

FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
53 HENDRIX STREET
WAYNESVILLE, NC 28786
FUMCWNC.ORG

REV. ROBO 828-345-4652

JANUARY 2023

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MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Dearest Faith,

I'm still reflecting on our Christmas Eve service. It was an intimate gathering because a number of us were stuck at home with icy roads and frozen pipes. But those of us who were able to gather drew near to each other in the warmth of the sanctuary, lighting candles, proclaiming that the light of Christ had entered the world. As each of us lit a candle, receiving the flame from a neighbor, we remembered that we bear the light of Christ for each other. As we lifted our candles high, together as one church, we remembered that we carry that light out into the world.

St. Francis of Assisi once wrote that "all the darkness in the world cannot extinguish the light of a single candle. "That Christmas Eve service reminded me that inside the church are many candles, many signs of the light of Christ, all of them - *all of us* - daring to declare hope against the darkness.

Looking ahead to the new year, I wonder how we might bear the light of Christ in new or renewed ways, both for each other and for the world. Are there new ways that we might proclaim that the light of Christ shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it (John 1:6)? Is God inviting us to hear a renewed call to carry our candles forth and offer hope to a world that needs it? The beginning of a new year is a great time to pray with wonder. Will you join me in that prayer?

Grace and peace,
Jed

MESSAGE FROM LAY LEADER

“Making a Difference”

“You are a walking, talking message of hope. Whether you realize it or not, your character, words, and actions are all preaching a sermon to those you meet along the road of life. The closer you follow God, the more visible He’ll be to others through you. Philippians 2:14-15 reminds us to “do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.” (Taken from Living God’s Way)

You may never know how wide your influence really goes. An act of kindness, word of encouragement, or a job well done could be what moves a close friend, or even a stranger one step closer to knowing God. Philippians 2:3-4 tells us “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interest of others.”

Take a moment to thank God for the people who’ve had a positive influence on your life. Then ask God to help you become someone else’s reason for thanks. And remember Matthew 5:16, “let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

The congregation of Faith made a difference in 2022. You were the hands and feet of Christ. You fed the hungry, gave drink to the thirsty, invited the stranger in, clothed the naked, looked after the sick, and visited those in prison.

Well done good and faithful servants of God!
Susan



RICK’S REFRAIN

2022 is rapidly becoming only a reflection in a dark pool. Many changes in our country and in our denomination have taken place. The political landscape has descended in a dark morass of deceit, lies and one-upmanship. Conservatives and liberal leaders alike seem to have no regard for the people they have sworn to represent, while they sink further into intellectual and financial skullduggery. In my lifetime, I have not seen this level of decadence.

Methodists are not immune to infighting, backbiting and dilution of Christian principles. The boiling point has been reached for United Methodists to either accept liberal interpretations of Scripture and Practices or separate from the once Wesleyan denomination. Divisions are not new. When I was formerly in a Presbyterian denomination, many of the same divisive issues resulted in some churches leaving the traditional denomination and new ones being formed.

Paul addressed the divisions that arose in the Church at Corinth. Here are some of his words: “I have a serious concern to bring up with you, my friends, using the authority of Jesus, our Master. I’ll put it as urgently as I can: You *must* get along with each other. You must learn to be considerate of one another, cultivating a life in common.” (I Corinthians 1: 10 The Message). He continues in verse 13: “I ask you, ‘Has the Messiah been chopped up in little pieces so we can each have a relic all our own?’”

There was some level of disagreement concerning the baptism of the believers in that Church. Paul continues in verse 17: “God didn’t send me out to collect a following for myself, but to preach the Message of what he has done, collecting a following for Him. And he didn’t send me to do it with a lot of fancy rhetoric of

my own, lest the powerful action at the center—Christ on the Cross—be trivialized into mere words.” We must keep our eyes on Christ above all and respect our fellow Christians.

I am truly disgusted with the state of our country and the turmoil within God’s Church. I pray that 2023 will be a year of reconciliation and a return to Biblical principles. In another of Paul’s letters, this one to the Church at Philippi, he wrote: “Summing it all up, friends, I’d say you’ll do best by filling your minds and meditating on things true, noble, reputable, authentic, compelling, gracious—the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise, not things to curse. Put into practice what you learned from me, what you heard and saw and realized. Do that, and God, who makes everything work together, will work you into His most excellent harmonies.” (Philippians 4:8-9 The Message).

Faith UMC is a very sweet fellowship of believers. I really look forward to seeing what God will do in our midst in 2023.



BETH’S MISSION MESSAGE

For 2023, I would like to change our focus for Missions to supporting Pathways and the Bethel House in their fight against homelessness. Please prayerfully consider monthly donations to Faith for these organizations. We will be learning more about these situations and the best ways for us to help.

Wishes and prayers for a blessed New Year. I miss you all.



SUNDAY SCHOOL AT 10

Smokey has Sunday School lessons for children ages 4 to 12 and Mark has adult lessons each week.



Stewardship News as of December 28, 2022

“I will be loyal to the United Methodist Church and uphold it with my Prayers, my Presence, my Gifts, my Service, and my Witness.”

2022 Budget \$58,453.00

Needed thru 12/28/22 for budget	\$58,453.00
Received to date for budget	\$41,977.00
Behind budget	\$16,476.00
Paid out to date for budget	\$50,296.66

We thank you for your faithfulness!



JANUARY 2023 DATES TO REMEMBER

**SUNDAY SCHOOL 10 AM
WORSHIP 11 AM**

JANUARY 1-NEW YEAR'S DAY

New Year's Day is a festival observed in most of the world on 1 January and is among the most celebrated public holidays in the world, often observed with fireworks at the stroke of midnight following New Year's Eve as the new year starts in each time zone. Other global New Year's Day traditions include making New Year's resolutions and calling one's friends and family.

JANUARY 2-SAINT BASIL'S DAY

Basil of Caesarea, also called **Saint Basil the Great**. He was an influential theologian who supported the Nicene Creed and opposed the heresies of the early Christian church.

In addition to his work as a theologian, Basil was known for his care of the poor and underprivileged. Basil established guidelines for monastic life which focus on community life, liturgical prayer, and manual labor.

JANUARY 3-HUMILIATION DAY

A day of thanksgiving was a day set aside for public worship in thanksgiving for events believed to signal God's mercy and favor.

JANUARY 6-EPIPHANY

For those who thought that Christmas was over, Epiphany, celebrated on January 6, marks the final celebratory day of the Christian holiday season!

'Epiphany' comes from the Greek word meaning 'to reveal', as it is when the baby Jesus was 'revealed' to the world.

Therefore, you might hear people say they've had an epiphany when they've just realized something. In some countries many families will take off the day off and exchange presents.

At the end of the Twelve Days of Christmas comes a day called the Epiphany, also called Three Kings Day. This holiday is celebrated as the day the three wise men first saw baby Jesus and brought him gifts.

JANUARY 7-ORTHODOX CHRISTMAS DAY or

Old Christmas Day

The symbols of Christmas Day are not presents, eggs or Christmas figures that have become popular, Christmas Day is a time for healing soul. It was also a time of peace and unity.

In some countries, dining tables will be covered with white cloth to symbolize the cloth that Jesus was wrapped in when he was born. Straw can be placed on these dining tables to symbolize the place where Jesus was born. The lit candle symbolizes the light of Christ, and the Christmas meal symbolizes the end of fasting.

JANUARY 9-THE BAPTISM of the LORD

The **Feast of the Baptism of the Lord**, or **Theophany**, is the feast day commemorating the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. Originally the baptism of Christ was celebrated on Epiphany, which commemorates the coming of the Magi, the baptism of Christ, and the wedding at Cana. Over time in the West, however, the

celebration of the baptism of the Lord came to be commemorated as a distinct feast from Epiphany.

Traditionally, the Methodist Churches partake in a covenant renewal liturgy during watchnight services held on New Year's Eve.

JANUARY 14-FEAST OF THE ASS DAY

A medieval, Christian feast celebrating the Flight into Egypt. It was originally celebrated primarily in France, as a by-product of the Feast of Fools celebrating the donkey-related stories in the Bible, in particular the donkey bearing the Holy Family into Egypt after Jesus's birth.

Rev. Terry & Vickie Rowland

Addition to Faith Directory

Jennifer Rowland
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JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 11 - Walter Lee
- 19 - Doug Rogers
- 20 - Carolyn Taylor
- 23 - Janie Benson
- 27 - Chris Johnson



JANUARY ANNIVERSARY