



Newsletter • June 2025



The 2025 Annual Conference Session will be in session June 5 - 7 at Kansas Wesleyan University in Salina, KS. Our theme this year is "Loving God," and it is the first of several years of themes keyed toward the greatest commandment shared in Deuteronomy 6 and Matthew 22.

Why is "Loving God" the theme for Annual Conference this year? Loving God is both the beginning and the end of a relationship with God. It is what it is to be a believer in God. It is what it means to be a Christian, to be a lover of God. It is the most defining attitude that we can express in

explaining who we are. We are those who love the true and living God, the one true God who is not only the God and Father of the patriarchs, but who is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, God the Trinitarian, true God. We love God. So if someone were to ask what does it mean to be a believer, what does it mean to be a Christian; it means to be a lover of God. And though we love Him imperfectly, we seek to love Him perfectly and long for the realization of that perfect love in the glory which is to come.

Then this, is a definition of what it means to be a believer and to have a relationship with God, but it is also a universal command and it must be stated that disobedience to this command is why hell will be forever populated. The world has been, is and will be full of people who refuse to love God. This is the great consummate command, disobedience to which brings about divine and eternal judgment and punishment. Nothing is more critical than this command.

When my wife and I were raising our kids, one of the things we did when they were very young was teach them a catechism. Catechism is a pattern of questions and answers that are memorized. It is the same as confirmation class questions. I still remember the beginning of the catechism, and the first question that we would ask is this: Who made you? And the answer would be given: God. The second question: What else did God make? Answer: God made all things. The third question: Why did God make all things? Answer: for His own glory.

What does that mean? God chose to put himself majestically on display in creation, and in history, so that we could see His greatness and marvel at it and love it, that our hearts would be kindled with love for Him because of His greatness. I will share more after I have attended the Annual Conference. Please pray for travel mercies and for the session to go smoothly.

Peace be with you all!

Pastor Ezekiel

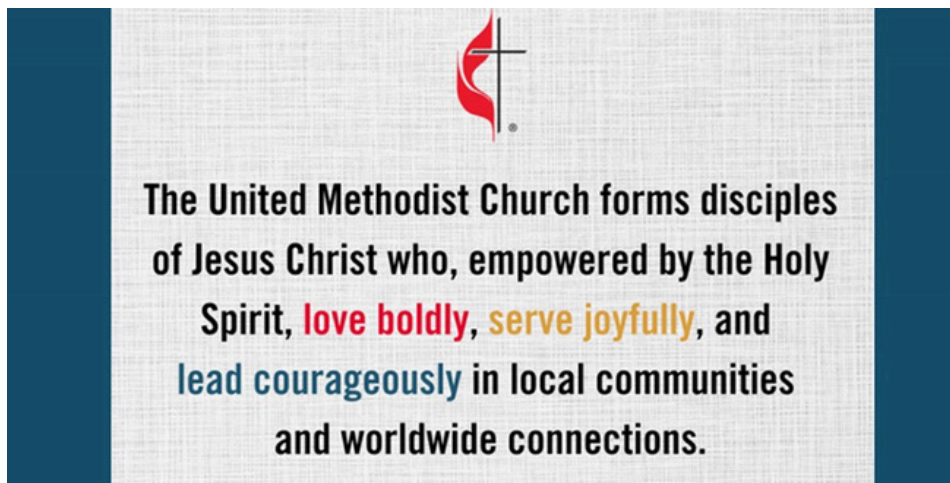
Bishops Unveil Vision for United Methodist Church

--Heather Hahm, [UM News](https://www.umnews.org/en/), May 1, 2025 (<https://www.umnews.org/en/>)

United Methodist bishops, in collaboration with other church leaders, have made public a new vision statement for The United Methodist Church that has been years in the making. Ultimately, the goal is for United Methodists around the globe to unite in living out the vision to “love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously.”

Church leaders also drew on the counsel of Bible passages, in both the Old and New Testaments, with an eye toward following Jesus’ example.

- The new vision aims to complement The United Methodist Church’s longtime mission to make disciples, and, like that statement, the vision draws on Scripture.
- Bishops also hope the new vision, years in the making, will inform the work of the Leadership Gathering planned next year.
- Ultimately, the goal is for United Methodists around the globe to unite in living out the vision.



The new vision statement aims to complement the denomination’s nearly 30-year-old mission statement, [based on Matthew 28:18-20](#): “The mission of The United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”

SUNDAY WORSHIP

Worship	9:30 am
Sunday School	10:30 am
Adult Bible Studies	10:30 am
Young Adult Bible Study	10:30 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

June 15

Father’s Day

June 22

UMW Cookout

June 23-28

Institute

June 29

Blessing of the Animals
Sullivan Square, 9:30 am

July 6 - 10

Vacation Bible School
6-8 pm

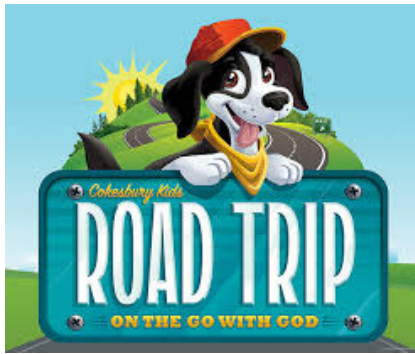
August 3

Pool Party & Ice Cream Social

August 10

UMW Picnic

Road Trip VBS On the Go with God!



Hey kids — from Preschool through 5th Grade — you're invited to an unforgettable week of Vacation Bible School, happening July 6–10 from 6:00–8:00 PM!

Join us for epic Bible stories, awesome music, cool crafts, delicious snacks, fun games, mind-blowing science experiments, and so much more!

Bring your friends, your neighbors — everyone is welcome to come along for the fun!

**SIGN UP
NOW**

Scan the QR code to Register!



We also need helping hands! If you'd like to volunteer and be part of the excitement, please reach out to Jill Dodge at jillmdodge@gmail.com.

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS SERVICE

JOIN Baldwin First UMC for Blessing of the Animals

All humans, furry friends, and favorite stuffed animals are welcome!

If your furry pal isn't into crowds, bring a pic to be blessed!

- Animal friends should be on a 6' or smaller leash or in a carrier
- Water bowls provided

In case of inclement weather, join us at:

- Baldwin First United Methodist Church, 704 Eighth Street
- No live animals in the church, so bring a picture

Sunday, June 29 • 9:30 a.m.

Sullivan Square • Bring a lawn chair

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Jilly Dodge

Marcia O'Neil

Barbara Pressgrove, Nursery

Angela Murry & Brad Peterson,
BLAST

TECHNOLOGY TEAM

Dr. Frank Perez
Mixer/Editor

Ryan Berg
Worship Technology

WORSHIP TEAM

Keith Sandrock,
Organ/Piano

Pam Sharp, Piano

Madelynn Knisely
Vocals

Cynthia Pereze, Vocals

Donna Curran

Kathleen Thomas

Baker Chaplain Retires

--Article written by David Barker, Baker Orange, May 14, 2025

After 40 years in ministry, the last 11 as campus pastor at Baker University, Rev. Kevin Hopkins is retiring. His final chapel service last Thursday morning included farewells not only for "Rev Kev," but the graduating seniors.



To the 1,200 students and the faculty and staff on the Baldwin City Baker campus, Hopkins is almost never addressed by his last name. He is known as "Rev Kev."

Abbie Jones, a Baker senior from Parsons, said her faith journey began the first time she walked into Clarice Osborne Memorial Chapel.

"I found a home here," said Jones, who was baptized in the chapel two years ago. "Rev Kev always remembers where I sat and always had really great messages that resonated with me. He's just an incredible mentor and someone I can really look up to and see his kindness and how welcoming and loving he is to everybody," she added.

Saphina Achi spent the last two years of her college career at Baker. "It's become a place of comfort, and a big part of that is the chapel and Rev Kev," said Achi, daughter of Rev. Gideon Achi, pastor of Salina First UMC, and Esther Achi, pastor of Lindsborg Trinity and Salina Grand Avenue UMCs.

Seven graduating seniors received a print of Osborne Chapel and a small bag of the rocks that were left over from the chapel's move, stone by stone, from the village of Braxton, England, and dedicated at Baker in 1996 by Margaret Thatcher.

"I want you to carry a piece of the chapel with you wherever your road may take you," Hopkins told the seniors. Darcy Russell, retiring dean of the college of arts and sciences, also received memorial stones.

Rev. Blake Stanwood, a Baker graduate currently serving Humboldt-Big Creek UMCs, will be pastor at both Baker University and Garnett beginning July 1.

Hopkins and his wife, Dr. Carol Ann Eades, plan to remain in Lawrence and perhaps travel more — between them, they have eight children around the world, including one in Grenada, one in London and three in New York City.

SUNDAY WORSHIP

Worship	9:30 am
Sunday School	10:30 am
Adult Bible Studies	10:30 am
B.L.A.S.T. Youth Group	10:30 am
Young Adult Bible Study	10:30 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

June 15

Father's Day

June 22

UMW Cookout

June 23-28

Institute

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Sullivan Square, 9:30 am

July 6 - 10

Vacation Bible School
6-8 pm

August 3

Pool Party & Ice Cream Social

August 10

UMW Picnic

May Finance Information

Glen Sharp, financial chairman, would like to begin giving monthly financial updates for Baldwin First. Giving and other income sources through May were \$76,000. As of May 31, our expenses were \$86,000. Blessings to all who give to our church with their talents and gifts.

Giving



We believe that all people are a gift from God, so it is important that you decide how your gifts are used for the Church. There are three ways for you to give financially. Please review the options before submitting your offering. Go to **baldwinfirst.org/give** for more information or scan the QR code.

Peace with Justice Sunday • June 15

Special Sundays are set aside each year to deepen the connection between the local church and ministries on a global scale. Individuals and congregations are encouraged to support the churches' collective efforts through an offering. We invite you to help continue to support the vital work of the Special Sundays.

WHAT IS PEACE WITH JUSTICE SUNDAY?

The United Methodist Church uses this day to speak out for peace and justice. Our Social Principles call us to love our enemies, seek justice, and serve as peacemakers in resolving conflict. We renew our commitment that to live into our mission of transforming the world, we must prioritize collaboration among nations, work to reduce the use and need for weapons, and foster just, equitable and durable solutions to the root causes of conflict.

Community Emergency Fund

Thank you, Kelley Bethell-Smith and Trish Batchelder, for representing Baldwin First on this important committee.

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

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

Office Hours
Tuesday - Thursday
10 am - 2 pm

Website
baldwinfirst.org

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



Missions Team

The Human Nutrition class at Baker University sponsored a campus food drive in April. Susan Butell spoke to the class about food insecurity in Douglas County, the Community Food Pantry, other resources available in Baldwin, and about volunteer opportunities. On May 6th the class and their professor, Erin Laurie, visited the pantry. Nancy Arnold explained how the pantry works, they helped clean the shelves, and stocked the 320 items they brought from their food drive.

On May 19th, the Missions Team participated in Flapjacks for Finals at Baldwin High School. As students entered the school, they were offered flapjacks provided by Worden Cornerstone Church, sausage patties served by our church, and bananas and Cuties handed out by Family Life Church.

Institute

For over 100 years, young people have come to Baker University and Baldwin First to attend United Methodist Youth Institute. Institute is a week of Christian spiritual growth and faith development for high school students. It is intentional about making disciples for the transformation of the world. The week will be packed with powerful worships, impactful small groups, and meaningful workshops. Instituters will stay in the dorms at Baker. Let's welcome these students June 23-28.

July Birthday's



If we inadvertently miss your birthday, please call the church office at 785-594-6612 to update your membership information. You may also email the church office at office@baldwinfirst.org.

MISSIONS TEAM MEMBERS



Nancy Arnold
Susan Butell
John & Marilee Beins
Coleen Burgess
Kelley Bethell-Smith
Martha Harris

HOSPITALITY TEAM MEMBERS

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



Community Events

There are many community events for adults and youth throughout May!
Click on the graphic to see your opportunities!



JUNE 20
JULY 18
AUGUST 15
SEPTEMBER 19
6-9 P.M.