



THE WITNESS

Our calling is to make Disciples of Jesus Christ through fellowship, worship, outreach, and nurture.

www.conwayfumc.org

First United Methodist Church
1610 Prince Street
Conway, AR 72034
(501)329-3801
(501) 733-3577
(pastoral care emergency #)

Worship This Sunday
8:45 A.M., 9:00 A.M., 11:00 A.M.
Sunday School at 10:00 A.M.

Volume XXXXIII

February 24, 2010

Number 8

Prayers, Presence, Gifts and Service ...

Let's Celebrate the Joy of Membership at First United Methodist Church.

The Scriptures speak of joy in giving. The psalmist writes of worshipping God and giving (Psalm 66:13), "I will come into your house. I will pay you my vows."

When we say, "Celebrate the Joy of Membership," the Stewardship Committee is describing the joy of fulfilling our vows of prayers, presence, gifts, and service to financially support Christ's mission and work through our Church.

This week, we are inviting you to prepare for financial offerings to support your church community. We are not called to give the same amounts; everyone is called to give in proportion to their income, and everyone can give something. Your gifts provide the raw materials for "making disciples of Jesus Christ through fellowship, worship, outreach and nurture." Please prayerfully review your income to make your best gift to God. There is no limit to what God can do through us as a congregation.

If you did not receive a pledge card in the mail, cards are available in the church office and will be available Sunday, Feb. 28, at all three worship services. Every full member from age 13 to 113 is encouraged to fill out a pledge card and bring it to worship on Feb. 28. Our pledges will be dedicated during worship.

St. Francis prayed, "It is in giving that we receive." This is our prayer, as a Stewardship Committee, for every member of First United Methodist Church. May God bless you in giving your best gift to the glory of God for the work of Jesus Christ in the world.

— Richard Clark, Stewardship Committee chairman



The Guiding Presence



One of the greatest advantages that I had growing up was that my father was a career soldier in the U.S. Army. This meant that our family had the opportunity to travel the world when it would not have been financially possible otherwise. My father married a German woman who would be committed to the Army lifestyle which provided an opportunity for us to live in Tehran, Iran, during my 4-6 grade years in school. As you can imagine, I will covet my experiences in the middle east for the rest of my life.

During my time in Iran, I had the opportunity to take a Holy Land tour with my father. This was one of the most pivotal moments in my faith journey. You might imagine that as a 5th grader I had learned all of the "stories" growing up in church, but never had the opportunity to experience them first hand. I fondly remember seeing many of the places that I had read about ... Golgotha, the Dead Sea, the tomb of our savior and so much more. It was during our quiet time in tomb that I experienced a reassuring and calming presence in my being. To me, it was an affirmation that the one we seek and serve is present with us, daily.

As our church reflects on this time of Lent, I want to encourage you to find those times and places in your every day life that will enable you to make Christ, and your faith, the priority and focus. My prayer for our church will be that we clearly experience anew the guiding presence in our lives. I want to close with these words from John 8:12; "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." May your path be lit during this Lenten season.

Gratefully, Michael Hutchison

A Look Ahead to Lent and Easter

Each Wednesday in Lent — Praying the Hours in the Chapel

7 a.m. — Morning prayer; Noon — Midday prayer;

5:30 p.m. — Evening prayer; 8:45 p.m. — Night prayer.

Sunday, March 28 — Palm Sunday.

Wednesday, March 31 — Seder Meal, 5:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 1 — Maundy Thursday service of Holy Communion, 7 p.m., Sanctuary.

Friday, April 2 — Good Friday worship, 7 p.m., Great Hall

Saturday, April 3 — Easter Egg Hunt, Laurel Park, 10 a.m.

Sunday, April 4 — Easter. Worship at 8:45 a.m., 9 a.m. & 11 a.m. Sunrise Service at 6:45 a.m. on the Clifton Street steps.

Don't Forget!

First United Methodist Church is hosting the Lenten Lunch at noon Thursday, Feb. 25, in the Fellowship Hall. The cost is \$3 per person for soup, corn bread, drink and dessert. Let us give our support to this community event.

Countdown: Two Weeks to Hymn Festival

The postponement of our Hymn Festival due to bad weather at the end of January has made it quite difficult to keep the excitement building. Please be sure you have the new date on your calendar, and remind your friends that we will now be meeting to sing and worship under the leadership of John Ferguson on Sunday, March 7 at 3:00.

The festival theme is "Through the Church the Song Goes On", and will provide an opportunity for us to sing many of the great hymns of the church, as well as to reflect on the way in which music "tells the story" of the Good News of Jesus Christ. Music will be provided by our adult, youth and children's choirs, brass, Dr. Ferguson (organ) and YOU, the congregation. As a reminder, the event is planned in part as a celebration of the completion of the recent renovation of our sanctuary and organ. Hope to see you there!

The 411 for Youth

Presence Numbers

Monday, Feb. 15 -

Youth Choir - 9 Youth

Wednesday, Feb. 17 -

Hang Time - 30 Youth

Youth Praise Band - 8 Youth

Thursday, Feb. 18 -

Breakfast Club - 21 Youth

Sunday, Feb. 21 -

Sunday School - 47 Youth

UMYF - 33 Youth

Weekly Schedule

Thursday, Feb. 25 -

Breakfast Club - 7 a.m. @ The Brewery on Prince Street

Friday, Feb. 26 -

Veritas Attendees Meet in Parking Lot - 5:15 p.m.

Sunday, Feb. 28 -

Sunday School - 10 a.m. in the Big Room

No UMYF

Monday, March 1 -

Youth Choir - 3:30-5 - Youth Cafe

Wednesday, March 3 -

Hang Time - 3 p.m. in the Youth Cafe

Jr. High Bells - 4:30 p.m. in the Music Room

Knitting Group - 5:15 p.m. in the Lodge Room

Praise Band Practice - 5:45 p.m. in the Big Room

123 JESUS - 6:45 in the Lodge Room

Church Softball Players!

Anyone interested in playing on a church softball team this year, please either sign up in the church lobby or email Jeff March at jeff.march@arkansas.gov. We need to know how many players are interested by March 7, in order to determine how many teams our church will have this year. Last year we only had enough interest for one men's team. The season will run April 12 through June 11 and consist of 16 games.

Wednesday Fellowship Dinners

March 3 - 6 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Menu: Sloppy Joes, coleslaw, chips and desserts. **Hosts:** Outdoor Ministries.



Cost is \$6 for adults (age 13 and up), \$4 for children 6-12, kids 5 & under eat free, \$20 maximum per household. To RSVP, call the church office or sign up on the attendance pads during worship so we know how many to expect.

Adult Sunday School Studies this Week

Believing, Becoming, Belonging (B3)	214
"Five Practices," Leader Melissa Jenkins	
Conference	220
"Romans," Leaders John Thompson and Jeff Standridge	
Dorothy Robins-Light	212
"Anointed By a Woman in Bethany," Matthew 26:6-13	
Faithbuilders	Parlor
"24 Hours That Changed the World," Leader Mike Hutchison	
Faith in Action (FIA)	230
"The Daily Five," Leaders Clay and Kelli Gordon	
Forum	222
"The Methodist Federation for Social Action," Rev. Ben Jordan	
Genesis	227
A study of Job	
George Hartje	218
"Anointed By a Woman in Bethany," Matthew 26:6-13; Leader Johnnye Hartje	
Gussie Scales	216
"Anointed By a Woman in Bethany," Matthew 26:6-13; Leader John Collier	
Koinonia	219
"The Daily Five," Leaders Gerald & JoNell Plafcan and Vicki Sutton	
New Covenant	221
"Anointed By a Woman in Bethany," Matthew 26:6-13	
Open Door	113
"Anointed By a Woman in Bethany," Matthew 26:6-13; Leader David Sutherland; (telephone participation available)	
Round Table	217
"Troublesome Bible Passages"	

Worship on Sunday, Feb. 28

Sanctuary Worship: 8:45/11:00 a.m.

Scriptures - Joshua 5:9-12, Psalm 32, and Luke 15:1-3a & 11-32

Sermon — "Follow the Savior Through Extravagant Love"

Preaching — Rev. Charles Murry

After studying the Bible for 50+ years, I should not be surprised at the sections I do not know or understand. In this 15th chapter of Luke, there are three parables in a row. The first two famous ones are about things lost -- a sheep and a coin. The third in this string of well-known Bible passages describes the relationship of a father and an older brother with the father's younger son, who is a recklessly extravagant, abundantly giving young man. That is the definition of "prodigal": "one who spends or gives lavishly, even foolishly." From the beginning of Jesus' story, the younger son may be lost, but he is not called "lost"; he is called a "spendthrift." I wonder where this young man learned to be so extreme in his giving. Who was his role model? During worship, our Stewardship Committee has made preparations for you to pledge your support of the ministries of Jesus Christ through First United Methodist Church. Included in the ser-

vice will be a dedicatory prayer as we get ready for a new year of extravagant generosity.

Good News Celebration: 9 a.m., Great Hall

Scriptures - Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

Sermon - "Follow the Savior in Extravagant Love"

Preaching: Rev. Dede Roberts

"Few bible stories capture our hearts or imaginations like the Parable of the Prodigal Son. Artists have painted it. Musicians have set it to music. Dancers move to its plot. And theologians write reams on its meaning. Why does this story fascinate and inspire? Is it that we can identify with the reckless younger son? Is it that we recognize the jealousy of the faithful older son? Is it that we long for the love of the father? Henri Nouwen, theologian and spiritual guide, says we are all the young son and we are all the older son and we are all called to be like the father. So who is this father who waits and watches and offers extravagant love? Come Sunday, we'll learn more about him, and we will even have the opportunity to imitate his generosity and hospitality as we make our pledges for the coming year.

Walking Group Forming

Beginning March 2, Conway FUMC will host a morning walking group, open to all, every Tuesday and Thursday from 8-10 a.m. in the Great Hall. Distances will be marked and you will choose your route through the gym, hallways and classrooms. Bring comfortable shoes and come walk the Great Hall with family and friends. If you have any questions about the group, contact Recreation Intern David Foley at the church or by email at recreation@conwayfumc.org.

Frank Jones Bible Lectures

10 a.m. Sundays in the Chapel.

All are invited!

The Gospel of Luke

Feb. 28 — Jesus and the City, the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 15-18)

March 7 — Zaccheus Was a Little Man, the Rich Man and the Widow (Luke 19-22)



Our Church Family

Congratulations

To Eric and Karla Carney-Hall on the birth of a son, Brendan, on Thursday, Feb. 18.

To Jason and Sandra Cole on the birth of a son, Jackson Powell Cole. He has a big sister, Katie.

Sympathy

To Ed, Rhonda, Brandon and Tyler Anthes on the death of Paul Anthes, Ed's father and Brandon and Tyler's grandfather.

Music Calendar

Please check carefully. Last week's calendar contained errors/omissions.

Wednesday, Feb. 24 – Little Seekers' Choir rehearsals begin (4:00)

Sunday, Feb. 28 – Chancel Ringers (sanctuary services); No High School Bells rehearsal.

Saturday, March 6 – Hymn Festival Rehearsal (9-12:30)

Sunday, March 7 – Chancel Ringers (9:00); Youth Choir (9:00); Int. Bells (11:00)

Sunday, March 7 – Hymn Festival (3:00; 2:00 warm-up)

Sunday, March 7 – No Sr. High Bells rehearsal

Sunday, March 14 – Youth Choir (8:45)

Sunday, March 21-27 – Spring Break week. No children's/youth rehearsals

Sunday, March 28 – Sr. High Bells (both sanctuary services); Little Seekers' Choir (9:00); Joyful Sound/One Accord (11:00)

Sunday, April 4 – Chancel Ringers, Youth Choir, Chancel Choir (both sanctuary services).

Study of Romans to Begin

The Conference Class invites you to join us as we begin a study on Romans. This interesting and challenging book will be the subject of a class study led by John Thompson and Jeff Standridge. Come on - stretch your brain with us! You may even learn things you never knew before!

It's Not Too Late to Join Little Seekers Choir!

Little Seekers (Bears and Rabbits classes ONLY) choir rehearsals began Feb. 24, but it's not too late to join! The group will rehearse from 4 to 4:30 p.m. in Room 212 each Wednesday through May 5. We will be preparing music for Palm Sunday, the spring musical and Mother's Day. If you are interested, come join us. For more information, please contact Monica Hutchison at mhutchison@conwayfumc.org.

5 Practices – Winter Groups Have Wrapped Up!

A total of 147 people just completed the winter, "Daily Five" groups. Many amazing ideas were formed as a result of the brainstorming sessions each week. Watch for updates about these new ideas and what they will mean for our church in the areas of:

Radical Hospitality – Passionate Worship
Intentional Faith Development – Risk-taking Mission
& Service – Extravagant Generosity

So far, 249 people in this congregation have completed this study. Make sure to contact us if you are interested in joining the next round of studies.

Many thanks to our fall leaders: Pebble Sutherland, Gerald and JoNell Plafcan, Vicki Sutton, Mark & Stacy Crone, Bill Higgs, Ann Davis, Nancy Mulhearn, Pam Chastain, Jim Caudle, Mauzel Beal, Joyce Miller, Melanie Codemo, Kelli & Clay Gordon, Jeff Standridge & John Thompson.

5 Practices Update: The participants who just completed the Winter Studies filled out evaluations on the study. On a scale of 1-5 (one being low and 5 being high), they ranked the importance of every member participating in this study as a 4.5!

HOLISTIC STEWARDSHIP

HOSPITAL

Conway Regional: Molsie Osborne.

Out of Town: Cindy Schmidt (Cher Masters' mother).

Dismissed: Doris Carrithers, to rehab; Cornelia Scales, to rehab; Carl Skekloff (Debbie Bratton's stepfather), to rehab; Karla Carney-Hall and baby Brendan.

PRAYERS

For Those Serving Overseas: Lin Williams (brother of John Williams); Ben Rand (nephew of Roy and Polly Martin); Michael Maeker (nephew of Shannon and Andreas deKunffy); Jeremy Hankins (son of Ray and Shirley Hankins); Rob Kieilty (Jill Hankins' brother-in-law).

PRESENCE

Total Attendance in worship: Feb. 21, 2010

{8:45-147; 9:00-not reported; 11:00-204}

Sunday School Attendance: 270.

Every Dollar Counts: \$138.

GIFTS

In memory of Sue Alread by: Gary & Carolyn Lewis, Ben & Loraine Wilson, Larry & Hilda Malpica, Doug & Ann Poindexter, Frank & Sue Jones, Waddy & Gay Moore, Bill & Rosanne Johnson, Mr. & Mrs. Charles Nabholz, John & Fritz Shock, Jack & Van McDuff; Cliff & Maribeth Garrison.

In memory of Mattie Showalter by: John & Vickie Bailey.

In memory of Dabbs Woodfin by: Larry & Hilda Malpica, Frank & Sue Jones, Waddy & Gay Moore.

In memory of Lewis Thompson by: Frank & Sue Jones.

In memory of Ella Rea Vandiver by: Richard & Barbara Collins.

In memory of Paul Anthes by: Koinonia Sunday School Class

In memory of Joyce Baker by: Mr. & Mrs. Milton Davis.

SERVICE

Thank you, High School Handbell Choir and Youth Choir, for your contributions to sanctuary services last Sunday. Your leadership is always a great blessing to our worship.

Thanks also to Molly Lentz, Kristen Farris (flutes) and Steve Cohen (trumpet) for your part in enriching our music.

Joyful Sound and One Accord choirs led the music at last week's Ash Wednesday service. Thank you all for leading us in our journey to "Follow the Savior".

Special thanks to Monica Hutchison, Nathan Jeffries and all who assisted with music programming last week.

Thank you to everyone who attended the Valentine Cafe! The youth appreciate your continued support!

Thank you to everyone who supported our youth in the Brighton-Kennedy Foundation Baby Formula Drive! In 40 days, the youth raised \$4,428.00 for baby formula. We were able to purchase and collect a total of 263 cans of formula (177 -25.7 oz and 86 - 12 oz cans) which is a total of 5,580 ounces of formula. This amount of dry formula will make approximately 41,140 ounces of liquid formula. This will make roughly 6,857 6oz. bottles of formula. At 5 bottles per day - this is enough food for 1,371.4 days. 3.75 years! That is 3 babies being fed for 1 year and 3 months - right up to transition off of formula!

A big thank you to all who helped with the Valentine Program. Sandra DeVore made the collection boxes, the 5th and 6th graders made the individual bags and delivered all of the Valentines. Many of the Valentine recipients have told the church how much they enjoyed the Valentines.

Green Team for FUMC

If you would be interested in being a part of a new Green Team, please contact Georgia Lewis at 327-7258 or Carole Teague at 329-3801. We will plan a first gathering soon.

Sunday Transportation Drivers:

Feb. 28 — NO BUS — Joe and Wanda Eason, 327-7929, in car.

March 7 — Bob McCormack, 327-5706, and David Bruce.

March 14 — Kathleen Caruthers and Carole Teague, 329-5357

Please call if you want to be picked up for Sunday school or worship and are not on our “regular” rider list.

College Students and Parents!

We need updates so we can keep in touch with our college students. Please let us know the following:

- Student’s name.
- College they are attending and year/classification.
- Their e-mail address.
- Their cell phone number and if they can receive texts.

E-mail info to Melissa Polk:

mpolk@conwayfumc.org. Post cards with info about college-
age activities will be mailed soon.

Community Lenten Luncheons

The 2010 Lenten Luncheons have started, and you are invited to join us. The luncheons are held at noon each Thursday during Lent, and begin with a devotional. Church Women United are the overall hosts of the luncheons. Each Thursday through March 25 there will be a luncheon held at a church in the community. First United Methodist Church hosts the Feb. 25 luncheon. The cost is \$3 per person for soup, corn bread, drink and dessert. Let us give our support to this community event. See you on Thursdays for lunch during Lent.

Sunday, Feb. 28, 2010

7:30 A.M. Chancel Ringers, 202
8:00 A.M. First Service Singers, 202
8:00 A.M. Praise Band practice, Great Hall
8:45 A.M. Worship, Sanctuary*
9:00 A.M. Good News Celebration, Great Hall*
10:00 A.M. Sunday School*
10:40 A.M. Chancel Choir, 202
11:00 A.M. Worship, Sanctuary*
4:30 P.M. Confirmation Class, 1110
4:30 P.M. Girl Scouts, B20, B27
4:30 P.M. Small Group Ministries, 124

Monday, March 1, 2010

8:30 A.M. Moms in Touch, 113
9:00 A.M. Prayer Group, 1003
11:00 A.M. Staff meeting, 216
3:00 P.M. Prayer Misfits, 1003
3:30 P.M. Youth Choir hang time, Cafe
4:30 P.M. Youth Choir, 1105
6:00 P.M. Soup Kitchen Task Force, 1103
6:30 P.M. Scout Troop 71 meeting, B13
6:45 P.M. Chancel Ringers, 202*

Tuesday, March 2, 2010

8:00 A.M. Open Walking Time, Great Hall
9:00 A.M. Companions in Christ, 216
9:00 A.M. Food Pantry (until noon), Fellowship Hall
9:30 A.M. ECC, 1106
6:00 P.M. Boy Scout District meeting, Fellowship Hall
6:30 P.M. Staff-Parish Relations Committee, 217
6:30 P.M. What Would Jesus Wear? small group for teens, 1108
7:00 P.M. Alzheimer’s Support Group, 216
7:00 P.M. Old Men’s basketball, Great Hall
7:00 P.M. Pack 71 Den meeting, 219, 221, 223, 224

Wednesday, March 3, 2010

7:00 A.M. Men’s Prayer Breakfast, Fellowship Hall
7:00 A.M. Morning Prayer, Chapel
Noon Midday Prayer, Chapel
12:30 P.M. “24 Hours That Changed the World” group (Davis), 224
12:30 P.M. Witness Labelers, 107
3:00 P.M. Youth Hang Time, Youth Café
4:00 P.M. Elementary Chimes, 202
4:30 P.M. Middle School Bells, 202
4:30 P.M. One Accord Choir, 212
5:15 P.M. Intermediate Bells, 202
5:15 P.M. Joyful Sound Choir, 212
5:30 P.M. Evening Prayer, Chapel
5:45 P.M. Youth Knitting, 1112
5:45 P.M. Youth Praise Band, 1105
6:00 P.M. Wednesday Fellowship Dinner, Fellowship Hall
6:30 P.M. Mission Committee 107*
6:45 P.M. “24 Hours That Changed the World” group (Howell/
Roberts), 212
7:30 P.M. Disciple I, 216*
7:30 P.M. Chancel Choir, 202*
8:45 P.M. Night Prayer, Chapel

Thursday, March 4, 2010

7:00 A.M. Youth Breakfast, The Brewery
8:00 A.M. Open Walking Time, Great Hall
9:00 A.M. Food Pantry (until noon), Fellowship Hall
9:30 A.M. ECC, 1106
Noon Lenten Lunch, Grace United Methodist Church
1:45 P.M. Soul Sisters, Parlor
7:00 P.M. Praise Band, Great Hall

Friday, March 5, 2010

1:00 P.M. Organ practice for Hymn Festival
7:00 P.M. Girls Small Group Sleepover (until 7 a.m.) Youth Rooms

Saturday, March 6, 2010

9:00 A.M. Hymn Festival practice, Fellowship Hall, Sanctuary, 202, 212
12:30 P.M. Hymn Festival choirs lunch, Fellowship Hall

(* Child care provided)

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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Pastoral Care Emergency Number