

If Heaven...



Many years ago, the country song, “If Heaven” was released by Andy Griggs. This was an effusively sentimental song to be sure. That is okay with me because I am too, and I love the lyrics, no matter how sad they are. They speak of longing for the future, of nostalgia, and recognition of how much change we all experience in life.

Here is a sample of the lyrics...

*If heaven was an hour, it would be twilight
When the fireflies start their dancin' on the lawn
And supper's on the stove and mamma's laughin'
And everybody's workin' day is done*

*If heaven was a town, it would be my town
Oh, on a summer day in 1985
And everything I wanted was out there waitin'
And everyone I loved was still alive*

The song reminds me of playing with the other children in my neighborhood, often until twilight, waiting eagerly for our mothers to call us in for supper. I remember being a teenager and dreaming of the future. Now, as an adult, the phrase about heaven being a time when everyone I loved was still alive brings

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Ways We Serve

Greeters

- 6 Steve & Kathy Valentine
- 13 Peggie Shuford & Wanda Lutz
- 20 Jerry & Gayle Park
- 27 Bo & Carol King

Acolytes

- 6 Owen Krech
- 13 Noah Hardin
- 20 Lucas Demofonte
- 27 Karson Shrum

Time For All God's Children

- 6 Steve Valentine
- 13 Billy Howell
- 20 Jan Duncan
- 27 Robbie Combs

Liturgists

- 6 Richard Beeker
- 13 Carol King
- 20 Jake Tweed
- 27 Levi Stroud

Pew Keepers

- 6 Beverly Beal
- 13 Kathy Valentine
- 20 Chase & Katie Hardin
- 27 Jeremy & Emily Krech

Parking Valets

- 6 Paul Douglas
- 13 Jeff Noles
- 20 Steve Herman
- 27 Jerry Park

Sunday School Rovers

- 6 Keith Dedmond
- 13 Rosalind Welder
- 20 Kay Hermann
- 27 Bo King

Altar Guild

Kay Lowe

Communion Assistants

Steve & Patsy Herman, Dianne Putnam



Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.
- Mark 11:24

In Your Daily Prayers, Please Pray for:

NEW: Caylor Brinkley, Beulah Cannon, Billy Harkey, Larry Papetti, Luke Rainwater, Randy Ramsey, Artie and Linda Shields, those who wish to remain unnamed

CONTINUING: Thomas Allen, Deanie Auton, Arlen & Sue Belk, Laurie Anne Beyer, Caylor Brinkley, Jeremiah Buff, Beulah Cannon, Les Canupe, Greg Clarke, Rob Coles (son of Lynn Campbell), Elvie Cranford, Kathy Douglas, Jane Finger, Barbara Fitzpatrick, Kim Fitzpatrick, Rev. Keiko Foster, Billy Harkey, Donald Hartsell (brother-in-law of Kathy Dellinger), Ed Hatley, Jayce Heff, Susan Henthorn, Denise Hobbs, LoisMary Hoehne, Dolly Jones, Jack Jones, Danny Kirkpatrick, Randi Kolseth, Pat Lawing, Karen Leonhardt, Jim Love, Judy Lowe, Jerry McClure, Pat Maddox, Thurman Melton, Faye Morris, Danny Nicholson, Patsy Nicholson, Suzy Otterman, Rob Owen, Hal and Joann Parker, Randy Ramsey, Dr. Tim Roberts, Linda H Rudisill, Gracie Sceascea, Artie & Linda Shields, Randolph Shives, Laura Smallwood, Rev. Charles Stevens, Rhonda Swafford, Rev. Sarah Underwood, David Wyant, First UMC, Peace in Europe, Prayers for the homeless, United States of America

NURSING FACILITIES: Ann Ford (The Addison), Mary Heavner (Abernethy Laurels), Judy Komas (The Addison), Verna Rufini (Abernethy Laurels)

HOMEBOUND: Lou Beal, Winnon Cashion, Jo Huss, Donna Connor Morris, Mary Robinson

Please take a few moments to look over the prayer list, and let us know if here are any updates or deletions that need to be made. You may contact the church office with any changes.

Birthdays

- 1 Brant Eagle
- 2 Sheldon Anderson & Carroll Heavner
- 3 Bucky Kinard
- 4 Debi Ballard & Rosemary Leonard
- 5 Lyneen Campbell
- 6 Taylor Gazdeck, Ash Wirth, & Betty Parker
- 7 Steve Peeler
- 10 Karen Leonhardt
- 17 Bill Leonhardt
- 18 Ben Beal
- 20 Vickie Andrews
- 23 Rita Cronland & Ann Howell
- 24 Laura Lineberger, Kristen Willis, & Levi Stroud
- 26 Grant Gazdeck
- 31 Thad Lowe

Anniversaries

- 12 Debi and Doug Ballard



FUMC News & Updates

Old Salem "Candle Tea"

We have reserved 20 tickets for a trip to Old Salem on December 14th for their annual Moravian Candle Tea.

The Moravian Candle Tea at Old Salem has been a Winston-Salem Christmas tradition since 1929. Participants experience the sights, sounds, smells, and even the tastes of early Moravian Christmas traditions. We will carpool from the church, leaving around mid-morning as our tour time is 1 p.m. If you are interested in attending, please contact the church office.



Ongoing Parsonage Improvements

To address the numerous issues that have occurred recently at the parsonage, the CLC requested quotes from three vendors to inspect and evaluate the situation. Quotes were received from two with the result of the CLC contracting with Bugg Busters to encapsulate and treat the basement. Under the circumstances it was a necessary expenditure of \$22,857.00 but there is also good news associated with this unexpected necessity. The entire project cost is being covered by another generous FUMC family! Work should begin the week of September 30 and completed in 5-7 business days.

Griefshare

Our next session for our Griefshare ministry will begin on Monday, October 7th at 10 a.m. in the Annex. You may register for the session by using the following link: <https://www.griefshare.org/groups/244894> or you can see Joey Lockman, Sheila Beeker, Katie Hardin or Jane Finger with any questions.

New Church Directory

A big "THANK YOU!" to all who helped sign up families for photo appointments, as well as those who helped with registration this past weekend. If you were not able to come in person for a photo session, you can always submit a photo to be included in the directory. If you have any questions, please contact the

church office. We will soon begin work on designing our new directory, and we will share the date that photo submissions may be made.

Blood Drive Thanks!

Thanks to all the volunteers who helped with our Blood Drive last Wednesday. We had a goal of 25 donors, and again we surpassed that goal with 35! Our next Blood Drive will be in January. Date and time will be announced later. If you have any questions, please see Pat Stevens.

Downtown Drive-Thru Trick or Treat

First UMC is again taking part in the Downtown Drive-Thru Trick or Treat event, sponsored by the Lincoln City Parks and Recreation Department. This year's event will be held on Saturday, Oct 26th from 5 until 7 p.m.. We will set up on Academy Street at the portico as we did last year. On Sunday, October 20th, following morning worship, we will put together treat bags for this event. We will accept donations of candy bags beginning on October 7th. If you have any questions, please contact the church office.

Prison Ministry Update

Our Prison Ministry outreach began a new season on September 17th by starting the 26th Discipleship Class for the inmates. The course uses Rev. Rick Warren's "Purpose Driven Life" as a text and springboard for discussion. Twenty inmates and ten volunteers were present for the September 24th meeting.

This outreach is "quiet" because we cannot take pictures, videos, or recordings of our work. It's intensive and sensitive work using prayer, discussion and Bible study. Costs are relatively low for the effort but we always need donations toward the end-of-class graduation celebration (caterer), holiday camp-wide meal and inmate gift packs, supplies, and constantly seek gently used or new copies of "The Purpose Driven Life" (inmates are given a book to keep).

This year's volunteer crew includes Steve Peeler (one of the original implementers of the program), Richard Beeker, Thurman Melton, Ron Metzger, Chase Hardin, Joe Lockman, and four more volunteers from

three different churches, two Baptist and one independent Methodist.

Thank you to the First United Methodist member angels who have supported us in the past and, we hope, a long time to come.

Parish Nurse Notes

Many people believe that cow's milk is desirable for children (after breastfeeding) unless they have a dietary allergy/restriction. But, what about adults? Here are some issues to consider:

- Dairy milk has a wider array of nutrients than plant based milk.
- Plant milk can be fortified with calcium and vitamin D but are lacking in several other nutrients.
- Soy milk has more protein than other plant based milk.
- Reduction in fat content in dairy milk is often desirable for adults, but the lower the fat is not necessarily the best choice.
- Lactose intolerance is common in older adults, but lactose-free milk is available to deal with this.
- Yogurt and cheese both provide important nutrition and have less LDL (bad) cholesterol than most meats.

I personally believe in drinking cow milk in adulthood to decrease bone loss especially in older women.

A Faith Community Interest Survey was distributed at our morning worship service on Sept. 22 and 29. The purpose of this survey is to determine the healthcare needs and interests of our congregation. A Health Committee is being formed by Pastor Sarah, and will be responsible for gathering this information from the surveys, and will assess ways to act on the survey results.

As an incentive for filling out the survey, a double numbered ticket has been affixed to each survey. Congregation members are invited to detach one of the tickets and deposit it in the container with the surveys to be entered into a drawing for a \$50 gift card to Carolina Rib and Steak. The drawing will be held on Oct 6. You do not have to be present to win, but be sure to hold on to your tickets. If your number is pulled, and you are not present at church on Oct 6th, A OneCall Announcement will go out following worship. You will have one week to claim the prize. If the prize is not claimed by Oct 13th, a second drawing will be taken.

Please contact the church office or see Betty Parker with any questions.

UMW Meeting Notes

To the women of the church: I invite you to read the notes below from our most recent United Methodist Women meeting. We meet once a month (2nd Sunday of the month) at 9 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. You can see how many areas are covered by this mighty band of women! Please come join us! There is so much going on....something for everyone....and surely an area where you could participate.

Vickie Andrews opened the meeting with prayer followed by the treasurer's report given by Dianne Putnam. The treasury stands at \$4152.17. The following reports were given:

The backpack program year has begun with 20 children with probably four more to join when parental paperwork is completed.

The visitation team plans to meet with the quilt group for the purpose of discussing a distribution of quilts already completed (around 7 so far).

Gayle Park announced that the Good News Class will prepare a meal for Hesus House on 9/30 and Kathy Valentine said the Kay Waters class will prepare a meal on 10/29.

Kathy Dedmond spoke about the upcoming birthday party for Lincoln Rehabilitation Center scheduled for 9/9. Helpers should arrive around 2:15. Gift bags will be assembled today after Sunday School.

The Kay Waters class will host a Christmas party for UMAR participants. No date was announced at this time. This class also provided lunch for the GE Massey staff on 8/7.

Katie Hardin and Rosalind Welder spoke about reserving the January 1 lunch slot for the Christian Ministry Soup Kitchen. Volunteers will be needed so consider this as you add to your new calendar.

Rosalind Welder reminded us of upcoming directory pictures and that a few more volunteers are needed to check people in as they arrive.

Also, the blood drive is this Wednesday, 9/11. Pat Stevens has everything prepared and ready.

Carol King will call a meeting of the Nativity Display committee in the near future to begin planning for the December event. Also, the next 5th Wednesday Book Club meeting will be 10/30 in the church library at noon.

The next UMW meeting will be October 6 at 9 a.m. in the fellowship hall. We will discuss a church-wide luncheon for after the service on All Saints Sunday, 11/3. All the women of the church are invited to join us and participate with us in these and many other activities!

Youth Notes

A big “Thank You” to all who organized and coordinated our Youth Cooking Class on September 22. Everyone had a great time, learning how to make homemade pasta, then getting to taste what they made! We had a good turnout of young people and parents, as well! We will be planning another Cooking class soon, so watch this space for more information.

The next planned activity is to help out during the Apple Festival BBQ by helping deliver BBQ plates to the police station and fire stations, and then enjoying the festival as a group. We hope everyone will come out on October 19th to help!

Robbie will be offering another session for Acolyte training in the next few weeks. If there are any young people in the church in 3rd -5th grade who wishes to take part in this important aspect of our morning worship, please contact the church office and we will coordinate a training session during the Sunday school hour.

Finally, as we are gaining momentum with our ministry for young people in the church, we need to come up with a unique name to help identify us to the congregation, as well as the community when we do activities outside the church. Our name needs to reflect who we are as a group, and what our mission will be. Get creative and let’s hear your ideas!!

Feast of Traditions Covered Dish Meal

Please join us November 3rd for A Feast of Tradition covered dish luncheon after worship in the Fellowship Hall. “A Feast of Tradition” is the title of our FUMC cookbook which was reprinted last in 2002. If you would like to prepare a recipe (from one of our saints) from that cookbook and do not have one, there is a library copy if you would like to print a recipe. Or you may have your own special recipe... or your own favorite fried chicken spot! If you do not cook, we want you to join us as we fill the tables with our church family! If you make a recipe from the

cookbook, there will be cards in the library to credit the source as we remember their many contributions to FUMC.

Preschool News

Preschool began on September 3, 2024, with a total of 38 students and 7 staff members. The children are enjoying a variety of activities, including chapel on Mondays with Pastor Sarah and music sessions on Wednesdays with Mrs. Joanna. The students have been busy making new friends and engaging in learning activities.

Units of study so far have included Back to School, All About Me, Family, Pets, Fall and more. These themes have helped students settle into the school environment, explore their identities, share about their families, and learn about the changing seasons.

Upcoming events include a trip to the pumpkin patch and a Trunk or Treat celebration.

Boy Scout Update

Our Boy Scout troop is off to a great start for the year with a number of activities, both local and within the community. They will be presenting the Flag Ceremony at the October Lincolnton City Council Meeting, providing parking support during the Apple Festival, as well as taking part in the 2024 Rendezvous at the Cleveland County Fairgrounds, celebrating 100 years of Scouting. The Cub and Boy Scouts will also be participating in the Veterans Day and Christmas parades.

Charge Conference

Our annual Charge Conference will be held on November 6th at 6 .p.m in the Fellowship Hall. Our District Superintendent, Rev. David Christy, will be here to lead us in a time of worship and celebration, as well as conduct our yearly business meeting. All members are invited to attend.

Financial Update

August 2024 YTD Revenue	\$229,064
August 2024 YTD Expense	\$246,948
August 2024 YTD Deficit	\$(17,884)

CLC Recap

The Church Leadership Council met on Monday, September 9th. Below is a recap of the highlights from that meeting:

- We have met with Helms Security regarding updating our campus building access, as well as improved fire monitoring for the sanctuary. Discussions are ongoing.
- We are on track to begin construction on the new pitched roof on the Education Building within the next few weeks. The trusses have been delivered and will be lifted to the roof by crane. Clarks Roofing will be handling this project. Ballard Roofing is also preparing to begin the roofing project on the Sanctuary building. We are continuing work on the parsonage at Bug Busters is set to begin work in early October to address the moisture problems in the basement, as well as addressing a pest/rodent issue. This project is expected to take approximately 2 weeks to complete.
- 12 artificial wreaths have been purchased from Hobby Lobby to be used outdoors. We will continue to use three live wreaths in the sanctuary for the holidays. Sponsorships for wreaths and purchase of poinsettias will be available beginning in mid-October.
- Nativity sets will be on display in the Annex during the month of December to coincide with the downtown carriage rides. A live nativity will be shown on the porch of the fellowship hall during the same time. We are still looking for back up nursery attendants for Sunday morning worship. The idea of a call list for back ups was put forward.
- Passing the Peace – It was recommended that we temporarily suspend the Passing the Peace portion of worship in the interest of caution as COVID is beginning its fall spike.
- Pastor Sarah shared some dates that she would be out of the office. Those dates are:

Sept 23-24 – attending the pastors retreat for the First Church Cohort

Oct 13-15 – attending Duke Convocation for continuing education

Some vacation time in November – dates to be determined

We have had several people state that would be a part of the First Church Cohort, but there is still a need for the Laity Champion. The cohort will consist

of in-person and Zoom online meetings for clergy and laity, including a staff workshop on November 21 at the Conference office in Huntersville.

- We had very successful photo dates for our new pictorial directory. A big THANK YOU to all the volunteers who helped with family check-ins during the photo sessions. For those who did not wish to make an appointment, photo submissions will be taken. We will have our design team meeting with the rep from Universal Church Directory on Oct 1.
- Discussions are ongoing with Artisan Church, St. Lukes Episcopal Church and Emmanuel Lutheran church regarding our potential cooperative Program Director to create programming for children and youth of our four churches, as well as reaching out to the community. A letter of intent was presented to the members of the CLC for review as we seek to commit to this joint venture of the downtown church community. All pastors are continuing to seek out grants and other funding sources to help fund this new venture.
- The Next meeting of the CLC will be on Monday, October 14th at 6:00 pm in the Annex. As always, church members are welcome to attend the main business meetings that begin at 6 p.m., but if there is a called Executive Session (Staff-Parish Relations issues) following the main meeting, those are for CLC members only.



**FIRST UMC is a
Lighthouse Congregation
of the
Western North Carolina
Conference of the
United Methodist Church.**

Laity Service Award

First United Methodist Church proudly awarded the District Laity Service Award to Jerry and Gayle Park, for their effort and involvement to bring the Ivananko Family to Lincolnton from Ukraine. The award was presented during the morning worship service on September 15th, following a mission update given by the Parks on the status of the family. Congratulations, Jerry and Gayle!



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tears to my eyes. Oh my. See, I told you was sentimental and silly.

At the First Church Cohort education event that I was fortunate to attend this week, Bishop Ken Carter, summarized the book we were assigned to read, "Quietly Courageous" by Gil Rendle. The book, and Bishop Carter, spoke eloquently about the power of nostalgia. Nostalgia can be defined as a "sentimental longing or wistful affection for the past, typically for a period or place with happy personal associations".

This wistful affection for the past can be powerful. Sometimes this is helpful when it inspires us to honor our heritage, our ancestors, our history as a people. The problem with nostalgia is that often our memories are faulty. The reality of the past often differs from the way we remember things. Memories fade, details are lost, painful truths are glossed over.

Churches, like individuals, are often nostalgic. Think how often in a church meeting we say, "If only things were like the past and we had enough.(I will let you finish that sentence.) Next thing you know, there is finger pointing, blaming, "back to Egypt" committees are formed, or even worse, there is paralysis and depression. We lose sight of what assets we have right now. We are fearful, anxious, or defeated. Usually not everything was as rosy as we like to remember.

For instance, I had a wonderful church historian in a church I served years ago. He deeply loved his church heritage. He was also a wonderful storyteller and teacher. The youth were enthralled with his tales of the passionate love for Jesus each founder of the church embodied. It sounded like a wonderful history, which it was. Yet, he completely amazed the class members when he took them outside and pointed to a big rock in the woods where he said all the men and boys, relieved themselves in the days before indoor plumbing. The kids were horrified and stunned!

Bishop Carter reminded us that most all churches wrestle with nostalgia. How can we celebrate our heritage, harness that joy and move forward into a bright future? Where are we in the lifecycle of our church? How can we be relevant in a culture that no longer values the institution and values of the church? There are so many questions to ask!

The First Church Cohort is a coalition of many influential churches like ours, that need revitalization, that need to learn new ways of sharing God's love with our neighbors. You will hear more about this in the coming weeks. Thank you to those who have agreed to serve on the lay team alongside me.

The season of fall only increases my tendency to reminisce, so if you hear sentimental songs playing on my office computer feel free to shake your head and mutter a "bless her heart." I will be all right!

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Sarah



201 East Main Street
Lincolnton, NC 28092

Sunday School at 10 am

Service at 11 a.m. each Sunday.

Office Hours: 9 a.m. until 1 p.m.: Mon.-Thur.

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Follow us on Facebook and YouTube

Events this coming month

- Oct. 6 – **Blood pressure checks** - Education Building 10:30-11 a.m. and following worship in the Breezeway 11 a.m. **World Communion Sunday Observance** during morning worship
- Oct. 7 – **Griefshare** Session, Annex, 10 a.m.
- Oct. 13 – **UMW Meeting**, Fellowship Hall, 9 a.m.
- Oct. 14 – **Church Leadership Council** in the Annex, 6 p.m. All members are invited to attend CLC meetings. Called Executive Sessions (Staff Parish meetings) are for CLC members only, and take place following the main meeting.
- Oct. 19 – **Lincoln County Apple Festival BBQ** in the Fellowship Hall, 10 a.m. until 4 p.m.
- Oct. 20 – 11 a.m. **Children's Sabbath** during morning worship
12:30 p.m. preparing treat bags for Downtown Trick or Treat - Fellowship Hall
- Oct. 26 – **Downtown Drive Thru Trick or Treat** – Academy St. at the Portico 5 - 7 p.m.
- Oct. 27 – **UM Men's Breakfast** – Fellowship Hall 8 a.m.
- Oct. 31 – **Halloween Preschool Trunk or Treat.** Academy Street will be closed from 8:30 a.m. until noon

ONGOING EVENTS

- **Quilting Ministry** Monday mornings at 9:30 in the Quilting Room on the 2nd floor of the Middle building.
- **Griefshare** meets each Monday morning at 10 in the Annex
- **Handbell Choir** meets at 6 p.m. every Wednesday in the Choir Room
- The **Chancel Choir** meets at 7 p.m. every Wednesday in the Choir Room

Memorials and Honorariums

July - September 2023

A Gift to the Handbell Fund in honor of Mary Anna Rankin, given by Amy and Joey Lockman

In Memory of Ruth Crowell Lockett
LHS Class of 1965

In Memory of Brenda Noles
Jerry & Gayle Park (Columbarium Fund)
Charles & Wanda Lutz (Kaye Waters Class)
Michael & Letha Owen
Bo & Carol King (Handbell Fund)
Rosalind Welder & Carl Henline (Backpack Fund)
Ernie & Betty Parker
Jeff Noles (Playground Fund and Handbell Fund)
Ed & Lyn Campbell
Charles & Pat Stevens
Kay & Jim Hermann
Joanne Parker (Kaye Waters Class)
John Lantz
Amy & Jeffrey Francis
Keith & Kathy Dedmond

In Memory of Bobbie Robinson
Bunnie Nantz

In Memory of Charles Larry Maddox
Pat Maddox (Handbell Fund)

In Memory of Brenda Ballard
Jim & Kay Hermann
Bo & Carol King (Handbell Fund)
Jerry & Gayle Park (Columbarium Fund)
Ernie & Betty Parker
Rosalind Welder & Carl Henline (Backpack Fund)
John Lantz
Keith & Kathy Dedmond
Jody Cronland

In Memory of Chad Smith
Jerry & Gayle Park (Columbarium Fund)
Charles & Wanda Lutz (Kaye Waters Class)
Michael & Letha Owen
Bo & Carol King (Handbell Fund)
Rosalind Welder & Carl Henline (Backpack Fund)

In Memory of Lula Strachan
Kay & Jim Hermann
Keith & Kathy Dedmond
Jerry & Gayle Park (Columbarium Fund)
Bo & Carol King (Handbell Fund)
Rosalind Welder & Carl Henline (Backpack Fund)

In Memory of John Self
Bo & Carol King (Handbell Fund)

In Memory of Ann H. Gaither
Jerry & Gayle Park (Columbarium Fund)

