

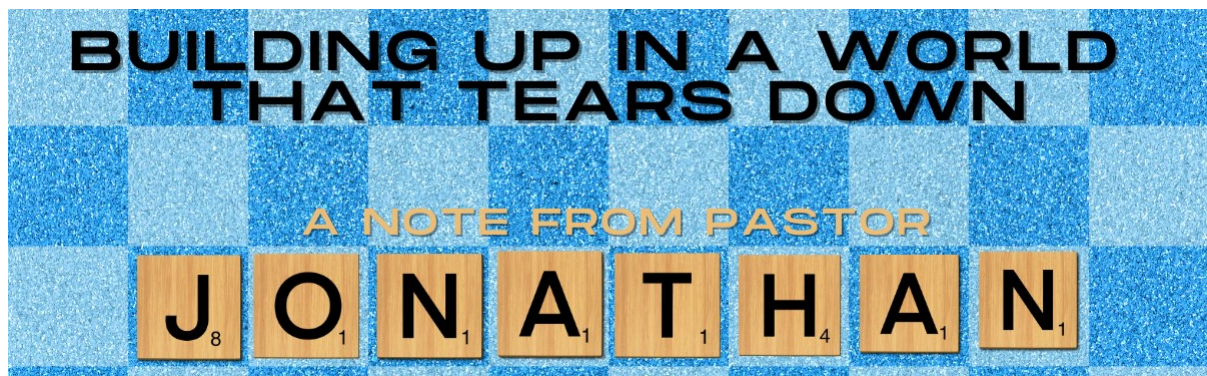


THE CHURCH BELL



FEBRUARY

2023



“If you can’t say anything nice, don’t say anything at all.”

Though I’m confident we’ve all heard those words from one source or another, for me, this counsel/command will always be associated with my mother, my grandmother, and my great-grandmother. It’s not only good advice for keeping relationships healthy and intact, it’s also Christlike.

There has never been a season of my life in which we’ve more desperately needed to live by this simple rule of thumb—or perhaps I should say rule of *tongue*.

We live in a culture and era in which we are reckless with our words, both spoken and written. As text messages and social media posts comprise an ever larger percentage of our discourse and dialogue, it is increasingly easy to avoid the immediate consequences of what we write or post.

We’ve forgotten that sticks and stones break bones, but words break hearts, trust, and relationships.

Almost all of scripture reminds us of the power of words. In the beginning, for instance, how does God create? God *speaks* creation into existence. Mere chapters later, God confuses the languages of humankind because their ability to speak to each other enables them to use power recklessly. Psalms, proverbs, prophecies, gospels, and letters remind us to speak no evil and to tame our tongues.

Yet, we use our conversations and discourse to diminish and harm others. Despite our claims of goodness and purity, Jesus tells us that our words reveal our hearts! In our culture, and probably even in our conversations, our words do not always or even often reveal love for neighbors.

As we enter into February, we continue the worship series called “Building Up in a World that Tears Down.” Through these weeks, we challenge each other to use our communication in ways that “give grace to all,” in the words of the Apostle Paul.

I hope that you’ll pay close attention to the words of this publication so that you’ll be able to participate more fully in the life of this congregation. I pray that we’ll all pay close attention to the words we speak, write, and post so that we’ll be able to live more fully into the love of God and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Sunday Mornings at 8:15 & 10:30
BUILDING UP IN A WORLD THAT TEARS DOWN

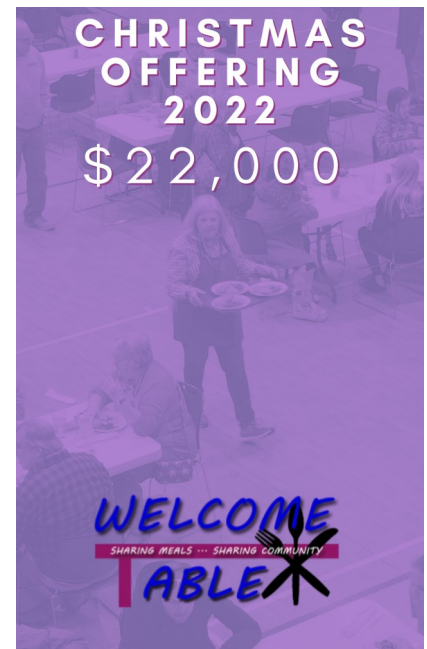
January 29th - Words Reveal More Than We Realize
February 5th - I Have a Good Heart, But This Mouth ...
February 12th - Speaking Intentionally
February 19th - Why it Matters What We Say

Welcome news for a church mission

The Christmas season has come and gone, but the spirit of giving during that time will go a long way in helping one of 1st Church's largest missions. During the Chancel Choir Cantata and the Christmas Eve Worship Services, you reached into your hearts and gave \$22,000 to the Christmas Offering.

The 2022 beneficiary is the Welcome Table, a ministry that continues providing meals and fellowship to thousands of people each year. Guests of the Welcome Table are never charged for the meals and it provides a time when EVERYONE can come together to share a meal.

Giving money isn't the only way you can help the Welcome Table. It takes a lot of volunteers to keep it running. If you are interested in giving some of your time doing things like serving, plating, washing dishes, setting up or cleaning up then visit 1stchurch.org/welcome-table and fill out the form. You can also contact the Welcome Table Volunteer Coordinator, Justin Small at JUSTIN.L.SMALL727@GMAIL.COM.



Milestones in ministry

Back in November 2022, our sister church in Latvia celebrated the 100th Anniversary of its founding and 22 years since its restoration. For more than a decade, 1st Church has helped Kuldiga United Methodist Church become a beacon of light in that part of Eastern Europe. While working to maintain and fix the buildings on their property, the church also offers people warm food and the opportunity to take showers and do laundry. This has been especially helpful as the Kuldiga community has been housing refugee families from Ukraine.

Ron & Carol Werker have long been involved in the Friends of Latvia organization. They recently received a letter from the minister of Kuldiga UMC. You can read it in its entirety on our website at 1stchurch.org/Kuldiga.

Stepping in to serve

If you've visited Contemporary Worship Service on Sunday Mornings, you've probably noticed a new person leading the music. Ralph Jeffers has stepped in as an interim worship leader for the service. Ralph is a native of the Sulphur Springs community of Washington County, Tennessee and is a graduate of E.T.S.U. He is a lifelong United Methodist and grandson of Holston Conference pastor, Rev. E.B. Jeffers.

For the past couple of decades, Ralph has led contemporary worship services at his home church Sulphur Springs UMC and more recently at First Broad Street UMC in Kingsport. He has also led worship for several Holston Conference youth assemblies across the years and has recorded two independent albums. We are so grateful for Ralph and his willingness to work and worship among us.



Preparing for the Lenten Season

The Season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22nd. We'll observe this special day in several ways. Details are still getting worked out and we'll have the details online and in the bulletins soon.



On Sunday mornings through this forty-day season of Lent, we will explore together some of the most memorable forty-day seasons of the scriptures to learn how we might spend seasons of our lives growing closer to Jesus Christ.

From ancestors in the faith like Noah, Moses, Jonah, Elijah, and Jesus himself, we will remember the importance of confession, repentance, and other habits of seeking God by living intentionally through seasons of our lives. You can find more details about each week at 1stchurch.org/worship.

For centuries, Christians have observed the season of Lent as a time of preparation to experience the miracle of Jesus' resurrection with fresh appreciation and gratitude. In its earliest years, Lent was a forty-day period for new Christians to prepare for their baptisms on Easter morning by confessing and repenting from their sin and by practicing other habits that enabled them to recognize their need for Jesus Christ and his grace. In time, the church realized that all of us can benefit from that intentional season of remembering that we need Jesus.



Some celebrate Lent by "giving up" habits or luxuries. Others choose to "pick up" new spiritual disciplines that enable them to grow in faith in love. As we observe Lent together this year, we will offer small-group opportunities, both in person and online, in which we can reflect on scripture, pray, and encourage each other **together**. If you would like to be part of a small group through the season of Lent, if you feel called and equipped to lead a group, or if you simply want to know more about them, please contact one of our pastors.

Exploring Lent through Devotions

To allow our congregation to share a seasonal discipline together, we plan to offer a Lent devotional guide this season. We need forty people from our congregation to reflect on a single verse of scripture and write a two hundred-word devotion. If you're interested, please contact one of our pastors.

We would need these devotions written and submitted by February 8th in order to get the guides formatted, printed and assembled.

We also plan on making these devotions available in a daily email and possibly on the website. Once all the details are in place we'll tell you how to sign up for the emails and where to find the devotions online.



COLLECTING ITEMS
JANUARY 31st
8:00 am to 5:00 pm



- Laundry Detergent
- Stain Remover Spray (Oxy or Shout)
- Bathroom Cleaner
- Toilet Bowl Cleaner
- Swiffer Wet Jet Cleaner Refills





Kristi Alton
 Director of 1st Kids Ministries
 kalton@1stchurch.org
 865-982-1273 ext. 113

How to ... follow God

The internet helps us learn how to do so many things! From new skate tricks and viral recipes to helpful hacks, there's a "how-to" for almost everything.

But is there a tutorial video for how to follow God? This four-week emphasis in February Kids Own Worship is kind of like that — thanks to some tutorials from Jesus!



Each Sunday morning (during the 10:30 Worship Service), we'll focus on one of Jesus' teachings from the Sermon on the Mount as we learn "how to" **make a difference, love our enemies, share with others, and pray.**

Check out what's happening with 1st Kids at: 1stchurch.org/1st-Kids

ONE
 FAITH HOPE LORD



Fun and faith filled weekend

One Faith ... One Hope ... One Lord. That was the theme of Resurrection 2023, a yearly gathering of youth from all over the Holston Conference of the United Methodist Church. This year, more than three dozen youth from 1st Church attended the weekend long event in Pigeon Forge. Rev. Dr. Stephanie Hand from Western North Carolina compelled the youth to find their God given gifts and use them to further God's Kingdom.

The band FRVR Free pumped up the crowd of more than 4,000 with songs of praise that had almost everyone waving their hands in the air and lifting their voices in praise to God. Keep an eye on our social media channels and the 1st Youth section of the website for more from Resurrection 2023. And a big thank you to everyone who helped get our group there.

Learning about the ministry of Jesus

Jesus surprised people at every turn during His earthly ministry. He showed in every interaction that His kingdom's perspective was upside-down from the world's norms.

Jesus loved the unlovable, forgave the scorned, and healed the forgotten. When others turned people away, Jesus welcomed them. He modeled for us an upside-down approach to life, focused on loving God and loving other people.

On Sunday mornings in February we take a look at the Upside Down Kingdom of Jesus during the Sunday School Hour starting at 9:15 am.



Weekly Youth Opportunities

Wednesdays at 1st

5:00 pm - Youth Study & Fellowship, Room 254

6:00 pm - Youth Choirs, Room 249

Sunday Mornings

9:15 am Youth Sunday School, 153A & 153B

Sunday Evenings

6:45 pm - 8:00 pm Jr. and Sr. High Youth Fellowship, Wesley Hall



As we enter a new year of working with Family Promise of Blount County, we do so knowing the Emergency Shelter phase of the program has come to an end, due to a wide number of circumstances. Although families won't be sheltered in the 1stUMC building, the church remains committed to serving families in crisis in a number of ways.

Moving forward 1st Church will continue providing dinners for the families in the program on Mondays and Wednesdays. On the other days of the week, families will attend Welcome Table on Tuesdays and Thursdays and The Longer Table on Fridays.

Host days for 2023 are: April 24 & 26 - August 14 & 16 - October 23 & 25.

Our most sincere thanks to everyone who made hosting at 1stUMC church happen. The interactions between hosts and guests are priceless and shall be missed the most. Please pray for the families who continue to struggle with homelessness.

Yours In Christ,
Mavis Ziegler and Amy Large
Co-Coordinator for Family Promise at 1stUMC

Grief Recovery classes starting soon

Bill and Jenny Green, a retired United Methodist minister and an educator, who have deep compassion for those experiencing loss, have developed a four week Grief Recovery Program they will be leading here at 1st Church.

The next classes will begin on Wednesday, February 1st at 4:15 pm in the Maryville First United Methodist Church library. During these sessions participants will discuss the emotions of grief, how each person's journey is their own, and how to find new life beyond the loss. Class members laugh a lot, cry some and celebrate the love they have for those they have lost. Each class is just over an hour.

If you would like more information or would like to participate but this time is not good for you, please contact Bill Green at: greenwilliam7@gmail.com.

Otherwise, come and join us on Feb. 1st.



CELEBRATE RECOVERY February 2023

February 1st <i>Amends</i>	February 15th <i>Forgiveness</i>
February 8th <i>Phil Wilks</i>	February 22nd <i>Ash Wednesday</i>

Learn more at CRMaryvilleTN.com.

Christian sympathy extended to:

Timmy Stephenson in the death of his sister, Christy Stephenson Williams on Nov. 27th.

The family of R.T. Ousley who died on December 14th: wife Clara, daughter Karen Ousley Smith, son Ted "Gunner" Ousley, his wife Laura and their daughter Samantha.

Sherry Hensley in the death of her brother, Hal on December 27th.

Clayton Hensley in the death of his stepmother, Charlene Hensley on Dec. 21st.

Shelley Maddox in the death of her father, Terry Maddox on December 21st.

The family of Rev. Kay Dillard on January 4th.

Matt Hall in the death of his Great Uncle, Wade Hall on January 11th.



1st Kids Ministries

<i>In memory of:</i>	<i>Given by:</i>
R.T. Ousley	Tim & Trish Badgett
R.T. Ousley	Pauline James Estate
R.T. Ousley	Jessie Sensaboy
R.T. Ousley	Phil & Amy Large
R.T. Ousley	Steve & Martha Shields
R.T. Ousley	Friends
R.T. Ousley	John & Julie Elder
R.T. Ousley	Lee Huffaker
R.T. Ousley	Barry & Linda Dilgard
R.T. Ousley	Bob & Lila Eby
R.T. Ousley	Ronald & Bobbie Hatcher
R.T. Ousley	Susan Daves
R.T. Ousley	Gary & Sherry Hensley
R.T. Ousley	Dan & Chris Johnson
R.T. Ousley	Donnie & Sandra Scott

Music Fund

<i>In memory of:</i>	<i>Given by:</i>
Charlie Ferst	Wayne & Vicki Everbach
Gary Burchfield	Wayne & Vicki Everbach
Ben Young	Dwain & Jane Pesterfield
Wilma Patterson	Dwain & Jane Pesterfield
R.T. Ousley	Dwain & Jane Pesterfield
Web Slawson	Dwain & Jane Pesterfield
Kahren White	Dwain & Jane Pesterfield
Nell Moore	Dwain & Jane Pesterfield
Roger Scott	Dwain & Jane Pesterfield
Charlie Ferst	Mike & Ibby Davis

UMCOR/Ukraine Relief

<i>In honor of:</i>	<i>Given by:</i>
1st UMC Pastors & Staff	Doug & Emily Smith

Building Fund

<i>In memory of:</i>	<i>Given by:</i>
Coy & Letha Dixon	Herb Dixon

Celebrate Recovery

<i>In memory of:</i>	<i>Given by:</i>
Jonah Nerzak	Nancy Nielson

Latvia Mission Fund

<i>In memory of:</i>	<i>Given by:</i>
Cheryl Coleman	Ron & Carol Werker

Memorial Fund

In honor of:
Steve & Sandra Monroe

Given by:
Dallas, Amber, and Ada Monroe

<i>In memory of:</i>	<i>Given by:</i>
Nell Moore	Nancy Moore Simpson
Ben Young	Shirley Stinnett
Ben Young	Gary & Sherry Hensley
Ben Young	Phil & Amy Large
Ben Young	Roy & Sara Gregory
Ben Young	Herb Dixon
Ben Young	Pam Young, Tom Klein
Ben Young	Bookie Reynolds
Gary Burchfield	Wayne & Vicki Everbach
Cheryl Coleman	Joey & Greta Smith
Web Slawson	Joey & Greta Smith
R.T. Ousley	Virginia Hardwick

Welcome Table

<i>In memory of:</i>	<i>Given by:</i>
Roger Scott	Jill Rollins
Jim Borden	Phyllis Borden
Roger Scott	Tim & Ana Maria Lomperis
Eileen Jenkins	Tim & Ana Maria Lomperis
Roger Scott	Wayne & Vicki Everbach
Roger Scott	Joey & Greta Smith
Jerry & Anne Lambert	Matt & Karen Bennett
Cheryl Coleman	Matt & Karen Bennett
R.T. Ousley	Rocky & Julie Rochelle
Web Slawson	Rocky & Julie Rochelle
Roger Scott	Rocky & Julie Rochelle
Roger Scott	Mike & Ibby Davis
Betty Hester	Mike & Ibby Davis
Web Slawson	Mike & Ibby Davis



R.T. Ousley

Joined First Church:
July 1, 1956

Entered the Church Triumphant:
December 14, 2022

Maryville First United Methodist Church
804 Montvale Station Road
Maryville, Tennessee 37803
Phone: 865-982-1273
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Wednesdays @

Check out the new schedule!

5:00 PM
Children's Choir Rehearsals
Wednesday Conversations
Youth Fellowship & Study

5:30 PM
Dinner begins

6:00 PM
Youth Choir Rehearsals

6:15 PM
Adult Bible Study
Children's Bible Study

Celebrate Recovery Worship

7:00 PM
Chancel Choir Rehearsal

7:40 PM
Celebrate Recovery Share Groups

Let us know you are coming by filling out the form today at:

1stchurch.org/WEDNESDAYS

Staff Contacts



You can find staff and ministry contacts under
the "Inside at 1st" tab
on the church website:

1stchurch.org

The church phone number is 865-982-1273



1stchurch.org

