Living Out Our Faith: The Balance Between the Inward and Outward Life in the Vision of John Wesley

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, is often remembered for his powerful call to personal holiness and social action. His theology and practice of the Christian life are grounded in the belief that faith must be both inward and outward, a dynamic balance of personal transformation and societal engagement. For Wesley, the Christian life was not one-dimensional. It was a harmonious blend of personal piety, social responsibility, and the cultivation of a loving and holy community. Wesley envisioned living out the Christian faith by finding a balance between the inward and outward dimensions of life.

Wesley's understanding of the inward life was rooted in the idea of personal holiness. He believed that the purpose of salvation was not just to secure eternal life but to transform the believer's life in the here and now. This inward transformation, or sanctification, was the work of God's grace and should be evident in every aspect of a Christian's life. Central to Wesley's vision of the inward life were what he called the "means of grace." These were practices and disciplines through which believers could experience the transforming power of God. The means of grace were divided into two categories: works of piety and works of mercy.

1. **Works of Piety**: These include practices such as prayer, Bible reading, fasting, attending church services, and receiving the sacraments (especially the Eucharist). For Wesley, these acts were not simply ritualistic or habitual; they were means through which God's grace flowed into the believer's life, deepening their relationship with God and empowering them for holy living. Wesley encouraged Methodists to engage in these practices regularly, as a way of drawing closer to God and being shaped by His presence.

2. **Works of Mercy**: These included acts of compassion and service to others, such as visiting the sick, caring for the poor, and feeding the hungry. Wesley saw these works as essential to the Christian life, as they were the natural outgrowth of an inward transformation. A person who had truly experienced the love of God would naturally desire to share that love with others, especially those who were suffering or in need.

Wesley also emphasized the importance of personal accountability in the faith. He established small groups, known as "class meetings," where Methodists could gather to support each other in their spiritual journeys. These groups provided a space for individuals to confess sins, share struggles, and receive encouragement in their pursuit of holiness. For Wesley, the Christian life was never meant to be lived alone but in community, where individuals could help one another grow in grace and holiness.

One of the most distinctive aspects of Wesley's theology was his doctrine of Christian perfection. Wesley believed that it was possible for Christians to experience a state of perfect love, where they were fully consecrated to God and free from the power of sin. This perfection was not about moral perfection or a life without mistakes, but about being so filled with love for God and others that sin no longer had dominion over a person's life. Christian perfection was a gradual process. It was not an instantaneous event but the result of ongoing growth in grace. Wesley believed that the Holy Spirit worked in believers to purify their hearts and make them more like Christ. This process of sanctification was ongoing throughout a Christian's life, but the goal was always to live in perfect love, free from the fear of sin and empowered to serve others.

While Wesley deeply valued personal holiness, he also understood that faith must be expressed in action. He was not content with a faith that was purely inward, private, or self-centered. For true Christianity was always about more than individual salvation. It was about transforming the world and making it a more just and compassionate place. His vision for the outward life was deeply influenced by the concept of social holiness. He believed that personal piety must lead to social action. Christians were called not only to love God but also to love their neighbors, especially the poor, the sick, and the marginalized. Wesley's own ministry was marked by an active engagement with social issues, including poverty, education, healthcare, and slavery. Wesley's commitment to social holiness was evident in his ministry to the poor and disenfranchised. He advocated for better treatment of the poor and worked to establish systems of charity, such as funding hospitals and providing relief to the destitute. He also strongly opposed slavery, speaking out against its immorality and advocating for its abolition. Wesley's belief in social holiness led him to take action on behalf of those who were oppressed or excluded by society, always emphasizing the need for Christians to work for justice and equality.

Another important aspect of Wesley's outward life was his commitment to evangelism and discipleship. Wesley was a passionate evangelist, preaching the gospel to anyone who would listen. He believed that the Christian faith should be shared with all people, regardless of their social or economic status. His itinerant ministry took him across England and beyond, where he would preach in fields, marketplaces, and public spaces to reach those who were not attending church. But Wesley was not content with mere evangelism. He also emphasized the importance of discipleship, or the process of helping people grow in their faith after they came to Christ. He saw the church as a community where individuals could be nurtured in their faith and encouraged to live out their beliefs in the world. The class meetings and bands he established were designed to help Christians grow in grace and hold one another accountable in their pursuit of holiness. For Wesley, discipleship was not just about learning doctrine; it was about living out the teachings of Jesus in every aspect of life.

Continued on reverse.

The Copperhill Courier

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

July-August 2025

Address changes requested

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C. -- The official theme for the 2025 session of Holston Annual Conference was “Together in New Beginnings,” which seemed to go hand-in-hand with participants’ advocacy for dismantling racism and prioritizing young people in ministry and leadership. Held June 1-4 at Lake Junaluska Conference and Retreat Center, the gathering was attended by 759 registered clergy and lay members (plus guests) representing 522 local churches in East Tennessee, Southwest Virginia and a small part of North Georgia.

Presiding was Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett, resident bishop of Holston Conference, who set the stage during opening worship. “We’re in the first year of our third century together,” she said, referring to Holston’s bicentennial year in 2024. “Isn’t every day a new beginning for Christ followers?” In her State of the Church report, Wallace-Padgett said Holston is now thriving after weathering a pandemic, disaffiliation, and cultural divisions. She cited 2,456 participants in camping, 463 professions of faith, and 331 students confirmed in the last year. “By the grace of God, we are making it through adversity together,” she said.

With fewer churches in its fold, Holston Conference will recalibrate for future ministry through district realignment, conference staff and budget adjustments, Wallace-Padgett said. The recalibration will also include a multicultural emphasis and respect for differences among people.

Wallace-Padgett reminded church leaders of Holston Conference’s vision statement (“Developing passionate spiritual leaders who reflect Jesus”) and mission statement (“A conference of passional spiritual leaders making disciples of Jesus Christ”).

In other actions, the Annual Conference:
Gave a mission offering of $52,000, to be divided between Ishe Anesu Project in Zimbabwe and Holston disaster response.
Celebrated the work of local churches that collected and packed 4,094 kits (food, school, health supplies). The Hands-on Mission Project kits are now on the way to schools in Liberia and Ishe Anesu in Zimbabwe. (Hiwassee District food bucket total was 306.)
Voted unanimously for the Strategy Team’s proposal to reduce the number of districts from nine to six. The realignment is effective July 1, with the transition expected to be complete by Dec. 31.
Licensed 15 local pastors, commissioned four provisional clergy, ordained two elders and one deacon, reinstated one elder and recognized the educational equivalency of a pastor from another denomination.
Recognized 28 retiring clergy, representing 635 total years of ministry. The Rev. Harry Howe, retiree, “passed the mantle” to the Rev. Mary Grace Ellis, ordinand. In her sermon, the Rev. Dr. Angela Hardy Cross urged retirees to “do it again,” finding new ways and places to serve in their ministry encores.
Memorialized 37 total clergy, clergy spouses and surviving spouses who died within the past year. The Rev. Mickey Rainwater preached, “Thankful for the Saints.”
Approved two budgets, including a revised 2025 budget of $6.24 million, a reduction of $533,881 from the previously approved budget. A 2026 budget of $5.79 million was also approved.
Voted in favor of recommended minimum salary requirements for clergy ranging from $40,7500 (full-time local pastor in process of completing studies) to $50,750 (full member with M. Div.).

From the Pastor’s Desk, continued

His vision for living out the Christian faith was deeply holistic, integrating both the inward and outward dimensions of life. Personal holiness and social action were inseparable. He believed that true Christian faith must be expressed not only in personal devotion and transformation but also in service to others and a commitment to social justice. The “methodical” approach to faith helped believers maintain this balance. His emphasis on the means of grace—such as prayer, Bible study, and the sacraments—helped individuals grow in their relationship with God and experience personal transformation. At the same time, his emphasis on social holiness—through works of mercy, evangelism, and discipleship—helped believers live out their faith in practical ways that impacted the world.

Wesley’s vision of the Christian life challenges us to consider the balance between personal devotion and social engagement. In a world that often emphasizes individualism and privatized spirituality, his example calls us to cultivate a faith that is both deeply personal and actively engaged in the world. Just as Wesley sought to live out a faith that was both inwardly transforming and outwardly impactful, so too are we called to embody the love of God in our hearts and share that love with the world around us.

Pastor Buddy

Weekly Events

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

Choir Practice: Sundays at 10 a.m.

(No practice in July) Resumes in August.

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

July Birthdays

1 Nan Wilson
7 Jennifer Clamon
13 Kelsey Limburg
21 Donna Ratzlaff
22 Janice Brooks
28 Linda Haney, Dura Montgomery
29 Margaret Wilson

July Anniversaries

7	Buddy and April Butler	31st
17	Ron and Shirley Singleton	32nd
17	Ron and Pam Wray	54th

August Birthdays

1 Maggie Wilson
2 Colin Rymer
4 William Luke
5 Loretta Loudermilk
6 Daenerys Markin
12 Lynn Turner
16 Oliver Butler
17 Rick Callihan
20 Turner Michael
22 Chris Limburg
28 Gretchen Soto

No anniversaries in August.

Your birthday or anniversary not listed?

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

United Women in Faith News

The UWF will not meet in July.

Our August Meeting will be on Wednesday, August 6, at 11 a.m. Please bring your favorite dish for a potluck lunch. A representative from Her Hope Pregnancy Center, Inc., in Blue Ridge, will attend to share details of their ministry. The Center makes "Mama Bags" for their moms when they go into the hospital. They like to put the following in the bags so if you can bring any of these items they would be greatly appreciated:
cup/or mug, body wash, lotion, nail polish, pair of socks for hospital.
The United Women in Faith will be collecting these items through August 3.
Thank you for your donations!

July Events

The Church Office will be closed on Friday, July 4, in observance of **Independence Day.** All items for the bulletin are due on Thursday, July 3, by 10 a.m.

An **SPPR Meeting** will be held on Thursday, July 10, at 10 a.m. All members are asked to attend.

The Church Office will be closed on Monday, July 14, and will be open July 16-18 that week.

Items for the July 27 bulletin are due in the church office by Tuesday, July 22, at 10 a.m. The church office will only be open on Monday and Tuesday (July 21-22) that week.

A **Church Council Meeting** will be held on Tuesday, July 22, at 6:30 p.m.

Upcoming in August

Deadline for items for our September newsletter is August 21. Copies will be available in the Narthex on August 31.

All information for the August 31 and September 7 bulletins are due in the Church Office by 10 a.m. on **August 28**. The Church Office will be closed September 1 (Labor Day)—September 8.

The **Fifth Sunday Offering for Holston Home For Children** will be received on August 31.

Missions Committee Update

We are well underway in our Summer Meals program, part of Snack in a Backpack's effort to insure children and their families get help with meals while school is out. This year, Snack in a Backpack expanded their area of service to east Polk County. Thanks to a good community turn-out of volunteers, we deliver about half of the meals weekly and distribute the other half at the East Polk County Library parking lot. We have already had one mother with five children tell us that she would not know how they would make it through the summer since the kids weren't in school getting their breakfast and lunch there. It is truly a team effort, and I am grateful for the help from these members of our church: Kathy and Joe Dusombre, David Hungerford, and Elaine Morgan who come out weekly to help. Also, thanks to Randy Loudermilk and Marti Lane for offering to help if needed. Our Missions Committee is also grateful to church members who have donated to Snack in a Backpack. Moreover, we have received grants from United Way and Tri-State Operation Round-up that were applied for from our church, and that has helped significantly to fund the cost of food.

In addition to the raisins and applesauce you have been bringing in, we will also be collecting boxes of peanut butter or cheese cracker packs to put at Copper Basin High School during the school year.

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.

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
May 25	37	8	$2,174.25
June 1	32	8	$4,448.25
June 8	37	6	$2,061.83
June 15	30	4	$2,082.25
June 22	40	3	$4,626.25
		Total:	$15,392.83
Average:	**35**	**6**	**$3,078.57**

Additional giving:

Snack In a Backpack (for summer meals for East Polk students)	$253.00
Missions:	$10.00
Peace with Justice Sunday Offering:	$190.00
Pastor's Benevolence Fund:	$60.00
Change for Children Annual Conference Offering:	$23.00
Annual Conference Offering:	$30.00
Community Meal:	$20.00
Holston Home for Children:	$100.00
Shipping for food buckets:	$12.00

Did you know you can Donate Online?

Scan this QR code to link directly to the church's web-site 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

July Ushers: Bill Simonds, Adam Turner
August Ushers: Smokey Brooks, Shirley Russell

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:
Carl Panter By: Cathryn McCarter

Our Prayer Concerns

Our Congregation: Barry Abbott, Ann Record, Barb Bender, Maria Ruark, Bill and Glenda Simonds, Stephanie Silvani, Sally Patterson, Mary Mills, Ariana Morris, Donna Ratzlaff, Sheppie Dunn, Lily Loudermilk, Elaine Crowe, Lisa Loudermilk, Ron and Shirley Singleton, Ron (having new therapy) and Neila Pace, Juline and Denny Mixon, Kathy and Jerry Panchyshyn, Elaine Minor

Homebound/Assisted Living: Janice Burger, Louise Arp, ^Cathy Turner (Pruitt Health), ^Jennifer Clamon (Sonshine Manor), ^T.J. Thompson (Pruitt Health), ^Barbara Collins, Margaret Self, Don Loudermilk

Others in our prayers: *the family of Diane Jones, *Blake Pierce, *Larry Collis, *Jeremy Collis (friend of Lisa Loudermilk, *Sue (sister of Marti Lane), *the family of Wayne Loudermilk, *Monica Err-ington, *David Gibson, Kelly Pace, car accident (d-i-l of Ron and Neila) Norma Bean, Cathy Cox-Brakefield (cousin of Joy Turner), ^Sue Beaver, Simon Grant (waiting on liver transplant), Paul Carter, Jean Miller, cancer (cousin of Kathy Panchyshyn), Madison Satterfield (auto accident), Richard (brother of Ann Rymer), Carol Green, Julie Young (daughter of Barb Bender), Lena Talley, Polly Perkins, Mary Jane, Margaret Fleming, broken rib (Dura's sister), Chad (brother of April Butler), Hope Loudermilk, Ryan Panchyshyn, Annette Loudermilk (aunt of Randy), Micheline Bennett, Phil Young, pancreatic cancer (grandson of Ann Record), Dennis Wray (MRI results), Betty Gwynn (car accident), Garry Cheyne, Ava Smith, plane crash victims, Jodi and John (daughter and son-in-law of Barb Bender), 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 or remove someone from our list.

A look back —UMW trip to Lake Junaluska.

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 a minimum of $75.00 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