



Valdese First United Methodist Church
 PO Box 637
 217 St. Germain Ave., SE
 Valdese, NC 28690
 (828) 874-0006
 faith@fumcvaldese.com

Connect with us:
www.valdesefumc.org
<https://www.youtube.com/@valdesefumc/streams>
facebook.com/FirstUnitedMethodistChurchValdeseNc



Kingdom Kid News

It is hard to believe that we are starting a New Year!!! 2025!!! 2024 was an incredible year for our children at First Valdese! We started in Lent (our season before Easter) with Lenten Adventures where we made cookies, crafts, snacks and a movie. We had an Easter Egg Hunt that was over the top!!!! GracePointe shared in our worship with a beautiful dance. Next on the fun list was VBS!! We “rocked it” with Outback Rock! We enjoyed a Family Movie Night,

Trunk or Treat was incredible and then we closed out the year with a “WOW” December. The December fun included Advent Adventures, GracePointe, Children’s Chime Choir, Children’s Christmas Play and the Santa Dance!!!! Now that was a lot of fun, but in all of this fun we learned about the “Life of Jesus” in Sunday School and Kingdom Kids.

2025 looks to bring this much fun and even more!!!! We are planning to add some more events for the children’s ministry this year. In Sunday School and Kingdom Kids, we will be learning about the “Foundation of Our Faith”. I hope you will join us as we begin a New Year of fun, learning and being together!!!! Watch for newsletter and “SAVE THE DATES”!!!!

As we begin a New Year, we always make New Year’s Resolutions. I hope your New Year’s Resolution will be to join us in 2025!!!! *Love, Ms. Susan*

*Follow Jesus.
 Make Disciples.
 Change the World!*

The Messenger

January 2025

Welcome to 2025!

My newsletter article for this month is going to be a hodgepodge. I hope you won’t mind. As you probably realize, I am writing this as we are well into Advent and speeding toward Christmas, which is busy for pastors as I’m sure it is busy for you. There are a variety of things I want to share with you to prepare for the New Year, and I am trying to get them on the page before they slip off of my brain and into the atmosphere! Please bear with me.

First of all, I want you to be aware of an opportunity for the whole church which I hope to offer in February. I’m sure you remember the study we did in the fall of 2023 on John Ed Mathison’s Treasures of the Transformed Life. That was a very special time for me, and I hope it was for all of you who participated. I wanted to do a similar study a few weeks ago, one that I have done previously, entitled 24/6: A Prescription for a Healthier, Happier Life. It is written by Matthew Sleeth, M.D., and it is a funny, inspiring, and challenging look about one very important aspect of Christian faithfulness: keeping Sabbath. As I said, I wanted to do this study earlier in the fall of 2024, but we weren’t able to order all the books that we would need. Thanks to Joan Hogan’s tireless efforts, that problem has been resolved, and with the permission of our Sunday School classes and teachers, I hope to offer this study during the Sunday School hour throughout the month of February. If that is acceptable, we will begin distributing the books later in January, one per household, as a New Year gift from your church. Begin lifting this study in your prayers. It truly holds a message for every Christian!

Next, an old friend will be visiting a pew near you starting in January! I hope it will be a welcome old friend. The friend is called an “attendance pad”, or sometimes a “pew pad”, or sometimes just “the pad”, and our hope is to have one on each pew waiting to greet you each and every Sunday morning. As many of you know, I love accurate attendance! Debbie Britt does an awesome job of taking our attendance each Sunday, along with some willing volunteers on those rare occasions that Debbie is away. But, sometimes members get missed on the roll sheet, especially on our best attended Sundays. And it is hard to get down from the choir loft in time to get the names of guests and visitors. Believe it or not, I actually study our attendance information every week. You are important to me! I pray over those who attend, over those who miss, and over those who visit often, seldom, or only once, and good attendance tracking helps me do that well.

So, please don’t shun the old friend when you see it sitting in the pew. Take time to sign it each week, and be sure to share it with the others on your pew. It doesn’t take long, and it helps me do the holy work of caring for each of you.

Finally, be prayerful for Rev. Tamika Garrison as she begins our new Youth programming here at FUMC. Tamika is already hard at work planning and organizing, and our first Youth Bible Study will take place on December 17. But, I have no doubt that the New Year will bring new opportunities for this ministry and for all of our FUMC ministries. Just as Susan Ogle and a great group of volunteers help to create top-notch children’s ministries for our church, Tamika and volunteers will build a Youth program that will change lives, especially the lives of all of us grown-ups as we realize how much the Children and Youth minister to us! They are our future, yes! But, I believe the Lord is working through them even now, and supporting them with our prayers and our efforts seems like a great way to build our future in 2025 and for many years to come!

The Lord be with you, and Happy New Year!

Bill Roberts

Rev. Bill Roberts

FIRST
 UNITED
 METHODIST
 CHURCH
 VALDESE,
 NC

*Prayer For
 The New Year*

Heavenly Father, we thank You for the year that has passed and the many blessings You have showered us in time.

We beg your pardon in our many failings and trespasses and we pray that the coming year be a more fruitful one.

We earnestly pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit and we call upon our Lord Jesus Christ for His intercessions, His guidance and His light to shine our path.

- ◆ Pastor
Bill Roberts
- ◆ Director of Music
Nancy Epley
- ◆ Organist
Nancy Epley
- ◆ Secretary
Joan Hogan
- ◆ Custodian
Pat Pons
- ◆ Groundskeeper
Larry Holden
- ◆ Youth Pastor
Tamika Garrison

Hurricane Helene

On September 27, 2024, our lives were changed forever in Western North Carolina. Hurricane Helene made a path of destruction that will take years to overcome. Lives were lost, homes floating down rivers and towns completely gone, washed away. The needs of the residents of Western North Carolina were overwhelming, but people from everywhere have been coming together to help supply those needs, including First Methodist Valdese. In just a few days after the hurricane, we helped to supply baby needs and water to a few families in Swannanoa. In two weeks we were able to collect and send a truck load of water, baby needs, and propane tanks to Spruce Pine United Methodist. The donations were so great in this area that the biggest need was to sort and organize

these donations. We were able to send two groups to Spruce Pine UMC to help sort and organize their donations. As they began to wind down their distribution center, we moved on up the mountains to a community called Buladean. This community is west of Bakersville and only a few miles from the NC/TN line. We have been able to send two groups to the Buladean Community Center to help sort and organize donations. On our last trip to Buladean we arranged over 40 new bikes that children would be receiving for Christmas. The pictures you see are from the Buladean Community Center. I hope we will be able to continue our volunteer efforts in WNC. There will be lots of needs for a long time. I am honored to tell these communities that we represent First United Methodist of Valdese!! Love, Susan Ogle



MUSIC NOTES

The year 2024 is almost behind us as we head into 2025. We don't know what the new year will bring but I am so thankful that we have a Savior to rely on. I am so thankful for our wonderful choir who give of their time each week to add to the music of our services. They have given way above the "normal" amount of time in order to present the cantata "The Road to Bethlehem". I am thankful that we had such a wonderful accompanist in Jessica Stamey. I am thankful to Susan and Natasha for directing our children with the handchime story, "Away in a Manger". I am very thankful for the ladies of the UWF for the absolutely wonderful reception they provided following the cantata.

I have a lot to be thankful for. I am most thankful that we can celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. My hope is that we all realize how very fortunate we are to be part of this congregation and this celebration.

I wish for all of you a safe and blessed Christmas and New Year.

In His Name,
Nancy



To the FUMC Carolers!

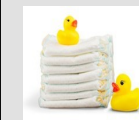
Thank you from Joyce Mahaffee and from Ron Lynn.

From Ron: "Kudos to the carolers yesterday! Their cheer, warmth, and smiles were much welcomed and infectious."

Joyce shared her love and thanks to the Carolers for coming by her house and also to everyone who has sent Christmas Cards as well as Sympathy Cards in the death of her sister, Carolyn.

From Western North Carolina Conference
RE: Hurricane Helene Relief

FUMC-Valdese collected and sent \$3,628 to the Conference during the Hurricane Helene Relief campaign. Of the monies sent, \$1,400 was used to purchase a shower trailer. Mr. Brian Mateer, Director of Missional Engagement & Conference Disaster Response Coordinator shared the following, "your gift ensures that our Conference and UMCOR will be able to provide help and hope for those left homeless or otherwise affected by Hurricane Helene for years to



Dry Bottoms Ministry Update

Greetings from the Dry Bottoms Team!

In November, we served 25 families and 31 children, slightly less than previous months. We felt blessed to have been able to serve these families especially so soon after Hurricane Helene. In December, we served 29 families and 39 children, back to a more normal number. During the month of November and December we received donations from various organizations as they began to close up their "drop off" sites for families who were affected by Helene. For that, we are grateful, these donations helped to fill our shelves! And the week before Christmas, the Department of Adult Corrections, local office in Valdese, brought a 14 ft trailer loaded with diapers to the church (they too were closing down their drop off sites). What a blessing to see so many diapers!

Thank you to each Council Member for a Wonderful 2024! I appreciate your dedication to our church and to Christ in your lives! As we have ended 2024 we look forward to a productive and wonderful 2025. It is exciting to see where Jesus will lead us as we keep our eyes on Him!

There is a place for you at our table...
Dinner Church
January 7th & 21st @ 5:30 pm

Again, we have been blessed in December with Dinner Church! We look forward to the members of Dinner Church when they come each Tuesday (1st and 3rd of each month). Everyone offers to help with serving, providing a dessert, etc. and there is a true spirit of oneness! As we continue to develop Christ's community we ask that you keep this ministry in your prayers. We have had over 30 at each Dinner Church. And we are now blest with youth attending! Thank you Tamika Garrison for your vision! We have plenty of room-there is a chair waiting for you at Dinner Church!

Blessings! Jen Boggs

United Women in Faith (UWFaith) January Meetings

January 13th @ 6:00 pm: UWFaith Circle #2
January 13th @ 6:30 pm: UWFaith Circle #6
January 15th @ 3:00 pm: UWFaith Circle #3
UWFaith Circle #3 will be hosting the January 15th Fellowship Meal
January 27th @ 6:00 pm: UWFaith General Meeting

The United Methodist Men will have their next breakfast meeting on Sunday, January 12th @ 8:30 am. All are welcome to attend! Mark your calendars for our annual Valentine Banquet on February 15th. Tickets will soon be available and the price is the same as last year!

Backpack News
Many thanks to the United Methodist Men and United Women in Faith who provided the funds for us to purchase a \$25 Walmart gift card for each backpack kid! We pray that each child and family will have a safe and enjoyable Christmas break.

Blessings, Melinda and Phyllis



January Fellowship Meals

January 1st: No Fellowship Meal
January 8th: Covered Dish
January 15th: Spaghetti, Salad, Garlic bread & Dessert (Hosted by Circle #3)
January 22nd: Meatloaf, Mashed Potatoes/gravy, green beans, roll & Dessert
January 29th: BBQ Chicken, Mac/Cheese, Slaw, Roasted Veggies, Roll & Dessert

Meals are: \$7/plate for adults and \$4/plate for kids
Pay weekly or prepay for the month by using the brown envelopes in the pews or pay at the door.

Unified Mission Churches

Waldensian Presbyterian Church
Food Pantry Ministry
Collection for
January: Canned Meats



Operation Christmas Child
January: Hats, Scarves & Gloves



Change the World Offering
January 19

All Operation Christmas Child items can be given during our Change the World Offering Sundays (red wagon) or left in the tote in the Narthex.

First Baptist Church—Valdese
Twice Blessed Closet

Donations needed for gently worn clothes. Most needed are baby clothes, children clothes and young adults; however, all clothing items are greatly appreciated. If you have items to donate, please bring to the church office and we will get them to EBCM.

New Ministry Opportunity
East Burke Christian Ministries

New and/or clean, gently used blankets. If you have items to donate, please bring to the church office and we will get them to EBCM.



The Pass Along Box

Please continue to bring devotionals, Advent booklets, and other reading materials for the Pass Along Project.
-Norma Rains

Please check out the gallery page on our webpage at:
<https://www.valdesefumc.org/gallery>
It holds the most wonderful memories of amazing events!

A message from Beth Heile and Friends of the Valdese Rec (FVR)

FVR is hosting free Lunch & Learns for Adults in our fellowship hall. These occur the 3rd Thursday of each month.

January 16, 2025
Thrive Dementia Education
Dementia & Treatment

Executive Director Daniel Reeves will cover dementia and treatment, how to approach combative behaviors with loved ones.

To RSVP for lunch, email friendsofthevaldeserec@gmail.com or call church office 874-0006 by Tuesday before the event.

You may attend if you do not RSVP, but lunch is only guaranteed for those who reply.