

FRANKLIN FIRST
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

STEEPLE BELL

SEPTEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER

THE PARENT'S COMPASS: GUIDING YOUR CHILD TOWARD SUCCESS

As parents, we're our children's first teachers and lifelong cheerleaders. While education continues to evolve, our role in supporting their success stays the same. It's not about doing their homework—it's about creating the environment and encouragement they need to thrive. Here's how to be a steady compass on their academic journey:

1. Make Learning Part of Everyday Life

Spark curiosity at home by keeping books around, discussing current events, visiting museums, and asking questions. Show interest in what they're learning—not just their grades.

2. Build Routines That Support Success

Kids do best with structure. Set regular times for homework, sleep, and play. Help them stay organized with dedicated study spaces and tools to track assignments.

3. Communicate Openly

Talk with your child about their school day—celebrate wins and listen to challenges. Stay connected with teachers and school staff to build a strong support system.

4. Promote Independence

Instead of solving problems for them, guide them to think critically and find solutions. Ask questions like, "What could you try next?" to build confidence and resilience.

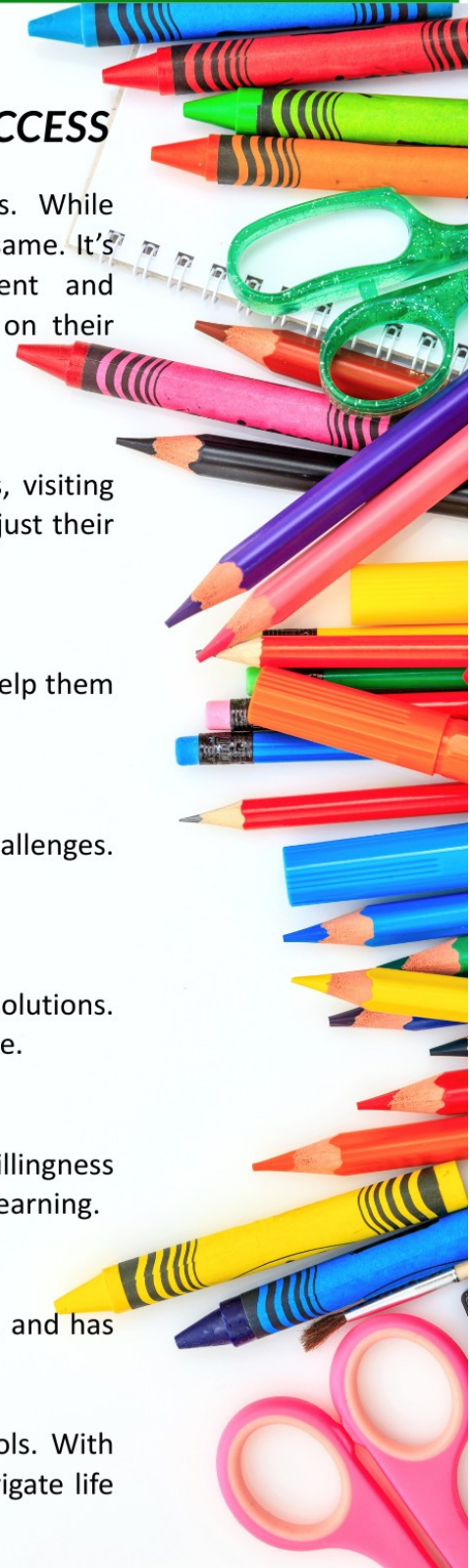
5. Celebrate Effort, Not Just Results

Focus on growth and persistence over perfection. Praise their hard work and willingness to try, even when the outcome isn't ideal. This helps develop a lifelong love of learning.

6. Balance Academics with Well-being

Success starts with health. Make sure your child gets enough sleep, eats well, and has time to relax and play. A balanced life fuels better focus and learning.

Your support, presence, and belief in your child's potential are powerful tools. With your guidance, they'll not only succeed in school—they'll be prepared to navigate life with confidence.



National Night Out

Yearly on the first Tuesday in August, Police and Fire Departments partner with local organizations for National Night Out – a time for First Responders to connect with their community. August 5 at Franklin Community Park, a sizeable crowd braved the hot temperatures to support our local heroes. Franklin First participated with a booth and games. Thanks to the volunteers who made the evening a success. Franklin First welcomed guests to our booth and gave away four backpacks filled with school supplies to drawing winners. We so appreciate our brave and committed officers and fire fighters.



Confirmation Class

Pastor Laura is organizing a Confirmation Class for sixth graders through high school students. The classes will run immediately after church from noon until 2:00, on the second Sunday of each month beginning September 14 and going through March. Easter 2026 falls on April 5, and the Confirmation service will take place on Sunday April 12.



Committee on Lay Leadership

This is the ministry team that prayerfully seeks the leadership for our church in the next calendar year. We are looking for ministry heads, as well as those to serve on ministry teams. What spiritual gifts do you have to share with this faith family? The committee will meet for the first time on Tuesday, September 23 at 6:30 pm. If you have an area of ministry that you'd like to explore, talk to Pastor Laura before that date. It takes all members of the Body of Christ to fulfill the mission of the church.



"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen."
2 Peter 3:18

SAFE SANCTUARY Training

Pastor Laura has scheduled the second session of Safe Sanctuary training for Thursday, September 11 at 6:30 pm. The training will last about one hour, and a meal will be served. Most of our volunteers are due for their required every-three-years background check. You will be asked to fill out a release slip at the training to authorize the church to run this. Please register for the training in advance via [website](#) or by contacting the office .



Safe Sanctuary Training

**September 11th
6:30 PM**

Training will last less than an hour and a meal will be served.



Back to Church SUNDAY

September 21, 2025
Franklin First UMC
10:45 am

- Joyful Worship
- Carry-In Dinner
- Reconnect with Friends

Gather. Worship. Celebrate.

www.franklinfirstumc.org

Back to Church Sunday

Franklin First will be celebrating “Back to Church Sunday” on September 21 with a fun worship service and a carry in dinner to follow. Pastor Laura and Lee will be providing the meat, and you are invited to bring sides and desserts. Worship will include a favorite hymn sing and some surprises. We look forward to regathering after summer schedule absences. You will want to be here!

Franklin First’s next Homecoming celebration will be in 2028 for our 230th anniversary.

Giving Options

Friends, as you are aware, we collect for a smorgasbord of different outreach ministries throughout the year. Snack Packs, the Franklin Pantry, school supplies, the Christmas distribution, etc. are all examples. We want you to rest assured that you are not expected to donate to each and every drive. Pray about which options you believe that God is asking you to contribute toward and feel the blessing of being a cheerful giver. All of these giving choices are above and beyond our regular tithes and offerings. Franklin First is such a community-minded group of folks. Praise God that we can provide these assets to our community.



"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

- 2 Corinthians 9:7 (NIV)



2025-2026 First Grade Tutoring

We are excited to be partnering with Principal Jim Rhoades at Gerke Elementary to tutor first grade students in their reading skills on Thursday afternoons from 3:15-4:30. The children will enjoy a time of recreation, snacks, and working with tutors on curriculum prepared by school personnel. This is a great way to help a child reach their full potential. We will be running a fall session beginning September 18, and a winter session beginning January 8. You can sign up for both sessions or the one which fits your calendar schedule. Safe Sanctuary training and a background check are necessary for all tutors. Talk to Pastor Laura for more information.



Angel Shop Opening for Blessings

Jenny Chilcutt and her crew will be opening the Angel Shop on Sundays after worship until 2:00 beginning September 7 and running through the Homecoming season. During the Prom season in the Spring, the Angel Shop outfitted 36 high schoolers for their special occasions. Jenny has been continually receiving formal wear donations to replenish her supply so spread the word to come and shop!

Jenny also made the decision to open the shop during the big Warren County Kustoms car show on Saturday August 9. She welcomed more than 20 shoppers and gave out some beautiful dresses. Great decision Jenny! The open shop also generated a lot of attention.



FRANKLIN FIRST UMC
303 S. MAIN ST.
FRANKLIN, OH 45005
WWW.FRANKLINFIRSTUMC.ORG

Choir Resumes

September 3rd
at 6:30 p.m.
brings a return
to practice for
our Chancel Choir and the Aspenleiter Bell Choir begins
practice on September 10 at 7:30. Directors Monica Rhude
and Tami Chamberlain are always looking for new singers
and ringers. Why not give our music program a try?



Join the Sunday Team

We're seeking friendly and welcoming individuals to serve as ushers or greeters once or twice a month for Sunday Worship.

As an usher or greeter, you'll play a vital role in creating a warm and inviting atmosphere for our congregation and visitors. It's a wonderful way to share your smile!

If you are interested in helping with Sunday Worship as an usher or greeter, please contact the [office](#).

Noodles—The Tradition Continues

Franklin First's Women Circle (and friends) will be making homemade noodles once again for the Fall Marketplace. It takes a lot of volunteers and dough supplies to accomplish this amazing ministry. The noodles will be rolled out each Tuesday morning beginning September 30th and continuing weekly through October. They are bagged on Thursday mornings. Donations of Gold Medal flour and eggs are needed. Invite friends to learn the process and help roll the dough.

Orders will be taken in advance online. Last year, 572 batches of noodles were made. Incredible!



Fall Marketplace—Save the Date!

On November 1, Franklin First will once again host the Women's Circle Fall Marketplace. The event features homemade noodles and many other homemade goodies, including a delicious luncheon. Outside vendors share their wares just in time to begin your Christmas shopping. This is a major fundraiser, as last year the Marketplace netted \$4,282.69. These monies are used for mission endeavors and for projects at the church.



Grandparent's Sunday

We will be celebrating the blessings of intergenerational relationships on September 7, Grandparent's Sunday. The day will provide a wonderful opportunity to invite your grandparents/grandchildren to a special worship service. Our Chancel Choir will be back with us, and we always look forward to their return.

Threads of Faith: Weaving Generations Together



Grandparent's Sunday
September 7th
10:45 am

*"We will not hide them from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord... so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children."
Psalm 78:4-7*

Thank You for Supporting Our Students!

We are so grateful for the generous support of our congregation in providing school supplies to children in our community. Once again, we collected an impressive amount of supplies, and your giving spirit truly shined!

During the Blessing of the Backpacks on August 10, all children and school staff in attendance were invited to take the supplies they needed. Afterward, the remaining items were carefully sorted and delivered to Franklin City Schools, ensuring that students across the district received the support they need to start the school year strong.

This outreach effort reflects the heart of our church—serving others with love and generosity. Thank you for being a part of it!



Gerke Snack Packs

We will again be providing first graders with snack packs and the Gerke administration is gathering information about family needs. We expect to resume packing in mid-September on Wednesday afternoons and anticipate around 100 packs weekly. Watch for our updates about details. You are invited to be part of this important outreach.

Sunday Fellowship & Snack Packs

After the wonderful success of packing our Summer Snack Packs in June, we're excited to bring back this meaningful and fun event! On **Sunday, September 14th**, right after worship, come on down and be part of something special.

We'll gather for Sunday Fellowship—a time to connect and enjoy some homemade treats.

But that's not all—we'll also be packing Snack Packs for Gerke Elementary students. These packs are filled with nutritious, individually packaged foods that help support children who may not have access to enough food over the weekend. It's a simple act of kindness that makes a big difference.

Whether you're a longtime member or visiting for the first time, we invite you to join us in fellowship and service. Come lend a hand, share a smile, and help us continue spreading love and care in our community.

Let's make September 14th another day to remember!



Children's Church Resumes

Do you agree that teaching our children that faith in God is important? God calls each generation to instruct future generations on matters of faith. Kaylee Glossip is leading our Children's Education program, and she needs your help. Each Sunday, we need a lead teacher, a floating assistant, and a nursery volunteer. Prepared curriculum is available for you to use or you can use your own, and the kids are learning an age-appropriate survey of the Bible beginning with the Creation story in Genesis. They will also be learning worship basics like the Lord's Prayer – not just the ability to recite it but also understanding what its different petitions mean. See Kaylee to sign up or with questions.



New Intermediate Church School Class

High School Sophomore Kaylee Womack, assisted by her granddad Lee Saunders, is starting a new class during the worship hour for students in sixth grade and higher. The class will dismiss during worship following Children's Moment beginning September 14. The group will meet weekly except for Communion Sunday, the first week of each month (along with a few special programming Sundays), when the youth will stay in worship.

Kaylee will begin with lessons on Creation, and her curriculum will progress through the book of Genesis as students learn about the Old Testament Patriarchs. There is no need to register for the class, but regular attendance is strongly encouraged. Students are welcome to bring friends.

From Log Cabin to Legacy: Celebrating 200 Years of Faith in Franklin

The Genesis of our congregation occurred on Monday August 14, 1798, when the Methodist Episcopal circuit missionary Rev. John Kobler (1768-1843) preached to a few families in the log cabin of Captain Robert Ross. Over the next 25 plus years, the itinerant

Methodist “circuit-rider” preachers led irregular services held in private homes and after 1808 also in a small, shared community church building located in the center of the village. In between

visits by the circuit riders, local Methodist “classes” held informal worship services. However, in 1825 James E. Thirkield, John Rossman, Fletcher Emley, Stephen Wood, Thomas Emerson, and their wives created the Franklin Society of Methodists that grew steadily as others joined the society. Worship services continued being held in the members’ homes and in the shared church building until a dedicated Methodist Episcopal church was built in 1832 that was replaced in 1836 with a larger brick church fronting Center (Main) Street, which is the site of the present Franklin First UMC building. Although the Franklin congregation didn’t become a “Station” with the assignment of a full-time ordained minister until 1853, the Franklin Society of Methodists was very active including formation of an organized Sunday School starting in 1833. Finally, 2025 is also the bicentennial year for beginning construction of the Miami Erie canal, which played a major role in the growth and prosperity of Franklin during the rest of the 19th century.



DID YOU KNOW?

Franklin First Milestone

Save Your Change

Our kids will be running

the next Noisy Bucket campaign for Heifer International during **Lent 2026** beginning in February. You can prepare to be part of this blessing by collecting those coins now.



Mission Team: Cleaning Product Drive

This August and September, our Mission & Outreach Team is collecting cleaning products to support The Pantry, our local food pantry serving families in need.

Items like dish soap, laundry detergent, disinfectant wipes, and all-purpose cleaners are greatly appreciated and help provide dignity and comfort to those facing tough times.

Drop off donations at the church anytime during office hours or bring them to Sunday worship.

Let’s come together to make a difference—one bottle at a time!



Women's Circle— Upcoming Meeting



Looking for connection, purpose, and fun?

The Women's Circle is a vibrant group of faith-filled women who gather monthly for service, fellowship, and friendship—and we'd love for you to join us!

Mark your calendar! Our next meeting is on **Monday, September 8th at 6:30 PM** in the Dining Room at the church. All women are encouraged to attend!

We'll kick off the fall season with great conversation and a look ahead to upcoming activities—including the return of Noodle Making! Whether you're new or returning, this is a wonderful time to get involved.

Have questions or want to learn more? Reach out to a member or contact the church office—we'd love to welcome you!

Birthdays

September 15	Cindy Kuntzman
September 16	Joe Jeromos
September 16	Deric Lucas
September 17	Grayson Leffew
September 20	Ernestine Chamberlain
September 23	Tom Steinberger
September 25	Taylor Jeromos

Anniversaries

September 22	Pam & Greg Trout
September 30	Pam & Daran Bishop

Deaf Awareness Month

Roughly 11 million people in the U.S. are deaf or have severe hearing loss, and a large percentage of this group is found among older Americans. September is Deaf Awareness

Month, an annual observance dedicated to celebrating the culture, language, and achievements of the Deaf community while also promoting a better understanding of deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals. This month serves as a crucial time to highlight the importance of accessibility and inclusivity, advocating for equal opportunities in education, employment, and social life. It encourages people to learn about American Sign Language (ASL) and other forms of sign language, which are vital for communication and cultural expression within the Deaf community. By raising awareness, we can foster a more inclusive and equitable society for all.



Looking Ahead

Franklin's Trunk or Treat will take place uptown on Saturday October 18. Our church will be participating and you can start planning your costume and vehicle decorations now. Look for sales on Halloween candy, as hundred of kids turn out for this fun event.



A Croppin' Good Time

The Women's Circle at Franklin First United Methodist Church is hosting a Fall "A Croppin' Good Time"—a week-end of creativity, connection, and crafting!

Event Dates:

- Friday, September 19th | 6:00 PM – 11:00 PM
- Saturday, September 20th | 9:00 AM – 8:00 PM

Join us for sixteen hours of scrapbooking and crafting fun with friends old and new. Whether you're a seasoned scrapbooker or just curious to try something new, this event is a perfect opportunity to share ideas, make memories, and enjoy the fellowship of a welcoming community.

Meals Included:

Saturday features a delicious brunch and a salad & baked potato bar dinner—so come hungry and ready to create!

Register Today: www.franklinfirstumc.org Don't miss out on this wonderful opportunity to connect and create. We can't wait to see you there!



Franklin First Online Giving: Convenient, Consistent, Faithful

Can't make it to worship in person? You can still support the mission and ministries of Franklin First through Online Giving—a simple, secure, and flexible way to give.



Whether you choose to set up a recurring gift or make a one-time donation, online giving ensures your support continues—even when life gets busy.

- Give anytime, from anywhere
- Set it and forget it with recurring gifts
- Support the church's work consistently and faithfully
- Click here to get started: franklinfirstumc.org/giving-%26-member-resources

Building a Legacy That Lasts

Looking for a meaningful way to make a difference in our church's future? A gift to our Permanent Endowment Fund is a powerful way to ensure your generosity lives on. Your contribution will be carefully invested to support our mission and bring hope to those we serve—today and for generations to come. Be part of something enduring. Reach out to Pastor Laura to learn how you can help shape a brighter tomorrow.

Aging Faithfully: Living with Purpose Every Day

“Growing older is easy—all you have to do is breathe. Aging faithfully is different,” says Missy Buchanan, author, speaker, and advocate for older adults. “It requires intentionality. It’s saying, ‘I’m going to continue to grow and live with purpose until my last breath.’”



A lifelong United Methodist, Buchanan has written eleven books published by **Upper Room Books**, offering encouragement for older adults and guidance for caregivers. Her work inspires readers to embrace aging as a journey of growth, not decline.

Practical Tips for Aging Faithfully

Missy Buchanan encourages older adults to:

- **Try something new every day.** Watch a documentary instead of cable news. Read a biography instead of a romance novel. “Be intentional about opening your mind to the things of the world,” she advises.
- **Make the best of where you are.** Ask yourself, “What can I do where I am now? How can I influence people?” Buchanan shares the story of a 99-year-old man in a senior living facility known as the “high five guy.” His simple gestures brought joy to others, reminding us that small acts can have great impact.
- **Embrace your evolving purpose.** “What you are able to do may not look the same as it did once upon a time, but it’s still so important,” Buchanan says.

Adapted from: <https://www.umc.org/en/content/aging-faithfully-10-ways-to-find-purpose-and-offer-support>

Mark Your Calendar! What’s Happening at Franklin First

September

Week of August 31st

31-Aug	Faith Seekers Group	9:15 AM
3-Sep	Choir Rehearsal	6:30 PM

Week of Sept. 7th

7-Sep	Faith Seekers Group	9:15 AM
7-Sep	Angel Shop Open	12:30 - 2 PM
8-Sep	Women’s Circle Meeting	6:30 PM
10-Sep	Choir Rehearsal	6:30 PM
10-Sep	Bells Rehearsal	7:30 PM
11-Sep	Safe Sanctuary	6:30 PM

Week of Sept. 14th

14-Sep	Faith Seekers Group	9:15 AM
14-Sep	Fellowship & Snack Packs	After Service
14-Sep	Confirmation Class	12:00 2 PM
14-Sep	Angel Shop Open	12:30 - 2 PM
15-Sep	Church Council Meeting	6:30 PM
17-Sep	Choir Rehearsal	6:30 PM
17-Sep	Bells Rehearsal	7:30 PM
18-Sep	Tutoring Starts	3:15 PM
19-Sep	A Croppin’ Good Time	6 pm -- 11 pm
20-Sep	A Croppin’ Good Time	9 am - 8 pm

Week of Sept. 21st

21-Sep	Faith Seekers Group	9:15 AM
21-Sep	Back to Church Sunday	10:45
21-Sep	Carry-In Lunch	After Service
21-Sep	Angel Shop Open	12:30 - 2 PM
23-Sept	Lay Leadership	6:30 PM
24-Sep	Snack Pack Packing	1:30 PM
24-Sep	Choir Rehearsal	6:30 PM
24-Sep	Bells Rehearsal	7:30 PM
25-Sep	Tutoring	3:15 PM

Week of Sept. 28th

28-Sep	Faith Seekers Group	9:15 AM
28-Sep	Angel Shop Open	12:30 - 2 PM
30-Sept	Noodle-Making Begins	9 am

“IN ALL THINGS I HAVE SHOWN YOU THAT BY WORKING HARD IN THIS WAY WE MUST HELP THE WEAK AND REMEMBER THE WORDS OF THE LORD JESUS, HOW HE HIMSELF SAID, ‘IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE.’” Act 20:35

Franklin First United Methodist Church

2025 Lay Leadership Ministry

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



Church Council:

Church Council Chair	Mike Smith
Church Council Secretary	
Lay Leader	Connie Bolinger
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
Finance	Paul Anderson
Endowment	Paul Anderson
Trustee Chairs	Jim Martin, Mike Runyan
Worship	Monica Rhude
Technology	Joe Chamberlain
Committee on Lay Leadership	Laura Saunders
Christian Education	Mike Smith, Rhonda Roberson
Missions & Outreach	Linda Smith, Karen Anderson
Care Team	Lee Saunders
Hospitality & Events	Carol Runyan
Welcoming Ministry	Dorothy Rayburg
Women's Circle	Monica Rhude
Member At Large	Kaylee Glossip
Member At Large	Amanda Leffew

Staff-Parish Relations Committee:

Chair: Peggy Darragh-Jeromos	Lay Leader: Connie Bolinger
Terms expiring 2025	Cheryl Cyphers, Mishelle Dicken
Terms expiring 2026	Sue Fullen, Peggy Darragh-Jeromos, Pam Trout
Terms expiring 2027:	Sally Fitzgerald, Karen Anderson, Cindy Kuntzman

Trustees: Co-Chairs: Jim Martin, Mike Runyan

Terms expiring 2025:	Cody Chilcutt, Mike Runyan, Connie Bolinger
Terms expiring 2026:	Gary Ogden, Joe Chamberlain, Joe Wright
Terms expiring 2027:	Jan Abell, Jim Martin, Trisha Dicken

Committee on Lay Leadership (Nominations):

Chair: Pastor Laura Saunders	Lay Leader: Connie Bolinger
Terms expiring 2025:	Kathy Martin, Peggy Darragh-Jeromos
Terms expiring 2026:	Sally Fitzgerald, Karen Anderson
Terms expiring 2027:	Barb Ogden, Charlotte Summer, Brian Graves

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:	Connie Bolinger
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, Mike Runyan
Chair of Church Council	Mike Smith
Lay Leader	Connie Bolinger
Member at Large (Term: 2024-25)	Peggy Darragh-Jeromos
Member at Large (Term: 2025-26)	Jerry Truesdell
Pastor (non-voting member)	Laura Saunders

Worship Ministry Team: Chair: Monica Rhude

Choir Director:	Monica Rhude
Bell Choir Director:	Tami Chamberlain
Altar Design:	Pam Bishop, Shari Tutt, Carol Runyan
Technology:	Joe Chamberlain
Lay Leader:	Connie Bolinger
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: Mike Smith (Adult) Kaylee Glosiip (Children)
Jan Truesdell, Rachel Chamberlain, Madelyn Lang, Carol Runyan, Mike Smith, 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

SEPTEMBER 7	GRANDPARENTS SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 19-20	CROPPIN' GOOD TIME
SEPTEMBER 21	BACK TO CHURCH SUNDAY
OCTOBER 5	WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY
OCTOBER 12	BREAST CANCER AWARENESS SUNDAY
NOVEMBER 1	FALL MARKETPLACE
NOVEMBER 23	THANKSGIVING SUNDAY
NOVEMBER 30	FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

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