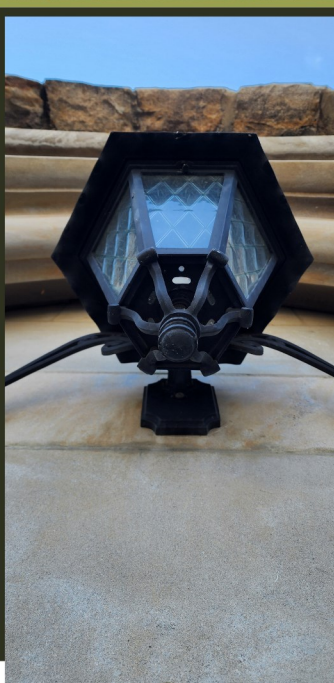


THE CHURCH BELL



JULY
2024

**BUT HE SAID TO ME, "MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR YOU, FOR POWER IS MADE PERFECT IN WEAKNESS." SO I WILL BOAST ALL THE MORE GLADLY OF MY WEAKNESSES, SO THAT THE POWER OF CHRISIT MAY DWELL IN ME.
2 CORINTHIANS 12:9**



From June 9th through June 12th, representatives of 545 United Methodist Congregations from Southwest Virginia, East Tennessee, and Northwest Georgia gathered for the 2024 Holston Annual Conference. The three days featured worship services celebrating our shared missions and the ordination, retirement, and memorial services for clergy leaders.

The conference devoted hours to the business of our common mission and ministries. Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett reminded us that our shared purpose is to be a “grace-filled, visionary community of believers with a passion for our mission,” which is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Similarly, our keynote speaker, Dr. Michael Bowie encouraged us to gauge vitality not by membership or attendance, but by how many people are engaged in service in the community. He urged us to see ourselves as stewards - and not owners - of the church and its mission and to focus on mentoring the young. He concluded, “serving together is our super power!”

A major business matter was the reducing our 2024 conference budget and adopting a 2025 budget. After the Covid-19 pandemic and the 2023 season of disaffiliation, our conference expenses outpaced income by about \$1.1 million last year. So, we voted to reduce the 2024 budget by about \$1 million to \$7,181,386, and we adopted at 2025 budget of \$6,782,541.

The Conference elected officers and leaders for the next four years, including three additional lay members to represent us at next month’s Southeast Jurisdictional Conference. Because the recent General Conference reduced the total number of bishops in the United Methodist Church, the Jurisdictional Conference will determine how the Holston Conference will be connected with another conference under the leadership of one bishop. We will not merge with that conference; we will simply continue to share the leadership of a bishop.

Another realignment is likely to happen within the bounds of the Holston Conference. Presently, the conference has nine districts (including our own Smoky Mountain District) led by five superintendents, some of whom lead more than one district with the assistance of district associates. In 2025, our conference strategy team expects to propose reconfiguring the conference into a smaller number of districts.

Our congregation was well represented by 3 clergy members, 4 lay members representing the congregation, 5 lay members representing our Smoky Mountain District, and 2 deacons affiliated with our congregation. We were all proud and humbled when the conference trustees’ report specifically celebrated our congregation’s use of the Sycamore Tree site for the ministries of Family Promise, Compassion Counseling, and the proposed DayBreak dementia respite care ministry.

Our conference invitation team described our task as “helping theologically diverse people find ministry and meaning together.” Unity in diversity has always been the church’s challenge and opportunity, hasn’t it? Our conference youth president, Sarah Thomas said, “Different perspectives should be celebrated.” They were at our annual conference, and they are every day in our congregation.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "#Jonathan Jones". The signature is stylized and includes a hashtag symbol at the beginning.

Daybreak Adult Care Ministry Approved

In a called meeting on June 17th, our Church Council unanimously approved the launch of a new adult day respite program called DayBreak. This ministry will allow people living with dementia to spend a few hours in a safe environment to socialize, to experience community, and to participate in a variety of activities.

At the same time, DayBreak allows the participants family members or people who care for them to run errands, make appointments, or simply have some time for rest.

1st Church member Jill Pope will serve as the director of this ministry, and in that role she will recruit and schedule volunteers, seek grant

Compassion Counseling ribbon cutting

In Early June, an organization that grew out of 1st United Methodist Church - Maryville, officially cut the ribbon for their new offices at our Sycamore Tree Campus. Compassion Counseling provides "timely, welcoming, accessible and affordable mental health counseling and education for all."

CCC joins Family Promise of Blount County in calling 1st UMC@Sycamore Tree home.

funding, network with experts in our community and region, and lead the everyday programming of the DayBreak ministry.

Jill and other volunteer leaders are coordinating with the church staff to begin the licensure process with the Tennessee

Department of Human Services. A grant from our mission endowment will provide much of the startup funding for this new ministry effort.

To know more or to support DayBreak by volunteering or donating, please contact one of our pastors.



Church Staff Changes

Our congregation has been blessed to have Danielle Robinson as our Administrative Assistant over the past few years. She has been faithful, diligent, compassionate, and creative in her work, and she has represented us so well as the first impression people form of our congregation as they call or enter the building.

Danielle resigned in early June as she and her husband Mark anticipate and prepare for a new season in their life together. We surround Danielle with our gratitude, love, prayers, and blessings as she departs.

Clayton Hensley's daughter, Hazel, will help in the church office through the summer as we seek our next permanent administrative assistant.

Chris Jacobs, our Director of Student Ministries, also submitted his resignation in June. We have been grateful for his enthusiastic, passionate, creative spirit among us over the past fifteen months, and we surround Chris, Lauren, Viggo, and Milo with love and prayers in this time of transition.

Faithful parent volunteers and our pastors will cooperate to continue to offer opportunities for fun, service, learning, and community through the remainder of the summer and into the new school year as our staff-parish relations committee begins the search and recruitment process for our next Director of Student ministries.

(See page 7 for details regarding the Maintenance Superintendent position.)

End of Summer Pool Party

Mark your calendars and join us on Saturday, July 27th from 6:30 to 9:00 pm at Springbrook Pool in Alcoa (636 Vose Road). Bring the whole family to swim, dive, and slide or to simply spend time together and enjoy good food with your church family.

This is a free event, but please sign up at 1stchurch.org/pool so that we make sure we have the appropriate number of lifeguards. The church will provide sub sandwiches and bottled water. Bring a side dish or dessert to share (just remember it will be hot outside and the food will be served outside). Folding camp chairs are encouraged, but there are benches and picnic tables if needed.



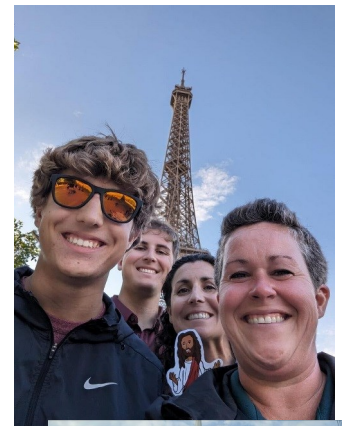
For more info reach out to Rev. Nathan Irwin at nirwin@1stchurch.org.

He's been everywhere

Summer is a big time for travel and that's certainly true for Flat Jesus. Since late May, you have taken Him along with you on your road trips, long flights, celebrations and even visits to the store.

Thanks for sharing the pictures with everyone and letting people know that Jesus is with us wherever we go. Keep traveling with Flat Jesus and sharing those pictures.

When you post pictures to social media, please tag the church and/or use #1stFlatJesus. You can also email them to communications@1stchurch.org.



Kevin Spangler

**Welcome to 1st
United Methodist
Church**



Matt, Nikki, Clara and Haden McKinnis

Summer Sunday School

During the summer, 1st Kids will be combining age groups in C1 & C2 during Sunday school to learn about God, like the 12 tribes of Israel.

During Bible times, all ages learned together and supported one another; we want the same experience for our kids this summer.

Each week, children will be placed in a new mixed-age tribe to get to know different people. We will do lots of outside learning activities with large group and small group opportunities.



Kids Own Worship for July



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT 1ST KIDS

Contact the 1st Kids Director Kristi Alton

✉ kalton@1stchurch.org
☎ 865-982-1273 ext. 712



Dates to remember!

July 28th
Blessing of the Backpacks
Bayou Back to School Party

August 4th
Kids Move Up Sunday
for Sunday School and
Kids Own Worship

August 11th
Kindergarten and 3rd Grade Bible Presentations

What are your best memories from SCUBA VBS 2024?



EVERY TUESDAY
Except July 2nd

SUMMER SERVICE & SURPRISES

JUNE 4TH - JULY 23RD
9:00am - 1:00pm

FOR CHILDREN 2ND GRADE-5TH GRADE

Register and complete permission form

1stchurch.org/summer-service



Sunday, July 7th
1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
Kevin Painter's House



Several of our youth (along with Rev. Nathan Irwin) attended Jr./Sr. High Assembly at Emory & Henry College. They even took Flat Jesus with them.



Exciting things are happening with Family Promise of Blount County. Volunteers have been painting and assembling furniture at the 1st UMC @Sycamore Tree campus. Once the space is complete, Family Promise will have the space to double the number of families served in the Emergency Shelter phase!

Family Promise Board Members were invited to the Farmer's Market event at Clayton Homes. While there, they met with many Clayton Homes staff members to thank them for all of their support, and to encourage them to use their Paid Time-Off hours to help with Family Promise.



In the Prevention and Diversion program two families were assisted in Mid-June. One family fell behind in rent after the wife had a stay in the ICU and they were bracing for an eviction notice. Thankfully their property manager was aware of Family Promise and referred them in time to stop the eviction from being filed. Additionally, the family was aided with a budget and resources to help extend their current budget to help prevent future crisis situations.

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



Christian sympathy extended to:
 Doug Jenkins in the death of his mother,
 Audrey Jenkins.

Habitat for Humanity

In memory of: Audrey Jenkins
Given by: Harald & Sue Weltzin

Memorial Fund

In honor of: Ralphine Hood
Given by: Sandy Stuart

In memory of: Judy Ballard, Pete Pedersen, Mary Alice Hart, Audrey Jenkins
Given by: Steve & Martha Shields, Steve & Martha Shields, Steve & Martha Shields, Steve & Martha Shields

Music Ministry & Choir

In memory of: Taylor Sykes, Taylor Sykes
Given by: Kathy Dorner, Kathryn King

Welcome Table

In honor of: Ralphine Hood, Ralphine Hood, Ralphine Hood
Given by: Doug & Emily Smith, Phyllis Bostick, Tim & Trish Badgett

A Christ-centered recovery program

CELEBRATE RECOVERY

EACH WEDNESDAY
 5:30 PM - DINNER
 6:30 PM - MUSIC & MESSAGE
 7:40 PM - SHARE GROUPS

July 3rd Eric Miller (Madisonville Church of God)	July 17th Sarah Myeers-Greeve
July 10th Sanity	July 24th Turn
	July 31st Karen (Shoreline Church)

CRMaryvilleTN.com


The Church Office will be closed on
 July 4th and 5th.

Staff Contacts 

You can find staff and ministry contacts under
 the "Reach" tab on the church website:
1stchurch.org


The church phone number is 865-982-1273.


Welcome back!



Chances are you've seen a familiar face working on a number of things around the church. We are happy to welcome Bryan Holder back to 1st Church. For many years he worked here as a custodian and now he is working in the role as Maintenance Superintendent.

So, if you see Bryan please take a moment to say "Welcome Back!"




Book Club

The July selection is
Horse by Geraldine Brooks.
 The Book club will meet on
 July 15th at 10:00 am in room 205

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THE GRACE OF



TOGETHERNESS

We are all equally dependent on God's grace. The shared experience of needing grace creates a level playing field, fostering a sense of community where we stand together before God.

Focusing on scripture passages from Ephesians, we look at the importance of fellowship, love

and support in all that we do in building a strong and vibrant church community. We also learn how we are each called to accept and build each other up and reflect God's grace towards one another.

We hope you will join us in this mid-summer journey of exploring "The Grace of Togetherness."

July 7th

Ephesians 1:3-14

July 14th

Ephesians 2:11-22

July 21st

Ephesians 3:14-21

July 28th

Ephesians 4:1-16

August 4th

Ephesians 4:25—5:2



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