

“AS MEMBERS OF THIS CONGREGATION, WE WILL FAITHFULLY PARTICIPATE IN ITS MINISTRIES BY OUR PRAYERS...

Patsy Zeigler Becky Derrick Arvan Derrick Dale Wells Patsy Shuler Christopher McCroskey
Jimmy Grahl Jackie McNeill Latson Lewis Steve Aiello Kaye Floyd John Ballentine
Hilda Edwards

Shut-Ins: Shirley Butler; Esther Carter; Gillett Hipp; June Hutto; Linda Maloch; Melton Martin; Georgeann Pace; Jean Raynor; Claudia Sineath; George Taylor

Family and Friends: **Gloria Erd** (friend of Lynn Martin); **Amber Kirby** (cousin of Kelsey Tolliver); **Pearl Geddens** (mother of Tom Geddens); **Laura Horlbeck** (niece of English Percy); **Andrew Jordan** (nephew of John Jordan); **Beverly Lipscomb** (sister-in-law of John Jordan); **Ross Deal** (grandson of Mary Kamoroff); **Jimmy Dawkins** (friend of Jeanette Hornsby); **David Turner** (brother of Pam Turner); **Chip Mixon** (friend of Tommy Gleaton); **Ron Walker** (friend of Tommy & Chris Gleaton); **Merit Takach** (friend of Joyce & Brent Robinson); **Frankie Hendrix** (cousin of Billy Pearson); **Howard Stephens** (former church member); **James Boggs** (father of Claire Boggs); **Stacy Coggins** (daughter of Steve Aiello); **Dan & Leslie White** (brother & sister-in-law of Steve White); **Alva Humphries** (friend of Marty Johnson); **Bill Areheart** (friend of Bonnie Ramsey); **Hayley Beaudoin** (niece of Edwa Meek); **Addie Kinard** (cousin of coworker of Edwa Meek); **Stuart & Penny Lloyd** (son & daughter-in-law of Tom & Marilyn Lloyd); **Megan Corby** (daughter of Carlis Edwards); **Chip Hooker** (Wayne Hooker's father); **Robert Bradley** (Business Associate of Simon Ross); **Gary Becton** (friend of Mark Branham); **Florence Lee Carter, Monnie Tiller** (friends of Chris Derrick); **Adrin & Linda Hargett** (stepfather and stepmom of Christopher McCroskey); **Alexa Lookingbill** (wife of coworker of Kathy White); **Katelyn Rose** (daughter of coworker of Kathy White); **Vickie Edwards** (neighbor of Kathy White); **Teddy Derrick** (uncle of Arvan Derrick); **Haidee Baehr** (friends of Ruth Frady); **Dianne Schmotzer** (sister-in-law of Gale Frady); **Denise Paul, Scott & Karen Nelson** (cousins of Gale Frady); **Dan Conner, Max Johnson** (friends of Gale Frady); **Wayne Blair** (son of Dot Johnson); **Walt & Janet Beck** (friends of Jo Ann Heiting); **Adam Lavender** (son of Phil Lavender)

If you have a friend or family member on the Prayer List, we ask you to please keep us updated. If no word is received, we will trust that our prayers have been answered and remove the name. To update us, please call the office or e-mail us at trinityumcwc@sc.rr.com.

OUR PRESENCE ...

In-Person Attendance 01/15 SS: 18 Worship: 36

OUR GIFTS ...

General Fund 01/15 \$ 1,326.10

OUR SERVICE ...

OUR WITNESS."

Upcoming Events

- 01/23 Exercise Class, 10:30 a.m.
Trustees Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
GLIA Articles Due
01/25 T.a.G., 7 p.m.
01/26 Exercise, 10:30 a.m.

Readings for January 29

Micah 6:1-8
Psalm 15
1 Corinthians 1:18-31
Matthew 5:1-12



Ministers	The Congregation
Pastor	John D. Jordan
Resident Bishop	Jonathan Holston
District Superintendent	Rev. Fran M. Elrod

Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Our vision is to Connect, Nurture, Inspire and Transform



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**Monday, January 23
6:30 p.m.**

The Trustees will meet on Monday, January 23, at 6:30 p.m. to elect officers for the year.



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A covered dish luncheon will be held on Sunday, January 29, following the service. Everyone is invited to bring a covered dish and stay for the food and fellowship!



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Church Council will meet on Sunday, January 29, immediately following the covered dish luncheon.



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Offering Envelopes for 2023 are now available in the Gathering Area. If you would like to use offering envelopes, and do not see your name on those in the Gathering Area, please contact the Church Office.



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Matthew 4:12-23

Life was dark for the ordinary people of Galilee during Jesus' lifetime. The Romans and their client-kings ruled the land. Herod and his successor, Herod Antipas, were known for their brutal acts of oppression. The slaughter of the innocents in Matthew 2 and the beheading of John the Baptist were just two examples. These rulers cared little for the cultural and religious sensitivities of the people. One example was building the city of Tiberius over a Jewish cemetery.

The economy was changing from a reciprocal, barter economy to a money-based market economy. In this new economy, the gap between the haves and the have-nots was ever widening. Ten percent of the population controlled two-thirds of the wealth.

Rome, the client-king, and the temple imposed taxes. The tax collectors collected whatever they could above that imposed. They all became wealthy off the backs of the people. Many common people resorted to slavery, begging, and banditry to support themselves.

Racial tensions between the Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles were ever-present. For women, life was even worse. She belonged to her father or husband. She was betrothed at twelve or thirteen and married a year later. She could not divorce her husband, but he could divorce her. Her father or husband could punish unseemly behavior in whatever way they saw fit.

Yes, times were dark. If you would like to get a sense of the darkness of the times, I recommend the movie, *The Nativity Story* and Sue Monk Kidd's novel, *The Book of Longings*.

This was the world in which Simon and Andrew, Zebedee and his sons, James and John, lived. As fishermen, they could have been tax collectors who sold fishing rights to local businessmen, or they could have owned and leased boats, or they could have been seasonal day laborers. Most likely Simon, Andrew, Zebedee, and his sons fell into the second category. They owned their boats, hired people then sold the catch. They may have had a contract to provide fish for a Roman legion. They were "middle-class" businessmen.

They would take the boats out at night or in the early morning and then bring in and sort the catch. They would turn over whatever they had contracted, and then sell all they could before the fish went bad. Hopefully, they would make enough to pay the help and the tax collector and have some profit.

One day as these fishermen were casting their nets, a man came walking along the beach. The man said to them, "Follow me." He did not say, "Follow me, please" or "I would like you to follow me." He said to them, "You! Follow me!" He said it as an imperative, a command. Following this man was something these fishermen must do. He said if they followed him, he would make them fishers of people. Instead of catching fish and bringing them to the shore, they would catch people.

These fishermen were happy and content with their life. They were married and had families. They were not looking for anything else to do with their lives. They were providing food for people. They were doing good. But this man told them to follow him. He did not say where they were going but only that he would make

them fishers of people. He did not say how or why they should follow him and become fishers of people. He just said, “Follow me and I will make you fishers of people.”

These fishermen left their nets and followed this man named Jesus. They followed him simply on his word. They left their nets and followed the word of command to follow him and his word of hope, giving them a new life as fishers of people. They responded to this intrusion in their lives by doing what Jesus commanded.

I know much has been speculated about these fishermen who left their nets to follow Jesus. It makes no sense for someone with a good life to suddenly toss everything and follow some itinerate rabbi. We have trouble wrapping our brains around that so we try to develop some rational explanation. When we do we completely miss the point.

The word of Jesus is so powerful and hopeful that one cannot help but obey. Jesus’ word is a word of a new kingdom, the Kingdom of Heaven. This Kingdom presents a different way of being, bringing light into the darkness of the world. In this Kingdom, the economy is not based on reciprocity or markets but on sharing so everyone has what they need. The people in this Kingdom are ruled by love and compassion, not violence and oppression. In this Kingdom, there is unity instead of division. Citizenship in this Kingdom is not based on religion, race, ethnicity, family, or birthplace but on being a Child of God.

Jesus called those fishermen to follow him into this Kingdom. They followed Jesus into that Kingdom of light and they became fishers of people. They began to fish with the light that overcomes the darkness of their world.

Jesus is still walking the earth calling people to follow him. Millard Fuller was a successful businessman and entrepreneur. He was a millionaire at age 29. Millard heard Jesus calling, “Follow me” amid a deep personal crisis. He and his wife, Linda, left their life of affluence in Montgomery Alabama and moved to Koinonia Farm, a Christian community outside Americus Georgia, where he felt God’s Spirit. He felt affirmed and supported by Clarence Jordan, the founder of Koinonia, and others in the community. He divested all his wealth and went on a mission to Africa. Upon returning from Africa, he began working to build affordable housing for poor people which evolved into Habitat for Humanity. Millard heard and responded to Jesus’ call to follow him and became a fisher of people.

Jesus’ call for us to follow him may not be as radical as Millard Fuller’s but Jesus is calling us. Jesus’ call remains an imperative for us to follow him. The imperative is that when we obey Jesus’ call, we become fishers of people. In whatever way Jesus calls us to respond, we bring people into the net of God’s Kingdom. When we answer the call to follow Jesus we shed light. We shed the light of love, peace, hope, truth, and mercy into the darkness of the world. This is our bait as we fish for people, the light that overcomes darkness.

“For the darkness shall turn to the dawning, and the dawning to noonday bright; and Christ’s great kingdom shall come on earth, the kingdom of love and light.”¹

¹ H. Ernest Nichol, “We’ve a Story to Tell to the Nations” In *The United Methodist Hymnal*, (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1989) 569.