



# THE FLAME

2025 February Issue

## From the Pastor's Study...

Happy February! We had a beautifully snowy and cold January and we are entering another winter month that may have some of the same weather in store for us. The month of February in the church year is often a "gap" period between two big seasons. We have just come out of Christmastide/Epiphany, but we aren't quite to Lent just yet. In the last week or so I have been rereading 1st and 2nd Peter for personal devotions. One group of verses that caught my attention comes from 1 Peter: 7-9:

*"These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls."*

As I have reflected on this, it struck me that even as we enter one of the coldest and dreariest of months outside...and even if we face seemingly insurmountable personal challenges or struggles...Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the same now and forever, and he is with us no matter what we are going through. Our faith in his unique message and the good news about his sacrifice and resurrection can give life equally to our souls, our hearts, our relationships, our work, our rest, and even our play. May we rejoice in this individually and as a church body day by day this month.

In this edition of *The Flame* newsletter, you will find many things that our church is doing in ministry that we can celebrate and rejoice over, including a wonderful reflection on how Resurrection inspired our youth.

I hope you will read through this month's newsletter with a prayerful heart in celebration, but also with an openness to how God might be calling you to get involved more deeply in the ministries of our church.

Lots of Hope!

*Chris*



### Worship Service

Sundays  
10:30am  
Sanctuary

### Fellowship Time

Sundays  
10:00am  
Gathering Area

### Midweek Communion

Wednesdays  
12:00pm  
Sanctuary

### Wednesday nights

Choir Rehearsal  
6:00pm-7:00pm  
Sanctuary

Ignite Children Ministry  
6:00pm-7:30pm  
Classroom

United Methodist Youth  
6:00pm-8:00pm  
Youth Room

## Are you interested in joining our Church?

We are a faith community that is incredibly blessed because we have so many active members! However, 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 interested in learning more about what it means to join the church as a full member, please feel free to reach out to Rev. Chris Black by email at [cblack@firstumcmadisonville.org](mailto:cblack@firstumcmadisonville.org) or you can call or text him on his cell. We are so blessed to be such a vibrant and multifaceted community of Christian disciples!



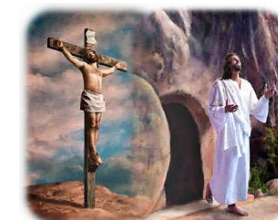
## Midweek Communion at First UMC

All are welcome to participate in a casual weekly communion service led by Rev. Chris Black on Wednesdays at Noon in the Sanctuary. This 15-20 minute worship opportunity consists of prayer, scripture readings, confession and a time of communion. Our time together promises to be a wonderful mid-week reconnection time of renewal, contemplation and fellowship. All are welcome to participate, come on your lunch break!



## The Bible Fellowship invites you to join them for their study!

The Bible Fellowship is starting a new study on March 2nd and they would love to have you join them!! In, **The Third Day, He Rose Again**, Tom Berlin provides insight using the lives of those who were first impacted by the Resurrection to see how it impacted their lives and how it is relevant for our lives today. The chapters focus on Mary Magdalene, Simon Peter, Thomas, Emmaus, Paul and Jesus. Join us on Sundays at 11:45am in the Youth Room for this new study with food, fun and fellowship. If you have any questions about this study or would like a study book please contact Marlee Tierce.



## Adult Sunday School meets weekly in the Library

Throughout each season of the church year we have various class opportunities for learning and growth as disciples of Jesus Christ. One great class is our weekly Sunday School group that meets in our Library at 9:30am. This class is taught by Reba Dopkins and Regina Warfel. This group enjoys powerful lessons from scripture with fun, fellowship and prayer. They would love for you to join them!



## Read Together in February

This year Rev. Chris Black invites you to join him in participating in the Holston Conference's **Read Together** initiative. This opportunity challenges us to read through the whole Bible in one year. In 2025, we will be reading the Bible chronologically using a path laid out in J. Ellsworth Kalas' *"The Grand Sweep: 365 Days from Genesis through Revelation"*. The reading plan asks us to read only 2-3 chapters a day which will be much less burdensome than previous years' studies.

Participating in this initiative as a whole congregation can uniquely bind us together as Christ's disciples all while rooting us more deeply in God's word. Even if you didn't read all of the assigned readings in January you are welcome to jump back in! There are schedules available in the welcome center with each month's readings. As always if you have any questions about a passage or verse you are reading, please call (or text) Pastor Chris or stop by the church office.

Rev. Chris Black, Pastor  
[cblack@firstumcmadisonville.org](mailto:cblack@firstumcmadisonville.org)

Nikki Rutzen, Executive Assistant  
[nikki@firstumcmadisonville.org](mailto:nikki@firstumcmadisonville.org)

Sue Hamilton, Director of Congregational Care & Choir Ministries  
[sue@firstumcmadisonville.org](mailto:sue@firstumcmadisonville.org)

Erin Strickland, 1st Steps Coordinator  
[eroberts@firstumcmadisonville.org](mailto:eroberts@firstumcmadisonville.org)



## FIRST UNITED METHODIST

**Church:** 143 College Street  
**Mail:** PO Box 157  
Madisonville, TN 37354  
**Call:** 423-442-2471  
**Fax:** 423-442-2434



## We Support Our Church By...

### Our Gifts:

- Helping to maintain the building to high standards
- Taking friends/other church members to their appointments

### Our Presence:

- In church average for January-86
- Attending one of the many classes/bible studies FUMC offers



**February 2**  
Janet Tweed  
Communion  
Sunday

**February 9**  
Ray and Dora Nelson

**February 16**  
OPEN

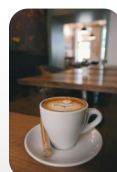
**February 23**  
Given by Gary & Brenda Alford in memory of their mothers, Bertha Reeves and Clarann Mathesius

**February 2**  
Janet Tweed

**February 9**  
Glenda Parker

**February 16**  
Tara Stewart

**February 23**  
Susan Sherrer



### Ways To Give...

- ◆ Monetary giving in Worship & online
- ◆ Hosting a Bible Study

## We Support Our Church By Our Prayers...

- ~Jan Johnson and family
- ~Fink family
- ~Kefauver family
- ~Barger family
- ~Green/Leamon family
- ~Conley family
- ~Slouka family
- ~Byrum/Hicks/O'Neill family
- ~Benton/Frerichs family
- ~Joshua Stuckey and family (Huff family)
- ~Charlie and Phyllis Harrell and family
- ~Maiuri family
- ~Reedy family
- ~Peery family
- ~Ahart/Baiz family
- ~Victims, families and responders of the recent plane crashes
- ~Unspoken prayers



## Ash Wednesday Worship & Family Night Supper on March 5th

Ash Wednesday is a unique day in the church year where we gather to mark the beginning of the 40 day season of Lent. Our worship together will be a time to put aside past sins and failures through repentance and to kick off a period of time to foster new beginnings in our relationship with Jesus Christ. In worship we will focus on the dual themes of sin and death in the light of God's redeeming love in Christ.

While the use of ashes as a sign of mortality and penance may be new to some, it has a significant history in both Jewish and Christian worship.

The imposition of ashes can be a powerful way of participating in the call to repentance and reconciliation. We hope you will join us for a special service of worship on **Wednesday, March 5th at 7:00pm** in our Main Sanctuary.

Before the service, at 6:00pm, plan to join us in the Fellowship Hall for a light soup/bread dinner. Please let Sue Hamilton know if you are able to provide soup or bread. This will also be the dinner for the Ignite and youth groups.



## SUE'S FEBRUARY NEWS



I hope everyone is ready to get back into our normal routine during the month of February. January weather played havoc with our normal activities. I don't know about you, but if I am not at Sunday morning worship and at church on Wednesday nights for activities, my entire week is off schedule. Hopefully the weather will cooperate this month and we can get back in rhythm.

I wear several hats at the church. For this month I want to concentrate on our music program here at First UMC. I have been doing the music program for a long time (almost 50 years!) and I still get excited about what we do. Our choir is one of the most faithful groups in the church. We have two great accompanists, Mary Alice Huff and Bev Taylor, and Megan Cavett provides beautiful flute music occasionally. Steve Tweed shares beautiful harmonica arrangements with us sometimes and he is a great sound technician. We have several people who are willing and very capable of doing beautiful solo arrangements. Our IGNITE group always does a great job singing at Christmas time and they sing every Wednesday night during IGNITE time with Carol McKenzie, Jennifer McKenzie and Charlie Wimmer leading them in music time. And we can't forget you—the congregation. Every Sunday you join us as we raise our thankful voices to God in congregational singing. Music is very much a part of worship at our church.

Our choir practices on Wednesday evenings (at 6:00pm unless there is a fellowship supper or special worship service). We work on anthems for Sunday morning worship and go over the hymns for the upcoming service. We prepare for special programs. Our next big presentation will be our **Easter cantata-One Day** which we are planning to do on Sunday April 27th (the Sunday after Easter). We would love for you to join us and become a part of the choir. There is no audition. Everyone one is welcome. If you have any questions, see me. (You'll have one of the best reserved seats in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings!)

*Join Us!*

*~Sue*

## Into the Bible with Rev. Chris Black continues!

*Have you ever been intimidated by the Bible?*

*Or felt that you didn't know where to start with reading or studying scripture?*

*Have you ever wanted to go deeper and to learn more?*

Join Rev. Chris Black for the Pastor's Bible Study Class that will help you approach the Bible with confidence. This class meets in the Fellowship Hall and is a home-style Bible Study for all ages! Pastor Chris offers an in-depth exploration of the gospel of John and then he moves into other areas of the scriptures. In the midst of our study the group is discussing some fundamental ways to engage with the Bible, so that you may apply it to your life today. It doesn't matter if you're new to the Christian faith or have studied the Bible for years, you are welcome to attend. If you have any questions about the class please email Pastor Chris at [cblack@firstumcmadisonville.org](mailto:cblack@firstumcmadisonville.org)

