NOVEMBER



NEWS AT FIRST

First United Methodist Church, Gastonia, NC
November Newsletter

UPCOMING EVENTS / NEW NEWS / EVENT RECAPS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3 Note from Co-Lead Pastors

4 Preschool

5 Children's Ministry

6 Youth Ministry

7 Adult Discipleship

8 Friends on the Go trip

9 Friends on the Go & Coming events

10 Coming Events Continues

11 WEF & Small Groups

12 Small Groups Continue

13 United Women in Faith

14 Sunday School

15 Community Health Ministry

16 Community Health Ministry Pt.2

17 Hands & Feet Missions

18 Finance Report

19 October Fun

20 Take Note

Note From Co-Lead Pastors



Remembering, Giving Thanks, and Looking Ahead

November invites us into a season of remembrance, gratitude, generosity, and hope at First United Methodist Church. We look forward to joining you all in worship on Sunday Mornings.

On Sunday, November 1, we will celebrate All Saints Sunday, remembering those who have died in the Lord and giving thanks for the lives, faith, and love of those who have shaped our own journeys. As we light candles and speak the names of loved ones, we are reminded that death does not have the final word. Through Jesus Christ, we hold fast to the promise of resurrection and the hope of eternal life. We give thanks for the great cloud of witnesses whose faith continues to inspire us.

Throughout November, we will continue our sermon series, Setting Ripples in Motion, alongside our 2027 Annual Giving Campaign. We invite every household to prayerfully consider how God is calling you to support the ministry and mission of First UMC in the coming year. Please return your commitment card as we seek to strengthen our ministries, serve our neighbors, and share Christ's love with our community and the world. Together, our generosity creates ripples of faith and hope that reach far beyond what we can see.

On Sunday, November 22, we will celebrate Christ the King Sunday, proclaiming Jesus as Lord over all creation and renewing our commitment to follow him.

As November draws to a close, we will enter Advent with a new theme: A Thrill of Hope, inspired by the beautiful hymn O Holy Night. In a world longing for light, may we prepare our hearts to receive Christ anew and share the hope that his coming brings.

Grace and peace,

Justin and Melissa

Rebecca Denton

Preschool

October was filled with fun, fellowship, and learning at FUMC Preschool! Fire Safety Week is always a highlight of the school year, and the children loved welcoming our local firefighters to the preschool. They learned about the important work firefighters do, what they look like in their full uniforms, and the importance of running toward firefighters rather than away from them in an emergency.

The children also had the opportunity to explore the fire truck, climb inside, learn about its equipment, hear a smoke detector, and even spray the fire hose! Our Fours class enjoyed its first field trip to the Myers Memorial United Methodist Church Pumpkin Patch, where the children listened to a story before choosing their own pumpkins to take home.

Our younger classes joined in the fall fun by selecting pumpkins from our very own preschool pumpkin patch. Families also gathered on the FLC Patio for our annual Pumpkin Picnic, enjoying a wonderful time of fellowship and fun together. We ended the month with one of our favorite traditions, Trick-or-Treating the Church Offices! The children loved wearing the matching T-shirts they created with their teachers, and our church staff delighted them by dressing up for the occasion.

It is always hard to tell who enjoys this tradition more—the children or the adults! We are so grateful for the continued support of our church family and for the many ways our congregation helps make these special experiences possible. Through these activities, our children are learning, building relationships, and experiencing the love and joy of being part of the FUMC family.





November (how did we get here so fast?!) brings the opportunity to give thanks, and I'm reminded of an idea we shared in our Children's Messages as well as Sunday School last year: the idea of ThanksLiving.

How to live with thanks, with gratitude, and make that a focus of everyday living, not just in November. We hear often of being a Matthew 25 Christian, where Jesus tells us "Whatever you do to the least of these, you do to me."

I invite you to read and share this passage (and word search!) for children, youth, and grown-ups, too, as a way to center our thoughts on these important words. We will be talking more about ThanksLiving on Sundays and Wednesdays in November.

As always, I am grateful for the opportunities for growth and service the Church gives us all. Let us be mindful of ThanksLiving every day! P.S. - I invite you to find the song "All Good Gifts" from the musical Godspell, a piece that speaks to my heart in so many ways.

I hope it speaks to your heart, too!

Children's MINISTRY



W	L	J	R	R	S	I	C	A	Y	N	G	D	H	T
B	D	S	X	L	E	V	O	A	K	J	L	H	M	T
D	R	R	E	O	A	D	M	S	O	Z	B	I	N	A
E	Y	G	I	S	T	H	E	I	B	P	Y	D	F	I
X	N	J	G	N	U	X	E	C	N	F	J	T	C	E
A	X	E	A	K	K	W	B	K	J	S	E	R	J	K
N	L	U	D	V	V	S	H	E	P	H	E	R	D	I
Z	C	F	A	T	H	E	R	H	U	N	G	R	Y	N
T	P	L	T	T	S	T	R	A	N	G	E	R	Y	G
E	H	R	O	X	N	G	T	X	T	H	R	O	N	E
L	N	I	I	T	Q	X	E	T	E	R	N	A	L	W
R	E	F	R	S	H	A	B	R	O	T	H	E	R	S
D	G	A	N	S	O	E	M	B	L	E	S	S	E	D
C	N	P	S	T	T	N	D	Y	C	V	P	C	D	Q
N	K	E	Q	T	P	Y	F	W	U	G	L	O	R	Y

CLOTHED	SHEPHERD	HUNGRY	KING	STRANGER
LEAST	BLESSED	THRONE	SICK	EAT
GLORY	LIFE	ANGELS	DRINK	THIRSTY
BROTHERS	FATHER	ETERNAL	PRISON	COME

Sr-Hi Fall Beach Retreat

At our Anchored in Christ High School Fall Beach Retreat at Kure Beach, youth explored Hebrews 6:19 and what it means to have Christ as our sure and steadfast anchor through life's storms. Through worship, meaningful discussions, creative activities, mission work and a foot washing experience, we wrestled with questions about faith, doubt, humility and what it means to love and serve others as Jesus did. We were reminded that being anchored in Christ does not mean we will never face challenges, but that we are never alone in them. As we return home, we hope to carry these lessons into our everyday lives by trusting God through uncertainty, serving others with humility, and sharing Christ's hope with the world around us.



*Mid-Hi Fall Retreat at Camp Awanita

Mid-Hi Fall Retreat at Camp Awanita

At our Don't Stop Believing Mid-Hi Fall Retreat at Camp Awanita, our middle schoolers explored what it means to "Don't stop believing, even when the journey doesn't look like you planned!" Through worship, meaningful activities, games, fellowship and studying the story of Joseph (the one with the cool coat), we learned that faith does not mean life will always go according to our plans. Instead, faith means trusting that God will be with us through every twist, turn, and unexpected detour. As we move forward, we hope our middle school youth will continue to trust God, lean on their faith community, and remember that even when they can't see the whole road ahead, they never have to walk it alone.



*Sr-Hi Youth at Carolina Beach Pumpkin Patch

ADULT DISCIPLESHIP

Becky Greene

All-Rolls-Royce Teams and Diaper Dandies This is my favorite time of year!

As the clock ticks down to the opening tip-off of college basketball season, Dick Vitale, ESPN analyst, always shares his predictions with us. The All-Rolls-Royce teams are a collection of elite NCAA players. While the Diaper Dandies are the next generation of stars.

Recently, I was reminded that the lay leadership in our church deserves similar recognition, T.C. Dunlap and John Land, Jr., certainly belong on the All-Rolls-Royce teams. T.C.'s contribution in education in Gaston County was outstanding. His love of God propelled him to love his staff and students in an elite way. John Land, Jr. was a prime-time performer at First UMC. All of our lives are different because John passed this way. He served this congregation with the same love and heart he showed during his time in the military. These men commended God's work to the rest of us.



Ellie Henry and Claire Henry belong on the Diaper Dandies. Their song in Modern Worship was inspiring. Pearce Yelverton prayed the prayer of dedication in Traditional Worship with conviction and compassion.

Berni Hurd did an amazing job reading a difficult passage of scripture. How blessed we are to entrust First UMC to the next generation. They are already shining the light of Jesus to transform lives.

The legacy of discipleship is not simply what we accomplish in our lifetime, but the faith we pass on to those who come after us.

Every generation has its All-Stars, and every generation has its rookies. The beauty of basketball and the church is we need both. Just like in basketball, even the most talented player cannot win the game alone. We need all of our members to coach, encourage, and pass the ball. Let the season of giving begin!

Friends on the Go :

TRIP TO THE OPEN KITCHEN AND SULLENBERGER AVIATION MUSEUM









FRIENDS ON THE GO

Friends on the Go invites you to join Community Health Ministry for our Veterans Luncheon!

Memorial worship begins at 10:30 AM in the Memory Garden, followed by registration at 11:00 AM and a complimentary meal at 11:30 AM in the FLC.

Reserve your spot by emailing stephanie.s@fumcgastonia.org, calling the church office, or scanning the QR code.



COMING EVENTS



Christmas Poinsettias

Honor or remember a loved one with a $15 poinsettia this Christmas! Order online or submit your form and payment to Stephanie Sholtzes by December 4.

Pick up your poinsettia after the Christmas Eve or December 27 worship service. Extra funds benefit the Minister's Assistance Fund.

Seasonal Chancel Choir

Love to sing? Youth and adults are invited to join the Chancel Choir October 28–December 16 as we prepare music for Advent and Christmas Eve!



COMING EVENTS CONTINUE



Annual Charge Conference

November 22 at 2 PM

The United Methodist Church's annual Charge Conference is a time for church leadership to gather with district representatives to review ministry, discuss church leadership and compensation, and conduct important church business. This annual meeting helps ensure accountability, support, and continued connection between the local church, district, and annual conference.

First UMC Theatre Presents: Les Misérables

November 13, 14, 20 & 21 at 7:30 PM | November 15 & 22 at 2:30 PM

Join FUMC Theatre for a special production of Les Misérables! Enjoy this beloved musical brought to life on stage at 162 East Main Street in Gastonia. Admission is free, and donations are gratefully accepted.
Reservations: fumcgastonia.org/theatre



SAVE THE DATE!!



WEDNESDAY EVENING FELLOWSHIP & SMALL GROUPS

JOIN US EVERY WEDNESDAY FOR DINNER AND COMMUNITY

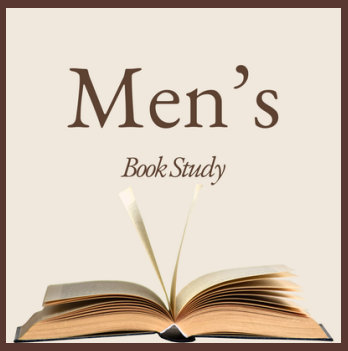


Small Groups



Sabbath

Wednesday
6:30pm
Parlor



Men's Book Study

Wednesday
6:30pm
Room 316



Prayer Pause

Wednesday
6:30pm
Room 312



Sacred Curiosity

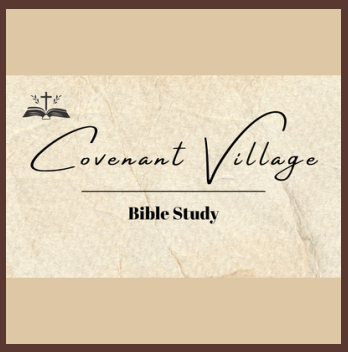
Wednesday
6:30pm
Room 218

Small Groups Continue



Prayer Shawl

Wednesday
3:30pm
Room 218



Bible Study

Monday
6:30pm
Covenant Village



Dementia

Tuesday, Nov. 17
4pm
Room 218



Theology on Tap

Thursday, Nov. 12
6:30pm
Keepsake Brewery



Gather

Tuesday, Nov. 10
6:30pm
FLC



Pickleball

Mondays
6:30pm
Gym



Mahjong

Thursdays - 6pm
Fridays - 3pm
Theatre



Breakfast

Thursday, Nov. 19
7am
Eggs Up Grill

United Women in Faith

Special Recognition Pin Nominations

Nominations Due: November 30
United Women in Faith (UWF) invites members to nominate an individual, woman or man, who makes a meaningful difference in the lives of women, children, and youth locally and around the world. This annual award honors someone who exemplifies the purpose of UWF through their dedication and service.

To nominate someone, submit a letter explaining why they deserve this recognition. Email nominations to Cathryn Beasley at cmbeasley3@gmail.com or deliver them to the church in an envelope addressed to Cathryn Beasley.



Rise Against Hunger

Wednesday, December 2 | Following Dinner | FUMC Gym

Join us as we partner with Rise Against Hunger to pack more than 15,000 meals for communities around the world! Volunteers of all ages, including youth and elementary students, are invited to help with this hands-on mission project. We need at least 100 volunteers and hope to raise $6,000 to cover the cost of the meals.

Register and donate:
Donations may also be dropped off at the church labeled “Pack-a-Thon.”

Questions? Contact Cathryn Beasley at cmbeasley3@gmail.com.



Sunday SCHOOL



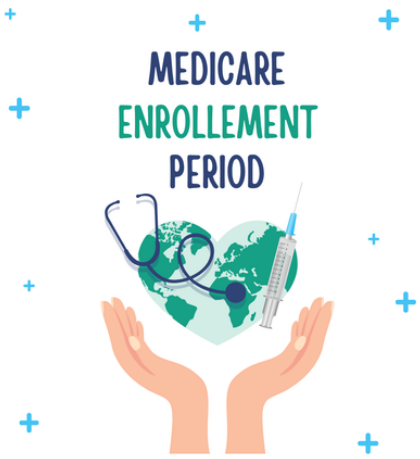
Find a Class and Grow in Faith!

Looking for a place to connect, learn, and grow in your faith? Explore one of our Sunday School classes, each offering a welcoming environment for fellowship, discussion, and spiritual growth.

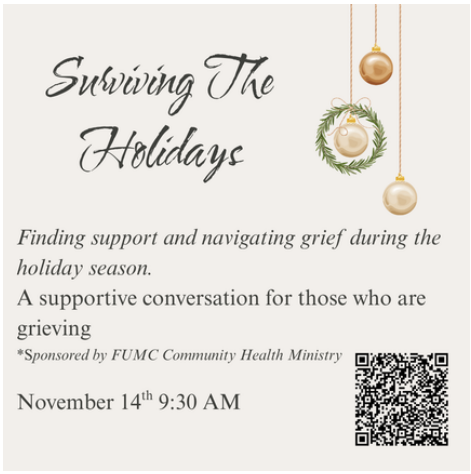
- Crosstalk – A cross-section of ages and opinions explores topics ranging from the Bible to modern-day issues. Room 301, 3rd Floor | Led by Carol Taylor, Steve Laws, Lindsay Willis, and Steve Whitesell
- Faith Matters – Parents of children and youth grow in their own faith while building a faith that matters for their families. Room 316, 3rd Floor | Led by Walt and Anne Mallonee
- Celebration Class – Enjoy roundtable discussions and shared experiences in this relaxed, unstructured class. Room 218, 2nd Floor | Led by Becky Greene
- Joy Class – A Bible-based class for couples and singles, ages 50–90. Room 315, 3rd Floor | Led by Judge Tim Patti
- Carpenter Class – A variety of ages come together for short studies using a lecture and discussion format. Room 314, 3rd Floor | Led by Mark McIntosh

Community Health Ministry

Lisa Marisiddaiah















COMMUNITY HEALTH MINISTRY

Medicare

Medicare Open Enrollment began October 15 and continues through December 7, 2026. This is your opportunity to choose or change plans, but you may have questions. With so many options—including Traditional Medicare, Medicare Supplement plans, and Medicare Advantage plans—do you understand the differences? Do you know which option is best for you? Contact SHIIP (Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program), a FREE, unbiased consumer information program run by the NC Department of Insurance that helps Medicare beneficiaries and caregivers to compare and evaluate their current plans and make necessary changes during the open enrollment period. 704-874-1953 for free guidance regarding Medicare Parts A, B, C, and D (prescription drug plans) and Medigap policies.

Flu Clinic

November 11th
4:30 PM - 6:30 PM
Advance registration is requested but walk-ins are welcome! Reserve your slot now! By scanning the QR Code or call (704) 864-4371

Veterans Luncheon

November 9
11:30 AM (Registration/Lunch is at 11 AM) Join us as we honor Gaston County veterans.
10:30 AM Memorial Worship
Speaker is SSgt Samantha Jo Anderson, BSN, RN,
Staff Sergeant pinning ceremony, color guard, music and speaker
FLC
Scan the QR Code to Register or call (704) 864-4371

Maintain Don't Gain

Discover practical tips for mindful eating, navigating holiday gatherings, and enjoying your favorite festive treats without guilt. Learn simple strategies to maintain your weight, manage holiday stress and keep your wellness goals on track.
Scan the QR Code to Register or call (704) 864-4371

Surviving the Holidays

November 14
9:30 AM - 11 AM
Fellowship Hall, FLC
Finding support and navigating grief during the holiday season.
A supportive conversation for those who are grieving.
Scan the QR Code to Register or call (704) 864-4371

Blood Pressure Clinic

Join Community Health Ministry for a free blood pressure clinic on the second Wednesday of the month from 4:30–6:30 PM in the FLC.

Stop by to check your blood pressure and take a step toward better health!

National Caregiver Month

November is a time to recognize and honor those who give their time, energy, and love to caring for a family member or friend with health needs.

If you are caring for a loved one or know a church member who is a caregiver, please send their name and address to Nurse@fumcgastonia.com.

Volunteers Needed! Help with our caregiver outreach project and deliveries on November 13, 2026. For more information, contact Lisa Marisiddaiah at Nurse@fumcgastonia.com.

Hands & Feet Missions

Front Desk Volunteers

Our Front Desk is looking for volunteers to help welcome and assist visitors during the week. Volunteers are especially needed from 3-5 p.m. on weekdays. If you enjoy meeting people and helping others feel welcome, this is a great opportunity to serve! ***Contact Leigh Smith at 704-864-4371 to learn more.***

Church Greeters

Help us create a warm and welcoming environment on Sunday mornings! Greeters are needed for Sunday services to welcome members and guests, offer assistance, and help people feel at home from the moment they arrive. If you'd like to serve as a greeter, ***contact Leigh Smith at leigh.smith@fumcgastonia.org or call the church office at 704-864-4371***





Finance Report

September 2026 Financial Update

Dave Davis

For the nine months ended September 30, 2026, First United Methodist Church continues to be in a strong financial position!

Through September 2026, the combined financial results for church operations, the kitchen, and the preschool were as follows:

- Year-to-Date Income equaled $1,498,169 ($8,382 above budget)
- Year-to-Date Expenses totaled $1,566,931 ($165,275 below budget)

The resulting year-to-date deficit is $68,762, which is $173,657 better than budgeted.



Estimate Of Giving

I/ We plan to support the mission and ministry of First United Methodist Church in 2027 with a:

Annual gift of $_____
Or monthly gift of $_____
And/or a special contribution to the General Endowment $_____
For a total in 2027 of $_____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Signature(s): _____

Stewardship: Setting Ripples in Motion

As we begin our Annual Stewardship Campaign, we invite you to prayerfully consider how God may be calling you to support the ministries of First United Methodist Church in the coming year. Information about this year's campaign is available in the Gathering Place on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings through November 8. Finance Committee volunteers will be there to answer your questions. You may also contact Dave H. Davis or Marie Revels in the Business Office (ddavis@fumcgastonia.org, marie.revels@fumcgastonia.org, or 704-864-4371). Commitment cards may be placed in the offering plate on Sunday mornings, mailed to the Business Office, or delivered in person. Your pledge and giving information will remain strictly confidential and will be viewed only by Dave and Marie in the Business Office.

Your Finance Committee





October Fun:

FALL FEST, LAITY SUNDAY, BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS





TAKE NOTE

SUNDAY MORNING VIEWS & ATTENDANCE

Date	8:45 AM In person	8:45 AM Online	9:00 AM In person	11:00 AM In person	11:00 AM Online	In Person Total
Oct. 4th	35	33	51	123	94	209
Oct. 11th	45	40	43	88	106	176
Oct. 25th	28	30	28	145	64	201

Date	10:30 AM In person	10:30 AM Online
Oct. 18th	168	188

Want Your Event in the Newsletter?

Please submit event requests by the 15th of each month using our Communications & Promotions Request Form
https://fumcgastonia.org/resources/communications-promotions-request

Connect with us!

Website: https://fumcgastonia.org/home
Phone: (704) 864-4371

First United Methodist Church Gastonia

FUMCGastonia

Sign Up for E-Blasts

fumcgastonia.org/give pay

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