



The Connexion



On the Christian Journey... with Pastor Christopher

The last couple of months have been a whirlwind and I have been delighted at the spirit within the congregation and the result of numerous conversations and dreaming that led to us reconfiguring our staff and welcoming Kristin Bishop into the office as our new Administrative Executive! It will take her time to learn all the various parts of this new role, but we are off to a great start! One of the convictions of my faith, drawn from lessons



*Roman stones on the
Via Dolorosa in
Jerusalem*

in my journey, is that we are always beginning. We are rooted in the traditions and decisions of the past, and yet we are always able to choose our next steps and, with God, seek something new.

This past month, I have been exploring “The Way of Christ and the Will of God.”

Candidly, the series has grown beyond what

I expected. I’ve been deeply engaged with Scripture and reflection on my own journey. Our congregation and our world have been full of examples of times when things do not go as we might wish, and yet, in faith, we find renewed hope and new opportunities. I hope this series, and all the decisions I and our lay leadership make, help you on your journey. As we move into September, in worship we will look at some of the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament and how Jesus draws from their insights as he calls us to live into the Kingdom of God. Then as we move into autumn, we’ll focus a bit more on how we are living that call out here at First United Methodist in this time. How are we doing at making disciples, as growing faith, at meeting needs? How are we doing as stewards of all God has blessed us with? What opportunities are before us? What needs to be reinvigorated, or perhaps set aside? As the blurb from Ron Wood notes, we’ll be working on our 2024 church budget – how does our planned spending reflect our theology and mission? We will host our Network’s Charge Conference on Sunday, October 15th at 6pm and as we lead up to that, Administrative Board will meet twice this month to do the paperwork. Our lay leadership team will be nominating people to serve in necessary roles on our committees in the coming years and we’ll be working to fine tune our processes. In some ways this is all routine, what we’ve “always” done, and in some ways it is new. Both / and. As we move into the future together, let me know your ideas, ask your questions, and pray about how you are called to help us take our next step in faith at First UMC. I am blessed to be on the journey with you here in Fort Scott.

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Request for 2024 Budget Input

~ from Ron Wood

It will soon be time to begin preliminary work on the 2024 budget, so I’m asking committee chairpersons and other activity leaders to provide me with your budget requests.

Please email your input by October 1 to: ronwood@cpol.net

Or drop them by the church office and they will forward the info.



The Beacon Challenge is Back!

For several years, 1st Presbyterian has challenged First United Methodist to see who could raise the most food for Fort Scott's "The Beacon" ministry each fall. And for several years, the Methodists won the Coveted Can Award fairly easily... BUT in 2022, the Presbyterians found their game and vastly outtraised the Methodists, at long last taking the trophy for their own! *(And far more importantly both churches have increased the amount they have given every year of our challenge! So, the Beacon wins!)*

In 2023, the Methodists want the trophy back! By virtue of being the losing side last year, we are claiming the right to set the rules this year. So – we proposed a new twist on the challenge! **Theme weeks**, with the winner of each week decided by **total package weight** of the target items donated. The contest will run from Sunday, September 10th to Sunday, October 15th with totals shared by Monday at noon weekly and an 8th count of all "other items" donated made at the end of the contest. We will then celebrate and announce the winner with a shared potluck meal on Sunday, October 22nd. *(To be held at 1st Presbyterian as the defending trophy holders.)*

Weekly Themes:

Count 1 Sunday September 10th – Rice, Granola Bars, Nuts, Instant Potatoes, Ramen, Crackers & Cooking Oils (Olive and Canola)

Count 2 Sunday, September 17th – Pasta and Sauces

Count 3 Sunday, September 24th – Canned Fruits and Vegetables

Count 4 Sunday, October 1st – Boxed or Bagged Cereal, Powdered Milk

*Count 5 Sunday, October 8th – Soup & Canned Meats/Fish
(chicken, Spam, tuna, salmon, stew, chili, etc).*

Count 6 Sunday, October 15th – Peanut Butter and Jelly (or similar).

*Tiebreaker "Other Items" TOTAL - also tallied by Monday, Oct 16th
(includes all items not on list or brought after target date, by weight)
Cash donations totaled here and count as One (1) pound per \$1.00*

THE RULES:

- Each weekly "Sunday" count is due by Mondays at noon, reported to the other church's office. Weight used is from item packaging. Weekly winner is the church that brings the most (by weight) of each item **by that item's Sunday (aka by the Monday noon deadline...)**

- Items may be "saved up" to be counted during the target week if brought early, but once that item's week passes, any further donations of said item just become "other items donated" and are included in the tiebreaker, but not retroactively to the item's weekly count.

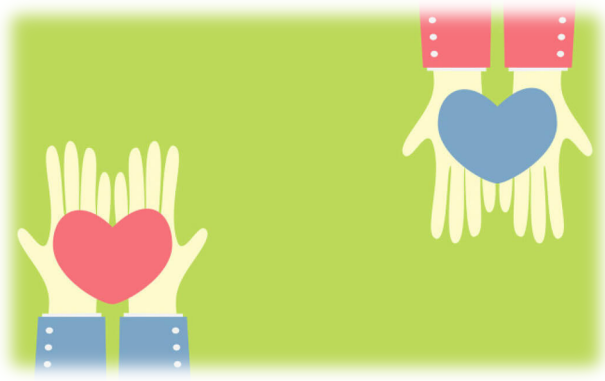
- Church that wins 4 of the 6 "weekly" count wins the trophy – if we spilt 3-3 on designated counts, an "other items and cash donated" tiebreaker is used.

- Churches may choose to use donated weekly cash to have someone purchase items for a given week to try and win that week BUT cash used that way cannot then also be counted for the tiebreaker later.)

- The overall goal, of course, is to continue the trend of each church donating more food (and cash) than last year so that "the Beacon wins!"**

Now... let's get that trophy back ☺





A Word on Giving

We ask for a lot - many Sundays there are 2 or 3 different special giving opportunities, in addition to our regular pleas for the church budget itself - and it can become a bit overwhelming. One reason is that there are such needs - but another is that we are the body of Christ - and we are created in diversity. Different giving opportunities speak to different people. Pastor Christopher encourages you to prayerfully consider all your giving (within the church and beyond) and listen for what causes and opportunities speak most deeply to you.

Individually, few, if any of us, can contribute to everything that comes up - but each of us can make a difference with specific things and, together, our little becomes a lot!

God can do abundantly far more than we ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20) - especially if we faithful and joyfully respond by giving to those opportunities where we feel the Spirit moving - and trust that others do as well.

CHC/USD234 Hygiene Drive: We are collecting backpacks, girls underwear sizes 4/6 to adult large, boys underwear sizes 4t to 14, girls leggings sizes XS to XL, boys slip on pants and shorts sizes 4 - 11/12, hygiene products and feminine hygiene products to help our local K-12 students have a successful school year!



UMCOR Helps Near and Far

One of the best things we do as United Methodist is respond to human and natural disasters through the United Methodist Committee on Relief UMCOR. They used to create a different

"advance number" for every incident but now they primarily use 3. For US events, the Advance # is For International Aid, the # is and if you specifically want to give but have UMCOR determine where funds are most needed, the Advance Number is #. You can give, through the church, anytime to any of these funds as the Spirit moves you. Simply mark your check UMCOR and use one of these numbers. (If no code is used we'll default to the "most needed"). UMCOR works both directly and through partner agencies and 100% of donations to disaster relief go to disaster relief (because of events like UMCOR Sunday special offering, through which we fund the administrative costs).

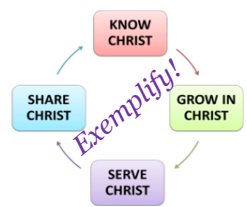
FEEDING FAMILIES in HIS NAME needs your plastic shopping bags. Please bring them by the church on Sundays or 9am to 2pm Monday – Thursday. Thank you!



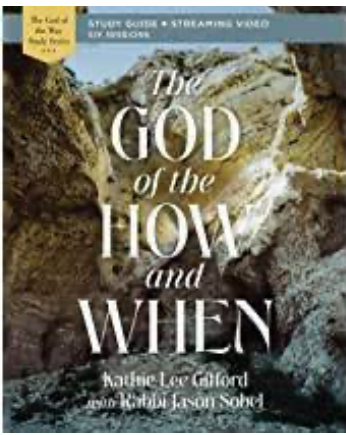
Next Scheduled Church Committee Meetings In Library unless noted:

- HOCROC:** 6pm Mon, Sept. 11
- Memorials and Gifts:** 3pm Tues. Sept. 12
- Trustees:** 7pm Tues. Sept. 12
- Administrative Board:** 7pm Wed. Sept. 13 (CC forms review)
- 2024 Shepherd's Center Planning:** 2pm Fri. Sept. 15th
- SPRC & Finance** 6pm Mon. Sept 18 (CC recommendations)
- Administrative Board:** 7pm Wed. Sept. 27 (formal CC votes)
- Charge Conference:** 6pm Sun. Oct 15 – Sanctuary

Our Mission is: to share the good news of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ and to *exemplify* the love of God by *knowing* Christ, *growing* in Christ, *serving* Christ and *sharing* Christ.



Faith Builders in September



We will continue our study of “The God of the How and When,” a multimedia study by Kathie Lee Gifford and Rabbi Jacob Sobel. We will be discussing God’s promises made through Abraham, Sarah, Moses and Joshua. These are stories we have heard time-and-again, but new ideas and perspectives are gained in our study and discussion.

We will appreciate some new thoughts and ideas, so please come start your Sunday worship experience with us in our journey of fellowship and discussion.

~Ron Wood

Join us at 6pm
Sunday, Sept. 17th for our
annual *Fish Fry Dinner*.
No need to bring anything
but your appetite and
fellowship.

Menu

Fish, Shrimp, Fried Potatoes,
Slaw, Hush Puppies
and cookies.



READING GROUP RESUMES – Dorothy Kivett



Any lady is welcome to join the Reading Group which will begin Wednesday, September 13. We meet in the library at 1:30 p.m. for about an hour. Carol Newcomer will moderate the book, The Forgotten Home Child by Genevieve Graham. The book reveals the plight of poor children of London who are picked from the streets and shipped to Canada. Ladies should order their own books from Hedgehog, Ink, Amazon, or ABE books. Chapters 1-11 for Sept 13; Ch. 12-25 for Sept. 20; Ch. 26 - End for Sept. 27.



United
Women
in Faith

Our Fall Tea will be held
at Presbyterian Village on
Thursday, September 14th
at 1:30pm.

All women of the
community are invited.

Our special guest speaker for this event
will be Marti Wells-Smith, author of
the book “Lamentations of the Heart.”

Bring a friend!
See you there!

~Jan Hedges,
UWF President



NEW SUPPORT GROUP FOR GRIEVING MOTHERS



Cindy Valdez will be starting a group called Support for Grieving Mothers in and around the Bourbon County Area. The group will be meeting every Thursday from 6-7:30 in the Church Parlor here at First United Methodist. The meetings will run from 9/21/23 to 11/16/23. This is a group for mothers who've lost children no matter how old they were when they passed. If you'd like to join, you'll need to contact Cindy Valdez in advance at 620-224-8515 or email her at freckles4624@zimbracloud.com to reserve your spot.

SHEPHERD'S CENTER / ADVENTURES IN LEARNING 2024 PLANNING MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15TH 1:30PM



Using our Healthy Congregations grant we have begun experimenting with ways to build connection and encourage lifelong learning among senior adults in our congregation and community.

Our Shepherd's Center / Adventures in Learning program is affiliated with a national network of such programs, each locally run.

Friday, September 15th at 1:30pm, we will have a meeting of folks interested in helping shape the next year of this program in Fort Scott. Our goal is to move the planning

from our HOCROC committee, which has guided it so far, to its own board drawn from both the church and community. If you'd like to help guide and grow this idea, join the 7 people currently signed up!



While you check email – please also be sure we have your current mailing address, home and cell phone numbers.

You can always update these using a contact card found at the entrances – just drop it in the offering plate, or come by, email or call Kristin in the office – 9am to 2pm Monday – Thursday!

Please check and make sure you are receiving emails from info@firstumcfortscott.org

That is the official church email. We will no longer use the older “secretary” account and our website domain is now www.firstumcfortscott.org

That replaces the older domain and emails that used the confusing abbreviation “fsks.” However – because our new domain is... new and because we tend to send group emails, they sometimes go to junk folders. The easiest way to fix this is to mark us as a trusted sender OR just send Kristin and email saying hello – then we'll have your current address!



Chuck Crain
In concert at First United Methodist!

Featured at Presley's Branson and RFD TV
Chuck will bring his music ministry here on
Sunday, October 8th at 6pm!

A Freewill offering will be collected for the artist.
For more information about Chuck, visit his website at
<https://www.chuckcrain.net> **Invite a friend!**



Birthdays & Anniversaries

September Birthdays:

2- Reggie Fancher, Jana Hazelbaker, 3-Jennifer Slinkard, 4-Chris Harry, Mia Perry, 5-Kristian Engle, 8-Cadence Hunziker, 11-Landia Antonetti, 12-Michael Harry, Zach Culberson, 14- Mike Leachner, 17-Mark Ward, 18-Carol Majors,

Lakin Albright, 19-Miranda Arndt, Dacia Clark, 20-Patricia Hartford, 22-Randy Sprague, 23-Barbara Stuart, 25-Tim Engle, Trenton Jahay, 26-Marlene Braker, 29-Winston Bishop, 30-Peggy Stark.

September Anniversaries: 3- Don & Jean Tucker, 4-Mak & Lisa Ward, 15-Ryan & Amber Hunziker, 16-Trot & Ty Post, 17 Roger & Charlene Sipe, 21-Jamie & Jessica Ballou, 28-Jason & Trina Arnd

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

Return Service Requested

*Here is your September 2023
Newsletter from:*



Visit us online:
www.firstumcfsks.org
Links to Facebook,
YouTube, Instagram

**Upcoming
KMDO Radio
Schedule:**



A recording of our services will run every other week at 1pm on 103.9 (or occasionally 98.3 if there's a Chiefs or Royals game conflict).

Our upcoming dates are:

- September 10th & 24th
- October 8th & 22nd
- November 5th & 19th
- December 3rd, 17th & 31st

Tell a Friend!