

THE CHURCH BELL



REACH - CONNECT - EQUIP - SEND



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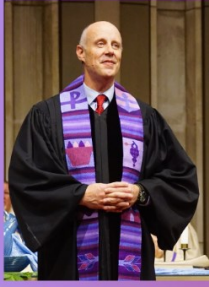
APRIL 2025



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While we were still weak, at the right moment, Christ died for ungodly people. It isn't often that someone will die for a righteous person, though maybe someone might dare to die for a good person. But God shows his love for us, because while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
Romans 5:6-8



A reminder of love

A note from Rev. Jonathan Jonas

Suzanne and I are in a season of life with our young adult children in which we are more frequently saying goodbye to them—as they go to work, as they go out with friends, or as they return to campus - and those goodbye moments offer perfect occasions for those important last-second communications.

We might remind them to be especially careful on wet roads. We remind us to let us know when they have arrived safely. Most of all, and especially if they're going to be away for a while, we hug them and remind them that we love them. The last word is almost always a reminder of love.

The same is true of Jesus.

In John's gospel, Jesus' last supper with his disciples lasts *five chapters*, from the beginning of chapter thirteen through the end of chapter seventeen. It's remarkable that John devotes five chapters to this one final evening of Jesus' life, especially since the entire gospel has only twenty-one chapters.

During that last supper and over the course of those five chapters, Jesus reveals that he realizes what his disciples do not yet - that he is about to be removed from them. In fact, John the gospel writer underscores this as the last supper begins in 13:1, writing, "Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from the world and go to the father."

In the very next sentence, John gives us a preview of Jesus' important last-second message to his disciples. John writes, "Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end."

No wonder then, that the last supper becomes a final lesson in love.

This month during Holy Week, we will observe Maundy Thursday, so named because of the *mandatum novum*, or "new commandment" in John's story of the last supper. In John 13:34-35, Jesus says to his disciples, "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Later, but still during that last supper, in John 15:12, Jesus repeats, "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." Beloved, this is quite literally, the final word on living as followers of Jesus Christ.

The true test and mark of authentic discipleship of Jesus Christ isn't orthodoxy, right belief, proper practice of baptism, or anything else that hangs up the Christian church.

Jesus' last-second **commandment** - twice repeated! - is to love each other as Jesus loves.

That is the final word. That is all we need to know.

New appointment to 1st Church

Someone familiar to many in our Celebrate Recovery Program and the church as a whole is projected to be appointed to 1st Church as an associate pastor for recovery and nurture ministries. Rev. Don Jones, is a Blount County native and is the husband of 1st UMC member, Kathryn King.

Don's ministry in the Holston Conference has included pastoral appointments at:

- Fairgarden Circuit;
- Andersonville/Mt. Pleasant;
- Faith, Knoxville;
- Valley Forge; Daisy;
- Harneds/Parrottsville;
- Sycamore Tree;
- and most recently, Heiskell/Andersonville.



We are delighted that he will share his gifts and experience as part of the ministry team here at 1st Church. The appointment begins July 1st.

Celebrating a ministry milestone



Simple conversations about dreams for ministry can lead to big things. And that's certainly the case with our *Grace for All* podcast. This daily devotional time is written and produced by the people of 1st UMC, and is led by members Jim Stovall and Greta Smith.

On Monday, March 31st, Grace for All aired its 500th episode!

If you want to listen to the podcast, you'll find it on our website at 1stchurch.org/podcast, on our YouTube channel, or download from most podcast providers.

If you want to help with one of the next 500 episodes, just visit the podcast page on the website, scroll down, and click on the **"I want to help"** button.

District realignment plan going to Annual Conference

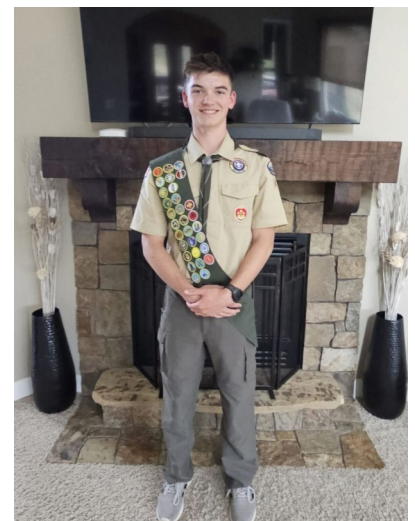
(information gathered from *The Call*)

The Holston Conference Strategy Team was recently tasked with finding a way for the districts in the Conference to be both faithful and fruitful for years to come.

At this time there are nine districts that make up the Conference which stretches from Southwest Virginia, through East Tennessee and down to North Georgia.

The team is recommending a reduction to six districts, while maintaining five District Superintendents (one D.S. would serve two districts). The plan will be presented and voted on during Annual Conference at Lake Junaluska, NC, June 1st through June 4th.

Read more about the plan at: Holston.org.



Congratulations to Oliver Nocton for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout!

Making the most of Easter in Maryville

This month as we come together to reflect on the power of God's love for us through the story of Easter, we want to make sure you know the ways you can be a part of Easter here at 1st Church.

The Voices of Ephesian Choir out of Nashville returns to 1st Church on **April 6th**. This time they will be a part of the **10:30 Traditional Worship Service** singing with our Chancel Choir and presenting a separate piece of their own.

Later on the afternoon of **April 6th**, you are invited to be a part of the Walk in the Light at Sandy Springs Park from **2:30 to 5:00 pm**. More details on page 5.

The next Sunday, **April 13th**, is Palm Sunday. This is a celebration where we wave palm branches, see the children parade down the aisles and remember the triumphant welcome Jesus had in Jerusalem before the events of the Holy Week transpired.

On **Maundy Thursday, April 17th**, we remember Jesus' final commandment to "love one another as he loved us." We'll come together in the **Sanctuary at 7:00 pm** that night for a service filled with music, reflection and communion.

Remembering Jesus' walk through his final hours is the focus of our Good Friday Worship Service, **April 18th**. This year, we will once again meet at **7:00 pm at 1st UMC @ Sycamore Tree** for this Tenebrae (shadows) service.

Easter Sunday, April 20th

Celebrations begin early as we gather at 6:45 am for the Sunrise Worship Service in the parking lot of Montgomery Ridge Intermediate School.

At **8:15 and 10:30 am in the Sanctuary and 10:30 am in Asbury Hall (gym, lower level)** you are invited to jubilant celebrations of the Good News of Christ's Resurrection and cheers that "Christ is risen, Christ is risen indeed!"

Throughout the morning we'll have an Easter Themed Selfie Station set up in Wesley Hall (upper level) as well as a place for people to get updated Online Directory pictures. Following 10:30 worship we'll have some light snacks in Wesley Hall and a time for people to continue the celebrations of the day, together.

This year's Easter Offering goes to Habitat for Humanity.

A MESSAGE FOR EASTER AND BEYOND!



Help spread the message

Easter brings with it a message of hope as well as a message about God's love for us.

As we approach this important day in the life of the church, we will provide you with several tools for inviting people to be a part of the celebrations as well as ways to continue spreading the message for each of us to "Love First."

Look for more information at **EasterinMaryville.com**, on our social channels, bulletins and emails.

The Good We Do

A quotation often attributed to Methodism Founder, John Wesley urged people to "Do all the good you can." That call is part of our mission at 1st Church as we work to make disciples of Christ.

On **Sunday, April 27th**, you will have an opportunity to explore "The Good We Do" together as 1st UMC Ministries and local non-profits gather for a special event in Wesley Hall (9:00 am until 12:00).

This ministry fair provides you with information on the ways you can Good in the church and throughout the community and world.

Come walk in the light and show others how to LOVE FIRST!

One of our core values as a church is to **SEND** people into the community and beyond to further Christ's mission. Engaging kids in this can be challenging, so this Easter, we're thinking **outside the box!**

Walk in the Light is a special event where families gather at **Sandy Springs Park Pavilion (near Best St.)** to worship, learn how **Jesus is the light of the world**, and create lanterns for a joyful parade.

31 **Date:** Sunday, April 6th

Ⓡ **Time:** 2:30 PM – 5:00 PM
(Worship & Lantern Decorating ongoing)

🎪 **Parade Times:** First Parade: 3:30 PM,
Second Parade: 4:30 PM

We'll **march through the park**, celebrating and declaring that **Jesus is King!** Snacks will be provided, and we'll have plenty of crafting supplies for church families and any curious parkgoers who want to join in.



Come **shine His light** with us this Easter!

On April 13th, Palm Sunday, will have a special opportunity for kids to celebrate with a palm parade! This happens in both the 10:30 Contemporary and 10:30 Traditional services.

We ask that children in the Traditional service join us at the back of the Sanctuary in the Narthex to prepare for this special part of worship. If any adults could assist with getting the children ready for the Palm Parade, we would appreciate the help.



True or False? Jesus loves us.

Jesus was betrayed by His followers, beaten and died a cruel and torturous death. When He died, He took all of our sin on Himself and paid the ultimate price for our sins.

As God, death would not defeat Him. Jesus rose from the dead! If we believe in Him for our salvation, we can be with Him forever! Jesus not only forgave us like He did Peter but wants us to have eternal life with Him. Jesus loves us!

Memory Verse:

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.
(John 3:16)



News



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT 1ST KIDS

Contact the 1st Kids Director
Kristi Alton

.....

✉ kalton@1stchurch.org

☎ 865-982-1273 ext. 712



"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."
2 Peter: 3:18A

This month in Kid's Own Worship we'll celebrate Spring with "Full Bloom."

April 6th

God sent Jesus to SAVE US.

April 13th

Jesus understands when WE'RE HURTING

April 20th

Jesus makes ALL THINGS NEW.

April 27th

Jesus CONNECTS US to God.



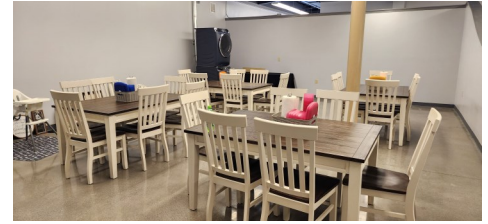
Get updates at: 1stchurch.org/vbs



As we await the most celebrated time of Christian faith when Jesus ascended to his everlasting home, there are 49 families in Blount County on the *Family Promise* wait list who have no earthly home.

Praise God and all those who have worked so hard to get the doors open at Sycamore Tree to help remedy that dire situation. To ensure that

all goes smoothly for the families and volunteers involved, Family Promise will open the Emergency Shelter gradually, beginning with one family. Rob and his 15-year old son will be the first family to enter, followed slowly by additional families until the four-family capacity is reached.



Thank you to all who have signed up for the short training session which will allow volunteers and guests to have face-to-face contact. Please note that more volunteers are needed. Sign up for training at 1stchurch.org/family-promise.

May everyone have a blessed Easter.

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

DayBreak Ministry Updates - Jill Pope

DayBreak hosted a ribbon cutting on February 26th and it was a wonderful event. We were blown away by the businesses, community members, and church members that attended and helped us celebrate. What a grand way to spend a beautiful afternoon!

We have welcomed several new families since the last *Church Bell* was published. We are thrilled to see our program grow. We also have new volunteers coming from both the church and the community. But it is the nature of the program that we will see friends leave us. Please help us by continuing to spread word to families in need and the community.

Follow us on Facebook and share our posts. Pick up some brochures and take them to your doctor(s), pharmacist(s), and other civic and social groups. Help spread the word about our Memory Cafe/Support Group the 4th Tuesday each month.

The last week of March, students from Coulter Grove and Montgomery Ridge are helping us clean and spending time in our day program as part of SERVE days. It is wonderful to welcome these young people into service at our Sycamore Tree campus.

One of the tasks these young people are helping us with is preparing our planters. We are excited for the spring weather and the opportunity for our participants and volunteers to grow flowers and vegetables this year.



The Alzheimer's Tennessee Foothills Walk is **Saturday, April 26th at Alcoa High School.**

Join our team- DayBreak 1st Dreamers. We will be walking to support their work on behalf of all those impacted by Alzheimer's.

Contact Jill Pope anytime at DayBreak for more information. Call or text 865-315-2371 or email director@daybreakcare.org

If you would like our quarterly DayBreak Morning Light updates, please visit 1stchurch.org/DayBreak.



Celebrate Recovery

In memory of:
Cooper Hodges

Given by:
Sandra Millsap

DayBreak Respite Care

In memory of:
David Smith
Cooper Hodges

Given by:
Albert & Jill Pope
Albert & Jill Pope

Memorial Fund

In memory of:
Bobby Mull
Evelyn Ross
Dianna Faircloth

Given by:
Don & Corkey Cochran
Steve & Martha Shields
Gary & Sherry Hensley

Welcome Table

In memory of:
Ray Pack
Ray Pack
Ray Pack
Ray Pack
Ray Pack
Ray Pack
Ray Pack
Ray Pack
Ray Pack
Ray Pack
Ray Pack
Ray Pack
Ray Pack
Dianna Faircloth
Dianna Faircloth
Larry Ladd
Anne Hand

Given by:
Don & Ann McElhane
Dean Moss
Daniel Cain
Judy Keller
TVA Employees FCU
David & Phyllis Sloan
Steve & Martha Shields
Gary & Sherry Hensley
Jeff Sweet & TVA Family
Julie Labhart
Barbara Chapin
Wally & Nan Werner
Pat & Allyson Proctor
Wally & Nan Werner
Dean Moss
Dean Moss
Dean Moss

A Christ-centered recovery program **EACH WEDNESDAY**

CELEBRATE RECOVERY

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

CRMaryvilleTN.com

1st YOUTH WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Each Sunday at 9:15 am
Sunday School
in rooms 147 & 151

Each Sunday at 6:45 pm
Youth Fellowship in Wesley Hall (upper level)

Every Tuesday at 7:30 am
Rise and Shine devotion and prayer time
Wesley Hall (upper level)



Elaine Graves Cox
Joined First Church: November 14, 2004

Entered the Church Triumphant:
March 30, 2025

Christian sympathy extended to:

Arnold Cox in the death of his wife Elaine on March 30th.

Sam Barto in the death of his father on March 1st.

Sarah Slack (and family) in the death of her uncle George Atkins on March 11th.

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.

Congratulations to:

Marian & Glenn White on the birth of their grandchild, Griffin, on February 23rd.

Spring is a great time to read a book

The 1st UMC Book Club invites you to join them in reading some great books over the next few months. The club meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 10:00 am in Room 205.

April's Selection
The Passion and the Cross
by Ronald Rolheiser

May's Selection
Dinners with Ruth
by Nina Totenberg

Every Wednesday at 5:00 pm
Youth Bible Study in Room 151

Every Wednesday at 6:00 pm
Youth Music

Maryville First United Methodist Church
804 Montvale Station Road
Maryville, Tennessee 37803
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CELEBRATE HOPE

Easter IN MARYVILLE

April 6th at 2:30 pm
Walk in the Light Event
Sandy Springs Park

April 13th
Palm Sunday Celebrations
8:15 & 10:30
worship services

April 17th at 7:00 pm
Maundy Thursday Worship
Sanctuary

April 18th at 7:00 pm
Good Friday Worship
1st UMC @ Sycamore Tree

6:45 am
Sunrise Worship
Montgomery Ridge Intermediate School
Parking lot
835 Montgomery Lane, Maryville

8:15 am
Traditional Easter Worship
Sanctuary (upper level)

10:30 am
Traditional Easter Worship
Sanctuary (upper level)

10:30 am
Contemporary Easter Worship
Asbury Hall (gym, lower level)

EASTERINMARYVILLE.COM



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