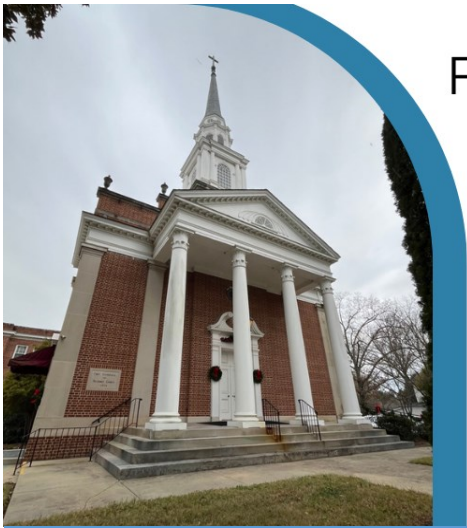




FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

SALISBURY, NORTH CAROLINA

*"To grow in faith, love and fellowship
as we serve God and all of our community."*

We are a bunch of seekers on a journey. We learn together and we serve together. We believe that God is love and that all persons are created in God's own image. We are people from all walks of life with varied life experiences doing our best to live out God's love in the world. So truly **"No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you are welcome here."**



Newsletter | September 2026

The Pastor's Pen

The month of September represents the end of summer and the beginning of autumn. The days shorten and the temperature becomes cooler at night but not always during the days. The seasonal transition brings also a transition for First Church as new Interim Pastors have been installed for another phase of transition in our continued exploration of First Church in partnership with Catawba College. Dr. David Nelson, President of Catawba College has been installed as Interim Pastor of Worship, and I have been installed as Pastor of Visitation and Administration. Mrs. Kimberly Nelson, wife of Dr. Nelson and First Lady of Catawba College has been a very important part of our transition this past year as she has been an active member of the Transition Committee, as a consultant and liaison with Catawba and First Church, organizing the Worship Bulletins each week and supporting Dr. Nelson in his role with First Church. Kimberly has kindly agreed to chair the Worship Committee. The Nelsons are associate members of First Church, and we welcome them both into leadership positions. Also, we have the leadership and talent of Dr. Phillip Burgess, Dean of the Shuford School of Performing Arts at Catawba as our Interim Church Organist and Choral Director. Mrs. Susan Trivette, retired organist and presently accompanist at Catawba has agreed to be a Supply Organist as needed.

On Sunday, September 6, Labor Day Sunday, we will welcome Dr. Ken Clapp, Senior Vice-President and Chaplain Emeritus of Catawba and long-time member of First UCC since 1989 to our pulpit. Also on September 6, Dr. Nelson has been invited to preach at our sister church, St. Matthew's Reformed UCC, Maiden, where the idea of "a college of our own" to train ministers in the Southern Reformed Church was conceived in 1851, 175 years ago. I will assist with the service as needed. All are welcome at the Table of Holy Communion this Sunday as well. During this first week of September, I will be taking Home Communion to our homebound members.

On September 10-13, I will be attending the UCC Pension Boards Annuitant Visitors Conference in Kansas City, MO. My wife, Edith and I will be traveling together and after the conference visit a Catawba friend for several days in Columbia, MO, returning September 16. While I am away, Dr. Clapp will be on call for the church. As a UCC annuitant visitor I represent the UCC Pension Boards to 60 retired clergy and their spouses who live along I-85 from Charlotte to High Point, a responsibility I treasure for it puts me in contact with retired servants of the UCC church, many of which are long-term friends and colleagues.

If you have not attended First Church for a while, I hope you will make the extra effort to join us on Sundays at 11 am at First UCC to worship God and join in the weekly buzz of conversation after worship among our members and guests.

Rev. Larry Bolick



Friends,

I want to thank you for sharing your church and your lives with me over the last year. It has been both a joy and an honor to walk with you in this time of transition, and I look forward to seeing the places that God will take you in the years to come.

When I first arrived, I knew that being an intentional interim pastor meant that my role would be temporary. But knowing that something has an ending doesn't make the relationships formed along the way any less meaningful. Over this past year, I have come to appreciate the people who make this church what it is—their faith, their generosity, their commitment to one another, and their deep love for this congregation.

I am especially grateful for the ways you welcomed me into the life of the church and trusted me to walk alongside you through both the joys and the challenges of this season. We have worshiped together, asked difficult questions, celebrated milestones, mourned losses, tried new things, and imagined what the future might hold. I hope that, in some small way, my presence has helped you see more clearly the gifts you already have and the possibilities that lie ahead.

As I leave, I do so with gratitude rather than sadness, because I know that the story of this congregation is far from finished. Every church goes through seasons of change, and I believe God is still at work among you, calling you to listen, to dream, and to be open to what comes next.

Thank you for allowing me to be part of your story. It has been a privilege to serve as your pastor, and I will carry many wonderful memories of our time together with me. May God bless you, guide you, and give you courage for the journey ahead.

With gratitude and affection,

Pastor Anne

Weekly Scripture References | September Lectionary

September 6 Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 12:1-4 and Psalm 149

Ezekiel 33:7-11 and Psalm 119: 33-40

Romans 13:8-14

Matthew 18:15-20

September 13 Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 14:19-31 and Psalm 114 or Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21

Genesis 50:15-21 and Psalm 103:(1-7), 8-13

Romans 14:1-12

Matthew 18:21-35

September 20 Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 16:2-15 and Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45

Jonah 3:10-4:11 and Psalm 145:1-8

Philemon 1:21-30

Matthew 120:1-16

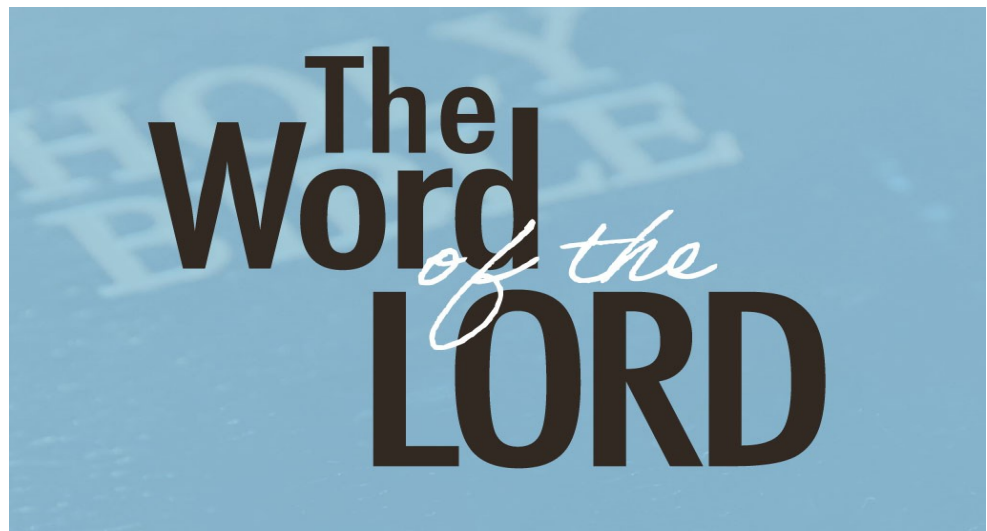
September 27 Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 17:1-7 and Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32 and Psalm 25:1-9

Philemon 2:1-13

Matthew 21:23-32



UPCOMING EVENTS

1	6:30pm	Circle 6 Meeting
2	5:30pm	WOW Bible Study-Fellowship Hall
6	10:00am 11:00am	Choir Practice Worship Service
7	6:30pm	Circle 7 Meeting
8	10:30am	Meals on Wheels Deliveries
9	5:30pm	WOW Bible Study-President's House/Catawba
10	11:30am	Prime Timers
13	10:00am 11:00am	Choir Practice Worship Service
15	1:00pm	Bless These Stitches
16	5:30pm	WOW Bible Study-President's House/Catawba
20	10:00am 11:00am	Choir Practice Worship Service
22	10:30am 5:00pm	Meals on Wheels Deliveries Church Council Meeting
23	5:30pm	WOW Bible Study-President's House/Catawba
27	10:00am 11:00am 12:00pm	Choir Practice Worship Service Feasting on the Fourth
30	5:30pm	WOW Bible Study-President's House/Catawba

WOW Wednesday Bible Study

The WOW Bible Study will resume on Wednesday, September 2 at 5:30pm in the First Church Fellowship Hall with shared food and conversation to get acquainted and introduce a Fall Study on Ecclesiastes, led by David Nelson:

WOW Bible Study: Sept 9 - Nov 18

The Time of Your Life: A Study of Ecclesiastes

Dr. and Mrs. Nelson are inviting participants, including Catawba students, to the President's House at Catawba College each Wednesday from Sept 9 through Nov 18 to share food and study Ecclesiastes together. This ancient text raises questions like: Who am I? What kind of person do I want to be in the world and how can I live my life with meaning and purpose? It invites us to consider how we will spend the time that is our life.

Dr. Nelson has taught courses in religious studies, philosophy, music, and cultural studies for more than twenty-five years. He earned a BM in Church Music and MM in Conducting from Hardin-Simmons University, with additional studies in conducting at the University of North Texas before pursuing studies in theology and philosophy, leading to a PhD in Theological Studies from Southeastern Seminary. He was appointed the 24th president of Catawba College in 2020. The WOW study will be advertised by Campus Ministry & Lilly Center for Vocation and Values as an opportunity for Catawba students.

All are welcome! Accessible parking is available in the rear of the house and along the side driveway, with extra parking in the Guest House Circle. All who wish to avoid stairs may enter at the rear of the house.

Take a Blessing, Leave a Blessing, Be a Blessing

The Blessing Pantry located near the driveway into the parking lot on Church Street is an outreach to the neighboring community. Members of the Mission Committee continue to monitor the box and add items at least once a week, but demand is great and it is usually emptied in a couple of days.

How can you participate?

Bring your contributions to the Church office during office hours. You can also add items directly to the Blessing Box or make a monetary contribution to help the Mission Committee to keep the pantry supplied.

Little Red Wagon

The items donated to the Little Red Wagon are given to Rowan Helping Ministries Food for Thought & the Backpack Program. Items may be placed in the Little Red Wagon or dropped off at the First UCC Church office during weekly office hours.

Suggested Items for the Blessing Pantry	Suggested Items for the Little Red Wagon
Canned meats (chicken, tuna, ham, Spam) Hearty soups with pull tab Chef Boyardee canned meals Canned fruits and vegetables Peanut butter and jelly, bread Dried goods (noodles, cereals, beans) Personal hygiene products Baby care items (wipes, snack pouches) Can openers Spices Only Nonperishable items.	Mac & Cheese cups Canned ravioli Individual cereal packs Oatmeal/grits Pop Tarts Pudding cups Fruit cups Granola bars Lance crackers (variety packs) Microwave meals (shelf stable soups, pasta, etc.)



The 5-Alive Fund helps neighbors in the Salisbury-Rowan community who are facing financial crisis through Rowan Helping Ministries.

The fund also serves our own church family by providing support to First UCC families and individuals in times of need.

Over the past 12 months, 5-Alive has helped several members of our church community. None of this would be possible without your generous contributions

Any questions about 5 Alive can be sent to the church office or directly to Ann Teague.

Bless These Stitches

Members of Bless These Stitches meet monthly on the 3rd Tuesday day of the month at 1:00pm. Items are available outside the church office.

If you are planning to give an item as a personal gift or for personal use, suggested donation amounts are listed below.

We now include adding hats and scarves to our blessing pantry during the cold winter months. If you knit or crochet, want to learn, or want to share in the fellowship with other needleworkers, join us

\$3.00.....Dishcloths	\$10.00.....Scarves
\$5.00.....Small Hats	\$10.00.....Large Hats
\$10.00.....Small Shawls	\$20.00.....Large Shawls
\$20.00.....Small Throws	\$35.00.....Large Throws

Prime Timers

The Prime Timers met on August 13 for hamburgers, baked beans, homemade ice cream and other desserts. Rev. Dr. Ken Clapp led devotions on two meaningful Psalms. Rev. Larry Bolick shared a program on preparing for “The Talk” with family and Power of Attorney about end-of-life plans including information on one’s funeral service and what are the next steps after a death of a loved one. First UCC Funeral Planning Guide may be obtained through the church office and returned to church office for a confidential file assessable by church pastors. Action was taken to donate \$100 for Nazareth Child and Family Connection for school supplies.

The Prime Timers will meet on Thursday, September 10 at 11:30 AM for hot dogs and baked beans prepared by Sara Schiemann and desserts. Rev. Dr. Ken will lead a program on participants sharing stories about First UCC as we reflect on our history and what First Church means to me. Please let Rev. Bolick (828.612.8146) know by Monday, September 7 if you plan to attend. The cost will be \$10.00 each.

The Prime Timers have accepted an invitation from Mt. Zion UCC JOY Club for 11 am on Wednesday, September 23. A musical program will be presented by Matthew Weaver.

Missions Committee

The Mission Committee met on Thursday, August 13. In August, Rebecca Wrights purchased food for The Blessing Pantry, Linda Hauze in September and Larry Bolick in October. Presently, the church is reimbursing our purchasers \$200 for the Blessing Pantry each month. The Little Red Wagon will be collecting food/snack items for RHM Food for Thought School Backpack Program. Rev. Dr. Ken Clapp is planning for a RHM Shelter Meal with Catawba Student Volunteers in September or October. Neighbors In Need will be collected on Sunday, October 4 on World Communion Sunday for Council for American Indian Ministries and Local Church Innovative Mission Grants. The committee approved the application for another First Foundation Grant for 2026-27 Calendar year. The Annual Report on Mission Committee was reviewed and was approved to be printed in the Annual Church Reports. The next meeting will be in October.

TRANSITION TEAM/CHURCH COUNCIL UPDATE

September 1, 2026

To: First UCC, Salisbury Congregation

From: Greg Alcorn, Council President

Re: Transition Team and Council update

The Transition Team has completed the required Church Profile for calling our next minister. After the UCC Western Association reviews and approves the Profile, we will be able to formally start the search process. No timeframe has been created yet.

Catawba College Chapel renovation plans and timeframe should be determined soon. We are in “waiting mode”. Another major milestone is to hopefully receive formal approval by Catawba’s Board of Trustees. Within our church profile, the Catawba Vision is laid out for the board to consider. So far, the response has been favorable.

Our Intentional Interim process has been completed. Rev. Anne Tambling’s year-long tenure ended in August. We celebrated her accomplishments in both the worship service and luncheon on August 23rd.

As we wait, the Transition Team will take a break in September and resume our process in October. Our initiative remains: Pilot the Catawba connection, call our next minister and look for ways to optimize the use of our church building and property.

Catawba Community News

Catawba College Center for Vocation and Values is hosting a free lecture by Dr. Amy Jill Levine, New Testament Scholar who gives a historical Jewish perspective on Biblical Studies on Thursday evening, September 17 at 6 pm in Keppel Auditorium. WOW participants used her book "Stories of Jesus" last year and received a new and different perspective on the Parables of Jesus. There is no registration for this free lecture. Dr. Levine is the Keynote Speaker for Catawba Clergy Days on September 17-18 with workshops and worship for clergy who register. The cost for registered clergy is \$100. Both Dr. Clapp and Rev. Bolick are members of the Catawba Clergy Network and participate in a monthly Zoom Call for Retired Clergy Still Thriving in Ministry.

On Tuesday, September 15, beginning at 6:30 PM in Keppel Auditorium, Jeffrey Rosen will be visiting the campus to share his thoughts on "The Founders and the Future," in celebration of the nation's 250th anniversary.

On Monday, September 28, beginning at noon and going into the evening, the N.C. Politics Center and the [Task Force for American Democracy](#) will present a conference on "The Ballots & Bots." We will have several North Carolina and national speakers attending and will conclude the day with former Judge Michael Luttig, former Secretary Jeh Johnson, and Judy Woodruff of PBS Newshour for an evening community event beginning at 7 PM in Keppel Auditorium.

US 250 Kindness

As many school systems who have joined US of Kindness to celebrate the 250th Anniversary of the USA, students are returning this fall to a special curriculum designed to teach and enact kindness within their schools and among students' friends and families. Just last week as I visited the classroom of my 4-year-old grandson Ewan at his NC Pre-K Class, I was warmly amazed that an older brother of one of his new classmates joined him at a table to draw. I do not know what they were saying, but I certainly could tell the older brother was speaking kindly to my grandson as if he was welcoming him to his new school where he too attended several grades up.



Johns River Valley Camp is turning 90!!

Join us on September 26 for a special 90th Anniversary Open House

celebrating JRVC's legacy, community and the people who have made it all possible. This event is open to everyone. We will have food, music, and activities for the whole family. Invite your friends to come and see what makes JRVC such a special place.

Details:

- Spend the weekend with us, all housing options 1/2 off.
- Lunch is provided from 11-1 on Saturday.
- A variety of activities will be available for everyone.
- Swim in the river, tubing, rocking on the porch, face painting, JRVC history exhibit, and more!

Come celebrate 90 years of JRVC with us!

6211 Hwy 90

Collettsville, NC 28611

First UCC Celebrates 130 Years in 2026

First UCC will celebrate its 130th Anniversary on Sunday, November 1 at 11am with Catawba College Homecoming Service, when Catawba celebrates 175th Anniversary in 2026.

On May 11, 1931, the 25th birthday of our church was celebrated. It was reported that Reverend Samuel Kirk, a ministerial son of the congregation preached on the topic of "The Duty of the Church in the Modern World." He is quoted as saying "let peace and goodwill reign among us; let us each have a mind to work, and may our highest and holiest desire be to serve Him faithfully to the end."

Our 40th anniversary, in 1936, was celebrated with a week of services 9/27/36 thru 10/4/1936. Reverend Fitz opened with a historical message. Then, three former pastors filled the pulpit for one night each: Reverend C.C. Wagoner, Reverend W.H. Causey, and Reverend Banks J. Peeler.

According to a 9/22/71 newsletter, the date of October 10, 1971, was set for the 75th anniversary celebration. Dr. James Lightbourne, conference minister, will be featured speaker. The Anniversary Committee included the following: Mrs. Edwin Alcorn, Narvie Lee Bonds, Martin Sholtzberger, John Robinson, Jr., Jimmy Lyerly, Catherine Whitener, and our pastor, Lonnie A. Carpenter.

On June 6, 1982, Dr. Lonnie Carpenter was installed as Pastor Emeritus. Dr. Porter Seiwel delivered the sermon titled "Yuh done Good!"

Participants were Edwin Alcorn, Area Minister; Porter Seiwel, Campus Pastor Emeritus; Stephen Wurster; James Cress; Harold Isenberg; Eric Norris, Consistory President; Janet Rhodes, President, Church Women; Chancel Choir; Jean Ramsey; Ralph Bostian; and Lary Diehl, Pastor.

The 90th Anniversary Celebration of the First Church of Christ was held on June 29, 1986. Lary G. Diehl served as pastor, Dr. Lonnie A Carpenter was pastor emeritus, Lugene Cox was director of music, and Ralph A. Bostian was organist. The Anniversary Committee was comprised of the History Room Committee, representatives from the circles, Pastor Diehl, and the Present of the Consistory. Dr. Richard Cheek celebrated the 40th year of his ordination in 1990.



Congratulations to Tyler and Saydie Bernhardt, who were united in marriage on Saturday, August 22nd in Jekyll Island, Georgia. Tyler is in the US Navy and based out of Jacksonville, Florida. He is the son of Jeff and Lynn Bernhardt and the grandson of Brenda Bernhardt.



We're Updating Our Church Directory

The **Annual Church Directory** will be printed in October for distribution at the Annual Meeting on **Sunday, October 11**. Please send to the church office any updates on addresses, phone numbers and emails. Also, all reports need to be turned into the office by the first week of September to be included in the Annual report.



September

BIRTHDAYS

- 3rd Carrie Webster
- 4th Kimberly Nelson
- 7th Stephanie Leichman
- 7th Linda Thompson
- 12th Joyce Trexler
- 18th Bettie Lyerly
- 19th Carolyn Cline
- 19th Traci Nolen
- 30th Greg Alcorn



IN OUR *Thoughts and Prayers*

Emily Faust, Erin Isenberg, John Isenberg, John Isenberg Family, John Marion, Dan and Winnie Mikkelsen, Donna Odrosky, Glenda Shrewsbury, Joyce Trexler, Family of Betty Rose Whitty, (sister to Joyce Trexler & Aunt to Susan Trivette), Frances Wensil, Jeannette Yost, Bobbie Troutman

In Care Facilities

Mott Arey (Trinity Oaks Assisted Living), Shirley McNeil (Terra Bella), Barbara Waller (Oak Park)

In Military Service

Tyler Bernhardt (son of Jeff & Lynn Bernhardt)
Brendan Johnson (son of Ginny Walser Johnson)

Friends and Family of the Congregation

Desiree Artz, Sally Cline Blossey, Julian Clark (Robert Propst's husband), Rev. David Crook, Gerri D. Crummett (Donna Odrosky's sister, Maggie Derby (Jim Weaver's great granddaughter), Emily Hauze (Linda Hauze's daughter-in-law), Rev. Jim and Faye Humphrey, Renee Leonard (John Marion's sister), Sarah Locklear, Eddie Meeker, Dan Morngan, Dan Pardue (John Marion's cousin), Cindy Shepherd (Kimberly Nelson's mother), Pat Shoe (Patty Shuping's mother), Amber Smith (Rhonda Smith's daughter-in-law), Diane Reavis Smith, Bruce South (Rhonda Smith's friend), Alonzo Surratt and his sister Ava Mann, Tom Troutman (Bobbie Troutman's nephew), Waylon Ward (Susan Ward's husband)



FIRST UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST
SALISBURY, NC

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