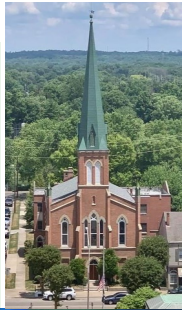




# The Steeple Bell— August 2022

Franklin First United Methodist Church

*“Under the Green Steeple”*



## A BETTER BACK TO SCHOOL

It's almost time for school to start. Our educators and staff are already preparing. It's always amazing how fast the summer goes. Do you remember your back to school feelings as a kid? Were you excited, anxious, angry, or somewhere in between? I remember mixed feelings. I always enjoyed school but hated to give up the freedoms of summer. Classrooms were hot (no air conditioning back then) and it seemed like we ought to still be in swimming suits eating popsicles. But it was fun to reconnect with old friends and meet the new students in the class. I enjoyed some of the subjects in the classroom and persevered through others.

Education is a guarded right in the United States, yet students will get out of it what they put into it. I was reading a Focus on the Family article this week, and the author Sheila Seifert shared that her sons were not excited about school resumption. Her comment to them, "It's going to happen. The only choice you have is whether you want to be miserable for the next nine months or find something to enjoy about school." It's a universal decision.

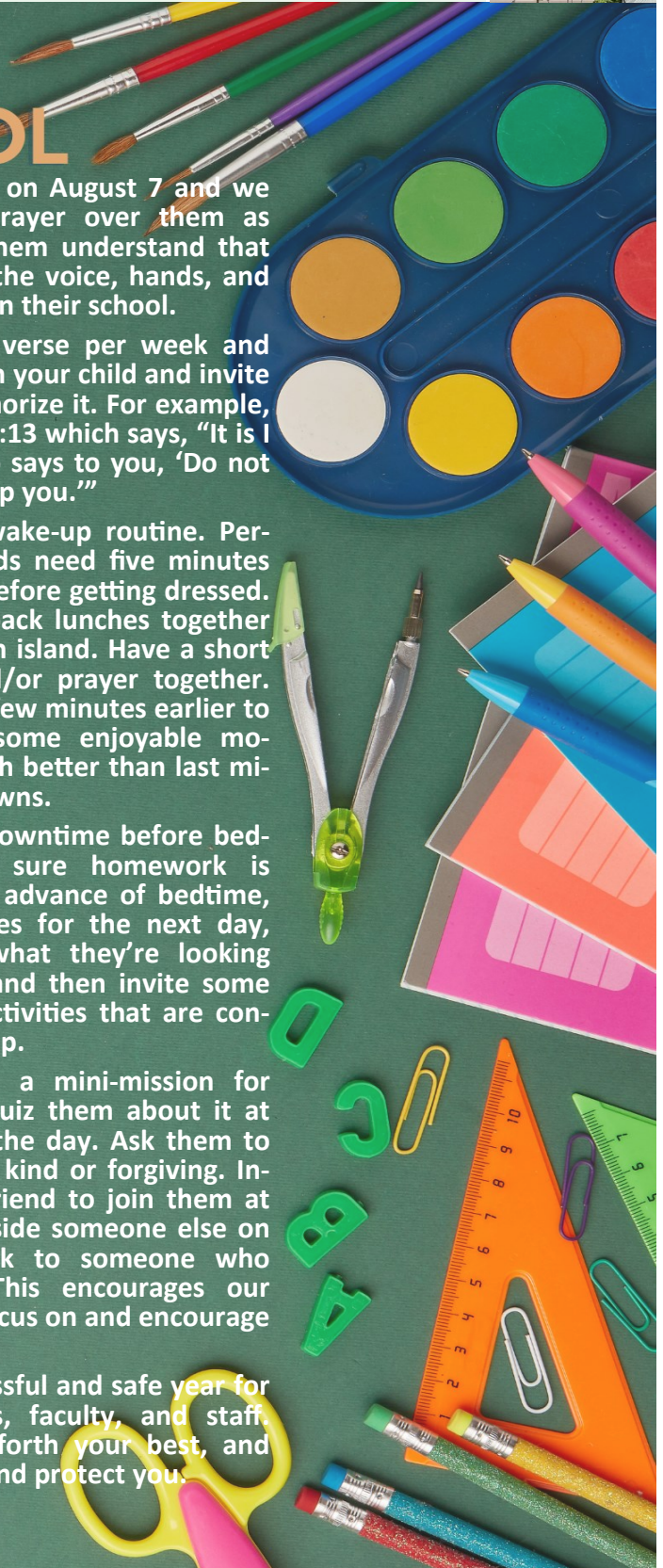
This article suggested some steps to make returning to school a more enjoyable experience:

- ◆ Have an end of summer routine before the commitments of the school year take over. Make a list of friends and relatives to visit, have a special event such as a zoo visit or outside sleepover, start regular bedtimes. This routine will signal to our children that we are saying goodbye to summer.
- ◆ Say a commissioning prayer over your children. (Bring them to

Franklin First on August 7 and we will say a prayer over them as well.) Help them understand that they will be the voice, hands, and feet of Jesus in their school.

- ◆ Pick a Bible verse per week and discuss it with your child and invite them to memorize it. For example, pick Isaiah 41:13 which says, "It is I the Lord who says to you, 'Do not fear, I will help you.'"
- ◆ Establish a wake-up routine. Perhaps your kids need five minutes of snuggles before getting dressed. Maybe you pack lunches together at the kitchen island. Have a short devotion and/or prayer together. Getting up a few minutes earlier to incorporate some enjoyable moments is much better than last minute melt-downs.
- ◆ Have some downtime before bedtime. Make sure homework is done well in advance of bedtime, choose clothes for the next day, talk about what they're looking forward to, and then invite some quiet time activities that are conducive to sleep.
- ◆ Give a child a mini-mission for school and quiz them about it at the close of the day. Ask them to be especially kind or forgiving. Invite a new friend to join them at lunch. Sit beside someone else on the bus. Talk to someone who looks sad. This encourages our children to focus on and encourage others.

We pray a successful and safe year for all our students, faculty, and staff. May you bring forth your best, and may God guide and protect you.







## Disability is Diversity

The Bible tells us that we are created in the Image of God – Imago Dei. All of us, not just some of us. Yet there is great diversity in God’s creation. A newsletter that I read from the “Disability Connection” introduced the concept of **neurodiversity**, which refers to the way our brains process input.

Each of us is unique and there is no “normal” way of thinking. People who think and process in a societally approved, typical manner are considered “neurotypical.” Individuals whose brains operate differently are considered neurodivergent. This designation includes dyslexia, ADHD, epilepsy, mental illness, and autism.

Over centuries, people who are neurodivergent have battled with social stigma in addition to their other challenges. Education can lead to acceptance instead of stigma. I share with you portions of the story of Rev. Melinda Baber, and UMC Ordained Elder from the Mountain Sky Conference. She writes:

“I am an autistic person, mother of four...and was raised by an autistic father...Autism is something that is an integral part of who I am. As a child, my autism meant I was labelled and treated in pathological and dehumanizing ways, all in the name of educational and therapeutic interventions.

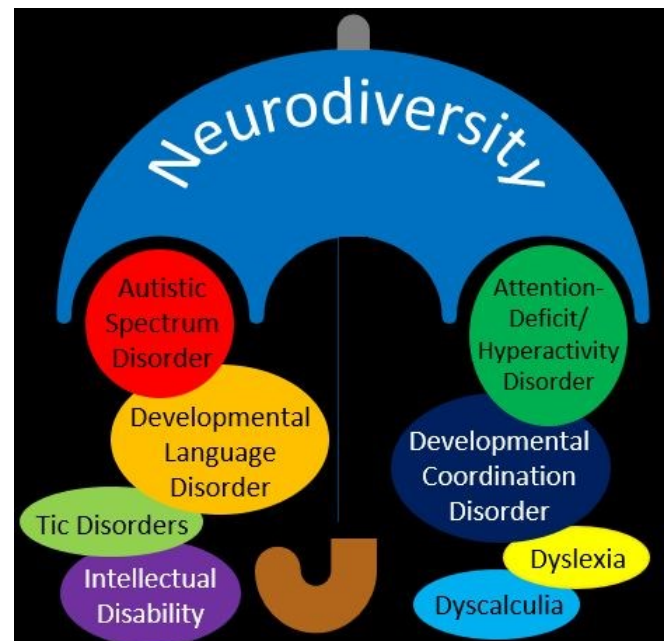
**“I share five important things about me as an autistic person to help others to be affirming and appreciative of neurodivergent people.”**

1. Autism is only one of many other things about me. Autistic people are all as different as all trees are different...and our experience of being autistic is also unique.
2. Being a good listener to verbal and nonverbal communication is essential to appreciate others. Listen for understanding rather than for the purpose of responding.
3. My autistic brain is not broken or diseased. I am a person, a disabled person with autistic limitations and strengths. God likes me being me! The assumption that I would need healing from autism is the result of outdated, inadequate understandings of the brain.
4. I have unique ways of self-expression, ways of emotionally self-regulating, and ways of coping with stress that are healthy and helpful for me to thrive in a world not made for me. These may seem odd to those who are neurotypical or unfamiliar with neurodivergent people.
5. I have a right to self-determination...and by virtue of being human I deserve respect and equal treatment under just laws.
6. We are embodied spiritual pilgrims on a journey of learning and teaching...Learning – to listen, to recognize what we need, what constitutes ableism, and taking steps to unlearn falsehoods – is empowering for everyone.

I am glad you are with me on this journey! Rev. Melinda”

Friends, I share this as an encouragement to broaden our understanding of God’s beautiful creation. As we learn to eradicate the stigma for those who are neurodivergent, we are practicing Love and Acceptance as God intended.

Pastor Laura



## National Night Out— August 2nd

National Night Out will be held on Tuesday August 2 at the Franklin Community Park on 6<sup>th</sup> Street from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. Franklin First will have a booth this year and will be greeting neighbors, sharing information, and will hold a drawing for a free backpack loaded with school supplies. Can you help at the booth for a while? Talk to Linda Smith or Karen Anderson. By all means, stop by and say hello if you are attending the event. Let's support our Police Department! They work steadily to ensure our safety.



## Stewardship Thank You

Friends, we are coming through the summer months continuing our ministries in the community. As always, we so appreciate your generosity in supporting the church. Your consistent financial giving is so needed during these times of vacations and warm weather activities. This is just a reminder that you can give online, through the mail, or in person. This is a generous congregation, and we thank you.



## Backpack Sunday— August 7th

Backpack Sunday is coming on August 7 during our 10:45 worship service. We will pray blessings for school staff and students as they prepare to return to classrooms. We will also be giving away the school supplies that we have collected. As we've learned in recent years, the return to school brings not only educational challenges,

but health and safety concerns as well. Invite school staff and students to join us that Sunday for their time of recognition.

## Free Clinic Update

Franklin First's Free Medical Clinic operates weekly on Tuesday evenings. Registration runs from 5:30-6:30 pm, and patients are seen on a first come, first served basis. We are targeting the uninsured and underinsured; and have treated infections, diabetes, and those in need of medical equipment – among other things. The clinic is manned by Dr. Chamberlain and volunteer nurses and support staff. Please spread the word that this resource is available.



## Faith Seekers Sundays 9:30 am

Join our Faith Seekers group on Sunday mornings. They will be studying Romans in August. All are invited!

## The United Methodist Connectional System

Franklin First is part of the connectional United Methodist denomination. What benefit does that bring?

A connectional system means that congregations do not stand alone in their ministry but work together to help one another execute their best in their ministry setting. Apportionment dollars fund grants, and our congregation has benefited from a number of grants that have come from United Methodist resources. Once again we have been awarded a grant. We have received \$1,000 toward the repair of our elevator through the Disability Ministries Committee of the UMC that encourages churches to be more accessible and inclusive in their ministry. We are grateful to be part of this connectional system.



## Children's Church

Children's Church will resume on Sunday August 14<sup>th</sup> after a time of hiatus. Kids from kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade will be invited to leave after Children's Moment for their own time of lessons and fellowship. Thanks to all who volunteer to make this ministry possible!

## Serve in Children's Ministry

Our Children's Ministry is gearing up in mid-August for the coming of fall, and we need volunteers in the Nursery and for Children's Church. Please sign up and support our children in their growth in faith.



## Save the Dates!



### Grandparent's Sunday September 11

We will be offering a special worship service to honor the grandparents among us and remember those grandparents who are part of our heritage. Grandparents, invite your grandchildren. Grandchildren, bring your grandparents. The service will be kid-friendly, and our children will remain in the sanctuary.



### Homecoming Sunday September 25

This year's Homecoming Sunday will include wonderful music and a re-dedication of our elevator. Watch for more details to come.



## Worship In the Park Recap

July 24<sup>th</sup> worship at Crain's Run Park was a good day. The sun peaked in and out, our dear Megan was back to lead singing along with Mishelle Dicken, and the park setting was beautiful. Pastor Laura's message was taken from Genesis 1 and introduced us to the "Divine Design" of God's creation. Mike Runyan was our grill master and of course we had enough delicious food for an army. Everyone appreciated the fresh air and shade in the warm weather. The kids loved the playground equipment. Worship need not be tied to a set of church walls.



## Submit a Prayer Request Anytime

Use the link below to submit a Prayer Request

ENTER PRAYER REQUEST HERE

anytime. The link will send an email directly to the Pastor and our prayer warriors will begin the prayers for your request.

[franklinfirstumc.breezechms.com/form/862a54](http://franklinfirstumc.breezechms.com/form/862a54)

Have you checked the bottom of your Kroger's Receipt? If it does not list our church as your designated Community Rewards Beneficiary, follow the instructions on the back and get signed up now! Please note our new church number! You do not need to change your current account; this is for new sign-ups.



KROGERS COMMUNITY REWARDS:

Go to: [www.krogers.com](http://www.krogers.com)  
 New account users: go to "Register" Create Account  
 Or Sign-in  
 Go to: Community – Community Rewards  
 Click: Enroll now  
 Church #: RK151



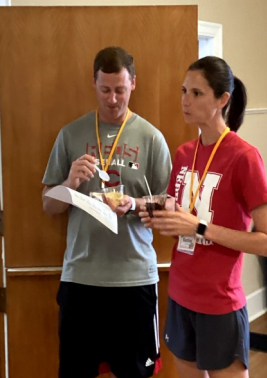
## Choir Re-Start Dates

The Chancel Choir and the Handbell Choir will begin practicing on Wednesday, August 31st. Stay tuned for more information.



## VBS Recap

What a fun time we had at the "Food Truck Party" VBS! We learned Bible stories about how God provides what we need, as well as the table prayer "God is Great, God is Good." The music was fun and every part of VBS held the kid's interest. Thanks to Chris Womack for directing the program and the many smiling volunteers who made the week such a success.









## The Gift that Keeps on Giving



Why are you part of Franklin First UMC? Is it because earlier generations of your family made this their church home? Is it because someone invited you and you felt the need to connect with God and a fellowship of other Christians? Is it because you are/were going through a rough time and needed hope? Perhaps you wanted your children to know God and develop a Christian value system?

We all affiliate with a particular church for different reasons, and yet when we connect we find that we receive much more benefit than we might have expected. We also find that God has a ministry purpose for us as we offer our talents and treasures to His service. Our souls are fed, our children are introduced to our loving God, and we reach out into the community in the name of Jesus.

One way to invest in the future of Franklin First is through giving to our Permanent Endowment Fund. The principal of this fund is invested so that ministry in coming generations have the monies that they need to prosper. The interest income that the Permanent Endowment Fund generates can be used at the discretion of the Church Council. You can consider giving to the Endowment Fund with Estate planning or as part of your yearly giving. Those donations help secure resources for our children and their children's faith foundation.



### Women's Circle

Mark your calendars for the next meeting on Monday, Sept. 12th.

Stay tuned for more details!

### Birthdays

August 01	Cheryl Krasnonski
August 02	Marisa Humphries
August 02	Dorothy Rayburg
August 03	Marna Rogers
August 03	Linda Smith
August 05	Jim Martin
August 08	Mike Jarvis
August 09	Brian Graves
August 09	Jerry Rhude
August 19	Teresa Lass
August 19	Carol Sweney
August 22	Paul Anderson
August 22	Mallory Chilcutt
August 24	Donnie Rogers
August 24	Jennifer Schramm
August 27	Bella Humphries
August 28	Lilly Moore

### Anniversaries

August 10	Bill & Cindy Kuntzman
August 27	Regina & Ryan Hynes
August 31	Jim & Kathy Martin



# Franklin First Team Updates

## Missions:

We are excited to participate in National Night Out on August 2, from 5:30-8:30 PM at Franklin Community Park. Our application has been submitted, but we have not been advised where our table will be located. We plan to hold a drawing to give away 2 Backpacks filled with School supplies and other donated prizes. Information is posted throughout the church and included in the Steeple Bell.

We will continue to collect school supplies through July 31<sup>st</sup> for distribution on August 7<sup>th</sup> after the blessing of the backpacks during Worship.

A Missions committee meeting is scheduled for July 20<sup>th</sup>. We will make plans for Trunk or Treat on October 15th from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. And consider how the missions committee can participate in Franklin Lights on Saturday November 26, 2022.

We will collect Cleaning products during August and September for The Pantry.

Submitted by Linda Smith



## Trustee Report:

I. Removal of Tress and Brush along property line in back of church along the church and the Mears property line was completed by Tree-Mend-Dus Service. They did not cut the hedge which was included in the quote of \$1750. I called and reminded them and they said to disregard the invoice until the hedge job is complete

II. Trustees removed the vines and small trees growing along the church and up the brick from the back corner of the church to the Mears property.

III. Third Street Door: We have not heard from Dayton Metal Door since the door was installed on 5/19/22. Still waiting to have the door frame painted and woodwork completed, transom painted, and reimbursed the \$242 charge from Shriver Security for the transmitter damaged by DMD during installation of the new door. Since June 15th, I have made six phone calls to DMD and sent three emails; most recent on 6/28/22. No response or



call back. Church has not received a bill for the \$4190 balance of the door.

IV. Trustees sanded the church front entry doors and applied two coats of polyurethane on June 14& 15. It is our hope that this will protect the doors until we have them refinished by Artifex Finishing. The estimate to refinish the doors was \$800-\$1000 for each door.

V. Chair Lift: Mike Runyan called the State of Ohio to ask what would be involved if the church wanted to remove the chair lift. The State reported the chair lift would have to be removed by a certified elevator service company and then do the removal would have to be approved by the state inspection. Mike contacted TKE Elevator, the company that repaired the church elevator, on July 15th. Not sure we will have an estimate by Church Council meeting. The Trustee's concern is the cost of \$800 a year to have the chair lift inspected and licensed would amount to approximately \$16,000 over the next 20 years to keep the chair lift operational. The cost of the chair removal will need to be considered in this decision.

VI. Water Damage behind the Altar in the Sanctuary Chancel are: Received an estimate from Urethane Unlimited for \$4600 to 1) Install the roof flashing over the existing duct work n flat roof section behind the rooftop HVAC units; 2) Install supports and metal flashing, adhere to exterior wall of the sanctuunder duct with silicone roof over the sanctuary. Thought ary and extend over duct work; 3) Coat area the estimate was kind of expensive since we can not be certain this is the area where the water is the church structure.

VII. Elevator Service Agreement: Entered into an elevator service agreement at a cost of \$900/year with TKE. The agreement includes quarterly inspections of the elevator and certifying/renewing the state license which we have previously paid OTIS between \$500-\$600 per year.

Submitted by Jim Martin

## Finance:

During our last Finance Committee meeting on June 28, 2022, we primarily discussed the Trustees current and future maintenance projects.



(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

- ◆ The most urgent need was for the Church to enter into an elevator Maintenance Contract with TK Elevators for the net five years. The motion was passed and approved by the Finance Department, and the Trustees subsequently sign the contract.
- ◆ Chair Lift Service Agreement requirements and cost compared to its current and expected benefit (amount of actual use) is being reviewed. As related to the Chair Lift, do we have to uninstall the Chair Lift if we do not have the annual inspections/maintenance.
- ◆ The new Third Street door still requires some maintenance requirements, such as, painting trim, questions regarding security system damage during installation and other minor items
- ◆ The trees and hedge at the rear of the Church need both removal and maintenance. There are signs of possible animal intrusions on the roof which potentially cause future unwanted damage. Since the Finance meeting, June 28, 2022, the trustees hired "Tremendous" Tree Company to remove the trees along the boundary line and shorten the height of the hedges. This work has been started.
- ◆ Lawn mowing and Snow removal were also discussed. There are no current problems with the lawn mowing. The finding of a vendor/ individual to remove snow however is currently being sought.
- ◆ Reminder, September 14, 2022 is our next scheduled Finance Committee Meeting. The Church's 2023 Financial Budget will be discussed and information will be requested from the various church mission groups. Please start thinking about what type, amount of expenses you anticipate for next year. Typically, this process has been completed in November prior to the Church Counsel meeting.



Submitted by Andy Anderson

### Care Team:

#### July 2022 Care Team Report for Church Council meeting of 7/18/22

Members: Lee Saunders, Charlotte Sumner, Dorothy Rayburg, Jan Truesdell, Judy Bowman

- ◆ Since last Council Meeting:
- ◆ Committee has been divided into two groups.
- ◆ Letters and cards are being sent to "shut-in" members and those on the prayer list.
- ◆ Calls are being made to home-bound members by phone, monthly.



### Next Steps:

- ◆ Visitation with documentation to those who are able and willing to have visits.
- ◆ Recruit one or two members to make visits.
- ◆ These actions should reach members through a number of ways.
- ◆ Suggestions on other steps are welcomed.
- ◆ In lieu of meetings, our groups has been corresponding via phone which gives the committee more time to actually work on issues.

Respectfully submitted by Lee Saunders  
7/13/22

## Faith & Abortion

The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection pastored by Rev. Adam Hamilton held a panel discussion about Faith and Abortion on July 27. Panel participants included a line-up of Resurrection women including medical professionals and legal experts.

There are people of faith on both sides of the abortion issue. The goal of the discussion was to seek common ground between sides. Rev. Hamilton closed the event with reflection on how the Bible speaks to the question of abortion.

The discussion was recorded and posted on their website and YouTube channel, and you are welcome to view it at <https://cor.org>. We thank the Church of the Resurrection for sharing their resources.





## A COUNTRY AT WAR BY: BISHOP CHRISTIAN ALSTEN



Load a dishwasher, five tables, food supplies, printer paper, coffee makers, toasters, a bunch of Upper Room devotionals and seven adult United Methodist representatives, along with driver and coffee expert Istvan Pasztor, and you have a jam-packed minivan.

This was my first trip to Ukraine as the newly assigned bishop to the Ukraine and Moldova Provisional Annual Conference. I had hooked on to a trip led by the Europe secretary of Global Ministries Üllas Tankler, who was traveling with Katherine Hills Uzoka and the Rev. Jack Amick (UMCOR) and Joey Butler, Francisco Litardo and Mike DuBose (United Methodist Communications).

Istvan, who has made several trips into Ukraine during the war, had picked one of the smaller border crossings, taking us over the Tisza River on a tiny ferry and then, after some conversations and checks at the border, into Ukraine. We were headed for Uzhhorod in the Transcarpathia region.

Having only communicated through Zoom and phone, it was a delightful moment to greet and hug Ukrainian United Methodist pastors, leaders and volunteers. Led by district superintendent the Rev. Oleg Starodubets, they met us at the Uzhhorod United Methodist Church.

The United Methodist Church in Ukraine is composed of only 10 congregations and 350 active members. Yet, by the grace of God, the church is accomplishing amazing things. We run several refugee shelters: in the church in Lviv close to the Polish border, in a secondary school in the village of Onokivci and in a former newspaper and publishing facility in Uzhhorod. Several churches have refugees living and sleeping in the sanctuary, putting mattresses aside during worship or other gatherings.

More than 8 million Ukrainian refugees have left the country, and the most likely higher number of internally displaced people have millions of stories to share. They are heartbreaking accounts of loss, suffering, separation, fear and despair and encouraging stories of survival, hope, joy and dreams of a peaceful future.

Elena was seven months pregnant when she left from Kharkiv with her husband Andrei and their children, ages 2 and 7. They went through the Kramatorsk railway station a few days before it was attacked by Russian missiles that killed 59 and wounded 110. After their arrival in Uzhhorod, Elena gave birth to a little boy named "Bogdan," which means "gift of God."

In the early days after Russia attacked Ukraine, Ludmilla and Costa fled from Kharkiv with their children Camilla and Artum. Their home is still intact, and they hope it remains so when the war is over.

Anna and Michail left Kharkiv with their son Nicolai. Michail, a trained psychotherapist, helps other refugees at the shelter to deal with their trauma.

Oksana fled with her 17-year-old son from Kupansk to Kharkiv and then to Uzhhorod. Crying, she showed me a photo of her now-destroyed apartment. Oksana, who had had no contact with her parents in Kharkiv for several weeks, finally was able to have a phone conversation with them. A couple of weeks later, Oksana's parents made it to the shelter in Uzhhorod.

More than anything else, connecting with God in prayer can bring comfort and hope in difficult circumstances. Praying with each person with whom I talked at the shelters, I experienced a deep sense of God's presence.

After my U.S travel companions went to Romania to visit refugee centers there, I stayed for another couple of days to visit churches and to get acquainted with pastors and church leaders.

We had passionate worship on a Tuesday morning in the Roma congregation in the village of Serednje. We worshipped and shared communion in a packed church in Kamyanytsa. We talked about the church, the country and the culture and, of course, about the war and how it affects life and families in so many ways. We talked about hope rooted in God's promises and in the strength in knowing that the final word in this world belongs to the risen Christ. And we prayed.

Many have asked, "Did it feel unsafe?" It didn't. Of course, you could see soldiers in several places, and human-operated machine-gun positions protect the infrastructure. At least for now, however, the Transcarpathia region has only been hit once by a Russian missile. With many refugees, the area population has more than doubled since the war started, and many pass through on their way to Romania, Slovakia or Poland.

Since I left, the attacks have intensified. One weekend, almost 200 missiles were sent, aimed at targets. In Ukraine, some, but far from all, were shot down by the defense system. Many civilians have been killed since the war started in February. Apartment buildings have been hit. Recently, more than 20 people were killed and many injured by an intentional Russian missile strike against a shopping center in Kremenchuk.

People are deeply affected by reports about civilian casualties, destruction, violence and the ongoing information about the numbers of soldiers who have died or are wounded. Many refugees are dealing with trauma. They worry about relatives still staying in the war zones and about relatives who serve in the army. Nevertheless, I heard many speaking about victory, driving out the enemy and rebuilding the country.

These months of meaningless violence, destruction, death and hatred will take years to heal. Right now, our prayer must be for peace, for the protection of the many innocent victims of this terrible war, and for strength for those doing their utmost to comfort and to help.

I am grateful for the United Methodists in Ukraine — for their love, dedication and servant heart. I am humbled by their courage and their tireless efforts to offer protection and care for those in need. Ukrainian United Methodists are true to Christ's calling under extremely challenging circumstances. I look forward to going back soon.

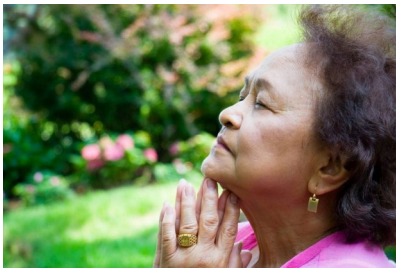
Taken from: [www.umnews.org/en/news/a-country-at-war](http://www.umnews.org/en/news/a-country-at-war)



Nordic-Baltic Episcopal Area Bishop Christian Alsten, newly assigned bishop to the Ukraine and Moldova Provisional Annual Conference. Photo courtesy of the Council of Bishops.

### UKRAINE AID BY THE NUMBERS

The United Methodist Committee on Relief has provided support throughout Europe for Ukrainians displaced by the war including \$1 million in medical supplies, 75,000 meals in the Odessa region and more than 120 shelters.



## THE MYSTERIOUS, CONNECTIONAL ACT OF PRAYER

When Linda Douty’s friend died from a brain tumor, the event sent the lifelong United Methodist on a spiritual spiral as she sought to understand why the prayers of many failed to result in her

friend’s healing.

“She was fit, successful, all of the plusses in life you can imagine,” Douty shares about her 50something-year-old friend. “Every prayer group I knew was praying for her. And she died.”

“Wait a minute,” she remembers thinking, “This doesn’t add up to what I’ve been taught.”

When she shared her confused anguish with her pastor, he counseled, ““When I feel like you feel right now, I pray, because Jesus prayed.”

At the time, Douty thought the answer was “glib,” she recalls. Thirty years later, Douty, who is a spiritual director in Memphis, Tennessee, doesn’t have a better response.

“It was an unsatisfactory answer at the time,” she shared. “But I call myself a Christian, a follower of Jesus. And what did Jesus do? He prayed in every circumstance. He prayed when he was happy, when he was sad, when he was bewildered, in the Garden of Gethsemane, even on the cross. So whatever this mystery is, Jesus thought it was important.”

The acts of asking for prayer, praying for others, reciting prayers together are built into our faith tradition. Jesus modeled it, we repeat it. But do we understand it? United Methodist spiritual leaders offer help unraveling the complexity of prayer, and, perhaps in doing so, leading us to accept the mystery and seek a deeper connection with God.

### Unanswered prayers

Like Douty, many people struggle with prayers that aren’t answered in the ways we want.

“When people say, ‘God didn’t answer my prayer,’ I always say, ‘You’re in good company and I point to the lament in the Psalms,’” shares the Rev. Claire McNulty-Drewes, a United Methodist pastor in the Mountain Sky Conference.

“I do pray for miracles and I believe in miracles. And I’ve seen miracles. But I also know the human body is an insidious thing. I don’t know why a child gets cancer. It seems unfair. I don’t know why car accidents happen to some people but not to me,” McNulty-Drewes shares. “The lament psalms remind me I’m not the only one who may be questioning if there really is a God.”

***“Prayer is an opportunity to ground me in that which is holy rather than that which is earthly.”***

***Rev. Claire McNulty-Drewes***

To make a specific request when praying to God is common. Our church services are filled with prayer times where we share “joys and concerns” – and mainly, concerns – with one another, asking God for healings, jobs, safety, positive outcomes.

“Viewing prayers as merely requests is transactional,” explains Sally Sharpe, a United Methodist and spiritual director in Mt. Juliet, Tennessee. “I’m coming to you because I want something. If my prayer is successful, I’ll get what I want. And I think a prevalent understanding of prayer is transactional. But I believe it’s experiential, it’s relationship.”

“I’ve learned not to tie my prayer to the result of getting what I want,” says Douty. “I long ago threw away my prayer notebook where I would write, ‘Here’s the day I prayed for XYZ and here’s the day God answered it.’ That makes it about my agenda and this has no room for mystery.”

Of course, there are situations, usually times of crisis, when we plead and beg with God for a certain answer to our desperate prayers. It is in these times, says McNulty-Drewes, when reframing our understanding of prayer may help, regardless of how the situation unfolds.

“Instead of being about changing God’s mind or getting what we want from God, it’s about changing our mind,” she says, referencing a book she read titled “The Meaning of Prayer,” published more than 100 years ago by Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick.

“I’m less inclined these days to give God direction,” Douty admits. “If I have a friend with a tumor, rather than pray to make that tumor go away, I’m more apt to envision that person completely enclosed in the love and mercy of God.”

Prayer is more about relationship than results, Sharpe offers.

“When we are being transparent, authentic and real with God, that’s where we are experiencing God’s love and God’s presence,” she points out. “So in our prayers, if we don’t get the answer we are asking for, but we feel safe, seen and known by God, that enables us to trust God even when things aren’t going as we would like.”

### Nonstop connection

The Apostle Paul, in 1 Thessalonians 5:16, commends us to “pray without ceasing.” What may seem an impossible task of around the clock praying becomes attainable when redefining prayer from a single act to a way of being.

Sharpe likens her prayer life to a cell phone conversation on which she never presses “end.”

“We may not have words for a couple of hours, but we’re still together,” Sharpe says, expounding on the analogy. “The connection is there even if the conversation pauses. I’m always in the background waiting and listening for God to break in again and speak to me, and vice versa. God is attentive and right there. And it goes both ways.”

### Failsafe praying

If you’ve ever thought, “I don’t know how to pray,” there’s good news.

“There is no way to get prayer wrong,” Sharpe offers. “If you are seeking God and calling out to God, you’re seeking connection and that’s a win. Prayer is turning to God. You can’t mess it up. Just be you. God is always open to that, delighted with that.”

“Everybody is different. So why would we think there is one method to connect to God?,” she asks, then recommends, “Find the language that suits your soul.”

“Prayer becomes an opportunity to reframe my day to day posture,” McNulty-Drewes explains, “to ground me in that which is holy, rather than grounding me in that which is earthly.”

Crystal Caviness works for UMC.org at United Methodist Communications. Contact her by email. This story was published on April 20, 2022.

Taken From: [www.umc.org/en/content/the-mysterious-connectional-act-of-prayer](http://www.umc.org/en/content/the-mysterious-connectional-act-of-prayer)



## Franklin First Giving

### Online Giving/We SHARE:

This is a great choice for when you are unable to join us for Worship to continue to support the church. You can either set-up a recurring payment or give each time you visit the site.

Connect by using this link:

[franklinfirstumc1.weshareonline.org](http://franklinfirstumc1.weshareonline.org)



# Back-to-School Blessing

by the Rev. Marilyn E. Thornton

Bless my paper and my pen.  
Guide my spirit deep within.  
Help me think and help me play,  
This whole school year, day by day.

As I move from class to class,  
Guide my footsteps; clear my path.  
Keep my tongue to speak your words.  
Let your will for me be heard.

In every subject high or low,  
May God's excellence be shown!  
Keep me strong to reach the prize,  
To grow in grace, becoming wise.

Whether far from home or near,  
May I hold God's precepts dear.  
To do my best at every task;  
For this blessing, I do ask.

Help my family be a part  
As I lift my mind and heart.  
As I study, work, and pray,  
Be with them throughout the day.

Of whom much is given, much is required.  
May learning be your greatest desire!



**Date:** Saturday, September 10th  
from 1-3 pm in the church dining room.

**Other Info:** Rylee Ann is expected to be born  
in November!

**Registry:** Marisa is registered on Amazon. Go  
to Amazon.com and click on the Registry Link.  
Put in Marisa Humphries and Baby Registry.  
Click on November 15, 2022.

**RSVP:** Please RSVP to Chrissie Womack at  
419-345-6400 if you are coming. RSVP by  
Saturday, Sept 3.

See you there!

# Franklin First United Methodist Church

## 2022 Lay Leadership Ministry

*Making disciples... Building Christian community... Transforming lives!*



### Church Council:

[churchcouncil2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:churchcouncil2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com)

Church Council Chair	Mike Smith
Church Council Secretary	Amber Ramsey
Lay Leader	Charlotte Summer
Lay Member of Annual Conference	Charlotte Summer
Lay Member of Annual Conference Alternate	Kim Chewning
Treasurer	Tami Chamberlain
Membership Secretary	Lee Ann Lee
Communications Coordinators	Carol & Mike Runyan
Church Historian	Robert Bowman
Pastor	Laura Saunders

### Ministry Team Representatives:

Staff-Parish	Julie Abell
Finance	Paul Anderson
Endowment	Ken Smith
Trustee Tri-Chairs	John Lass, Jim Martin, Mike Runyan
Worship	Monica Rhude
Technology	Joe Chamberlain
Committee on Lay Leadership	Laura Saunders
Christian Education	Charlotte Summer, Chris Womack
Missions & Outreach	Linda Smith, Karen Anderson
Care Team	Lee Saunders
Hospitality & Events	Judy Bowman
Welcoming Ministry	Dorothy Rayburg
Scouting Coordinator	Cindy Kuntzman
Member At Large	Amber Ramsey

### Staff-Parish Relations Committee: Chair: Julie Abell

(Lay Leader: Charlotte Summer)

[staffparishrelations2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:staffparishrelations2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com)

Terms expiring 2022:	Cheryl Cyphers, Mishelle Dicken
Terms expiring 2023:	Julie Abell, Judy Parker, Sue Fullen
Terms expiring 2024:	Sally Fitzgerald, Karen Anderson, Patti Noland

### Trustees: Tri-Chairs: John Lass, Jim Martin, Mike Runyan

[trustees2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:trustees2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com)

Terms expiring 2022:	Cody Chilcutt, Mike Runyan, Connie Bolinger
Terms expiring 2023:	Joe Chamberlain, Brian Graves
Terms expiring 2024:	John Lass, Jim Martin, Trisha Dicken

### Committee on Lay Leadership (Nominations):

[layleadership2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:layleadership2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com)

#### Chair: Pastor Laura Saunders

Charlotte Summer, Lay Leader

Terms expiring 2022:	Pam Bishop, Sue Fullen
Terms expiring 2023:	Sally Fitzgerald, Karen Anderson
Terms expiring 2024:	Ken Smith, Shirley Berold

### Finance Committee: (By virtue of office.)

[finance2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:finance2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com)

Chair	Paul Anderson
Treasurer:	Tami Chamberlain
Financial Secretary:	Julie Abell
Church Council Chair:	Mike Smith
Trustees Tri-Chairs:	John Lass, Jim Martin, Mike Runyan
Staff Parish Chair:	Julie Abell
Lay Leader:	Charlotte Summer
Lay Member of Annual Conference:	Charlotte Summer
Pastor:	Laura Saunders

### Permanent Endowment Fund Committee

[endowment2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:endowment2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com)

Chair of Finance Committee	Paul Anderson
Church Treasurer	Tami Chamberlain
Chair of Board of Trustees	Jim Martin
Chair of Church Council	Mike Smith
Lay Leader	Charlotte Summer
Member at Large (Term: 2022 only)	Monica Rhude
Member at Large (Term: 2022-2023)	Ken Smith, Chair
Pastor (non-voting member)	Laura Saunders

### Worship Ministry Team: Chair: Monica Rhude

[worship2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:worship2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com)

Choir Director:	Monica Rhude
Bell Choir Director:	Tami Chamberlain
Altar Design:	Kay Marksberry, Pam Bishop, Shari Tutt
Technology:	Joe Chamberlain
Usher Organizer:	Judy Parker
Lay Leader:	Charlotte Summer
Pastor:	Laura Saunders

### Mission & Outreach Team:

Co-Chairs: Linda Smith, Karen Anderson

[mission2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:mission2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com)

Lisa Dillon, Madelyn Lang, Tracy Easter, Ken Smith, Karen Anderson, Tami Chamberlain, Marna Rogers, Judy Parker, Sally Fitzgerald, Amber Ramsey

### Technology Team: Chair: Joe Chamberlain

[technology2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:technology2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com)

Joe Chamberlain, Trisha Dicken, Andy Kuntzman, Tami Chamberlain, LeeAnn Lee, Paul Anderson

### Christian Education Team:

Co-Chairs: Charlotte Summer, Chris Womack

[layleadership2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:layleadership2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com)

Jan Truesdell, Rachel Chamberlain, Madelyn Lang, Carol Runyan, Chris Womack, Charlotte Summer

### Care Team: Chair: Lee Saunders

[careteam2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:careteam2022@franklinfirstumc.onmicrosoft.com)

Lee Saunders (phone contact); Charlotte Summer, Dorothy Rayburg, Jan Truesdell, Judy Bowman (visitation team)



## Upcoming Events

Franklin First

United Methodist  
Church

Pastor  
Laura Saunders



**Sunday Worship Service**  
10:45 am  
Livestreaming on Facebook

**August 2nd**

**National Night Out**

**August 7th**

**Backpack Sunday**

**August 14th**

**Fellowship Sunday**

**September 11th**

**Grandparent's Sunday**

**September 25th**

**Homecoming Sunday**

**November 5th**

**Fall Marketplace (Fall Bazaar)**

Franklin First United Methodist Church

303 South Main St.  
Franklin, OH 45005

Phone: 937-746-5232  
E-mail: [office@franklinfirstumc.org](mailto:office@franklinfirstumc.org)

PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

