# The Copperhill Courier

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

May 2025


Address changes requested

## 2025 Hands-On Mission Project

## Hiwassee District Goal: 500 Food Buckets for Liberia

NEW 5-gallon bucket with lid will be provided.

The list is divided into two parts so if you just want to purchase 1/2 a bucket you can do so.

If you wish to purchase the complete contents of a bucket please shop from List A **and** List B.

### List A: ½ bucket

1 bag sugar (4-5 lb.)

1 bag rice (2 lb.)

1 bag dried beans (2 lb.)

1 can meat: ham (1 lb. can),
spam or tuna (12 oz. can)

### List B: ½ bucket

1 powdered/dried milk (no larger than 64 oz.)

1 oatmeal (18 oz. or less)

1 cooking oil (48 oz. or less)

1 can meat: ham (1 lb. can),
spam or tuna (12 oz. can)

Please include $4.00 per ½ bucket for shipping. Include cash or write check to First UMC. We will write one check for the total.

**Deadline for items to be brought to First UMC is Sunday, May 18.**

## From the Pastor's Desk, continued

The climax of the book is not destruction, but renewal. In Revelation 21–22, we are given a breathtaking vision of the new heaven and new earth, where God will dwell with humanity, wipe away every tear, and make all things new. The holy city, the New Jerusalem, descends from heaven—not to take us away from the earth, but to unite heaven and earth forever. This is the ultimate hope of the Christian story: not the escape of souls from a doomed planet, but the redemption of all creation. The Bible begins in a garden and ends in a city, a place of beauty, justice, and flourishing. God's home is with us, and the river of life flows through the center of the city.

In the final verses, Jesus speaks: "See, I am coming soon." And the church responds with longing: "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus." This is the hope of Revelation. It is not fear, but longing. It is not anxiety, but confidence. It is not speculation, but devotion.

In a world still marked by empire, injustice, and death, Revelation reminds us that Jesus reigns, the Lamb has triumphed, and the future belongs to God. The book is not a crystal ball but a compass. It doesn't tell us what to think about world events, but it shows us how to live as faithful witnesses of the Lamb who was slain.

If we read it well, Revelation will not satisfy our curiosity, but it will deepen our courage. It will not tell us when the world will end, but it will teach us how to live in the hope that it is being made new.

Let anyone who has ears to hear, listen to what the Spirit is saying to the church.

*Pastor Buddy*

The Book of Revelation stands as one of the most misunderstood, misused, and yet deeply meaningful books in all of Scripture. As the concluding book of the Christian Bible, it brings the biblical story full circle from creation and covenant to Christ and new creation. Revelation is not a secret codebook meant to predict global disaster or identify political villains. It is, first and foremost, a pastoral and prophetic vision given to a persecuted church, designed to sustain faith, instill courage, and reveal the triumphant love of God in Jesus Christ.

To understand Revelation rightly, we must begin by understanding what kind of literature it is. Revelation belongs to a genre known as *apocalyptic literature*, a style of writing that flourished among Jewish and early Christian communities in times of oppression and persecution. The word *apocalypse* means "unveiling" or "revealing." Far from concealing truth, apocalyptic writings aim to reveal a deeper spiritual reality hidden beneath the surface of historical events. In that sense, the book of Revelation is not about the end of the world; it's about the meaning of the world. It pulls back the curtain to show that despite appearances, Jesus Christ reigns, and God's purposes will prevail.

The book opens with a powerful prologue (Revelation 1:1–8), introducing the reader to its purpose: "to show his servants what must soon take place." It is a *revelation* from Jesus Christ, about Jesus Christ, and ultimately for the sake of the church. Written by a man named John, exiled to the island of Patmos "because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus" (1:9), the book addresses seven real churches in Asia Minor, each facing unique challenges ranging from persecution and suffering to complacency and compromise. This grounding in real historical communities reminds us that Revelation is not abstract; it is deeply contextual and pastoral.

Yet while rooted in the first century, the message of Revelation transcends its time. It speaks to every generation of believers who struggle to live faithfully in a world that opposes the values of God's kingdom. Throughout the book, we find Christians under pressure from imperial power, cultural idolatry, and spiritual deception. Rome, the empire of the day, is never named directly but is symbolized through imagery such as the beast, Babylon, and the prostitute. These symbols are not to be interpreted literally, but, theologically, they represent systems of domination, injustice, and violence that oppose God's reign. Revelation unmasks such systems and calls the church to courageous witness, even in the face of death.

One of the keys to reading Revelation well is understanding its use of symbolism. From seven-headed beasts to golden bowls of wrath, from a Lamb standing as if slain to a new heaven and new earth, Revelation is filled with vivid, often strange images. These are not meant to be read as literal predictions, but as rich theological symbols drawn from the Old Testament, especially the books of Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Exodus. Nearly 70% of the images and references in Revelation echo or rework earlier scriptural themes. The number seven, for example, symbolizes completeness or divine fullness. The Lamb represents Jesus as the crucified Messiah. Babylon represents the corrupt power of empire. These symbols form a kind of theological tapestry through which John paints the conflict between the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of this world.

At the center of the book stands a vision of worship. Revelation is not a horror story; it's a liturgy. Again and again, we are drawn into scenes of heavenly praise where elders, angels, and multitudes worship the Lamb who was slain. Revelation 4–5 is especially pivotal. In these chapters, John is taken up into the heavenly throne room where he sees God seated in majesty and the Lamb who alone is worthy to open the scroll of history. This is the turning point of the book, and it reframes everything: Jesus is Lord not despite the cross, but because of it. The victory of God comes not through violence, but through the self-giving love of Christ.

This vision of the Lamb reshapes our understanding of power. In contrast to the beasts who dominate by coercion and fear, the Lamb conquers by laying down his life. The saints who follow the Lamb do not overcome by the sword, but "by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony" (Revelation 12:11). Revelation does not call us to escape the world or predict timelines; it calls us to patient endurance, faithfulness, and witness in the midst of trial. It reveals that the cosmic battle is not about tanks and missiles, but about truth and lies, worship and idolatry, faithfulness and compromise.

Throughout the book, there is a recurring refrain: *"Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches."* This is a call not merely to hear the words but to respond. The vision of Revelation is not passive, it's active. It calls the church to come out of Babylon, to reject false gods, to worship only the Lamb, and to live now in light of the future God is bringing.

*Continued on reverse.*

## Weekly Events

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

**Choir Practice:** Sundays at 10 a.m.

**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.

## Birthdays and Anniversaries

***Birthdays***

4 Lonney McDonald, Stephanie Silvani
9 Scott Montgomery, John Turner
11 Lance Luke
13 Steve Taylor
18 Ann Record
19 Shirley Starling
22 Brett McDonald
23 Hayley Rymer, Jeff Walker
26 Bonnie McDonald
28 Christine Dowlin

***Anniversaries***

2 Dominic and Stephanie Silvani 18th
5 Ron and Neila Pace 51st
15 David and Joy Turner 54th
30 Smokey and Janice Brooks 58th

*Your birthday or anniversary not listed?*

*Please contact the church office at 423-496-4931 or firstumc@etcmail.com.*

## United Women in Faith News

We will meet on Wednesday, May 7, at 10 a.m. After our business meeting we will be preparing pots of flowers to deliver to our homebound members.

Our June meeting will be on June 4 at 11 a.m. Bring your favorite dish for a potluck lunch. A representative from First Fruits will attend to share details of their food ministry with us. All ladies are invited to join us.

The UWF will not meet in July.

United Women in Faith

## Friends of the Library Book Sale

May 23-25: Friday and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Blue Ridge Methodist Church Fellowship Hall,
235 Orvin Lance Drive, Blue Ridge.

Mountains of used books, rare and collectible books, DVDs, CDs, jigsaw puzzles, etc. will be for sale! Special bag sale on regular books and 50% off sale on collectible and rare books on Sunday. Parking available at rear and front of church. Entrance at rear. Call Heidi Rule at 706-455-7941 if you have donations or for more info.

## May Events

**SPPR Meeting:** Thursday, May 1, at 4 p.m.

**Native American Ministries Sunday** will be observed on May 11. This offering supports Native American outreach within annual conferences, provides seminary scholarships for Native Americans, and strengthens, develops and equips Native American rural, urban, and reservation congregations, ministries and communities.

**UWF Meeting:** Wednesday, May 7, at 10 a.m.

The church office will be closed on Monday, May 26, in observance of Memorial Day.

**Church Council Meeting:** Tuesday, May 27, at 6:30 p.m.

## *Brasstown Ringers Spring Concerts*

Their concerts will be held at Sharp Memorial UMC, Young Harris, GA, (featuring the Sharp UMC Choir) on Sunday, May 4, at 5 p.m. and First UMC, Franklin, NC, on Friday, May 9, at 7 p.m. The theme is "Joy in the Mountains."

Admission is free but a love offering will be received to benefit UMCOR hurricane relief. All are invited to attend.

## Upcoming in June

**UWF Meeting:** June 4, at 11 a.m. Potluck lunch and speaker.

HHC We will receive the **Fifth Sunday Offering** for Holston Home for Children on Sunday, June 29.

## Missions Committee Report

The Missions Committee voted to help address food insecurity in our area. We are going to be working the Fannin County Snack in a Backpack program since they also serve surrounding areas around Fannin County, GA. They have a summer program established for Fannin County Schools, but they need a group from the Copper Basin to help with a summer program at Copper Basin Elementary School (CBES). This organization has been delivering weekly meals to CBES since the start of this school year when they took over the project which was started by a teacher several years ago.

Debbie Beck, the director for Snack in a Backpack came to speak at a meeting hosted by our Missions Committee. Representatives from area churches, a local book club, and Jake Reuse, vice-mayor of Copperhill were present. She explained the need to have meals delivered in the summer months because it is difficult for most families to get to a pick-up point due to work, lack of transportation, etc.

Volunteers will be needed to help deliver bags of food to CBES children in need. This project will run from the first of June through the third week in July. Bags will be assembled in Blue Ridge and delivered to a drop off point in Copperhill. Then volunteers, in groups of two, will deliver these bags to families. If you are interested in helping, please contact Ann Rymer.

## 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, spaghetti sauce, spaghetti, pasta, rice, soup, chili, shelf stable milk, oatmeal, cereal, canned vegetables, mac and cheese.

*Thanks to all who contribute—the families are always grateful.*

## 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 |
|---|---|---|---|
| March 23 | 44 | 10 | $2,494.35 |
| March 30 | 30 | 5 | $2,762.25 |
| April 6 | 35 | 9 | $3,588.25 |
| April 13 | 50 | 11 | $5,651.83 |
| April 20 (Easter) | 83 | No Sunday School | $5,830.05 |
| Total: | | | $17,857.32 |
| **Average:** | **48** | **9** | **$3,571.46** |

Good Friday Service attendance: 26

*Additional giving:*

| | |
|---|---|
| Snack In a Backpack (for summer meals): | $250.00 |
| Missions: | $10.00 |
| Pastor's Benevolence Fund: | $125.00 |
| UMCOR Sunday Offering: | $426.00 |
| Holston Home for Children Fifth Sunday Offering: | $335.00 |
| Memorial Fund: | $25.00 |

## 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

## Members in Service to FUMC

**Ushers:** Elaine Morgan, Ron Singleton

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


**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**
**Bethany Allison, Choir Director**
**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.***

## In Memory / In Honor Giving

General Fund in memory of:

| | |
|---|---|
| Sheila York | By: Jeff and Jennifer Walker |
| Weldon Self Jr. | By: Barb Bender |
| Joe McCarter | By: Cathryn McCarter |

Memorial Fund in memory of:

| | |
|---|---|
| Marsha McCarter | By: Cathryn McCarter |

## Our Prayer Concerns

***Our Congregation:*** Ann Record, Barb Bender, Maria Ruark, Bill and Glenda Simonds, Stephanie Silvani, Sally Patterson, Mary Mills, Ariana Morris, Louise Arp, Donna Ratzlaff, Janice Burger, Sheppie Dunn, Lily Loudermilk, Heather Turner, Erica Turner Putnam, Elaine Crowe, Lisa Loudermilk, Ron and Shirley Singleton, Ron and Neila Pace, Juline and Denny Mixon, Kathy and Jerry Panchyshyn, Elaine Minor

***Homebound/Assisted Living:*** ^Tom Reed, ^T.J. Thompson (Pruitt Health), ^Cathy Turner (Pruitt Health), ^Jennifer Clamon (Sonshine Manor), ^Barbara Collins, Margaret Self, Don Loudermilk,

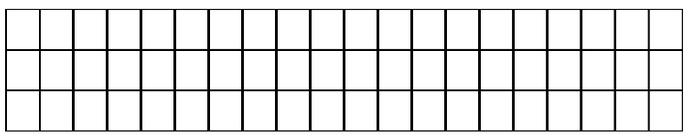
***Others in our prayers***: *Lena Talley, *Edd Pelfrey, *Polly Perkins, *Mary Jane, *Margaret Fleming, broken rib (Dura's sister), Chad (brother of April Butler), Kenneth Gilliland (father's passing), Hope Loudermilk, Ryan Panchyshyn, Annette Loudermilk (aunt of Randy), Micheline Bennett, Brenda Turner (sister of David Turner), Phil Young, pancreatic cancer (grandson of Ann Record), Norma Bean, Dennis Wray (radiation and chemo), Betty Gwynn (car accident), Garry Cheyne, the Berry family, Ava Smith, plane crash victims, Tim and Jennifer Higdon, Jodi and John (daughter and son-in-law of Barb Bender), Sandra Williams (sister-in-law of Joy Turner), Jerry Williams (Shirley's husband), +Mackenzie Ray, Ed and Jerrie Sue Massengale, Hannah Geren, victims of natural disasters, first responders, armed forces members

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

*Please contact the church office to add someone to the Prayer Concerns.*

# 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

## 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!*

Video and/or audio of our services will be available online and Sermon by Phone by Monday afternoon.