There was a time when church was the center of the community. People went to church every time the doors were opened unless sick or out of town. People raised their families in church. It has not been that long ago when a bench would contain three and sometimes four generations worshipping and praising God together. Now, many do not have time for church, and once a month attendance is considered normal. One article says decreasing church attendance has more to do with the busyness of American life rather than rising atheism and hostile attitudes toward religion.

But at what cost does our busyness bear upon us? If we do not feed and nurture our spirits, then life will wither into a frenzy of feeding desires that do not nurture or build up the soul. Loneliness is at an epidemic level. Mental health is no longer an issue we can afford to ignore as stress, anxiety, and suicide are on the rise. In 2022, only 38% of Americans said they were satisfied with their lives. And where is the church?

The church is no longer the center of the community. Many people wonder why church is still in existence as some people see church as a place that reinforces hate, bias, and backward thinking. And to be fair, there are churches that are partisan in their political views from the pulpit, rather than lifting up all people in the politics of God's justice. "Take away from me the noise of your songs; to the melody of your harps I will not listen. But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream" (Amos 5:23-24). Where is this church? Where is the church that claims the name of Jesus Christ and lives in his way of life?

For the most part, churches are stuck in the past. People used to tell me the 1950s were the glory years of the church because the sanctuary was full and growing. But most of that growth was in-house growth as many were starting families after the war. It was the boomer generation in diapers. Many see this as the best time for the church, but if we are forward thinking, we can say, "The best is yet to come."

It is easy to get locked into nostalgia as we look out and see empty pews. We see the places where friends and family members used to sit, and we long for those days. We remember the traditions and ministries the church used to offer the community and can no longer do so because of fewer people and less money. What is the answer? The answer is to acknowledge all the good times and beauty of the church's past traditions, and then look forward and do the work of the Lord while it is still daylight outside. "As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work" (John 9:4).

There are two sides of the Christian life that work together to make the church healthy and whole. The inner life is the life of worship and devotion. As Christians we are to give ourselves to praise and worship of the Lord as a way of life throughout each week and not just on Sunday alone. We are to give ourselves to prayer and other spiritual disciplines that open us up to the Lord more and more that our focus would be on Christ. We are to give ourselves to the study of scripture that the Holy Spirit might lead, guide, and teach us about the Christian life.

The inward life nurtures the soul and brings life to Christian principles in us. It is a life of worship that gives us energy and focus to live in the way of Christ. The inward life gathers us not for isolation alone, but the focus is a gathering together of those who are following Christ to

worship and praise the Lord together. We are not in this Christian life alone. Just as God was in Christ reconciling us to himself, there was also the work of Christ reconciling us to each other. We gather as the body of Christ and not just separate Christians on separate paths.

The outward life of a Christian should be in balance with the inward life and growing from a life of worship and devotion. We see this in the behavior of Jesus as he would retreat to a place of privacy where he could pray, and then he would minister to the people. This was the cycle of Christ, and it is to be a cycle for everyday Christian life.

Continued on reverse

The Copperhill Courier

First United Methodist Church
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The Church

The United Methodist Church

We believe that the church is the body of Christ, an extension of Christ's life and ministry in the world today.

We believe that the mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

We believe that the church is "the communion of saints," a community made up of all past, present, and future disciples of Christ.

We believe that the church is called to worship God and to support those who participate in its life as they grow in faith.

Excerpt from What Every Teacher Needs to Know About Theology *(Discipleship Resources, 2002), p. 14.*

From the Pastor's Desk, continued

The outward life is a life of ministry involved in service and justice. Jesus served those he came into contact with as need arose even if it meant going against tradition or intuition. We see Jesus healing people on the Sabbath (that's like mowing your lawn on Sunday), eating with tax collectors, and even ministering to Romans (viewed by many as oppressors). His way of life was an outgrowth of his love for all people. You could see who Jesus was as a person, as he sought to serve and seek justice for those who were least in the community. What does this tell us about our approach to the Christian life on a personal and communal level?

For our church, we serve and seek justice through our involvement in the Monday night meals, our benevolence fund, the work of the United Women in Faith, the work of our Mission Team, and the work of our Son Seekers Sunday School Class. The urgency of our faith should be front and center now more than ever. The day is quickly coming to an end, and the night will be upon many of us when we can no longer work. Then, we will enter the full presence of God.

You see, this is the true end for the church. It is when our membership is transferred to the Church Triumphant for all eternity. We have just celebrated our 135th Homecoming. I pray that there are many years in front of us to do this work, but we all know there is no guarantee. This is why we have but little time upon this Earth to do the work Christ has called us to do. Think of all the people who have worshipped in those pews and done the work of the Lord across those 135 years. It is representative of a very small part of the Church Triumphant. One day the whole church, including the full church of Copperhill First UMC, will be apart of that great gathering,

9 After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. 10 They cried out in a loud voice, saying,

'Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!'

11 And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, 12 singing,

'Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.'

-Revelation 7:9-12

Pastor Buddy

Weekly Events

Sunday School: Sundays at 10 a.m.
Son Seekers meet in the Parlor.

Worship: Sundays at 11 a.m.

Life Group Meeting: Sundays at 6 p.m.
This is an exploration of the early Methodist class meetings. All are invited.

Community Meal: Mondays from 4-5:30 p.m.
All are invited. "To Go" only meals available.

Choir Practice: Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays

1 Lee Wilson
3 Elaine Minor, Mindy Nicholson
4 Cathryn McCarter
8 Randy Loudermilk
11 Heather Turner
13 David Turner
16 Billie Ash, Kenny Cook
17 Laura Ash, Crystal Ash
21 Lyndsay Turner, McCay Turner
23 Neila Pace, Ron Pace
25 Brittany Knight
29 Blake Callihan, Beth Geren

Anniversaries

6 Alex and Lisa Loudermilk 24th
17 Garry and Linda Day 43rd
20 Dellon and Billie Ash 44th

Your birthday or anniversary not listed?
Please contact the church office at
423-496-4931 or firstumc@etcmail.com.

United Women in Faith News

UWF Sunday will be observed on October 13. Cindy Campbell, Deaconess in the Hiwassee District, will be our guest speaker.

The pecan sale will begin soon—watch for an order form in the Narthex.

The Garden Party/Plant Swap has been post-poned until Spring.

We have new 2024 UWF Reading Program books in the church library. All members of the church are welcome to check out books.

Contact Flora Grindstaff for more information.

United Women in Faith

FOL Fall Book and Media Sale

Blue Ridge Methodist Church Fellowship Hall
(enter at rear of church)
235 Orvin Lance Drive, Blue Ridge

October 11-13 Friday and Saturday,

9 a.m.—5 p.m.; Sunday, 12—5 p.m.

Mountains of books (including collectible, rare, signed, local authors), DVDs, CDs, and Jigsaw puzzles will be available. This year we will have an Arts & Crafts Table & Bake Sale Table. There will be a Bag Sale and special sale on Sunday. Donations of books, jigsaw puzzles, arts and crafts, DVDs, and CDs are welcome. Contact Heidi Rule at 706-455-7941.

October Events

World Communion Sunday, October 6, calls the church to reach out to all people and model diversity among God's children. United Methodists join together to receive a Special Sunday offering that helps students from around the world reach their full potential through scholarships, training and mentoring. Half of the dollars fund leadership development programs and scholarships for marginalized students. The other half funds scholarships and in-service training programs.

UWF Sunday will be observed on October 13. Cindy Campbell, Deaconess in the Hiwassee District, will be our guest speaker. The Garden Party and Plant Swap has been postponed until Spring.

Come join us for good food and fellowship on Wednesday, October 23, at 6 p.m. Bring your favorite dish to our Potluck Supper.

Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes and suggestion lists will be available in the Narthex in October. Filled shoeboxes and $10 for shipping will be due back on Sunday, November 10.
You can make a difference in a child's life!

Looking ahead to November

Daylight Saving Time ends at **2 a.m. on Sunday, Nov. 3**.

UWF will meet on Monday, November 6, at 11 a.m.

Our **Annual Charge Conference** will be held on Thursday, November 7, at 6 p.m.

Brasstown Ringers

The Brasstown Ringers are scheduled to perform on Saturday, December 7, at Mine City Baptist Church. Check your bulletin for more details are they become available.

Online Worship Opportunities

You may access Sermon by Phone at 423-226-6437 to hear the current service, plus several previous ones. Check out the page titled **Sunday Worship Highlights** on our website,
fumc-copperhill.org.

As each becomes available, we'll also post the link on our Facebook page @ **First United Methodist Church-Copperhill**
Please like and share so others see our posts!
Audio of our services will be available online and Sermon by Phone by Monday afternoon.

Church Website: fumc-copperhill.org.

If you have an idea of something to add (or update), please email it to firstumc@etcmail.com or call 423-496-4931.

The website is especially important to persons visiting the area AND for local folks who find they need help.

We Remember Our Promise

To participate in our church's ministries by our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service, and our witness…

	Worship	Sunday School	General Fund
August 25	45	7	$2,626.10
September 1	40	7	$3,675.00
September 8	26	6	$1,805.00
September 15	33	5	$3,121.77
September 22	44	5	$5,268.10
Average:	**38**	**6**	**$3,299.19**

Weekly Budget Requirement:	**$3,859.85**
Budget Requirement (YTD):	**$150,533.75**
Actual Budget Received (YTD):	**$125,089.67**

Additional giving:

Pastor's Benevolence Fund:	$140.00
Local Mission Fund:	$10.00
Scholarship Fund:	$50.00
Community Meal:	$50.00

Members in Service to FUMC

Ushers: Charlie Stemmann, Joy Turner

Audio/Visual Technicians: Marti Lane, Randy Loudermilk, Ann Rymer, Jeff Walker

Did you know you can Donate Online?

Scan this QR code to link directly to the church's website to donate. You can also donate securely online on the church webpage: fumc-copperhill.org.

Our Vanco giving page can also be accessed at: https://secure.myvanco.com/YJXP/home

First United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 538 • 146 Scenic Drive
Copperhill, TN 37317

Email: firstumc@etcmail.com
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Like us on Facebook:
First United Methodist Church-Copperhill
Office Hours: 9 a. m.—3 p. m. Monday, Thursday & Friday

Church Office: 423-496-4931
Parsonage: 423-761-6999
Pastor's Cell: 423-429-3820

Sermon by phone: 423-226-6437

Gilbert "Buddy" Butler, Pastor
Heidi Rule, Secretary
Matt Scoggins, Accompanist
Christine Dowlin, Custodian

The mission of the United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

In Loving Memory…

Travis Clinton Goss
January 11, 1939—September 1, 2024

In Memory / In Honor Giving

General Fund in memory of:

Lynn Lee	By: Cathryn McCarter
Travis Goss	By: Cathryn McCarter

Our Prayer Concerns

Our Congregation: *John Mills, Maria Ruark, Ariana Morris, Louise Arp, Donna Ratzlaff, Janice Burger, Alex Loudermilk, Sheppie Dunn, Lily Loudermilk, Garry Day, Heather Turner, Erica Turner Putnam, Glenda Simonds, Abby Gamble, Elaine Crowe, Lisa Loudermilk, Cathy Turner (at Pruitt Health for rehab), Ron and Shirley Singleton, Ron Pace, Juline and Denny Mixon, Kathy and Jerry Panchyshyn, Elaine Minor, Barb Bender (Bonnie McDonald is in remission and would like to thank everyone for their prayers)

Homebound/Assisted Living: ^Tom Reed, ^T.J. Thompson (Pruitt Health), ^Jennifer Clamon (Sonshine Manor)

Others in our prayers: *Gail Abernathy, *the family of Travis Goss, *Donna Sexton, *Regan (auto accident), *Jerry Williams (Shirley's husband), *the family of Mike Birchmore, Sr., *Shelly Matthews Allen (chemo), *+Mackenzie Ray (auto accident), *Dennis Wray, *Mary Davis (friend of Shirley Starling), *L.B. Murray (cancer, uncle of Garry Day), *Joey, Jim Smith, Norma Bean, Josephine Bittner, Jim Epperson (at home), Wilma Sexton, Roy Goss, Don Loudermilk (brother-in-law of Loretta), Caitlynn (three year old in Florida with brain tumors), Bud Butler (father of Buddy), Gretchen and Cassandra (family of Dura Montgomery), Connie Harper Malton, Barb Bender's daughter Jody, Brenda Hamby (cancer), Ben Key, Charlotte Sisson, ~Susan Butler and family, Stephen Lebo (brother of April), Barbara Collins, Janis Martin, Monica Ledford, Tamsy and Charlene (friends of Dura), Weldon Self, Jr., Nichole (niece of Buddy), Ed and Jerrie Sue Massengale, Hannah Geren, first responders, armed forces members, the people of Ukraine, the people of Israel and Gaza, victims of natural disasters worldwide

**new to concerns +Hospital or Rehab ^Assisted Living/Nursing Home ~ Hospice*

Please contact the church office to add someone to our Prayer Concerns list.

Memorial Bricks

Bricks may be ordered to memorialize or honor a friend or loved one. Profits from this sale will be used for many local mission projects. Each brick costs $50.00 and entitles you to your choice of three lines of engraving with up to 20 characters per line. Please use the worksheet below to send in your brick order. Please note that spaces and periods each count as a character, only one character can appear in each box, and a box must be left empty between words.

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

Bricks Ordered: _____ Total enclosed: _____

Mail to: First United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 538, Copperhill, TN 37317