sunday in Lent. To mark the beginning of this important season of penitence and preparation, we are joining with worshipping communities from across the world in singing congregational songs a cappella (without instrumental accompaniment) during the Sunday morning worship services. By singing a cappella, we are offering to God ourselves in its most basic form. Soli Deo Gloria! Glory to God Alone!

Spending one Sunday a year to focus on a cappella congregational singing has many benefits and purposes, including:

1. It connects us to the history of the church. For thousands of years, *a cappella* singing was the mainstay of the Church's song. By exploring this way of music-making, we acknowledge the saints of the past.
2. It connects us to many Christian denominations, traditions, and regions of the world that continue to primarily use a cappella music in corporate worship. Including many Mennonite, Church of Christ, Church of God in Christ, South African Methodists, and Orthodox traditions.
3. It offers to God something that is, for many congregations in North America, a gift that is different from our usual music-making. Psalm 96.1 tells us to "Sing a new song to the LORD," which can be achieved for some of us by singing a cappella.
4. It encourages the congregation's song by building up confidence in their own voices. Many in our congregation believe that they can't sing, or can't sing well. Singing a cappella presents these people with the best opportunity to hear themselves and others singing, giving them a fresh perspective on their assumptions of their own abilities and the ability of the congregation's combined voice.
5. It emphasizes the unique ability of instruments to enhance the congregation's song. By showing the congregation that they can sing without instrumental accompaniment, instrumental accompaniment can then begin to enhance and empower the congregation's voice rather than acting primarily as a crutch. Singing a cappella also allows us to more intentionally focus upon the texts we are singing and meditate upon their biblical truths.
6. It allows instrumentalists to spend a Sunday listening carefully to the congregation to assess where their voice needs support. Often times it is hard to listen carefully to the congregation when you are focusing on playing your instrument accurately and musically. This gives the instrumentalists permission to step away for a Sunday without feeling like they are leaving the congregation stranded.
7. Finally, singing a cappella is fun! By removing our typical means of accompanying song, our minds are often challenged to come up with new and creative ways to sing together that maintains energy and vitality. It can bring out the best in not only the congregation, but in the musician's leadership.

"A Cappella Sunday" is a ministry of The Center for Congregational Song. For more information, please visit: www.thehymnsociety.org/ccs

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

1 James Johnson

2

3 Andy Swanson
Sutton Webb

4 Caroline Clark

5 Rachel Buchanan
Mo Culler
Ken Hollar

6 Samuel Howe
Earle Koontz
Garrett Miller

7 Court Drake

8 Connor Conforti

9 Regina Faggart

10 Michael Anderson
Glener Gilland
Carole Young

11 Mary Sue Leonard
Betsy Mowery

12

13 Ryan Anderson

14

15 Scotti Webb

16 Barry Gainer
Nicholas Peltz
Amelia Steinman
Will Steinman

17 Lauren Williams

18

19 Spencer West

20

21 William Clark
Kaleb Robinson
Mary Beth Scibilia
Mel Smith

22 Bill Linn

23

24 Jeff Matthews

25 Ben Weisensel

26 Barbara Saleeby
Pete Stout

27 Laura Koontz
Hannah Lineberry
Robert McGee

28 Faye Cline
Debbie Kolkebeck
Will Koontz

29 
Leap year!

February

General Conference 2020... in 2024



WHAT IS GENERAL CONFERENCE?

GENERAL CONFERENCE IS COMPRISED OF UNITED METHODIST CLERGY AND LAY LEADERS WHO ARE ELECTED FROM ANNUAL, MISSIONARY AND PROVISIONAL CONFERENCES AROUND THE WORLD. THIS REPRESENTATIVE BODY IS THE ONLY ONE THAT CAN SET OFFICIAL POLICY AND SPEAK FOR THE DENOMINATION.

Mark your calendar

General Conference info session April 15, 6:00pm

In early 2020, The United Methodist Church was

preparing for its next General Conference. The gathering promised to be one for the history books, with key legislation proposed that would chart the course for the denomination's future.

General Conference gathers for a 10-day meeting every four years. But as we all know, COVID-19 gripped the world and shut it down in March, leading to the postponement of the 2020 General Conference, not once, but three times. The global pandemic, as well as extended waits for visas, eventually pushed the gathering to April 23 – May 3, 2024.

Stay Connected

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 should be submitted by the 10th day of each month for the month following - March articles should be submitted by February 10.

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*.



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.

ECCLÉSIA

NEWSLETTER OF FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



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

