



# THE CHURCH BELL



JULY

2023

## Moving forward with the connection

Rev. Jonathan Jonas

One key of our identity as United Methodists is that we are part of a *connectional* church, and so we celebrate our connection with other United Methodists in our district, conference, jurisdiction, and denomination. We are connected locally, regionally, and globally. We celebrated one expression of that connection June 4th-7th at the Holston Annual Conference in Lake Junaluska, North Carolina.



Our conference consists of 117,378 members of 578 United Methodist congregations in East Tennessee, Southwest Virginia, and Northwest Georgia. 829 lay and clergy members of those congregations - including 16 from our church - gathered for the three day conference.

**HOLSTON CONFERENCE**  
of The United Methodist Church

**Annual Conference 2023**  
**June 4th - 7th**

- **578** - United Methodist Congregations  
(in East Tennessee, Southwest Virginia & Northwest Georgia)
- **117,378** - Membership of the Holston Conference
- **829** - Clergy & Lay Representatives at Annual Conference
- **16** - Members of 1st UMC-Maryville represented at AC

In the wake of April's disaffiliation conference, in which 264 congregations disaffiliated from the United Methodist Church, this June session was hope-filled, forward-facing, and focused on our shared mission and ministry. In her state of the church address, Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett said, "I bring you great news at this annual conference. Ultimately, all is well, and here's the reason: the head of the church, Jesus Christ has risen from the dead."

Other highlights of the annual conference included:

- the ordination/credentialing service, in which our Greta Smith was commissioned a provisional deacon, and Brye Rop's clergy orders as an ordained deacon in the British Methodist Church were recognized;
- Rev. Sarah Slack's preaching for the Monday morning service and leading the communion liturgy with Rev. Dr. Greta Smith;
- the collection of 4,778 school kits, health kits, and food buckets, with a total estimated value of \$114,000, for ministries in Liberia and Zimbabwe;
- the collection of \$36,616 in the annual conference offering for Ishe Anesu Mission in Mutare, Zimbabwe, and \$24,000 for Change for Children grants;
- adoption of a 2024 annual conference budget of \$8,182,747;
- announcement of a New Voices campaign to raise \$1.5 million for our conference camps, Wesley Foundations, and universities as they equip young leaders;
- the fixing of appointments, including the reappointment of all our pastors to 1<sup>st</sup> Church for another year;
- the realignment of superintendency, so that our Smoky Mountain District and the Tennessee Valley District will both be led by district superintendent, Rev. Ann Robins, and district assistant, Rev. Sam Dzobo.

I composed a more detailed two-page report to the church council. Copies are available at information tables throughout the church building. To learn more, please visit [ac.holston.org](http://ac.holston.org) or feel free to reach out to me.

I'm so grateful to be connected with you!



designated funds and strategic ministry opportunity reserve funds.

How will we use this new property to carry out our mission and ministry? There are countless ways that we might expand our congregation's ministries into a new area of our community. In the near term, however, one of the earliest uses will be to share space with some of our community ministry partners.

**A new opportunity for 1st Church Ministry**

In late January, the Sycamore Tree United Methodist Church gathered for its last worship service and subsequently closed. The church's property, consisting of a 17,000 square foot building on a 5 acre lot at 1830 Clydesdale Street, became the responsibility of the Smoky Mountain District and ultimately the Holston Conference.

We anticipate that Family Promise of Blount County will soon occupy parts of the facility for office space and for housing families. Our hope and expectation is that other community help agencies with whom we partner will also relocate to the Sycamore Tree campus so that our most vulnerable neighbors can access several layers of assistance in one place.

In late May, the Holston Conference trustees voted to convey the property to our congregation, with the condition that we satisfy the remaining indebtedness associated with the property. The conference trustees valued the property at \$1.9 million; the outstanding debt was \$213,388.

We are grateful to God for this opportunity to share blessing with our community and region in new ways. Please pray that God's Holy Spirit will reveal to us the God-sized visions of how we might use this gift in the most fruitful, faithful, effective ways.

Early last month, our church council and board of trustees met jointly at the Sycamore Tree site to see and pray over the building and grounds and to discuss whether and how our church might use this property to carry out our mission and ministry. Days later, our church council voted unanimously both to receive the conveyance and to pay the remaining debt from



As we make plans for the Sycamore Tree Campus we invite you to join us for two prayer walks. These will be on **July 16th & 18th**. The walks will be at **7:00 pm** on both nights at the Sycamore Tree location.

Keep up with updates at : [1stchurch.org/sycamore-tree](http://1stchurch.org/sycamore-tree)



**Summer fun and a chance to Go.Do.**

For the past few summers, 1st Kids have been part of a summer food delivery program here at the church. This year, a few surprises were added to the mix. On each of the Tuesdays of *Summer Service and Surprises* kids come and pack the food, deliver it then return to the church for lunch. Afterward there is a special guest leading the kids in a surprise activity.



So far those have included:

- helping decorate for VBS,
- learning about how we are made in the image of God,
- and building houses (for living on other planets) out of cups and plates.



Check out the schedule for July on page 5 and be sure and sign up your kids (2nd—5th grade) up for these fun events at: [1stchurch.org/summer-service](http://1stchurch.org/summer-service).

**Special blessings for students, teachers & school staff**

While many of you probably don't want to be thinking that the start of another school year is just weeks away, we do want to make sure you begin the year with blessings.

Each year during Sunday morning worship we invite students, teachers and school staff members to bring backpacks or other items related to school so that we may bless them and the people who will be using them.

This Blessing of the Backpacks happens during all three Sunday Morning services on July 30th.



This year's All-Church Tailgate is going to be a bit bigger than usual as we use the event as a kickoff for new activities, new groups and much more. So mark your calendar for 9/3.



The next meeting of Men's Connection is July 10th at 11:30 am at the Asbury Place Bistro. Contact Ron Werker with any questions at [rwerker@bellsouth.net](mailto:rwerker@bellsouth.net).

**Staff Contacts**



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

[1stchurch.org](http://1stchurch.org)

The church phone number is 865-982-1273



## S'More lessons for Summer Sunday School

All wisdom comes from God and the book of Proverbs teaches us how God says life works best. Throughout the month of July, 1st Kids Sunday School will focus on the wisdom we find in friendships, in what we say, how we use money, how we work and S'more places along the way.



## NEWS



### Kids Own Worship for July

Abraham and his family spent a lot a time learning how to enjoy a "STAYCATION" and this summer during Kids Own Worship, children can learn how to make the most of a vacation close to home. During the month of July we'll take a look at stories about Abraham and his family found in the book of Genesis. KOW happens during the 10:30 am worship service. It's time for a family STAYCATION!

### More summer fun!

*Preschool Picnic*

July 12th at Noon at the Friendship Shelter

*Blessing of the Backpacks (and Promotion Sunday)*

July 30th - All Three Worship Services

*Bayou Back to School*

July 30th - 11:45 am

Asbury Hall (lower level)

More details at:  
[1stchurch.org/1st-Kids](http://1stchurch.org/1st-Kids)

**SUMMER SERVICE & SURPRISES**  
**JULY CALENDAR**

**JULY 11TH: WE ARE THE CHURCH**  
ACTIVITY LED BY ANN LEATHERWOOD, CARLA MCCARTNEY, & PAM BEARD

**JULY 18TH: BUILD THEM UP**  
ACTIVITY LED BY JIM STOVALL

**JULY 25TH: BOOKMANIA**  
ACTIVITY LED BY AN AVID READER

SIGN UP AT:  
[1STCHURCH.ORG/SUMMER-SERVICE](http://1STCHURCH.ORG/SUMMER-SERVICE)



*Back to School Faith Time Capsule*

Available for pickup on July 9th at the 1st Kids Desk

As this edition of *The Church Bell* goes to print, a few of our youth are at Emory & Henry College attending Jr./Sr. High Assembly. When they return be sure and ask them about the experience and what they learned while they were there.



Students have been diving into the Word at pool side Bible Studies with more to come on **July 9th & July 16th**. Service has also been a part of the summer mix with the four students in the bottom right picture, pitching in at the new KARM Store in Alcoa. On **July 12th**, all youth students (6th - 12th grade) are invited to serve at the Second Harvest Food Bank in Maryville from 9:00 am until 12:00 pm.



More details available at [1stchurch.org/1st-Youth](http://1stchurch.org/1st-Youth) .

Parents please mark your calendars for **August 6th at 11:30 am**. We will be having a Parent Meeting to go over the First Future Ministry Vision, Communications, the Upcoming Calendar, volunteer needs and more. Lunch will be provided. The meeting is in Wesley Hall.



**Youth Student Sunday School**  
9:15 am Wesley Hall



**Harris Family**  
Malinda, Del, Maggie,  
Eliza & Jackson



**Beth Emeterio**



**Barbara Chapin**



**Pam & Tony Graf**



**Roy Gregory & Daughter  
Kristin Gregory**



**Mike Cogdill**



**Kay Marcum**



**Neisner/Sanderson Family**  
Neil, Rachael and Wade Neisner  
Brook & Maggie Sanderson



**2023 Confirmation Class:**  
Taylor Ford, Rachel Slack, Dylan Ramsey,  
Jackson Harris, Wade Neisner, & Willow Givens

**Giving the gift of life**

Coming up in August, Medic Blood Center will be here at 1st UMC for a Blood Drive. At this time we are still awaiting confirmation on the date and time. Registration will be needed prior to the event so be sure and watch for the details in the bulletin, our church social media channels and the website.

The Men's Bible Study group led by Owen Ragland is organizing this special event. They ask that you pray that all of the time slots for this upcoming blood drive be filled.



**CELEBRATE RECOVERY**  
JUNE 2023  
CRMaryvilleTN.com

Each Wednesday Night  
5:30 Meal  
6:30 Worship  
7:40 Share Groups

<u>July 5th</u> Hope	<u>July 19th</u> Sanity
<u>July 12th</u> Steve Costen	<u>July 26th</u> Chris Jackson



Citizens of the USA will celebrate birthday #247 on this July 4th.

Eric and Ebonisha along with their 10-year-old son and 8-year-old daughter have even more to celebrate. They are no longer homeless thanks to people like you who serve "the least of these".

Special thanks to all of the people who attended the **No Place Like Home** fundraiser. That support goes a long way in helping families in need.

With the former Sycamore Tree UMC property becoming part of 1st Church's ministry, there are new possibilities for Family Promise as the organization hopes to utilize parts of that facility. Details about upcoming changes to **Family Promise** will be forthcoming. Until then, enjoy celebrating the USA, family, God, and all the other many blessings there are in life.

1st UMC's next time to host is August 14th and 16th.

Yours In Christ,

*Mavis Ziegler and Amy Large*  
Co-Coordinators of Family Promise at 1<sup>st</sup>UMC



**Welcome Table**

<i>In memory of:</i>	<i>Given by:</i>
Cheryl Coleman	Mike & Ibby Davis
Ginger Waters	Mike & Ibby Davis
Joe Campbell	Mike & Ibby Davis
John Kristy	Mike & Ibby Davis
Ed Green	Friends
Ed Green	Bob & Becky McDaniel
Ed Green	Robert & Judy Giffin
Ed Green	Bernice Howard
Ed Green	John & Nancy Howell
Ed Green	Dorothy King
Ed Green	Maryville HS Class of '59
Ed Green	Karly & Sherry Miller
Ed Green	Bartlett Adult Day Out Program
Ed Green	Jerry & Frances Hodge
Ed Green	Joe, Jan, & Karen Kimbrough
Ed Green	Terry & Starr Bragg
Ed Green	Janie Haley
Ed Green	Roy & Carolyn Gallaher
Ed Green	Wilson & Sue Borden
Ed Green	Eric & Lynda Spalding
Ed Green	Daniel & Judy Batson
Ed Green	Ron & Gail Blair

**Welcome Table (Continued)**

Ed Green	Dick & Rebecca Williams
Ed Green	Gerald & Betty Smith
Ed Green	Tom & Kathy Howard

**Memorial Fund**

<i>In memory of:</i>	<i>Given by:</i>
Lois Farrier	Steve & Martha Shields
Norman Keith Corey	Wayne & Donna Doede



**Paul Bay**

*Entered the Church*  
*Triumphant:*  
May 31, 2023

**Ed Green**

*Joined First Church:*  
October 24, 1965  
*Entered the Church*  
*Triumphant:*  
June 2, 2023

**Christian sympathy extended to:**

Judy Green in the death of her husband Ed on June 2nd.  
Sarah Culvahouse in the death of her husband Paul Bay on May 31st.

**Maryville First United Methodist Church**  
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Maryville, Tennessee 37803  
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### **When it's okay to cross boundaries**

The human world is filled with boundaries that separate us from each other. Boundaries aren't necessarily bad as they are often for our protection. But the lines we aren't supposed to cross can also lead to repression and discrimination.

As Jesus' disciples we might find that we are called to follow Jesus right past some boundaries like:

- The boundary of sin
- The boundary of policy
- The boundary of us vs. them
- The boundary of propriety
- The boundary of uncleanness

We hope you'll be able to join us Sundays in July as we learn to **CONNECT** to people **ACROSS THE BOUNDARIES**.



[1stchurch.org](http://1stchurch.org)