

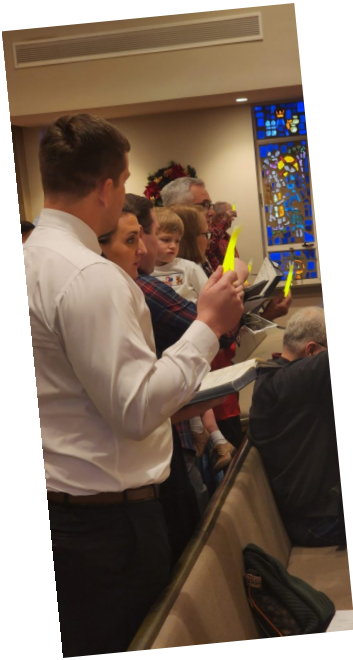
# THE CHURCH BELL

JANUARY  
2024



FOR SURELY I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR  
YOU, SAYS THE LORD, PLANS FOR YOUR  
WELFARE AND NOT FOR HARM, TO GIVE YOU  
A FUTURE WITH HOPE.

**JEREMIAH 29:11**



What a wonderful December it was here at 1st UMC-Maryville. Here are a few pictures of the Advent Celebrations as well as Christmas Eve.

Visit [1stchurch.org/Christmas](http://1stchurch.org/Christmas) for more highlights from all the celebrations.



## Organist search update

The Organist search committee continues to work on filling the role that will be vacated following Dwain Pesterfield's retirement on December 31st, and I'm sure we will all want to be there for his last Sunday in that role. We are so grateful for Dwain's 46 incredible years of service to our church! The search committee hopes to announce a new person in that role in January; we currently have two candidates.



Additionally, we look forward to recognizing the ways in which music blesses our lives and enhances our worship on **Sunday, February 11th** during the 10:30 traditional worship service. Following that service, there will be a chance to thank not only Dwain, but also Terry Wilson and Susan Daves for their incredible years of service to our church.

We are so thankful for Dwain, Terry & Susan, and I know that we will want to make sure we let them know how much they have meant and continue to mean to all of us. - *Dr. Dwight Dockery*

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## Christmas Offering puts the spotlight on young voices

The Holston Conference of the United Methodist College hopes to raise \$1.5 million dollars for its New Voices campaign. All the money raised will support Holston Conference Colleges & Universities, the Wesley Foundations and the Camping ministries.

In December through our special Christmas Offering you have helped raise \$25,000 for New Voices. If you haven't already given you still have time. Just mark your check "Christmas Offering 2023" and bring it by the Church Office or drop it in the offering plate. You can also mail it to 804 Montvale Station Road, 37803.

To give online just go to [1stchurch.org/giving](https://1stchurch.org/giving) and select "Christmas Offering."

Christmas Offering 2023



NEW VOICES

\$25,000  
as of 12/28/23

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## Want to help with our devotional podcast?

Since its launch in September nearly 1000 people have tuned in to our podcast, "Grace for All." At the beginning of December, new episodes were added daily, and the intent is to keep it a daily devotional you can listen to online. Starting in mid-February the episodes will focus on the season of Lent.

As you can imagine it takes a lot of work to put something like this together and our Podcast team is quite dedicated, but they still need your help. Whether you write a devotional for the podcast or lend your voice or other talents to the production of each episode, we want to hear from you. Just visit [1stchurch.org/podcast](https://1stchurch.org/podcast) and scroll down the page and hit the "I want to help" button, fill out the form and we'll get back to you. You can also send an email to [podcasts@1stchurch.org](mailto:podcasts@1stchurch.org).



If you haven't tuned in yet, you can listen to the podcast at [1stchurch.org/podcast](https://1stchurch.org/podcast), on the church YouTube Channel, or most everywhere you get your podcasts.

**Start a New Year with Wednesdays at 1st**

After taking a break for the holidays, our FULL Wednesday night programming gets back on track January 10th. Wednesdays at 1st adds vitality, joy and lots of love to what already happens here at 1st Church, so if you haven't been here on a Wednesday night, make plans to come. Here's a quick look at the schedule. You can find more details at [1stchurch.org/Wednesdays](http://1stchurch.org/Wednesdays).

**5:00 pm**

Children's Choir Rehearsals  
Deep Space Student Study

**5:30 pm**

Dinner in Asbury Hall

**6:00 pm**

Youth Choir Rehearsals

**6:15 pm**

Adult Bible Study  
1st Kids Study-Trackers of Truth

**6:30 pm**

Celebrate Recovery Worship

**7:00 pm**

Chancel Choir Rehearsal

**7:40 pm**

Celebrate Recovery Share Groups



As a year draws to a close, it is typical to reflect upon the events that occurred. Family Promise of Blount County experienced phenomenal changes. Hosting families in the Emergency Shelter Phase utilizing church rotation permanently ended. COVID-19 initiated the closure but the conveyance of Sycamore Tree United Methodist Church to 1st UMC provided an alternative by providing housing at just one location. More renovations are necessary before guests can

make it their temporary home while working their way into a home of their own. Meanwhile all the office staff for Family Promise have moved into the 1st UMC @ Sycamore Tree location.

Mired amidst unrepresented rent hikes and unaffordable housing in general, movement through the three phases of the mission has been slow. However, just this past month a mom and her young son became part of the program and another family found their permanent home.

Fundraising via *Night Without a Bed* was the most successful ever. A large part of that was due to the participation of 1st UMC youth. Thank you to all who were part of that and special thanks to Nathan Irwin for taking the lead.

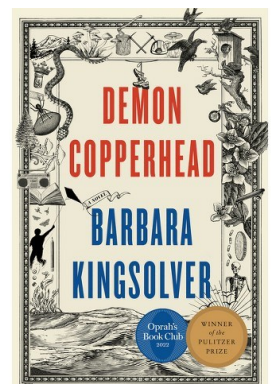
All the guests in Family Promise and even those on the waiting list will find presents this Christmas thanks to the generosity of many. This is the first time that has happened. We have a link to the article at [1stchurch.org/family-promise](http://1stchurch.org/family-promise).

We hope you had a very Merry Christmas and we wish you a Happy New Year. It will be one filled with hope for Family Promise. Thank you for playing a role in that.

Blessings,  
Mavis Ziegler and Amy Large  
Co-Coordinators of Family Promise at 1stUMC

**Book Club**

The 1st UMC Book Club will meet on Monday, February 19th at 10:00 am in Room 205 (Library). The group will be discussing the book *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver. All are welcome to join the discussion. If you have any questions please feel free to call Patsy Lunde at 865-805-8583.





**Kristi Alton**  
 Director of 1st Kids Ministries  
[kalton@1stchurch.org](mailto:kalton@1stchurch.org)  
 865-982-1273 ext. 113

**Outstanding Organizers**

Organization is crucial for a successful ministry and 1st Kids needs your help! As we begin a New Year we want to re-organize a few areas related to children’s ministries. If you have a gift of sorting, cleaning and organizing we would love to have you become one of our “outstanding organizers.”

For this event we will be providing simple sandwiches and a side. Make sure to wear or have a change of clothes and shoes.

Contact Kristi Alton (by January 6th) if you are interested in helping. Lunch will be in Room C12.

Check out what’s happening with 1st Kids at:  
[1stchurch.org/1st-Kids](http://1stchurch.org/1st-Kids)



Chris Jacobs - [cjacobs@1stchurch.org](mailto:cjacobs@1stchurch.org)  
[1stchurch.org/students](http://1stchurch.org/students)

**Close Encounter moving locations!**

At the beginning of 2024, the Sunday Night First Future Youth gatherings will meet at 1st UMC @ Sycamore Tree. If you don’t know where that is, just type in the address, 1830 Clydesdale Street, Maryville to get you there. We are looking forward to the opportunities meeting at Sycamore Tree presents. Hope to see you there!



**Resurrection 2024**

More than three dozen students are signed up to go to Resurrection 2024 in Pigeon Forge, January 19th through January 21st. There is a mandatory meeting for all the parents of those going to the event. That happens on January 7th at 11:30 am in Wesley Hall. During this time you will meet the volunteers going, go over information about packing, the schedule, expectations and much more.

**Adopt a grand-friend**

Intergenerational Friendships are important but can be difficult to cultivate. During the month of February, we encourage adults ages 65 and up to become an undercover pen pal with one of our 1st Kids ranging from 5 to 11-years- old.

Neither of you will know your real identities, but will address each other by a nickname. We encourage pen pals to write back and forth as much as possible. Ms. Kristi & the 1st Kids team will act as the middleman delivering your messages to the recipient with the intent of protecting your secret identity.

You can either send messages through physical letters or email or send to [kalton@1stchurch.org](mailto:kalton@1stchurch.org). You can also send your pen pal any art that you create, or fun nature finds. We ask that you not buy any actual gifts from a store but use your creativity to bless your pen pal.

After a month of corresponding, you will meet your new friend on March 3rd at the Grand Reveal party after the 10:30 service (so around 11:30) in Wesley Hall. Lunch will be provided, you will meet your pal, and we will play an intense game of Bingo! Spouse’s and families are also encouraged to attend.

To be a part of this awesome program **YOU MUST REGISTER ONLINE at [1stchurch.org/1st-Kids](http://1stchurch.org/1st-Kids) BY JANUARY 28<sup>TH</sup>**. Pen pals will receive the nickname of their pal on January 30<sup>th</sup> and correspondence begins on February 1<sup>st</sup>.



**Weekly Youth Opportunities**

*Wednesdays at 1st*  
 5:00 pm - Deep Space Youth Study, Wesley Hall  
 6:00 pm - Youth Choirs, Room 249

*Sunday Mornings*  
 9:15 am Youth Sunday School, Wesley Hall

*Sunday Evenings*  
 6:45 pm - 8:00 pm - Close Encounter  
 1st UMC @ Sycamore Tree

## **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 Grief Recovery Program they will be leading here at 1st Church. The class was supposed to happen back in the fall, but had to be rescheduled. This four week class will begin on **January 21st from 4:00 to 5:00 pm** in room 205.

During each session, 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.



**Grief Recovery**

**STARTING JANUARY 21ST**  
**4:00 TO 5:00**  
**ROOM 205**

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING PLEASE CONTACT  
REV. BILL GREEN AT: GREENWILLIAM7@GMAIL.COM  
OR CALL 360-223-1359

### ***Christian sympathy extended to:***

Sally Thierbach in the death of her husband Rev. John Thierbach on December 15th.

Sarah Jane Roberts and her family in the death of her husband, Wally on December 7th. This includes her son Brent Roberts, his wife Whitney and their children Claire and Barrett. Also be in prayer for Sarah Jane's daughter Sarabeth Laurenzi, her husband Justin, and their children Sarah Kate and Colin.

The family of Barbara Matzek who died on December 3rd.

Denise Johns and her family in the death of Denise's mother, Nelda Lucille Stephens on December 21st.

Marjorie and Alvin Jenkins in the death of their son, Doug.

Sandy Stuart and Mary Stanley in the death of their mother, Doris Quillin Bailey on December 21st.



**Maryville First United Methodist Church**  
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### **How can we deal with change?**

Change is inevitable. God made it part of creation's rhythm. Being born again necessitates it. So does going to perfection. Nevertheless, we fear it. We resist it. We may even outright refuse it.

In a year with a presidential election year, a United Methodist General Conference, and a season in which we are encouraging a new way of living faith together in small groups, it feels that we might spend time in a worthwhile way by normalizing change and offering comfort and more importantly HOPE in the midst of constant change.

Join us each Sunday, beginning January 7th as we focus on CHANGE during Sunday morning worship!

### **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



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