



## On the Christian Journey...

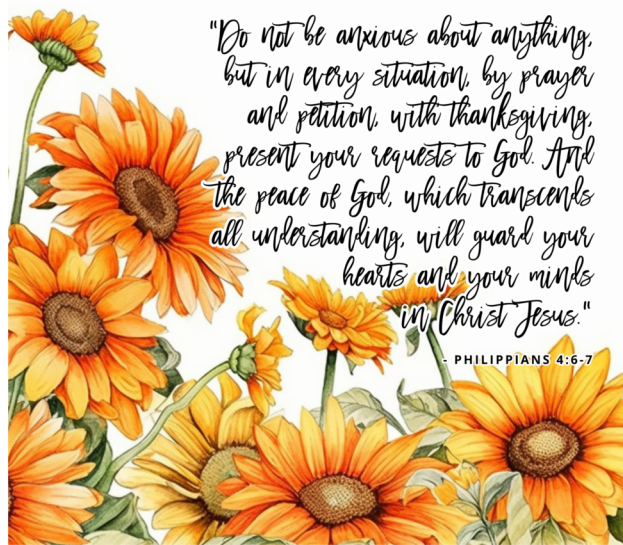
### With Pastor Christopher

I continue to be excited about all the good things happening here at Fort Scott First UMC. We had 30 people come to meet with the DS. We had people who grew up here, and others who have attended for decades, and five of those gathered have been here only a few months or a couple years – yet all are invested in the future of our ministry. Together, we represented a cross section of the congregation and our community. Even with heavy topics, the room was filled with laughter and hope. It was a blessing! Another positive sign is that every single person I approached in October about serving on a committee said yes. I have never had that happen before in 18 years of appointive ministry. Now maybe I'm just getting better at this pastor thing, and certainly some of the skills I've been learning in my continuing education have helped, but I think it also reflects well on our membership and how engaged in ministry we are. Our committee rosters and meeting attendance are as strong as they have been in years – and many of those serving are new members in the last few years. I find that very encouraging. I've also had no fewer than 5 people approach me saying they planned to increase their giving. In these challenging economic times, that is exceptional! Thank you!

When I was taking my first steps into ministry and still working through my sense of call (and my amazement that God would call *my* name!) I spent quite a bit of time in a small chapel/prayer room at the base of the bell tower at East Heights UMC in Wichita. Painted on the wall of that room was Philippians 4:6-7. Over the past few months, I've been "*presenting my requests to*

*"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*

— PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7



### A Suggestion for Prayer in this Election Season *Submitted by Jean Tucker*

Some time ago, Pastor Christopher challenged our congregation to set their phone alarms at 3:01pm (or another convenient time each day) to pray for our church, community, and world.

As we approach the midterm elections I would like to suggest that we pray for our county, state and national leaders, candidates for leadership and their families. Include the poll workers and their families. Pray for their safety and the strength to do their job well. Pray that the voters will take their responsibility seriously and remember and give thanks for those who have sacrificed, giving their service and lives, past and present, for us to have the right to vote.

*God*" about the future. I've been working hard on how I manage my own anxieties; being more intentional about how I respond (vs. "react"); discerning when to speak and when not to. I've been praying about how to be a better pastor, husband, son, father, grandfather, and friend. There aren't always easy answers. I'm conflicted about my own next steps – and I've been reminded of what a blessing the church – here in Fort Scott, at all of my prior appointments, our "connexional" United Methodist denomination, and the larger fellowship of believers from different paths, has been to me. Even as I'm still uncertain, Christ is "*guarding my heart...*" I firmly believe that, in the words of 14th Century mystic Julian of Norwich, that "*all will be well, and all will be well, and all manner of things will be well*" because Christ holds the future – and has equipped each of us to respond in the present, fruitfully! Blessed to be on the journey with you. ~Pastor Christopher



## November Birthdays

Birthdays: 1-Dale Smilie 3-Sheryl Bloomfield  
3-Kitty Fowler 3-Brooklynn Miner  
4-Joan Hembree 5-Dean West 8-Jane Williams  
9-Cindy Foxx 10-Susan Carnes 14-Dorothy Kivett  
15-Debra Wood 16-Leatha Boyd 20-De Covey  
21-Joe Tourtillott 25-Jennifer Carnes

*If we missed your November Anniversary,  
please let Christy know, to update our calendar.*



United  
Women  
in Faith

The next UWF meeting will be held Dec 10th; Pastor Christopher will share the devotion. The program will include installation of officers and preparing Christmas gifts for the home bound. Officers will be the hostesses. All women are invited to attend as we learn to know God, experience and share his gifts.



Best Choice Labels, the UPC, are still being collected by Linda Lechner. Drop off jars are available on the entrance tables. She recently sent a batch in, please help her collect more!

**Faith Builders** will continue the multimedia study by Adam Hamilton, "Why Did Jesus Have to Die?" With the crucifixion's central place in Christian faith, the New Testament offers few clear answers about how Jesus saves, or why exactly he had to die. Many advanced theories have attempts to answer this issue, understanding these thoughts will deepen one's faith. We will also begin our Advent study. Come join us in study and fellowship.



This Caregiver Support Group offers peer support, helpful resources, and practical guidance to help

you navigate care giving while caring.

The second Tuesday, each month, 6:00pm at CREDO, 820 S. Horton, Fort Scott, KS

[jeffrey.feagins@hynesmemorial.org](mailto:jeffrey.feagins@hynesmemorial.org)

620-231-7223. Light snacks and drink offered.

# HOLY HOCROC!

## Community Relations Team in Action

**The next HOCROC Meeting** is scheduled for Monday, November 2 at 6:00. The Nativity Showcase, and our part of Christmas on the Bricks, will be discussed, be thinking about participation!

### 4th Annual Nativity Showcase



Part of "Christmas on the Bricks" December 4, 5 and 6, 2026.

Be thinking about your favorite(s) nativity set(s) and the story behind it, as sign up sheets for displays and volunteers will be coming soon.

### Feeding Families In His Name

established in 2011, serving 40 people at the first sit down dinner. It grew rapidly, changed to a "to-go" meal, now averaging about 400 meals a week, and totaled 200,000 meals served through June of this year! It takes an army, but we want to thank Bonnie Milburn, FFIHN Coordinator, and her team for their continued organization skills for successful dinners served each Wednesday evening.

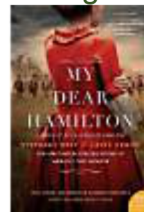


**\*No meal will be served on November 25th.\***

**The Ladies Reading Group** has begun the fall reading session on Wednesdays at 1:30 p.m. in the FUMC library. The first book is the 1938 classic "Rebecca," by Daphne duMaurier, a classic psychological



Gothic novel set in Cornwall, England. The second novel will be "My Dear Hamilton" by Stephanie Dray and Laura Kamoie. In honor of the nation's 250th anniversary, Dorothy thought it fitting to read about Alexander Hamilton's life through his wife, Eliza Schuyler Hamilton's eyes, based on letters and other sources.



Ladies are asked to purchase their own copies through Hedgehog or Amazon. Dorothy Kivett is the moderator for any questions.

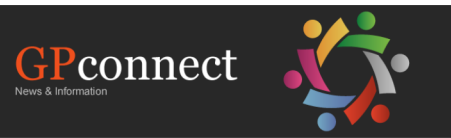
### Reminder! Pastor Christopher will



never text or e-mail you asking for gift cards for an "emergency." Any such request is a scam.

Block & report as junk. Don't let scammers take advantage of your generosity. Donation requests will always go through the church! Thank you!

GPconnect is the weekly newsletter of the Great Plains Annual Conference. Check out [www.greatplainsumc.org/gpconnect](http://www.greatplainsumc.org/gpconnect) each week to



learn about the news and opportunities across the United Methodist

connection in Kansas and Nebraska. When you subscribe, you may also opt-in to the other publications, like the daily devotionals.



**Presbyterian Village**  
**Game Night**  
**Every Wednesday**  
**6:00 to 8:00**

Our friends at Presbyterian Village are inviting "kids of all ages" to put on your game face, share some laughter and fellowship with friendly competition. It will be in the Village dining area; contact Cheryl Richards for questions.

***"The Singing Bones" Concert***

Leroy and Tracey Bender-Bones of Oklahoma  
**Saturday, December 5, 6:00pm**  
Country Gospel music and dessert potluck  
**Ft. Scott Brethren Church, 1421 S. Margrave**  
Free will donation, bring a dessert to share.

**FORT SCOTT SENIOR COALITION**  
**\*SENIOR EXPO\***

**Thursday, November 5th 10:00 to 2:00**

Buck Run Community Center  
FREE opportunity to connect with local organizations, discover helpful resources and services, and learn about programs available in the Fort Scott area.

Contact Angela Carpenter: 620-215-4942



Wednesday, November 11th;  
ceremony starts at 11:00am  
at the Fort. Scott National Cemetery #1  
F.S. VFW Post #1165 Soup & Dessert Lunch

**Second Sunday Sandwich Sale, Nov. 8th!**



November's freewill donations are again going to the First UMC General Fund to support all we do!

Grab a tasty sandwich after the service and thank you for your support of ASP and First United Methodist Church!

The Fort Scott Public Library is turning pages with many options! and Jennifer Carnes has stories to tell:



Bring Your Own Book Club,

November 2 at 2:00pm

Story Time with Mackenzie and Sam,

Tuesdays. 10:15am

Unraveling the Clues with Sam,

Tuesdays at 2:15pm

Golden Aces with Jennifer GF,

Wednesdays, 10:00am

Come be a bookworm;  
travel the world in your mind...

**FALL BAKE SALES COMING UP!**



If you like to bake, or make candy, ect., you have two chances: **11/22**, the Sunday before Thanksgiving, and **12/20**, the Sunday before Christmas!

The monies earned will go to our General Fund, and you have an opportunity to pick up holiday goodies for yourself, or invite a friend to buy some goodies! Please call Cindy Valdez to let her know what you can bring, at 620-224-8515.

**PIONEER KIWANIS**  
**CHILI FEED FUNDRAISER**



**Tuesday, November 10th**  
**11:00 - 1:30 / 4:00 - 6:00**

FUMC Drive Through.

Come by for lunch or dinner and support this great group, hosted here at First UMC! Suggested donation of \$10.00. Delivery available for ten or more. Call Nancy at 620-224-0563 to place an order.

## TRANSPARENCY AS REQUESTED: OUR FINANCIAL SITUATION

On the next page you'll find a proposed draft budget for 2027. It is NOT final, but has been developed, as a preliminary goal, by taking a hard look at the bare minimums of what we have to do to support our ministries and maintain the building as currently structured. Note that the top section on income shows our actuals through September 2026 and the totals for 2025. Then the rest of the page shows our actual expenses through September of 2026 alongside a projected budget for 2027. We welcome your questions, insights, and input.

I want to thank Linda Hessong and Jon Hutchinson, who have taken on the task of keeping our books, doing our payroll, and looking through our expenses and budget with a fine tooth comb. They have asked important questions, clarified policy and requirements, and, in cooperation with Trustees, Finance, and the Conference, brought much needed clarity to our finances. We have been working towards increased transparency and communication with the congregation as well, a desire that was emphasized at our recent meeting with DS Alice Purvis.

**OUR GIVING.** The inset box at the right shows our general fund giving in 2026. Note that March, May, and August had 5 Sundays, as will November.

A couple of months ago, we started sharing that, based on our existing budget, we needed \$20,000 to \$21,000 per month for our general fund to sustain what we do here at FirstUMC. Since sharing that, members of Finance have continued evaluating every expense, questioning requirements, and looking for savings. The proposed draft budget on the next page, largely developed by Linda Hessong with input from Pastor, SPRC, and Finance members, would reduce our monthly goal to \$19,250. That is, candidly, still a stretch for us.

In 2025, our total General Fund income was \$176,933.57, an average of \$14,744 a month. Through September of this year, we've brought in \$142,021.13, an average of \$15,780. A significant increase, but not yet where we need to be. Sharing this information is part of a conversation about what we can realistically sustain and finding ways to make the changes needed to ensure our ministries are sustainable. Together, I am convinced God will show us the way to be even more fruitful and do still greater things in this mission field. "All will be well!"

### 2026 Undesignated Tithes and Offerings

January \$10,731  
February \$16,724  
March \$19,424  
April \$14,706  
May \$19,613  
June \$12,079  
July \$12,390  
August \$18,599  
September \$17,845  
October (projected) \$14,417

### **CASH ASSETS AS OF SEPTEMBER\*TOTAL: \$143,210.82**

We currently have no debt. Our cash assets listed here are as of September, \*except that the Money Market balance has been adjusted to reflect paying \$14,462.02 for the recent dome repairs which were finished just as September ended. Trustees and Finance approved that repair after extensive conversation and consideration.

#### **Money Market Account: \$62,607.50**

*These funds are from recent estate gifts (undesignated use) and maturing CD's. About 60% of this balance came from the B. Irene Monday or Luceil Lehnoff Endowments and thus are formally designated for building maintenance or scholarships.*

#### **Memorials and Gifts Account: \$9,769**

*These are various smaller amounts remaining from gifts given to the church in memory of our great cloud of witnesses, most are designated for a variety of things including building, children, youth, music, etc.*

#### **Endowment Interest Account \$4,836.11**

*Prior to establishing the Money Market Acct, Interest from CD's designated for building maintenance had been moved here to allow use.*

#### **Scholarship Interest Account: \$694.27**

*Interest from CD's designated for scholarships has been moved here and used for our active college students each year. We have typically given out \$200-250 per student.*

#### **Remaining CD's Yet to Mature: \$42,500**

*These include a \$35,000 Rogers Memorial Scholarship Endowment, a \$5,000 Youth Endowment, and a \$2,500 Coleman Education Fund.*

#### **General Checking Account: \$22,788.99**

*Note: this account includes our undesignated funds to pay routine bills, expenses, salaries, etc. It also holds \$7,538.37 designated for ASP and \$22,803.94 designated for HVAC. Some quick math will tell you that means we are "in the red" by **\$7,578.32** on the undesignated funds. Since the ASP and HVAC funds are held in the main account, our cash flow is still ok. The "missing" funds **will** be restored, either by future giving, or, as needed, by Finance moving funds from the endowments in December. We seek to honor all designations, especially ASP and HVAC, but we clearly have some hard decisions facing us.*

| FORT SCOTT FIRST UNITED METHODIST                                    |                     |                     |                                |                     |                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| JANUARY- SEPTEMBER 2026 ACTUAL YTD SPENDING and Proposed 2027 Budget |                     |                     |                                |                     |                     |
|                                                                      | ACTUAL              | ACTUAL              |                                | ACTUAL              | PROPOSED            |
| GENERAL INCOME                                                       | YTD Sept 26         | Ful Year1 2025      |                                | YTD Sept 26         | Budget 2027         |
| Pledged                                                              | \$133,012.00        | \$171,292.00        | Staff Salaries                 |                     |                     |
| Loose Plate                                                          | \$1,720.25          | \$2,308.56          | Administrative Executive       | \$9,287.33          | \$16,550.00         |
| Church School                                                        | \$506.50            | \$942.56            | Custodian                      | \$9,904.78          | \$13,250.00         |
| Other Income / Grants                                                | \$6,782.38          | \$2,390.45          | Nursery                        | \$496.30            | \$1,300.00          |
| <b>TOTAL INCOME</b>                                                  | <b>\$142,021.13</b> | <b>\$176,933.57</b> | Music Director                 | \$7,080.96          | \$9,250.00          |
|                                                                      |                     |                     | IT Technician                  | \$925.00            | \$1,350.00          |
|                                                                      | <b>ACTUAL</b>       | <b>PROPOSED</b>     | Payroll Expenses               | \$4,090.72          | \$6,500.00          |
| <b>GENERAL EXPENDITURES</b>                                          | <b>YTD Sept 26</b>  | <b>Budget 2027</b>  | <b>Total Staff Salaries</b>    | <b>\$31,785.09</b>  | <b>\$48,200.00</b>  |
| <b>Conference Expenses</b>                                           |                     |                     |                                |                     |                     |
| Annual Conference Lay Expenses                                       | \$911.41            | \$800.00            | <b>Office Expenses</b>         |                     |                     |
| Mission Shares (10%)                                                 | \$10,530.26         | \$17,226.00         | Chamber Dues                   | \$125.00            | \$125.00            |
| Agency Support (1%)                                                  | \$1,053.30          | \$1,722.96          | Computer/Office Supplies       | \$2,503.24          | \$2,500.00          |
| <b>Total Conference Expenses</b>                                     | <b>\$12,494.97</b>  | <b>\$19,748.96</b>  | Contingency Fund               | \$0.00              | \$300.00            |
|                                                                      |                     |                     | Phone & Internet               | \$1,850.20          | \$2,500.00          |
| <b>Education Expenses</b>                                            |                     |                     | Postage                        | \$390.00            | \$800.00            |
| Adult Ministries                                                     | \$178.84            | \$200.00            | Safe Gatherings                | \$140.00            | \$150.00            |
| Children Ministries                                                  | \$160.07            | \$200.00            | Subscriptions                  | \$340.30            | \$400.00            |
| Vacation Bible School                                                | \$0.00              | \$750.00            | <b>Total Office Expenses</b>   | <b>\$5,348.74</b>   | <b>\$6,775.00</b>   |
| Youth Ministries                                                     | \$0.00              | \$200.00            |                                |                     |                     |
| <b>Total Education Expenses</b>                                      | <b>\$338.91</b>     | <b>\$1,350.00</b>   | <b>Support-Trustees</b>        |                     |                     |
|                                                                      |                     |                     | Church Maintenance             | \$4,316.91          | \$9,000.00          |
| <b>Evangelism Expenses</b>                                           |                     |                     | Electric                       | \$11,855.98         | \$14,000.00         |
| Advertising                                                          | \$895.56            | \$1,000.00          | Gas                            | \$3,739.75          | \$5,000.00          |
| HOCROC                                                               | \$189.88            | \$500.00            | Trash                          | \$1,000.00          | \$1,200.00          |
| Web Page                                                             | \$17.95             | \$50.00             | Water                          | \$1,193.61          | \$1,300.00          |
| <b>Total Evangelism Expenses</b>                                     | <b>\$1,103.39</b>   | <b>\$1,550.00</b>   | Property Insurance             | \$24,552.00         | \$24,750.00         |
|                                                                      |                     |                     | Workers Compensation           | \$2,594.83          | \$2,600.00          |
| <b>Mission Expenses</b>                                              |                     |                     | Roof Buydown                   | \$3,802.76          | \$3,900.00          |
| Good Sam                                                             | \$1,015.43          | \$1,500.00          | Parsonage Repairs              | \$41.63             | \$1,500.00          |
| Healthy Congregations                                                | \$1,056.10          | \$1,700.00          | Security                       | \$533.67            | \$500.00            |
| Community Missions                                                   | \$750.00            | \$1,200.00          | <b>Total Support - Trustee</b> | <b>\$53,631.14</b>  | <b>\$63,750.00</b>  |
| <b>Total Missions Expenses</b>                                       | <b>\$2,821.53</b>   | <b>\$4,400.00</b>   |                                |                     |                     |
|                                                                      |                     |                     | <b>Worship</b>                 |                     |                     |
| <b>Pastor Compensation</b>                                           |                     |                     | Copyright License              | \$266.00            | \$275.00            |
| Base Pay                                                             | \$40,260.26         | \$54,131.00         | Choir Expenses                 | \$0.00              | \$100.00            |
| Continuing Education                                                 | \$3,072.99          | \$3,000.00          | Communion                      | \$46.05             | \$100.00            |
| Direct Bill Pension                                                  | \$7,523.78          | \$7,307.69          | Miscellaneous                  | \$72.00             | \$100.00            |
| Health Insurance                                                     | \$10,566.72         | \$15,800.00         | Pulpit Supply                  | \$350.00            | \$1,000.00          |
| Professional/Travel                                                  | \$3,607.24          | \$3,200.00          | Worship Supplies               | \$138.83            | \$200.00            |
| <b>Total Pastor Comp.</b>                                            | <b>\$65,030.99</b>  | <b>\$83,438.69</b>  | <b>Total Worship</b>           | <b>\$872.88</b>     | <b>\$1,775.00</b>   |
|                                                                      |                     |                     | <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>          | <b>\$173,427.64</b> | <b>\$230,987.65</b> |



**Our Advent Series** this year will begin on Sunday, Nov. 29th and will be based on traditional seasonal scriptures viewed through the lens of “The Redemption of Scrooge” by Matt Rawle.

During Advent, we are on a journey that takes a look at how God blesses each and every one of us with the ability to be transformed. The chimes of the clock-tower bells and light, shared by the visitors Scrooge encounters in Dickens’ classic, *A Christmas Carol*, provided a wake-up call for Ebenezer and turned him from his resentment, fear and isolation.

With beloved carols and dramatic readings, each week we will discover how we too can be born anew, woken up, and redeemed into renewed life, joy, passion, generosity, humility, and love!

**Invite a friend to join us on the Advent journey!**

**HANGING OF THE GREENS** – plan to stay after the service on Sunday, Nov. 22nd to decorate the Sanctuary for Advent and Christmas.

Thanks to Cindy Foxx for coordinating our efforts each year!

First United Methodist Church  
301 S National  
Fort Scott, KS 66701-1397

Return Service Requested

*Here is your November 2026  
Newsletter from:*



Visit us online:

Links to Facebook, YouTube, Instagram  
[www.firstumcfortscott.org](http://www.firstumcfortscott.org)