



University UMC News

Christ, Campus, & Community

May 2025

Lingering with Libby

Friends,

Many of our gospel stories of Jesus are about how Jesus turns things upside down or over for a more fulfilling outcome from tables in the temple to the way disciples lived their lives. For me this is good news as I have prepared to move and things continue to shift and change dramatically. During all this change I have kept my focus on my call as an Elder in the United Methodist Church and on what is the best way I can be faithful to my calling to be itinerant and serve where the spirit is leading.

In the transition this time I have come to realize even when a church (es) is doing wonderful ministry I may not be the right fit. This is what I learned through the introductory process with the Concordia UMC churches that I am simply not the right person to serve those churches. I am grateful to see that Rev. Tony Serbousek has been appointed to serve the churches in Concordia which puts him closer to his family in Nebraska.

I am excited to share that through further discernment by the bishop, cabinet, and me we have found what I believe will be the right fit to serve at Abilene First UMC. They have many ministries in place like we have shared at the churches here and are open to doing more to connect more deeply with the community. This week I was able to meet with their SPPRC Committee and we have a meaningful discussion about what they have been doing and how they hope to live out their mission. I am extremely thankful this appointment will keep me close to family.

I also realize that my leaving causes me grief for all the meaningful relationships I have formed with the people at Church of the Cross of the Cross, Roxbury United Parish, and University UMC. I have shed more than a few tears. I know that it is only because of all the joys and struggles we have walked through, mine included, that those tears have come.

I'm extremely excited for your new pastoral leadership because I know these new leaders, one for Church of the Cross and University UMC's and another one for Roxbury, will love you deeply and desire the best for you on your journeys of faith and as each church lives out their mission to help people have a relationship with Jesus Christ.

In the coming weeks we will be making plans to celebrate what we have accomplished together and to begin to prepare for your new pastoral leadership, so keep an eye out for that information as it becomes available and when you can offer help with hospitality. :_)

In times of transition, we remember Romans 8:28, " And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

Grace and Peace, my friends,
Pastor Libby

A message from J.J. Martinez

Friends,

I'm the Reverend Juan Josue "J.J." Martinez, the incoming pastor of Church of the Cross and University United Methodist Church beginning July 1, 2025.

Currently, I'm the minister of creative engagement at the Union Combined Parish, one of the largest United Methodist congregations in New England. I was previously the student minister of both the historic Old West Church—United Methodist and Union United Methodist Church. I was raised in the Seventh-day Adventist Church and have been an active member in the local church since I was ten.

I will officially be elected and commissioned as a provisional elder in the New England Conference of The United Methodist Church in June.

In May, I will earn a Master of Divinity in Ecclesial Ministry, *summa cum laude*, from the Boston University School of Theology. I earned a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, *summa cum laude*, from The University of Texas at El Paso. In seminary, I have been president of the Wesleyan Student Association for the last two years, and preached at the historic Marsh Chapel. My studies have focused on Wesleyan historical, liturgical, and sacramental theology, as well as the histories and doctrines of mainline American Protestantism.



I'm deeply passionate about thoughtful worship, engaging teaching, and compassionate service.

I was born and raised in El Paso, Texas—the largest binational and bilingual community in the Western Hemisphere. I find joy in a hot mocha, a good book, and Handel's *Messiah* and Vivaldi's *Gloria*.

I truly look forward to joining you in Salina.

Grace and peace.

Welcome!

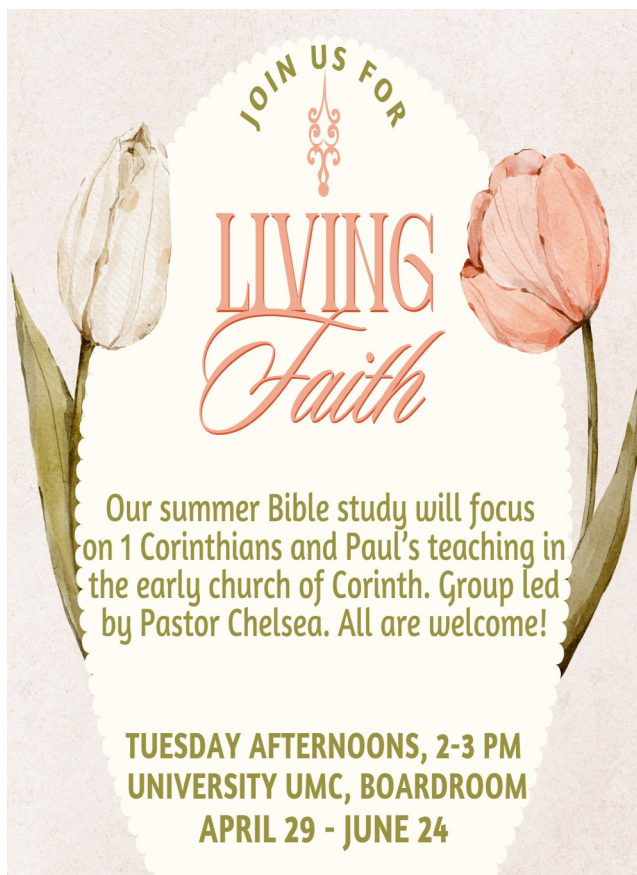
Discipleship News

Adult & Youth Sunday School:

Sundays 9:15am

Bible Study: UUMC Boardroom

April 29-June 24 | Tuesdays, 2pm-3pm



Ministry

In

Growing Your Church's Impact
& Strengthening Connections

Motion



May 17 — Parsons, Kansas, at Wesley United Methodist Church. [Register through May 14.](#)

June 5 — The morning before we start annual conference at Kansas Wesleyan University in Salina, Kansas.

Aug. 2 — North Platte, Nebraska, at First United Methodist Church.

Aug. 16 — Lincoln, Nebraska, at St. Mark's United Methodist Church.

Sept. 13 (tentative) — TBA in the Western Kansas District.

Oct. 4 (tentative) — TBA in the Wichita area.

Each workshop is designed to provide you with practical tips so your church can be as vital as possible while also building connections, both within the church and between the church and the communities you serve.

The cost is just \$15 per person and pays for all materials and lunch the day of the workshops. We'll start at 9 a.m. and will be finished no later than 3 p.m. in each location.



Annual Conference
Salina, Kansas
June 5-7, 2025

Deuteronomy 6:5

Kansas Wesleyan University will be hosting the Great Plains Annual Conference from June 5-7, 2025.

This is KWU's first time hosting our clergy and lay members to annual conference. We are excited to share the beautiful campus and the UUMC building with so many from our conference!

For more information, visit <https://www.greatplainsumc.org/annualconference>

Missional Service Opportunities

Local churches, you can help others by joining the 12 x 12 Club

Become an important part of our ministry of compassion and care!



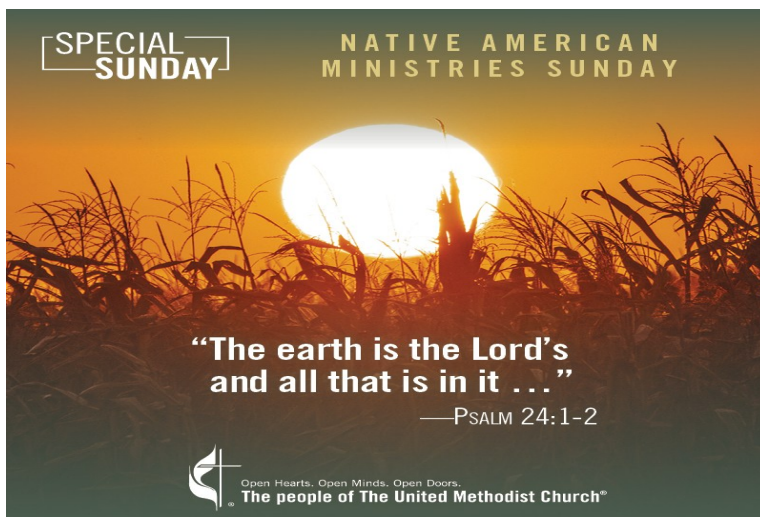
1. Register your church with htapley@greatplainsumc.org.
2. Simply make 12 of each UMCOR Relief Kit <https://umcmision.org/relief-supplies/>.
3. Store them at your local church.
4. If they have not been called for in six months, give them to a local organization, family, school, or business in your community.
5. Repeat the process!

United in Giving: Making a Difference for Native American Ministries

The United Methodist Church acknowledges the sacredness of Indigenous cultures, languages, and contributions to our faith. Through Native American Ministries Sunday, we actively support Native American leaders, ministries, and students pursuing theological education. Your generosity on Native American Ministries Special Sunday ensures that these vital efforts continue to grow and flourish. Join us in celebrating, giving, and praying for our Native American siblings in Christ.

How to give:

- Write a check to your local church and write "Native American Ministries Sunday offering" in the memo line.
- Give online at donate.gcfa.org/NAMS



How can we serve others?

United Methodists have long participated in God's work in the world. We pray, worship, and offer well wishes. We also serve, lend a hand, and meet a need. Through our service, we often find healing for ourselves as the Holy Spirit moves in and through us.

A great guide for finding ways to minister to our neighbors is Jesus' story of the sheep and goats in Matthew 25:31-46. Jesus tells the helpers that they served him by serving those in the greatest need.

- Give to the Blessing Box
- Embrace love, care for the elderly, do no harm on social media
- Donate clothing, give blood, care for your neighbors
- Work for justice, learn about prison ministry, support addiction and abuse ministries



Financial News

Our financial totals for the month of March 2025 are as follows:

Income: \$15,849.48
Expenses: \$59,065.07
Difference \$(3,215.59)

The \$59,065.07 expense includes monies spent on AC repairs.

Monthly Income Budget: \$12,668.00
Monthly Expenses Budget: \$15,829.00
Difference: \$(3,161.00)

Diane, UUMC Treasurer
Office Hours: Mon. & Wed. 1-4pm

Leadership Team Updates

Since our update last month we have had one meeting where we completed the Congregational and Pastoral Leadership Assessment and began discussions about a celebration for our pastors as they transition to their new positions.

We are planning to have a celebration for Pastor Chelsea and Pastor Libby on Sunday, May 25 following worship. This is the only Sunday both will be available before their tenure with us is over.

We will be planning out details and will provide additional information in coming email messages and in the bulletin.

Please be in prayer for our pastors as they prepare to leave and as we begin to plan our welcome for our new pastor J.J. Martinez.

Goodbye

Dillons Community Rewards

Just a quick update on the Dillons Community Rewards. We currently have 47 households participating with a total of \$255.40 collected. That is great! If you still haven't signed up for this free benefit, please do.

The easiest way to do this is:

- Go to your Dillons App
- Click on the 3 bars in the top left corner
- Click on Rewards
- Click on Community Rewards
- Now, sign up. We are University United Methodist Church
- You will need to scroll down to find the correct church by its address.
- That is all you need to do.

In the future you can check and see how much you contribute on that same page. If you have any problems or just need some help, stop by and see me in the office and I can help get you started. You will need to have the app downloaded to your phone before you get started. I can help you with that too! What a great way to help the church raise money!!

Diane, UUMC Treasurer
Office Hours: Mon. & Wed. 1-4pm





**THANK YOU to
Karen Buhler for
the beautiful
decorations to
celebrate Easter
at the Tuesday
Bible Study
Group!**



**Easter décor made
by the O'Rorkes
and Crafters Sunday
School Group and
delivered to our
homebound**



**Maundy
Thursday
Handwashing**

May Birthdays

- 1 Jeremie Eustice
Judi Fisher
Joyce Wiese
- 10 Wiliam Dreiling
- 11 Delores O'Rorke
- 16 Jaylee Jarboe
- 19 Lillian Dreiling
- 22 Carly Redding
- 23 Dan Creech
Jacob Jarboe
- 25 Curtis Cairns
- 28 Jase Eustice
- 31 Louise Robb

Communication Updates

If you have items for the newsletter please send them to Tara at office@theuunc.org.

Please submit your newsletter items by May 21 to be included in the June newsletter.

Would you like to receive the monthly newsletter by email?

Email Tara at office@theuunc.org.

Remember we will not regularly send out mid-week news, but will send out reminders and new opportunities that we don't hear about until after the newsletter is published.



The United Health Ministry Fund recognized University UMC with a certificate of achievement for 15 years of dedication to improving the health and lives of our congregation and community through the Healthy Congregations program!

Thank you to all past and current Healthy Congregations team members in helping us care for our community for 15 years!

Are you interested in how you can better inspire healthy minds, bodies, and spirits? We would love to have you join the group!



Litany in Honor of Women Here and Around the World (adapted) by Stacey Cole Wilson

We remember irreplaceable women, O God. We honor those who nurtured us and taught us to honor and love you, O God. May their example of Christian faith help transform us into your image.

We honor women who feed the hungry, clothe the unclothed, befriend the lonely, and comfort the comfortless. We bless them for unselfishly loving your people as you love us. May you continue to meet their needs as they minister to others.

We honor women grieving the loss of loved ones. May you, O God, continue to comfort them with your Word, spoken and blessed. May we learn to encourage them as they have encouraged us.

We honor women pregnant women, O God. May You shelter them and the children they bear under the shadow of your almighty Presence.

We honor those throughout the world who need your spiritual, economic, and physical healing. May you meet their needs, Holy One, according to your riches in glory, we pray.

We honor all women who have gone before us, named and unnamed. We give you thanks, O God.

We bless those who wept for us, rejoiced with us, wiped our tears, prayed for us, and laughed with us. We give you thanks, O God.

We bless those who undauntedly sacrificed for us. We give you thanks, O God.

We honor all those who stand alongside and for these women. We bless those who encourage them to dream, who bring out the best in them, who help them bear their burdens, and who love them rightly, O God.

May You watch over and keep all your people, these women and all who love them, with your care, gracious God. Consecrate this day for your glory. In the name of the Triune God, the one who parents us and creates us, who redeems us, and empowers us forever. Amen.



LET'S BE FRANK:

Mental Health Matters!

Join us as we get *frank* about mental health!

Drive on thru to pick up a FREE hot dog meal and helpful mental health resources from Central Kansas Mental Health Center.

Thursday, May 8, 2025

5:30–6:30 pm

**800 Elmhurst Blvd, Salina
(Crossroads Building)**



*Supplies are limited—hot dogs and materials available on a first come, first served basis!
Limit 1 per person, must be present to receive.*



REGISTER NOW!

SELECT YOUTH INSTRUCTIONAL

WELCOME TO YOUTH AGES 4-16



**3PM
TO 5PM**

**1ST
ANNUAL
BIKE RODEO**

MAY

**10
2025**

**CITY LIGHTS STAGE
DOWNTOWN SALINA**

FREE BIKE HELMET FOR THE FIRST 50 REGISTERED!

MUST REGISTER BY APRIL 7TH TO GUARANTEE REQUESTED HELMET SIZE.

BRING YOUR BIKES & HELMET AND BE READY TO RIDE!



**SATURDAY
MAY
10TH, 2025**

11:00AM–2:00PM

**ART CENTER
WAREHOUSE**
149 S. 4TH STREET

NEED A QUICK REPAIR?
WE'VE GOT YOU
COVERED! OUR
VOLUNTEERS CAN
TACKLE ELECTRICAL
ISSUES, BIKE TUNE-UPS,
JEWELRY FIXES, SEWING
PROJECTS, BOOK
BINDING, SMALL WOOD
PROJECTS AND MORE.

KIDS WILL BE ABLE TO
MAKE MOTHER'S DAY
CARDS FROM 11–1 PM &
FRIENDSHIP BRACELETS



SPONSORED BY:



KANCycle
Bike Sharing for Rural Kansas

**KANSAS
BIKE MONTH**
MAY 2025

FREE RIDES

ALL MONTH LONG

www.kancycle.org

Mother's Day 5/11/2025





Throughout this season, we explore themes from Revelation and the Gospel of John about what is possible when we believe. The book by Natalya A. Cherry, *Believing into Christ*, may be a helpful accompaniment to the series as we learn more about the power of our belief in Christ, how belief is not only an intellectual endeavor and assent to the power of God to transform, but also a process that helps us use our hands and feet in ways similar to how Jesus used his hands and feet to seek out and address the hurting ones, including our planet and its most vulnerable people and beyond-human creatures.

4/27/25:	"Embodied Believing"	John 20:19-31
5/4/25:	"Circling Toward Food Justice"	John 21:1-19
5/11/25:	"Springs of Living Water"	Revelation 7:9-17
5/18/25:	"A New World"	Revelation 21:1-6
5/25/25:	"The Tree of Life"	Revelation 21:10, 22:1-5
6/1/25:	"Becoming One"	Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21

Prayer List

Our Country, Veterans & Active Military & Families, Leanne Decker, Terry Hauschel, Christina Robin, Steve Blackwell, Kim Duell, Evelyn Maxwell, family of Sarah Toburen Lindblad.

Homebound individuals, Van Lett, Patricia Baldwin, Mike Trow, Vanessa Dickson, Janice Paulie, Chris Dahl, Kristi Hansen.

How can we pray for you?

Send your prayer requests the following ways:

Pastor Libby

785-564-1977

libbythemis@gmail.com

Pastor Chelsea Shrack Bell

620-546-6059

chelsea@triumc.org

Church Office

785-825-9505

office@theuumc.org

Church office hours:

Monday 1:30pm-3:30pm

Wednesday 1:30pm-4pm

Friday 9:00am-10:00am (may vary)

Phone: (785) 825-9505

Email: office@theuumc.org

Please call and leave a message or email us at the addresses to the right to set up an appointment outside of office hours.

Church Staff

Libby Themis, Lead Pastor

libbythemis@gmail.com

**Pastor Chelsea Shrack Bell, Assistant
Pastor**

chelsea@triumc.org

Tara Baxter, Administrative Assistant
office@theuumc.org

Diane Werth, Accountant
accounting@theuumc.org

Rick O'Rorke, Custodian