First Recovery Is On the Move this Summer!

First Recovery was awarded a $118,000 grant, the highest-rated project, for the 2026–2027 Anderson County Opiate Abatement funding cycle! These funds will support two key areas: transportation and peer support. Our goal is to provide 250 rides per quarter, and we have nearly met that goal within the first two months. We provide transportation for the Anderson County Drug Court and Hope of East Tennessee, and we accept referrals from ASAP of Anderson County. Brandi Pedigo and Matt Holder assist these individuals by driving them to meetings, court, medical appointments, and other essential commitments.

September Special Offering

The Special Offering for the month of September will support FUMC's Youth Ministries. This growing ministry engages youth in 7th-12th grades through Sunday School, weekly youth gatherings, and regular fellowship activities. Additionally, First Church provides a Student Lunch each Thursday during the school year. This is for ORHS juniors and seniors who have off-campus lunch. Investing in today's youth is necessary in growing the body of Christ. Teaching young people in the church and helping them grow in their relationship with God can prepare them to serve Christ in all they do. As a result, this nurtures the congregation and allows the church to flourish. To support the September Special Offering, 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

September 2026

Young Adults Take the Lead

Full Spectrum will bring together young adults for learning and fellowship.

A group of young adult leaders at First Church recently finished reading and studying together *The 21st Century Christian* by Michael Moynaugh and Michael Adam Beck. The study included profound discussions around showing Christ's love in practical ways, building relationships, sharing the story of Jesus, and the forms of Christian Community. Specific conversations surrounded doing good, meeting people where they are, providing safe spaces, and what expressions of church look like.

The group of mostly younger than 30-year-olds dedicated themselves to study, dialogue, and ongoing leadership in and through the church. Please give them your gratitude and support as they continue to grow into the people God is calling them to be!

Pictured front: Johnson Dhanasekaran, Kali Bargiel, Fiona Boyd, Robyn Maker, and Julia Sedgwick. Back: Duncan Frazier, Josh Sumter, Ben Vaigneur, Mallory Vaigneur, and Ella Morton. Not pictured Clayton Scarborough and Sarah Lively.

Joys and Concerns

In Celebration:
Aidy Mae Price, born 8/15 to Billy and Lara Price.

Recently Hospitalized:
Linda Battle, Donnie Macklin

In Sympathy:

Gayle Boroughs (died 7/30); service at FUMC on Sept. 5, at 12:00 p.m.

Joanne Boyle (died 7/30); service at FUMC on Sept. 6, at 2:00 p.m.

Jean Keil (died 8/17); private family service will be held in Illinois.

Janice Lovelace (died 8/23); service held at FUMC on Aug. 28.

A Note from the Pastor

"I'm no longer in the world, but they are in the world, even as I'm coming to you. Holy Father, watch over them in your name, the name you gave me, that they will be one just as we are one." ~John 17: 11

Do you ever feel like there is a lot of division in the world?

History has taught us that "othering" is easy. But fracture is never solely the result of "the other." Division doesn't only happen because we disagree. Fracture happens when fear eclipses love, when identity replaces discipleship, or when being right matters more than being faithful. Jesus knows this, and that's why he prays for our protection—not from suffering, but from separation. The protection Jesus seeks is an abiding relationship with God and with one another.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks once suggested that we need a theology to help us recognize the image of God in the face of those who are not in our own image. Can we recognize the image of God in people who pray differently, think differently, and vote differently? Can we see Christ's face in those who trouble us, provoke us, and disagree with us? To find God in the faces of all humankind, and perhaps especially in the faces of those with whom we struggle, may very well be at the heart of the eternal life Jesus invites us to live now.

In Christ's Love,
Pastor Clair

September Birthdays

1 Sue Elkins, Wayne Houlberg, Marybeth Luby, George Lewis

2 Anita Langley, Sheila Michel, Zach Williams

4 Chuck Darling, Kerrigan Davis

5 Mary Palmer

6 Betty Lou Alspaugh, Jenny Driskill, Mary Ann Hardy, Jan Ryan, Kim Smith, Amanda Murchio

7 Greg Smith, Tyler Trent

8 Justin Kittle

9 Doug Creek, Janalin Watson, Crawford Webb, Dan Marsh

10 Teresa Murchio, Sydney Shults

11 Finley Stokes, Debi McFarland

12 Megan Tuck, Amy Duffy, Don Gregory, Alice Weir

14 Lyn Sage

16 Marlene Ericson, Bill Martin, Mary Jane Randolph, Jackie Rylander

17 Lauryn Rouse, Savanna Rouse

18 Jane Pope, Judy Smith, Linda Yarbrough

19 Michael Bath, Agnes Moore, Jenni Rouse, Carolyn Carroll

21 Kevin Homan, Debbie Buchanan, Chuck Sabin

23 Angie Carico, Melissa Jeter, Becky McKamy, Robert Roach, Ann Snow, Bruce Warford, Shannon Blijlevens

24 Cathy McDaniel, Brad Watson, Braylon Windham

25 Bill Dodge

26 Abby Ochs

27 John Richardson

28 Amy Byrd, Hannah Magill, Carol Niehaus, Brooke Kizzire, Aaron Johnson

29 Gale Johnson, Angie Gallaher, Travis Hardy, Christopher Phillips, McRae Sharpe, Rachel Stokes, Jerry Van Fossen, Kelly Mixon

30 Mary Lawless

Stewardship Report

As of July 31, 2026

2026 YTD Offering and Income: $848,775
2026 YTD Budget Expenses: $848,771
2025 YTD Offering and Income: $842,745

July Special Offering (Family Resource Center): $4,330

All Around First Church

Youth Worship Night

On August 23, the First Church youth took a road trip to Concord UMC, where they joined many other youth from the area for a night of worship. They also got to enjoy dinner together at Texas Roadhouse.

Staff Appreciation Picnic

The Staff-Parish Relations Committee likes to let the staff know that they are loved and appreciated. On August 20, Michie and Donna Deising hosted the staff for an appreciation picnic at their beautiful riverfront home. The staff enjoyed perfect weather, great food, fellowship, kayaking, and paddleboarding. It was a wonderful way for the staff to spend an afternoon together relaxing and unwinding.

With a new school year, the First Steps CDC welcomed some new and familiar faces, and First Kids opened a new Sunday morning nursery in Room 206.