



It's almost as if someone once asked John, "Why – why, John?" Perhaps the disciple was asked that very question during his ministry, though the possible question is not preserved in his gospel account. Still, John makes his "WHY?" clear.

Consider John 20:30-31 (NIV '11): 30 Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are written that you may believe *that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name* (italics mine).

John's gospel presents a clear purpose, shaped by the Spirit's guidance. His unique account of Jesus' life and his clear sense of "WHY" have contributed to bring many to faith throughout history.

I have a feeling John, Jesus's disciple, and author Simon Sinek would have understood one another well. Simon Sinek hosted one of the most famous TED talks, now almost two decades ago. He also wrote a book called Start with WHY. Both John and Sinek emphasize that understanding one's purpose shapes one's actions. For John, this means believing in Jesus as Messiah and living a personal faith; for Sinek, it's about discovering and acting from your "WHY" to inspire and create long-lasting impact. When people are governed by their purpose, lives become more intentional and communities become stronger.

Now, what about you? What motivates you to be part of this faith community? Perhaps your "WHY" is to build meaningful relationships, to serve in love, to grow spiritually, or to make a difference in our community. Consider what draws you here, or what gives your involvement meaning.

Let's continue our shared journey to discover, identify and reclaim our shared purpose for the sake of our community and world. Join our next strategic planning session, March 8, following the conclusion of 10:30 worship. Some will participate to enjoy a tasty lunch (not all bad, considering the good dishes to be enjoyed), but others will participate for a great hope that all may have life in Jesus' name. Regardless of your WHY, your voice matters as we discern God's will and our church's future together.

Why? – To become more intentional ministers of the gospel

How? – Lunch & Learn (bring a potluck food item to share)

What? - Strategic planning and potluck (Church Council Open planning session)

When? - Date: Sun Mar 8, 2026 11:45 am - 1:30pm (after 10:30 worship)

Where? – FUMC Fellowship Hall

In Christ,

Ryan Heatherly, Pastor McMinnville First UMC

Dear Church Family,

This year is certainly "MARCH"ing on! Can you believe it? Seems we were just sitting under the Christmas tree. But, as time marches on so do we and our youth are no exception. Our Confirmation class is nearing its conclusion and as it does so we can see growth in many of our participants. On Sunday February 1st we had a class on the Sacraments of the church, baptism and communion, which ended with a special candlelight communion service in the small chapel on the sanctuary level of the historic building. As you can see in the pics [provided by Beth Heatherly] it was a lovely evening with many parents, mentors, and friends in attendance. An opportunity was provided to remember one's baptism and a couple of our youth who have not been baptized expressed a desire to do so. More on that to come.

The following Sunday night, February 8th, we dispensed with Confirmation and attended a Super Bowl Party at Webb House. This too was a well attended event with many of the residents enjoying the company of our youth and other church members for a smorgasbord of treats and delicacies. Many thanks to Beth Heatherly who stepped up and hosted in the absence of our fearless pastor who some of you may remember was ill on Super Bowl Sunday, I believe a good time was had by all who attended..

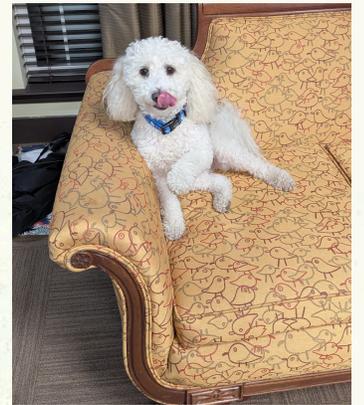
We have also been celebrating the accomplishments of Triston Luman who successfully completed testing for and received his GED. We/I am very proud of Triston for his determination in achieving this accomplishment which some said couldn't be done. It took more than one try on a couple of his final tests, but Triston ran the race to its conclusion, as the apostle Paul advises, and persevered and won the prize. Good job, Triston!!! Let me take this opportunity to express both Triston's and my own gratitude to each of you who contributed to Triston's shopping spree. This was a much needed blessing to him and JR with a result we can all see and enjoy. To me, that's a win/win. Good job Church!!!!

Also, Levi Hicks, son of Jennifer Hankins, and Rowdy's older brother, has made it official. Upon his completion of high school in May, Levi will officially become a Marine. The papers are signed; so, congratulations to Levi and thank you for your willingness to serve our country in this way. Godspeed!

I'm sure there's more I could share, but I want to leave room for others so, for now, that's a wrap. I thank you all for your love and support and please continue to hold me and our young people in your hearts and prayers.

Peace and Love in Him
Bruce





THANK YOU FOR YOUR GIFTS

TO: Good Neighbors, Homeless Ministry

IN MEMORY OF: Barbara Gillespie, Lillian Daniel,
Chris Jones

BY: Melody & Mike Green, Charlotte & Joe Hamby

Dear United Methodist Church
Thank you so much for your generous donation.
We all had a lovely Christmas season with gifts,
Santa, treats, and happiness.
Your donation will be used for visiting the "Pottery
Art Cafe" on Chancery Street. We have been
waiting to go! Thank your for your love and
support.
Lisa

**Good Neighbors
Cooks & Driver Schedule**



March 5
Cook: Mary
Route 1: Sandlin
Route 2: Dennis
Route 3: Hall
Route 4: Dodson
Route 5: Alsbrook

March 19
Cook: Dennis
Route 1: Sandlin
Route 2: Sub
Route 3: Sandlin
Route 4: Spanjer
Route 5: Alsbrook



Ferns are \$12.00 each.

Deadline to sign up is March 26.

Call the office or sign up on the
bulletin board by the main
office.



Lent Schedule

February 18 - April 1

Lenten Worship Series

Wednesdays at 12:05pm -12:25pm

Lunch following

- March 4 Liberty Cumberland Presbyterian; Rev. Greg Bowen
Proceeds support LifeWise
- March 11 Christ Chapel; Rev. Robert Garrett
Proceeds support MATCH
- March 18 St. Matthew's Episcopal, Fr. Charlie McClain
Proceeds support MATCH
- March 25 Centertown UMC; Rev. Miriam Seyler
Proceeds support MATCH
- April 1 First Presbyterian; Rev. Patrick Woolsey
Proceeds support MATCH



Thank you to Cindy Ratz for
the beautiful bulletin board
display near the fellowship
hall.

Prayer Shawl Ministry: Dear Sisters,
Thank you for the beautiful Prayer Shawl. What a wonderful ministry!
It reminds me of Sara Jean Thaxton, a close friend of my family and me for many years.
Love & Blessings,
Glenn Davis

United Methodist Creation Justice Tips

Be a bee saver. One in three bee species is facing risk of extinction largely because of neonicotinoid pesticides in lawn care products such as Round Up. First, do no harm: boycott those products or their suppliers. Second, do good: plant gardens or patches that offer pollinator blooms early spring through autumn.

Dispose of worn-out, stained, torn clothes and fabric scraps with Earth in mind. Send them to [ReTold Recycling](#). As of 2025 this repurposing company has diverted 312 tons from landfills, the equivalent of saving 4.4 million liters of water, preventing 980,805 pounds of coal burning, and removing emissions from 206 gas-powered cars for a year.

Read more. A book club could read *Saving Us*, by Katherine Hayhoe, or *Stewards of Eden*, by Sandra Richter, for starters. As part of the discussion, encourage people to talk about what they are doing and bring their questions.

Watch for connections to faith. As a Sunday school class, choose a speaker, film, or panel to discuss sustainability, the connection of climate change to environmental justice, and actions individuals, families, and the church can take.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

March 1: Confirmation Class

March 1: Worship Meeting @ 12:00pm

March 1: SPRC Meeting @ 1:00pm

March 4: Lenten Service #3 - Liberty Cumberland Presbyterian

March 5: Good Neighbors

March 5: Chris Jones Celebration of Life @ 6:00pm at Woodfin Memorial Chapel (Levon & Eulalia's son)

March 8: Daylight Savings Time Begins

March 8: Potluck Lunch & Open Church Council Strategic Planning Session @ 11:45

March 8: Confirmation Class

March 9: Prayer Shawl Meeting @ 10:00am

March 10: Staff Meeting @ 10:00am

March 10: Deadline for youth to sign up for Ark Trip

March 11: Lenten Service #4 - Christ Chapel

March 12: Shepherding Team @ 10:00am

March 13: Lay Servant Class from 5:30pm - 8:30pm at Smithville FUMC

March 14: Lay Servant Class from 7:30am - 6:00pm at Smithville FUMC

March 14: Habitat for Humanity Work Day @ 7:00am on 210 George Huggins Dr.

March 15: UMCOR Sunday Offering

March 15-17: Church Trip to Ark Encounter & Creation Museum

March 18: No Wednesday Night Meal or activities during Spring Break

March 15-21: Spring Break

March 17: UMW Meeting @ 9:30am

March 18: Lenten Service #5 - St. Matthew's Episcopal

March 19: Good Neighbors

March 25: Lenten Service #6 - Centertown UMC

March 26: Deadline to order Ferns

March 29: Palm Sunday

April 1: Lenten Service #7 - First Presbyterian

March Birthdays & Anniversaries

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Alexandra Ivins	2	3	4	5 Emily Holt	6	7
8	9 Dewayne Fox	10 Will & Molly Davis (A)	11 Robert & Marsha Newman (A) Jack & Robin Phillips (A)	12	13 Benjamin Spanjer	14
15 McKenzie Holt-Miller	16	17	18	19 Thomas Spanjer	20 Doug & Sandra Haynes (A) Sam & Linda Young (A)	21 Peggy White Jimmy & Katrina Haley (A)
22 Mac & Susan McWhirter (A)	23 Wes Newman Triston Luman	24 Tricia Murray	25 Mike Lopez	26	27 Pat Bryan Ryan & Beth Heatherly (A)	28
29	30 Shea Taylor	31				

Basketball Schedule:

Thursday, February 26 @ 6:00pm at Bernard Gym, playing Friendship
Saturday, March 7 @ 5:00pm at Boyd Christian, playing Hebron COC
Saturday, March 14 @ 8:00pm at Boyd Christian, playing Westwood-Simpson
Saturday, March 28 @ 7:00pm at Boyd Christian, playing Freedom Life -Aughinbaugh
Thursday, April 9 @ 6:00pm at Bernard Gym, playing Rock Island COC
Saturday, April 11 @ 3:00pm at Boyd Christian, playing First Assembly of God
Friday, April 17 @ 8:00pm at Bobby Ray, playing Westwood-Tomberlin
Thursday, April 23 @ 7:00pm at Bernard Gym, playing Eastside Baptist
Friday, May 1 @ 8:00pm at Bobby Ray, playing First Baptist

**Church Family & Friends:**

Whether you are new to church or long time members, we invite you to get more involved in the church and the community. There are lots of opportunities and so many ways to serve. Don't be afraid to step out and volunteer because we may not know you are interested or be aware of all your skills and talents.

We have a meal ministry called Good Neighbors that delivers meals in the community on the 1st & 3rd Thursday of each month. You can volunteer to be a driver or help in the kitchen to prepare food or box up the meals. I believe one team currently needs kitchen helpers and their next time to cook is March 5th. We are currently serving 83 meals but at one time we were up to 160 meals.

We have a wonderful shepherding team that meets monthly and sends out cards and bereavement books but would love to have someone volunteer to take our Sunday morning flowers in the sanctuary and make a few vases from them and deliver to some of our shut-ins or those who need encouragement.

We need someone who would be willing to take communion to homes or facilities for those of our church family that are shut-ins.

Are you passionate about connecting with new people? Well we would love for you to follow up with visitors by making a personal phone call or sending them a card or letter thanking them for attending.

It would be wonderful for church members to write letters to previous members and reach out to see if they want to reconnect and just to show you care about them and miss them.

First service sometimes needs volunteers to arrive early to set up for coffee fellowship time, prepare communion, or run slides. Those who currently serve in this area sometimes need a break.

Prayer Shawl is always looking for ladies to join in and help crochet shawls. Their ministry is so meaningful to the church and community. They are a fun group of ladies and always have a joyful time at their meetings.

The church used to have a group called Super Stars that went on regular outings or day trips on the church bus or van. We no longer have the bus but still have a church van. We would like to see if there is any interest in reviving or creating a new group to get together and have some fun outings. Whether you are a seasoned young at heart senior, retired, or stay at home mom who craves fellowship, this opportunity is for you. Outings always include a meal and some fun activity that can be done in a day. We need volunteers to plan outings and lead this ministry.

We have a thriving homeless ministry in our Outreach Building. We open our doors on Wednesday afternoons and Saturday mornings to feed the hungry and give opportunities to shower and do laundry. We provide basic necessities of clothing, hygiene items, snacks, blankets, etc. for those in need. If you are interested in helping cook or serving in some way, please contact Jimmy Haley.

If you want to help out in the kitchen when we host events or with our Wednesday night meal teams, please contact Lucinda Smith, our hospitality chair.

40 Days of Lent – Devotional Journey

1. Return to Him (Joel 2:12)
2. True Repentance (Psalm 51:10)
3. Humility (James 4:10)
4. Surrendering Control (Proverbs 3:5–6)
5. Emptying Ourselves (Philippians 2:7)
6. Confession Brings Freedom (1 John 1:9)
7. Resting in Mercy (Lamentations 3:22–23)
8. Seeking the Secret Place (Matthew 6:6)
9. Listening (John 10:27)
10. Abiding (John 15:4)
11. Stillness (Psalm 46:10)
12. Hunger for God (Matthew 5:6)
13. The Word as Bread (Deuteronomy 8:3)
14. Worship in Spirit (John 4:23)
15. The Cost of Love (John 3:16)
16. Taking Up Our Cross (Luke 9:23)
17. Forgiveness (Luke 23:34)
18. Grace Over Guilt (Romans 8:1)
19. Finished Work (John 19:30)
20. The Blood that Covers (Hebrews 9:14)
21. Love Demonstrated (Romans 5:8)
22. New Creation (2 Corinthians 5:17)
23. Renewing the Mind (Romans 12:2)
24. Freedom from Bondage (Galatians 5:1)
25. Guarding the Heart (Proverbs 4:23)
26. Refining Fire (Malachi 3:3)
27. Faith Over Fear (Isaiah 41:10)
28. Walking in the Spirit (Galatians 5:16)
29. Loving God Fully (Mark 12:30)
30. Loving Others (John 13:35)
31. Servanthood (John 13:14)
32. Compassion (Colossians 3:12)
33. Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:7)
34. Bold Faith (Proverbs 28:1)
35. Shining Light (Matthew 5:16)
36. The Triumphal Entry (Matthew 21:9)
37. The Last Supper (Luke 22:19)
38. Gethsemane (Luke 22:42)
39. The Cross (Isaiah 53:5)
40. Resurrection Hope (Matthew 28:6)

The Power of Surrender

Scripture:

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."

— Proverbs 3:5–6 (NIV)

Reflection:

Surrender is often seen as weakness in our culture, but in the kingdom of God, surrender is strength. It's an act of faith—a declaration that we trust God's plan more than our own. When we surrender, we lay down our desire to control outcomes and allow God to lead.

Jesus modeled this perfectly in the Garden of Gethsemane, praying, *"Not my will, but yours be done."* (Luke 22:42). That moment of surrender led to the greatest victory the world has ever known.

Surrender isn't a one-time decision; it's a daily practice. It means trusting God with your relationships, your future, your struggles, and your pain. It means letting go of fear and choosing faith—even when the path is unclear.

Prayer:

Lord, I surrender to You today. I lay down my plans, my fears, and my desire to control. Help me trust You fully and walk in obedience to Your will. Make my heart soft to Your leading and give me peace in the process. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Challenge for Today:

Take one area of your life that you've been holding tightly—maybe a decision, a relationship, or a fear—and give it to God. Write it down as a physical sign of surrender and pray over it.

