



*"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*

baldwin first

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Newsletter • August 2025

The summer months and its activities are coming to an end. However, I thank God that we made an effort to reach out to the wider community.



We started off with the blessing of the animals at Sullivan Square. Blessing of the Animals is a religious ceremony celebrating the bond between humans and animals and acknowledging them as part of God's creation. Such services have a history that's centuries old. The roots go back to Saint Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals, who lived from 1181 to 1226. Most protestant churches have adopted the practice as a way to extend the love of Christ to our animal companions. Scores of United Methodist churches hold Blessing of the Animals services each summer.

Baldwin First UMC found a unique way to connect with the community through Blessing of the Animals. Pets are significantly part of our lives and families so they deserve a blessing. It was the first time for Baldwin First UMC to offer this special service. We thank God that we were allowed to worship at Sullivan Square free of charge. The outdoor setting provided a more intimate and meaningful experience for both animals and their owners. Animals, after all, have been part of God's story since the very beginning. The animals in our lives are gifts that God gives us and acknowledging that became a meaningful part of our worship this summer.

The service provided an opportunity where humans and animals came forward together to receive the blessing. For those pets who were not able to travel to attend the service in person, their humans had the option of bringing in a photo of the animal. The service reminded us that animals are part of God's creation and that all of creation is God's.

In addition to the summer activities, we had Vacation Bible School; the VBS theme was "Road Trip: On the Go with God." As their mission project, their target was to raise \$650 for a church to buy a keyboard for a Kenyan church. They raised \$198 and on Sunday, July 6th, the congregation topped it up with an additional \$552. I'm thankful to Jill Dodge and everyone who made an effort to make the VBS successful.

The final summer activity will be a Pool party on August 3rd from 7-9 pm. This social activity is a way of reaching out to the youth and children and build community.



Have a happy Fall!

Pastor Ezekiel



Vacation Bible School

Road Trip: On the Go with God — VBS at Baldwin First UMC, June 6–10
by Jill Dodge



I want to share my heartfelt thanks for an incredible week of Vacation Bible School! I've heard from many parents that their children had a wonderful time and came home excited to talk about what they learned—especially about “that short guy who climbed the tree,” which was a big hit!

Our amazing volunteers brought their unique gifts and talents to serve every child who walked through the doors each evening. Thank you to all of our volunteers listed below—your dedication made a lasting impact.

It was truly inspiring to witness both the large group activities and the meaningful one-on-one conversations happening throughout the week. What a powerful and joyful experience for everyone involved!

We had fourteen kids registered, with 6 to 12 attending each night to sing, pray, play, and learn how God is at work in their lives. Our theme for the week was: “The Lord your God is with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9).

Our mission project this year was to raise funds for a village church in Kenya that is currently without musical instruments. The VBS kids aimed to raise enough money to purchase a keyboard—and I’m thrilled to share that they raised \$198 during the week! Then, our congregation stepped up in a big way the following Sunday to help us reach our total goal of \$650. The kids will be so proud and excited to know their efforts will help provide a keyboard for children in Kenya to use in worship!

As we look ahead, we’d love your feedback on how we can make VBS even better—whether it’s ideas to encourage more kids to attend or ways to get more volunteers involved. Some of those conversations are already happening, but we welcome all thoughts!

Jill Dodge, Marcia O’Neil, Donna Curran, Sandy Larson, Tara Welch, Mike Curran, Samantha Cheek, Doug Cheek, Cynthia Perez, Annette Perez, Gabriela Perez, Isabel Perez, Adam McQuarrie, Laurel McQuarrie, Katherine Cook, Kelley Bethell-Smith, Linda Ballinger, Taylor Bogart, Dylan Dodge, Dr. Frank Perez, Missions Team for providing dinner for volunteers



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 Perez, Vocals

Donna Curran

Kathleen Thomas



Dive in!



AUGUST 3!
ALL WELCOME!

Let's Help Fill That Bus

The UMW mission for this month's fellowship is to bring school supplies to help fill the bus located at State Farm Insurance located at 208 Baker Street.

You may bring donations to the box found in the narthex.



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

August 3
Pool Party @ BC Pool

August 10
UMW Picnic

August 17
Special Service
Back to School Blessings

Sundaes on Sunday after Service

Baker Back to School Night
(Fellowship /Hospitality)

September 14
Ministry Sunday

Pot Luck After Service



New Member's Spotlight: Welcome Kay Kuhlman

Kay moved to Baldwin City on Thanksgiving Day, 2024, and began attending Baldwin First soon after. Her grandmother, Anna Sebring Roberts, graduated from Baker in 1906.

Kay's parents are Kansans; however, Kay and her five siblings grew up in Wyoming, Montana, and Washington state with periodic returns to Kansas to live with her grandparents. As an adult, she noticed that her collection of old driver's licenses spanning 60 years includes Wyoming, Iowa, Kansas, Virginia, New Mexican, Missouri, and Colorado. She lived in Lawrence during the 1990s decade and when looking for a final "hometown," Kay remembered how much she liked Douglas County.

Kay's past occupations include theatre and being a college teacher. She retired from New Mexico Military Institute in 2018 at the Army equivalent rank of major. From 1983-85, Kay taught English at the Brother Corporation in Nagoya, Japan.

As she has done professionally since 1989, she continues to write, perform, and direct other actors in original history-based plays. In fact, on September 20, please come to the library for a 12:30 preview of her latest work titled "Petticoats in Kansas." You may also see Kay as either Mamie Eisenhower or Bess Truman in solo stagings, which are roles she has been playing for 30 years.

After attending Baldwin First for five months, it felt like a place to call home spiritually and she joined the church on May 11, 2025. Kay looks forward to fellowship, service to the community, and spiritual deepening. She feels her talents are best served singing, being a member of the choir and serving on the Hospitality Committee and United Methodist Women. She has found the church and community to be friendly.

When she is not performing, Kay likes to take long walks, travel, and attend cultural events.

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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Office Hours
Tuesday - Thursday
10 am - 2 pm

Website
baldwinfirst.org

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



Special Services

On August 17th we will have a blessing of school students and staff, and all who are gearing up for a new school year! After service, the Fellowship and Hospitality Committee will have ice cream sundaes!



September 17 will be Ministry Sunday with a pot luck lunch after service sponsored by the Fellowship and Hospitality Committee. Please bring a side dish!

August Birthday's

Carolyn Groves, Gabrielle Huntoon,
Ryun Pressgrove, David Pressgrove, Sidney Roberts

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.

Happy
Birthday

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



BALDWIN  FIRST

This year's UMY Institute sees a post-pandemic high in attendance

by David Burke, July 01, 2025, Great Plains Connect



United Methodist Youth Institute has been celebrating its 115th anniversary on social media by flashing back to Institute from years past, where hundreds of high school students would invade the campus of Baker University.

While Institute has been declining for a generation, the 49 youth who gathered June 23-28 this year – the highest numbers post-COVID – are just as intent on learning about their faith and purpose and joining in fellowship.

The youth studied John Wesley as a young adult, his methods that became Methodism, and his theology of prevenient grace, justifying grace and abiding grace, as well as a Wesleyan view of immigration.

At the traditional midweek visitors night, two members of the Youth Coordinating Team for Institute said they had already noticed changes in the campers after three days. "There's more joy and more confidence," said Sydney Helget, a member of Ottawa Trinity UMC. "Honestly, the community is just amazing."



I CAN DO ALL THINGS
THROUGH CHRIST
WHO STRENGTHENS ME.

PHILIPPIANS 4:13

"FOR I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE
FOR YOU," SAYS THE LORD.
"PLANS TO PROSPER YOU AND
NOT TO HARM YOU. PLANS TO
GIVE YOU HOPE AND A FUTURE."

JEREMIAH 29:11

Community Events

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



AUGUST 15
SEPTEMBER 19
6-9 P.M.