



*"I am the vine, you are the branches.
He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit;
for without Me you can do nothing." John 15:5*

Newsletter • August 2026



As I see it.....

As we welcome the month of August, I am grateful for the many ways God continues to work in our church and in our lives. Summer often brings a change of pace, but it is also a wonderful opportunity to grow in faith, encourage one another, and serve our community with Christ's love. The words of Galatians 6:9 remind us, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

There are times in every believer's life when doing the right thing becomes difficult. We pray, serve, give, forgive, and love others, yet we may not see immediate results. It is easy to become discouraged and wonder if our efforts matter. Whatever burden or concerns you are carrying, remember this simple truth: Don't quit, keep trusting, keep serving, and keep believing. The harvest is coming in God's perfect time.

This time of year reminds us that growth takes time. Just as farmers patiently wait for the harvest, God is continually at work in our lives, often in ways we cannot immediately see. Every prayer offered, every act of kindness, and every word of encouragement matters. The seeds we plant today through faithful service will bear fruit in God's perfect timing.

As a church family, I want to thank you for your faithfulness, your prayers, volunteer efforts, encouragement, and generosity. Whether you have served quietly behind the scenes or reached out to someone in need, your ministry reflects the heart of Christ. Thank you for partnering with God with your generous support toward the Kenyan mission. So far we have raised enough money for the water purification kits, and almost enough for the children's uniforms. Out of the 36 children at the Umoja Children's Home, 21 children got full uniforms, while 15 didn't. We thank God for how He has touched our fellow believers inside and outside the church to donate. As I write this report, enough money has come in for 15 uniforms (sweater, shirt, skirt/shorts, socks and shoes). Five students at the children's home are still in need of full uniforms. If you feel touched by the grace of God, you can donate by giving to our church account. Full uniforms are \$67. Even under garments for middle schoolers are accepted.

As we begin a new season, I encourage each of us to remain committed to worship, prayer, Sunday school, Bible study, and fellowship. If you have been away during the summer months, consider this your invitation to reconnect. There is a place for you here, and together we are stronger as we worship, learn, and serve side by side.

Please continue praying for our students, teachers, school staff, first responders, healthcare workers, and all those facing difficult circumstances. Ask God to give them wisdom, strength, protection, and peace.

May the Lord bless you and your family with His peace. I look forward to worshipping with you and seeing all that God has in store for our church in the months ahead.

In Christ's love,

Pastor Ezekiel

Baldwin First UMC Congregational Care Ministry Team

The Bible reminds us to "carry each other's burdens" (Galatians 6:2) and to "encourage one another and build each other up" (1 Thessalonians 5:11). Whether someone is celebrating a joyful milestone or facing illness, grief, loneliness, or hardship, the church has the privilege of offering hope and support through the Congregational Care Ministry Team (CCM Team), and whoever feels called to reach out to our brothers and sisters in the Lord. The following are the well-trained team:



Rev. Ezekiel Koech, Marchia O'Neil, Bob Ford,
Cindy White, Jeanne Stanley



Linda Ballinger

LOVE.SERVE.DISCIPLE.

Since 1855, the mission of Baldwin First UMC is to love and serve God and our neighbors as disciples of Jesus Christ.

ALL ARE WELCOME

Believing that all persons are created by God and loved through and by Jesus Christ, the people of Baldwin First United Methodist Church understand that our neighbors include persons of all ages, races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientation and identity, economic or marital status, and physical and mental condition, and are welcome to participate in the life of our congregation.

CONTACT US

Rev. Ezekiel Koech, Pastor
785-324-9174
ezekiel.koech@baldwinfirst.org

Church Office
785-594-6612
office@baldwinfirst.org

Office Hours
Tuesday - Thursday
10 am - 2 pm

Website
baldwinfirst.org

Social Media
[@baldwinfirstumc](https://www.facebook.com/baldwinfirstumc)



Cookout & Pool Party



All are welcome to dive in for the BFUMC Cookout and Pool Party on August 2!

The evening will begin with a cookout at the pool shelter followed by the pool party from 7-9 p.m.

Family and friends are welcome!

Lawn Mowers Needed!

In order to keep the church lawn maintained, mowers are needed! The church has a push mower in the shed that can be used.

Thank you to those who have helped us keep the yard maintained:

Roger & Jon Boyd
Glen Sharp
Bruce & Kevin
Scott Erwine
Coltin Thomas



A signup form is also in the narthex.

Sundaes on Sunday

Let's Celebrate!

Summer is drawing to a close. Families are returning from vacation. School is ready to begin.

Join us for ice cream and fellowship following service on August 9th as we enjoy sundaes on Sunday.



SUNDAY WORSHIP

Worship	9:30 am
Sunday School	10:45 am
BLAST JH/HS Group	
(BLAST does not meet during the summer months)	
Adult Bible Studies	10:45 am
Young Adult Bible Study	10:45 am

Childcare service for Pre-K and under is available in the lower level across from Fellowship Hall.

Children's bags can be borrowed during service. They may be found in the narthex.

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 2

Cookout & Pool Party!
6-7 p.m. - Cookout Pool Shelter
7 - 9 p.m. - Pool Party

August 9

Sundaes on Sunday
After Service

August 10

Leadership Team Meeting, 7 p.m.

August 20

UWF Summer Book Study
6:30 p.m.
Becoming Heart Sisters
Cookies provided, bring your own drink

September 13

BLAST Crew Resumes

September 27

Mission Sunday
Potluck after Service

Children's Ministry News

Vacation Bible School

Our Snowball Mountain Challenge VBS was a success! We had fun each day learning that we can pray, hope, and share our gifts. Our verse of the week was Philippians 4:13, I can do all things through Him who strengthens me. Our 23 campers started each evening in the sanctuary learning about the lessons of the day and singing our VBS songs. Then with their groups they rotated through fun stations that reinforced the daily message while the kids had fun. Thank you to the 19 adult volunteers and 9 preteen and teen volunteers that made it a great week for the Kidds!



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Jill Dodge, Marcia O'Neil,
Amy Berg, Cynthia Perez
Barbara Pressgrove, Nursery
Angela Murry, BLAST Leader

TECHNOLOGY TEAM

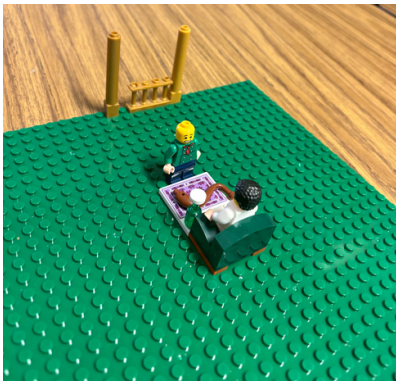
Dr. Frank Perez, Mixer/Editor
Ryan Berg, Worship Technology

WORSHIP TEAM

Pam Sharp
Cynthia Perez
Donna Curran
Kathleen Thomas

Building Our Faith Brick by Brick:

It has been amazing to watch our elementary aged kids dive deeper into the Bible this summer as we have been "Building our Faith Brick by Brick." Each week we have read a story from the Old Testament, talked about it, and then the kids have used their creative powers to build Lego creations based on the story. To end each session we went around the table and each child shared what they created and why. This has led to lots of retellings of the bible stories and some great questions! Our last session this summer is August 16. Regular Sunday School after services will begin the following week on August 23. We look forward to doing the same program next summer with the New Testament. Thank you to everyone who donated Legos to our class!



Leadership Team

Jeanne Stanley, Chair
Ryan Berg
Susan Butell
Mike Curran
Christi Darnell
Martha Harris
Marcial O'Neil
Frank Perez
Glen Sharp
Katherine Cook, Secretary
Coleen Burgess, Finances

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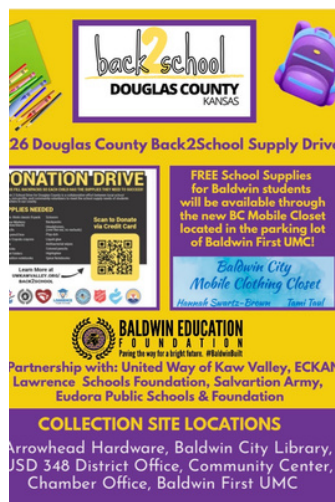


Back to School Drives



Cody Anno State Farm Insurance is bringing STUFF THE BUS back bigger than ever! Baldwin City School District (USD 348) serves approximately 1,500 students who may need some support from our amazing community to ensure that they have a successful year.

Every school supply item donated is matched by Cody Anno State Farm and delivered to the schools before the 1st day of school for the students and teachers.



The Lawrence Schools Foundation, in partnership with United Way of Kaw Valley (UWKV), ECKAN, Eudora Public Schools & Foundation, Baldwin City Public Schools & Education Foundation and the Salvation Army, invites your participation in the 2026 Douglas County Back2School Supply Drive. This collaboration gathers and organizes resources to help low-income students obtain required supplies for the 2026-27 school year. With your help, we aim to provide Douglas County children with the necessary tools so that they may succeed on the first day of school and beyond.

MISSIONS TEAM

Susan Butell
Nancy Arnold
Marilee Beins
John Beins
Coleen Burgess
Kelley Bethell-Smith
Martha Harris
Robin Schrack
Corey Schrack

FELLOWSHIP / HOSPITALITY

Linda Ballinger
Trish Batchelder, Co-Chair
Coleen Burgess
Randi Canterbury
Samantha Cheek
Sheryl Cleverley
Katherine Cook, Co-Chair
Christi Darnell
Jill Dodge
Jennifer Fulton
Lori George
Carolyn Groves
Kay Kuhlmann
Peggy McMillon
Marcia O'Neil
Jeanne Stanley
Kathleen Thomas
Janet Venable
Tara Welch, Co-Chair
Letha Williamson



BFUMC Member Spotlight Robin & Corey Schrack



Robin and Corey Schrack have been attending Baldwin First for 1 ½ years. They joined the church because everyone was so friendly and welcoming. They hope to grow in their faith through fellowship with others.

Corey and Robin both work in the Gardner-Edgerton School District. Corey is a teacher and baseball coach and Robin is a librarian. Corey enjoys baseball, fishing, and outdoor activities. Robin loves to read, garden, and refurbish furniture. They enjoy listening to live music and spending time with family.

The Schrack's have two adult sons - Carson and Corbin along with Corbin's wife Macy. Robin attended Baker University for her undergraduate degree and Corey attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Robin is a native Kansan while Corey is originally from Nebraska. A blind date setup proved successful as they recently celebrated their 29th wedding anniversary.

Robin has often been seen giving the children's sermon at Baldwin First. She also serves on the hospitality committee, UMW, and singing in the choir. Both are involved with the missions team.