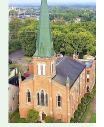


# The Steeple Bell—August 2024

Franklin First United Methodist Church

"Under the Green Steeple"







# **Keeping Your Cool!**

The dog days of summer continue into August as temperatures put our air conditioners to the test. This August and beyond may be hot for a different reason – the presidential election. One of my spiritual mentors Rev. Rebekah Simon Peter shared in her blog seven tips for keeping your cool when you happen to disagree with your conversation partner on the topic at hand.

- Assume the best about others, not the worst. Those whose opinions differ from ours care every bit as much as we do about what is right and good and holy. If you catch yourself thinking that yours is the only right way this tip will be hard.
- Ask how questions, not why questions. Why questions put people on the
  defensive. How questions encourage people to think creatively. Ask
  "How did you arrive at this position?" instead of "Why do you think this
  way?" to get a better understanding of the other person's reasons and
  story. Then, feel free to respectfully share how you came to your position
  on the issue.
- Open your ears, not your mouth. When you're talking to those who you don't always agree with, listen to their answers. Really listen. Don't just wait for them to pause so you can slip in your rebuttals. As you listen, you might just discover more similarities between the two of you than differences.

Identifying your shared humanity is an important part of staying cool in hot times.

- Practice disagreeing without cutting others off. When it comes to hot topics, the usual response is
  to avoid, or to push away from one another, and be done with them. Kick the dust off your heels
  and move on. Sometimes love actually requires us to stay connected in spite of disagreement.
  This is hard to do, but necessary.
- Fact check, fact check, fact check. Just because someone repeats a talking point, or says it louder than others, doesn't mean it's necessarily true. Dig deep. Get the facts. They're likely more complex than you first understood. This goes for politics of all sorts: presidential, work, church, international, etc.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2** 



# Keeping Your Cool!

 Pray for each other. Ask God what you can do to forward the Kin(g)dom in the midst of change and upset. Ask how you can be kind toward those who misunderstand you and do good to those whom you fear may hate you. Ask to see things from another's perspective.

 Resist being hijacked. Fear activates the reptilian part of our brain that's wired for fight or flight. It can also activate the limbic part of our brain that's wired for emotion. So intense can emotion be that it literally hijacks our thinking and our responses – leading us to say things we might not otherwise say or do things we might later regret. The neocortex part of our brain is activated by higher-order thought processes like logic.

So, avoid gossip, reputation-bashing, and either-or thinking. While it feels powerful in the moment, it intensifies polarization. It's hard to take words back once they've been spoken. Instead – pause, breathe, pray, and see what sort of logical or creative responses you can generate.

I appreciate Rev. Simon Peter's thoughts and find them to be helpful in what is sure to be a contentious election season. As Christians, we seek to model Christ and find the image of God in each of his children. Voting is a privilege that many around the world do not enjoy, so let's approach this constitutional right with gracious conviction and a spirit of overall unity.

Pastor Laura



# **National Night Out**

NNO is on Tuesday August 6 at Franklin Community Park.
Franklin First will have a booth at this event and needs community-minded smiling volunteers to man shifts throughout the evening. Again this year we will be collecting names for a drawing for school supply filled

backpacks. We will also have some games on site, including toilet seat horseshoes. Talk to Linda Smith or Karen Anderson to work the event, or call the office.

# Submit a Prayer Request Anytime

Use the link below to submit a Prayer Request anytime. The link will send

an email directly to the Pastor and our

praver



warriors will begin the prayers for your request.

franklinfirstumc.breezechms.com/ form/862a54



#### THIS IS IMPORTANT!

## **Upcoming Safe Sanctuary Training**

The safety of our children is of utmost concern, and our Safe Sanctuary policy provides guidelines for their protection. Pastor Laura will be holding two opportunities for Safe Sanctuary training, and if you work with our children in any ca-

pacity, you will be expected to sign up for one of these options. Please register by Sunday August 18 for one of these sessions so that we can prepare adequate materials and food.

#### Choose from two convenient sessions:

- August 21st at 11:30 AM Enjoy a light lunch as we learn and discuss.
- August 22nd at 6:30 PM Sweeten your knowledge with desserts served.

Your presence is not just encouraged; it's a step towards safeguarding our children's future. Please plan to attend one of these essential trainings. Together, we can ensure that Franklin First remains a sanctuary of trust and safety.

Let's uphold our promise to protect and nurture the hearts and minds of our children. See you there! For more information and to RSVP, please contact the church office.



#### Children's Church Resumes

On August 18, our Children's Church will resume with Rhonda Roberson leading. Her theme for this fall will be "Moving Mountains with God," and the kids will be learning a memory verse every week beginning with John 3:16.

Rhonda will need teaching partners each week to fulfill our Safe Sanctuary two adult requirement. Our children's ministry is key to their faith development and the continuation of our



church's future as a beacon for God in Franklin. Please take your turn and sign up for some spots in the rotation.

# **Small Meeting Venue**

Do you chair a smaller sized meeting here at Franklin First? Check out the new location of our conference table in the fellowship hall. It might be the perfect place to gather your group for their discussions.



# Correct Contact Information?

Please be sure the office has the correct cell phone number, home phone number, address, email, etc. for your family. Confirm with the office if you are unsure.

















"GOD LOOKED OVER EVERYTHING HE HAD MADE

























# Backpack Sunday — August 11th

Invite students and school personnel to join us in worship on August 11 for blessings and prayers as they prepare to return to school. This will be an interesting year for Franklin students and teachers alike as the realignment of the elementary schools will change many things from past procedures. Let's wrap our folks in prayer and equip them with needed supplies.

## Kroger **Community Rewards**

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.

Go to:

#### www.krogers.com

New account users: go to "Register" Create Account

Or Sign-in

Go to: Community – Community Rewards

Click: Enroll now Church #: RK151



# **Leffew Family Celebration**

On July 28, Jason and Amanda Leffew chose to become members of Franklin First as well as baptize their daughter Amelia Lynn Faith Leffew. Amelia's big brother Grayson was an important part of the celebration. We welcome them and look forward to the opportunity to grow in faith with them.













# **New Rooftop AC Units Installed & Working!!**

The new rooftop AC units have been installed and are working efficiently. During the spring service on May 8, 2024, a technician found one of our church's rooftop units was only cooling at 25-30% efficiency due to a clogged evaporator coil. The trustees decided to replace both 20-year-old units rather than repair them, as repair costs were high.

The Finance Committee and Church Council chose JBS Heating and Air for the installation, costing \$22,750, which was \$7,914 less than other quotes. Ben Haws of JBS has maintained our units for the past three years.

Although the rooftop units were 20 years old, their replacement was an unexpected expense at this time. Contributions to cover this expense are appreciated. You can donate online here or make checks payable to Franklin First UMC with "AC Units" in the memo line. Checks can also be mailed to the

church or placed in the sanctuary offering plates. Or give online on our website: <a href="https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZMM2/home">https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZMM2/home</a>. Thank you for your continued support.

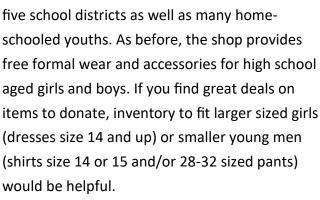


## **Angel Shop Updates**

You will want to check out Jenny Chilcutt's new and improved Angel Shop Boutique. Using grant money from the West Ohio Conference, she was able to purchase new racks for dresses and shoes as well as a better display set up for jewelry. This new equipment will facilitate a better flow for multiple shoppers.



Last year the Angel Shop served students from schooled youths. As before, the shop provides aged girls and boys. If you find great deals on (dresses size 14 and up) or smaller young men (shirts size 14 or 15 and/or 28-32 sized pants)



Jenny is hoping to extend her advertising reach this year







and pick up some clientele from private schools. The shop will be open on Sundays beginning August 11 through the end of September except for Labor Day weekend. Donations of gently used formal wear will be welcomed.



Save the Date

Franklin First United Methodist Church

Grandparents Sunday

September 8, 2024

Grandparent's Sunday will be September 8 and we will be having a special service followed by fellowship. Invite, invite, invite! It will be a wonderful day.

## Worship in the Park—Indoors!







You know what they say about the best laid plans, right? The weather was sauna -like on July 14, so our park worship was held in the air-conditioned sanctuary. It was a fun service with camp songs and a hymn sing, a pop quiz, and a relaxed atmosphere.

Connie Bolinger grilled for us and we enjoyed a potluck picnic.

Next year, we will be using a different special summer Sunday worship fun day that will keep us in the air conditioning and out of threatening weather. Details will wait until 2025, but you won't want to miss it.

# **Free Clinic Update**

Franklin First's Free Medical Clinic operates weekly on Tuesday evenings. Registration runs from 5:30 -6:30, 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 continue to spread the word that this resource is available. We like to see new patients connect with us.

# Your Generosity Sustains Ministry

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.







## **2024-2025 Tutoring**

Principal Jim Rhoades has been assigned to Gerke Elementary, which will house all Franklin first graders. Franklin First has committed to tutoring in partnership with Mr. Rhoades. We are again recruiting tutors to work on reading skills with early elementary students identified by the school as in need of help. School staff provides the curriculum. We will be flexible with our start date, as the new school configuration will require some time for staff to get organized.

In the past, the program met weekly on Thursdays from 3:15 until approxi-

mately 4:30 (or when your assigned student has been picked up). If you are not available for every week, we have subs who can fill in – or you can volunteer as a substitute. All tutors must have had a background check, and we will provide that if you need one.

The schedule during tutoring operates as follows:

3:10-3:30 Gym time

3:30-3:45 Snack time

3:45-4:30 Tutoring time

4:30 Pickup time



Tutoring is a great way to bless a child, helping them to achieve their very best. Students and tutors often form a great bond of friendship. Talk to Linda Smith, Karen Anderson, or Pastor Laura to sign up or with questions.



# **Weekend Snack Pack Program**

Franklin First will be partnering with Principal Jim Rhoades at Gerke Elementary to provide snack packs for students. Many of our local families struggle with food insecurity and rely on school meals to help with their children's nutrition. The snack pack program provides shelf-stable snacks to help families through

those days without school meals. The bags are packed on Wednesday afternoons beginning at 1:30 in the Mission Room on the third floor. The school picks them up on Thursday for student distribution on Friday. You are welcome to help

pack the bags, and donations to the program are always appreciated. Please talk to Linda Smith or Karen Anderson if you are interested in helping. We will let you know as soon as we can when this ministry will start for the fall.





#### Women's Circle Kick Off Cookout

Women's Circle cookout on Monday, August 26th at 6:30 at Monica Rhude's home 4656 Shaker Rd. Bring a dish to share, meat and drinks will be provided. We will be discussing our upcoming events! Please come and bring a friend! Watch your church announcements for any changes due to weather. Any questions please call Monica at 513-594-8890

#### 2024 at Franklin First

August		September	
Missions Team begins to collect cleaning products for		3	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm
The Pantry		4	Choir & Bell Rehearsal Stats,
6	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm	8	Choir Returns to Worship
6	National Night Out	8	Grandparents Sunday
11	Backpack Sunday	8	Angel Shop, 12:30—2pm
11	Angel Shop Opens, 12:30—2pm	8	Men's Group, 7 pm
13	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm	9	Women's Circle Meeting; 6:30 pm
14	Endowment Team; 2:30 pm	10	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm
14	Staff Parish Relations, 6:30 pm	11	Finance Committee Meeting, 2:15 pm
18	Children's Church Resumes	15	Angel Shop, 12:30—2pm
18	Angel Shop, 12:30—2pm	16	Church Council Meeting; 6:30 pm
20	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm	17	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm
21	Safe Sanctuary Training, 11:30 am	22	Homecoming Sunday
22	Safe Sanctuary Training, 6:30 pm	22	Angel Shop, 12:30—2pm
25	Angel Shop, 12:30—2pm	24	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm
26	Women's Circle Kickoff Cookout, 6:30 pm	29	Angel Shop, 12:30—2pm
27	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm		

# **Upcoming in October**

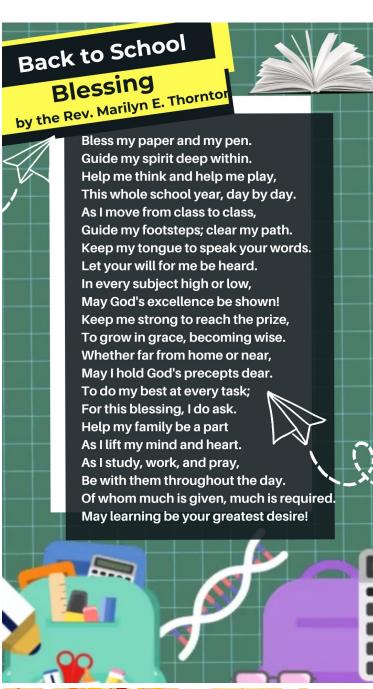
- Missions Team begins to collect paper products for The Pantry
- ♦ Noodle-making begins

# Happy 88th Birthday Jackie!

Last Sunday, many Franklin First friends came together to celebrate Jackie Messmore's special day. What a wonderful gathering







#### **Choir Restarts**



Get ready to be inspired! Our
Choir and Handbell Choir rehearsals kick off on Wednesday, September 4th at 6:30
PM and 7:30 PM respectively. We invite you to join
us as we prepare to fill our sanctuary with beautiful
music starting September 8th. Your voice or musical
talent would be a wonderful addition to our choir!

# Franklin First Permanent Endowment Fund

Franklin First's Permanent Endowment
Fund was established as a long-term way
to invest in the future generations of
Franklin First worshipers. Whether we give
through an estate plan or as part of our
regular giving, the Endowment Fund
provides a way for future disciples to carry
on the work of the Lord. If you are
interested in learning more about
contributing to the Franklin First
Endowment Fund, please email us
at: office@franklinfirstumc.org



#### Give Franklin First a Review!

Take a moment to tell others what you like about Franklin First. Use the link below to give us a review on Google. The more positive reviews and interaction, the better placement we receive when individuals search for a church in Franklin.

https://g.page/r/CebjXokui9PHEB0/review

# MOTIVATED BY GRACE, NOT BY FEAR BY: Rev. Joseph Yoo

My wife and I were walking around the streets of Vegas years ago when we (along with all the other tourists) were accosted by a man holding a large sign

with a list of sins.

"You're all going to hell," he shouted. "Unless you repent!" I bet he's a real charmer at parties.



He was trying to har-

ness the fear of hell and the fear of God to warn us that unless we stopped engaging the things on his list and repent, we were all doomed for an eternity in hell. Or something.

Fear is an excellent motivator. It's a fantastic tool to harness to try to curb/control behavior. Our politicians do it all the time.

However for us, Christians, I fully believe that how you get a person to your church — how you get them to believe in God — is what you have to do to keep them there. If you guilt and shame people into your church, you're going to have to keep them feeling guilty and ashamed for them to stay. If you entertain someone into your church, you'll have to keep them entertained so that they stay. And yes, if you scare people into the church, you'll have to keep them scared.

But a fear-based relationship is the antithesis of what God desires.

#### YOU MUST REPENT!

We're even told that there is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear (1 John 4:18a). Fear can lead us to repentance, but I genuinely don't believe that's



Join our Faith Seekers group on Sunday

mornings at 9:15 am.
All are invited!

God's MO. Paul even asked, "Don't you realize that God's kindness is supposed to lead you to change your heart and life?" (Romans 2:4).

I started to wonder, as we picked up the pace to get away from the zealous sign-holder: does grace come first or does repentance come first?

I think Jesus beautifully answers that question with the story about the Lost Son in Luke 15. The younger son, after ruining his family and then ruining his life, decided that he needed to go back home and at least ask his father to hire him as a servant because being a servant in his father's house was far better than the situation he created for himself.

On that long trek home, he worked out an apology and (I like to think) was rehearsing it so that he wouldn't forget a single word because who knows how emotions may trip him up when he's confronted by his — presumably — angry father.

The father however, Jesus says, waited for that son to come home every day, looking over the horizon wondering if today might be the day he got his son back. When he saw his son returning, the father bolted up and ran to his wayward son. As the son attempted his rehearsed speech, the father cut him off mid apology and gave the kind of bear hug only a father could give.

Grace came running towards the young son before he could even finish his apology.

Grace comes before repentance.

#### **RETURNING TO GRACE**

I know that for many of us the word "repentance" (or repent) comes with a lot of baggage. It was never used in a grace-filled way but often used as a threat.

The Hebrew word for repent is t'shuva which means "to return."

So when we repent, it doesn't have to be dramatic as a "turn or burn" vibe. It's simply us returning to the life that we were always meant to live; it's us returning to the path that God always wanted us to be on; it's us returning home, to the arms of God. It's returning home so that we can restore what we may have marred: the image of God within us.

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

We repent, not to escape punishment— but we repent because we experienced grace and we know we were made for more than what we are in that moment. We repent and move towards becoming the very person God always had in mind for us.

Grace restores us. Grace transforms us. Those who encountered God's grace are forever changed; forever marked by that experience and encounter.

For our prodigal, wayward son, grace restored him to his rightful status as an heir; a son. And not only was he restored, he was celebrated. The grace of his father mended the broken image that the young man had of himself. Grace brought him a new beginning; a new life out of death.

When God's grace and kindness leads us to repentance, we are forever changed because our view of ourselves have changed. We now know who we really are (and always have been): a beloved child of God.

Grace has given us new life. Grace has shown us that we are truly created in the image of God. And what we have now seen can never be unseen again.

Joseph Yoo is the author <u>When the Saints Go</u>
<u>Flying in</u>. He is a West Coaster at heart contently living in Houston, Texas with his wife and son. He serves at Mosaic Church in Houston. Find more of his writing at josephyoo.com.

Taken from: <a href="https://www.umc.org/en/content/motivated-bv-grace-not-bv-fear">https://www.umc.org/en/content/motivated-bv-grace-not-bv-fear</a>

# Sunday Worship

We are always looking for individuals to assist with Sunday Worship. If you are interested in helping as an usher or greeter, please contact the office.

# **Birthday**

_	
August 01	Cheryl Krasnonski
August 01	Callie Trout
August 02	Dorothy Rayburg
August 03	Linda Smith
August 03	Marna Rogers
August 05	Jim Martin
August 06	Nancy Massey
August 08	Mike Jarvis
August 09	Brian Graves
August 19	Carol Sweney
August 19	Teresa Lass
August 22	Paul Anderson
August 22	Mallory Chilcutt
August 24	Donnie Rogers
August 24	Jennifer Schramm
August 25	Amanda Leffew
August 28	Lilly Moore
August 30	Cole Goodpaster

# **Anniversary**

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



#### Franklin First United Methodist Church 2024 Lay Leadership Ministry

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



#### **Church Council:**

Church Council Chair Mike Smith **Church Council Secretary Amber Ramsey** Lay Leader Mike Smith Lay Member of Annual Conference Tami Chamberlain

Lay Member of Annual Conference Alternate

Kim Chewning Treasurer Tami Chamberlain Membership Secretary **Cheryl Cyphers Financial Secretary** Theresa Fultz Church Historian Robert Bowman **Pastor** Laura Saunders

#### **Ministry Team Representatives:**

Staff-Parish Peggy Darragh-Jeromos

Paul Anderson Finance Endowment Paul Anderson

Trustee Chairs Jim Martin, Mike Runyan

Monica Rhude Worship Technology Joe Chamberlain

Committee on Lay Leadership Laura Saunders **Christian Education** Joe Wright, Rhonda Roberson Missions & Outreach Linda Smith, Karen Anderson

Lee Saunders Care Team

**Hospitality & Events TBD** 

Welcoming Ministry **Dorothy Rayburg** Women's Circle Monica Rhude Kaylee Glossip Member At Large **Amber Ramsey** Member At Large

#### **Staff-Parish Relations Committee:**

Chair: Peggy Darragh-Jeromos Lay Leader: Mike Smith

Terms expiring 2024:

Sally Fitzgerald, Karen Anderson, Patti Noland

Terms expiring 2025 Cheryl Cyphers, Mishelle Dicken

Terms expiring 2026

Sue Fullen, Peggy Darragh-Jeromos, Pam Trout

Trustees: Co-Chairs: Jim Martin, Mike Runyan

Terms expiring 2024: Jan Abell, Jim Martin, Trisha Dicken

Terms expiring 2025:

Cody Chilcutt, Mike Runyan, Connie Bolinger

Terms expiring 2026:

Gary Ogden, Joe Chamberlain, Joe Wright

**Committee on Lay Leadership (Nominations):** 

Chair: Pastor Laura Saunders Mike Smith, Lay Leader

Ken Smith, Shirley Berold Terms expiring 2024:

Terms expiring 2025:

Kathy Martin, Peggy Darragh-Jeromos

Sally Fitzgerald, Karen Anderson Terms expiring 2026:

Finance Committee: (By virtue of office.)

Chair Paul Anderson Treasurer: Tami Chamberlain Financial Secretary: Theresa Fultz Church Council Chair: Mike Smith

Trustees Co-Chairs: Jim Martin, Mike Runyan Staff Parish Chair: Peggy Darragh-Jeromos

Mike Smith Lav Leader:

Lay Member of Annual Conference: Tami Chamberlain

Pastor: Laura Saunders

#### **Permanent Endowment Fund Committee**

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 Mike Smith Member at Large (Term: 2023-24) Monica Rhude Member at Large (Term: 2024-25) Ken Smith Pastor (non-voting member) Laura Saunders

Worship Ministry Team: Chair: Monica Rhude

Choir Director: Monica Rhude Bell Choir Director: Tami Chamberlain

Altar Design:

Kay Marksberry, Pam Bishop, Shari Tutt, Carol Runyan

Technology: Joe Chamberlain Lav Leader: Mike Smith Pastor: Laura Saunders

#### Mission & Outreach Team:

Co-Chairs: Linda Smith, Karen Anderson

Madelyn Lang, Karen Anderson, Tami Chamberlain, Marna Rogers, Sally Fitzgerald,

#### **Technology Team:** Chair: Joe Chamberlain

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

#### **Christian Education Team:**

Co-Chairs: Joe Wright (Adult) Rhonda Roberson (Children)

Jan Truesdell, Rachel Chamberlain, Madelyn Lang, Carol Runyan, Joe Wright, Rhonda Roberson

**Care Team:** Chair: Lee Saunders Lee Saunders (phone contact); Charlotte Summer, Dorothy Rayburg, Jan Truesdell, Judy Deskins

(visitation team)



# STEEPLE BELL NEWSLETTER

#### Franklin First United Methodist Church



Pastor Laura Saunders

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

**Faith Seekers Bible Study** Sundays, 9:15 am

	Upcoming Events				
	August 6	National Night Out			
	August 11	Backpack Sunday			
	August 21	Safe Sanctuary Training			
	August 22	Safe Sanctuary Training			
	September 9	Grandparents Sunday			
	September 22	Homecoming Sunday			
	November 2	Fall Marketplace			
	<b>国建筑</b>				

#### Franklin First United Methodist Church

303 South Main St. Franklin, OH 45005

Phone: 937-746-5232

E-mail: office@franklinfirstumc.org

PLEASE PLACE STAMP HERE

