

THE CHURCH BELL



REACH - CONNECT - EQUIP - SEND



Istchurch.org

MAY 2025



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**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

From the Nicene Creed (325 A.D)

“ IN BETWEEN YEARS ”

REV. JONATHAN JONAS



In Luke 2:41-52, we read the only “in between” story of Jesus’ life. Matthew and Luke tell stories of Jesus’ birth, and John includes an introductory prologue. Otherwise, the gospels begin with Jesus’ baptism and the beginning of his ministry—both in adulthood. Luke alone shares this one story of Jesus’ adolescence.

When he’s twelve years old, he travels with his family from Nazareth to Jerusalem for the Passover. After several days in Jerusalem, their group of traveling companions begins the journey—several days on foot—back to Nazareth, and then his parents notice that Jesus is nowhere to be found.

After three days, they find him back in the temple in Jerusalem. Isn’t that powerful foreshadowing? He’s away from them in Jerusalem, and he’s restored to them *after three days*! Nevertheless, when they find him, it seems entirely natural to him that he would be in his “Father’s house” learning from the scholars.

Luke tells us “all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers,” and upon their return to Nazareth, “Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.”

Before his parents’ very eyes, Jesus was becoming a remarkable young person. So are our young people, and in the month ahead, we will celebrate some important mileposts in their lives.

Several of our twelve-year-old friends and neighbors have met on Sunday mornings over the past few weeks in this year’s confirmation class. Like Jesus, and at the same age as Jesus, they’re spending Sunday mornings exploring together how to walk in the footsteps of Jesus.

On Sunday, May 18, we will celebrate their confirmation, and no doubt, there will be moments of amazement at their understanding and answers. We will rejoice over how they continue to increase in wisdom and in years.

For others among our young people who are a few years more advanced into their in-between years, we will honor the mileposts of graduations in May. Along with their parents and families, we will celebrate what they have accomplished and we will look forward with anticipation to the doors that will open before them.

Our prayer for them, too, will be that they increase in wisdom and in years. We know this - during the teen and young adult years, more of our young people than we would care to imagine drift away from the faith and the fellowship. Pray over these dear ones in their in-between years.

May they know how tightly they are held in God’s love. Let them know how tightly they are held in ours.

Ministry Fair connects people with ways to Go.Do.

Throughout the history of 1st United Methodist Church, the people of the church have served in many ways as the hands and feet of Christ here in Maryville and around the globe. The call to Go.Do. is an integral part of the mission to Reach, Connect, Equip and Send people into the world to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

On Sunday, April 27th, more than a dozen organizations and ministries set up in Wesley Hall to educate people about what they do and the different ways you can help them carry out their missions.



Throughout the morning there were many great conversations. For those of you thinking about volunteering with a group you encountered at *The Good We Do Ministry Fair*, let us know the ways you are helping by posting on social media and tagging 1st Church or email us a picture and a little about what you did to communications@1stchurch.org.

If you missed this event and want to reach out to the participant organizations, check out the links at: 1stchurch.org/ministryfair page on the website.

Family Promise takes a step forward

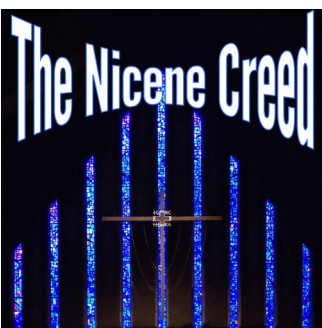
The Family Promise center at 1st UMC @ Sycamore Tree is ready to host families after a couple of years of planning and fundraising helped the organization take this big leap forward.

People attending an Open House on Friday, April 25th, got to see first hand what the space is going to be like for the families sheltered there in the future.

There will be many opportunities in the future for you to help with the Family Promise program. Keep looking out for more volunteer training opportunities in the future and see what else you can do in the Family Promise update on page 6.



During a called Charge Conference on April 28th, Leslie and Owen Ragland were confirmed as candidates for ministry in the United Methodist Church. The vote was unanimous.



1700 years old and still going strong

Born from the Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D., the Nicene Creed has been an anchor for stating what we, as Christians, believe about God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. From now through May 25th, we will embark on a journey during worship to dive deeper into the Nicene Creed, its history and how it can help us today understand and appreciate the essential truths that define our faith.

Celebrating HOPE!

The story of Christ's resurrection brings us HOPE and is always a reason for celebration. Along the way, other stories are told that have us thinking more about the emotions that Jesus and his followers had before the promise was fulfilled.

So many people came forward to help with special services, extra welcomes and even a time after Easter Sunday worship to take pictures, have conversations with one another, and have some refreshments.

Easter in Maryville is always a special time and it is our sincere hope this time was special for you. Remember, the Easter season continues through Pentecost on June 8th. So continue to celebrate the Good News that "Christ is risen! Christ is risen Indeed!



Waving branches on Palm Sunday



Remembering The Last Supper with handwashing and communion.



Reminders on Good Friday that The Light overcomes darkness.



People came together to celebrate on Easter Sunday in so many different ways.



If you posted pictures from Holy Week and Easter on social media be sure and tag the church or send them to communications@1stchurch.org. You can also see galleries of pictures from the season at EasterinMaryville.com.

2025
Easter OFFERING

\$22,000

THANK YOU FOR GIVING!

The joy of special music

Music can elicit a wide array of emotions, and when that music comes during a time of worship, it can become even more powerful.

On the first Sunday of April, the Voices of Ephesian Gospel Choir from Nashville returned to 1st Church. This time, the choir joined the Chancel Choir for some memorable music during the 10:30 Traditional Service. Voices of Ephesian also presented a piece by themselves.

You can watch both, "Praise His Holy Name" and "Total Praise" on our YouTube channel.

We hope to have Voices of Ephesian back in the future.





The light shines on through the rain! Ever heard the saying “don’t let a little rain ruin your parade?” Well, that’s the dilemma 1st Kids faced on the day of the “Walk in the Light” event. Because of soggy conditions, the event moved indoors. And while we weren’t out celebrating the light in the park, the message and fun kept

going inside Asbury Hall. A special thanks to all the volunteers who served at the event and to all the families that participated. There were some beautifully decorated lanterns and lots of smiles, and of course a parade to remind us that Jesus taught us to “Walk in the Light” and to “Love First.”



News



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT 1ST KIDS

Contact the 1st Kids Director
Kristi Alton



✉ kalton@1stchurch.org

☎ 865-982-1273 ext. 712

Heading to the True North THIS JUNE!

How do you find your way in a world gone wild? That’s the question at the start of this year’s Vacation Bible School journey. The fun begins on June 8th and runs through June 11th.

Each night we’ll have dinner from 5:30 to 6:00 and Vacation Bible School activities from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. It is open to kids from 3-years-old through students having completed the 5th grade.

To make sure this event is a success, we need people to serve during the days of VBS and in the weeks leading up to it. We hope to see a lot of you in a few weeks as we head out to find our “True North.”



Please visit 1stchurch.org/VBS or scan the QR code (on the left) to sign up your child for VBS or to serve.



“In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps.”
Proverbs 16:9

We can follow Jesus even when we don’t see the big picture right away. In May during Kid’s Own Worship we’ll take a look at what we CAN do to follow Jesus and ask “What’s Next?”

This May in Sunday School! Memory Verse:



But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things.
(John 14:26a)

Summer Service and Surprises

Looking for a great way for your child to Go.Do.? Our Summer Service and Surprises program gives children a chance to serve others and to enjoy a few joyful surprises along the way.

This year we will have a varied schedule for Service and Surprises with a mix of late afternoons on Sunday and some Tuesday morning & afternoons.

Be on the lookout for more details in the coming weeks, primarily through the 1st Kids Email and 1st Kids Facebook Group.



No doubt the joy of Easter is still fresh in the hearts and minds of everyone reading this. It is joyous seeing the people of 1stUMC "Love First" in a number of ways, particularly loving homeless neighbors here in Blount County.

Thank you to everyone who attended the Family Promise training at 1st UMC @Sycamore Tree and for your positive feedback. For those who wanted to attend but had scheduling conflicts, please contact Ciara Humphrey at

chumphrey@blountfamilypromise.org. She will arrange future trainings.

As you are Spring cleaning, remember the Second Chance Family Promise Thrift Store (705 East Lincoln Rd, Alcoa, TN) when you are discarding items. The store relies on items you and others donate with the proceeds going to fulfill the goals of the Family Promise mission.

If you are looking to shop, be sure and check out the amazing inventory of gently used clothing, household goods, electronics, furniture, books and more. There are wonderful items of all kinds at superb prices that could be gifted for any occasion.

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

**Marking a small milestone of service! -
A note from DayBreak director, Jill Pope**

As of the first of April, we have been serving families in our community for SIX months! I would like to give a huge THANK YOU to all of the donors who have supported us during our start up.

Numerous people have made purchases from our Amazon Wish List in addition to all of the donations through our website and the church. Twice someone has purchased everything listed on the wish list! An even bigger THANK YOU goes out to the dozens of volunteers who have worked to make this mission a reality. With this kind of support, we hope to be able to sustain a thriving mission for years to come.

We have successfully started holding Memory Cafe meetings for those who are in early stages of dementia and would like to be a part of a supportive community.



Meetings are held every 4th Tuesday at 2:00 pm. At that same time and location at DayBreak, there is a Caregiver Coffee support group sponsored by Julie George, Prisma Blount Memorial.

Compassion Counseling also offers a caregiver support group on the 1st Thursday of the month at 9:30 am in their offices at 1st UMC @Sycamore Tree.

All of these programs are excellent ways to gather information, resources, and begin to build a network of support.

We really enjoyed having students from Coulter Grove join us the last week of March. They did some painting, landscaping, and joined us for a couple of hours as we engaged in our day program. Everyone enjoyed having them there quite a bit.

Next up– students from Montgomery Ridge Intermediate will serve!

Have questions? Contact Jill Pope at DayBreak by calling and/or texting 865-315-2371 or emailing **director@daybreakcare.org**.



DayBreak Respite Care

In honor of:
Ruth West

Given by:
Jim & Susie Curtiss

Habitat for Humanity

In memory of:
Ray Stinnett
Bill Poole
Ted Thorson

Given by:
Shirley Stinnett
Harald & Sue Weltzin
Harald & Sue WELTZIN

Memorial Fund

In memory of:
Barbara Barton

Given by:
Susan Black

Music Ministry

In memory of:
Elaine Graves Cox
Elaine Graves Cox

Given by:
Jim & Mary Kay Hamlin
Jerry & Frances Hodge

UMCOR

In memory of:
Barbara Barton
Barbara Barton
Barbara Barton

Given by:
Steve & Martha Shields
Joey & Greta Smith
Lynn Ladd

Welcome Table

In memory of:
Ray Pack
Ray Pack
Ray Pack
Barbara Barton
Barbara Barton
Don Watson
Lila Eby

Given by:
Charles & Mary Beth West
Jim & Susie Curtiss
Sandra Davis
Jim & Susie Curtiss
Betsy Halliday
Jim & Regina Watson
Sandra Davis

Barbara Barton
Joined First Church:
April 4, 1963

Entered the Church Triumphant:
April 2, 2025

Christian sympathy extended to:
Charlie Barton in the death of his wife
Barbara on April 2nd.

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.



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)
Last meeting until Fall is May 4th

Every Tuesday at 7:30 am
Rise and Shine devotion and prayer time
Wesley Hall (upper level)
Last meeting until fall is May 20th.

Every Wednesday at 5:00 pm
Youth Bible Study in Room 151
Last meeting until Fall is May 7th.

Every Wednesday at 6:00 pm
Youth Music
Last meeting until Fall is May 7th.

A Christ-centered recovery program
CELEBRATE RECOVERY
EACH WEDNESDAY
5:30 PM - DINNER
6:30 PM - MUSIC & MESSAGE
7:40 PM - SHARE GROUPS
CRMaryvilleTN.com

Stay tuned for details about summer events!

Maryville First United Methodist Church
804 Montvale Station Road
Maryville, Tennessee 37803
Phone: 865-982-1273
Change Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG

US POSTAGE
PAID
MARYVILLE TN
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Open to children 3-years-old up to completing 5th grade



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
JUNE 8th - 11th

5:30 to 6:00 pm - Dinner in Asbury Hall (lower level)
6:00 to 8:00 pm - VBS Activities

sign up your child or sign up to volunteer!



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