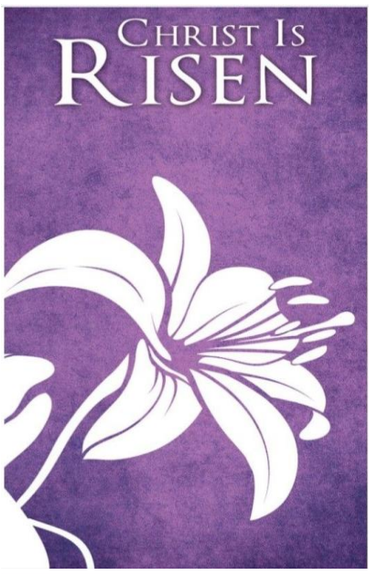
The Copperhill Courier

First United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 538
Copperhill, TN 37317
March 2026

Our **Good Friday Service** will be held on April 3 at 6 p.m.

Please invite your friends and neighbors.



Easter is on Sunday, April 5.

Our Sunrise Service will be held at 7:00 a.m.

Join us at 11:00 a.m. for Easter Worship in the Sanctuary.

Please invite your friends and neighbors.

From the Pastor's Desk, continued

March 29 — Palm Sunday
The King Who Comes in Humility
Our Lenten journey culminates in the strange and beautiful tension of Palm Sunday. Crowds line the road waving branches and shouting "Hosanna!" as Jesus enters Jerusalem. It looks like a royal procession, but everything about it is unexpected. The king rides a donkey, not a warhorse. The crowd cheers, but within days their cries will change. The triumphal entry is both celebration and warning, joy and foreboding.

Palm Sunday asks us to examine what kind of king we truly want. Do we want a ruler who conquers by force, or a Lord who reigns through love? Jesus enters Jerusalem not to seize power but to give his life. His crown will be thorns. His throne will be a cross. In worship we will hold palms in our hands even as we sense the shadow of the Passion drawing near. This day reminds us that God's victory does not look like worldly victory. The salvation we shout for may arrive in a form we did not expect.

An Invitation
As we move through these weeks together, you are invited not simply to attend worship but to enter the journey. Come ready to listen, to reflect, to pray, and to be surprised by grace. Bring your hopes, your doubts, your questions, and your weariness. God can work with all of it.

The wilderness road of Lent ultimately leads to Easter morning. But before resurrection comes reflection, and before joy comes honesty. May this season draw us closer to Christ, shape us more deeply into his people, and renew us for the life of faith to which we have been called.

Let us walk the road together.

Worship Focus for March

As we enter the sacred season of Lent, we step into a forty-day pilgrimage that is less about giving things up and more about being drawn deeper into the life of God. Lent is the church's wilderness road — a time for truth-telling, repentance, renewal, and rediscovery of grace. This year our Scripture readings trace a powerful arc: from promise, to testing, to unexpected calling, to restoration, and finally to the paradoxical kingship of Christ. Each Sunday invites us to see our own story inside God's larger story of redemption.

March 1 — Second Sunday in Lent
Genesis 12:1–4 — The Call of Abram
Our Lenten journey begins with a journey. God calls Abram to leave everything familiar, land, security, identity, and future plans, and step into a promise he cannot yet see. The command is simple but costly: "Go." The promise is breathtaking: "I will bless you… and you will be a blessing."

This text reminds us that faith is not primarily a set of beliefs but a direction of life. Abram does not receive a map, only a promise. Lent begins by confronting us with the same question. Will we trust God enough to step into the unknown?

We will explore how discipleship always involves movement that is sometimes physical and often spiritual. God's call pulls us out of our comfort zones and into participation with God's purposes for the world. The focus of worship will be on trust, surrender, and the surprising truth that God's promises are often revealed only after we begin walking.

March 8 — Third Sunday in Lent
Exodus 17:1–7 — Water from the Rock
If the first Sunday shows us faith's beginning, the second shows us faith's testing. Israel has been liberated from Egypt, yet in the wilderness they panic when water runs out. Their complaint is raw and honest: "Is the Lord among us or not?"

This passage gives voice to the questions many believers quietly carry. What do we do when faith feels dry or prayers seem unanswered? When the road God called us onto becomes difficult? Rather than condemning Israel outright, God responds with provision. Water flows from rock like life from barrenness. The wilderness becomes the place where God proves faithful.

Our worship will center on honest faith. Lent is not a season for pretending certainty; it is a season for bringing our thirst to God. We will reflect on how doubt, struggle, and questioning can actually become places where grace breaks forth. Sometimes the rock we think is an obstacle becomes the very place where God's mercy flows.

March 15 — Fourth Sunday in Lent
1 Samuel 16:1–13 — David Anointed
On this Sunday the focus shifts from wilderness testing to God's surprising choices. Samuel is sent to anoint a new king. One by one Jesse's impressive sons pass before him. They are strong, tall, and kingly in appearance. Yet God rejects them all. Finally, the youngest son, David, is summoned from the fields. He is overlooked, underestimated, and forgotten. And he is the one God chooses. God's words to Samuel echo across the centuries: "The Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."

This text invites us to reconsider how we measure worth in ourselves, in others, and in the church. We live in a world obsessed with appearances, credentials, and status. But God's kingdom operates by a different vision. In worship we will explore how God's call often comes to unlikely people in unlikely places. Lent reminds us that grace does not depend on impressiveness. God specializes in choosing shepherds and servants instead of celebrities and stars. The question for us is not whether we look qualified, but whether we are willing.

March 22 — Fifth Sunday in Lent
Ezekiel 37:1–14 — The Valley of Dry Bones
As we move toward Holy Week, the tone deepens. Ezekiel is carried by the Spirit into a valley filled with bones. These are not just bones, but bones that are "very dry." It is a vision of utter hopelessness as the bones represent a people who believe their story is over. God asks Ezekiel a haunting question: "Can these bones live?" The prophet's answer is humble: "O Lord God, you know." What follows is one of the most powerful scenes in Scripture. God commands Ezekiel to prophesy, and as he speaks the bones begin to rattle. Sinews form, flesh appears, breath enters, and the dead stand as a vast multitude. What looked like an ending becomes a beginning.

This Sunday's worship will focus on resurrection hope in the middle of present reality. Lent does not ignore death, despair, or exhaustion; it brings them honestly before God. The valley reminds us that God is not afraid of what looks lifeless. Whether in our personal lives, our community, or the church itself, God's Spirit still breathes life where we see only dryness.

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

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays:
8 Jennifer Walker
10 Heather Limburg, Laura Day Ramsey
10 Joy Turner
12 Kathy Dusombre
18 Barry Abbott
19 Smokey Brooks
20 Tyler Limburg
25 Emily Bryant
28 Hunter Pierce, Ron Wray
29 Ellijah Knight
31 Noah Wilson

Anniversaries:
18 Adam and Lynn Turner 26th

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

Upcoming Events

United Women in Faith

Our next **United Women in Faith** meeting will be at noon on Wednesday, March 4. We will have a potluck lunch and our Call to Prayer and Self Denial Program. Please bring your favorite dish. Our love offering will benefit programs for at risk children. All ladies are cordially invited!

The UWF will be attending the Blue Ridge Community Theater 2 p.m. performance of *Smoke on the Mountain* on Sunday, March 22. Set in a Baptist church in 1938 North Carolina, this play follows the quirky Sanders Family as they return to performing. They bring laughter, faith, and chaos to a Saturday night sing through gospel songs and heartfelt stories. All are invited.

There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex for tickets. Ticket price will depend on number of tickets ordered but will be between $19 and $26.

Deadline to order is March 8.
Money for tickets is due by March 15.

March Events

The UWF will meet on Wednesday, March 4, at noon.

Daylight Savings Time begins on March 8. Remember to set your clocks ahead one hour on March 7.

We'll have a **Fellowship Potluck Lunch** after worship on March 15. Please bring your favorite dish and join us for good food and fellowship.

The **UMCOR Sunday** offering on March 15 underwrites UMCOR's administrative costs. This offering allows UMCOR to use 100% of all funds given to humanitarian response and recovery efforts directly to communities in need. These gifts ensure UMCOR can respond swiftly to disasters around the world and as a source of hope and healing for those left most vulnerable. This Special Sunday is an opportunity to strengthen our connections to global ministries that provide disaster relief, aid for refugees, sustainable agriculture and more. Every gift makes a life-changing impact.

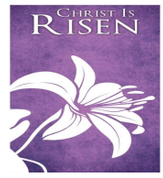
The **Church Council** meets on Tuesday, March 24, at 4:30 p.m.

Palm Sunday is March 29.

On March 29 we will receive the **Fifth Sunday Offering for Holston Home For Children**.

April Events

Our **Good Friday Service** will be held on April 3, at 6 p.m.



Easter is April 5.
Sunrise Service will be held at 7 a.m.
Easter Worship at 11 a.m.

Our April **Fellowship Supper** will be held on Wednesday, April 22, at 6 p.m. Please bring your favorite dish – come enjoy good food and fellowship.

Looking ahead to May

SPPR Meeting at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, May 20.

Our May **Fellowship Supper** will be held on Wednesday, May 27, at 6 p.m. Please bring your favorite dish.

Online Worship Opportunities

You may access **Sermon** by Phone at 1-423-226-6437. Check out the page titled **Sunday Worship Highlights** on our website, fumc-copperhill.org. All recordings can be found on buzzsprout.com/197301 and on Spotify https://open.spotify.com/show/3dxrFeeZSteYC0GRYTbJdz?si=4183b072c5e94dd5.

As each becomes available (usually by Monday afternoon), we'll also post the link on our Facebook page @ **First United Methodist Church-Copperhill.**
Please like and share so others see our posts!

The United Methodist Church forms disciples of Jesus Christ who, empowered by the Holy Spirit, love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously in local communities and worldwide connections.

Love Boldly: We passionately love God and, like Jesus, embrace and include people of every age, nation, race, gender, and walk of life. (Matthew 22:37-39 | John 13:34-35)
Serve Joyfully: With the heart of Christ, we journey alongside the most vulnerable among us, offering care and compassion with joy. (Psalm 100:1 | Nehemiah 8:10 | John 13:14-15 | 1 Peter 4:10)
Lead Courageously: Following Jesus' example, we resist and dismantle all systems of evil, injustice, and oppression, striving for peace, justice, and reconciliation. (Joshua 1:9 | Ephesians 6:10)

Love Boldly
Serve Joyfully
Lead Courageously
#LoveServeLeadUMC

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
January 25	18	5	$2,236.00
February 1	Church cancelled due to snow		$761.00
February 8	24	5	$5,101.00
February 15	32	6	$2,041.00
February 22	33	10	$2,903.00
			Total: $13,042.00
Average:	**21**	**5**	**$2,608.40**

Additional giving:

Local Missions:	**$60.00**
Pastor's Benevolence Fund:	**$100.00**
Community Meal:	**$30.00**
Human Relations Sunday Offering:	**$50.00**
Scholarship Fund:	**$25.69**

Our Ash Wednesday Service attendance was 13.

Members in Service to FUMC

Ushers: Adam 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

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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: 1-423-226-6437

Gilbert "Buddy" Butler, Pastor
Heidi Rule, Secretary
Bethany Allison, Choir Director
Matt Scoggins, Accompanist
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:
Joe McCarter By: Cathryn McCarter

Prayer Concerns

Our Congregation: *Randy Loudermilk, Marti Lane, Loretta Loudermilk, Evelyn Stemmann, Emily Hodskins, Smokey and Janice Brooks, Jerry Panchyshyn, Donna Ratzlaff, Sheppie Dunn, Barb Bender, Maria Ruark, Bill and Glenda Simonds, Mary Mills, Hope and Aiyana Loudermilk, Ron and Shirley Singleton, Ron and Neila Pace

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

Others in our prayers: *Tom, *Kiera (high risk pregnancy) and *Madeline -daughters of Jennifer Gibson, *Angela Santa Maria, *Will Hoffman, Kim Swinehart (friend of Linda D.), Tim Garrett (knee surgery), the people of Minneapolis, ~June (aunt of Evelyn S.), Charles Nicholson, Norma Bean, Rush Phillips (brother of Flora), Gina (burned in fire), Kimberly Curcio (paraplegic), Dennis Wray, Gary Hooper (brother-in-law of Pam Wray), Mackenzie Ray, Hannah Geren, +Ed and Jerrie Sue Massengale, 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.

Food Drive

Please donate nonperishable food items in the Narthex box - canned meat, tuna, flour, sugar, peanut butter, jelly, rice, soup, chili, pasta. spaghetti sauce, spaghetti, shelf stable milk, oatmeal, cereal, canned vegetables. *Thanks to all who contribute—the families are always grateful.*

Diaper Drive

Unscented diapers (size 3) and unscented wipes to help a Foster Family with two babies are needed on an ongoing basis and can be placed in the box in the Narthex. Your gifts are appreciated!

Snack in a Backpack

Small boxes of raisins, packs of individual applesauce and packs of cheese crackers are needed by Snack in a Backpack – there's a box in the Narthex for donations.

FCPL Grand Opening

The Fannin County Public Library Grand Opening will be held on Saturday, March 7, beginning at 11 a.m. Their new location is 2290 East First Street (next to the Christian Learning Center). There will be a magician performance at 2 p.m. All are invited!