

The Church Bell

REACH - CONNECT - EQUIP - SEND

SEPTEMBER
2026



1st
YOUTH
MUSIC

ALL CHURCH
TAILGATE

CAMP
NOT A LOT OF WOODS!

It's Tailgating Time at 1ST UMC!



On Sunday, **September 6th**, we will celebrate one of our favorite intergenerational activities: the All-Church Tailgate. Folks from all of our worship services gather together for a morning of fellowship, connection, and worship. Setup starts at 8:45 and tailgating at 9:00. At 10:30, we'll have one worship service under the big tent with our children's choir, Chancel choir, and contemporary band. One of my favorite moments is when we all sing together, hearing all our voices united in praise!



My other favorite moments are the connections I watch you make. People who are not in a Sunday School class walk around experiencing hospitality and picking a group to join the following week. Folks see others they have worked with for years and never knew they both went to the same church because each goes to a different service. I see the joy on your face as you hug your friends and neighbors and offer a delicious something to eat. It is a glorious morning watching the body of Christ fully live out community with each other.

This tailgate we will welcome Rev. Garrett Hammonds as our preacher. Rev. Hammonds is the Director of Camp Wesley Woods. I asked him to join us to start our new sermon series "On Purpose." The first week is "Why Am I Here?" Rev. Hammonds is a Blount County native who has a great story of his call to ministry and will help us all see that even if we don't know exactly where God is calling us, God does.



It will be a wonderful morning of fellowship and worship. If you don't have a place to go, look for the Welcome Tent. Pastor Teanna and I will have plenty of food and a space for you.

Additionally, since the tailgate falls on the 1st Sunday of the month and logistics make it hard to share in Holy Communion, we will offer a simple communion service

on Wednesday, September 2 at 12:00p.m. and 6:00p.m. Holy Communion will also be offered at Celebrate Recovery that same evening.



Ministering beyond the pulpits and pews by Rev. Teanna Black

“For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.”

– Matthew 25:35-36

One of my core beliefs that I've discovered throughout my 10 years as a pastor is that “ministry” isn't bound to pulpits and pews. I love to sit with others over a cup of coffee or a meal and learn more about their stories (and share a bit of mine, too). As Jesus shares in Matthew 25, ministry takes place in hospital rooms, with the unhoused on a street corner, and yes, even behind prison walls or beside someone experiencing one of the most difficult moments of their life.

For several years, I have had the privilege of serving in prison ministry with women who are incarcerated. We worship together, study Scripture, share honestly, pray, and are continually reminded that no person is defined solely by the worst thing they have done or the hardest chapter they have lived. God's grace reaches behind every wall, and no life is beyond the reach of redemption. I've experienced it and now I get to see them experience it too!

I have also been blessed to serve as a chaplain with the Knoxville Police Department and have recently become certified to serve with the Blount County Sheriff's Office. Chaplaincy often means entering situations where there are no easy answers and no

perfect words. It is the ministry of showing up - offering a calm presence, a listening ear, a prayer when welcomed, and the reminder that no one has to face suffering alone. It also means caring for the officers, first responders, office personnel, and their families who carry the weight of what they witness and experience while serving our communities.

Though prison ministry and law enforcement chaplaincy may appear very different, they share something essential: both call us to meet people where they are. They remind me that ministry is not always about what sermon I preach or the ability I may have to fix a situation. Often, it is simply about being willing to enter the other person's story with compassion, humility, and the presence of Christ.

At the close of Jesus' teaching in Matthew 25, the King says, **“Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these... you did it to me” (verse 40).**

Every time we cross a barrier, sit beside someone who is hurting, welcome someone who feels forgotten, or offer grace where the world expects judgment, we are serving Christ himself. And perhaps that is the heart of all ministry: recognizing Jesus in the person before us - and choosing to show up.



Barrier Free Worship expanding

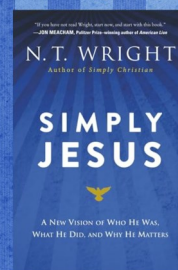
Starting **September 13th** and going through December, Barrier-free Worship at 1st UMC @ Sycamore Tree will be weekly!

This expansion of worship allows for several special services and more time for fellowship. Before each service you are invited to come and have a light

lunch at 1:00pm. The worship service begins at 2:00 pm.

Stay tuned for more details. If you are interested in supporting this ministry by providing music, food, ushering, or being a friend, please let Rev. Don Jones or DayBreak Director Jill Pope know.

Men's Bible Study Tuesdays, starting September 15th



7:00 to 8:00 am in Room 202

No signup needed.

Learn more at 1stchurch.org/groups

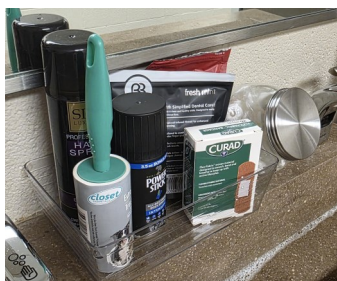
How can you Go.Do. more?

Since starting at 1st Church at the beginning of July, Rev. Teanna Black has been hard at work thinking of ways for us to Go.Do. She says exciting things are ahead as we discover new ways to serve our neighbors and share the love of Christ beyond the walls of the church.

Be on the lookout for upcoming outreach opportunities like helping pack meals for Rise Against Hunger on the morning of September 19th (Details on back page). There is a place for everyone to serve and see where God leads us together!

How can you help provide more hospitality?

Whether you currently serve on our hospitality team or are simply interested in helping people feel seen, welcomed, and at home at 1st Church, we would love for you to join us for an upcoming team lunch! As of this printing, the lunch and learn is set for **September 13th at 11:45 in Asbury Hall.**



When you got to church have you ever realized you needed a lint brush? This is just one item you'll find in some of the bathrooms at the church now, a simple way to extend hospitality to others.

During this time, you'll share a meal with others interested in serving, connect with one another, and talk about how we can create a warm and meaningful welcome from the parking lot to the pew.

If you have questions please reach out to Pastor Teanna at tblack@1stchurch.org.

College students helping at Welcome Table

The success of the ministries of 1st Church rely heavily on people serving in them. The congregation of 1st Church has a strong history of people stepping up to Go.Do. Welcome Table is one of those ministries where it takes dozens of people to set up the room, prepare the food, take it to the people at the tables and clean up afterward.

A couple of weeks ago, 14 Maryville College Students came to help out. It's a great way for them not only to **SERVE JOYFULLY**, but in some cases cross off volunteer hours. If you know of a college or high school student looking for ways to serve, tell them about Welcome Table.



Ready to Tailgate?

There's a long standing American tradition of getting together with friends, getting out the grill and putting that truck tailgate down before a football game. For nearly a decade now, we've extended that tradition to worship with the All-Church Tailgate.

On **September 6th**, you are invited to be a part of this tradition. Sunday School classes and ministries set up tailgating tents offering plenty of good food and conversation. There's also a "Welcome Tent" for folks who may not yet be a part of a group here at 1st Church. (You can usually find sausage balls there!)

This Tailgate caters to the idea that you can have fun on a Sunday, including during worship. This year you can pick up church t-shirts (limited sizes available), stickers, NEW car magnets and other 1st UMC swag.

SCHEDULE

8:45 AM - Set up
9:00 to 10:30 - Tailgating
10:30 - Worship

The 1st Kid's Team will have a tent in the parking lot where kids can hang out and guardians can get an extra set of hands to help with their children during the service.

There will not be an 8:15 Traditional or 10:30 Contemporary Service on this day and **NO STREAMING.**

Learn more at:
1stchurch.org/tailgate



Camp Not a Lot of Woods is an overnight event for 3rd - 5th graders starting at **6:30 pm on September 25th and ending at 8 am** the next morning.

Kids will come to church for an amazing "camping"

experience they will never forget! Kids will be given the chance to grow deeper in their faith, bond together in community, and have tons of fun! We will serve dinner, snacks, and breakfast to the kids.

You will need to **register your child by September 20th** to attend. The cost of this event is \$15 per child. Max attendance: 20 kids



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT 1ST KIDS



Contact the 1st Kids Director Kristi Alton

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✉ kalton@1stchurch.org

☎ 865-982-1273 ext. 712



Ready for a lock-in?

When 1st Youth get together, there's always time for learning, growing in faith, and of course having some fun.

So, what if there was an opportunity to stretch out that experience all night long? On **September 11th**, all youth in 6th through 12th grades are invited to a "Lock-in". It's a fun overnight opportunity youth won't want to miss.

The lock-in begins at 6:30 pm and runs through 7:30 am. Leaders need a head count to help with planning so please sign up at

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



Looks like the Knoxville Smokies rolled out the carpet for 1st Youth Students back in July, one of many summer outings for the group.



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



In the past month, a mom and dad moved from the *Emergency Shelter* into their own place with their two sons. That opened a room for a mom and her son who had been trying to survive by couch surfing.

Family Promise makes a tremendous difference in the lives of our neighbors in Blount County who have endured the unthinkable, homelessness. Hardworking people end up without a place to call home far too often for a variety of reasons.

This non-profit program is a vital resource in Blount County. 1stUMC helped get it started and continues to lend strong support including housing the program within 1st UMC @ Sycamore Tree.

Coming up , **September 14th - 18th**, volunteers are asked to serve as hosts from **5:30 - 8:00 pm** and sleep over from **8:00 pm until whatever time they need to leave the next morning**. There is no work required. Just be present and engage with the families to let them know the community accepts them. If you can't host, you can prepare a dish to help complete a meal during the week.

Beyond hosting and providing meals there are many other ways for you to **Go.Do**. And serve at Family Promise. There is a link to a form with all those volunteer opportunities at: **1stchurch.org/family-promise**.

As always, it takes a village to raise a child and no child should have to go without a home.

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



Dog Days of Summer

As the heat of August settled in, we enjoyed fun activities and treats at DayBreak. We have had dog visits, musical guests every week, and a special treat of snow cones provided by the Knoxville TVA Employees Credit Union. We've also started to build pinewood derby cars and are getting ready to race!



New Employee

We are excited to announce that DayBreak has hired a new part-time employee. Abigail Blankner is a welcome addition as the program continues to grow. Abigail has already started making a positive impact at DayBreak, bringing a depth of experience to the job. Her positive attitude and infectious laugh are perfect for this caring community.



Aging Well & Wise

DayBreak is partnering with 1st Church and Senior Helpers to offer a free education series. Dr. John Kriese led the first one. The next session is coming up on October 27th. It will focus on *Getting Your House in Order*, helping you gather the information and documents needed to help your families.



Labyrinth Update

One of the finishing touches to the side yard at 1st UMC @ Sycamore Tree will be a labyrinth made with Engraved Bricks that support the DayBreak ministry. We are about to order the bricks and start building over the next month or so. If you would like to order an engraved brick, now is the perfect time. You'll find a link on the DayBreak website or you can contact Jill Pope at **director@daybreakcare.org** .

Learn more at:
DayBreakCare.org



Memorial Fund

In memory of: Pat Prince
Given by: Christian Living Class

Music Ministry

In memory of: Terry Wilson
Terry Wilson
Terry Wilson
Terry Wilson
Terry Wilson
Terry Wilson
Terry Wilson
Terry Wilson
Terry Wilson
Given by: Wally & Nan Werner
Ben & Bonny Kate Sugg
Karl & Sherry Miller
Don & Karen Feather
Bill & Elizabeth Pedersen
Larry & Mary Beth Towles
Joey & Greta Smith
Susan Phillips Knoll Mem. Fund
Jere & Joy Ingram

Welcome Table

In memory of: Chuck Connor
Given by: Jere & Joy Ingram



Joe Sprigg

Joined First Church:

May 19, 2024

Entered the Church Triumphant:

August 14, 1958

Marion Paulk

Joined First Church:

September 9, 2015

Entered the Church Triumphant:

August 21, 2026

Christian sympathy extended to:

Jackie Sprigg and her family in the death of her husband Joe on August 13th.

John Paulk and his family in the death of his wife Marion on August 21st.

Nancy Allee in the death of her mother.

Karen Tucker in the death of her sister, Lila.

Mike and Ibby Davis in the death of their brother-in-law, Dick Kelso



Chase, MacKenzie, Val, Jayden, Jude
and Harrison Best



SEPTEMBER LINEUP



Every Wednesday
5:30 Dinner
6:30 Worship & Message
7:40 Share Groups
CRat1st.com

September 2nd
Rev. Greta Smith

September 9th
TBD

September 16th
Action

September 23rd
Sponsor

September 30th
Recovery Soldiers

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

NON-PROFIT ORG

US POSTAGE
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September 19th
10:00 am
Asbury Hall (lower level)



One of the most fun ways to **Go.Do.** is to participate in the food packing event for “Rise Against Hunger.” This is an event for people of all ages and skill levels and it lasts about two hours. This year, we are doubling the number of meals we normally packed, so get this on your calendar and we’ll see you on the 19th!



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1stchurch.org