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NOVEMBER

2026

1st UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MARYVILLE



There is so much in this world, in our daily lives, that pulls us in a multitude of directions. We get caught up in activities, appointments, the news, and often find ourselves overwhelmed with everything.

In these times, it is hard to experience gratitude. We can't see things to be grateful for in the midst of all the hectic stuff. For most of us,we will have to intentionally practice gratitude. Author and religion professor, Kate Bowler shares in her book, *Have a Beautiful, Terrible Day!*,

"The better we get at gratitude, the better we can get at noticing smaller and smaller reminders of God's goodness. We might notice the softness of someone's hand we get to hold. We might notice how much a television show really makes us laugh. Gratitude is not a solution to suffering, but it sure does make the rest of existence more meaningful."
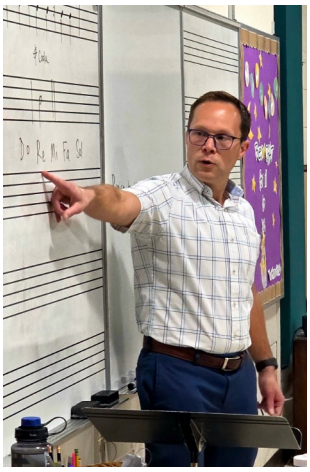
Noticing God's goodness, especially in simple moments, helps us navigate the harder things. It improves our physical and mental state (see this article from *The Newport Institute on Glimmers:* **https://www.newportinstitute.com/resources/mental-health/what-are-glimmers**).

Because we can see that God is working in the world, even in the small things, we are assured that God is working in the bigger things. In all these circumstances, we will be able to give thanks to God. We will live out the words from 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18,
"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

In this month of November, let us all look for the small things to be grateful for. As we practice gratitude, may we see how God is working in our lives, in our church, and in this world.



Grateful for Dwight Dockery



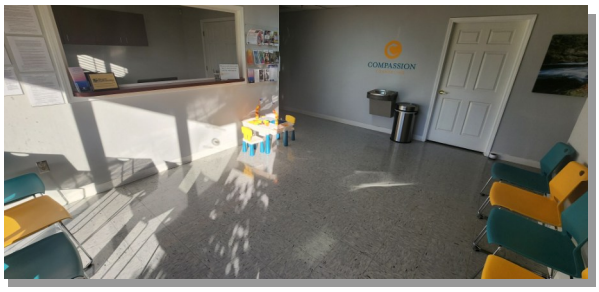
For nearly six years now, you've watched Dr. Dwight Dockery lead the choir and the Music Ministry at 1st Church. After many Christmas Cantatas, special musical performances and dozens of Wednesday nights helping both youth and adults learn new music and more, Dwight has accepted a position as Director of Music Ministries at Church Street UMC in Knoxville.

In addition to the many things musical that Dwight has contributed to 1st Church, he has also shared his faith journey on the Grace for All podcast and has written a number of beautiful prayers and hymns for our time together in worship.

With love and gratitude for all the ways he has shared the love of Jesus Christ during his time among us, we wish Dwight the very best in his new role at Church Street. His last Sunday here at 1st Church will be December 27th, so come out and support him over the next few weeks or send him words of encouragement at **ddockery@1stchurch.org.**

Continued support for counseling

On behalf of everyone at Compassion Counseling, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude for 1st Church's generous support of our nonprofit community counseling center. Your commitment to the well-being of our community helps ensure that individuals and families have access to compassionate, professional counseling and the support they need during life's most challenging moments.



The offices for Compassion Counseling are located inside the 1st UMC @ Sycamore Tree Building on Clydesdale Street in Maryville.

As we enter the holiday season, your support is especially meaningful. While this time of year brings joy and celebration for many, it can also bring increased stress, loneliness, grief, financial hardship, and emotional struggles. For those facing these challenges, knowing that caring people and organizations are standing beside them can make a tremendous difference. Your generosity, prayers, and volunteer hours help us continue to provide a safe, welcoming place where people can find hope, healing, and encouragement when they need it most.

1st UMC Maryville's partnership is more than a financial contribution; it is an expression of compassion that strengthens individuals, families, and our entire community.

Thank you for believing in our mission and for helping us make counseling and support more accessible to those who need it. We are honored to have this congregation alongside us as we continue this important work, especially during the holiday season and throughout the year ahead.

For appointments or to donate to our scholarship fund go to **ccmaryville.org.**

30 years and counting!

As this newsletter goes out, one organization 1st UMC has supported all along is celebrating 30 years of helping people with utility and rent assistance and guidance on how to avoid being in a financial crisis. Good Neighbors of Blount County was the recipient of the 2025 Christmas offering where YOU gave more than $33,000 to the organization. Many people from 1st Church also volunteer their time there. Here's to another 30 years of helping our neighbors in need.

GOOD NEIGHBORS OF BLOUNT COUNTY



Giving thanks for God's love and grace

Over the past few weeks you have been hearing about the ways grace isn't just a gift, but an invitation to a relationship with God, one that can transform lives and the world.

As 1st Church plans for another year of ministry, ask yourself the following questions:

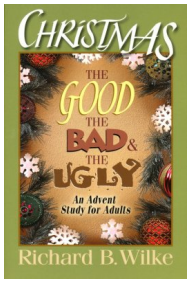
- **What is God calling me to do?**
- **What will I commit to God's Kingdom work?**
- **When and how will I fulfill my commitment?**

Are you ready to commit to helping 1st Church continue its ministries? Some of you have received Commitment Cards in the mail and they were available at various locations throughout the church. You can also fill out a card online at **1stchurch.org/generosity.**

During the Churchwide Thanksgiving Dinner on November 8th there will be an opportunity for you to turn in your commitment card as we give thanks for all God is doing.

Dive deeper into the Christmas story

During the Advent and Christmas seasons you will likely see a lot of peaceful images of Jesus in the manger and people and animals around him adoring the Christ child. But was this scene really peaceful? Probably not.



On Mondays during Advent (beginning November 30th) you are invited to look at "The Good, The Bad and The Ugly" parts of the Christmas story through the lens of author Richard B. Wilke.

Bernice Howard leads this Book Study.
Please sign up soon at: **1stchurch.org/Christmas-Story**.

Spreading the Christmas message

December is one of the busiest months at 1st Church and even though many of the events of the season are well known, there's always room to invite others to share in the message of Hope, Peace, Love, Joy & Jesus.

ChristmasInMaryville.com is where you'll find what's happening this time of year and is a great place to send your friends, family and colleagues. There will also be invites for you to use around the church and in bulletins. Remember one of the best ways to get people to church is to offer them a personal invitation! So go ahead and start spreading the Good News.



The Spooktacular Extravaganza in Downtown Maryville provided a great way for people of 1st Church to meet thousands of our neighbors. So much love and goldfish given throughout the night. There are already plans to do this again next year.



Hundreds of people came out to this year's Fall Festival at 1st. It was awesome seeing so many great costumes, talking to our neighbors and making a few smores. Thanks to everyone for helping make this annual event a success.



Were you able to check off the people on your holiday gift list by picking up something at the Alternative Gift Fair? This is a cool way for everyone to help people here and around the world.



1st Kids News



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT 1ST KIDS

Contact the 1st Kids Director Kristi Alton

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

At 4:00 p.m., the lights will shine in the Sanctuary (upper level) as our 1st Kids Choir leads us into the spirit of the season with their presentation of "Silent Night: The Birth of a Carol." This beautiful musical reminds us that Christ is still at work even when things do not go according to our plans!

We would love to have as many people at the kid's musical as possible to show our love and support!

After the presentation, the celebration continues at our "after party" in Asbury Hall (lower level, gym). Come enjoy pizza and cookie cake, then let your kid's creativity shine at the craft stations throughout the room. Craft and pizza activities will be in full swing from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m.

If you are interested in volunteering with this event, and helping with all of the Christmas magic please sign up at **1stchurch.org/1st-Kids.**





1st YOUTH NEWS

Rise & Shine breaks records

Just a few short years ago, students from Maryville Junior High were invited to come to 1st Church for breakfast, devotion and prayer before the start of the school day. Since then, more and more tables have been added and more and more biscuits purchased.

This ministry is now breaking records with more than 160 kids coming each Tuesday morning at 7:30. During this time, 8th and 9th graders are fed physically and spiritually, and your gifts are helping purchase the $2000 in chicken biscuits each month!



If you walk into Wesley Hall early on a Tuesday morning, you are likely to see dozens of tables filled with students gathering for Rise & Shine.

WEEKLY 1ST YOUTH EVENTS

Sundays
1st Youth 5:30 to 7:00 pm

Tuesdays
Rise & Shine at 7:30 am

Wednesdays
Bible Study at 6:50 pm

Resurrection 2027 is coming up in January.
Sign up now at 1stchurch.org/resurrection.



Brayden York
1st Student Ministries
byork@1stchurch.org

Family Promise of Blount County

On November 1st, at the Family Promise, "Home for the Holidays" fundraiser, Christmas music created a festive atmosphere for shopping for Christmas trees, wreaths, and table centerpieces. There was also time for craft and cookie decorating, hot chocolate and picture time with Santa and Mrs. Claus. It was all so joyous! Money raised helps keep the important work of Family Promise going.

A mom and dad along with their 6-year-old daughter just recently moved out of the shelter and into their own home. With the increasing price of housing, there is a long line of families waiting to enter the Family Promise program.

Last year 84 families were spared from homelessness due to the eviction prevention and move-in assistance part of Family Promise.

If you missed "Home for the Holidays" there are still ways to help. One opportunity is coming up on November 4th. William Blount High School is hosting the Turkeys vs Hens Soccer Match at 6:00 pm. Admission is a toy donation. The toys will be given as Christmas presents to children who are in need but do not qualify for a Giving Tree. Of course you can also donate directly.

Sincere thanks to everyone who assisted with Home for the Holidays and to those who hosted or prepared meals for 1st UMC's host week at the shelter. The families in Family Promise do not need to wait until Thanksgiving to count their blessings. They know they are blessed by the Christians who give their time and money to support them during their worst hardship.

Have a blessed Thanksgiving.
Mavis Ziegler,
Coordinator of Family Promise at 1stUMC

News DayBreak Dementia Respite

from: Jill Pope, DayBreak Director

Feeling the need for speed



During October, we spent over a week celebrating speed week and competition. Thanks to the Scouts for letting us borrow their fancy track. We built cars and raced them.

We had other contests and watched videos of silly competitions. And as always, we celebrated good weather and spending time together. We were making crafts for the Alternative Gift Fair and decorating our space. What a fun time! Come join us one day.



Aging Well & Wise: Fall Prevention & Home Safety

Falls in the home can lead to long term problems, but how do you prevent them? The 1st Church and Senior Helpers series on Aging Well & Wise bring you important safety tips coming up on December 8th at 1st UMC @ Sycamore Tree. Come learn what it takes to stay mobile, stay safe and live independently.

A-maze-ing progress

We have hired the contractor and hope to lay out the design in November for the Labyrinth at 1st UMC @ Sycamore Tree. Of course this all is dependent on weather.

If you would like to order an engraved brick, now is the perfect time. The option to have a brick engraved will be ongoing. Please fill out an order form - or two. For all questions contact Jill Pope. Order forms are available on the DayBreak website and in the Church Office.

After trying out Barrier-Free Worship on both a monthly and weekly basis, organizers are putting it on hold at this time. The hope is to integrate it within the weekday programming for DayBreak.

We'll keep you posted on what happens.

Learn more at:
DayBreakCare.org

MEMORIALS & HONORARIUMS

Memorial Fund

In honor of:	*Given by:*
Doug Smith	John Paulk
In memory of:	*Given by:*
Patsy Carroll	Steve & Martha Shields

Music Ministry

In memory of:	*Given by:*
Terry Wilson	Jerry & Lin Reichelt
Terry Wilson	Matthew & Lacey Bulow

Welcome Table

In memory of:	*Given by:*
Chuck Connor	Steve & Martha Shields
Marion Paulk	Gerald & Betty Smith
Chuck Connor	Pamela Young
Chuck Connor	Phil & Amy Large



Jerry Earls Waters
Joined First Church:
November 11, 1964
Entered the Church Triumphant:
October 19, 2026



Christian sympathy extended to:
The family of Pat Payne who passed away in June.

Mollianne Hubbs and MaryKate Reese in the death of their grandmother, Roberta Petree on September 29th.



You can find staff and ministry contacts under the “Reach” tab (Contact 1st) on the church website:**1stchurch.org**
The church phone number is 865-982-1273.

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

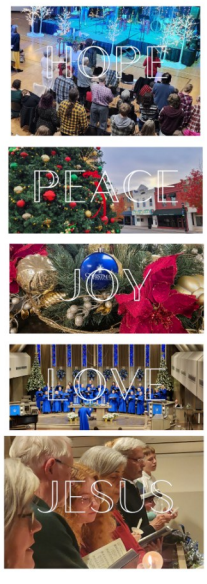
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CHRISTMAS
IN MARYVILLE

- Special music and worship
- Activities for kids
- Seasonal Bible Studies
- Candlelight Christmas Eve
- and more...

CHECK OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING
ChristmasInMaryville.com



MARYVILLEFUMC 1STMARYVILLE MARYVILLE1STUMC

1stchurch.org