

THE CORNERSTONE



A Letter From The Pastor

By Matt Seals

"As you go, proclaim the message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give."
 Matthew 10:7-8

It seems that as we approach a new month, I always find myself saying, "It's looking to be an exciting month in the life of the church." I truly mean that. Every month brings something that makes me excited about life with God here at First Methodist Church. October is no exception!

For us, the month begins with Homecoming. Homecoming is something we brought back a few years ago as a way of remembering our past and celebrating what God has done through the generations of people who have called First Methodist home. But Homecoming is not simply about looking backward. It is also an opportunity to celebrate what God is doing right now and to look forward with great anticipation as we join God in the work He has for us in the days ahead.

Our theme for this year's Homecoming is "At the Table." Our Homecoming also falls on the same Sunday as World Communion Sunday, which gives us a wonderful reminder that the body of Christ is so much larger than what we see gathered on a Sunday morning at First Methodist.

On that day, we will gather with brothers and sisters in Christ around the world at the table of the Lord. There is something beautiful about that. If I am honest with you, it is one of the things I love most about being part of the Global Methodist Church. From my seat at the conference level, I have the privilege of seeing the connections that God is creating across nations and cultures. We truly are a global movement. I have a prayer partner in Uganda. Our new Assembly of Bishops, which begins its work this month, represents several nations and nationalities.

All of this reminds me of a simple but powerful truth: at God's table, there is room. There is room for us, and there is room for the person who has not yet found their place. There is room for the person who has been walking with Jesus for decades and the person who is just beginning to ask questions about faith. There is room for people from different backgrounds, different cultures, and different generations. And as we receive the invitation to the table, we are also given the opportunity to extend that invitation to others. We become God's mouthpiece, hands, and feet, inviting others to come and experience the grace, love, forgiveness, and new life that we have received through Jesus Christ. That leads us to another important part of October: our Stewardship Campaign.

Our campaign is a little different this year. Our Finance Team has put together our proposed budget for 2027, and we are going to present that budget to the church. We want to invite you to prayerfully consider what we have put together, but even more importantly, to consider what we are praying and seeking to do together with the help of God. Our theme for this year's stewardship campaign is "Freely Received, Freely Give." Everything we have ultimately comes from God. We have freely received His grace. We have freely received His love. We have freely received the gifts, abilities, resources, relationships, and opportunities He has entrusted to us. And Jesus reminds us that what we have received is not meant to stop with us.

This year, we will also ask you to prayerfully consider how you might help support the future growth of First Methodist as we collect funds over the next three years toward the purchase of the Bell property. We believe God has given us an opportunity to think not only about what our church needs today, but also about how we can prepare for what God may want to do through First Methodist tomorrow.

Be on the lookout for our first-ever Stewardship Booklet, which will recap much of what God has done through First Methodist in 2026 and then look ahead toward 2027. It is our hope that this booklet will help us celebrate where we have been, recognize what God is doing among us now, and prayerfully discern where He is leading us next. I hope each of you will take time to pray about how God might be calling you to support the ministries of First Methodist through your tithes and offerings in 2027. Stewardship is about much more than paying the bills or meeting a budget. It is one of the ways we respond to the grace we have received. We give because God has first given to us.

This October, as we gather at the table, may we remember that we have freely received an abundance of God's grace. And may we freely give what He has entrusted to us so that lives can be transformed through the ministries of First Methodist Church—and so that everyone who comes through our doors, and everyone we encounter beyond them, will know that there is a place for them at the table.

In Christ,

Rev. Matt Seals
 pastor@fmcnc.org



A Letter From The Youth Pastor

By Joel Wise

Happy Fall!
It’s about time it got here!

The youth had a good month in September. We started Operation Christmas Child donation collections and went camping at Raven Rock State Park. We also started FMC game nights in support of our youth and their athletic pursuits. Thank you to all who have gone to these games. There are still some games left in the season. We will continue to share those in the bulletin.

This month, the youth will be getting ready for trunk or treat in downtown Clinton on **October 31**. The theme this year is Jurassic Park. If you’d like to donate candy, please drop it off at the missions cabinet outside the office.

We have been blessed to have so many church members come and feed and teach our kids. It really helps them to connect to the larger congregation. If you have not had the opportunity to feed the youth or to teach the youth, either in Sunday School, Sunday night, or Wednesday night, you can **sign up at fmcnc.org/youth** or at the bulletin board outside the office.

I hope you have a blessed month.

In Christ,
Pastor Joel

Youth Fall Trip
Hubbs Corn Maze

Oct. 24
9:30am - 2:30pm
RSVP by Oct. 14

tinyurl.com/Hubbs2026



Steadfast Youth

Volunteer to be a
Lesson Leader
or provide a
Sunday Night Meal

fmcnc.org/youth



JURASSIC PARK
WATCH PARTY

OCT. 25
5PM *TRUNK OR TREAT PREP*

THEMED SNACKS

RSVP BY OCT. 21
[TINYURL.COM/JPWPARTY](https://tinyurl.com/JPWPARTY)





A Letter From The Children’s Minister

By Abby Tomell

The school year is officially underway, and we are settling back into our school year routines. I am excited to have all our kids back and look forward to another wonderful season together.

Wednesday Evening Fellowship is back in session! The preschool and K-2 class are working on stabilizing our foundation with the basics. Our 3-5 group is diving into creation. Each week brings us a great opportunity to connect with friends, grow in their faith, and enjoy their time together.

Our movie night featuring *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe* was a wonderful evening. The kids enjoyed the movie and buckets of popcorn. Thank you to everyone who showed up and helped make the night fun.

A thank you to all the parents who took the time to attend our parent meeting. Your involvement and support means a lot to the Children’s Ministry, and we are grateful for the opportunity to partner together. If you did not receive a copy of the Covenant of Conduct to review and sign, please let me know so I can make sure you receive one.

UPCOMING: Wheels Up

October 2nd: Get ready to roll! Kids are invited to bring anything with wheels – bikes, roller blades, skates, scooters, or anything else they can safely ride. There will be a short lesson and then we will break in the new parking lot!

“I have no greater joy than this: to hear that my children are walking in the truth.” 3 John 1:4
I am looking forward to all the wonderful things God has planned for us this month.

Much Love,
Abby Tomell
Children@fmcnc.org





A Letter From The Musicians

Dear Church Family,

We recently sang the hymn "Fairest Lord Jesus" (OGRP No. 113) in worship at both services. While singing, I was struck by the line "who makes the woeful heart to sing", found at the end of the second verse. As the seasons change from summer to fall and we enjoy the wonder of the autumnal beauty that surrounds us, we can be reminded that our Lord Jesus is indeed fairer than the meadows, the woodlands, and all of creation. He is purer and shines brighter than the sun, moon and starry hosts. He alone can make the "woeful heart to sing." So, even if you don't sing much out loud, the next time your heart feels "woeful" remember the words to this hymn and let Jesus fill your heart with a song of joy.

***Fairest Lord Jesus,
Ruler of all nature,
O Thou of God and
man the Son;
Thee will I cherish,
Thee will I honor,
Thou, my soul's glory,
joy, and crown.
"Fairest Lord Jesus",
verse 1***

Here are a few upcoming events to help fill your heart with a joyful song:

- The Children's Choirs will sing in worship on October 4th, November 1st, and December 6th.
- 10-10-2026: The FMC Wind Ensemble or the Singing Strings will play at the Sampson County History Museum as part of the Square Fair (details TBD).
- 11-15-2026: Women's Sunday with special music.
- 11-16-2026: The FMC Wind Ensemble will play for the Clinton Lion's Club.
- 11-22-2026: Community Thanksgiving Service. This will include combined adult and children's choirs. More details to come.
- 12-16-2026: Chancel Choir Christmas party. Rehearsal at 6 and party at 7. Last choir rehearsal of the year and dress rehearsal for the Christmas special. More details TBD.
- 12-20-2026: Choir Special as part of the 11 o'clock service.

As a continued tribute to America's 250th birthday, the FMC music ministries will present "An American Christmas", a musical celebration featuring selections from Joseph Martin's Appalachian Winter, special anthems, and traditional American carols.

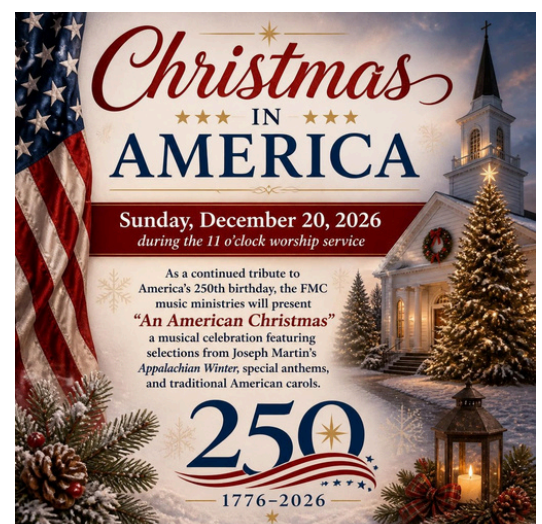
We would love to invite anyone who would like to sing in this program to join us every Wednesday for the first 15 minutes or so of choir rehearsal. We will work on this program during the first part of weekly choir rehearsals so that folks who only want to sing in the program can participate right after WEF dinner. Please consider joining us for this wonderful event. This is open to singers in 3rd grade and up.

In Christ,

*Cameron & Marquita
Someliana-Lauer*

(910) 548-2719

organist@fmcnc.org





N.O.W. Corner – College Kids

Reach out to our college kids:

Wright Waters – son of William and Heather Waters 3418 W. Grace St. Tampa FL 33607

Mac O’Quinn – son of Patrick and Dottie O’Quinn UNC School of Law 100 Spring Meadow Dr. Apt 06306 Chapel Hill, NC 27517



Birthday Cake Bunch

Lesa Moore; Mary Margaret Hobbs; Doris Gore



W.E.F. Schedule

OCTOBER
7th – Team Lesa Moore
14th – Team Jan Smith & Kay Raynor
21st – Team Bob & Ken
28th – Team Mike Rivenbark

NOVEMBER
4th – The Methodist Men
11th – Team Marilyn St. Pierre
18th – Team Luke Martin



Meals on Wheels

October 9: Steve & Dianne Cox
October 23: Helen Hobson



Flower Calendar

4th- Curtis & Lori Barwick; Ashley Rivers
11th- Dempsey Craig
18th- Brenda Nordin
25th- Mary Jo Carr; Susan & Mike Eaves

Sanctuary flower arrangements are \$55 for one slot or \$110 for both.
Payments are made before your date.

Scan the QR Code
to sign up for yours.



Worship Corner

Altar Guild: Matt & Sarah Stone
Greeters: Eleanor Powell Circle

The Prayer Corner

Intercessory Prayer Group: Mondays at 10:00 am



Happy Birthday!

- 1st – Reid Herring
- 1st – Tiffany Rivenbark
- 1st – Kayleigh Seals
- 1st – Tanner Serafini
- 4th – Polly Coffey
- 5th – Bill Carr
- 5th – Dennis Carter
- 6th – Mike Eaves
- 7th – Edward Owen
- 9th – Douglas Taylor
- 10th – Josie Sargent
- 11th – Warren Perry
- 14th – Everett Griffin
- 15th – Ben Prestage
- 15th – Bill Prestage
- 15th – Kylie Cashwell
- 15th – Maggie Wells
- 15th – Rose Vann
- 15th – Wendy Carr
- 15th – Albert Thornton
- 18th – Kathryn Jacomet
- 19th – Loraine Butler
- 21st – Luke Martin
- 21st – Mac O'Quinn
- 22nd – Belinda Kiziah
- 22nd – Taylor Driver
- 22nd – Trey Pope
- 23rd – Lynne Moore
- 24th – Justin Boyette
- 26th – Rachel Grantham
- 27th – Grayson Butler
- 27th – Kim Sutton
- 27th – Louetta Carr
- 27th – Vevlyn Lowe
- 29th – Zane Burkhardt
- 30th – Jordan Lindsay

Happy Anniversary!

- 3rd – Dempsey & Pat Craig
- 8th – Eric & Caitlyn Collins
- 11th – Mike & Tiffany Rivenbark
- 13th – Luke & Jessica Martin
- 18th – Evan & Vanna Johnson
- 22nd – Caleb & Kimberly Ayers
- 23rd – Jerry & Mary Margaret Hobbs
- 27th – Hugh & Mary Jo Carr
- 28th – Stan & Debbie Roberts



Prayer List:

Debbie Roberts, Janet Mitchell, Audrey Vaughn, Marti Knobloch, Amanda Underwood, Lynn McLamb, Jack Musick, Larry Waters, Jerry & Mary Margaret Hobbs, Jane Spell, Doris Gore, Neal Hardison, Joey Lowder, Dr. Mac Herring, Jimmie Hall, Marvin Mitchell, Homer and Debra Morris, Wayne Tew, Pat Warrick, JoAnn Westbrook, Janet Johnson, Zachery Johnson, Steve Baker, Mike & Myra Humphrey, Glenn Brewer, Bryson Capps, Ed Owen, Greg Moore, Jimmy Smith, Wayne Reynolds, Angie Hall, Violet White

Those who are homebound:

Ruth Godwin

Missionary:

Forrest & Laura Strickland

Those who are in long-term care:

Loraine Butler, Anthony Balkcum, Pat Green, Frances Pearson, Polly Coffey, Helen Griffin, Louetta Carr



Children’s Volunteers

Nursery:

- 4th – Vanna Johnson (11:00)
- 7th – Don Wrench (WEF)
- 11th – Vevlyn Lowe (9:00)
- 14th – Sandra Pearson (WEF)
- 18th – Kalin Cockman (9:00)
- 21st – Johnathan Lane (WEF)
- 25th – Linda Andrews (9:00)
- 28th – Hannah Baxter (WEF)

October

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 VICTORIA OUT OF OFFICE	2 6:00 Wheels Up	3
4 9:30 Fellowship 10:00 Sunday School 11:00 Homecoming Service 12:00 Covered Dish	5 10:00 Intercessory Prayer	6 9:00 Chat with M@ 4:30 Griefshare 6:15 NOW Meeting	7 4:00 Singing Strings 5:00 K-5 Choir 5:30 Bible Study for All Ages 5:30 Preschool Choir 5:45 Bells/Winds 6:30 Dinner 7:00 Chancel Choir	8	9 Meals on Wheels	10 10:00 Square Fair featuring FMC Wind Ensemble
11 9:00 Son-Up Service 10:00 Sunday School 11:00 Worship Service 4:00 Confirmation 5:00 Youth	12 10:00 Intercessory Prayer	13 9:00 Chat with M@ 4:30 Griefshare 6:00 CHS Varsity Volleyball	14 4:00 Singing Strings 5:00 K-5 Choir 5:30 Bible Study for All Ages 5:30 Preschool Choir 5:45 Bells/Winds 6:30 Dinner 7:00 Chancel Choir	15 9:30-10  Birthday Cakes 4:00-8:00 Fall Festival Volunteers @ Butler	16	17
18 8:00MMBreakfast 9:00 Son-Up Service 10:00 Sunday School 11:00 Worship Service 4:00 Confirmation 5:00 Youth	19 10:00 Intercessory Prayer 11:00 Ida Johnson Circle Newsletters Due	20 9:00 Chat with M@ 4:30 Griefshare 6:30 Eleanor Powell Circle	21 4:00 Singing Strings 5:00 K-5 Choir 5:30 Bible Study for All Ages 5:30 Preschool Choir 5:45 Bells/Winds 6:30 Dinner 7:00 Chancel Choir	22 6:30 Skill Creations	23 10:00-11:30 Kitchen In Use 6:00 Wind Ensemble Plays Music on Main Meals on Wheels	24 9:30-2:30 Youth Hubbs Corn Maze
25 9:00 Son- Up Service 10:00 Sunday School 11:00 Worship Service 4:00 Confirmation 5:00 Youth	26 10:00 Intercessory Prayer	27 9:00 Chat with M@ 4:30 Griefshare	28 4:00 Singing Strings 5:00 K-5 Choir 5:30 Bible Study for All Ages 5:30 Preschool Choir 5:45 Bells/Winds 6:30 Dinner 7:00 Chancel Choir	29	30 3:00 N.O.W. Feeding CHS Football Team	31 Youth Trunk or Treat Downtown Clinton

10/1: Receipts & Coordinating forms Due to Office

9/19: November Newsletters Due to Office

The
Seedbed
Daily Text

October 21 November 18
Wednesday Night Bible Study

first love

Philippians

J. D. WALZ

With Rev. Matt Seals

OCTOBER 4, 2026

ALL ARE WELCOME

First Methodist

At the Table

Homecoming 2026

WITH PASTOR
REV. MATT SEALS

LOCATION
208 SAMPSON ST
CLINTON, NC

CHILDREN'S CHOIR WILL SING

COVERED DISH TO FOLLOW



OPERATION

Christmas

CHILD

OCTOBER ITEMS

OCT. 4-11

SMALL BALL

BUILDING BLOCKS

PLASTIC ANIMALS

FINGER PUPPETS

OTHER SMALL TOYS/FIGURES

OCT. 11-18

DOLL/PURSE TOY TRUCK/CAR

SMALL BACKPACK

SOCCER BALL W/PUMP

STUFFED ANIMAL

OTHER LARGE TOY

OCT. 18-25

PUZZLES

DRY WATERCOLOR SET

BINOCULARS & COMPASS

OCT. 25-NOV. 1

GAMES

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

CHALKBOARD & CHALK

JUMP ROPE STICKERS

LET US DO THE SHOPPING FOR YOU!

LABEL DONATIONS "OCC"

 FIRST METHODIST CHURCH

208 SAMPSON STREET • CLINTON, NC

METHODIST MEN

Sunday

BREAKFAST



OCTOBER 18

08.00 AM

JOIN US FOR A MORNING

OF FOOD AND FELLOWSHIP.

Skill Creations

Night

Crafts, Bible Story,

Singing & More

October 22nd

6:30pm

Youth Trunk or Treat



Come support our youth on

October 31

Downtown Clinton

We are not collecting candy this year.

Money donations can be made to N.O.W.

 Butler Avenue
Elementary

CLINTON, NC

Volunteer Opportunities

Donuts for ~~Students~~ **EVENT POSTPONED** ➤ October 1 & 2 ➤

7:35 - 8:00 AM

Volunteers are needed to help with students whose parents cannot attend.

Fall Festival ➤ Thursday, October 15 ➤

4:00 PM - Help with set-up

5:00 - 8:00 PM - Help during the festival & clean-up

Can't stay the whole evening? No problem!

Volunteer for one of these shifts:

5:00 - 6:30 PM or 6:30 - 8:00 PM - or both!

King & Queen Fundraiser ➤ October 6-13 ➤

8:00 - 10:00 AM

Volunteers are needed to help count money collected from students.

 Want to Volunteer?

Contact Brenda Nordin at 910-990-1668 or the church office.

Please let us know which event and time you would like to help with.

Thank you!