



The Flame Newsletter

2026 August Issue

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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From the Pastor's Study...

August is upon us, and I must admit that I am excited about it. Personally, I am excited because we have celebrated several milestones in our family over the course of the last several weeks. Our oldest daughter Sydney has stepped into the new world of being a full-fledged 4th grader and will be 9 years old this month. Molly seems to be thinking

about where to run to next, and what fun to get into almost at every turn as a 4.5 year old. I celebrated my 40th year around the sun, and Julie and I celebrated 14 years of marriage. The months of July/August have naturally become a festive and celebratory time for our family, and a season of milestones.

I know that many of us “celebrate” during this time of year because August often marks the beginning of something new. Educators, students, and parents often use August to mark a rite of passage to the next school grade, or the next group of students. Some of us may even recognize that August kicks off the downhill slide to the wonderful season of fall.

Just as August often provides milestones to recognize, it also inevitably provides the opportunity to fully get back in the swing of things after summer. This means fulfilling responsibilities for loved ones and friends, like doctor’s visits, attending games, running errands, and getting folks to and from school or practices. No matter your age, August promises to have a more complex schedule with more responsibility. It is a **fun** but equally **busy** time.

This month I am rereading a book called A Simple Path by Mother Teresa of Calcutta. Many of you know that Mother Teresa was a Catholic Nun who founded the Missionaries of Charity to serve the poorest of the poor in India. The book explores her philosophy of her faith life, and the direction of her work on earth. Her simple path is composed of six essential steps: silence, prayer, faith, love, service, and peace. The book says, “Familiarity with one (step) will naturally lead on to another. If one surrenders to the nature of the process, life will inevitably run more smoothly, more joyfully, and more peacefully.”

The Simple Path

The fruit of silence is
Prayer.

The fruit of prayer is
Faith.

The fruit of faith is
Love.

The fruit of love is
Service.

The fruit of service is
Peace.

As we move into August with all its natural complexities, I want to invite you to give yourself the gift of striving to walk down Mother Teresa’s simple path. I hope that you will find ways to cultivate this during our worship each Sunday, in your own devotional practice, and even as you interact with others in the community. In the gospel of Matthew, Jesus calls his disciples to be “*the salt of the earth,*” and to be “*the light of the world.*” This means that we are to strive to flavor the world uniquely for him and that we are to be a beacon of God’s hope and love in all that we do.

Striving to make Mother Teresa’s simple path a part of who you are could be a way for you to be the salt and light that Jesus was talking about. I hope you will join me this month in striving after this.

Lots of hope!
Chris



Fellowship Time

Sundays
10:00 AM
Gathering Area

Worship Service

Sundays
10:30 AM
Sanctuary

Wednesday nights

Choir Rehearsal
6:00 PM
Sanctuary

United Methodist

Youth
6:00 PM
Youth Room

Another wonderful Update for our Sign of Faith Campaign!

At the end of June we kicked off a campaign to replace the main front electronic sign by the church office. We established a goal of \$21k to make this project possible and members and friends of our church have given a total of **\$24,500!!!**

This means that (as of July 28th) this project has been fully funded!
Praise God!



This upgrade for FUMC will allow us to communicate and even bless our community in powerful new ways. It will also allow us to let folks know more about all the great things happening in our church family from week to week. What a blessing it is for this new initiative to move so quickly! ***Thank you to all who donated!!!***

A Big Thank you!!!

Our 2026 Snowball Mountain Challenge Vacation Bible School was a success! A huge thank you to all our volunteers who helped set up, tear down, teach, cook, lead games, run registration, shepherd children, make crafts, teach, host/MC and run our technology in the sanctuary. Also, a big thank you to our Presbyterian friends who helped us host. A wonderful time was had by all and many of our children, youth and adults learned a little more about God and how to have a deeper relationship with him. We are already looking forward to our Vacation Bible School next year!

Important update on our Ignite Children's Ministry
In late July we promoted volunteer opportunities for our Ignite Children’s Ministry. This is our Fall/Spring Wednesday night ministry offering some fun discipleship opportunities for children in K-5. As this ministry is currently organized we need at least 2-3 folks in areas of K-2 teacher/classroom helper, 3-5 teacher/classroom helper, games, crafts and music leader/helper. We also need 5-6 groups to provide dinners on a rotation. Unfortunately, we did not get enough volunteers committed to this ministry to make it work in its current form. (we want to follow our Safe Sanctuary guidelines, but also need enough support so that no volunteer teacher/helper is over burdened). At this juncture, we will be doing a ministry “program pivot” with Ignite. This happens from time to time in church...*especially in growing ones!*...where a ministry may need to be adjusted/refreshed or lay fallow for a little. This Fall a group will meet with Pastor Chris to create plans for a new Wednesday night children’s ministry which will begin in January 2027. If you are interested in helping with this in the next few months please let Pastor Chris know.

Scissor Drop Off!

We handed out *over 500 pairs of children's scissors* at Monroe County’s annual Back to School Bash! Our church has such a wonderful history of stepping up for community outreach and missions! A big thank you to all of you who supported this initiative! Pastor Chris was present at the bash to greet families and get to know our educators as he handed out the scissors.



Carolynn Greenwood

Volunteer Spotlight

Our volunteer of the month is our own *Carolynn Greenwood*. For many years Carolyn has been the primary coordinator for our Acolyte Ministry. Our Acolytes are often children (but don’t have to be) who bring the light of Christ into our worship and who remind us that Christ’s light goes with us as we depart to be in mission throughout the world. It is always a beautiful and essential reminder for us as Christ’s people as we worship and Carolyn helps to make this possible! Over the years Carolyn has also served on just about every committee in the church, helps to coordinate the food/kitchen for our Breakfast with Santa event and has been a faithful volunteer in our VBS and Ignite Children’s ministries. I hope all of you will take some time this month to thank Carolyn for all her wonderful work in our worship and children’s ministries.

Mark your calendars for Family Night Supper!

On Wednesday, August 19th at 6:00PM we will be having our monthly family night supper in the fellowship hall, and we want to invite you to bring your favorite summer dish! This could be casseroles, deviled eggs, vegetables, fruit, bread, meat loaf, chicken, etc. Every time we have a family night supper it is a wonderful time to fellowship and break bread together and our dinner on August 19th will be no different!

FUMC & UWF Dental Clinic

The Dental Clinic will be at FUMC on September 16th from 10AM-2PM. Dental cleanings will be provided free by appointment only. Adults and children are welcome to schedule cleaning appointments by calling 423-252-1475. Tennessee Wesleyan (TWU) Dental Hygiene program and their mobile clinic will provide services under the direction of Dr. Randa Colbert and local dentists led by Dr. James Dash, DDS. Participants will receive free dental cleanings and exams.

We Support our Church by...

Our Gifts:

- Sharing our prayers and praises every Sunday with each other.
- Giving your time and talents to help update the kitchen for our churches many uses!

Our Presence:

- In church average attendance in **July-111**
- Worshiping together and celebrating God!

Coffee Bar

- August 2
Glenda Parker
- August 9
Kris Browder
- August 16
Open
- August 23
Janet Tweed
- August 30
Peggy & Donna Wengert



Flowers

- August 2
Communion Sunday
- August 9
Given by the children of Margaret and Chad Chester in honor of their 50th wedding anniversary

August 16

Given by Bruce Christopher in memory of Judy Christopher

August 23
Open

August 30
Open



We support our Church by our Prayers...

- | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ◆ Barbara Penland and family | ◆ Kay Ashley (Barger) | ◆ Maiuri family |
| ◆ Tara Stewart and family | ◆ Slouka family | ◆ Houvenagle family |
| ◆ Drake and his new family the Barrs | ◆ Taylor family | ◆ Joshua Stuckey and family |
| ◆ David Fancher and family | ◆ Humphries family | ◆ Tate Sherrer and family |
| ◆ Margie Perkins (Greenwood) | ◆ Jill Reeves and family | ◆ Kendall Wimmer and family |
| ◆ Cardarella's and family | ◆ Brenda (Kathy Isbill's sister) | ◆ Mike and Sandy O'Neill and family |
| ◆ Rustie Stukey and Jim Richardson (Dopkins) | ◆ Kayana Jones (Gary's sister) | ◆ Larson family |
| | ◆ Connie Caroine and Ken Hibbert | ◆ Nelson & Stratton family |
| | ◆ Conley family | ◆ Mary Kefauver and family |
| | ◆ Kat Ahart and Barbara Baiz | ◆ Unspoken Prayers |

Stewardship Report

as of the printing of the newsletter on 8/3/26

July Total Giving: \$44,959.11

July Budget: \$22,892.00

Year-to-Date giving: \$180,195.55

Year-to-Date budget: \$177,413.00

Total Annual budget: \$297,596.00

Because of your generosity we were able to...

- ◆ Open our church five days in a row for a wonderful Vacation Bible School experience where children, youth and adults learned how to deepen their discipleship with Christ.
- ◆ Participate in the Monroe County Back to School Bash and give away 500+ pairs of scissors.
- ◆ Move forward with a wonderful initiative for two new electronic signs in front of our church.
- ◆ Worship God together through fellowship, praise, singing, prayer and opening the Scriptures.
- ◆ Offer numerous printed materials like our bulletins (and this newsletter) for you to learn, grow and connect with our church community.

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 a part of God's work here at FUMC.

Come Join the Choir!

Our Choir ministry meets weekly on Wednesday evenings at 6PM in the Sanctuary. This group enjoys plenty of fellowship and fun each week as they learn new music to help lead our Sunday worship. Even if you have never sung in a choir before you would be welcomed to participate. Joining a choir group is a great way to build relationships with others, and to learn a new skill that can glorify God. If you have questions about our Choir ministry or wish to join please contact Sue Hamilton at sue@firstumcmadisonville.org.

Are you interested in joining our Church?

We are a faith community that is incredibly blessed because we have so 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 feel free to reach out to Rev. Chris Black at cblack@firstumcmadisonville.org. We are so blessed to be such a vibrant and multifaceted community of Christian disciples!

SUE'S AUGUST NEWS

I can't believe that we are putting together the August 2026 newsletter! Where has the summer gone? Where has the year 2026 gone? 2027 will be here before we know it!

First, I want to thank everyone who helped in any way during this year's Bible School. We had a great week, and we had several visitors take part in this year's Bible School. I can't think of a better way to show community folks who we are.

Now! I will be Sue, the music director. We would love for YOU to become a part of our church music ministry. Our chancel choir meets on Wednesday nights at 6 PM in the sanctuary. The music for our Christmas cantata has already arrived and we have already listened to and sung through several of the selections. The choir has fallen in love with this cantata Glorious Night When Christ Was Born, and we are ready to begin working on this beautiful music that we will present in December. Our Presbyterian friends have purchased the same cantata, and we are looking forward to putting our choirs together for a community presentation like the one we did with last year's cantata. Also, I know that Marlee Tierce could use a few more volunteers in her handbell choir. They practice on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month at 2 PM. Please let Marlee know if you would like to take part.

We try to keep all of you informed and updated about the opportunities at First United Methodist Church Madisonville. We publish the newsletter monthly and every week we send out emails on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. If you are not getting our emails and want to receive them, please let us know.



Have a great August!

~Sue



Madisonville First Methodist UMC Church 200 years of fellowship 1826-2026 Part 6:

On December 7, 1941, "a day that will live in infamy", the USA and the people of Madisonville found themselves involved in a second World War. Fathers, who served in the First World War, said farewell to their sons of the Volunteer State as they joined the Army, Navy and Marines on the battlefields of Europe and far away Pacific Islands. Madisonville High School didn't field a football team from 1943-1945. Women served in the WACS and WAVES as the whole country got behind the war effort. Here in Madisonville, food and gasoline rationing returned along with rubber drives and Victory Gardens. The Hollywood Theatre showed the latest films and newsreels, while many of our parishioners went to work at ALCOA or the new "Secret City" of Oak Ridge. The 5th largest bus system in the country would pick up engineers, office personnel, cooks and mechanics; all working for the war effort on the "Manhattan Project" that would take the small-town county seat of Madisonville into the "Atomic Age". Throughout the "Great Depression" of the 1930's and the ensuing "War Years" of the 1940's, First Methodist of Madisonville saw six pastors preach the gospel each Sunday. "The Sunshine Band" for children and youth continued every week as scripture verses, bible stories and songs were taught. The brick First Methodist Church building begun in 1917 and was officially dedicated by Bishop Paul B. Kern in 1948.



-Don Browder

New Pastor's Bible Study Beginning in September..."Mostly Methodical"

Rev. Chris Black will once again host a home style Bible Study beginning on Wednesday, September 2nd at 7:00PM in classroom #5 which is a downstairs classroom across from the Community Room. This new class called "Mostly Methodical" will take a fun and inviting look at what it means to be Methodist today. We will rely heavily on scripture but will also delve into the history, theology and experience of what it means to be a Methodist. If you have questions about the upcoming class, please email Pastor Chris at cblack@firstumcmadisonville.org.

