

# First Word

Begin  
the  
Year  
with



## FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

### *A word from the District Superintendent...*

“It’s all in the adjectives!”

Those were the words of Bishop Robert Schnase of the Missouri Conference spoken during the Cabinet Convocation held at Lake Junaluska, NC the weekend of November 9-11, 2007. Bishop Schnase was one of the most helpful of the many speakers there where there were church leaders present from literally all over the world. There were bishops and district superintendents from Africa, the Philippines, and Europe—as well as all across the U.S. (I ate breakfast one morning with a D.S. from Sweden who confirmed that the northern part of his country is mostly snow with few people—something that I had always suspected!)

Bishop Schanse is the author of a new book that you’ll be hearing about, if you haven’t already, *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations*. Each of the five practices is preceded by a forceful, descriptive adjective that significantly enlarges its meaning. For example, the first practice he describes is “Radical Hospitality.” Now, all churches practice hospitality to some extent, but how many are “radical” in their welcoming of others into their fellowship? You begin to get the idea of what Bishop Schnase means by the importance of the descriptive word when you consider all five:

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

After all, all churches worship and teach and give, but how many do it passionately, intentionally, or extravagantly?

I strongly recommend Bishop Schnase’s book and website, [www.fivepractices.org](http://www.fivepractices.org) where there is more information available. Cokesbury is developing a program for churches based on the five practices that is due out next August. Your church may want to make use of it.

In the meantime, why not ponder those descriptive words in relation to your own church’s practices and see how far there is a match and how much work there is to be done.

Thanks for all you do in Christ’s name, and Merry Christmas!

*David Forrest*

This article is reprinted from the December 2007 issue of the Winchester District Newsletter *News from the Core of the Winchester District* with the permission of David Forrest, Winchester District Superintendent.

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- A Word From the District Superintendent
- Lay Speakers Academy
- Youth News
- Children’s News
- Thank You!
- Consultation Process

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### Lay Speakers Academy, Feb. 22-24, 2008

The conference is celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Virginia Conference Lay Speaker training at the Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center (VUMAC) in Blackstone, Feb. 22-24, 2008. A wide variety of classes will be offered that may not be offered on the district level. Opportunities to serve within your home

church are many and can be enhanced by taking a class that might assist in building a new ministry or strengthening an existing one.

A complete course outline and registration form are available on the Virginia Conference Web site at

<http://www.vaumc.org/repository/Events/WesleyExhorterBlackstoneIssue2008.pdf>

“For the Lord God is a sun and shield; he bestows favor and honor. No good thing does the Lord withhold from those who walk uprightly.” Psalm 84: 11

### HAPPY NEW YEAR!



The pastors and staff of First Church would like to wish everyone a very blessed New Year. May this be a year of great change and spiritual development for our church. Let's put

the old behind us, look and work towards a fruitful year in the spirit of Jesus Christ. A wonderful way to start the New Year is to plan on attending the Renewing Weekend scheduled for January 11th—13th.

### THANK YOU!

Deena and I would like to thank everyone who sent us gifts and holiday greetings over the holiday. We have felt most welcome at First

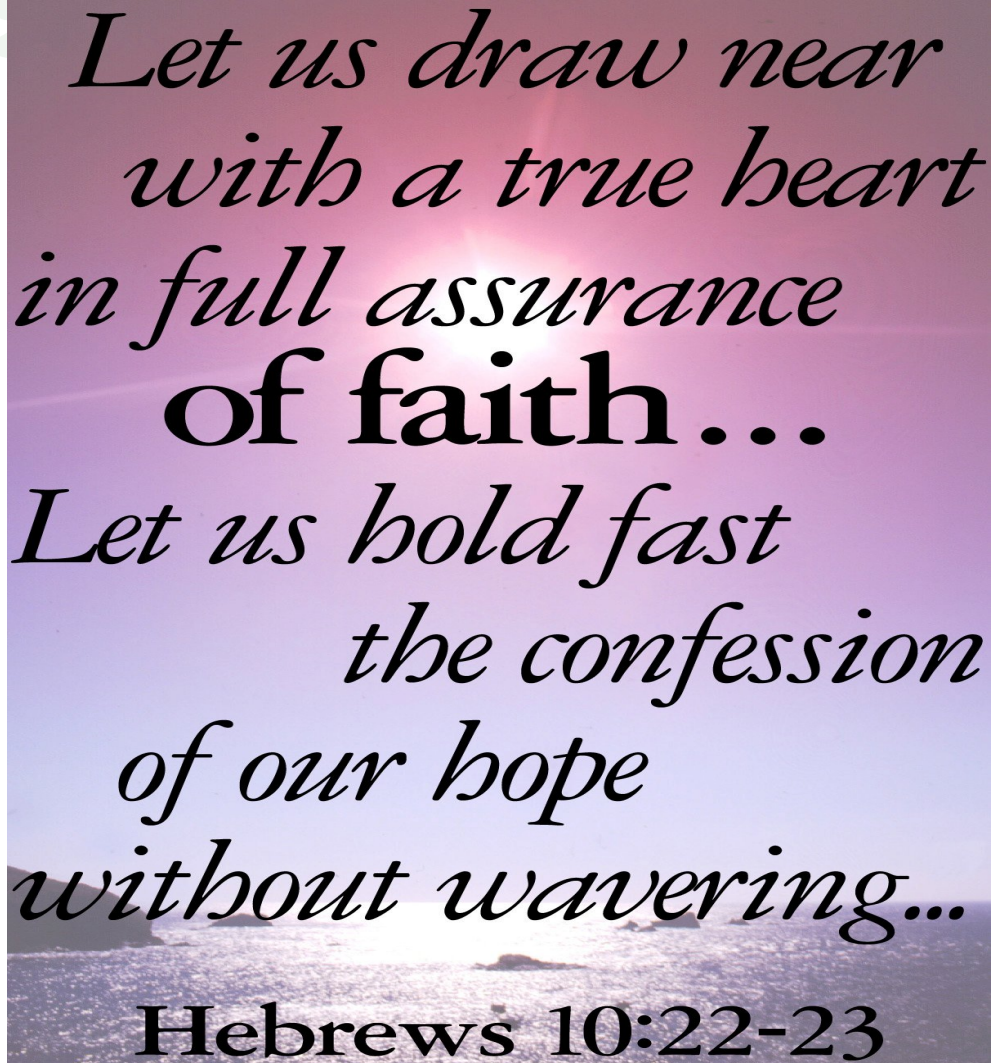
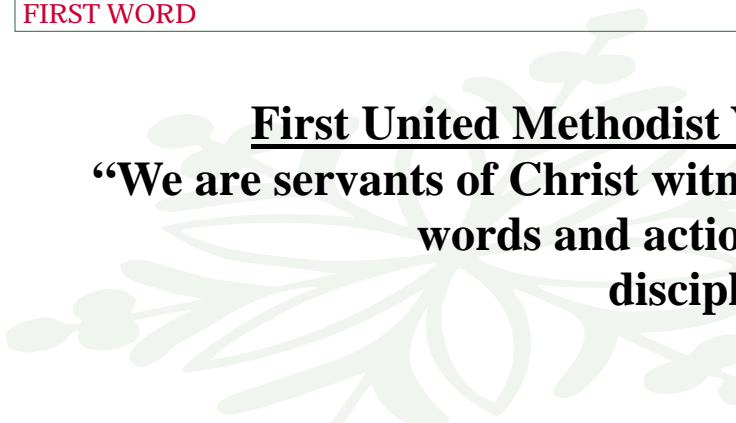
Church. You have been a blessing in our lives.

Pastor Doug



## First United Methodist Youth Mission Statement

“We are servants of Christ witnessing to His people through our words and actions as we grow in discipleship.”



*Let us draw near  
with a true heart  
in full assurance  
of faith...  
Let us hold fast  
the confession  
of our hope  
without wavering...  
Hebrews 10:22-23*

First United Methodist Church  
308 North Braddock St. Winchester, VA 22601  
Phone: 540-662-3151  
Email: [mvorous@fumcwinchester.org](mailto:mvorous@fumcwinchester.org)

JANUARY YOUTH NEWS

During the month of January on Sunday evenings we are trying to get back on track after the holidays! Also, on Wednesday evenings we will be back on schedule for worship team from 6:30-7:00, hope to see you there so we may start talking about our next service and also talk about how we can continue in the life of the worship service . Take note of the schedule. I hope the season was a great one for you and your family.

Added activities to our calendar for the month are:



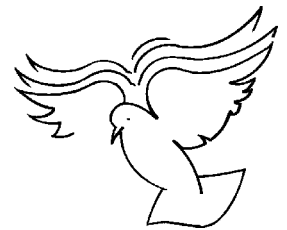
January 6th- Regular Youth time, 4:30-6:30

January 11th- 13th- Renewing weekend with John Savage. We will have a more detailed schedule soon please watch for more details. The youth are asked and encouraged to participate.



January 9th- Worship team will start back on schedule every Wednesday. Dinner 5:15 , Worship Team from 6:30-7:00.

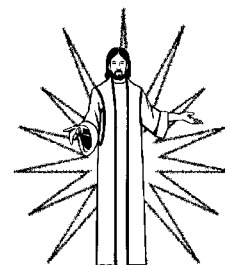
January 20th- Youth will be going to D.C. for the "TOP" (teens opposing poverty) program. We are teaming up with Market St. UMC youth. We will fix food here at the church during the Sunday school hour and leave immediately for D.C. Please bring in your donations of men's new socks, undershirts and underwear. Men's used pants and sweatshirts. If you have any used , in good conditions blankets or sleep bags we could use them as well. Thank you for your support!



## Youth News Continued

January 27th– Regular Youth time 4:30-6:30.

January 27th– Confirmation Classes will start during the Sunday school hour.



## Notice:

We have purchased t-shirt for the youth group, on the front they say First United Methodist Church Youth and on the back they read “It’s not about me, we are in service to Christ”. We will be tie dyeing them. If you would like to donate towards the shirts to offset the cost it would be greatly appreciated. They cost us about \$8.00 each.

## OFFERING ENVELOPES

Please remember to pick up your 2008 Offering Envelopes. They are located in the hallway by Pastor Becky’s office. To assist us in keeping accurate records, please write

your name and contribution amount on the envelope in the designated areas. If you did not receive envelopes and would like them please contact the church office 662-3151 or

Sandy Burkhart 667-2621.



**CHRISTIANS**  
Caring for each other

## THANK YOU!

The Pastors and Staff of First Church would like to thank everyone for the Love Offering that was given. Your generosity and

thoughtfulness was truly appreciated. We wish you all a very blessed New Year.

**Parsonage Repair Donation, A Thank you for First Church's Outreach**

The Trustees were pleased to accept the offer from Cynthia Zirlott to pay for the replacement or repair of the Ridge Avenue parsonage basement shower stall that is in poor condition. This donation is a thank you for allowing her to temporarily stay in the basement of the parsonage as Becky's guest. Becky sought the approval of SPRC & Trustees before extending the hospitality of the parsonage to Cindy

at a time when she needed a temporary housing arrangement and time to recover from some serious health issues.

Dr. Cynthia Zirlott is an ordained deacon in The United Methodist Church and currently serves as Minister of Spiritual Formation and Discipleship at Braddock Street UMC. Since Becky was the only inhabitant of such a

large house, this has proven to be a win-win situation for both of them, allowing Cindy time to recover her health, and for Becky, not having to come home at night to an empty house.

**THANK YOU!!!!**

Thank you very much to all of my "helpers" who assisted me with this year's Christmas program. I would not have been able to do it without any of you! Thanks too for the very

thoughtful gifts and flowers. Your kindness is greatly appreciated!

Jennifer White



*"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." 1Thessalonians 5: 16-18*



**DOOR DECORATING CONTEST**

The door that received the most votes for our Advent Door Decorating Contest was.....The Golden Link Class Door.

Congratulations and thank you to all who participated. All the doors were wonderful.



## CHARLIE HORTON MEMORIAL BLOOD DRIVE

First Church will be having our next Red Cross Blood Drive on Tuesday, January 8, 2008. It will be held in the Fellowship Hall from noon till 6:00 PM. This Blood Drive is to be a Memorial Blood Drive to honor Charlie Horton. Charlie had type A- blood which is always in high demand by the Red Cross. Charlie willingly gave blood regularly throughout his adult life. When he was diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma in 2002, he no longer could donate his blood. Instead, he found himself to be the recipient of others' donations, especially during his last nine months. Blood and platelet transfusions allowed him to take medications that prolonged and gave quality to his life.

Charlie lost his courageous battle with cancer on January 29th, 2007. Your gift of blood on January 8th, 2008 will honor Charlie Horton's life and personal commitment to the Red Cross blood donation program. Thank you for helping his memory live on.

Volunteers are also needed to work at the blood drive and to make sandwiches and cookies. Sign up sheets for donating blood and volunteering will be available beginning Sunday, December 23rd.

Our goal for this memorial blood drive is 50 units or double that of last year. Our goal for the August 2007 blood drive was 25 units and First Church exceeded that goal by

collecting 38 units. If you cannot donate yourself for health or other reasons; consider asking friends, relatives, neighbors or co-workers to come in and donate.

For further information on donating or volunteering, contact Tim Anderson (667-4228) or Susan Cain (662-1548).



## WORSHIP PREVIEW

6 Isaiah 60: 1-6  
Psalm 72: 1-7, 10-14  
Ephesians 3: 1-12  
Matthew 2: 1-12

**“Lift up Your Eyes and Look-They Come to You”  
Epiphany**

13 Jeremiah 31:31-34  
Psalm 50 (UMH 783)  
1 Peter 1  
John 15: 1-8

“Living as Covenant People”  
Communion  
Hunger Offering

20 1 Thessalonians 5: 12-18

Pray without Ceasing  
Pulpit Exchange

27 Isaiah 9: 1-4  
Psalm 27: 4-9  
1 Corinthians 1: 10-18  
Matthew 4: 12-23

**“Walk in the Light or Blinded by the Light?”**

F.U.M.C. CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



We would like to take this opportunity to respectfully thank:

All the children and other participants of the Christmas Pageant, but especially Jennifer White and Kathy St. Amand, for all their hard work!

It was lovely!

Also - thanks to the United Methodist Men

for the amazing Turkey Dinner, Thanks to Robinn Wilfong and all those who contributed goodies for Jesus' birthday party, and thanks to Mary Mc Gaffick for that awesome cake! Mmm!

Lastly - great thanks to all who attended for the fun and fellowship that so joyfully exemplifies the true spirit of Christ...

To all - MERRY CHRISTMAS!!



FUMC Children's Ministry Upcoming Calendar

**Christmas-Themed Door Competition Judging will be concluded and Prizes will be awarded Sunday - Dec. 23rd**

**The next Children's Committee Meeting will also be an organizational & planning PARENT'S MEETING**

**for 2008**

**ALL PARENTS - PLEASE ATTEND!**

**Also - all parties who are willing to assist, interact with and serve the children of our church in any way - PLEASE COME!**

**January 20th following the 11AM Service in the Social Hall**

**F.U.M.C. SENIORS: Remember to mark this CM hosted Event, in your honor:**

**BINGO Afternoon Sunday, February 17th after the 11 AM Service**

**"Let us Live the Faith we Profess"**

## GREETINGS FOR THE NEW YEAR!

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect."

—Romans  
12:2

It's that time of year to again make resolutions for the new year. I admire people who can make them and keep them. I've pretty much given up on the power of resolutions to work in my life.

The problem with resolutions is that they are about me and my will. I'll be the first one to admit that I am strong-willed about many things. Unfortunately not usually about the things that are "good" for me, like good nutrition, regular exercise and so forth.

This year I choose submission rather than resolution - submission to God's will instead of my own. God's will for my life has the power of transformation.

Transformation is about God and God's power to make me into the likeness of Christ. Granted this process will take my cooperation and participation. My part it to submit to God's authority in my life. Not an easy

thing to do, because, as always, my will gets in the way.

The bottom line for me is that my desire and ability to change me, to change my life, pales in comparison to God's desire and ability to change me, to change my life. So this year, I choose transformation. By the grace of God, I will be changed.

What do you choose?

*Pastor Becky*



Thank you Church for all your expressions of the Christmas Season — food, cards, gifts, and invitations to your home — which you shared with me. For one far from family over Christmas your kindness touches my heart in a very special way. Thank you.

—Pastor Becky

## INSIDE STORY HEADLINE

This story can fit 150-200 words.

One benefit of using your newsletter as a promotional tool is that you can reuse content from other marketing materials, such as press releases, market studies, and reports.

While your main goal of distributing a newsletter might be to sell your product or service, the key to a successful newsletter is making it useful to your readers.

A great way to add useful content to your newsletter is to develop and write your own articles, or include a calendar of

upcoming events or a special offer that promotes a new product.

You can also research articles or find "filler" articles by accessing the World Wide Web. You can write about a variety of topics but try to keep your articles short.

Much of the content you put in your newsletter can also be used for your Web site. Microsoft Publisher offers a simple way to convert your newsletter to a Web publication. So, when you're finished writing your newsletter, convert it to a



Caption describing picture or graphic.

Web site and post it.

## INSIDE STORY HEADLINE

This story can fit 100-150 words.

The subject matter that appears in newsletters is virtually endless. You can include stories that focus on current technologies or innovations in your field.

You may also want to note business or economic trends, or make predictions for your customers or clients.

If the newsletter is distributed internally, you might comment upon new procedures or improvements to the business. Sales figures or earnings will show how your business is growing.

Some newsletters include a column that is updated every issue, for instance, an advice column, a book review, a letter from the president, or an editorial. You can

also profile new employees or top customers or vendors.

*"To catch the reader's attention, place an interesting sentence or quote from the story here."*



Caption describing picture or graphic.

## INSIDE STORY HEADLINE

This story can fit 75-125 words.

Selecting pictures or graphics is an important part of adding content to your newsletter.

Think about your article and ask yourself if the picture supports or enhances the message you're trying to convey.

Avoid selecting images that appear to be out of context.

Microsoft Publisher includes thousands of clip art images from which you can choose and import into your newsletter. There are also several tools you can use to draw shapes and symbols.

Once you have chosen an image, place it close to the article. Be sure to place the caption of the image near the image.

First United  
Methodist Church  
308 North  
Braddock Street  
Winchester, VA 22601

Web site: [www.fumcwinchester.org](http://www.fumcwinchester.org)

Church: 540-662-3151

Fax: 540-662-1462

Staff

Becky Cloud  
Doug Sasser  
Pastors

Mary Vorous  
Director of Youth  
Ministries

Kristen Grzywacz  
Office Manager

Debbie MacKnight  
Preschool Director

Ralph Gronlund  
Lay Leader

Jennifer White  
Treasurer

Queenie Dockeney  
Custodian

Wayne Corbett  
Organist and Music  
Director

Gary Fisher  
Choral Director

Melinda Russell  
Hand Bell Director

Youth Choir Director

Amy Shepley & Mary Beth Ours  
Children's Choir Directors

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