The Copperhill Courier

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

December 2024—January 2025

Non-profit Organization
Postage Paid
Copperhill, TN
Permit #40

Address changes requested

December 24

5 p.m.

Holy Communion

The Joy of Giving

Help is needed with items for Christmas food bags. The Missions Committee will be putting together ten food bags for Copper Basin Elementary School (CBES) students this year. Items needed are 15 ounce cans of green beans, canned corn, whole cranberry sauce, and a box/bag of stuffing mix. Please bring by Sunday, December 15. A gift certificate for a meat and a dessert from IGA will also be included, so those wishing to help fund this, can designate your payment to Missions Christmas 2024 Project.

For those of you who want to contribute gifts for CBES students, there will be Angel Tree lists at People's Bank of East Tennessee in Ducktown.

Thank you from the Missions Committee.

Angel Tree

Join us in 2025 for a journey into the roots of United Methodism.

Radicle Methodism 2025 project, an inspiring journey into the roots of United Methodism designed to foster growth, connection, and reflection across our denomination.

Hosted by the
United Women in Faith

Getting to the root of us

Radicle Methodism

Coming in January and February 2025– dates to be announced.

A five week study consisting of an introductory session and four modules. Refreshments and a time of fellowship will be a part of each session. Everyone is invited to attend.

Christmastime is upon us once again. At Walmart, it started in early September as the charcoal grills and gardening tools were replaced with Christmas trees and Christmas cards. The anticipation builds until the day after Halloween when everything is turned up to 11 for Christmastime. There is a break at the end of November where families sit down together to give thanks while they fight over the election, religion, and other things. And then…it's on like Donkey Kong. It is time to make out that list, check it twice, sit down at the keyboard, and order all those gifts. It is time to make hot chocolate, watch nostalgic movies, and listen for that voice that signals, to me at least, that Christmastime has truly begun. Of course, I am listening for the voice of Nat King Cole singing The Christmas Song. Yes, Christmastime is here once again.

Outside the church everyone is celebrating the Christmastime season, but inside the church there is a different narrative. Inside the Church it is time for Advent, which is the beginning of the church calendar. The Christian year ends with Christ the King Sunday. With the knowledge that Jesus is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, we dedicate our lives to living with Christ the King as Lord of our lives. That is the true end of the Christian faith, the Lord upon the throne and a multitude that no one can count from all nations bowing down in worship of the one who sits on the true throne of Heaven and Earth.

As the church calendar ends in thanksgiving, praise, and worship, Advent helps us to begin with the end in mind. Advent is a season that, more than anything, prepares us for the coming of Christ and his kingdom. The Christmastime celebration is happy to keep the focus on the baby in the manger and making sure that Mary can keep him from crying out so loud. But the Advent readings are there to focus us on Jesus coming back to set up his kingdom of Earth as it is in Heaven. The question that needs to be upon our hearts in such a season is, are we prepared to live in his kingdom? The Advent readings give us a reading which speaks to this preparation in week one and then lets loose with both barrels from John the Baptist in weeks two and three. John's fiery preaching is not only meant for first century Jews. It is meant for us as well. It is meant for everyone who is seeking the coming of the Lord. It is a cry for all of us to prepare the way of the Lord in our own lives and make his paths straight so that we are ready to receive the Lord. Outside the church, it is a season of family, friends, good food, delicious desserts, and gift giving capped off with a visit to the manger on December 24th (and there is nothing wrong with any of this). Inside the church though, the temperature of the season is very different. We are asking what does it mean to live in God's kingdom? What will it look like for Jesus to come back again in terms of politics, church life, and how we relate to all the people of the world? These are all questions the church deals with as we prepare for Christmas.

As we enter into those magical 12 days of Christmas, there is little time to focus on the nostalgia of the season. It is a celebration that Jesus Christ, the son of the living God has become one of us. This sparks some more questions for us. What does it mean for the son of God to become human like us. As a theological category, we call this the incarnation. As a church, we still wrestle with the question of the incarnation. Many will say the only meaning of the incarnation is our salvation. However, through the incarnation, we learn that God cares about context. We learn this in the last reading of Advent as an angel informs a teenage Mary about the birth of her son that will soon take place. God entrusts his son to a poor teenage girl. Joseph has a dream, giving him permission to love Mary and take her as his wife. They have to deal with the communal eyerolling, the gossip, and a journey to Bethlehem. Being forced to flee for their lives, they would become aliens in a foreign country. It was a very messy beginning as the son of God would be born in the poorest of situations. I wonder what Mary and Joseph thought of the name Emmanuel, God is with us, as they struggled and struggled. And the struggle would get no easier, as they would eventually return and make a home in Nazareth where they would continue to struggle with raising the son of God. That first Christmas was extremely messy as they struggled with Emmanuel, God with us. I often wonder about the young families crossing our Southern border who will be known as aliens in a foreign land as they struggle to provide for their children while being met with the inhospitality of no room in the inn.

As a church who claims the name of Jesus Christ, what does it mean for us to proclaim the message of God with us? God cares about context. He is born into a very poor family who would have to flee to a foreign country. He was not born in a rich and privileged palace, and yet he carried the name of Emmanuel. God certainly cares about context and details. And yet, the poor rejoiced, even in the midst of a struggle for life, that God was with them. As a church, we are the hands and feet of Jesus Christ in the world. People should find in the ministry and life of the church that God is with them in very concrete ways more so than the religious words preached at Christmas. In the story of Jesus Christ, everyone should be able to find themselves in the context and details of God's work upon the Earth. So, as we look at the picture painted by the Advent and Christmas readings, what does it mean to prepare for the coming of Christ, and what does it mean for the church that God is with us?

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 p.m.

Mission Projects Update

We collected items for UMCOR kits: Our Flood Bucket total was 8 and our Hygiene Kit total was 5.

Thanks to everyone who helped with this important project. The flood buckets and hygiene kits were taken to the storage facility in Cleveland, TN, to help replace those used in the cleanup in the Asheville area after the hurricane.

Thanks also to all who helped make Christmas ornaments for families in the Asheville area who were affected by Hurricane Helene. We appreciate the leadership of Kathy Thompson with this project.

Christmas Concerts and Events

The **Brasstown Ringers Handbell Choir** will perform at Mine City Baptist Church on Saturday, December 7, at 4 p.m. as part of the Christmas Activities in Ducktown. Free admission—a love offering will be received. Everyone is cordially invited to attend.

St. Luke's Christmas Bazaar—Saturday, December 7, 9 a.m to 2 p.m. —baked goods, jams and jellies, arts and crafts, etc., will be available.

The Epworth Community Band, along with the Tri-State Community Band and the NTS Homeschool Band, will present their **3rd Annual Christmas Concert** on Sunday, December 15, at 3 p.m. at 125 Schoolhouse Road, Epworth, GA. Everyone is invited to attend. A freewill offering will benefit the Appalachian Regional Campus Council.

Christmas by Candlelight

Sunday, December 22, 5 p.m.
St. Luke's Episcopal (Anglican) Church
featuring:
Misty Mountain Wind Quintet
St. Luke's Candlelight Singers
Smoke Rise Recorder Consort
with
Dr. Hayes Bunch—Percussion
Susan Gooch—Piano

Free admission– a love offering will be received to help fund the St. Luke's Concert Series. Contact St. Luke's Church in Blue Ridge at 706-632-8245 for more information.

December Events

The **SPR Committee** will meet on Tuesday, December 3, at 6 p.m.

Christmas Eve Service on Tuesday, December 24, at 5 p.m. Holy Communion will be observed. Invite your friends and neighbors!

The church office will be closed December 23-27. Bulletin deadline is Thursday, December 19 at 10 a.m. for the December 22 and 29 bulletins. Normal office hours will resume on December 30.

The **Fifth Sunday Offering for Holston Home For Children** will be received on December 29.

Did you know that The Upper Room offers a daily devotional? You can access it at www.upperroom.org/devotionals.

Upcoming in January

Human Relations Day Offering - January 19. Our gifts are part of building beloved community through faith-based volunteer programs, community developers and programs that work with at-risk teens. For more than 50 years, United Methodists have observed this churchwide special Sunday in recognition of the message Jesus demonstrated during his life: ***each of God's children are equally important.***

The **Church Council** meets on Tuesday, January 28, at 6:30 p.m.

United Women in Faith News

All ladies are invited to a **Christmas Tea** hosted by the United Women in Faith on Wednesday, December 4, at 2 p.m. in Legacy Hall. Menu will be finger foods, sandwiches, cookies, cakes, and tea. Please bring one of the suggested food items to share and your favorite teacup and saucer. Please bring a wrapped ornament for our Christmas Ornament exchange.

The January 8th meeting of the United Women in Faith will be our Pledge Service and Call to Prayer and Self-Denial Program. We will have a potluck lunch at 11:30 a.m. in Legacy Hall. We hope you will plan to join us.

Food for the Needy

Please donate nonperishable food items in the Narthex box - canned meat, tuna, flour, sugar, stove top stuffing mix, peanut butter, jelly, rice, soup, chili, macaroni and cheese, shelf stable milk, oatmeal, cereal, canned vegetables.
Thanks to all who contribute—the families are always grateful.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

December Birthdays

2	Jill Pierce
3	Brian Pierce
9	Haley Loudermilk
14	Janis Martin
16	Alex Loudermilk
18	Ron Singleton
20	Gabriel Montgomery
25	Tonya Callihan
27	Sam Grindstaff
28	Shirley Singleton
31	Colin Limburg

January Birthdays

1	Dennis Mixon
8	Hannah Geren
11	Marti Lane
13	Cathy Turner
14	Chloe Cook
20	Nathan Callihan
21	Wayne Brooks, Jr.
21	Lauren Callihan Lei
24	Charles Stemmann
28	Erica Turner
30	Bill Simonds

December Anniversaries

12 Joe and Kathy Dusombre 12th

No Anniversaries in January

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

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
October 27	33	4	$2,520.00
November 3	38	7	$3,936.00
November 10	39	10	$2,719.77
November 17	43	7	$2,568.00
Average:	**38**	**7**	**$2,935.94**

Weekly Budget Requirement:	**$3,859.85**
Budget/General Fund Requirement (YTD):	**$181,412.55**
Actual Budget/General Fund Received (YTD):	**$152,004.31**
Additional giving:	
Pastor's Benevolence Fund:	$50.00
UMCOR Flood Bucket and Hygiene Kit Shipping:	$15.00
Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Shipping:	$150.00

Dear Church Family, our Budget/General Fund is seriously underfunded as we approach year end. We need to be able to pay our employees and our bills to carry out God's work. What is needed most at this time are your generous contributions to our budget/general fund. As we approach the Advent and Christmas season and you are gift shopping, please prayerfully consider a gift to your church as well.

Thank you, the Finance Committee

Members in Service to FUMC

December Ushers: Smokey Brooks, Shirley Russell

January Ushers: Elaine Morgan, Ron Singleton

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

Thank you to all who participated in Operation Christmas Child! 20 children will have a happier Christmas because of your generosity.

Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts delight the hearts of boys and girls in more than 100 countries where Samaritan's Purse local partners deliver the shoeboxes along with the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For some children, it is their first gift ever! Many recipients also participate in the follow-up discipleship program, The Greatest Journey, where they learn to know Jesus, grow in faith, and spread the Good News. Through these exciting evangelism and discipleship efforts, we're seeing the multiplication of believers and churches worldwide!

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

Email: firstumc@etcmail.com
Visit us on the web at www.fumc-copperhill.org
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
Matt Scoggins, Accompanist
Heidi Rule, Secretary
Christine Dowlin, Custodian

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

Our Prayer Concerns

Our Congregation: *Stephanie Silvani, *the family of John Mills, *Jimmy Hendrix and family after the death of his son, Sally Patterson, Mary 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, Elaine Crowe, Lisa Loudermilk, Ron and Shirley Singleton, Ron and Neila Pace, Juline and Denny Mixon, Kathy and Jerry Panchyshyn, Elaine Minor, Barb Bender

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

Others in our prayers: *Betty Ann Nicholson, *Ebby Miller, *Laura Lee and baby James, *Monica Arringham, *Jim Epperson, *Jackie McCann family, *the Queen family, *the Daves family, *Gail (auto accident—daughter of Linda Haney), *the family of Will Clayborn (died in motorcycle accident, age 21), Margaret (sister of Dura), Renee Roberts, Christine Chambers, the family of Judy Jones, hurricane victims, Regan (auto accident), Jerry Williams (Shirley's husband), Shelly Matthews Allen (chemo), +Mackenzie Ray, Abby Gamble, Mary Davis (friend of Shirley Starling), Joey, Jim Smith, Jim Epperson, Wilma Sexton, Don Loudermilk, Caitlynn (three year old with brain tumors), Bud Butler (father of Buddy), 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, Weldon Self Jr., Nichole (niece of Buddy), Ed and Jerrie Sue Massengale, Hannah Geren, first responders, armed forces members

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

Please call the church office to add someone to the Prayer Concerns.

In Memory / In Honor Giving

General Fund in memory of: John Mills
By: Leland and Ann Rymer, Ron and Shirley Singleton, Smokey and Janice Brooks, Elaine Morgan, Flora Grindstaff, Cathryn McCarter

General Fund in memory of:

Travis Goss	By: Richard and Dale Wagner
Travis Goss	By: Ron and Neila Pace
Lynn Lee	By: Ron and Neila Pace
Jimmy Hendrix's son	By: Smokey and Janice Brooks
Leonard Murray Jr.	By: Garry and Linda Day

General Fund in honor of:

Paul Walker	By: Cathryn McCarter

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

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.