Wesleyan Heritage

This month, we received several new members into the life and ministry of FUMC. Did you know that from the beginning of the Holy Club at Oxford in 1729 until John Wesley's death in 1791, the Methodist movement grew from four to 132,000 members?

VIVA Communion

First Church provides a communion service the first Sunday of each month at VIVA Senior Living. Phyllis Spangler plays piano while the residents lift their voices in song. It's an honor and a blessing to show our love to these folks, some of whom are founding members of FUMC.

October Special Offering

The Special Offering for the month of October will support our facilities and the work of FUMC's Trustees by bolstering the Trustees Contingency Reserves Fund. This year, maintenance on all 59 HVAC units in the building was completed, and the MPR floor was refinished. This is routine maintenance work required every 3-5 years to ensure the longevity of our church facilities. The Building Contingency Fund helps keep our facilities functioning through routine maintenance projects and when unexpected needs arise. To support the October 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

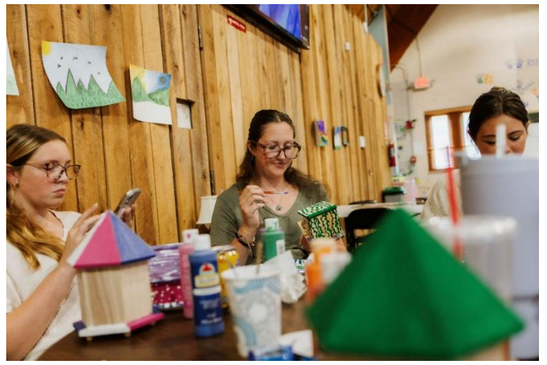
Office: 865-483-4357
Pastor-on-call: 865-272-9862
https://fumcor.org

First Things

October 2026

Next Gen Ministries

The children and youth are in the midst of a busy and active season!



Next Gen Ministries made some changes at the start of the school year. The nursery, now in Room 206, continues to be a lively place on Sunday mornings! The FIRSTKids Sunday School classes, now in Rooms 305 and 306, have adapted well to new spaces this month as they have studied about hearing from God. Also, several of the children participate in the Music Makers Children's Choir, which made it's season debut in worship on September 13.

The youth had a great time attending a worship night at Concord UMC with other local UMC youth last month! FUMC Youth meet each Sunday from 1:00-3:00 p.m. They spend quality time checking in with each other, listening to worship music, discussing and reflecting on a lesson, and enjoying fellowship through games and activities. There are also a couple of youth outings planned during the upcoming Fall Break.

Joys and Concerns

New Members:
Jonathan and Samiha Abernethy—UMC transfer and Profession of Faith
Jimmie Carter—transfer
Barbara Jenkins—transfer
Tony Rothweiler—transfer
Tom and Carol Toth—UMC transfer

In Celebration:
Ash Hardwick, born 9/8 to Kailin (Tan) and Gary Hardwick.

In Sympathy:
John Peters (died 8/29); services held at FUMC on Sept. 3.

Recently Hospitalized:
Abby Caughman, Ed Ducko, Carol Stoops, Rudy Weigel

A Note from the Pastor

"God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'" ~Hebrews 13: 5

There are times in life when what we need most isn't a solution, a plan, or even a word, simply someone who will stay with us. Someone who won't rush past our pain or hurry us toward feeling better. Someone who sits close enough for us to know we're not alone. Scripture tells us that God is like that, only more faithful, more patient, more present than any human companion could ever be.

"Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." It's one of the simplest promises in the Bible, and one of the hardest to believe when life feels too heavy. But God's staying power isn't dependent on our feelings. It's measured by God's character. God is the God who stays when circumstances change, when strength fades, when answers take their time. God's presence doesn't depend on our confidence. It doesn't waver when our hope feels thin. It doesn't disappear when the day is dragging.

God stays in the silence, in the waiting, and in the ordinary hours that make up most of our lives. God stays with a steady compassion, a patient love, and a peace that settles slowly, like a hand resting gently on the shoulder.

So today, may you feel the quiet nearness of the One who has not moved. May God's presence be your comfort, God's faithfulness your strength, and God's companionship your peace.

God is the God who stays, and God is staying with you now.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Ken

October Birthdays

1 Alice Miller, Cara Weigel

2 Kristie Pryor, Bobbie Scull, Jared Gibson

3 Kirstine Buchanan, John Wheeler, Lenora Holman

4 Nita Barnes, Debbie Diemer, Pam Fleming, Nancy Stanley, Janet Stroud, Canice Barnett

5 Dianne Farris, Neil Koone, Linda Morel

6 Sherri Carris, Chuck Dawn, Tina Ingersoll, Shelby Fowler, Susan Whitney

7 Rockwell Dukes, Neal Smith

8 Lee Garrott

9 Parker Bell, Corrine Bailey, Meta Carriker, Ella Morton, Jill Walter

10 Betsy Peterson

11 Jackie Lands, James McMahon, Elliott Normand, Max Vowell

12 Coco Isenberg

13 Jerry Amonett, Ron Battle, Kay Sharpe

14 Kathy Gillenwaters, Renee Hicks, Ella Mowrer

15 Walter Brown, Chris Lee, Beth Sampsel

16 Bill Beams

17 Louis Kittrell, Abby Magee, Curtis Miller, Andrew Ryan, Teri Smith

18 Ashley Mitchell, Skip Moore

19 Peg Ashline, Dakota Fuller, Peggy Marsh, John Prazniak, James Stokely, Clayton Scarborough

20 Tom Holler, Becky Smith

21 Keith Jeter

22 Jan Greenwalt

23 Chris Bonner, Shane Abercrombie, Caroline Samudio

24 Max Lawson, Alicia Kizzire

25 Kathy Finchum, Vickie Reddick, Stephanie Shults, Matthew Wham

26 Jenny Caughman

27 Pam Gibson

29 Sherry Bath, Mark Diemer, Wayne Lawless

30 David Coffey, Jim Hardy, Eric Perkerson, Miriam Wankerl

31 Kim Kittrell, Susan Waddle

All Around First Church

FUMC launched a new Emergency Food Closet, which served the first guest last month.

The Senior Travelers took their first trip to the Mennonite Community in Muddy Pond, TN, on September 17.

The Second Saturday Servants gather monthly to help keep FUMC clean and organized. Thank you!

Stewardship Report

As of August 31, 2026

2026 YTD Offering and Income: $951,821
2026 YTD Budget Expenses: $991,441
2025 YTD Offering and Income: $952,777

August Special Offering (Music Ministry): $14,300

What Does a Week Look Like for First Recovery Staff?

Have you ever wondered what a typical week looks like for the First Recovery staff? The truth is, there really isn't a typical week. Along with regular church staff meetings, First Recovery meetings, and Open Share groups, much of the week is spent simply walking alongside people. Sometimes that means sitting one-on-one with someone who is struggling, driving across the state to help someone get to treatment, or searching for resources to help provide medication, food, or clothing. Sometimes it means sitting with a family member who is watching someone they love struggle with active addiction and simply needing someone to listen.

We may find ourselves at a Drug Court graduation celebrating a new beginning, in a local coalition meeting, speaking at a community gathering, or working with Covenant Health through our partnership with its accredited nursing program. Then there are the moments we can't plan for: a return to use, a phone call in the middle of the night, taking someone to the hospital, or the call we all dread: an overdose.

This work is truly a calling. It is not simply something you decide to do one day. God has called us to walk into some of the hardest places and remind people that they are not alone and that their story is not over. First Recovery is making a difference right here in our community. Through this ministry, God continues to create space for healing, connection, community, and purpose.

Some weeks are incredibly hard. We often must sit in the middle of the pain and uncertainty. But then we get to witness something beautiful: a life beginning to change, a family finding hope, or someone discovering that recovery and a relationship with God are possible. Those moments are what keep us going. They remind us that God is still working, still restoring, and still calling us to show up for another day and another person.

FIRST RECOVERY
HELP. FAITH. HOPE.