Mahjong has made it to First Church! In late June and early July, over 50 individuals came together to learn how to play Mahjong. The fun continues as small groups are forming to play together regularly.

August Special Offering

The August Special Offering will benefit FUMC's Music Ministries. For years, FUMC's Music Ministry has influenced many lives. The Music Ministry currently includes multiple groups, including the Parish Adult Choir, Children's Treble Choir, Schola Cantorum, Carillons handbell ensemble, and Contemporary Praise Band. When all the hymns, praise songs, anthems, offertories, and special music are included, over 600 musical pieces are performed or sung each year. There are many music ministry expenses that are not included in the budget, like robes, stand lights, and travel. Music has a profound impact on us, creating lasting memories and friendships. Your support will benefit all musical endeavors at FUMC so that we can continue to inspire the community through song. If you would like to support the August Special Offering, you can mail a check to: First UMC, 1350 Oak Ridge Turnpike, Oak Ridge, TN 37830. Notate "monthly offering" in the memo line.

First United Methodist Church
1350 Oak Ridge Turnpike
Oak Ridge, TN 37830

Office: 865-483-4357
Pastor-on-call: 865-272-9862
https://fumcor.org

First Things

August 2026

We All Scream for Ice Cream!

Ice Cream Social is a Cool Treat in the Summer Heat.

In the heart of the heat of summer, over 30 First Church friends gathered following the Evening Grace worship service on July 5th to enjoy ice cream. The weather forced us inside, but the homemade (or not) treats still tasted just as sweet. Not only was there wonderful fellowship to accompany the good food, but we added some good-natured fun with a homemade ice cream competition.

Pastor Clair won the day (and the ice cream cone bucket hat) with her homemade strawberry ice cream. But as new friends were made, stresses melted away, and the laughter of sugar-filled children filled the Fellowship Hall, everyone was feeling like a winner. You can never go wrong with ice cream, right?

New Member:
Caleb Roberts joined 7/19 by baptism and profession of faith.

Recently Hospitalized:
Tim Burchell, Michie Deising, Dan Ingersoll, Elizabeth Parr, Nancy Tuttle

Joys and Concerns

In Sympathy:

Tanyia Creasey (died 6/24); service was at FUMC on July 25.

Betty Dreyer (died 7/28); service at FUMC on Aug. 9.

Sandra Voina (died 7/26); remembrance in worship on Aug. 2.

A Note from the Pastor

Recently, a friend of mine suggested that I read the book *Peanut Butter Kisses & Mud Pie Hugs* by Becky Freeman. The author describes the book as "stories of love, laughter, and being a mom." I started flipping through the chapters to see if I wanted to read it and found myself interested in the funny (and short) chapters. It is very entertaining: she includes an idea that she has for a song entitled "Songs to Embarrass Your Children By," which, as a practical joker—I love that idea!

But the chapter that impacted me most is about staying childlike throughout our lives. As we work and raise our families, growing older and wiser, sometimes we get jaded or just plain tired. We lose our childlike joy. So today, I am sharing with you a poem from this book. I hope it makes you giggle a little and reminds you that your child is still inside you!

"Growing Up to Be a Child"
Mudd-puddle miracles
Doodle-bug designs
Bursts of fun with bubblegum
Oh, to see life as a child!
"I love you's" big as rainbows
"I'm sorrys" from the heart
A kiss goodnight, a bear hug tight
To love as would a child!
"Let the children come to Me," He said with arms flung wide
Don't stop me now—
I'm comin' too
For I'm a child inside . . . .

August Birthdays

1 Cassie Rueff, John Yarbrough

2 Kari Iwanski, Tina Marascia, Shawn Roach

3 Jeff Kile, Paula Medlin

4 Thom Casey, Betsy Pease, Lauren Smith

6 Dan Cottrell, Tara Kittle, Mary Jellison

7 Jim Michel

8 Caden Webb

9 Gloria Bryson, Bill Henry, Nancy Irby

10 Heather Atwell, Miles McMillan, Brandon Nickle

11 Chris Gillenwaters, David Peterson, Monica White

12 Sandra Voina

14 MacKenzie Aurin, Pryce Palmer, Jill Welch, Adam McCampbell

15 Ginny Basseen, Frances Costner, Eric Sampsel

16 Sharon Anderson, Alison Pack

17 Lauren Fouche

18 Suzie Asher, Judy Walker, Duncan Frazier

20 Linda Martin

21 Harold Clark, Nathan Kizzire, Caroline Nessaraja

22 Jill Johnson

23 Anne Garland, Carter McKamy, Lester Petrie, Alicia Williamson, Eleanor Wistrom, Kayla Whitefield

24 Jeremy Roach

25 Becky Kendall, Alex Lawless

26 Doris Jolley, Emily Meadows, Elana Sampsel, Jack Parker

27 Veronica Cain

28 Tribby Kelly

29 Marlene Darling, Emily Kraeske, Brendan Naren

31 Liz Davis, Wayne Garber

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me," in Matthew 19:14. As we grow in age and spirit, may we always go running to Jesus as if we were a child.

Shalom, friends.
Pastor Denna

Peanut Butter Kisses & Mud Pie Hugs; Becky Freeman; Harvest House Publishers, 2000.

All Around First Church

First Recovery Picnic

First Recovery's annual summer cookout was a massive success! Held every year during the week of Vacation Bible School, this year's installment brought the community together for an evening filled with music, games, and fantastic fellowship.

The event saw an incredible turnout, reflecting the strength and connection of our recovery community. A very special thank you goes out to Whitney Chambers of Judy Dodd Catering for supplying amazing food, as well as our Recovery Committee members, whose dedication to serving and organizing helped make the entire night a smooth and total success.

Thank you to everyone who showed up, brought their energy, and made this year's cookout one for the books! We're already looking forward to next year!

Stewardship Report

As of June 30, 2026

2026 YTD Offering and Income: $756,351
2026 YTD Budget Expenses: $698,769
2025 YTD Offering and Income: $697,519

June Special Offering (RMN): $1,445

Pastor Ken leads a Bible Study on the Gospel of John each Wednesday morning and evening.