

# First Things

Issue No. 3

A weekly publication of First United Methodist Church, Oak Ridge, Tennessee

January 24, 2021

## An Overview of Our Financial Stewardship Results

Thank you! That is the message our church leaders want to convey to all in our congregation who remained faithful in their giving throughout 2020. The members and friends of FUMCOR have been, and remain, financially generous in spite of the numerous obstacles of the past year. That same generosity is now evident in the final results of our 2021 financial stewardship campaign.

Our Finance Committee reports that we have received 247 estimates of giving, which is 85% of our 290 goal. However, those 247 estimates equate to \$1,118,963, or 93.25% of our \$1,200,000 goal. Considering all the uncertainty and upheaval of the previous 10 months, that is an amazing result!

Following are a few other figures that may help place our financial situation in perspective:

- 27 of the 247 estimates of giving received were for a smaller amount than last year, representing a decrease of \$42,208.
- 91 estimates of giving received were for more than in 2020, representing an increase of \$68,369.
- There were 16 NEW estimates of giving, providing \$42,300 toward this year's operating budget.

We are still hopeful more estimates of giving will arrive. The more information we have, the better financial decisions can be made. If you would like to help by making a 2021 estimate of giving, please contact Linda Bowen ([financedirector@fumcor.org](mailto:financedirector@fumcor.org)) in our Finance and Administration office.

Again, thank you for helping our congregation launch into 2021 on such a positive note.

## Sacred Conversations on Race

*Sacred Conversations on Race* is a group of individuals from across Holston Conference deeply committed to eradicating individual and systemic racism in our church and in our communities. Holston Conference believes that in listening to and learning from one another, we can build a community where our faith leads us to a love that chooses justice. Holston Conference will be offering a series of programs for all congregations in the Tennessee Valley District during February.

Four Zoom sessions will be offered, each dealing with topics of racism in our church, community, and world. Each program will be different, so please consider registering even if you cannot "attend" all four. We also will be sharing a wealth of resources with the participants. The sessions will be held on each of the four Tuesdays in February, from 7:00-8:30 p.m. All are welcome. Contact Pat Bellingrath ([patbellingrath@gmail.com](mailto:patbellingrath@gmail.com)) to register.

## Help Us Celebrate Our Saints

Among the myriad struggles our congregation faces during this pandemic is our collective inability to attend the funerals of our members and friends. The receiving of friends is more than mere ritual; celebrations of life are essential to the spiritual life and health of our people. We need opportunities to tell our stories of how much people have meant to us.

Normally, All Saints Day, celebrated on the Sunday closest to *November 1*, is a time when we read the names of deceased congregational members aloud in worship, collectively thank God for their lives, and remember once again the stories we shared together in the wake of their passing.

Because we have not been able to easily share stories and antidotes of the Saints who have passed (and might not be able to for quite awhile), our pastoral staff is putting together a *Booklet of Remembrances* to be available for our All Saints Day celebration *on Sunday, October 31*. We encourage everyone to prayerfully consider contributing a sentence or two, writing a paragraph, or sharing a story about one or more of our Saints who have passed since this pandemic began. You may mail or email those remembrances to our church office ([dgallaher@fumcor.org](mailto:dgallaher@fumcor.org)) or to one of our pastoral staff members.

Following is a list of those members who have passed away since November 1, 2019: W.T. Northcutt, Barbara Parks, Kathy Wilson, Fred Hurst, Clarice Thompson, George Brandon, Madelyn Rathbone, Ashlyn Whisnant, Sue Shults, Clarence Nabers, Susan Saunders, Mary Louise Winton, Bill Laing, Dee Longendorfer, Larry Foster, Edith Hummel, Ewin Kiser, Rita Speas, Bernard Griggs, Martha Denton, Harris Moeller, Majorie Congdon, Gene Grassel, Buzz Wolfe, Mary Ann Manning, Glenn Haste, Doris Beams, John Auxier, Charlotte Keyes, Suzanne Bilbrey, Emma Boyd, Helen Catron, Robert Walker, George Ritter, Bonnie Hedrick, Dave McCully, John Sanders, Mable Buskirk, Loraine Valentine, Margaret Fuller, Helen Roberts, Dub Shults, David Mason, John Cooke, George Wilson, and Margaret Pryor.

## Success with Advent Devotionals Moves Us Forward

As we received such a positive response to our Advent Devotionals, we will continue to offer opportunities for you to reflect on and deepen your relationship with God. Monday-Fridays a different staff member will offer a devotional. These devotions will be available on our website under the Virtual Chapel tab ([fumcor.org](http://fumcor.org)). On Wednesdays, we will have a written piece, and the other days will have videos. On Wednesday, there also will be a devotional designed especially for youth and families. We hope you will make use of these challenging times to deepen your knowledge and love of God and to learn about your faith. If you have a specific topic or scripture you would like us to address, call the office and let one of the pastors know. Blessings on the journey of 2021.

## In Loving Memory

### George Wilson

who joined FUMC October 4, 1998, and died January 14. We extend love and sympathy to his wife, Jennie, daughter, Elizabeth Ann, son and family, Brian, Karen, Grace, Kate, and David.

### Margaret Pryor

who joined FUMC October 29, 1961, and died January 17. We extend love and sympathy to her husband, Bill, and family.

## In Sympathy

We extend love and sympathy to Pam Crisp (Preston) and Bettie Preston on the death of Pam's husband, Tom, January 6.

## Hospitalized

**Personal information removed for privacy**

## Our Gifts

Offering this Week	\$30,735
2021 Year to Date	\$100,526
2020 Year to Date	\$103,306
Special Offering	\$2,080



## Restocking Area Food Pantries

In 2020, we did a wonderful job helping to stock local food pantries and providing a site to collect the thousands of donated supplies. In fact, we filled Anderson County Pantries seven times last year. Now, those same pantries are in need of our support again.

Our local pantries are finding themselves low on basics such as mac and cheese, evaporated milk, chili, stews, canned meats, and other in-date/nonperishable food items. They also are always in need of diapers, wipes, and feminine hygiene products.

Please help us spread the word: donations are being accepted now *through January 31* at FUMCOR's covered Vienna Road entrance, Monday–Thursday, 8:00 a.m.–noon, or may be left at that same entrance door after hours.

The United Way will coordinate the sorting and distribution of donated items to local pantries. Thank you all for what you have done and will continue to do for our community.

Naomi Asher, United Way

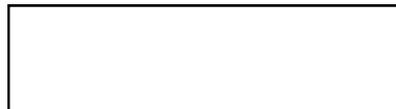
Nancy Kile, Welcoming Committee Chair



1350 Oak Ridge Turnpike  
Oak Ridge, TN 37830

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage PAID  
Permit #18  
Oak Ridge, TN  
37830

Return Service Requested



## Need 2021 Calendars

Have an extra 2021 calendar you can donate to a good cause? If so, you could be an answered prayer for a local, long-term nursing home resident. Please bring extra calendars to the church office, Monday–Thursday 8:30 a.m.–noon, or drop them in the basket outside the Welcome Center off Vienna Road.

## Stephen Ministers, Here to Help

I have had conversations with many people over the last 10 months, and no one that I have spoken to is enjoying the pandemic. While some have endured greater hardships than others, almost all of us are facing challenges as a result of COVID-19 and the impact it has had on our lifestyles, families, country, and the world. It can be very helpful to have a listening ear as we navigate these challenging times. Stephen Ministers are caring people of faith who have been trained to work alongside people during difficult times. If you would like to speak with a Stephen Minister, either once or on a regular basis, let me know.

Rev. Jenny Caughman (jcaughman@fumcor.org, 483.4357).

## Dishwashers Needed

Do you want to help with the Community Meal but cooking just isn't your thing? Good news—we are in need of a few dishwashers. If you are available on Wednesdays from 4:30–5:00 p.m. or so and don't mind getting your hands wet, call the church office (483-4357) or email Rev. Jenny Caughman (jcaughman@fumcor.org).



## Pictorial Directory Photos August 17-21

We are aware that many people like to know well in advance when photos for new pictorial directories will be made so that you can make arrangements with family members to be present. So, be sure to mark your calendars now for August 17-21.

## Special January Offering: Wesley House

Our monthly mission offering will go to Wesley House in the Mechanicsville/Lonsdale neighborhood of Knoxville. This United Methodist community center serves an underprivileged population with day care, an after-school program for children, and a daily gathering place for older adults. With great effort, it has been able to offer these services, including meals, throughout the pandemic. It also offers food items, cleaning supplies, and paper products to people in need. Wesley House has been an area mission since 1907. Please designate your special gift this month to the Missions Special Offering for Wesley House.

## Memorial Gifts Received July–December 2020:

Sarah P. Smith	Emma Boyd
Harold Wolfe	Helen Catron
Glenn Roy Haste, Jr.	David McCully
Mary Ann Manning	Bonnie Hedrick
Charlotte Keyes	Mable Buskirk
John Auxier	Loraine Valentine
Suzanne Bilbrey	Harris Moeller
	William Mooney