The Church Bell

REACH – CONNECT – EQUIP – SEND





OCTOBER

2026

1st UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MARYVILLE









Growing up in the mountains, Halloween was a little different than what we experience here. First, we were allowed to wear our costumes to school. Most years, this was the only time anyone got to see what we were because by the time the sun set, we'd have to don our winter coats in order to trick-or-treat. For my brother and I, trick-or-treating consisted of walking down the hill to our grandparents' then further down to our aunt and uncle's house. Our momma would then make a couple of phone calls to her friends, and we'd drive to their houses to ask for candy. Our route, including family, was about 6 houses total. We did have fun dressing up and we enjoyed the spoils but it wasn't that big of an event.

When my girls were old enough to trick-or-treat, I wasn't sure what to do since we don't live in a neighborhood. Thankfully, a friend invited us to share supper and trick-or-treat in their neighborhood. It was like being in a charming Halloween movie! People sat outside, inviting children to come into their yards. Folks walked and talked and enjoyed time together. Children laughed and sang. Babies to teenagers were welcomed, along with their grown-ups. Streets were filled with all sorts of characters. Everyone, from the youngest to the oldest, was greeted with smiles and treats.

We walked one square block and, in that time, I saw the kingdom of God: princesses, goblins, puppies, dinosaurs, the sweet and the sketchy, all welcomed. Doors were opened. Smiles abounded. Everyone knew they belonged and were treated with grace and love.



This is what we as the church are called to: a place where everyone, how ever they are, finds love and grace. Where minions, cheerleaders, scarecrows, astronauts, and everybody else are welcome.

Whether you live in a neighborhood or out in the country, you can experience this vision of the kingdom of God this month. **Sunday, October 25th**, in our parking lot, we will create a place where the cute and the creepy are welcome. We'll hand out treats and offer a bit of grace. We'll have conversations that show God's love. And we will glimpse the kingdom of God.

There are many ways you can offer treats and a bit of grace at the Fall Festival at 1st.
Join the team by signing up at:
1stchurch.org/fall-festival .



1st NEWS

A season of giving, serving, and providing grace



As the temperatures cool and the leaves on the trees begin to change colors, God reminds us that for everything there is a season. Just last month people came together to spend time with each other, welcomed neighbors, and worshiped God under a big tent during the All-Church Tailgate. Dozens of people helped pack 20,000 meals in Asbury Hall. Kids and Youth both had chances to bond and grow in their faith during overnight stays at the church. And the month ended with more reminders of how to live our life "On Purpose" along with some beautiful handbell music and presenting children with new Bibles.

Activities really start ramping up this time of year, even when some students and parents take a fall break. What are you looking forward to in the weeks ahead?



Find your place at the Fall Festival at 1st

When you want to be a light on a hill for all to see you should engage with the community. That's the purpose of the Fall Festival at 1st. The event helps make coming to the church less intimidating or scary. It also lets people experience the heart of 1st Church as they wander around the trunk-or-treat, grab a hot dog, or play games. Are you willing to help 1st Church REACH & CONNECT with others through this event?

Find out more about the Fall Festival or sign up to serve at **1stchurch.org/fall-festival**. Your help will go a long way in making this event a success.

Examining you generosity and stewardship

God's grace works in our lives in many ways. It helps people go from feeling like outsiders to being part of a community. Grace turns fear into trust and helps the "same old" something become creative and new. As 1st Church looks toward a new year of ministry, please search your heart for ways to be a good steward of all that God has given and how the church can help others learn about God's gift of grace.



How you are helping make DayBreak a success

As people came together on September 27th for the DayBreak Dessert Jam, the program was marking a few milestones. In the last year, the day program has doubled in size. In addition, DayBreak added programming and support for the community. That includes the Memory Café & Support Group, supporting the barrier-free worship service (now weekly), and adding the Aging Well & Wise Community Education Series.

Every bit of the success at DayBreak can be traced back to you and your support. 1st Church individuals and businesses in the Blount County area have truly been supportive of the program. Monetary donations, donated items, and the time and talents of the DayBreak volunteers keep it all going and growing.

There's more about what's happening at DayBreak on page 6 and online at **DayBreakCare.org** .

Serving Joyfully to to help those in need

On a Saturday morning in September, about 85 people came to Asbury Hall to complete an important mission, pack 20,000 meals for Rise Against Hunger. In years past, the goal had been 10,000, an effort that usually took a little over an hour. This year in two hours, the new goal was met and those meals are now on their way overseas. Each meal packet contains rice, soy, vegetables and a vitamin packet. Throughout the morning, people came together to perform their tasks and with each 1,000 meals there was time to hit the gong and celebrate.



Say yes to grace - worship focus

Grace is not merely a gift but God's invitation to a relationship that can change our lives and transform the world. **Starting October 18th** the focus in worship will be on stories of transformation that connect to our everyday experiences.

Learn how God's grace works in our lives, say yes to grace, and find new freedom in relation to yourself and others and how it all ties into the spirit of generosity and stewardship.

Check out the topics for each week at:
1stchurch.org/worship



Tailgate Memories

We hope everyone had a great time at the 2026 All-Church Tailgate. Yes, it was definitely a hot one, but there was so much great food, time together and an awesome worship service, it kind of made the heat more bearable.

A special thank you to Camp Wesley Woods Director, Garrett Hammond for providing inspiring words during worship. And thanks to everyone who set up tailgating stations, helped with set up and tear down and for just being part of this great event.

You can check out photos from the event at:
1stchurch.org/tailgate

And if you didn't get one at the Tailgate come by the office and get your "Love Boldly" car magnet.

Creating a more inviting online worship experience

In a digital world it is becoming more important to pay attention to digital communications for the church. According to Pinnacle Leadership Associates, 80 percent of the people coming to a church for the first time will go to the church's website before entering the building. Many of those same people watch the streamed worship services to help make decisions about attending.

In recent months, 1st Church has transitioned from a service where camera switching and operation was done remotely, to a system where that control is now in-house. This switch enhances the need for more people to serve on a digital communications team so that we can continue providing quality streaming to everyone and be able to provide it for all services, all the time.

Have you ever wanted to run a TV camera or the graphics for a show? If so, we invite you to come shadow some of the folks already doing that here. Hopefully watching what they do will inspire you to be a part of the team. If this sounds like something in your wheelhouse, please email **communications@1stchurch.org.**

October is here and that means one thing at 1st Kids Ministries: Fall Fest! This year's event happens on October 25th and we need YOU to help make it a success. Please visit the website using the QR code or web address in the graphic below to sign up to serve.

Fall Break is another thing to keep in mind as October rolls around. On October 7th, there will not be Trackers of Truth Bible Study and Children's Choirs will not be meeting.

And looking ahead to the Christmas season, please **Save the Date of December 6th** when we will have the Children's program and an evening of arts and crafts for the kids.

1st Kids News



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT 1ST KIDS

Contact the 1st Kids Director Kristi Alton

kalton@1stchurch.org

865-982-1273 ext. 712

Keep up with what's happening at:
1stchurch.org/1st-Kids



1st YOUTH NEWS

Because of Fall Break there will be a few changes to the 1st Youth schedule. There will not be Rise & Shine on October 6th or 13th. There will also be no Sunday youth on October 4th. However, there WILL be youth on **Wednesday night, October 7th,** but no Youth Choir.

It's also time to be thinking about **Resurrection** which comes up in January. Registration has started . If you are interested in going or just need to learn more about the event, visit **1stchurch.org/Resurrection.**



This group of youth spent the night at the church during September's Lock-in event.



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

Volunteers from 1st UMC found time in September to hang out with the four families in the *Emergency Shelter* phase of ***Family Promise.*** Others prepared delicious food that was most appreciated. Hosts witnessed how the parent{s} with so many burdens to deal with still parented skillfully and found time to play with their child/children. It was especially joyous to help one of the boys celebrate his 5th birthday. There are too many other highlights to share so save 2.5 hours during November 2nd - 6th to experience the blessings of hosting first-hand.

On the flip side of the provision ***Family Promise*** offers to those fortunate enough to be in the program, there are 16 homeless families who are still waiting to enter the program. In addition to giving homeless families a way to work their way back into their own home, the program also prevents families from being evicted. In 2026, eleven families have been able to stay in their own home thanks to ***Family Promise***.

Fundraising is an important part of what keeps ***Family Promise*** going. And with the recent closure of the Thrift Store, that becomes increasingly important.

A fun way you can get involved is to attend *Home for the Holidays* on **Sunday, November 1st from 4:00 to 6:00 pm at 1830 Clydesdale Street in Maryville.** There will be a silent auction for beautifully decorated Christmas trees and wreaths, pictures with Santa, cookie decorating, a hot chocolate bar, crafts and family-friendly fun.

Thank you to all who support this mission with your time, talents and gifts. With your help, more children will have a home.

Blessings,
Mavis Ziegler
Coordinator of Family Promise at 1st UMC

News DayBreak DEMENTIA RESPITE



1st UMC member Linda Lane helped get the DayBreak logo on this truck. Her employer parked it outside of 1st UMC @ Sycamore Tree during the annual Dessert Jam

Learn more at:
DayBreakCare.org

Getting your house in order

Senior helpers and 1st Church continue partnering with DayBreak to offer a free education series to the community. The next session is coming up on October 27th and it focuses on getting your house in order. There is a book that goes with this session. Please RSVP to reserve your copy.

You'll find a link at **1stchurch.org/daybreak.**

Brick by brick

The first set of engraved bricks for the Labyrinth at 1st UMC @ Sycamore Tree have been ordered. Construction is set to start this fall season. 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 visit the DayBreak website to access the form to order. Paper forms are also available in the 1st Church office.

Barrier Free Worship

Whether it's living with dementia or neurodivergence, coming to worship can be a struggle. That's where a special service now happening each Sunday at 1st UMC @ Sycamore Tree comes in. This Barrier Free service begins with a light lunch served at 1:00 pm and worship at 2:00 pm.

Are you looking for a way to help keep this ministry going? If so, there is a need for people to serve food, play the piano or another instrument, and to be an usher or friend to guests attending. Please contact Rev. Don Jones or DayBreak director Jill Pope if you are interested in helping.

MEMORIALS & HONORARIUMS

Family Promise

In honor of:	*Given by:*
Christian Living Class	Shirley Brown

Memorial Fund

In memory of:	*Given by:*
Joe Sprigg	Phil & Amy Large
Joe Sprigg	Jim & Julia Hurst
Joe Sprigg	Cornerstone Class of Trinity UMC - Homewood, AL
Joe Sprigg	Donald & Nancy Guthrie
Joe Sprigg	Robert & Jennifer Edwards
Joe Sprigg	Ronald & Fran Kemp
Marti Womack	Ben Long
Joe Sprigg	Kathryn Epps
Joe Sprigg	Clare Phinney
Joe Sprigg	Mitts Family
Joe Sprigg	Fred & Connie McCallum
Marion Paulk	Doug & Emily Smith
Joe Sprigg	Brian & Patty Smead
Joe Sprigg	Brian & Martha Blatt
Joe Sprigg	Leland & Lisa Blackwood

Music Ministry

In memory of::	*Given by:*
Terry Wilson	Patrick & Fae Burkhart
Terry Wilson	William & Martha Robinson
Terry Wilson	Ben Long
Terry Wilson	Leland & Lisa Blackwood

Welcome Table

In memory of:	*Given by:*
Chuck Connor	Penny Hornsby
Terry Wilson	Doug & Emily Smith



Christian sympathy extended to:

Ann Morgan and Kandyce Morgan Harber in the death of their (son/brother) Kyle Morgan on July 9th.

Rev. Don Jones in the death of his father, Don Jones on September 19th.

Kristi Alton in the death of her uncle.

Marianne Woodside in the death of her husband, Phil.



Welcome to

1st UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MARYVILLE

Debbie Cooper

CELEBRATE @ 1st RECOVERY

Every Wednesday
5:30 Dinner
6:30 Worship & Message
7:40 Share Groups

CRat1st.com

OCTOBER 2026

October 7th
Moral

October 14th
Jennifer Kelly

October 21st
Inventory

October 28th
Spiritual Inventory (pt. 1)

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Maryville, Tennessee 37803
Phone: 865-982-1273
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The Churchwide Thanksgiving Dinner is coming up on November 8th. Be watching for more details and sign ups in the bulletin, the next edition of *The Church Bell,* social media and the church website.

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1stchurch.org