The Flame Newsletter

November 2026 Issue

First United Methodist Church

143 College Street
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Madisonville, TN 37354
423-442-2471
www.1umcm.com

Sundays

United Methodist Men
*2nd Sundays
8:30 AM
Fellowship Hall

Adult Bible Study
9:30 AM
Library

Fellowship Time
10:00 AM
Gathering Area

Worship Service
10:30 AM
Sanctuary

Bible Fellowship
11:45 AM
Youth Room

United Women in Faith
*3rd Sundays
11:45 AM
Fellowship Hall

Joyful Ringers
*2nd & 4th Sundays
2:00 PM
Classroom #1

Wednesday Nights

Choir Rehearsal
6:00 PM
Sanctuary

United Methodist Youth
6:00 PM
Youth Room

Pastor's Bible Study
7:00 PM
Classroom #5

From the Pastor's Study…

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." -1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18

November is traditionally a month when we are encouraged to give thanks and consider all the ways we have been blessed. During the next couple of months, we also usually find more time to gather with family and friends to share, eat, and visit.

Every time I think about all the unique traditions of this month, I am reminded of the verse offered above from Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians. He is encouraging the early disciples {and us nearly 2,000 years later} to adopt a simple path of walking through our daily lives in constant conversation with God, but with gratitude on our hearts and lips. As I considered this, I was reminded of a quote from St. Therese of Lisieux who said, "*Prayer is an aspiration of the heart. It is a simple glance directed to heaven. It is a cry of gratitude and love in the midst of trial as well as joy.*" Her words point to the tremendous power that prayer can have in our everyday lives and in our relationships with others.

This month I hope you can find some daily moments to talk with God, and to find ways to say thank you to God for the blessings in your life, even when things are challenging. This simple path of prayer mixed with gratitude can be a beautiful way to mark the days of November as disciples of Jesus Christ.

I hope you will be on the lookout for opportunities here at the church to pray for one another, to study, to worship, and to be in fellowship together. November is a time in the church year that often previews the deeply rich season of preparation called Advent. This year, Advent will begin on Sunday, November 29th. My hope as your Pastor is that this month, and the upcoming season of Advent, will be a time for us to continue to grow in our relationship with Jesus Christ together via the simple path offered above. May we grow deeper in love with God and with one another through prayer, and may others come to know about God's love through how we rejoice and give thanks as a church community.

See you around the church!

-Chris

We Support our Church by…

Stewardship Report

as of the printing of the newsletter on 11/2/26

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***October* Budget Giving:** $19,950.00

***October* Budget:** $22,893.60

***October* Designated Giving:** $4,223.00

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Because of your generosity we were able to:

- Offer children ministries of various types.
- Make upgrades throughout the building that improve safety and appearance.
- Have our church open for worship each Sunday morning.
- Host Trunk or Treat for the church family and our community.
- Work together to improve the playground.

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Thank you for your faithful generosity. Your gifts are more than numbers on a report-they are acts of worship that make ministry possible in our church and community. Because of you, lives are touched, needs are being met and the Gospel continues to be shared. We are deeply grateful for your stewardship and for being a part of God's work here at FUMC.

Our Prayers

- Shannon Larson & family
- Family of Mary Kefauver
- Ann Barker and family
- Maiuri family
- Haley Cloud (Lois Green's niece)
- Chad Chester and family
- Gini Tallent and family
- Gary Hamilton and family
- Tara Stewart and family
- Peters/Reeves family
- Quinn Strickland and family
- Barbara Penland and family
- Cardarella family
- Lisa Wills and family (Sherrer)
- Ruppel family
- Kay Ashley and family (Barger)
- Alyssa Slouka and family
- Taylor family
- Brenda (Kathy Isbill's sister)
- Kayana Jones (Gary 's sister)
- Patti's Jones' mother
- Connie Caroine and Ken Hibbert
- Kat Ahart and Barbara Baiz
- Houvenagle family
- Humphries family
- Kendall Wimmer and family
- Rustie Stukey and Jim & Bob Richardson and Pitts family (Dopkins)
- Nelson/Stratton families
- Green/Boyce/Leamon/ Robertson families
- Unspoken Prayers

Altar Flowers

November 1
Communion/All Saints Sunday

November 8
Given by Shannon Larson in memory of her mom Suzanna McKamey

November 15
Created by Margaret Chester

November 22
Created by Margaret Chester

November 29
Advent

Coffee Bar

November 1
Glenda Parker

November 8
Open

November 15
Open

November 22
Janet Tweed

November 29
Peggy & Donna Wengert

Our Presence

In church attendance average for ***October-90***

Enjoying our congregation members musical talents during our Worship services.

Improving our kitchen in the Fellowship Hall which many groups utilize throughout the year.

Greeting new guests in Worship.

Our Gifts

Watching our children learn a new musical instrument and play for us during Worship!

Sharing in God's grace for each other.

Celebrating the many praises of our church family.

Our Praises

- Showering Erin and Greyson for soon to be Baby Boy Strickland
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Join Us!!

Save the Date!
We are celebrating 200 years in Ministry!

On Sunday, November 22nd we will have a special worship service and time of fellowship celebrating our church's 200th anniversary! This will be a very special day for us to go down memory lane, break bread together, and celebrate our church's long and storied history. Prior to and after worship on November 22nd there will be a historical display set out in our Gathering Area which will showcase some interesting moments from our church's past.

Madisonville's First United Methodist Church-*200 years of fellowship 1826-2026*: Part 8

Some activities moved to the downstairs classrooms. During Sunday service the congregation heard Children's and Youth handbells using instruments donated in honor of Peter Aliman's father. The choir loft was expanded in the 1980s echoing with the sounds of dairy farmers Carl & Finley Smith, Buzz Barr, Miss Gussie Ghormley, and organist Helen Boring. In 1975, Choir Director, Sue Hamilton remembers Bob & Barbara Pennington, Mildred Irons, Emma Tate, Ralph & Marylin DePew, the Kennedy Family and Sarah & Fred Tallent as being particularly welcoming to her as a young new member.

Alfred Greenwood grew up in 1st Methodist UMC Madisonville. He and Carolynn met and married here in Church (thank you Carolyn Peters). Carolynn Greenwood always has been counted upon teaching children's classes and lead mission programs since joining the church in 1980. Alfred has been involved in some Treasurer capacity since 1979, "I have never written a bad check" meaning, that the congregation has always come through whether big donations or small. When the sanctuary and education building (erected in 1956) burned on December 10th, 2007, the very next day people put thousands of dollars in Alfred's pocket. Generosity came from across town and across the country. It took 3 years to build the new sanctuary. Insurance covered $1.2 million; however, the final cost was $2.2 million. Fittingly, Alfred was chosen to burn the loan note upon our final payment in 2025. Where to worship? Neighbors stepped up, services were held across the street at the Cora Veal Center. John Summitt opened his brick house across the street as the church office. Sunday School classes were stuck everywhere but quickly returned to the Fellowship Hall (built in 1990). Once the water damage was repaired, holiday feasts and potluck suppers resumed, and we still carry on today. The new parking lot was installed following an extensive archeological dig led by UT.

We too aspire to be good neighbors. For 200 years, FUMC has been open to the Madisonville community. The Red Cross, Boys & Girls Club, Women's Club yard sales and the Catholic Church all met and had their organizational origins here. For years, every student at Madisonville Primary School attended the Pumpkin Patch. A police escort through town from the schoolhouse to the church house was a sight to see. Hundreds of children have grown up in this church, and many others attend Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Breakfast with Santa and Trunk or Treat. Kids continue to fill our church in the 21st Century as we, like John Wesley, strive to "Stay in love with God, doing all the good we can, by all the means we can…to all the people we can".

Children and Family Ministry

Operation Christmas Child: Tangible Expressions of God's Love

This year, our church is participating in **Operation Christmas Child**, which began in 1993 as a simple idea—filling shoeboxes with small gifts to bless children in need around the world. Since then, over **200 million boxes** have been delivered to children in more than 170 countries, each one carrying not only practical items and toys but the message of God's love.

We're excited to join this mission. **Our church-wide goal is 50 shoeboxes!**

Anyone is welcome to fill one and return it.

For our children's ministry, we're issuing a special challenge: **Kids, let's pack at least one box each!**

A single box can make a huge difference in another child's life.

Common items to include:

- Small toys (balls, dolls, cars, stuffed animals)
- School supplies (crayons, pencils, notebooks)
- Hygiene items (toothbrush, washcloth, soap—no liquids)
- Clothing accessories (socks, hair bows, hats)
- A personal note or picture

*Shoeboxes will be collected on **November 15th** and **November 22nd**. Let's come together as a church family to send joy, hope, and the love of Jesus to children around the world. If you have any questions, please see Abby Blair.

Children's Advent Opportunities

This Advent season, we're excited to bless our families with young children by providing a special **Advent devotional and activities book** designed to help you walk through Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love together at home. Each week leading up to our Christmas Eve service, children will also receive a **small, themed gift** that connects with that week's Advent focus.

This will begin on November 29th. Thank you, church family, for welcoming our kids into one of the most meaningful seasons of the Christian year and helping them experience the wonder of Christ's coming.

~Abby

A huge *Thank You* to all who helped make our Trunk or Treat a huge success! Check out some fun pictures from the event.

Check out our ***NEW*** Children's Ministry Facebook page for more information on all our children's events and specials happening at FUMC.

Follow this link...
https://www.facebook.com/share/1B67kKDqcz/

Sue's November News

Look at your November church calendar. We are going to be busy. November is packed full of wonderful worship services and special events, and the first Sunday of Advent this year is November 29th. The Bible Fellowship began a new study on November 1, and the choir has been practicing the Christmas cantata for several weeks now. The handbell choir has begun to practice Christmas songs. We are beginning to make plans to decorate our church for the Advent/Christmas season. But! Hold on! We still have the whole month of November to enjoy! One of my favorite November events is our Thanksgiving family night covered dish supper. This year it will be at 6 PM on Wednesday, November 18. We will cook a couple of turkeys that afternoon and we want you to bring your favorite dishes. Join us at 6 for a time of food, fun and fellowship. This is a great time to mingle with folks you want to get to know better. It will be a wonderful evening.

We will have another special event on Sunday, November 22 when we celebrate the 200th anniversary of our church. Our church has so much history, and the gathering area will be filled with memorabilia and other exciting historic information. Let Don Browder know if you have items to display. After worship we will have a covered dish lunch in the fellowship hall. The church will furnish barbeque and buns, and we are asking you all to bring favorite covered dishes. This is going to be a day to remember!

Check your November church calendar and make plans to take part in as many services and special events as you can. November is going to be a great month!~***Sue***

Family Bible Time: Teaching Kids the Whole Story (Not Just the "Kid-Friendly" Parts) by Abby Blair, Director of Children and Family Ministries.

Family Bible time with kids is one of those things we *want* to get right. We imagine the classic picture: everyone gathered on the couch, a colorful children's Bible open, a familiar story about Noah or David or Jesus' miracles. Those stories are beautiful, foundational, and worth returning to again and again. But here's the quiet challenge I want to raise: our kids are capable of learning the whole Bible—yes, even the parts that are not typical Sunday School stories and even the parts of the Bible that adults may tend to skip. And when we expand beyond the traditional stories, something surprising happens. The "boring" parts become deeply formational. The "confusing" parts become invitations. The "skippable" parts become treasures.

I believe we often underestimate children's ability to absorb Scripture. But kids are naturally curious, unafraid of complexity, and wired for patterns. When we only give them the highlight reel, we unintentionally teach them that the Bible is a collection of stories rather than a unified, living narrative. But when we give them the whole thing—even in small, simple doses—we teach them that God speaks through *all* of Scripture.

And that's where the something beautiful happens.

Here are a few practical (every parent loves practical!) examples of how the parts of Scripture we usually avoid can become rich teaching moments for kids.

- **Censuses and lists of names** Instead of skipping them, pause and say: *"Look at all these names. Could you remember all of those? God knew every single one. Jesus knows your name too."* Kids understand names. They understand being known. Suddenly a census becomes a moment of identity and belonging.
- **Property boundaries and land descriptions** These can feel dry and a bleak reminder of the days that Haden was in Property Law and would recount all of his new knowledge to me. But these details in Scripture whisper a truth kids can grasp: *"God cares about real places, real homes, real families. God cares about where you live and where you grow."* Children understand space, home, and place.
- **Lineages and genealogies** Kids love family trees. Genealogies become a chance to say: *"God keeps His promises through the years, and families remind us of that. You are part of God's story too."*
- **Repetitive instructions or laws** Kids understand rules(whether they act like they do or not!) and these can teach them that God is orderly, intentional, and patient. These sections of Scripture become a chance to say: "*God is patient with His people. He wants the best for you."*

When we teach kids the whole Bible, we're not trying to make them scholars. We're helping them see that God is present in every corner of Scripture—and therefore present in every corner of their lives. And, that's a reminder that the whole family needs.

Remember that, as always, we are praying for you!

What is happening around FUMC?

Advent is coming!

The season of Advent begins on Sunday, November 29th this year. Followers of Jesus often use the days leading up to Christmas to celebrate and prepare for the coming of Christ. Our congregation will mark the 4 weeks in Advent leading up to the Christmas season in some very rich, unique, and fun ways both on Sundays and throughout the week. Please be on the lookout for all the ways we will be preparing as a community to celebrate the birth of our Savior. The last Sunday of the liturgical year will be "Reign of Christ" Sunday on November 22nd where we will also celebrate our 200th anniversary in ministry!

United Women in Faith

The *UWF November mission project* will be the Monroe/McMinn Isaiah 117 House. The Isaiah House provides safe, temporary housing for children from Monroe and McMinn counties who are entering the foster care system.

The goal of the Isaiah House is to provide comfort and a safe haven for children going through transitions and uncertainty during their lives.

We invite anyone who would like to donate to bring either snacks (peanut-free) or Walmart gift cards for the counselors to buy clothing, food, and other items as needed for children throughout the year. Snack item donations can be placed on the UWF shelf in Mission Alley. Gift cards may be given to Regina Warfel, Tara Stewart, Peggy Wengert, or Jill Alliman throughout November.

District Day with the Bishop

On Thursday, November 19th, Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett will be with us in the Smoky Mountain District. She will spend the afternoon visiting some ministry sites and hosting leadership meetings with a few clergy groups. Then from 6-8 PM she will host a conversation with both the Laity and Clergy Laity at Seymour UMC. All are welcome to attend.

Let's Eat Together!

On **Wednesday evening, November 18th** we will be having a covered dish dinner at 6:00 PM to celebrate Thanksgiving. This will be a time to gather as a church family, share a meal, and be in fellowship with one another. Bring a dish or two of food to share. Pastor Chris may be bringing a ham or smoking a turkey to share. This dinner should be a wonderful time to be together and offer thanksgiving as a community.

Bible Fellowship

Please join the Bible Fellowship for a new study leading into Advent and the Christmas season. We meet after church on Sunday mornings in the Youth room downstairs for lunch. Let Marlee Tierce know if you want a book and/or can join us. Lee Strobel weighs the evidence to distinguish myth from truth about what happened in Bethlehem. Join Strobel as he invites us to push past the distractions of the holiday season and come into the presence of the baby who was born to change us and rewrite our eternal destination: the greatest gift of all.

Charge Conference This Month

On **Sunday afternoon, November 15th at 3:00 PM at Loudon UMC** we will be having our Annual Charge Conference meeting. This is the yearly meeting that our District Superintendent presides over to receive formal missional/ministry reports, and to hold votes on various church business items including (but not limited to) Pastor's compensation and nominated leadership for the upcoming year. The charge conference is one of the unique connectional points between the local church and the broader Annual Conference. All are welcome to attend the meeting, but only those in our congregation who are members of the church council or current/retired clergy may vote.

Project Appreciation

Bible Fellowship will be collecting snacks to be delivered to the First Responders of Madisonville in appreciation for all they do for us. The holidays bring more emergencies and stress to each one who answers a call. Please put any items in Mission Alley on the Bible Fellowship shelves. Item ideas: granola bars, snack chips, Slim Jims (jerky with cheese sticks), packaged crackers, snack nuts, snack sized candy that won't melt, etc.