As summer turns to fall (at least on the calendar), October invites us into a season of reflection. In worship this month, we will journey through four powerful passages from the Gospel of Luke. Each text offers a glimpse into what it means to live as disciples of Jesus in a complicated and often confusing world. Together, these scriptures call us to examine our faith, to live with gratitude, to persevere in prayer, and to walk in humility before God.

October 5 — Luke 17:5–10: "Increase Our Faith!"

We begin the month with a surprising request from the disciples: *"Increase our faith!"* At first glance, it sounds like the most natural prayer in the world. Who doesn't want more faith? Who among us hasn't longed for stronger belief in difficult times?

But Jesus' answer is startling. He tells them that even faith the size of a mustard seed is enough to uproot trees and move mountains. In other words, faith is not a matter of quantity. Faith is not measured in ounces, pounds, or gallons. Faith is about trust, leaning into God's promises, no matter how small our confidence feels.

Jesus follows this teaching with a parable about servants and masters, reminding us that discipleship is not about earning credit with God. We don't rack up points for good behavior. Instead, our lives are meant to be lived in service, freely, joyfully, and humbly. This text challenges our modern ideas of entitlement. We often think, *"If I do the right things, God should bless me."* But Jesus turns that expectation on its head. Faith is not bargaining power with God. Faith is the posture of a servant doing what needs to be done simply because it is right.

As we reflect on this passage, we will ask: what does it mean to live with mustard-seed faith? How does discipleship shape our daily lives? And how do we find freedom in serving God, not out of fear or duty, but out of love?

October 12 — Luke 17:11–19: "Your Faith Has Made You Well"

The following week we continue in Luke 17 with the story of ten lepers who cry out to Jesus for mercy. All ten are healed, yet only one returns to give thanks. And the one who comes back is a Samaritan, a foreigner, an outsider.

This story is about more than physical healing. It is about the power of gratitude. Nine receive their cure and move on with life as if nothing extraordinary has happened. Only one recognizes that mercy has touched him, and his response is to fall at Jesus' feet in thanksgiving.

Jesus' words to him are striking: *"Your faith has made you well."* The other nine were healed, but only one experienced the deeper wholeness that comes through gratitude and faith. Healing, then, is more than a cure. It is a new way of living, a life oriented toward God in thanksgiving.

In worship, we will explore how gratitude changes us. Gratitude is not just good manners; it is a spiritual discipline. It turns our eyes away from scarcity and resentment and helps us see life as a gift. Gratitude binds communities together, heals relationships, and opens us to joy even in hardship.

This story also reminds us that God's grace often shows up in unexpected places through outsiders, foreigners, and people on the margins. The thankful Samaritan becomes a model for discipleship. What might it mean for us, in our own culture, to recognize faith and gratitude in people we might not expect?

October 19 — Luke 18:1–8: "Always Pray and Do Not Lose Heart"

Midway through October, we encounter the parable of the persistent widow and the unjust judge. Jesus tells this story so that his disciples "may always pray and not lose heart."

The widow represents someone with no power, no influence, no protection. She cannot bribe the judge or sway him with status. All she has is her voice, and she uses it relentlessly: *"Grant me justice against my opponent!"* Day after day, she pleads until the judge gives in, not because he cares about justice, but because he is worn down by her persistence.

If an unjust judge can eventually respond, how much more will God, who is perfectly just, hear the cries of His people?

This parable is both encouraging and challenging. It tells us that prayer matters, not because we twist God's arm, but because persistence in prayer shapes us. It keeps us close to God when life seems unfair or overwhelming. It builds resilience in the face of delay.

But Jesus ends with a sobering question: *"When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"* In other words, will we keep trusting, keep praying, keep seeking justice, even when it feels like the world is against us?

In this service, we will reflect on perseverance in prayer. What does it mean to "not lose heart" when answers don't come quickly? How do we keep praying in a world that often feels indifferent to suffering?

Continued on reverse

The Copperhill Courier

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

October 2025

Address changes requested

Shoeboxes will be available in the Narthex on October 5. Please bring filled shoebox and $10 for shipping back by November 9. ***You can make a difference in a child's life!***

Shoebox gift ideas: Fun "wow" item & toys: dolls, stuffed animals, shoes toy cars, jump ropes, yo-yos, soccer ball with pump.

School supplies, person care items: toothbrushes, socks, combs and hairbrushes, pens, pencils, sharpeners, crayons, markers, notebooks, coloring books, solar calculators, sunglasses, hair accessories, flashlights (with batteries).

Personalize with a note and photo, prayer for each child.

Do not include: soap, candy, toothpaste, gum, used items, seeds, food, liquids or lotions, medications or vitamins, breakable items or glass containers, aerosol cans, scary or war-related items.

From the Pastor's Desk, continued

October 26 — Luke 18:9–14: "God, Be Merciful to Me, a Sinner"

We close October with one of Jesus' most pointed parables, the Pharisee and the tax collector who go up to the temple to pray.

The Pharisee stands tall, listing his accomplishments: fasting, tithing, moral behavior. He compares himself favorably to others and feels justified before God. The tax collector, by contrast, stands far off, unable to lift his eyes. His prayer is short and desperate: *"God, be merciful to me, a sinner."*

Jesus declares that it is the tax collector, not the Pharisee, who goes home justified. The kingdom of God turns our assumptions upside down. Righteousness is not about spiritual scorekeeping. It is not about pride in our religious performance. True righteousness begins with humility, the honest recognition of our need for God's mercy.

This story calls us to examine our own hearts. Do we ever find ourselves like the Pharisee, comparing ourselves to others, confident in our own goodness? Or can we come before God with the humility of the tax collector, acknowledging our need for grace?

As we worship, we will be reminded that God exalts the humble and humbles the proud. Our prayers are not about impressing God or others. They are about opening ourselves to the transforming mercy of God.

Threads Across the Month

Taken together, these four passages from Luke weave a powerful message:

- Faith is not about size or strength, but about trust and obedience (Luke 17:5–10).
- Gratitude transforms healing into wholeness (Luke 17:11–19).
- Persistence in prayer strengthens faith in the face of injustice (Luke 18:1–8).
- Humility opens the way to God's mercy (Luke 18:9-14).

These are not abstract virtues. They are practices for daily life. Faith, gratitude, prayer, and humility shape who we are as followers of Jesus. They guide us in how we relate to God, to one another, and to the world around us.

In a time when life often feels hurried and divided, these texts invite us to slow down, to reflect, and to live with intention. Faith grounds us. Gratitude opens our hearts. Prayer keeps us connected to God's justice and mercy. Humility keeps us honest and compassionate.

As we gather in worship each Sunday in October, I encourage you to come with an open heart. These scriptures may challenge us, but they also carry deep promise. They remind us that God is at work in small seeds of faith, in thankful hearts, in persistent prayers, and in humble spirits.

Together, let us walk this path of discipleship, trusting that God is shaping us into a people of faith, gratitude, prayer, and humility.

Pastor Buddy

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

1 Lee Wilson
3 Elaine Minor, Mindy Nicholson
4 Cathryn McCarter
8 Randy Loudermilk
11 Heather Turner
13 David Turner
16 Kenny Cook
21 Lyndsay Turner, McCay Turner
23 Neila Pace, Ron Pace
25 Brittany Knight, Townes Rymer
28 Blake Callihan
29 Beth Geren
30 Dylan Brooks

Anniversaries

6 Alex and Lisa Loudermilk 25th
17 Garry and Linda Day 44th
20 Dellon and Billie Ash 45th

Your birthday or anniversary not listed?

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

Diaper Drive

We are now collecting diapers to benefit a Foster Family with three little ones. Sizes needed are 2, 3, and 4—any brand except Luvs (due to perfume sensitivity). Your donations are greatly appreciated!

United Women in Faith News

On Wednesday, October 1, at 11 a.m. we will have a Potluck Lunch Meeting. Sue Riker from First Fruits will attend to share their ministry with us. We will also finalize plans for UWF Sunday on October 19. We will have a sign-up sheet for UWF participation in the service: Liturgists, ushers, prayer leaders, etc.

We will meet on Wednesday, Nov. 5, at 10 a.m.

Our December meeting will be a trip to the Blue Ridge Community Theater on Sunday, December 14 to see *Christmas at Pemberley*. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex in November for tickets. Everyone is invited.

United Women in Faith

October Events

World Communion Sunday, October 5, 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 received fund leadership development programs and scholarships for marginalized students. The other half funds scholarships and in-service training programs.

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 9.

The **SPPR Committee** will meet on Thursday, October 9, at 10 a.m.

A **Nominations Committee** meeting will be held on Thursday, October 9, at 5 p.m.

United Women in Faith Sunday will be held on October 19.

Our **Annual Charge Conference** will be held on Sunday, October 26, after the Worship Service.

Donations of **individually wrapped candy** are needed to give out at the Halloween Safe Zone on October 31. Please bring these by Sunday, October 26.

You are cordially invited to a 95th Birthday Celebration for Cathryn McCarter on Saturday, October 4, 2-4 p.m. in Legacy Hall.
No gifts please: your presence is her present.

Upcoming in November

Daylight Savings Time ends on Sunday, November 2. Remember to set your clocks back one hour on November 1.

The Church Office will be closed on November 27 for Thanksgiving.

Online Worship Opportunities

You may access Sermon by Phone at 1-423-226-6437 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.

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 24	35	9	$3,106.00
August 31	33	4	$1,881.00
September 7	45	7	$4,276.00
September 14	32	8	$3,542,58
September 21	38	6	$3,353.85
			Total: $16,159.43
Average:	**37**	**7**	**$3,231.89**

Additional giving:

Missions:	$10.00
Pastor's Benevolence Fund:	$157.00
Community Meal:	$160.00
Homecoming Expenses:	$50.00
Holston Home for Children:	$515.00
Music Program:	$200.00

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

Ushers: Shirley Starling, Charlie Stemmann, Joy Turner

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

Food Drive

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.*

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: Janice Burger
By: Craig and Carol Green, Marti Lane, Ron and Shirley Singleton, Louise Arp and family

Music Program in memory of: Janice Burger
By: Victoria Norwood

Scholarship Fund in memory of: Brady Singleton
By: Ron and Neila Pace

General Fund in memory of: Carolyn Smith
By: Louise Arp, David and Denise Ray, Ron and Shirley Singleton,

Music Program in memory of: Carolyn Smith
By: Victoria Norwood

Community Meal Fund in memory of: Carolyn Smith
By: Steven and Amie Slack

Pastor's Benevolence Fund in memory of: Carolyn Smith
By: Jerry and Kathy Panchyshyn

Our Prayer Concerns

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

Homebound/Assisted Living: +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: *Kierah (daughter of Jennifer), Captain Brian Worley, Elizabeth Payne (cancer), the family of Susie Kendell, Lori Hancock, broken wrist (Joe Dusombre's daughter), Emma Anderson (friend of Bethany Allison), Doug Hudson (brother of Linda Haney), Emily Ginn (mother of Dylan Scoggins), Madeline (daughter of Jennifer), M/M Lloyd Mays, Pamela Gamble, Bonnie (friend of Carolyn Smith), Rodney Patterson (cancer), flood victims in Texas, Gail Scheren (friend of Flora), Larry Collis, Jeremy Collis (friend of Lisa Loudermilk), Sue Talley (sister of Marti Lane), Monica Errington, 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 (on organ transplant list), Paul Carter, Jean Miller, cancer (cousin of Kathy Panchyshyn), Madison Satterfield (auto accident), Richard (brother of Ann Rymer), Carol Green, 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 (chemo), 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, world leaders

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

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