

# THE INFORMER

First United Methodist Church

PO Box 296

828-586-2358

[www.firstumcsylva.org](http://www.firstumcsylva.org)

December 2011

Now in Worship:



## Christmas Must Be Something More

Is Christmas something more than gift wrapped presents, Santa Claus, and decorations? Sometimes it can be difficult to tell. What would happen if we stripped all that away? Would we notice the holy, the hope, the promise? Surely Christmas must be something more.

### December 4 - Holy, not superficial

Sometimes it can be difficult to find joy in the midst of adversity and pain. And yet God promises us that indeed joy can be found. Join us as we look to the prophets of old and how their words to people experiencing adversity can still speak to us today. It's about focusing on the holy and not the superficial.

- The Adult Handbell Choir will play in the 11am service.

### December 11 - Do you try to ignore?

John the Baptist proclaimed the coming of the Lord. But, do we try to ignore his message? We might not think so but, the way we live our lives might say, "yes."

- The Children's Handbell Choir will play in the 11am service.

### December 18 - Love Came Down

Christmas is more than shopping, presents, and parties. Most importantly it's the time of year when we celebrate the love that came down at Christmas. But what will you do with that love? How will you be a sign that love did indeed come down?

- The Adult Choir will bring the message of Christmas through music at the 11am service. Special guests: The Smoky Mountain Woodwind Quintet will also be with us at the 11am service.

## Join us for these special events during this special season!

- **Children's Christmas Play:** Wednesday, December 14 at 6:30pm in the Christian Life Center the children will present "What Child Was This". Join us for a pot luck supper at 5:30pm in the Asbury Room.
- **Chancel Choir Christmas Music:** Our adult choir brings the message of Christmas through song on Sunday, December 18 during our 11:00am worship service as well as at 7pm. Following the evening performance a reception will be held in the Asbury Room.
- **Christmas Eve Services:** Join us for our traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight and Communion Services. Let us come together as we celebrate God's gift to us through familiar carols and scripture. Three different services are offered:
  - 5:30pm service:** Worship will be led by our 9:12 praise band. Join us for a slightly "modern" twist to our traditional service in the CLC. Candlelight will also be a part of this service. Childcare will be provided.
  - 7:00pm service:** Traditional Candlelight and Communion Service in the sanctuary. Special music by our Adult Choir. Children are welcome to dress in their PJ's ready for bed. Childcare will be provided.
  - 11:00pm service:** Traditional Candlelight and Communion Join us for our Traditional Candlelight and Communion service as we experience the true joy and hope of Christmas at the doorstep of Christmas Day!
- **Christmas Day:** Join us as we celebrate the day of the birth of our Lord! There will be one service at 11:00am in the sanctuary. There will be no Sunday School on this day.

Join us as we sing favorite carols, prepare our hearts for Christmas, and reflect on what Christmas really means.

CELEBRATE  
ADVENT  
AND  
CHRISTMAS  
AT  
SYLVA FIRST

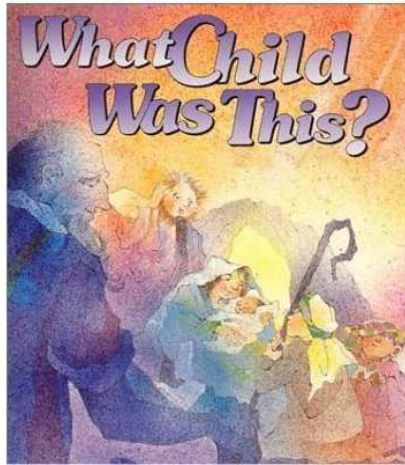


**Children's  
Christmas Caroling  
December 11!**

It is important that we spread the joy and warmth of Christmas to all who may not receive it this holiday season. That is why our children & youth will be traveling to nursing homes in the area to sing Christmas carols. We will leave the church at 4:45pm and return around 6:30-7:00pm on December 11. If you are a parent who would like to sing with us as well contact Courtney at [cumphlett@firstumcsylva.org](mailto:cumphlett@firstumcsylva.org) to let her know! All are welcome to participate!

**Children's  
Christmas  
Play**

**December 14**



On December 14 at 6:30pm our Club 4:12 Players will present their play "What Child Was This?" in the Christian Life Center. This is a cute little play with beautiful music to ring in the Christmas spirit. A pot luck supper will be provided at 5pm and all the church is invited! The cost is the same as the regular Gathering Meal. Children in the play are asked to report no later than 5:30pm to get ready for the show. Anyone bringing food for the pot luck supper is asked to contact Courtney at [cumphlett@firstumcsylva.org](mailto:cumphlett@firstumcsylva.org) to let her know what you are bringing.



**Children's Christmas Party**

On December 18 from 3-5pm we will hold a Christmas party for children ages 3 years to 5th grade. We will have snacks, a service project, a gift exchange game, and a surprise visit from a very special person! All attendees are asked to bring a small gift that costs no more than \$5.00 (it can even be homemade!). We also need parents and members of the church to donate the following items: pretzels, Christmas cookies, punch, chex mix/popcorn, fruit, cups, napkins, plates. Please bring all donations to the church office by December 16.

**YOUTH NEWS FOR  
~December~**

**Inside Out Youth Ministries**

Inside Out Youth meets every Sunday morning at 10:15am for small group Bible study & 6-8pm on Sunday evenings.

**Youth Fry Bread Luncheon  
and ASP Slide Show**

Join us on Sunday, December 18 at 12:00noon in the Asbury Room for a delicious fry bread luncheon and Slide Show for ASP. See pictures and hear testimony from the youth & adults who were part of this mission experience in Greeneville, Tennessee. Proceeds will benefit the 2012 ASP trip.

**Gathering Meal & Activities**

Meals for **December** will be provided by:

December 7 - Youth (spaghetti, salad, bread)

December 14 - Pot luck supper before Children's Christmas Play (**NOTE:** Time change to 5:30pm).

December 21 - **NO Gathering Meal**

December 28 - **NO Gathering Meal**

Reservations may be made by using the forms in the Sunday bulletins (place it in the offering plate), go online at the church website-[www.firstumcsylva.org](http://www.firstumcsylva.org) or contact the church office at 586-2358 by 10:00am on the Tuesday before the Gathering Meal. Activities will begin at 6:30 and we hope to see you for fellowship and fun each week!



**Wednesday, December 7 Only**

A look at the traditions, myths, symbols, and stories of Christmas!

- Where did Christmas come from?
- What about Santa Claus?
- What really happened on that first Christmas eve?

Join us immediately following the Gathering Meal for this fun and informative time!

## United Methodist Women



The **Afternoon Guild** will meet on Wednesday, December 14th, at 12:00 Noon in the Asbury Room for their Christmas luncheon.

**The Action Group:** The Action Group will meet on Thursday, December 15 at 6:00pm at the home of Kathy Roberson. Dinner will be provided and you should RSVP to Kathy. Please bring a \$10.00 gift for the gift exchange. A gently used book donation for the Foster Care Children's Library is also appreciated.



## United Methodist Men

The United Methodist Men would like to thank everyone for their support of the annual "Poor Man's Luncheon. Proceeds from the luncheon helped to replace the refrigerator in the Christian Life Center.

## Chancel Choir Christmas Cantata

Join us for our 11am worship service on Sunday, December 18, as our Chancel Choir brings the message of Christmas through song in "Joy to the World: A Celebration of Carols". Please note that the choir will be performing their cantata again at 7:00pm in the sanctuary.

## 220 Thanksgiving Boxes Distributed!

On Monday, November 21, people from all over the community converged on the First UMC Christian Life Center to receive a Thanksgiving Box. Coordinated by United Christian Ministries, 220 Thanksgiving boxes were distributed. Churches and youth groups from all over the area collected items to make it happen.

Thanks to you here at Sylva First each one of those boxes included a ham! In fact you supported the effort so well that not only were we able to purchase enough hams, we were also able to make a financial contribution to the United Christian Ministries! Thanks for being a witness for Christ in this special way!



**Thank you!  
Thank you!**

**Thank you for being  
bearers of hope!**

We collected nearly 1900 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child from Jackson County this year. Of that number, 160 were from Sylva First UMC! Three times as many from years past! Thanks to Marilyn Collings, the OCC Committee, and everyone who participated to help bring joy and hope to children around the world.

## Our Foundation News

### REVIEW YOUR WILL BY DECEMBER 31!

The Sylva First United Methodist Church Foundation, Inc. encourages you to focus on your *Will* as December 31st approaches. Ask yourself these questions. Have circumstances changed since you last updated your *Will*? Does your current *Will* carry out your commitments to your church?

Reviewing your *Will* at every major life event is essential. A review every three to five years is also wise. Ask your lawyer to review your *Will* with you on a frequent basis to ensure that your wishes will be carried out. If you do not have a *Will*, get your attorney to help you with one today!

Here is a partial list of reasons to review your *Will* or write one as December 31st approaches: marriage; birth of a child; birth of a grandchild; death of a friend or family member; divorce; planning a long trip; celebrating a "benchmark birthday"; receiving a large inheritance; having the last child leave home; changing occupations; changing place of residence; setting the retirement date; change in tax laws; major illness; the need to dispose of property; selling the family business; and selling real or personal property. The list goes on and on depending on your circumstances.

Is your current *Will* keeping up with you? Does it reflect your Christian commitments? Make sure your *Will* is up-to-date and reconsider doing it later...later can be too late! Gifts you plan for your church through your *Will* can help your church continue to minister & serve.

Contact Stan Bienick at 828-586-8683 or [bienick@dnet.net](mailto:bienick@dnet.net) for more information.

### **More News from Your Foundation!**

This year, 2011, is the final year you can make a minimum *IRA* distribution transfer directly from your *IRA (Individual Retirement Account)*, and neither pay taxes on that direct transfer or have your adjusted gross income rise; as long as the transfer is a charitable donation (your church could be the recipient of that donation). You must be a least 70 1/2 and no charitable deduction is allowed (the *IRA* distribution is excluded from your income). **PLEASE REMEMBER!** Distributions must be made directly from *IRA* "trustees/administrator" to qualifying public charity (you cannot receive distribution prior to gifting to charity). The charitable donation must be postmarked no later than December 31, 2011.

### **Church Office Closed**

The Church Office will be closed for the Christmas and New Year holidays on December 26 & January 2!

**Merry Christmas and  
Happy New Year!**

## Sunday Servants for December

### Good Gracious Greeters:

	<u>8:30</u>	<u>9:00</u>	<u>11:00</u>
4 <sup>th</sup>	Claude Jones	Gale Dills Cecil Dills	Karen Harris
11 <sup>th</sup>	Sherry Ginn	John Jurss	Cathy Booth
18 <sup>th</sup>	Lou Ann Carden	John Arnold Al Newkirk	Kathy Kay Ted Kay
25 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas Day! (only 1 service)		Kim Woodard Dickie Woodard

**Ushers:** Hoyte Roberson, Jr. & Tommy Stearns

### Acolytes:

- Dec. 4 – Katherine Selby
- Dec. 11 – Salem & Samantha Long
- Dec. 18 – Maggie Curtis, James Hinson
- Dec. 25 – Allie Curtis, Julianna Welch

### Children's Church:

- Dec. 4 – Tommy & Jennifer Hodges
- Dec. 11 – Kim Williams
- Dec. 18 – Cassie Moore/Jenny Impaglatelli
- Dec. 25 – No Children's Church Today!

### Children's Message:

- Dec. 4 – Scott Cochran
- Dec. 11 – Robert Hopper
- Dec. 18 – Catherine DeWeese
- Dec. 25 – Kim Woodard

### Coffer Servers:

- Dec. 4 – Mary Ann Jacobs
- Dec. 11 – Boyd & Lynda Sossamon
- Dec. 18 – Sherry & Richard Ginn
- Dec. 25 – Only (1) service at 11am

### Financial Update

JANUARY 1 THROUGH DECEMBER 1, 2011

\$ 338,239	General income to date
<u>- 328,651</u>	Expenses to date
\$+ 9,588	Current income exceeding expenses
\$ - 20,237	Apportionments/Expenses due but not paid.
<b>\$ - 10,649</b>	Current Expenses over Income through Dec. 1, 2011

MONTHLY CAPITAL CAMPAIGN REPORT  
THROUGH DECEMBER 1, 2011

Capital Campaign Balance..... **\$14,953**

## Jackson County Christmas Store



The Jackson County Christmas Store is beginning its 24th year of service for local families who need assistance with Christmas gifts for their children. You may sponsor a child for **\$50** by purchasing \$30 worth of new gifts and \$20 worth of clothing items (socks, underwear, gloves, etc. suggested by the mother). If you wish, you may also make a donation for the store and a "volunteer shopper" will purchase the gift items. Please make your check payable to the **Jackson County Christmas Store and mail it to PO Box 887, Cullowhee, NC 28723**. Please call Wanda Kidd (293-5138) or Elaine White (293-5785) at night if you would like to sponsor a child *or* help with this project in any manner. Thank you for sharing the joy of giving with others in our community!

## Joe Fulk Retires from Givens Estates

Reverend Joe Fulk, Jr. who served as pastor of Sylva First UMC from 1996-2001 retired this past June as the Director of Ministries at Givens Estates. During his tenure, Givens experienced significant growth. With the expansion in 2005 and the addition of the Great Laurels of Junaluska in 2007, Joe's "congregation" of residents almost doubled. The consecration and dedication of the Norma F. Pulliam Chapel was also an important highlight of Joe's ministry. Joe & his wife, Dianne celebrated 36 years of marriage this October.

## Thank You!

Thanks to Sylva First for your kindness during the last several months, including food, rides, the ramp and most of all, your prayers. Going through two surgeries within a few months of each other isn't easy, but your kindness and Christ-like deeds have made it much more bearable. I'm happy to report that I'm getting around somewhat better—still not quite normal walking yet, but I'm very determined and have faith that I will get there.

- Betty Dishman

## Upcoming Meetings

**Finance Committee:** Next meeting December 5th at 6:00pm. Final 2012 budget recommendations will be made at this time.

**Church Council:** The Church Council will meet on Monday, December 12 at 7:00pm in the Joyful Noise Makers Class. We urge all members to be present.

# DECEMBER 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wed.	Thursday 1	Friday 2	Saturday 3
				9-ELC 10-Nifty Needles (Sr. Adult Class) 6-Chancel Bells (sanctuary) 6:30-JCRD (Gym)	9-ELC 12-NA (JNM Class)	10am-8pm-Emmaus Board Meeting & Christmas Dinner (Asbury Room)
<b>4</b> 8:30-Early worship 8:30-Prayer Group 9-Praise Service 9:40-Journey Class 10-Sunday School 10:15-Sunday Sch. 11-Worship 4-Children's Coun. 6-Children's Play 6-Youth (CLC)	<b>5</b> 9-ELC 12-Narcotics Anon. (JNM Class) 6:30-Boy Scouts (Asbury Room) 6:30-Cub Scouts (Admin. Hall Classes) 7:30-AI-anon (Sr. Adult Class)	<b>6</b> 9-ELC 6:30-JCRD (gym) 7:30-NA (Asbury Room)	<b>7</b> 9-ELC 12-NA (JNM Class) 2-Afternoon Guild 6-Gathering Meal (Asbury Room) 6:30-Activities 7:00-Choir practice 7:30-NA (JNM)	<b>8</b> 9-ELC 10-Nifty Needles (Sr. Adult Class) 5-9-Dogwood Crafters Christmas Dinner (Asbury Room) 6-Chancel Bells (sanctuary) 6:30-JCRD (Gym)	<b>9</b> 9-ELC 12-NA (JNM Class)	<b>10</b> 1:30-4:30pm-Private Event (Asbury Room)
<b>11</b> 8:30-Early worship 8:30-Prayer Group 9-Praise Service 9:40-Journey Class 10-Sunday School 10:15-Sunday Sch. 11-Worship 5-7-Children's Caroling 6-Youth (CLC)	<b>12</b> 9-ELC 12-Narcotics Anon. (JNM Class) 6:30-Boy Scouts (Asbury Room) 6:30-Cub Scouts 7:30-AI-anon (Sr. Adult Class)	<b>13</b> 9-ELC 7:30-NA (Asbury Room)  5-Children's Christmas Play Rehearsal (CLC)	<b>14</b> 9-ELC 12-NA (JNM Class) 5:30-Covered Dish (Asbury Room) 6:30-Children's Christmas Play (CLC) 7:00-Choir practice 7:30-NA (JNM)	<b>15</b> 9-ELC 10-Nifty Needles (Sr. Adult Class) 6-Chancel Bells (sanctuary) 6:30-JCRD (Gym)	<b>16</b> 9-ELC 12-NA (JNM Class)  5-HCA Christmas Banquet & Program (CLC)	<b>17</b> 2-6:30pm-Private Event (Asbury Room)
<b>18</b> 8:30-Early worship 8:30-Prayer Group 9-Praise Service 9:40-Journey Class 10-Sunday School 11-Worship—Choir Christmas Music 12-Fry Bread Lunch & ASP Slide Show 3-Children's party 7-Choir Christmas Music & Reception	<b>19</b> 9-ELC 12-Narcotics Anon. (JNM Class) 6:30-Boy Scouts (Asbury Room) 6:30-Cub Scouts 7:30-AI-anon (Sr. Adult Class)	<b>20</b> 9-ELC 6:30-JCRD (gym) 7:30-NA (Asbury Room)	<b>21</b> 9-ELC 12-NA (JNM Class) NO Gathering Meal NO Choir Practice 7:30-NA (JNM)	<b>22</b> No ELC	<b>23</b> No ELC 12-NA (JNM Class)	<b>24</b> <i>Christmas Eve!</i> 5:30-Christmas Eve Candlelight Service (CLC) 7:00 & 11:00pm-Christmas Eve Candlelight Services (sanctuary)
<b>25</b> <i>Merry Christmas!</i> 11-Worship (sanctuary)	<b>26</b> <b>Church Office Closed</b> No ELC 12-Narcotics Anon. (JNM Class) (Sr. Adult Class)	<b>27</b> No ELC 6:30-JCRD (gym) 7:30-NA (Asbury Room)	<b>28</b> No ELC 12-NA (JNM Class) 7:00-Choir practice 7:30-NA (JNM)	<b>29</b> No ELC	<b>30</b> No ELC	<b>31</b> <i>New Year's Eve</i>

## ***Birthdays & Anniversaries***

2-Donna Large, Mary Mantooh  
3-Sherry & Richard Ginn  
5-Kirk Childress, Colin McGuire  
6-Alicia Jacobs, Brad Jacobs  
8-Dan Clapper  
10-Sherry Wilson  
11-Reg Moody, Sr.  
12-John Arnold, Rachel Nixon  
*Meredith & Dan Clapper*  
13-Ken Curtis, Katie (Crisp) Howard  
14-Steve Allred, Regan Melton  
15-Ted Kay, Jennifer Mauldin  
16-Vickey Frazier, Sharon Hartbarger

17-Melissa Dills, Anna (Dills) Mayhew, John Thompson  
18-Karen Clarke, Ken Perry  
*Linda & Jack Morris*  
19-Randy Savell, Shirley Pelling  
*Judy & Stan Bienick*  
20-Buzz Hartbarger, Tyler Clarke, Natalie Cantler  
*Bonnie & Kevin Childers*  
21-Homer Holden  
22-Kathy McGuire, Jeff Bewsey, Dianne Leonard  
23-Rachel Pede ~ *Anna & Tommy Ginn*  
24-Mindy Curtis, Nancy Mauldin ~ *Lynne & Bill Johnson*  
26-Ellen Perry  
28-Nicholas Savell ~ *Judy & Reg Moody, Sr.*  
29-Kathy Roberson

## ***First United Methodist Church***

***P.O. Box 296  
77 Jackson Street  
Sylva, NC 28779-0296***

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