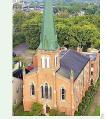


The Steeple Bell—May 2024

Franklin First United Methodist Church

"Under the Green Steeple"







Mother's Day is approaching, a time for remembering our mothers and other influential women in our lives. Although the holiday originated in the U.S. through the efforts of Anna Jarvis, now more than 80 countries worldwide observe a special day for mothers or women. Let's explore some of the traditions.

USA: Second Sunday of May, often observed with family dinners, flowers (carnations are symbolic), and churchgoing. Mother's Day Rule: don't plant your garden before Mother's Day.

Australia: Second Sunday of May, autumn in Australia. White chrysanthemums instead of carnations are tradition. The collection of charitable gifts for lonely, elderly women is common.

Belgium: Second Sunday of May. Children make presents at primary school to give to mothers. Fathers buy croissants and pastries for breakfast in bed, which begins a day of pampering.

China: Chosen day varies. Acceptance of the holiday is encouraged as part of the country's ethic of respect for the elderly.

Ethiopia: Celebrated for three days at the end of the rainy season. Ingredients are brought by children to make a traditional hash recipe. A celebration takes place after the meal, and mothers and daughters anoint themselves with butter on faces and chests while men sing songs.

Indonesia: Celebrated December 22 by expressing love and gratitude to mothers. Gifts are given, surprise par-

ties and competitions are held, and women are given a day off from domestic chores.

Ireland and United Kingdom: Celebrated the fourth Sunday of Lent. Known as "Mothering Sunday."

Japan: Second Sunday of May. Gifts of flowers, especially red carnations and roses.

Mexico: "Dia de las Madres" is celebrated on May 10. Celebrations start with the famous song "Las Mananitas" and families gather to share a meal.

Pakistan: Second Sunday of May. Media channels celebrate with special shows. Gifts and personal notes are given to mothers. Those who have lost their mothers pray and pay their respects to loved ones lost. Schools hold special programs.

Spain: First Sunday of May, the month dedicated to the Virgin Mary. The day is meant to be celebrated with family, and children give gifts created in school.

Sweden: Last Sunday in May, a later date chosen so everyone could go outside and pick flowers to give.

However Mother's Day is observed, we celebrate those women who have been influential in our lives. Whether our mother or grandmother, an aunt or a neighbor, a coach or a mentor – we are grateful for those ladies whose positive characters have enhanced our lives.

Happy Mother's Day!

Pastor Laura

An Amazing Broadway Hits Concert

The April 28 "Broadway Hits" concert was fantastic! Our vocalists and instrumentalists worked hard to prepare for this event, and their diligence was evident. The sanctuary was packed with 170 people and we collected \$685 for the Franklin High School drama & music program. After the concert, many enjoyed a reception featuring a delicious appetizer assortment and great fellowship.

Many thanks to directors Tami Chamberlain and Monica Rhude for their leadership and creativity in fashioning such a fun concert. Voices from the audience were singing along to their favorite tunes and there were abundant smiles all around.

In addition, we extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who supported the concert in various capacities. From the greeters who welcomed us with smiles to the ushers who guided us to our seats, from the kitchen crew who prepared a splendid reception to the trustees who adeptly managed the Main St. construction issues, and to all the guest performers and contributors – your efforts created a symphony of fellowship and service.

We also thank the City of Franklin for their help. Even though road construction directly in front of the church created challenges, the city moved steel plates into place for safe handicapped and front door entrance.

Again, thank you musicians! You are amazing, talented people! It was a fun afternoon.



















Heifer International

Congregation, you were very generous with your support of our children's mission work during Lent. Their "noisy bucket" raised \$938.54 for Heifer International. The kids will be choosing their purchases soon.

Jan Abell was our winner for guessing the closest weight and money total of the Noisy Bucket offering. He was presented the "Franklin Heifer" award and a \$25 Chick-fil-A gift certificate.

Thank you for your support! Remember, you can be filling the small noisy buckets that the kids gave out for future Heifer International campaigns.





The summer months can get very busy, so please use this opportunity to mark these special dates on your calendar:

:		
	May 5	Volunteer Recognition Sunday
	May 8	Anthony Wayne Staff Appreciation bread baking deadline
	May 12	Mother's Day worship celebration
	May 19	Music Sunday & Pentecost
	May 27	Franklin's Farmer Market starts, running through Sept. 14 – weekly Saturday mornings
	May 27	Memorial Day parade at 10:00, new route/check city website
	June 2	Graduation Sunday
	June 16	Father's Day worship celebration
	July 4	Independence Day Parade, check city website for details
	July 14	Worship in the Park @ Franklin Community Park, large shelter house
	July 16-18	Vacation Bible School from 6:00 – 8:00 pm
	July 21	VBS program in worship
	August 6	National Night Out from 5:30 – 8:30 pm
	August 11	Backpack Sunday
	1 1 10	Free of Parks Control of Control

Summer Sermon Series:

August 19

July-August "Friends in Low Places: A Study of the Gospel of Luke"

Franklin's first day of school

Exploring God's World" Vacation Bible School

Genesis 1:31 "God looked over everything He had made. It was good, so very good."

Mark your calendars for July 16-18 for a fun VBS experience! Kids from kindergarten through 6^{th} grade will have a blast at the "Exploring God's World" program. (There will be no pre-school class this year.) Celebrating the world God gave us, kids will learn that God's creation is incredibly beautiful and worthy of our care. Classes will run from 6:00-8:00 each evening. Please let Director Rhonda Roberson know if you will be able to help with VBS.





Children's Ministry

Our Children's Church will take a break over the summer months as families travel and engage in other activities. Our last class for the spring will be on May 19. We will resume Children's Church on August 19.

Nursery will continue throughout the summer, and we appreciate those who are willing to take a turn in caring for our kids. Please sign up on the electronic schedule that Theresa sends out. If your plans change and you are unable to be here on a Sunday you signed up for, please arrange for a replacement. Thank you!

Memorial Day Remembrance

Memorial Day started as a remembrance of soldiers who died in the Civil War (1861-1865), but eventually became a time to honor those who died serving the United States in any war. Did you know that 620,000 Americans died in the Civil War? Compare that to the 644,000 who have died in all other U.S. wars combined. Staggering, isn't it?

We wear red poppies to remember the fallen. May God hasten the day when "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation 5/27/2024

Nemorial

Day

May God hasten the day when "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore."

Isaiah 2:4

shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore." Isaiah 2:4



Snack Packs

Our school year is ending soon, and with it our 2023-2024 snack pack program. We are finishing the year by providing 250 snack packs weekly to Anthony Wayne Elementary. This ministry has grown significantly, and its goal is to service students who face food scarcity on the weekends when school lunches are not available.

The Franklin City School System is realigning the elementary schools for the coming year. We will be providing snack packs again, but the details are yet to be worked out. You are encouraged to continue your support over the summer. Thank you to those who pack the snack packs every week and thank you to those who have provided funding and/or food items this school year.



Angel Shop

Join us for a day of giving at the Angel Shop! May 5th, 1:00 - 4:00 PM, marks our special Donation Day. It's the perfect time to declutter and donate to a great cause. Your contributions of clean, gently-loved formal attire and accessories will make a significant difference.

With prom season behind us, let's embrace the spirit of spring cleaning! We're accepting:

- Elegant gowns and dresses
- Men's dress shirts, suits, and jackets

- Stylish ties and belts
- Fashionable shoes
- Chic purses
- Strapless bras
- Brand-new makeup

Your generous donations will help our youth shine at their upcoming homecoming and prom events.

Don't miss this chance to check out our shop and support our community's teens in style!

Spread the word, and let's make this Donation Day a success!



The next Women's Circle
Meeting is on Monday, May
13th at 6:30 pm at Calypso
Café & Bakery. Meal orders
will be taken in advance of the
meeting. Please reach out to
Monica or the office if you
would like to place an order in
advance of the meeting.



May 2024 at Franklin First

		12	Mother's Day/Ascension Sunday
Missio	ns Team begins to collect baby care items	13	Women's Circle, 6:30 pm (Calypso)
Teacher Appreciation Month Activity		14	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm
		14	Missions Meeting, 6:30 pm
1	Snack Pack Packing; 1:30 pm	15	Final Snack Pack Packing; 1:30 pm
1	Choir Rehearsal; 6: 30 pm	15	Endowment Team; 2:30 pm
1	Bells Rehearsal; 7:30 pm	15	Choir Rehearsal; 6: 30 pm
		15	Bells Rehearsal; 7:30 pm
5	Volunteer Recognition Sunday		
5	Men's Group, 7 pm	19	Pentecost—Music Sunday
		20	Church Council, 6:30 pm
7	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm	21	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm
8	Snack Pack Packing; 3 pm	21	VBS Planning, 6:30 pm
8	Finance Committee; 2:30 pm		
9	Clergy Cluster, 11 am	24	Franklin Schools Last Day of School
9	Teacher Appreciation Event		
	Delivery of Bread to Anthony Wayne	27	Memorial Day/Memorial Day Parade
		28	Free Medical Clinic, 5:30 pm

Rirthdays

DII tiiuuys			
May 01	Jessica Lucas		
May 09	Pam Trout		
May 11	Sutton Brannon		
May 11	Jennifer Chilcutt		
May 12	Hayden Chamberlain		
May 13	Bellamy Dillon		
May 15	Charlotte Summer		
May 16	Hiram Fullen		
May 17	Mariah Hynes		
May 18	Nell Daugherty		
May 20	Andy Kuntzman		
May 27	Pam Bishop		

Anniversaries

May 27

May 29

May 31

May 20	Karen & Paul Anderson
May 22	Carol & Orval Sweney
May 22	Rick & Tami Chamberlain

Greg Cyphers

Serenity Hill

JoAnn Achtermann



Men's Group

All men are invited to the monthly meeting of Franklin's Men's Group on the second Sunday of the month at 7:00 pm. Grow in faith and in service to others with Christian brothers. The

next meeting is scheduled for Sunday, May 5th.



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



Do you have a child or grandchild graduating?? Send the office a photo and the graduation details, (school, degree, activities, etc..) for the June newsletter and slide show during Worship on June 2nd. Submit to the office by May 28th.



General Conference

The General Conference of the UMC is taking place in Charlotte NC as I write this. The first week is completed and the second week has commenced. The second week is the timeframe when most of the legislative motions come to the delegates for vote. The General Conference is the top legislative body of the United Methodist Church and is scheduled to meet every four years. Because of the pandemic, this is

actually considered the postponed 2020 General Conference.

General Conference has passed a worldwide Regionalization Proposal, which creates four regional conferences (Africa, Europe, Philippines, and the U.S.) – all possessing the same duties and powers to pass legislation for greater missional impact in their respective regions. Prior to this, the church in the U.S. and the central conferences have had unequal standing in decision-making, with the U.S. in the primary position.

The General Conference has also approved the exit of four Euro-Asian conferences, along with the addition of an East African conference and two additional bishops in the African Region.

General Conference is interpreted in nine languages, which includes American Sign Language, and is facilitated by the work of more than 1,000 volunteers.

I will share more updates in the near future. In the meantime, let us continue to pray for the future of the United Methodist Church and our ministry of making disciples of Jesus Christ.

Pastor Laura

A Glorious Easter

Franklin First's Easter celebration is always resplendent with music, flowers, and a message of hope. Thanks to all who gave their time and talents to make Easter worship special. Thanks again to



Jeff Sams who lent his Thespian talents to our Lenten/ Easter trial dialogues, as well as Brian Graves. Easter is the high point of the Christian year, and our church observes Easter with glorious worship.

Mission & Outreach Team
Next Meeting:
Tuesday, May 14th
6:30 pm
Dining Room





We want to celebrate and thank our amazing outreach partners! If you've volunteered in our community programs, we invite you to join us for a special worship service followed by a reception with refreshments & fellowship.





Music Sunday—Pentecost

Join us on Sunday, May 19th at 10:45 am for a vibrant Pentecost Sunday celebration filled with uplifting music! This special service will ignite your spirit with joyful hymns and inspiring anthems. As we commemorate the descent of the Holy Spirit, we'll reflect on themes of renewal, power, and unity through music that will touch your heart and fill you with the fire of faith.

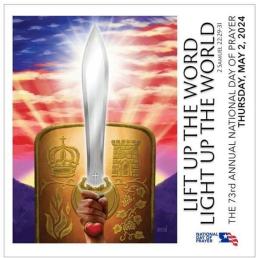
National Day of Prayer - May 2nd

The website for National Day of Prayer makes the following observations and suggestions. Let's each of us be part of praying for our country.

"God is sovereign and nothing comes as a surprise to Him. Whether we face fluctuating economics, threats from abroad, unrest at home, or other troubling circumstances, our Heavenly Father is not caught unaware. Through prayer, we are able to tap into His wisdom, strength, protection, and peace. He is the One who gave us this promise in 2 Chronicles 7:14: 'If my people who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land."

How to pray for America:

- 1. **Government:** federal, state, local: for leaders, as well as judges in our courts, to act with wisdom and integrity.
- 2. **Military:** perseverance to endure hardship, wise leaders who inspire respect from those under their command, protection and support for the families they leave behind.
- Media: that decision makers will realize they can make a
 profit by producing uplifting projects, that Christians in media
 find favor and be filled with creative ideas to share kingdom
 messages.
- 4. **Business:** for impartation of ideas and resources to open principled businesses, especially in areas that needs economic boost, for Christian workers to display Christ-like humility and service to their co-workers.
- 5. **Education:** for a safe atmosphere conducive to learning, for excellence in educators, for equal opportunities for every student to achieve their full potential.
- 6. **Church:** to find a new zeal and commitment to the mission and purpose of Jesus Christ, for unity with and among churches that reveal God's love to the world, for integrity that God's people look and act differently from the world.
- 7. **Family:** unity and love in individual families that reach out in hospitality toward others, to establish healthy relationships between family members.



RE-ENERGIZE YOUR PRAYER LIFE WITH A NEW PRACTICE by Joe Iovino

"Lord, teach us to pray," the disciples request of Jesus (Luke 11:1 CEB). Many of us who lack confidence in our prayer lives ask the same of our pastors and others who seem to have a better handle on that spiritual discipline.

As United Methodists we know the value of works of piety like prayer. The third of John Wesley's three rules for the Methodist Church was to continue "attending upon all the ordinances of God." The list of examples he offered with this rule included "Family and private prayer."

Learning to pray is like learning to ride a bicycle. What we can learn from a book or class is not enough. Proficiency comes through practice.

Additionally, because prayer is a form of communication, there is no one-size-fits-all technique. Each of us needs to find our unique style.

Spending a day or season invigorating your prayer life is time well spent. Experiment with some new-to-you ways of praying. You might be surprised to find what works best for you.

BE STILL

You don't necessarily need words to pray. In Psalm 46 God tells his people who were busy trying to please him, "That's enough! Now know that I am God!" (Psalm 46:10 CEB). Sometimes we need to stop performing for God and simply "be still."

This can be hard at first because it is so unfamiliar. Set a timer for 3-5 minutes, or find some relaxing music or sound effects that will mark the time. Then be quiet and rest in the presence of God.

BREATH PRAYER



Join our Faith Seekers group on Sunday mornings at 9:15 am. All are invited! Breath prayers are another way to become more aware of God's presence. The Holy Spirit is as near as the air we breathe.

A common way to practice breath prayer is silently repeating a single-line prayer with each breath. As



you inhale address God with something like, "Jesus, Son of God." Then, as you exhale, express a request to God such as, "be merciful to me, a sinner." Other examples are, "Creator God, allow me to see your beauty around me," "Holy Spirit, let me feel your joy," "O Lord, show me your way," and "Holy One, heal me." Repeat the prayer with each breath for several minutes. Listen for God.

MULTI-SENSORY PRAYER

Engaging other senses in prayer proves effective for many. Through the centuries, Christians have looked at candles, smelled incense, and held onto beads, crosses, and more as they prayed.

A creative way to do something similar is to pray while working a piece of clay in your hands and contemplating your humanity and sinfulness. The clay reminds us that God is constantly shaping us into vessels of the Holy Spirit. As Jeremiah watched a potter shape and reshape clay, he heard the voice of God, "Like clay in the potter's hand, so are you in mine" (Jeremiah 18:6 CEB).

LABYRINTH PRAYER

<u>A labyrinth is another helpful tool</u> for focusing prayers. A labyrinth is a path marked out in a field, painted in a parking lot, or shown on a carpet that you

(Continued on page 11)

walk while you pray.

While a labyrinth may look like a maze, it is not. It is a liever to share with God that single path leading participants into the center, and back for which you are thankful, out.

While entering the labyrinth, prayers are focused on confession. Participants then pause in the center to read scripture, sing, or worship another way. On the way out of the labyrinth prayers for others, self, and anything else that occupies the mind are offered.

Since labyrinths are not readily available, a finger labyrinth makes a great substitute. You can pray this three-part prayer while slowly tracing the path with your finger. Print a finger labyrinth and give it a try.

Or, if you would rather walk, pray similarly while strolling around your neighborhood or on a nearby hiking trail.

PRAYING SCRIPTURE

Another great source of prayer is the Bible. <u>Praying the scriptures</u> has a long tradition among the faithful.

Prayerfully read a passage by stopping every line or so, and praying what comes to mind. This can stretch us to bring before God petitions we might not think of on our own.

Praying the Psalms, for example, calls us to address every emotion. Praying Mary's *Magnificat* (Luke 1:46-55) will lead us in prayer for the poor and oppressed. Many scriptures such as Jesus' healings and parables, Paul's letters, and others, may deeply speak to our needs, help us to praise, or remind us of a promise of God.

PRAY BY CHECKING IN WITH GOD

You may also pray by simply checking in with God at the end of the day. As you might call a friend or family mem-

Praying while reading the Bible can expand the topics we lift in prayer. Photo by Lance Cpl. Austin Goacher, courtesy of Wiki-

ber just to chat about what is going on in your life, you can have the same conversation with God.

Ignatius of Loyola, a 16th century cleric and theologian, taught what he called the Daily Examen. The Examen asks the believer to share with God that for which you are thankful, moments you recognized God's presence in the events of the day, your shortcomings, and to ask God to prepare you for the day ahead.

FIND YOUR WAY

As there are many ways to communicate with those closest to us, so too there are numerous ways to pray. This list is not comprehensive, but rather a place to begin exploring prayer methods.

Spend some time developing a richer prayer life by finding what works for you. This will

allow you to re-energize your conversations with God.

Joe Iovino works for UMC.org at United Methodist Communications. He may be reached at <u>jiovino@umcom.org</u>.

Taken from: https://www.umc.org/en/content/re-energize-your-prayer-life-with-a-new-practice

MAKE PLANS TO CELEBRATE THAT SPECIAL LADY BY BRINGING HER TO SUNDAY WORSHIP

Baby Care Items this Quarter

The Mission
Team is
collecting
baby items
such as
diapers,
wipes,
formula,
etc. this
quarter.
Bring your
items to
church and



deposit in the bin the front lobby.

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

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

Finance Paul Anderson
Endowment To Be Determined

Trustee Chairs Jim Martin, Mike Runyan

Worship Monica Rhude Technology Joe Chamberlain

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

Care Team Lee Saunders

Hospitality & Events TBD

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

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

Terms expiring 2024: Ken Smith, Shirley Berold

Terms expiring 2025:

Kathy Martin, Peggy Darragh-Jeromos

Terms expiring 2026: Sally Fitzgerald, Karen Anderson

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

Lay Leader: Mike Smith

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
Lay 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)

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 May 5 **Volunteer Recognition Sunday** May 12 Mother's Day **May 19 Music Sunday Memorial Day** May 27 **Graduation Sunday** June 2 Father's Day June 16 July 14 Worship in the Park July 16-18 **Vacation Bible School**

Franklin First United Methodist Church

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Phone: 937-746-5232

E-mail: office@franklinfirstumc.org

PLEASE PLACE STAMP HERE

