The Copperhill Courier
First United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 538
Copperhill, TN 37317
**August 2026**

## From the Pastor's Desk, continued

One of the blessings I have discovered is that ours is a congregation filled with people who quietly serve. Some prepare food. Some care for our building. Some faithfully support missions. Some write cards. Some pray every day for our church. Some teach. Some give generously. Some offer words of encouragement just when someone needs to hear them. Many of these acts happen without recognition. Perhaps that is exactly as it should be. The kingdom of God often grows through quiet faithfulness rather than public applause. Jesus compared it to a mustard seed, small enough to overlook, and yet capable of growing into something far greater than anyone expected.

Paul closes this section with words that challenge every generation of Christians: "Let love be genuine." Rejoice with those who rejoice. Weep with those who weep. Bless those who persecute you. Live peaceably with everyone. Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good. Those words are not easy to live. They certainly run against the spirit of our culture. We are surrounded by anger, division, suspicion, and the temptation to treat people as enemies instead of neighbors. The church is called to be different. Our witness is strongest not when we win arguments but when we embody the character of Christ. Every act of forgiveness, every meal shared, every prayer offered, every visit made, every hand extended in friendship becomes a testimony that Christ is alive among His people.

As I think about the coming month, I am grateful for the opportunity to serve alongside you. We are not the largest church. We may never have the biggest programs or the most impressive facilities. But we have something the world desperately needs, a community seeking to follow Jesus together. That has always been the church's greatest strength.

My prayer is that as we continue through Romans this month, God will deepen our compassion, strengthen our faith, and help each of us discover new ways to use the gifts He has entrusted to us. May our worship shape our daily lives, our service point others toward Christ, and our love reflect the grace we have first received from God. I look forward to seeing how God continues to work through our congregation as we seek to love God, love our neighbors, and faithfully share the good news of Jesus Christ.

Pastor Buddy

## Day with our Bishop

Rev. Debra Wallace-Padgett, Resident Bishop is again planning to spend a day in each district this year, and the Scenic South District will welcome her on Tuesday, September 1. During the day, she will meet with various groups throughout the district. That evening, all clergy and other church leaders are encouraged to gather at Ooltewah UMC from 6 to 8 p.m. for a time of connection, conversation, and encouragement.

Living the Gospel Together

This summer we have been walking together through Paul's letter to the Romans. We have explored God's grace, the gift of faith, the freedom found in Christ, and the life of the Holy Spirit. These chapters have reminded us that Christianity is not simply about becoming better people. It is about God doing for us what we could never do for ourselves.

As we enter August, Paul's letter begins to take a practical turn. The question is no longer simply, "What has God done?" Instead, Paul asks, "How should God's people live because of what God has done?" The answer is both challenging and encouraging.

Our first reading, Romans 9:1-5, surprises us because Paul begins with tears. Before he speaks about theology, he speaks about sorrow. His heart breaks for those who have not yet recognized Jesus as the Messiah. Paul's love for people is so deep that he cannot discuss salvation as though it were merely an intellectual exercise. That is a good reminder for the church today. Sometimes Christians become known more for what we oppose than for whom we love. Paul reminds us that sharing the gospel begins with compassion. Before we speak, we learn to care. Before we debate, we learn to listen. We pray for our neighbors, our families, and our communities because they matter deeply to God.

The following Sunday, Paul asks a series of questions that still echo today: "How are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him?" He concludes with those memorable words: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news." When I read those verses, I do not picture famous preachers or packed stadiums. I picture ordinary Christians whose faith quietly changes the lives around them. I think about those who faithfully prepare meals every Monday so that people in our wider community can have a hot meal and know there are people who care for them. I think about those who quietly visit someone who is sick, send a card of encouragement, make a phone call, pray faithfully at home, or simply welcome a visitor with genuine kindness. These may seem like ordinary acts, but they become extraordinary when they point someone toward the love of Christ. The gospel is often shared long before a sermon is preached.

Romans 11 reminds us that God's faithfulness never fails. Paul assures us that even when people are unfaithful, God remains faithful. His promises endure, His mercy continues, and His grace is greater than our failures. Most of us have experienced seasons when our faith has been strong and other seasons when it has felt fragile. Life has a way of bringing illness, grief, disappointment, uncertainty, and change. During those moments we may wonder whether God is still at work. Paul reminds us that our hope does not depend upon our ability to hold tightly to God. Our hope rests in God's promise to hold tightly to us. As I think about our congregation, I see many examples of that faithfulness. I have watched members care for family and others, grieve the loss of loved ones, face health challenges, celebrate new grandchildren, support one another through difficult days, and continue showing up week after week to worship and serve. Through every season, God has remained faithful.

That brings us to Romans 12, one of the most practical chapters in all of Scripture. Paul begins by inviting us to present ourselves as "living sacrifices." Worship is not limited to the hour we spend together on Sunday mornings. Worship continues when we forgive someone who has hurt us. It continues when we choose generosity instead of selfishness. It continues when we serve someone who cannot repay us. Every part of life becomes an opportunity to honor God. Paul then reminds us that every member of the church has been given gifts. Not everyone teaches, not everyone sings, not everyone serves in the same way, yet every gift matters because every person matters.

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. in the Parlor. 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.

**AA Meeting:** Thursdays, 6-7 p.m.
in Legacy Hall

## Birthdays and Anniversaries

*Birthdays:*
2 Colin Rymer
5 Loretta Loudermilk
12 Lynn Turner
16 Oliver Butler
17 Rick Callihan
20 Turner Michael

*Anniversaries: none in August*

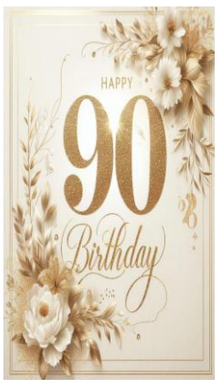
Your birthday or anniversary not listed?

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

## 90th Birthday Celebration

*You are cordially invited to a celebration of the 90th Birthday of Loretta Loudermilk.*

*It will be held in Legacy Hall on Sunday, August 2, following worship.*




United Women in Faith

The UWF will not meet in August.

Our next **UWF Meeting** will be on Wednesday, September 2, at 10 a.m. After our business meeting, we will be working in the UWF room to organize supplies and table decorations. Please bring a sack lunch. All ladies are cordially invited to attend.

## August Events

**Bible Study** in Legacy Hall: from 5 to 7 p.m. on the following dates: August 2, 9, 16, 30. Continues in September on the first three Sundays.

The **Scenic South District Conference** will be held on Sunday, August 16 at 3 p.m. at Tyner UMC.

Our **Potluck Fellowship Supper** will be held on Wednesday, August 26, at p.m. Bring your favorite dish and come enjoy good food and fellowship.

## Looking ahead to September

**Bible Study** in Legacy Hall: from 5 to 7 p.m. on the following dates: September 6, 13, and 20.

We will celebrate **Homecoming** on Sunday, September 27. A potluck lunch will follow the service.

## You are Invited!

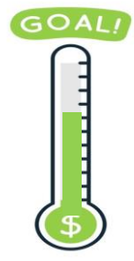
*A drop-in Baby Shower for Bonnie & Dusty Graves will be held on Saturday, September 12, from 2-4 p.m. in Legacy Hall*

*They are registered at Walmart and Amazon.*

## Roof Repair Campaign

The flat part of our church roof has been cleaned, and the roof resealed at a cost of $10,000.00. Our 2026 budget for capital expenditures has been depleted already by the installation of a new heating and air conditioning unit and water heater for our parsonage to replace items that were no longer working

If you can make a donation toward our roof repair above and beyond what you already contribute for our budget it would be greatly appreciated.




Contributed to date: $6,474.94

## Community Meal

**The Community Meal** is held on Mondays, 4 to 5:30 p.m. Around 200 free 'to go" meals are served weekly. Designate donations to help pay for food and supplies "Community Meal" on memo line of check or envelope. The Community Meal does not currently need donations of plastic bags.

## 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!*

## 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 |
|---|---|---|---|
| June 28 | 36 | 7 | $1,891.75 |
| July 5 | 38 | 5 | $3,562.75 |
| July 12 | 31 | 4 | $2,597.75 |
| July 19 | 27 | 4 | $1,908.75 |
| **Average:** | **33** | **5** | **$2,490.25** |

***Additional giving:***

| | |
|---|---|
| Local Missions: | $10.00 |
| Pastor's Benevolence Fund: | $344.00 |
| Community Meal: | $10.00 |
| Love Offering: | $50.00 |
| Roof Repair Fund: | $1,281.69 |
| United Methodist Student Day Offering: | $180.00 |

## Members in Service to FUMC

**Ushers:** Smokey Brooks, Shirley Russell
**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


**First United Methodist Church**
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**Copperhill, TN 37317**
**Email: firstumc@etcmail.com**
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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 Loving Memory*

*Catharine Turner*
*January 13, 1947 – July 4, 2026*

## *In Memory/In Honor Giving*

General Fund in memory of: Cathy Turner
By: Cathryn McCarter, Barb Bender, Garry and Linda Day, Leland and Ann Rymer, Elaine Morgan, David and Joy Turner, Smokey and Janice Brooks, Jeff and Jennifer Walker, Dale and Richard Wagner, Peggy Gillespie, Linda Monk, Ann Patterson, Wade and Mallory Woodall

General Fund in Memory of:
Jimmy Russell By: Shirley Russell

Roof Repair Fund in Memory of:
Cathy Turner By: Ron and Shirley Singleton

## *Prayer Concerns*

***Our Congregation:*** *Janis Martin, *Kathy Panchyshyn (having surgery) the family of Cathy Turner, Lisa Loudermilk, Linda Day (recovering from surgery), Ann Record, Neila Pace, Barb Bender, Randy Loudermilk, Loretta Loudermilk, Evelyn Stemmann, Smokey and Janice Brooks, Jerry Panchyshyn, Donna Ratzlaff, Sheppie Dunn, Maria Ruark, Bill and Glenda Simonds, Mary Mills, Hope and Aiyana Loudermilk, Ron and Shirley Singleton
***Homebound/Assisted Living:*** Louise Arp, ^Jennifer Clamon (Sonshine Manor in Blairsville), ^T.J. Thompson (Pruitt Health), ^Barbara Collins, Margaret Self, Don Loudermilk
***Others in our prayers:*** *Tom Rodman (grandfather of Dylan), *Julia Allison (recovering from surgery), Carol Green (knee surgery), Billy Timmons, the family of Martha Hatfield (aunt of Buddy), ~George Hood, Van Williams (surgery), Melissa Pittman, the people of Venezuela (earthquake), Jerry Pack, Jason, Susie Skelton (cancer treatment), Katelyn Murdoch, Suzy, Henry, Chloe Walker, James Edward Abernathy, Ryan and Randy Panchyshyn, Peter, Elizabeth, Richard Rohler (brother of Ann Rymer), Sandra (sister-in-law of Joy Turner), Lacy, Frankie Robbins, Gabriel Putnam (great grandson of Joy Turner), Linda Reeves (friend of Shirley S.), Barbara (sister of Lisa L.), Buggs Arp (father of Freda A.), Christina Stemmann, James Wood, Tom, Kiera and Madeline -daughters of Jennifer Gibson, Angela Santa Maria, Will Hoffman, Tim Garrett, Charles Nicholson, Norma Bean, Rush Phillips (brother of Flora), Gina (burns), Kimberly Curcio (paraplegic), Dennis Wray, Gary Hooper (brother-in-law of Pam Wray), Mackenzie Ray, Hannah Geren, Jerrie Sue Massengale, victims of natural disasters, first responders, firefighters, armed forces members, world leaders, turmoil in the Middle East

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

**Please contact the church office to add someone to our list.**

## 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!