

What Can I Give Him?



Years ago, I served another church that, like ours, was also located in the heart of a small town. It was a beautiful little church, built by Waldensian stonemasons, sandwiched between the town park and town hall. Nestled into a grove of trees next door was the parsonage, which shared a driveway and parking lot with the church and the town park.

Imagine my joy the first Christmas season when the town park was decorated for Christmas. It was like having my very own mini-McAdenville right next door to my house! The weather was a little colder there than here, and snow, while still not abundant, fell with greater frequency. Like Lincoln, it was a beautiful place to live and work.

Our small choir faithfully prepared for the Christmas cantata. Often, one of the soloists, Mike, would bring his guitar to the church in the late afternoon and use the fellowship hall, located above my office, to practice his music. Contentment, as you know, is often made up of the little things in life. I found contentment that year in the lights of the village, the special traditions of the church, and from the music wafting down the stairwell in the late afternoons into my office. One afternoon Mike sang a favorite carol of mine.

“In the bleak mid-winter
Frosty wind made moan
Earth stood hard as iron,

Ways We Serve

Greeters

- 1 Tim & Rosemary Leonard
- 8 Bill & Karen Leonhardt
- 15 Jason & Jennifer Ellis
- 22 Dianne Putnam & Joanne Parker
- 29 Chase & Katie Hardin

Acolytes

- 1 Karson Shrum
- 8 Brooks Hardin
- 15 Owen Krech
- 22 Noah Hardin
- 29 Lucas Demofonte

Time For All God's Children

- 1 Jan Duncan
- 8 Kathy Douglas
- 15 Suzanne Peeler
- 22 Cale Thornburg
- 29 Billy Howell

Liturgists

- 1 Robbie Combs
- 8 Cathy Thornburg
- 15 Michael Powers
- 22 Gordon Hubbell
- 29 Steve Herman

Pew Keepers

- 1 Joe & Susan Wigley
- 8 Jason & Jennifer Ellis
- 15 Steve & Jane Morton
- 22 Vickie Andrews
- 29 Beverly Beal

Parking Valets

- 1 John Lantz
- 8 Gayle Park
- 15 Mike Owen
- 22 Steve Morton
- 29 Steve Kirksey

Sunday School Rovers

- 1 Letha Owen
- 8 Paul Strachan
- 15 Mike Owen
- 22 Liz Strachan
- 29 Kathy Dedmond

Altar Guild

Amy Lockman

Communion Stewards Dec. 24

Levi & Tricia Stroud
Charles Stevens



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:

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, Jody Cronland, 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, Ginger Lowe, 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, Jamie Van-Dohlen, David Wyant, First UMC, Peace in Europe, Prayers for the homeless, United States of America, Our brothers and sisters in Western NC, First responders, Rescue Teams

NURSING FACILITIES: Ann Ford (The Addison), Mary Heavner (Abernethy Laurels), Judy Komars (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 Stephen Hovis
- 2 Tim Leonard
- 3 Sandra Eagle
- 6 Brooks Hardin
- 7 Steve Cain & Theresa Irby
- 8 Jeremy Jackson
- 12 Stan Cronland
- 14 Matthew Eagle & Paul Sykes
- 15 Suzanne Peeler
- 18 Meredith Church & Larry Parker
- 19 Gayle Park
- 21 Sharon Gazdek
- 22 George Brookins
- 24 Bill Blackwell Jr.
- 25 Phillip Cole, Bart Cranford, & Lydia Lineberger
- 26 Donna Morris
- 27 Emily Krech & Joanna Underwood
- 29 Taryn Schou

Anniversaries

- 22 Wayne & Peggy Sibert
- 22 Chris & Kelly Wilt
- 30 Mike & Libby Cline
- 30 Keith & Kathy Dedmond
- 31 Gordon Hubbell & Randi Kolseth

FUMC News & Updates

Community Events

Emmanuel Lutheran is hosting Advent Vespers at 6 pm on December 1st & 22nd. A Blue Christmas worship service will be held on December 8th at 6 pm. The public is cordially invited to join with the church in these special worship events.

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.

"Going to Bethlehem" Nativity Display

The church will be presenting a nativity display showcasing a collection of nativity sets from our church members. Some are homemade, some are family heirlooms, and some are from travels around the globe. For certain, each one is unique while telling the story of Jesus' birth.

The display is free of charge and will be open for viewing in the Annex on the following dates:
December 5-7 (Dec 7, live nativity)
December 12-14 (Dec 13 live nativity)
December 19-21 (Dec 20 - live nativity and live music from Olde Towne Carolers of Lincolnton)
Time: 6-8pm each night

Light refreshments will be served. Please stop in and enjoy this beautiful display. It will certainly enhance this Holiest of Seasons for you and your family.

Greeters/Pew Keepers for 2025

As 2024 comes to a close, we are preparing the new schedule for greeters and pew keepers to assist in morning worship for 2025. If you would like to assist with this important ministry to our church, please contact the church office, and we will add you to the rotating schedule.

Christmas in Worship & Song

As we enter the holiday seasons, we are excited to offer many opportunities for worship and music in the coming weeks.

- Our Handbell Choir will be presenting special Christmas selections during morning worship on December 15th
- Our Annual Moravian Style Love Feast will take place on Sunday evening, December 15th. Join us for this special service of song and fellowship.
- We hope you will join us on Wednesday, December 18th, in our sanctuary for a joint Christmas Cantata, featuring the chancel choirs and handbell choirs from First UMC and Boger City UMC.
- During morning worship on Sunday, December 22nd, our Chancel Choir will be sharing some special holiday anthems.
- Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion will be on Tuesday, December 24th, in the sanctuary at 5 pm. Bring your family and help us celebrate the birth of the Christ Child.

Offering Envelopes

Offering envelopes for 2025 will be put out on the counter in the middle building during the month of December. Packs of 52 or packs of 12 will be available. If you need a different amount of envelopes, please contact Letha.

New Year Meal at Christian Ministries Soup Kitchen

First United Methodist Church will be serving a meal at the Soup Kitchen operated by Lincoln County Christian Ministry on Wednesday, January 1. Both ladies and men can help by donating, preparing, and/or serving food. Text, call or see at church either Katie Hardin (704-685-0462) or Rosalind Welder (704-472-0128) to be a part of this great way to start 2025!

Angel Gifts for 2024

Angels, angels, angels! As in past years, our church has angels for children and survivors staying at Amy's House. Amy's House is an 501(c)3 nonprofit operated by Lincoln County Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Contact Rosalind at church or 704-472-0128 for

an Amy's House Angel!

Thanks, Thanks, Thanks!

Due to the generosity of our church members, the 24 children from G.E. Massey will have a nice Christmas.

Church members adopted an Angel and donated gifts from each child's wish list. In addition to the gifts, the family will receive a Food Lion Gift Certificate for \$50. Thank you to all church members who participated in making a nice Christmas for our Backpack children and their families.

Used Toy Give Away:

The Good News Sunday School Class has two class members who are heavily involved in Christian Ministry used toy drive. Please support their efforts and help the children in our community.

Christian Ministry is collecting used toys now for the Used Toy Give Away on December 7. Donations can be dropped off Monday – Friday, 9 am to 1pm at Christian Ministry. Also, if smaller toys, we can collect and take to Christian Ministry weekly so leave in grocery cart (or near it) or in box in the hall of the middle building

Christian Ministries Update

December is OUR month to donate food to Christian Ministry. A talk with the executive director at Christian Ministry pointed out a current need - mac & cheese and all kinds of soup except "cream of". She said that they "badly need these two items". So during December, let's "wow" Christian Ministry with our contribution! Bring in soon to the grocery cart in the education building or box in the middle building. Thanks in advance.

Soup Kitchen: The most needed items for the pantry are cereal, breakfast foods, detergent, bar soap, pop top canned foods. The wish list for the kitchen includes 12 ounce cups, grits, sweet salad cubes.

Emergency Services is asking for: Men's shoes, socks for boys, girls, men and women (mostly women); Men's pants size 30, 32, and 34

Girl Scout Update

Our Girl Scout Troop continues in doing valuable work within our community. In Early November, they handed out 200 Poppy Pins in honor of our veterans, then they attended an educational program about Wreaths Across America and made several wreaths which will be placed on Veterans graves on December 14th. They will also walk in the Lincoln Christmas Parade, and "Sing for Canned Goods" in front of Ingles Supermarket on December 8th for Christian Ministries of Lincoln County.



Boy Scout News

Our Boy Scout pack and troop continue with a very active schedule for the fall. Both groups took part in the Veterans Day Parade and Celebration on Nov. 11, as well as engaging in the Scouting for Food pick-up and sort for Christian Ministries of Lincoln County. On November 25, the scouts hosted their annual Local Heroes Dinner for Scouts and Families, with special guests being police, firemen, EMT and other city/county employees. In December, the scouts will take part in the Lincoln Christmas Parade, and the food and toy distribution for Lincoln Christian Ministries.



First United Methodist Church Christmas Season Schedule

First Sunday of Advent, Dec. 1

Dec. 1, 4 pm Lincolnton Christmas Parade & Tree Lighting

Christmas Nativity Display

December 5-7; 12-14; 19-21 6 - 8 pm in the Annex

Second Sunday of Advent, Dec. 8

Live Nativity Display

December 13, 6 - 8 pm

Old Salem "Candle Tea" Trip

Tour time is 1pm - We will leave the church mid-morning
December 14

Third Sunday of Advent, Dec. 15

Moravian Love Feast

A service of readings, fellowship, music and candlelight
at this special Christmas service at 7 pm

Joint Christmas Cantata

presented by the FUMC and Boger City UMC
Chancel Choirs and Handbells
First UMC Sanctuary, December 18 - 7 pm

Christmas Eve Communion/Candlelight Service

All are welcome to join us as we celebrate the birth of the Christ Child!
December 24, 5 pm

Christmas Day, Dec. 25

CLC Recap

The Church Leadership Council met on Monday, November 11th in the Annex. Please note that all members of the church are invited to attend CLC regular meetings each month. Executive Sessions (which deal with staffing issues) are for CLC members only, and will take place as needed following the regular business sessions. Below are the highlights of this month's meeting:

- The work to encapsulate the basement of the parsonage has been completed, and we are continuing to engage in maintenance for the insect and pest issue with monthly monitoring. Another issue has arisen related to high radon levels from the basement. Monthly monitoring is ongoing, as we seek to resolve this issue as soon as possible.
- Additional minor repairs at the parsonage and church have been completed as well, including repair of the gas logs, other basement repairs, replacement of ceiling tiles in the education building, new compressor for the AC unit in the Fellowship Hall.
- The metal roof should be completed soon on the educational building, and roof replacement on the sanctuary will start at the beginning of December. Repairs to the ceiling in the sanctuary will be beginning soon as well, with completion before Christmas.
- The Worship team is busily preparing for the holiday season, which will bring multiple opportunities for special music and worship. The worship schedule can be found in this month's newsletter.
- We are still looking for individuals to serve as back up leaders in our children's Sunday school class, as well as in the nursery. Please see Robbie or Jennifer Ellis for additional information.
- It was decided that we would return to using the attendance pads during morning worship as an effort to better identify and communicate with visitors. The bulletin tabs currently in use will continue to be used or prayer requests, information updates and other

occasions throughout the church year.

- For our Hurricane Relief to date, we prepared close to 50 flood buckets, which have been delivered to the WNC Mountains for distribution, and we collected monetary donations of approximately \$12,000. Thank you for your generosity. We will be reaching out as we hear of additional ways we may support recovery efforts in Western NC. There are opportunities for training sessions for the Early Response Team for the WNC Conference. See Pastor Sarah for information on these session.
- The United Methodist Men's Tuesday morning breakfast group has taken on a number of projects around the church, including assembling the new handbell tables in the balcony, moving furniture to the middle building, various yardwork tasks at the parsonage and putting out pine needles.
- At our charge conference on November 6th, it was announced that First UMC has paid 100% of our church apportionments for the year. Additional information from this month's meeting may be found within this newsletter, or if you have any questions, feel free to reach out to any member of the CLC.



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

What Can I Give Him - continued from page 1

Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak mid-winter
Long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold Him
Nor earth sustain,
Heaven and earth shall flee away
When He comes to reign:
In the bleak mid-winter
A stable-place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty —
Jesus Christ.

What can I give Him,
Poor as I am? —
If I were a Shepherd
I would bring a lamb;
If I were a Wise Man
I would do my part, —
Yet what I can I give Him, —
Give my heart.

This song reminds us that small gifts are often the most profound. Into the bleakness of winter, good news comes. Into a humble manger, the Christ child is laid. Overwhelmed by this great gift, we wonder, what can we give in return? The simple gift of dedicating ourselves to Christ is what is most meaningful, concluded the author, Christina Rossetti.

I hope this Christmas you will find contentment in the simple, yet profound, gifts of life: celebrating again the birth of the Christ child, enjoying time with family, our lovely sanctuary, music, and traditions at First UMC, to name just a few. May the haunting lyrics of “In the Bleak Midwinter” challenge us to consider how we, too, can give our heart to Christ.

Blessings,

Pastor Sarah

thank you

Earlier this week, I was delighted to welcome women representing our new church Quilting Committee. It was a double blessing! I enjoyed a lovely visit with my guests who then gifted me with a beautiful quilt with a Cross expertly and lovingly stitched into the design. It now has a place of prominence in my home and is a continual reminder of my many years of cherished friendships and community at First United Methodist Church. How I would have loved to have joined in the conversations of those who spent so many hours laboring to create this gift that now warms both heart and body.

*With Love and Gratitude,
Pat Lawing*





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.

Office: 704.735.7489

NEW Email: firstumclinc@gmail.com

Website: fumclincolnton.com



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Events this coming month

Dec. 5-7 Nativity Displays in the Annex, 6 - 8 pm

Dec. 7 Live Nativity Display, 6 - 8 p.m. on the porch of the Fellowship Hall

Advent Lunch in the Fellowship Hall following morning worship

Blood pressure checks - following worship in the Fellowship Hall

Dec. 9 Church Leadership Council at the Parsonage, 6 pm

Dec. 12-14 Nativity Displays in the Annex, 6 - 8 pm

Dec. 13 Live Nativity Display, 6 - 8 p.m. on the porch of the Fellowship Hall

Dec. 14 Old Salem Candle Tea - Leave church mid-morning

Dec. 15 Moravian Love Feast - 7 pm in the Sanctuary

Dec. 18 Joint Christmas Cantata with Boger City UMC, 7 pm in the Sanctuary

Dec. 19-21 Nativity Displays in the Annex, 6 - 8 pm

Dec. 20 Live Nativity Display, 6 - 8 p.m. on the porch of the Fellowship Hall

Dec. 24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service, 5 p.m.

Dec. 25 CHRISTMAS DAY

Dec. 31 NEW YEAR'S EVE