



OUTREACH



Volume 38 Issue 4

First United Methodist Church

April 23, 2026

Moving from the Back Row to the Frontline By Pastor Troy

A Follow-Up to “Easter from the Back Row” (For David. Here we go Brother.)

Last month, I invited us to look again at the empty tomb from a different angle. To step into the back row of history and witness the quiet, almost unnoticed moment when everything changed. The stone rolled away. The grave left empty. The first whispers of resurrection passing from person to person.

But now that Easter 2026 has come and gone, we must recognize something important: Easter was never meant to leave us sitting in the back row.

If the resurrection is truly the beginning, not the end, then what comes next matters just as much as what we celebrated that morning. The story does not stop at the tomb. It moves outward – into streets, into homes, into real lives, and into a very real, very broken world.

And that movement requires something from us.

Consider what happened not long after that first Easter morning. Peter and John are on their way to the temple to pray. Another ordinary day, a familiar routine. At the gate called Beautiful sits a man who has never walked. Every day he is carried there. Every day he asks for the same thing: money.

And on this day, when he asks Peter and John for help, Peter responds with words that have echoed through history: “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you.”

Then he reaches out his hand and says, “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.”

Now, stop for just a second. Because what Peter is about to do has only one of two outcomes. Either Peter is about to be greatly embarrassed, or God is about to be greatly glorified.

Then suddenly everything changes. The resurrection power of the risen Christ explodes on the scene! The man rises! He walks! He leaps! His life is completely transformed!

Now here is where the story presses into our world.

Today, it would be easy to read past this moment and assume that money doesn't matter. That what people truly need is something “more spiritual.” But that would miss something essential.

Because here's the truth: The man did need help. He did need provision. He did need someone to respond to his daily reality. And Peter responded with everything he had. For the early church, it was true. They didn't have much in the way of financial resources. They gave what they had because it was all they had.

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Outreach articles are due the **third** Sunday of each month. Please email your OUTREACH item to wendy@haysfumc.com before **Sunday, May 17, 2026**. Items may also be placed in the office, labeled **for the Outreach** by **May. 17**. The next Outreach should be received on May 21.

Thanks

Thanks to Sherri & Troy Brown, Greg Daughhete, Armin & Vicki Kelly, Wendy Beougher, Jarilyn Staab, Jill Arensdorf, Hannah Barrett, Megan Skipper, Sarah & Hope Schumacher and Jackson Cooper for working at Feed Hays in March. FUMC prepared the meal and served 300 people.
 Thanks to Jenna & Alvy Sloan, Vickie Unruh, the Sloan family, Jacinda Johnson and Edison Leuschner for serving in March. There is a sign up sheet across from the office if you would like to help with Feed Hays.

We send heartfelt thanks to our FUMC friends for the many expressions of sympathy and caring shown to us at the recent passing of our mother, Marguerite Stewart. This was her church home for 62 years and your prayers, calls, cards, and memorial gifts in her name meant so much to us. We truly appreciate all the support our church family has given our family over the years. Thank you for sharing God's love with us.

INTRODUCING OUR STAFF

PROGRAM STAFF
 Pastor: Pastor Susan Murithi
 Associate Pastor:: Pastor Troy Miller
 Special Music Coordinator: Meredith Cory
 Organist: Hannah Barrett
 Charlotte Rathke
 Pianist: Sharon Graham
 Handbell Choir Dir. Hannah Barrett
 Marijo Rooney
 Director of Discipleship: Matt Dumler
 Children's Ministry Coordinator: Jenna Brubaker
 Outreach Editor: Wendy Beougher
SUPPORT STAFF:
 Administrative Secretary: Beverly Bearley
 Administrative Assistant: Wendy Beougher
 Financial Secretary: Marsha Swanson
 Childcare Director: Mellissa Pyle
 Building Supervisor: Alan Nelson

Sympathy

Our sincere sympathy is extended to the family & friends of

Connie Forsberg on the death of her mother, Leora, on April 5.

Thanks for letting us use the church building for our meetings.

Girl Scout Troop 10088



Thanks to Susan Jansonius for preparing meals for WOW this year!

Thanks to all who have helped make WOW happen this year: Joe Edwards, Brad Schumacher, Alan Nelson, Dandy Henderson, Tura Clement, Kristi Lang, Armin Kelly, Stan & Vickie Unruh, Sheryl Cox, Barbara Clinkscales, Tony Anthony and RW Stuart. Thanks to Hale & Jenna Sloan for donations of hamburger.

MENUS

April 22
 Pulled pork sandwiches
 Tater tots
 Carrots & peas
 Salad
 Dessert

April 29—Last WOW

Cook's choice casserole
 French bread
 Salad
 Dessert

Serving time is 5:00
 Five dollars per person
 All menus are subject to change.
 To go meals are available-call 625-3408

Circle News

Naomi & Rebekah Circle met Wednesday, April 8 in the church dining room. The women enjoyed a delicious salad luncheon and fellowship together. Phil Stahlman presented information about the Capital Campaign.
 The next meetings for the Circles will be Wednesday, May 13.



Congratulations to our 2026 Hays High School Graduates
 Johanna Jones
 Sophie Miller
 Aubrey Preston
 Brynn Zweifel
 Abby Martinez

We are always the same age inside.
 Writer Gertrude Stein

As you age, you either become your worst self or your best self. I feel like I've become my better self.
 Steve Martin

Mario Andretti has retired from race-car driving. That's a good thing. He's getting old. He ran his entire last race with his left blinker on.
 Comedian Jon Stewart



Thanks to Ethan Klausmeyer for his seven years of service on the audio-video team. Good luck, Ethan, as you move to Bellaire to begin a new job.

Thanks to Trey Brown and Gabe Warrick for volunteering. If you are interested in serving on the audio-video team please call Tony Anthony or the church office.

FUMC Financial Snapshot

	March 31, 2025	Year to Date
Checking Account*	\$90,917.81	
Operating Gifts	\$74,947	\$192,018.64
Operating Expenses	\$51,383.26	\$158,782.50
Parsonage Mortgage Balance	\$71,600.41	
Organ Fund	\$11,906.79	

*Also known as Unrestricted Operating Account that funds our operating budget.

The sustaining gift for the Altar Foundation 2026 is \$153.



Every church household should have received a campaign pledge packet (packet pick up was on 4/12 / leftover packets mailed on 4/14 . Please continue Prayer & Discernment which runs 4/12 – 5/3 by using the 21-Day Prayer Guide for adults and/or the Children’s Prayer Journal. A special thanks to the Prayer Team for creating these meaningful prayer resources.

Key Campaign Dates:

4/29, Ambassadors begin phone calls to answer campaign questions

5/3, Commitment Sunday, please bring your completed pledge cards to worship. Thank you.

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But we are not in the same position. We cannot honestly say, “Silver or gold I do not have.” God has entrusted us with resources – buildings, land, finances, opportunities – not as a substitute for faith, but as an extension of it.

And that changes our responsibility.

Because now, giving is not a lesser response. It is a necessary one. If we truly believe the resurrection changes everything, then it must also shape how we steward what we’ve been given. Financial generosity is not a distraction from ministry. It is one of the primary ways ministry moves forward in today’s world. It creates space. It opens doors. It makes room for life change to happen again and again.

The danger is not that we give too much. The danger is that we separate what we give from who we are. Yes, it is possible to write a check without engaging your heart. But it is also possible, and far more powerful, to give in a way that reflects deep faith, real sacrifice, and genuine commitment to what God is doing.

Because the truth is, meaningful giving does cost something. It requires trust. It requires priority. It requires belief that what God is building matters enough to invest in.

At this writing, Hays FUMC is in the beginning stages of launching a capital campaign. But, don’t be misled. This message isn’t about that. It’s about inspiring anyone reading, in any context of ministry, that this kind of giving is essential.

Not because the power of money replaces the power of God. But because God uses what we place in His hands.

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Peter reached out his hand and lifted a man up. Today, we have opportunity to do the same. Not just spiritually, but practically, tangibly, and collectively. The spaces we create, the ministries we fund, the doors we open, these become the places where lives are changed.

This is not about maintaining what we have. This is about stepping into what God is calling us to become. So yes, we still give ourselves. Our time, our presence, and our faith. But we also give our resources, because they are part of that same act of surrender.

If you're still with me, you may be asking, "What then shall we do?" Good question. I have three short answers/challenges that all work together.

Number one, we begin by remembering what we actually have. The same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead is still at work. The same power that healed the lame man is not confined to the pages of history. The resurrection is not just something to celebrate – it is something to step into.

Number two, we begin to shift how we see people, especially those we don't know. The man at the gate was not a project. He was not a situation to manage. He was not a problem to solve. He was a person to be restored. Peter and John did not just meet a need; they transformed a life.

And most importantly, number three, we begin to take responsibility. Faith in action is rarely convenient. It takes a lot of time and energy. It interrupts schedules. It requires attention. It demands that we move closer to people rather than keeping a safe distance. It asks us to risk something. To pray out loud, to speak hope, to offer presence, to believe that God can still do more than we can measure.

This is what it means to move from the back row to the frontline. Not abandoning generosity, but deepening it. Not rejecting resources, but refusing to let them replace reliance on God. Not just funding ministry, but becoming ministers. All of us. Together. The body of Christ. With each part contributing to the whole.

Because the truth is, the world is still full of people sitting at the gate called Beautiful. They are waiting, hoping, asking for something, anything, that might change their situation.

This week in Prayer Powerhouse we discussed connecting with God through nature. The question was asked how is it that we connect with God outside of prayer. One individual stated they see God in the flowers with their the beauty and colors. Another individual stated that she sees God in the Monarch Butterflies that come around every year. We discussed seeing God in the sunset and the beauty that He has created. Then the question arose of how do we connect with God when the beauty is interrupted by the sights and sounds of the city. It would be easy to make the excuse that I cannot connect with God through nature because I am surrounded by concrete and buildings.

What if I told you that was simply an excuse. What if I told you, you can still connect with God in the concrete and the buildings. Take the liquor store across from the church. Think of it not as a liquor store but a business. Someone poured time energy and effort into creating that business. That business provides for families financially as well as the hope that a better future is possible. That business has carried someone through the good times and the bad times. That sounds a lot like faith doesn't it. God carries us through the good times and the bad times. God provides hope for a future. God asks us to give him our time energy and effort. When we look at it not as a liquor store but as something much deeper, we can find God connecting to us in the same fashion.

What if instead of seeing a house we see something more. We see the foundation that holds up a family's four walls. God is our foundation that holds up our four walls. We see a place where a family can come together and laugh and dream together. They can struggle together. They build relationships that will carry them through anything and be some of the most precious things they will ever have. God surrounds us with people to share our most trying times with and our most cherished memories. It's not simply a house we see, it's something much deeper.

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The challenge for you is to get out in your neighborhood and do the same thing. Instead of looking to encounter God in nature through a butterfly, flowers or a sunset, seek to connect with him in a very different way. Take him out of the box you've put him in and look for him in the unexpected. I invite you to use the following prayer prompts as you walk through your neighborhood.

Gratitude for Surroundings-As you walk, notice the homes and the people, thank God for specific things you see.

Praying for Neighbors-Pray for the households you pass that they may experience peace, provision and love.

Community Needs-Look a few blocks ahead of you and pray for the needs of the community.

Guidance and Direction-Look at the cracks in the sidewalk and pray for the cracks you find in your own life.

Healing & Restoration-Look for a newly repaired fence, deck or other object. Pray for the restoration that God has done for you.

Letting Go of Burdens-Look for a new construction project. Pray for the personal growth that God is inviting you into.

Interceding for Specific People-Look for an overflowing trash can and pray for the burdens that weigh you down.

Awareness of God's Presence-Look for cars and people rushing. Pray for rest.

Justice and Compassion-Look for people walking or kids playing together. Thank God for the relationships you have in your own life.

Personal Growth and Character-Continue to look for those things around you that can remind you of how God works and what he has done for you. Look for him in the unexpected.

Matt Dumler

Endowment Grants

In 1997 the church's Board of Trustees established, and an all-church conference ratified, the permanent endowment fund and committee for the purpose of creating a vehicle for legacy giving and a method to oversee those gifts. Since that time, several estate legacy gifts have been endowed, and the Altar Foundation established as an endowed fund.

The endowment committee began making grants from the permanently endowed funds of the church in 2013. The very first grant was to provide some matching funds for the fundraiser that was going on at the time to replace the chiller. The table below provides details of the grants that have been awarded since that time.

Facility upgrades \$140,266
 Community outreach 48,137
 Scholarships to graduating seniors 36,750
 Funds to launch ministries and programs 20,715
 Continuing education 18,403
 Support of missionaries 15,600
 Other scholarships 14,560
 Feasibility study 14,000
 Worship and Christian education materials 13,160
 Education committee activities 10,626
 Expenses 3,760



Total \$335,977

In addition to the above grants an additional \$164,000 has been set aside in a non-endowed building fund for use by Trustees for building improvements. This non-endowed set aside is per the terms of the charter of the permanent endowment program.

Each year the church's endowment has a spending budget that is determined by the endowment charter and grants are funded from that budget. The budget for 2026 is \$106,000. Any amount that is not granted out can be transferred to the non-endowed building fund.

The endowment provides vital funding, on an annual basis, to support building improvements, ministries, scholarships, and a variety of other church initiatives that otherwise could not be funded from the annual operating budget.

April OUTREACH

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, April 22	Arcade night for families
Wednesday, April 29	Last WOW
Sunday, May 3	Pledge Sunday for Capital Campaign
Monday, May 4	Red Cross blood drive, 12:30-6:30
Sunday, May 10	HHS graduates celebrated
Sunday, May 17	Graduation Sunday
May 27-30	Annual Conference, Kearney, NE
Friday, May 29	Church Office closed for Memorial Day