

# *The Messenger*

**Spindale United Methodist Church**

PO Box 241 - 185 Mill Street Spindale, NC 28160

January 2025

## **Eric's Ethereal Cereal**

What a gift it is to live together in community. What a challenge it is to live together in community. I find that both of these statements are true and carry different levels of meaning for me depending on the way my days unfold. Now, as much as any time in my memory, we are being reminded regularly that personal growth, and fulfillment, the health of society and ourselves are tied closely to the many ways we are shaped in and by community.

Reuben Job offers us the following encouragement about Jesus' practices and promises regarding the importance of "being in" community.

*Jesus lived his life in community. From his childhood with Mary and Joseph to his calling and traveling with the disciples to his declaration that he and the Father were one, Jesus lived in community. A community of faith nurtured him, supported him, and informed him. It is unthinkable that we would try to live a faithful life without the gifts offered in a faithful community of Jesus. Jesus was known for valuing solitude since he retired to rest and pray, but living in a community also marked his life....Jesus makes a dramatic and revolutionary promise when he says, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them" (Matt 18:20) This is a welcome promise to those who may wonder if God is present in their lives or their affairs. This is a hopeful promise for those who sometimes feel alone and forsaken. This is an enormous assurance for those who face the unknown and need companionship and community.*

The writer of Hebrews encouraged his readers to not lose heart or succumb to the temptation to fall away. "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

Community – whether in-person or online is a gift. I pray we will continue to celebrate its gift and embrace the ways God is calling us to join in the creation and sustaining of the beloved community.

Blessings. Peace, and Happy New Year!  
Pastor Eric

## CHURCH STAFF

Pastor Rev. Eric Marshburn  
Office Manager Jennifer Ruppe  
Financial Secretary Janet Atkins  
Director of Music Jeane Watson

### Church Office Hours

Tuesday through Friday, 9am - 12noon

### Worship Assistants

Liturgists Carolyn Young  
Greeter Denise Bateman

### Small Groups

**Bible Study** is held on Sunday mornings at 10am.

**Book club** - Join us on Thursdays at 7pm at Main Street Market in Rutherfordton. We will resume January 9.

## CHURCH NEWS



**Frankful Fridays** - Free Hotdog Meal  
The Frankful Friday Crew will be sharing a free hotdog meal on the second and fourth Fridays of each month (January 10 and 24). We will be set up at 12 noon.

**Book Club** will resume January 9. Join us on Thursdays at 7pm at Main Street Market in Rutherfordton.

### Senior Yoga

Join us January 16 at 10:30am for Senior Yoga in the fellowship hall. Yoga is led by Marie who also leads classes at the Senior Center.



### Drive Thru Community Meal

Come join our volunteers as we host a Drive Thru Meal on Wednesday, January 15 at 5pm. We will be serving soup. Contact Bill McDaniel if you would like to help.



### Saturday Night aLive

Mark your calendar to come join us for a night of fun and food on Saturday, January 18 at 6:30pm. Please invite a friend! Start spreading the word!

### Upper Room Devotionals

If you would like an Upper Room Devotional mailed to you, please email or call the church office.

### New Address

Marge Hamrick  
Ashlan Village  
415 Brenda Way  
Lyman, SC 29365

**Dear Spindale UMC,**

*Thank you for all your kindness and the Christmas bonuses this year. We look forward to continuing the work of the church for many years, Happy New Year!  
With much appreciation,  
Your Church Staff*

**Pastor Eric, Choir, and all the extras!**

*Thank you so much for the beautiful singing! It made me feel special that you would take the time to come to my home. Thank you! Thank you! Warm Wishes for a happy Christmas and a wonderful New Year!  
Love to all, Tommie White*



**2025 Church Directory**

We would like to have everyone's updated contact information for the new 2025 directory. Please complete a form located on the table

across from the church office. You can return it to the church office, put it in with the offering plate, or you may email the church office. You only need to complete a form if you have any changes. The deadline to submit changes is January 26.

**Contribution Statements**

You may pick up your 2024 end of year contribution statements at the back of the sanctuary.

**Church League Basketball Schedule**

At the Lary Ross Gym - Forest City Parks and Recreation Dept. Come out and support our Spindale UMC team!

- January 2, 9pm
- January 6, 8pm
- January 7, 7pm
- January 16, 7pm
- January 27, 6pm
- January 28, 8pm
- January 30, 8pm
- February 3, 7pm
- February 6, 6pm

**HOMEBOUND  
MEMBER OF THE MONTH**

Marge Hamrick  
Ashlan Village  
415 Brenda Way  
Lyman, SC 29365  
(Note New Address)

**COMMUNITY NEEDS**

**Yokefellow** – Instant Oatmeal

**Blessing Box** - Any shelf stable foods, individual servings of canned food, crackers, etc. (McDonald's Location)

**MINISTRY OF THE MONTH**

We are collecting *cans of food, instant oatmeal, and monetary donations* for the "Souper Bowl of Caring". All proceeds will go to Yokefellow Service Center to assist in their ministries.



The Long Family lighting the Avent Wreath



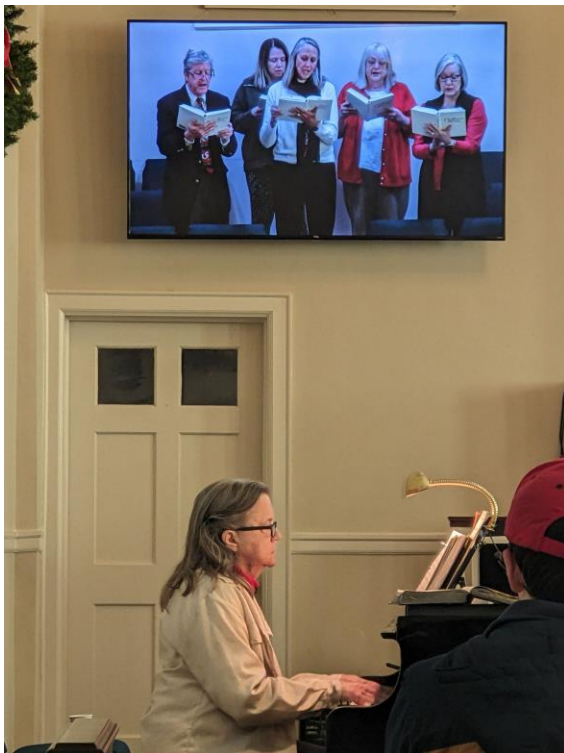
- 1 *Kathy Cabaniss*
- 4 *Amy Lewis*
- 5 *Jeane Watson*
- 6 *Dot Abrams*
- 8 *Emily Walters*
- 18 *Betty Lyle*
- 18 *Marty Caldwell*
- 21 *Andrew Watson*
- 23 *Brynn Walker*
- 23 *Nancy Womack*
- 25 *Lael Toms*
- 25 *Sharon Tomblin*
- 27 *Eric Marshburn*
- 30 *Tony Hamrick*
- 30 *Rachel Roberson*
- 30 *Steve Owens*
- 31 *Bill Howard*



### **Prayer Requests**

- The Family of Guy Whitener - Sherry Owen's brother-in-law
- Javon Calton -Uncle of Lynn Wall
- Mickey Bland
- Linda Holshouser - Aunt of Jennifer Ruppe
- Charles and Maggie Clute
- Wayne Henson
- Tommie White
- Lisa Moore - Sister of Jeri Shuck
- Darla and Hope - Family of David Dunn
- Jean Ross
- Sharon Wilson and Travis Clark - Daughter and son of Jean Ross
- Patricia Spencer - Friend of Jeri Shuck
- David Wiseman - Cousin of Jeane
- Lynne Potter
- Bill Metcalf
- Gina Gold - Friend of Brooke Watson
- Bobby and Carolyn Stone - Family Members of Tommie White
- Thadd Hodge - Nephew of Jeanette and Lucille Marge Hamrick
- Michelle Gillis - Friend of John and Stephanie Higgins
- Gene and Mary Mitchell
- Kylie - Granddaughter of friends of John and Stephanie Higgins

Please contact the church office in order to add or remove someone on the prayer list.



## LAST MONTH

### December 1

In Person Attendance	46
Online Attendance	40
Budget Offering	\$ 5,335.00
YTD Giving to Budget	\$ 164,938.57
YTD Needed to meet budget	\$ 205,200.00

### December 8

In Person Attendance	55
Online Attendance	59
Budget Offering	\$ 4,345.00
Building Fund	\$ 21,000
YTD Giving to Budget	\$ 169,283.57
YTD Needed to meet budget	\$ 209,475.00

### December 15

In Person Attendance	52
Online Attendance	63
Budget Offering	\$ 12,504.00
YTD Giving to Budget	\$ 181,660.57
YTD Needed to meet budget	\$ 213,750.00

### December 22

In Person Attendance	62
Online Attendance	35
Budget Offering	\$ 2,831.00
YTD Giving to Budget	\$ 184,491.37
YTD Needed to meet budget	\$ 216,581.00

### December 29

In Person Attendance	29
Online Attendance	70
Budget Offering	\$ 4,770.00
YTD Giving to Budget	\$ 189,261.57
YTD Needed to meet budget	\$ 221,351.00



## Christmas Caroling - December 2024



## **A Pastoral Letter at Christmas to the People of the Western North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, 2024**

In his gospel Luke passes down the account of Jesus' birth, as seen and experienced by the eyewitnesses. The main characters along the way are Elizabeth and Zechariah, John the Baptizer and Mary, the mother of Jesus.

These are ordinary people, faithful people. God uses them to facilitate miracles, to transform lives. They are essential to the narrative of how salvation will be offered to all people, even to the Gentiles, even to you and me.

The scripture is fulfilled as God shows up, as God's people show up. God is faithful, and this inspires God's people to be faithful. "Let it be to me according to your word", Mary says. "Bear fruit worthy of repentance", John preaches.

Jesus was born in a particular place, Bethlehem, to a particular people. He was a Palestinian Jew, which means he was born in the land called Palestine, a land inhabited by Jews. In Jesus, God was doing a new thing, but all of this was in continuity with the promises of the ancient Word.

As followers of Jesus in a particular place, Western North Carolina, and within a particular tradition, United Methodism, we have experienced an extraordinary year filled with events that can be described as historical. We hosted a worldwide General Conference in Charlotte, and we experienced a devastating flood following Hurricane Helene in the mountains; these carried with them discontinuities. Yet the changes, even as they have included losses, have revealed gifts—we are now more open to all people, even all of our own people, and we have come together in our hour of need, with tangible expressions of food, shelter and presence.

And even as we live and serve in a particular place, Christmas has a way of enlarging our hearts and expanding our vision for the world that God loves. And so we pray especially for Nigeria and Ukraine, Israel and Palestine, and all people who are seeking daily bread, sanctuary and flourishing through migration.

Through the changes and disruptions God is faithful, and God's people are faithful; God has shown up, God's people keep showing up. And in the very midst of it all, a child is born. And the child, Jesus, is for a purpose: in the language of Charles Wesley's hymn, "born to give us second birth".

May it be so! Merry Christmas!

**Bishop +Ken Carter**