



The Flame Newsletter

2026 June Issue

First United Methodist Church

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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, or lining up camps for our children. For some of us (especially those in education or our 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. {You will find more details about the 2026 Annual Conference in the July edition of The Flame Newsletter}

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

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Altar Flowers

June 7
Communion

June 14
Given by Bryan and Mia Sage Beason in honor of their anniversary

June 21
Given by Frances Sellers in memory of her mother Marie Harrell

June 28
Open

Coffee Bar



June 7
Glenda Parker

June 14
Janet Tweed

June 21
Open

June 28
Open

FUMC Diaper Drive for Community Baby Shower

The Monroe County Health Department is hosting their 2nd annual Community Wide Baby Shower event on June 27th at Madisonville Intermediate School. Our church has been asked to take the lead on a diaper drive.

We want to invite you to purchase diapers (Newborn or Size 1) and drop them off in Mission Alley.

FUMC VBS

Gear up for an unforgettable winter sports extravaganza with Snowball Mountain Challenge VBS 2026. **Mark your calendar now for the week of July 12th.** With hands-on activities, laughter, and life lessons rooted in solid faith, this VBS empowers children to trust God, share love and discover they can face any challenge with God by their side.

We Have New Members!

In the last few months we have had several people join our church community by transfer or by profession of faith. Some of these folks have been in worship with us for a long time, and others are brand new to our faith community and even our city. Below is a listing of those who have joined our church since January. If you see them around and haven't welcomed them yet we invite you to do so!

- ◆ **Josh & Haven, Adalay, Kai, Della and Brody Rector**
- ◆ **Ron & Carrie Taylor**
- ◆ **Bob & Gail Fink**
- ◆ **Greg & Nikki, Olivia and Cooper Rutzen**
- ◆ **Tim & Annette Ballard**
- ◆ **Karli Leinart**



Bible Fellowship

Think, Act, Be Like Jesus by Randy Frazee is a personal growth study that will delve into the three big questions: What do I believe? What should I do? Who am I becoming? This book is comprised of 30 short chapters that explore the ten core beliefs, the ten core practices, and the ten core virtues that help Christians to think, act, and be more like Jesus Christ. **Please join us in discussions for this study beginning on Sunday, June 14th.** We meet after church downstairs in the Youth room. We share lunch at each gathering. Please see Marlee Tierce for books and any questions you may have.

Senior Fellowship Group

Join us on **Wednesday, June 24th at 11:30 AM at Aubrey's in Lenoir City.** If you would like to carpool be in the upper parking lot by 10:30 AM. Contact Regina Warfel at 219-964-8989 with any questions.



Fellowship Time

Sundays
10:00AM

Gathering Area

Worship Service

Sundays
10:30AM

Sanctuary

United Methodist Men

2nd Sundays
8:30AM

Fellowship Hall

United Women in Faith

3rd Sundays
11:45AM

Fellowship Hall

Wednesday Nights

Choir Rehearsal
6:00PM

Sanctuary

United Methodist Youth

6:00PM

Youth Room

FUMC Graduates

MacKenzie Bentley: Daughter of William and Shannon Larson. Graduating from University of Tennessee with a Masters in Social Work.

Hunter Cavett: Son of Megan and Shane Cavett and grandson of Bev and Kevin Taylor. Graduating from Tennessee College of Applied Technology in Machine Tool Technology. He has also obtained the US Coast Guard Master 25 ton license to captain vessels.

Elise Kile: Daughter of Kevin and Sarah Kile. Graduating from Tennessee Wesleyan University with a BS in Chemistry.

Merritt Sherrer: Daughter of John and Susan Sherrer. Graduating from University of Miami with a BS in Psychology and minors in Art/Art History and Marine Biology.

Cooper Strickland: Son of Todd and LeeAnne Strickland. Graduating from Tennessee College of Applied Technology in Computer Electronics IT Support Specialist.

Matt Taylor: Son of Carrie and Ron Taylor. Graduating from Ohio University with a BS in Computer Science.

Katen Wall: Daughter of Rachel and Rob Wall and great niece of Mary Alice Huff. Graduating from Tennessee Wesleyan University with a Major in Creative Writing and a double Minor in Religion and Philosophy and Social Work.



United Women in Faith

The local mission project for June for UWF will be participating in the diaper donations for the Community Wide Baby Shower on June 27th. **Please bring size Newborn or size 1 diapers to the collection area in Mission Alley by June 21.**

Looking ahead to July, we'll be collecting school supplies for our local teachers and schools. **Needed items include tissues, hand sanitizer, wipes, wide-ruled notebooks/paper and pencils.**



Dora Nelson

Volunteer Spotlight

Our volunteer for June is our own Dora Nelson. For many years Dora has been the primary coordinator for our weekly Community Café ministry. On Tuesday evenings each week volunteers from First UMC and other churches in the area gather in our fellowship hall to offer a free, hot, homemade meal for anyone who shows up. This ministry has grown significantly in the last several years in both participants and volunteers. Dora also helps each week in our youth ministry on Wednesdays, and has a tradition of being the primary cook on our youth mission trips. Lastly, Dora serves as an active member of our Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC). I hope all of you will take some time this month to thank Dora for all her hard work in outreach to our community.

Thank You Dora!

Why I Tithe to the Church

I tithe my time, money, and service to the church because everything I have—my days, my resources, and my abilities—comes from God. Returning a portion of these gifts is my way of expressing gratitude and participating in the work God is doing through our church community. Giving my time allows me to be present with others. Giving my money supports the ministries that reach far beyond what I can do alone. Giving my service lets me use my gifts to strengthen the body of Christ.

The church is more than a place of worship; it is a family that nurtures faith, offers hope, and cares for one another. When I give, I am reminded that I am part of something larger than myself. My offering—whether hours spent helping, resources shared or acts of service given—becomes a small but meaningful contribution to God's ongoing work in the world.

Tithing shapes my heart. It keeps me grounded in gratitude, attentive to the needs around me, and committed to living out my faith in practical ways. In giving, I find joy. In serving, I find purpose. And in offering what I have, I honor the God who has given me so much.

~Glenda Parker

Stewardship Report

as of the printing of the newsletter 6/11/26

May Total Giving: \$22,013.83

May Budget: \$28,615.00

Year-to-date giving: \$119,394.63

Year-to-date budget: \$131,629.00

Total Annual budget: \$297,596.00

Because of your generosity we were able to:

- ◆ Provide some relief and essential items for our partners in Liberia and Zimbabwe.
- ◆ Open our doors for worship, prayer, learning, and outreach throughout the week and on Sundays.
- ◆ Baptize a new youth into the faith and affirm her relationship with Christ as a church body.
- ◆ Celebrate our recent graduates and welcome new members.
- ◆ Feed folks who drop by on Tuesdays for Community Café, or through our Blessing Box ministry throughout the week.

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 being touched, needs are being met, and the Gospel continues to be shared. We are deeply grateful for your stewardship and for being part of God's work here at First UMC of Madisonville.

Our Church has stepped up in Missions!

Last month the Smoky Mountain District Hands-On Mission Project goal for our church was 100 health kits and our community collected and donated 120 kits!

This was an amazing turn out for this project and a record for our local church.

These kits went directly to benefit the people in Liberia and also Zimbabwe.

At the most recent Annual Conference it was announced that the Smoky Mountain District collection total for health kits was 804. This means that our local church contributed approximately **15% of the total**

for the whole district. This is AMAZING!

Let us celebrate together how we have been inspired to provide in such an abundant and beautiful way!

Our Church Prayers

- ◆ Barbara Penland and family
- ◆ Sue Cardarella and family
- ◆ Taylor family
- ◆ Humphries family
- ◆ Family of Kathy Hartley
- ◆ Jill (Peters) Reeves and family
- ◆ Brenda (Kathy Isbill's sister)
- ◆ Kayana Jones (Gary Jones' sister)
- ◆ Connie Caroine (Sandy Hibbert's sister)
- ◆ Conley family
- ◆ Kat Ahart and Barbara Baiz
- ◆ Maiuri family
- ◆ Ronnie Gay and family (Venable)
- ◆ Houvenagle family
- ◆ Joshua Stuckey and family (Huff)
- ◆ Tate Sherrer and family
- ◆ Mary Kefauver and family
- ◆ Kendall Wimmer and family (Charlie's brother)
- ◆ Mike and Sandy O'Neill and family
- ◆ Larson family
- ◆ Nelson & Stratton family
- ◆ Unspoken prayers



SUE'S JUNE NEWS

Summertime is here. You can feel it in the air and see it as you look outside. Gardens are growing. People are taking long awaited vacations. Everything is moving at a little bit slower pace. The church calendar for June is not quite as busy, but we still have lots going on!

Last Sunday Pastor Chris began his 8-week sermon series called "Into the Wilderness". If you were not with us at morning worship last Sunday, read the first Sunday's scripture Genesis 12:1-9 and get on board and join us over the next seven weeks as we continue this journey. It is going to be an exciting sermon series.

On Sunday June 13th at noon our United Women in Faith are having a picnic meal at the lower pavilion of Houston Park. All women of the church are invited. They have put together the meal, but they are asking that you bring your own beverage.

The Bible Fellowship group led by Marlee Tierce will begin a new study on June 14th entitled *Think, Act, Be Like Jesus*. This group meets after morning worship in the youth room downstairs. They share a meal and study together. Marlee will be glad to answer any questions that you might have.

Our youth continue to meet through the summer months at 6 PM on Wednesday evenings. They have a meal together and share in a time of study and fellowship. If you would like to get to know this fine group better and maybe provide a meal for them, I am sure they would appreciate it. Vanessa and Jerry Barr can give you more info.

I am always looking for new choir members. We practice on Wednesday evenings at 6PM in the sanctuary. Believe it or not, it won't be too long before we start working on Christmas music. The choir is a very faithful group of folks who enjoy the practice and fellowship time together on Wednesday evenings. We would love for you to join us.

You can find information in this newsletter about our upcoming Bible School that will be the week of July 12. We are again joining forces with Madisonville Presbyterian Church to provide this Bible School for all of our children and children in the community. We will have classes for little ones through adults. Please let me know if you would like to be a Bible School helper.

It may be summertime, but you can see that we still have lots of things going on at First United Methodist Church Madisonville. We hope you will join us throughout the summer months. *~Sue*

Madisonville First United Methodist Church 200 years of fellowship 1826-2026

Part 4: The revival of Methodism in late 19th and early 20th century Madisonville and the growth of the Sunday School Movement

"In the course of time, the homeless Methodists rebuilt and their A frame building went up facing North" according to 1st UMC Madisonville Historian Gussie Ghormley in her 1979 church history. This frame building was damaged in the March 1899 cyclone that threw the nearby Bolivar Academy tin tower 200 yards away. Our congregation rebuilt but quickly outgrew this frame structure which was sold to the AME Zion congregation in 1908. Rolled down Warren Street on logs, it still stands today at the corner of Warren & Main Street. Known by many names over the past century, Victory Baptist, Good Hope, it is home to the Church of Life as of 2026.

The Sunday School movement saw hundreds meeting here, on this very spot each Sabbath morning before scattering to worship at separate Baptist, Presbyterian and Church of God services. Using the "Uniform Lesson Plan", which emphasized Bible stories, hymn singing and memorizing Bible passages this was a primary source of early literacy before mandatory public-school attendance began in Monroe County in 1908. "A more commodious frame building was erected with beautiful stained-glass windows". It faced West until 10:30am, on February 27, 1916, as Sunday School was letting out Rev. J.N. Jones looked up and saw the roof on fire. Methodist parishioners leapt into action grabbing anything portable...hymnals, pews even the preacher's bench as the late winter wind swirled and burned the wooden structure to the ground. 11-year-old Gussie Ghormley remembered that day well and this time a 5th building, a brick church, would arise on the same spot laid out in 1826. The rescued pews remained as a reminder of that earlier church until replaced in a 1971 renovation. In 2026, the pulpit currently resides in the Church of Life building and, if you look closely at **Pastor Chris Black on Sunday, he is sitting on our historic preacher's bench.** History is all around us.

-Don Browder

Our Presence:

- ◆ May Worship Average: 106
- ◆ Praising Jesus in Worship together.
- ◆ Being part of one of FUMC's many missions.

Our Gifts:

- ◆ Volunteering to repair various items in our building to help save on costs.
- ◆ Celebrating new members to our church family.