

From the Pastor's Study...

So then, a Sabbath rest still remains for the people of God; for those who enter God's rest also cease from their labors as God did from his. Let us therefore make every effort to enter that rest..." (Hebrews 4: 9-11a)

June is upon us and it is hard to believe that summer is finally here. I know many of us have trips planned to travel with friends or family. For some of us (especially those in education or youth), June is the beginning of a season where we catch our breath to get ready for the fall. For those among us in agriculture or farming, it is the complete opposite. This is one of the busiest times of the year for them as hay continues to be put up, livestock is cared for in the heat, and crops are tended to.

As a Pastor, June has traditionally been a month of spiritual rest/renewal for me. I usually take time to reflect on the previous year's ministry, and then begin making long-range plans for the next year. This includes everything from choosing preaching texts, drafting liturgies, planning classes, and even working to create some fun ministry programming. June is also traditionally when all the Holston Conference clergy and laity come together to meet as an Annual Conference. This is a time where church business is done, but it is also a time of fellowship, renewal, retreat, and inspiration for mission.

I also hope that you will find time this month to rest and be in retreat as I will be. For some of you, this will come naturally. For others of you it might sound impossible because of all that needs to be done. Still, we are called to find a time for Sabbath rest just as God did in the story of creation. God gently commands this so that we can remain balanced and centered on him.

Annually I try to remind myself of the wise words of Pastor/Author Rev. Eugene Peterson, who says, *"Sabbath is the time set aside to do nothing so that we can receive everything, to set aside our anxious attempts to make ourselves useful, to set aside our tense restlessness, to set aside our media-satiated boredom. Sabbath is the time to receive silence and let it deepen into gratitude, to receive quiet into which forgotten faces and voices unobtrusively make themselves present, to receive the days of the just completed week and absorb the wonder and miracle still reverberating from each one, to receive our Lord's amazing grace."* He also reminds us that, *"Sabbath is that uncluttered time and space in which we can distance ourselves from our own activities enough to see what God is doing."*

We were given the gift of Sabbath so that we can be strengthened in our hearts, souls, and even our bodies by God alone. A sabbath practice could be as simple as a prayerful hike in the woods, or even an hour in the evenings to meditate on God's word and to pray. It could also mean a whole day away devoted to rest and reflection. I hope you will join me in striving to carve away some time to rest, to commune with God, and to be prayerfully centered on Christ this month.

Lots of hope!

~Chris

FIRST UNITED METHODIST

Church: 143 College Street

Mail: PO Box 157

Madisonville, TN 37354

Call: 423-442-2471

Fax: 423-442-2434



Fellowship Time

Sundays

10:00 am

Gathering Area

Worship Service

Sundays

10:30 am

Sanctuary

Midweek Communion

Wednesdays

12:00 pm

Sanctuary

Wednesday nights

Choir Rehearsal

6:00 pm

Sanctuary

United Methodist Youth

6:00 pm

Youth Room

Youth: Mini Golf Adventure

Eleven of us took to the course May 25 to try our best at 18 holes of adventurous mini golf in Greenback. Zander and Russ tied for first place, but we all had a lot of fun and great laughs. A couple balls found the water, but we fished them out. Then some left the course and had to be retrieved from the rocks and even other holes a little farther away. It was a great time! Afterwards, we enjoyed Rocky's ice cream and enjoyed additional time together. If you want to join us on our next adventure, we'd love to have you!

Mission Work: June 22-28

Each year our youth become the hands and feet of Christ during a mission trip where they learn new skills, work hard as a team and have fun afterwards. We've been to South Carolina, Washington, D.C., Kentucky and Virginia/West Virginia. This year, our youth have chosen to stay here in Monroe County and help with local organizations and missions. We are so excited to serve our home community and be great representatives for our church. We currently are putting together our project list for the week, and if you have a suggestion, let us know. Our team has been super at building ramps, painting, laying laminate flooring and so much more. Have you thought about going on a mission trip or wondered what it would be like? This is an opportunity for you, too, to work with us for a day or more. Perhaps mission work isn't your thing, but you'd like to get to know our youth better. You may consider preparing supper for us one night and staying for fellowship.

Mission Trip week is one of my favorite times with the youth. I'm so impressed by their hard work and positive attitude even when they are hot and tired. With us staying in Monroe County, it's a great opportunity for our whole congregation to share with us in the week. Please talk to Jerry or Vanessa Barr for more details.

Are you interested in joining our Church?

We are a faith community that is incredibly blessed because we have many active members! We are also blessed because we have numerous folks who have been faithful as long-time visitors, and some who have been wonderful short-term guests. If you are someone who is interested in learning more about what it means to join the church as a full member, please reach out to Rev. Chris Black at cblack@firstumcmadisonville.org or you can call/text him on his cell. We are so blessed to be such a vibrant and multifaceted community of Christian disciples!

Christmas in July Backpack Mission

It's time again to help our children in Monroe County through the Christmas in July backpack initiative hosted by the Good Shepherd Center. We have 21 tags. New backpacks are provided to be filled with at least a new pair of shoes, pants and shirt along with anything else you wish to provide. We have families of one, two or more. You can go in with someone else and split a larger family, and if you are providing for a family of two or more make sure that items are equal in number. The child's number will be written on the backpack. In appreciation of your care and help, the Christmas ornament with the sizes of every child is yours to keep. Return the backpacks to the church as soon as you have them completed as the deadline to be turned in is June 26. If you have any questions, contact Regina Warfel at 219-964-8989 text/call.

Vacation Bible School

Summer is here and that means that Bible School time is getting close. Our Bible School will be the week of July 13th and the theme is *ROAD TRIP!* based on Joshua 1:9 *"The Lord your God is with you wherever you go"*. This verse reminds us that God's presence is always near, no matter where the journey of life takes us. *ROAD TRIP!* invites us on an exciting journey as we discover new places, new friends and ways that we can discover God's goodness and presence everywhere. We will explore timeless Bible stories that show how people from the Old and New Testaments journeyed with God through many locations and situations and found strength in God's presence wherever they went.

We will have classes for children, youth and adults. We will have supper each night, and Kathleen Cornett will be our food coordinator. Let Kathleen know if you can furnish fresh vegetables and/or dessert items. Several folks have already volunteered to be helpers in different areas, but we need more helpers.

Please let Sue know if you would like to volunteer. We will have a job for you! Mark the week of July 13th on your calendar now! We will have lots more information coming your way over the next few weeks.



CONTACT US...

Rev. Chris Black, Pastor
cblack@firstumcmadisonville.org

Sue Hamilton,
Director of Congregational Care & Choir Ministries
sue@firstumcmadisonville.org

Nikki Rutzen, Executive Assistant
nikki@firstumcmadisonville.org
Erin Strickland,
First Steps Coordinator
eroberts@firstumcmadisonville.org

We support our Church by...

Our Gifts:

- Helping to maintain the kitchen equipment so it lasts for years to come
- Being a volunteer during our amazing Vacation Bible School!!

Our Presence:

- In church average for May-100
- The many community groups and events that our members are a part of

Coffee Bar

June 1st
Glenda Parker

June 8th
Janet Tweed

June 15th
Open

June 22nd
Kris Browder

June 29th
Peggy Wengert

Flowers

June 1st
Mike and Gabi Tallent

June 8th
Mike and Gabi Tallent

June 15th
Father's Day

June 22nd
Open

June 29th
Open

2025 Holston Annual Conference

As we prepare for the Holston Annual Conference, we are excited to announce this years theme: **Together in New Beginnings**. This theme reflects our shared commitment to moving forward as one body in Christ, embracing the opportunities and challenges that come with stepping into a new season of ministry and mission.

Rooted in Romans 12:5, which reminds us that *"so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another,"* our theme invites us to reflect on the power of unity as we embark on new beginnings together. Whether in our local churches, our communities, or across the conference, we are called to build connections, strengthen relationships, and trust God's leading into a renewed future.

The Annual Conference will take place June 1-4 at the beautiful Lake Junaluska Conference and Retreat Center in North Carolina. Surrounded by the tranquility of the lake and the grandeur of the mountains, this beloved gathering space will once again host clergy and laity from across the Holston Conference.

During these four days, we will worship, celebrate the ways God is working through our churches, and discern how we can better serve Christ and one another. As we meet in fellowship, we will embrace the spirit of renewal that comes with new beginnings and deepen our connection as the body of Christ.

We look forward to seeing how God will move among us...



We support our Church by our Prayers...



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|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| ♦ Wengert Family | ♦ Larson Family |
| ♦ Peery Family | ♦ Ruppel Family |
| ♦ Strickland Family | ♦ Tweed/Robbins Family |
| ♦ Kefauver Family | ♦ Nelson/Stratton Family |
| ♦ Family of Kayla Couch | ♦ Dr. Dennis Trammel |
| ♦ Stuckey/Huff Family | ♦ Williford/Jones Family |
| ♦ Betty Hicks Family | ♦ Pitts/Dopkins Family |
| ♦ Conley Family | ♦ Harrell Family |
| ♦ Liszeski Family | |
| ♦ Maiuri Family | |
| ♦ Reedy Family | |



A new Hand Bell Choir is starting!

All interested individuals are invited regardless of age or experience. First meeting of the hand bell enthusiasts will be held on Sunday, June 22nd at 3pm in the Fellowship Hall. If you are willing to give this a try, whether you can attend the first meeting or not, please contact Marlee Tierce at mtierce@aol.com or text 678-525-0348 or call 423-884-2196.

SUE'S JUNE NEWS

Summer time is upon us! There is just a different feel as I drive to the church on weekdays. The hustle and bustle of school traffic has ended (not that I usually got into the early morning traffic. I am more of the school dismissal time traffic). Graduations are over. Summer jobs are beginning. Parents and grandparents are getting to spend more time with their kids. Folks are gardening. Lots of folks are taking early vacations. Hopefully everyone is in a more relaxed frame of mind. We may slow down a little bit as a church for the next few weeks, but we will still have a lot going on in June.

Chris and Marlee Tierce will be attending the Holston Annual Conference at Lake Junaluska, NC. I am sure that they will be filling us in on Conference news when they return. We will have morning worship every Sunday at 10:30am and midweek communion on Wednesdays at noon (not on June 4th). Our youth will continue to meet on Wednesday nights at 6:00pm and they are planning to do their mission work here in the area June 22nd-28th and will stay at the Grubb's cabin at Laurel Lake that week so they can be together as a group. This sounds like a great week for the group. Our Ignite leaders are hoping to get our kids together a few times this summer for activities.

The Bible Fellowship class will resume after morning worship on Sunday, June 22nd and will begin a new study on *Bible Stories For Grownups*. Also on June 22nd Marlee Tierce plans to begin a hand bell choir at 3pm in the Fellowship Hall. Adult Sunday School is on Sunday mornings at 9:30am in the library.

I know that we will have many other meetings and activities during the month of June.

Keep your June newsletter and calendar handy and watch for your email updates!

~Sue

Holy Conferencing

A Reflection from our Annual Conference Representative Marlee Tierce:

Annual Conference is a yearly meeting of Holston United Methodists (lay and clergy) for spiritual renewal, missions reporting, business and ministry decisions; also, appointments and ordination of clergy take place. The purpose of the Annual Conference is to connect, equip, and inspire local churches in our shared mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. John Wesley desired the Annual Conference to be a means of God's grace through Christian "conferencing." The first Annual Conference was on Monday, June 25, 1744. *"The following persons being met at the Foundry-John Wesley, Charles Wesley, John Hodges, Henry Piers, Samuel Taylor and John Meriton-after some time spent in prayer, the design of our meeting was proposed, namely, to consider what to teach; how to teach and what to do; i.e. how to regulate our doctrine, discipline and practice."*

As a connectional faith body in the 21st century we continue many of Wesley's organizational principles including maintaining an equal number of lay and clergy members. Lay members are elected at the charge conference of the local church/charge each year. Members-at-large are laity elected annually at District Conferences. Other lay members are included based on positions and offices held within the districts and annual conference as outlined in the Discipline. I am honored to represent First UMC of Madisonville at the 2025 Holston Annual Conference. Quinn Strickland will be attending as a Hiwassee District representative. She is one of just a few Young Adult District At-Large Members and we are so proud of her; we are also thankful for her willingness to volunteer a week of time away from her work. Lee Anne Strickland and Don Browder will be attending the conference as non-voting members.

At this upcoming Annual Conference we will witness the ordination/commissioning of new clergy, as well as recognize those who are retiring. We will also honor those clergy who have passed away during the last year.

We will hear reports from our Resident Bishop, Conference Lay Leader, The Council on Finance & Admin., The Board of Pensions, The Committee on Rules and Order, The Discipleship Team, The General Conference Delegation, The Conference Trustees, our local/international missions team, our Wesley Foundations, some of our UMC affiliated seminaries and our Holston Conference Colleges. We will also hear from those representing our Board of Ordained Ministry, The Sexual Ethics Committee, The Nurture Team, The Dismantling Racism Taskforce, The United Women in Faith, The United Methodist Men, The Outreach & Advocacy Team, The Committee on Nominations, The Children's Ministry, Holston Conference Youth & Young Adults, The Cabinet, The Committee on Congregational Development and the Committee on Petitions & Resolutions.

We will be voting on 4 constitutional amendments that have come down from the General Conference and voting on a redistricting proposal that will shift us from having 9 smaller districts to 6 larger ones.

One of the last annual acts of the Conference is the fixing of clergy appointments by the Bishop and the Cabinet. Appointment changes were announced last month, but the fixing of appointments makes things official for the upcoming year.

The gathering at Lake Junaluska promises to be a formative, wonderful time of worship, prayer, learning, and celebration. Please feel free to explore all the resources at www.holston.org.