



First United Methodist Church

Manhattan, Kansas

CONNECTING to Christ | GROWING in Community | SERVING the World

VOLUME 94 | NO. 7 | JULY 2026

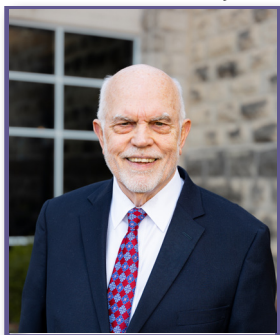
All That We Can Be

Traveling back from the east coast several years ago, Judy and I elected to avoid I70 and instead take the “National Road” which retraces one of the earliest routes, over the Allegheny Mountains, to the western frontier. The route (now I64) snakes through western Maryland and into West Virginia, Kentucky and on to the west.

As we traveled through the mountains, I couldn’t help thinking about the people who made the journey when the road was little more than deer trails and footpaths. And as I looked at the dense forests that covered the countryside I wondered how they ever found their way forward. Whizzing along on an interstate highway, it was possible to look out on the valleys, rivers and mountains, but buried in the forest, there would have been no way to see the big picture - your vision would have been blocked by the dense foliage. You literally wouldn’t have been able to see the forest for the trees. Yet men and women with a special vision saw something more than the trees and the rivers that blocked their paths. They saw a bigger picture.

The celebration of our nation’s 250th birthday offers a special opportunity to express our joy and thanksgiving for the great gift of our country. We are a truly blessed people to live in “the land of the free and the home of the brave.” We wake each morning to a new day of possibilities. We are free to speak, think, and move about as we wish. We are free to pursue our most fanciful dreams. We are free to make of our lives what industry and providence will allow. To borrow the Army’s old recruiting slogan, we are free to “be all that we can be.” We can also be thankful that the same can be said about our nation: we (corporately) are also free to be all that we can be.

Our national birthday is also a moment to take our bearings on our national journey-- to make sure that we have not become so disoriented by the “thickness” of things around us that we have lost our greater vision. We need to ask ourselves again what our calling is - as a nation - and how that calling points us on our way. The character of our nation, forged in the hearts and minds of visionary men and women, ought to inform us in all circumstances. Our national character ought to suggest a way forward when we meet an obstacle or are challenged by circumstances. We should always be striving to see beyond the thickness of our present circumstance to the larger vision for our nation. (Continued on page 2)



SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

Worship in-person or live on our website. Replays will also be available on our website.

- 8:45 am - Contemporary Worship
- 9:45 am - Fellowship Time
- 10:00 am - Discipleship Time
- 11:00 am - Traditional Worship

11:30 am - Radio Broadcast on KMAN 1350 AM, 93.3, or 93.7 FM

The church office is open Monday through Thursday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm and on Sunday Mornings.

Please use the double doors from the parking lot into the Connecting Link during the week for all meetings and to visit the office. Thank you.

The newsletter is published monthly on the 28th for the following month. The deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month. If you have items for the congregation, please send them to Cathlene Higgins, Connections Coordinator, at fumc@fumcmanhattan.com.

When the newsletter is available you will receive a notification via email with a link to our website. If you prefer to receive a paper copy in the mail, please contact the office at 785-776-8821. If you have items for the bulletin, website, or Sunday morning worship screens, those should also be sent to Cathlene, fumc@fumcmanhattan.com.



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www.fumcmanhattan.com | fumc@fumcmanhattan.com | 785-776-8821

All That We Can Be (continued from page 1)

So... given our national character - the kind of people we are - what should our vision be for the education of our children? What should our vision be for the care of the elderly and the infirm? What should our vision be for the health of our citizens? What should our vision be for the treatment of strangers in our midst? Of enemies? What should our vision be for those with whom we do not agree? What should our vision be for those whose jobs have been "downsized" or rendered obsolete? What should our vision be for the poor? What should our vision be for the earth and its environment?

The prophet says that "where there is no vision the people perish." Perhaps another way to say it is where there is no vision, the people get lost.

Have a happy and thankful Fourth of July. May God continue to bless these wonderful United States and may God give us the vision and the will to achieve our high calling and not get lost.

Pax, Mike





pathways walking group

July 11 @ 9:30am Warner Loop
301 Warner Park Road
Take Arbor Drive off of Miller Parkway



STRING QUARTET

ARMONIA

JULY 19, 2026 3:00 PM

FUMC SANCTUARY
RECEPTION FOLLOWING

Misti LeMoine,
Director of Children's Ministries
children@fumcmanhattan.com



SUMMER SCOOP

HERE'S THE SCOOP ON WHAT'S HAPPENING IN CHILDREN'S MINISTRY @ FUMC THIS SUMMER!

ALL SUMMER: JAM SUNDAY MORNINGS - 10AM

JUNE 7: FIRST FAMILIES - BIBLE TRIVIA

JUNE 22-25: VACATION BIBLE CAMP - 9AM-NOON

JULY 5: FIRST FAMILIES

JULY 26: SUNDAE FUNDAY - 10AM

SCOOPS OF FUN WITH AN ICE CREAM TREAT AND ACTIVITIES!

AUGUST 2: FIRST FAMILIES

AUGUST 9: BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS - 8:45 OR 11AM CHURCH SERVICE

BRING YOUR BACKPACKS TO KICK OFF YOUR SCHOOL YEAR!

YOU'RE INVITED
BRING A FRIEND!



Meet Lindsay Kinsinger, Director of FUMC Preschool! Summer may be a break for the children, but it's one of the busiest seasons for preschool planning and preparation. Lindsay spends these months organizing classrooms, preparing curriculum, and making sure everything is ready to welcome our students back in the fall. This year's to-do list included assembling new tricycles and personally testing them for safety and performance. Based on the smile in this photo, we're not sure where the testing ended and the fun began!

Tricycle Testing Report

- Assembly: Complete
- Safety Inspection: Passed
- Fun Factor: Exceptional
- Director Willing to Return Tricycle: Under Review



Jeff Cunningham,
 Director of Youth Ministries
 jcunningham@fumcmanhattan.com

Wednesday hangout during the summer has been well attended. As you can see below, the Project Hail Mary discussion has been well received.



• YOUTH GROUP • FAITH SERIES

A 9-WEEK SERIES • SUMMER 2026

Project Hail Mary

What do you hold onto when everything feels impossible?

One astronaut. One impossible mission. One shot at saving everything. **Sound familiar?** Using Andy Weir's gripping story as our launchpad, we'll explore the big questions faith has always wrestled with — who we are, why we're here, and how we find hope in a universe that can feel cold and indifferent.

// BIG THEMES WE'LL EXPLORE

Identity & Purpose

Ever feel like you're still figuring out who you actually are? Same. Ryland Grace wakes up with zero memory of himself — and has to figure it out fast. We'll talk about identity, purpose, and what it means to know yourself when everything feels uncertain.

Hope in the Dark

The world can feel pretty overwhelming right now. School, relationships, the future — it's a lot. Ryland is literally alone in space with no way home, and somehow he keeps going. We'll talk about where real hope comes from when things feel impossible.

Unlikely Connection

Rocky is literally an alien — different language, different biology, different everything. And he becomes Ryland's best friend. We'll dig into what it looks like to actually connect with people who aren't like you, and why those friendships might be the most meaningful ones you'll ever have.

Faith & Doubt

Got questions about faith that feel too big or too awkward to ask out loud? Good — bring them. Ryland is a scientist who doesn't believe in anything he can't prove. We'll get honest about doubt, skepticism, and why asking hard questions doesn't make your faith weaker.

Courage to Act

It's easy to know what the right thing is. It's way harder to actually do it — especially when you're scared, or it might cost you something. Ryland faces that choice over and over. We'll talk about what courage actually looks like in real life, not just in movies.

Grace & Sacrifice

The whole story builds to one moment — a choice that costs everything. We'll talk about what it really means to sacrifice for someone else, what grace looks like when you least deserve it, and why that might be the most radical idea in the universe.

WHEN

Every Wednesday
 3:30 – 5:30 PM • June 3 – July 29

WHERE

First United Methodist Church
 612 Poyntz • Manhattan, KS 66502

WHO

All youth welcome
 Entering 6th through completing 12th grade

No need to have read the book or seen the film • Just bring your questions

Scripture Focus for July

"Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help."

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

I have worked in the church office by myself since January. I like to think I was doing a pretty good job. To be honest though, if you were to poll the church staff, I'm not entirely sure the vote would be unanimous. Let's just say there may be differing opinions on the definition of "caught up."

Since welcoming our new administrative assistant (look for her introduction in this newsletter) to the office, the extra help has certainly been appreciated. Having another set of hands makes many tasks easier. But what has surprised me most is how much I have enjoyed simply having someone else in the office. We share conversations throughout the day, exchange stories, and laugh. The office feels warmer and more alive. Because of this change, I have been thinking about the idea "Two are better than one." Typically, we often think of this verse in terms of getting more work accomplished. But I have come to understand there is a deeper lesson here. God did not create us to go through life alone. He created us for relationships - with Him and with one another.

**FRIENDS ARE THE
PEOPLE WHO MAKE
YOU SMILE BRIGHTER,
LAUGH LOUDER
AND LIVE BETTER.**

In today's world, it is easy to become isolated. We can fill our calendars, stay busy, and still feel disconnected. We can attend worship each week, smile at a few familiar faces, and then head home without ever truly getting to know the people sitting around us. Yet God calls us into community. Throughout Scripture, we see people gathering together to worship, learn, encourage, serve, and support one another.

One of the greatest gifts of the church is not simply the worship service on Sunday morning, it is the opportunity to build relationships with fellow believers. It is finding people who will celebrate with you during life's joys and stand beside you during life's challenges. It is discovering friends who will pray for you, encourage you, and remind you of God's presence when you need it most.

That is why fellowship matters. Sunday school classes matter. Bible studies matter. Small groups matter. Serving together on a committee or ministry team matters. These are the places where strangers become friends and where church members become a church family.

If you have been considering joining a class, attending a fellowship event, participating in a Bible study, or volunteering in a ministry, I encourage you to take that step. You do not need to know everyone. You do not need to have all the answers. You simply need to be willing to show up.

You may discover, as I have, that the greatest blessing is not always the work that gets accomplished. Sometimes the greatest blessing is the person beside you—the one who shares a laugh, offers encouragement, listens when you need to talk, and reminds you that you are not alone.

God often works through ordinary relationships. A simple conversation can become a friendship. A friendship can become a source of encouragement. And encouragement can strengthen both our faith and our church. As we continue to grow together as a congregation, may we look for opportunities to connect with one another, welcome new faces, and deepen our relationships within this church family. We were never meant to walk this journey alone. After all, two really are better than one. And a church family walking together in faith is one of God's greatest gifts.

Cathlene Higgins, Connections Coordinator





CHURCH NEWS & NOTES



FT. RILEY MILITARY BAND - CANCELED

Due to military policy restrictions, the Ft. Riley Military Band is unable to perform at our church as originally planned. We regret having to cancel this event and appreciate your understanding.

MUSIC IN WORSHIP - JULY 2026

We are grateful for the gifted musicians who will be helping lead worship during our 11:00 Traditional Service throughout July. Please join us as we worship together through scripture, prayer, music, and fellowship.

July 5--The FUMC Male Quartet along with 15 instrumentalists featuring Patriotic Favorites

July 12--Charlie Sargent and Friends

July 19--Drew Harrison and his String Quartet (Worship and 3:00 p.m. Recital)

July 26--Dr. Keith Wright-Vocal and Piano Solos

YARN EXCHANGE BIN

Be sure to check out our Yarn Exchange Bin! We currently have a selection of quality wool yarn available. Feel free to take any yarn you can use and give it a good home. The bin is located behind the desk in the Connecting Link.

MEET OUR NEW OFFICE ASSISTANT

Hi New Friends,
My name is Megan, and I recently joined the church staff as the Office Administrative Assistant. When I was in High School, my dad felt called into Ministry as a Pastor which has given me lots of experience assisting the office in unique ways. I am a mom of three amazing kids and have a heart for serving others and helping people feel welcomed and connected. I love spending time in God's Word, enjoying a good book, caring for plants, and finding joy in the little things. I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve this church family and looking forward to getting to know more of you in the days ahead.



2026

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
MANHATTAN, KS

Summer MIDWEEK RENEWAL

WEDNESDAYS AT 5:30 PM

DINNER AND DEVOTION
FELLOWSHIP HALL





First United Methodist Church
Manhattan, Kansas

612 Poyntz Avenue
Manhattan, KS 66502-6041

Pastors: Mike Chamberlain, Courtney Fellers
Editor: Cathlene Higgins

Return Service Requested

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Pad The Pantry

July - Drink Mix

- Donations can be placed behind the welcome desk in the Connecting Link



If your garden has been blessed and you feel called to share, we also welcome any extra produce.