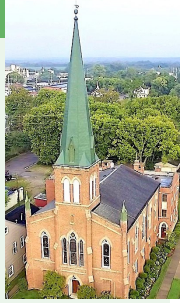




The Steeple Bell— June 2023

Franklin First United Methodist Church

“Under the Green Steeple”



Juneteenth – June 19

The Juneteenth National Independence Day Act was

signed into law by President Joe Biden on June 17, 2021. Perhaps you,



like me, do not know much about the history of this federal holiday. I thought I would share some research into its importance.

On June 19, 1865, Major General Gordon Granger proclaimed freedom for slaves in Texas – a final step in emancipation for slaves. President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, declaring that all slaves in the Confederate States of American in rebellion and not in Union hands were freed. But during the Civil War, emancipation came at different times in different parts of the southern United States. When General Granger issued General Order Number 3 declaring freedom for slaves, the southern rebellion to emancipation collapsed. The Juneteenth holiday derives its name from combining “June” and “nineteenth.”

In 1980, the Texas Legislature made Juneteenth a state holiday, and over the next two decades it was officially recognized as an official observance in all states, except South Dakota, until becoming a federal holiday. In

2016, activist Opal Lee, often referred to as the “grandmother of Juneteenth,” began a walk from Ft. Worth, Texas to Washington D.C. to advocate for the federal holiday.

Celebration traditions often include public readings of the Emancipation Proclamation, and singing traditional songs such as “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” and “Lift Every Voice and Sing.” The works of significant African-American writers such as Maya Angelou are often read. Historical reenactments, street fairs, cookouts, and family reunions are typically part of the festivities. Gatherings frequently include voter registration efforts.

As we intentionally move toward a more inclusive and equal rights society, may we honor all of God’s children.

Pastor Laura

Music Sunday Thanks!

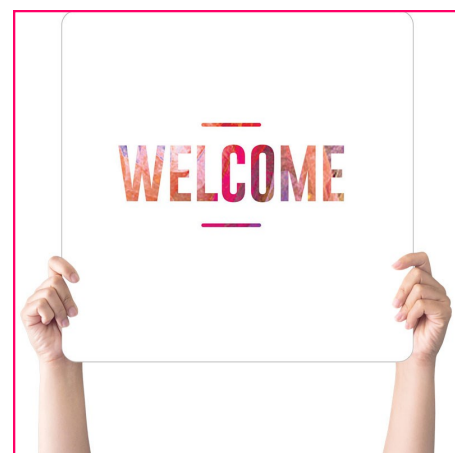
May 21, our musicians gave us God's message in song and lifted our hearts to new heights. Franklin First is blessed with much talent, and the theme "Glory" brought uplifting and inspiring pieces. Thanks to our staff: Monica Rhude, Tami Chamberlain, Megan Duff, and Trisha Dicken. Thanks to soloist Jeff Sams and all those who shared their vocal talents. Thanks to our guest musicians: Priscilla Acuff on organ and Jake and Molly Eyink and Becky Huddilston on strings. What a glorious way to end the choir season!



Let's Extend a Welcoming Hand

We may be having more visitors in the coming months as some area congregations have voted to disaffiliate from the United Methodist denomination. There are people within these churches who wish to remain United Methodist and may be visiting other UM churches. Let's make sure we make guests feel welcome.

As I've shared in previous writings, it is my belief that it is wise to wait until after General Conference 2024 before deciding what future actions Franklin First may want to consider. This conference will be pivotal in determining how the denomination will operate in future decades. West Ohio Bishop Gregory Palmer has consistently communicated that there will be a place in the United Methodist denomination for persons and congregations all along the continuum of theological understanding. If you have questions, please arrange a time to talk with me. I'll do what I can to address them. Pastor Laura





“Twists & Turns” Vacation Bible School

VBS 2023 is going to be a fabulous time for all! This year’s theme

is Twists & Turns and is based on the idea of playing games/gaming. The kids will learn about Jesus from the perspective of Peter. This program is a high energy, action-packed collection of crafts, lessons, music and more. The kids will have so much fun they won’t even realize they are learning valuable lessons about our relationship with Jesus!

The VBS program is July 18-20 from 6pm-8pm and is for kids entering 1st grade through 6th grade and the online registration site is open. Please invite kids to come! This is one of the biggest opportunities we have as a congregation to open up our church and allow the community to see how welcoming and loving we are! And we are doing it by reaching the future of our community - our kids! I enjoy partnering with all of you in this endeavor, whether you are an active volunteer in the program or someone who prayerfully supports the ministry.

In Christ, Chrissie Womack

My Dad, My Teacher

From the very start, my dad’s been there,
Teaching me to ride my bike without a care.
When my toys broke, he fixed them with a grin,
And when I needed help, he always pitched in.

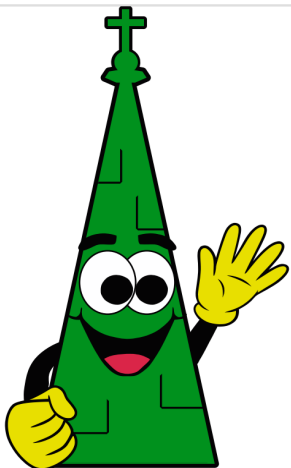
Through every scrape and tear, he wiped away my fears,
Making everything okay and drying up my tears.
He’s been my rock, my guide, my hero, all in one,
And I’m grateful for everything he’s done.

He’s taught me to be kind, and to spread my wings,
And he’s always been there to help with anything.
With his patience and love, he’s helped through it all,
And I’m grateful for his support, big and small.

I’m lucky to have such an awesome dad,
And I’m grateful for all the fun we’ve had.
He’s the best friend I could ever wish for,
And I’ll always love him
more and more.

(Written by Reese
Carlington)

HAPPY
*Father's
Day* ♥



Children’s Summer Programming

Summer months are times of traveling and special commitments. We are adjusting our children’s program to accommodate summer schedules. Children’s Church is adjourned through the summer and will resume on August 13. A number of our summer worship services will include special involvement for our kids, and there will be age-appropriate activity bags available for kids in the worship service. The nursery will continue throughout the summer, and the top nursery age will be expanded to include six-year-olds who wish to attend. Thanks to everyone who volunteers to keep our children’s ministry vibrant.



Teacher Appreciation for Anthony Wayne Elementary

Wow! More than 35 loaves of quick bread were delivered to the Anthony Wayne Elementary teachers and staff. Thanks to all the Franklin First bakers who helped express our appreciation to the staff for their care and work with the children of our community.



Anthony Wayne Elementary

Snack Packs

2022 - 2023 School Year




5529

TOTAL SNACK PACKS

That's a Wrap! Another Year of Snack Packs

The final batch of snack packs for this academic year was delivered. Our team prepared and delivered 5529 snack packs to the students of Anthony Wayne throughout the year. We are grateful to everyone who contributed funds, snacks, and time to ensure that kids have healthy snacks over the weekend.



Franklin First Online Giving

Online giving 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:

<https://franklinfirstumc.org/member-resources-%26-giving>

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>



Support “Family Promise of Warren County



This organization was formerly known as “Interfaith Hospitality Network,” and

Franklin First has a history of involvement with this group which seeks to provide housing and services to families that are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Family Promise has now acquired Shaken Inn on Cincinnati Avenue in Lebanon as a permanent location for their services.

On July 4, they will have a 5K Run/Walk and a Kid’s Fun Run at Armco Park on Route 741. Proceeds will be used for upgrades on the new facility and Christmas in July which provides school clothing and supplies for children. Online registration can be done at brunningendurance.com.

Matthew 25: Ministries — Pill Bottle Donations

Franklin First has been collecting pill bottles for Matthew 25: Ministries to include in their shipments of medical supplies in developing countries. As of March 2023, they have changed the guidelines for accepting these donations. Please follow these guidelines before bringing them to church.

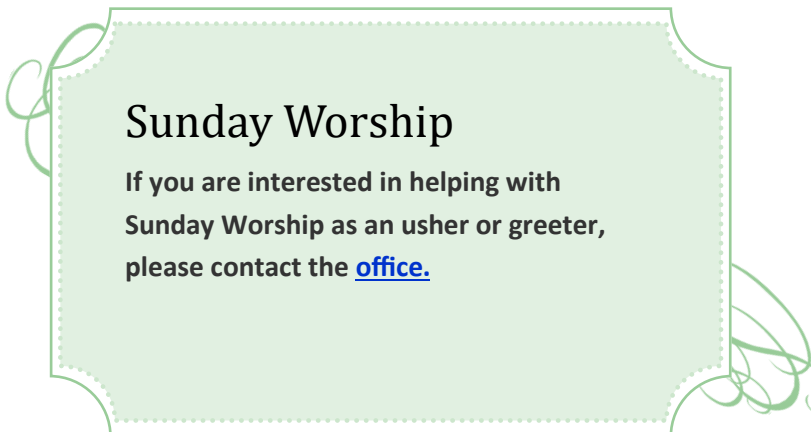
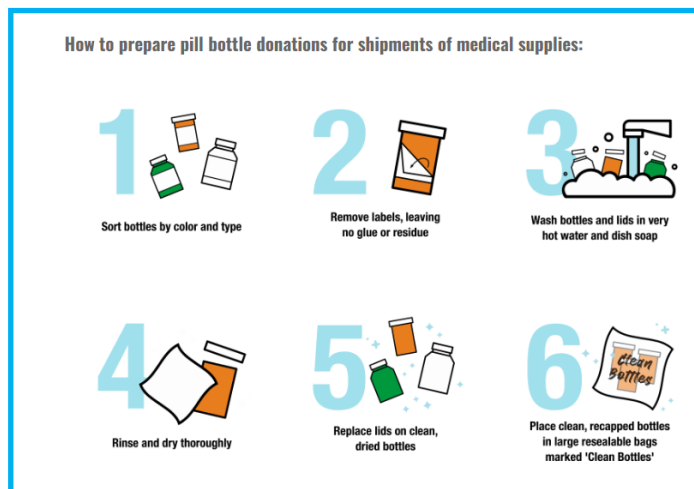
Acceptable collection items include:

- Prescription and over-the-counter pill bottles
- Large and small pill bottles
- Pill Bottles with and without secure caps (child-resistant)

Pill bottle donations should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Bottles included in shipments of medical supplies must have an all plastic lid.

- Bottles should be sorted by color and type.
- All labels should be removed, leaving no glue or residue.
- All bottles and lids should be washed in very hot water and dish soap, rinsed, and dried thoroughly.
- Caps should be placed back onto clean, dried bottles.
- Clean, recapped bottles should be placed into large resealable bags marked “Clean Bottles.” These will be included in shipments of medical supplies.



Franklin First UMC
GARAGE SALE
 August 9 - 12th

303 South Main St.,
 Franklin OH
 franklinfirstumc.org

Women's Circle
 UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Women's Circle News

The Garage Sale is planned for August 9 – 12th. Contributions can be dropped off at the church after July 21st.

Women's Circle Picnic,
 Monday, July 17th at

6:00 pm at the Rhude house. Bring a covered dish to share — meat and drinks provided. More details to follow.



Women of the Year - Mishelle Dicken

Each year on Mother's Day, Franklin First presents the Women of the Year award to someone who goes above and beyond to help in any way possible for the better of the church. Franklin First is blessed by many women who contribute much to the benefit of the church and the greater community. We are very grateful for everyone's contributions.

This year, Mishelle Dicken was our recipient. Mishelle has been a part of the fabric of Franklin First since she was a small child, a member for more than 40 years, and has served in numerous roles during that time. She has taught Sunday School, helped at VBS, served with the youth group, the nursery, Church Council, as a liturgist, a member of Women's Circle and is very active with our music program starting with Children's Choir to Bells, Women's Ensemble, solos to name just a few. Mishelle thanks for sharing your talents and gifts with all of Franklin First over the years.

SAVE THE DATE

Franklin First United Methodist Church

HOMECOMING
 SEPTEMBER 24, 2023
 CELEBRATING 225 YEARS

Fellowship Sunday
JUNE 11
 After Worship in the Dining Room

Worship in the Park
 FRANKLIN FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Sunday, July 16th
 10:45 am
 Outdoor Worship
 Franklin Community Park
 301 E 6th St, Franklin

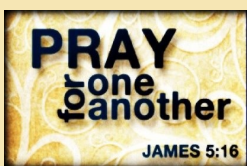
Noon - Picnic & Games

Casual Attire Welcomed

4th of July
WETTEST PARADE
 July 4th
 Stop by
 303 Main Street before 10 am
 to sign up for a

FREE SUPER SOAKER
 Drawing to take place at 9:55 am

Franklin Independence Day



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 prayer warriors will begin the prayers for your request.

franklinfirstumc.breezechms.com/form/862a54

Missions Team Collections

Next Missions Meeting:

Sunday, July 23rd, after Worship Service

School Supply Collection Begins

The Missions Team is collecting school supplies for students and teachers during the months of June & July.

Items from Franklin City School include:

- Headphones
- Pencils
- Colored Pencils, markers, or crayons
- Pens - blue, black, red
- Highlighters
- Loose leaf paper
- Spiral notebook 1 an 5 - subject
- Folders (3) - with pockets
- Binder - 1.5", 2"
- Composition notebook
- Backpack - no wheels
- Glue sticks 4
- Pencil Box/Pouch
- Scissors
- Erasers
- Dry Erase Markers
- Binder Tab Dividers



Franklin City Schools are offering a free summer breakfast/lunch program to all students ages 18 and younger.

The breakfast program at **Anthony Wayne Elementary, 16 Farm Ave, Franklin, OH 45005** will run Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and the lunch program will run 11:30 am to 12:00 from June 5th through June 30th.

We will be closed, Monday, June 19th.

If you have any questions , contact Lori Feltner, Food Service at 937-743-8602

Permanent Endowment Fund

The Permanent Endowment Fund was established to provide a long-term source of income for Franklin First

church. The intent is for the funds to be held in perpetuity, where only the income from the funds can be used. By giving to this fund through your will and estate planning, you can establish funding for future generations. This means that your grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren of the community will witness the love of God through the ministry of Franklin First. Contact Pastor Laura or Ken Smith for more information.



Birthdays

June 02	Mary Harville
June 02	Christian Lucas
June 03	Tiffany Chilcutt
June 06	Cheryl Cyphers
June 06	Judy Thomas
June 08	Connie Bolinger
June 09	Julie Abell
June 10	Megan Duff
June 14	Nancy Osborne
June 16	Robert Bendel
June 16	Shari Tutt
June 23	Barry Daugherty
June 24	Tom Rayburg
June 25	Marty Wright
June 26	Lily Smith
June 26	Tyler Smith
June 30	Kathy Martin

Anniversaries

June 14	Joseph & Rachel Chamberlain
June 12	Andrew & Macie Goodpaster
June 27	Bill & Carol Hatfield
June 27	Lee & Pastor Laura Saunders
June 20	Jan & Jerry Truesdell

Class of
2023



GRADUATION CONGRATULATIONS

Graduations are important achievements. These milestones mark the culmination of hard work and are stepping stones to new seasons in life. Congratulations to all those who graduated this year. May God be with you in your next steps.



EMMA CORRINE BURNS

Emma, the granddaughter of Patti Noland, graduated on May 7, 2023 from The Ohio State University Summa Cum Laude with a major in Animation.

Ohio State University has agreed to fully fund 3 years of living expenses and college expenses as she attends graduate school beginning in the Fall of 2023



ALEXIS BURT

Alexis Burt, granddaughter of Michael and Linda Smith and daughter of David and Merrideth Burt, graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Wright State University.

She graduated with a minor in mathematics. She is employed by MZA Associates Corporation. Alexis was vice president of her sorority, Zeta Tau Alpha and a member of Women in Science and Engineering and Engineers Without Borders.



LAYNE M. FERRELL

Layne, the granddaughter of Sally Fitzgerald, graduated from The University of Akron with a Bachelor of Science in Education, Sport Studies - Sports Management; Cum Laude.

She plans to continue her education at Wright State and pursue a Masters's degree in Business Administration and play basketball.



ANGELA HARVILLE

Angela is Mary Harville's new granddaughter-in-law. Angela, graduated from the University of Kentucky College of Dentistry. She will be serving as a captain at Wright-Pratt Air Force Base.

"I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU.

JEREMIAH 29: 11



DAVIS MEARS

Davis, grandson of Susie Mears, graduated from Ohio State University. He graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration.



DEREK RHUDE

Derek, the grandson of Monica Rhude, graduated from Lakota West High School. He is seeking an internship with a trade school.

Derek has been a volunteer with the West Chester Food Bank and plans to continue volunteering through the summer. He enjoys baseball, football, and online tech games.



LOGAN RUNYAN

Logan, grandson of Mike and Carol Runyan, graduated Lakota East, and is headed for Miami of Ohio in the fall.

He is an actor and singer in all the school plays, and intends to be a history teacher/principal after college.



KATIE TROUT

Katie Trout graduated from Wright State University's Lake Campus on April 27, 2023. She graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor's degree in Technical & Applied Studies with a concentration in Multimedia Design.

She is currently working as a photographer for Lifetouch and is doing freelance design work for various clients.



COLIN CLARK VEGA

"Colin Clark Vega, the grandson of Bob & Judy Bowman, is graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Linguistics from Princeton University (New Jersey) on May 29, 2023."

"I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU.

JEREMIAH 29: 11



Franklin First Team Updates

Care Team Report

January cards sent: (Jan Truesdell reporting)

- 5 Thinking of you & Get well.
- 1 Sympathy
- 6 Calls

February cards sent:

- 9 Valentines
- 6 Thinking of you & Get well.
- 1 Sympathy

March cards sent:

- 7 Thinking of you & Get well.

April cards sent:

- 2 Thinking of you & Get well.
- 1 Sympathy
- 17 Easter

May (through the 11th) cards

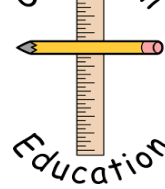
- 2 Thinking of you & Get well.
- 9 Mother's Day

All shut-ins have been called twice since the last Church Council meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Lee Saunders



Christian Education



We spent about 2 months offering Children's Church in addition to the nursery. Starting Music Sunday, we will suspend Children's Church for the summer as it is difficult to get volunteers during that time.

As always, we are still looking for Nursery volunteers.

We are gearing up for VBS which will be July 18, 19, 20. The program will be during the service on July 23. We met on 5/11 and need additional adults to help with stations and kids team rotations. We will meet again on Wednesday, May 31st at 7:30pm. Anyone who is interested in helping is welcome.

Thanks,

Chrissie

From Charlotte Summer

Our adult class is studying Revelations. Mike Smith is leading the class. We have several new members attending. This an interesting study.



Finance

The last Finance Meeting was April 12, 2023 and at that meeting Tami Chamberlain brought forth a

motion how the Church can fund the Parsonage basement cleanup without borrowing money from the line of credit. This motion was approved by the Finance Committee.

Since our meeting the Parsonage basement has been cleaned and the Trustees have worked with the Brotherhood Insurance company. At this time it appears we have received enough funds to finance some of basement. At this time we do not have the total amount the Church will have to finance.

The Trustees have been very busy with the above repairs, Parsonage roof replacement, Church Storm window replacements, Church roof repair and handrails replacements.



Trustees report

The parsonage roof replacement has been completed. The damage

caused by the sewer back up at the parsonage has been cleaned up, we should receive a check from insurance to apply towards repairs next week. Trustees are in the process of locating a contractor to do the work. Plan to get three bids, but we want a licensed and bonded contractor that does the work.

We were approved by insurance for replacement of the storm glass that blew out in a recent wind event. Total cost quoted \$2095.00. Insurance applied our deductible and issued a check for around \$595. Current lead time for installation is Oct or November. Would like to get this rolling to protect stain glass for winter.

Repair of the leak over the alter has been approved. The contract was signed with the roofer, just waiting on a start date.

Finally, we are researching handrail options for the church entry. No firm decision yet.

Historian Report

To commemorate this 225th anniversary of the FFUMC congregation, a special series of nine monthly historian articles commenced with the January 2023 issue of The Steeple Bell where each segment covered 25 years of history and events within the Franklin Methodist community. A celebration of the 225th anniversary of FFUMC is being planned for the September 2023 Homecoming service. A compilation of these articles will be made into a booklet as a permanent remembrance of this event.

- 1.) January 2023: Covering 1798 – 1823
- 2.) February 2023: Covering 1823- 1848
- 3.) March 2023: Covering 1848 – 1873
- 4.) April 2023: Covering 1873 – 1898
- 5.) May 2023: Covering 1898 – 1923
- 6.) June 2023: Covering 1923 – 1948
- 7.) July 2023: Covering 1948 – 1973
- 8.) August 2023: Covering 1973 – 1998
- 9.) September 2023: Covering 1998 – 2023

Celebration of 225th Anniversary on Homecoming Sunday
September 24, 2023 at FFUMC.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact me.
Bob.

Communications

The communications team is asking for your ideas. We are looking for a tag line to be used in promoting Franklin First to the public. Below are some guidelines to consider.

- 1) keep the vision of the church in mind
Making disciples, building Christian community, transforming lives
- 2) keep the message unique and different from others
- 3) keep it short and simple 3-6 words
- 4) describe who we are
- 5) present a picture of what the church is, and what it does.
Mike Runyan will collect them and present all at the next communications meeting.

*Examples of tag lines:
We provide, we care, we deliver.
Living hope for real people
Helping people, changing lives
Thanks for your ideas.*

Missions Report

Missions Meeting
4/18/2023

Devotion-Linda Smith

Members present-Karen

Anderson, Sally Fitzgerald,

Madelyn Lang, Mike Runyan, Laura Saunders, Marna Rodgers, Tami Chamberlain, Traci Easter & Linda Smith.

Adjustments made to Snack packs. We have eliminated the fruit snacks and are purchasing smaller packages of cookies. We are now providing 190 snack packs a week. \$3500.00 in grant money available at time of meeting.

The Noisy bucket collection for Heifer International totaled \$1,000.00. The children chose to send

2 girls to school	\$550.00
Seeds that grow	\$60.00
Share of a Heifer	\$50.00
Honeybees	\$30.00
Hope Basket	\$50.00
Flock of Chicks	\$20.00
Purchase a Sheep	\$120.00
Purchase a Pig	<u>\$120.00</u>
	\$1,000.00

Community Dinners, Rocky has received funds to purchase an additional freezer which he is keeping at his home.

Food Truck Friday April 28th, Toilet Bowl Horseshoes drew people into our tent and materials highlighting upcoming activities at our church were handed out.

Free clinic reports 4 to 5 people per week.

Angel Shop is finished for this prom season.

Teacher appreciation week, All Anthony Wayne teachers and staff will receive a homemade loaf of Quick bread.

Anthony Wayne tutoring was concluded for this year with a pizza party for the students and their parents. Next years tutoring schedule is as follows.

Fall 9/7, 9/14, 9/28, 10/5, 10/12, 10/19, 10/26, 11/9, & 11/16.

Winter/Spring 1/11, 1/18, 1/25, 2/1, 2/22, 2/29, 3/7, 3/14, & 3/21.

Upcoming events to be discussed at May 23rd meeting.

4th of July parade, Worship in the Park July 16th, National Night Out August 1st, and Women's Circle Rummage sale August 9th-12th, and Backpack Sunday August 6th.



225th Anniversary of Methodism in Franklin – Part 6 (1923—1948)

This is the sixth article commemorating the 225th anniversary of forming the congregation that became the Franklin First United Methodist Church (FFUMC), the period from 1923 through 1948 will be described. Our congregation dates our founding to Monday August 14, 1798 when the Methodist Episcopal (M.E.) missionary Rev. John Kobler (1768-1843) held the first religious service in the frontier hamlet of Franklin. For than 50 years, irregular services were held by Methodist “circuit-rider” preachers. A full time minister was assigned to Franklin in 1853 and the current church building was constructed in 1860 and remains our Sanctuary until the present time.

From comparing the 1920 to 1930 U.S. census data the population of Franklin village increased from just over 3000 by more than 75% to nearly 5400. Much of this growth was due to the operation of a number of mills and foundries in the town as well as the steel mill and other factories in nearby Middletown and the General Motors plants on south side of Dayton. Of course, the community was impacted by the Great Depression during the 1930s and also World War II. Franklin’s Methodist church and congregation didn’t undergo any major changes but continued to serve the local residents.

In 1939 the name of the national Methodist denomination was changed to The Methodist Church following the merger of the Methodist Episcopal Church with the Methodist Protestant Church (formed in 1830) and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS) that had been created in 1844 during the national schism within the Church over the issues of slavery and its abolition prior to the U.S. Civil War. The doctrine of the MECS rationalized the existence of slavery as being tolerated within biblical writings even though the Wesleys and most other ME leaders and members outside of the slave-holding states vigorously opposed this practice. Franklin named changed to The Methodist Church.

During most of this period the Church had primarily two organists. Anna M. Stahl (1869–1947) began

~1915 and served until the mid-1940s while Wilhelmina McLane Vinnell (1908-2011) started in 1946 played our organ until 1984. Also, Harry C. Eldridge (1873-1946), an extremely accomplished musician and composition as well as founder of the Eldridge Music Company in Franklin, was the choir director from circa 1915 until early 1940s.

The earliest known photograph of the Franklin Methodist choir is dated to between 1931 and 1936 when Dr. George H. Smith was the pastor in Franklin. A second photograph of the choir from around 1945 also shows the pipes for the magnificent organ that had been built in 1893 and it was used regularly during the worship services and other events.



Fig. 1. The Franklin Methodist Episcopal choir with its director Harry Eldridge and organist Anna Stahl in a photo from circa 1934.



Fig. 2. The Franklin Methodist Church choir in circa 1945 with its pastor Bryce W. Nichols and choir director Mary Lou Mohr.

(One of a regular series of reports on the people and events associated with the history and ministry of the Franklin First United Method Church. Robert Bowman, Historian)



Time spent outdoors can strengthen our faith and reveal a deeper meaning in our daily life. God equipped us with five senses to help us discover and better appreciate the natural world – it’s up to us to step outside, engage and explore.

Few could say they’ve experienced this more than Jack Layfield. In 2019, at age 67, Layfield served as a chaplain on the Appalachian Trail, hiking 2,192 miles through 14 states in 6 months. Layfield’s unique perspective opens the way for all of us to understand how nature can be a balm for our soul and an invitation to reflect.

“In everyday living in our world, all five of our senses are

HIKE ALONGSIDE JACK LAYFIELD

After his Appalachian Trail through-hike was complete, Layfield wrote more than 160 devotions and gathered them in a book, [“On the Trail with Chappy Jack: Devotions for the Path You’re On.”](#)

“I never had that aspiration [to write a book]. I felt like the Lord was speaking to my heart to do that,” Layfield says. Each entry offers a story from Layfield’s hiking adventures, as well as a Scripture reading, reflection and prayer.

Layfield, a retired mental health therapist, served through the Appalachian Trail Chaplaincy, an initiative of the Holston Conference of The United Methodist Church. Each year, a new chaplain hits the trail to build relationships and share the love of God with everyone they meet. All proceeds from Layfield’s book benefit the ongoing ministry, which was established in 2013.

bombarded. We just have so much coming to us 24/7,” says Layfield. Being intentional about spending time in nature, and paying attention while we are there, can help us find peace.

Look

“At a young age I knew that God had created [nature], from the very little things that we see to the great, majestic things,” shares Layfield. “That was one of the things that was so good about the [Appalachian Trail]. There were the tiniest of wildflowers, the tiniest of little creatures. But then also there were the mountains with beautiful vistas when you reached the top.”

Put it into practice: Go outside or gaze out of your window. What’s the smallest thing you see? The biggest? Take a moment to marvel at God’s creativity and your own place in creation.

Read Scripture: [Psalm 96:11-12](#)

Hear

When people ask Layfield why he hiked the trail, he answers, “I love being out in nature, I love enjoying God’s creation. But the other reason is, after a while, I was able to experience the quietness of the trail, where I’m not bombarded by sounds. I felt like I could hear God speaking to me.”

Put it into practice: Layfield begins each day by sitting on his back porch, listening to the birds and soaking in the quiet stillness of the morning. Try this for yourself one day this week. Bring along your cup of coffee and a Bible.

Read Scripture: [John 10:27-30](#)

Taste

“On the trail, I had ramen noodles almost every night,” mentions Layfield. “And people say to me, ‘How did you eat that day after day?’ I can’t really say it tasted bad. I always looked forward to it. I think being outdoors, in nature, it enhances the taste somehow. That’s not a scientific thing, but for me, I think it has.”

Put it into practice: Pack a simple snack or meal and find a picnic spot. Eat slowly, with intention, and savor each bite. Give thanks for your surroundings, the food and anyone who might be with you.

Read Scripture: [Psalm 23](#)

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

Smell

“The things that we smell, we really don’t notice them unless it’s something really outstanding, like an apple pie baking in the oven.” Layfield says. “On the trail, after hikers had been hiking for 2, 3 or 4 months, there was a phenomenon that when we passed a day hiker that would be coming the other way, and when they were at least 20 feet away, we could smell that hiker. It was a pleasant, usually soapy smell.”

Put it into practice: Sit outside for several minutes and close your eyes. Take a few deep breaths. What do you smell? Try to identify more than one scent. Remember that from this earth, God created you.

Read Scripture: [2 Corinthians 2:14-17](#)

Touch

“I have a little garden and I like digging in the dirt... I don’t know why people that garden do. Maybe there’s something about it that brings us all back into touch with what we once were,” suggests Layfield. “Maybe it all goes back to the Garden of Eden. I guess all of this maybe does.”

Put it into practice: Plant a seed. Hold the dirt. Get mud-

dy. Care for your new plant over time and touch the leaves once they sprout. Think about the growth cycle and how you might emulate it in your spiritual life.

Read Scripture: [Genesis 1:9-12](#)

Take the Creator’s peace to others

Layfield remembers many acts of kindness along the trail. A woman offered him a ride in spite of his smelly, dirty appearance. Someone left thermoses of hot coffee and donuts for people to find as they hiked through the snow. A stranger took Layfield and a fellow hiker out to dinner.

He says, “There were people like that all along the way. It’s just amazing.”

Put it into practice: As creations of God, we are called to care for the earth and for each other. After you’ve found peace in nature, it’s time to share it. How will you do this? Host a picnic in your neighborhood or teach a young person the benefits of unplugging from technology, perhaps. Consider the endless possibilities and choose one that will bring the light of Christ to those around you.

Taken from: <https://www.umc.org/en/content/nature-connects-us-to-god>

OHIO RIVER VALLEY DISTRICT INVITES YOU TO CELEBRATE JUNETEENTH!



"On June 19, 1865, General Gordon Granger landed in Galveston, Texas, leading federal occupation forces some three months after the official end of the Civil War. He immediately proclaimed Texas to be under U.S. authority and re-issued the Emancipation Proclamation. He could hardly have expected his action to give birth to an annual African American freedom celebration."

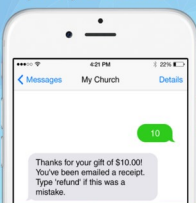
Juneteenth is an occasion to celebrate one of the most important events in American history—the end of slavery in America. Cincinnati’s 36th Annual Juneteenth Festival includes a full schedule of multiple days of dance, music, and learning, centering around a Saturday June 17 day celebration in Eden Park. The full schedule can be found at <https://juneteenthcincinnati.org/>

The Saturday festival includes a kickoff parade, two stages of music, a chess tournament, food and vendors- and several activities for kids, including pony rides, magic shows, education, and arts and crafts. All are welcome- even if it's your first Juneteenth!



Franklin First UMC Text An Amount To: (937) 582-9009

TEXT TO GIVE



- Text the amount you would like to give.
- If it's your first time, you will receive a link to set up the account with your information.
- After the first time, you will just receive thanks for your gift reply.

Franklin First United Methodist Church 2023 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	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 Chairs	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	
Welcoming Ministry	Dorothy Rayburg
Scouting Coordinator	
Member At Large	Amber Ramsey

Staff-Parish Relations Committee: Chair: Julie Abell

(Lay Leader: Mike Smith)

Terms expiring 2023:	Julie Abell, Judy Parker, Sue Fullen
Terms expiring 2024:	Sally Fitzgerald, Karen Anderson, Patti Noland
Terms expiring 2025:	Cheryl Cyphers, Mishelle Dicken

Trustees: Co-Chairs: Jim Martin, Mike Runyan

Terms expiring 2023:	Joe Chamberlain, Brian Graves
Terms expiring 2024:	Jan Abell, Jim Martin, Trisha Dicken
Terms expiring 2025:	Cody Chilcutt, Mike Runyan, Connie Bolinger

Committee on Lay Leadership (Nominations):

Chair: Pastor Laura Saunders

Mike Smith, Lay Leader

Terms expiring 2023:	Sally Fitzgerald, Karen Anderson
Terms expiring 2024:	Ken Smith, Shirley Berold
Terms expiring 2025:	Kathy Martin, Peggy Darragh-Jeromos

Finance Committee: (By virtue of office.)

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

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:	Mike Smith
Pastor:	Laura Saunders

Mission & Outreach Team:

Co-Chairs: Linda Smith, Karen Anderson

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

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

Christian Education Team:

Co-Chairs: Charlotte Summer, Chris Womack

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

Care Team: Chair: Lee Saunders

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

Communication Team: Mike & Carol Runyan, Linda & Mike Smith, Pastor Laura Saunders, Theresa Fultz

Upcoming Events

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

June 4

Graduation Sunday

June 18

Father's Day

July 4

Franklin's Wettest Parade in Ohio

July 16

Worship in the Park

July 18-20

Vacation Bible School

August 1

National Night Out

August 6

Backpack Sunday

September 24

Homecoming Sunday

STEEPLE BELL NEWSLETTER

Franklin First United Methodist Church

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Franklin, OH 45005

Phone: 937-746-5232

E-mail: office@franklinfirstumc.org

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

JUNE

