



Volume 30, Issue #4
April 2026

The **Connexion**

On the Christian Journey... with Pastor Christopher

I want to apologize. I am aware that our services recently have been running longer than expected. I have been trying too hard to do too much.

In reflecting recently on the story of David, I'm pondering to what degree that has been hubris on my part. I have been trying to create moments, to help others encounter God, but have continued to fill too much of it with my own voice. Part of it is that there are so many exciting connections that I want so desperately for others to see – and part of it is that the world is currently so far from the vision I believe Christ has for us that I cannot stay silent! But at the same time, too much means many aren't able to hear or see what I'm trying to convey.

I appreciate all the positive feedback my sermons and worship planning get – and I appreciate that there is a norm of a time frame of an hour that, particularly this last few weeks, I've gone well over. I want you to know that I am evaluating that and that I agree the main thing that needs to be adjusted is how much I'm talking - both at the threshold and during the sermon. There has been mixed feedback on the prayer format using silence. Some folks really like it, some are uncomfortable with it. Frankly I expected more of the latter. Overall, I think this congregation appreciates the silence and the space – as long as other things aren't causing us to run long! Some of introducing that style in recent weeks has been the series I've used from Worship Design Studio suggesting it – but 'll confess a lot of that is that I just don't know how to pray right now.

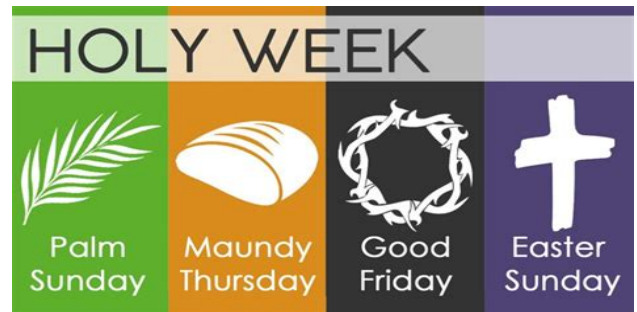
There is too much hurt. Too much cruelty. Too many disasters stacked one on top of another – so many things that don't even make the news that are just... wrong! And I don't want to turn it into a litany of stuff I am aware of and care about and impose that on the congregation either... and I want to give thanks for all that which is good too!... and its all just... too much! Which is why our Easter series will focus on prayer. I think we can all use some



we can all use some "affirmation, correction, and motivation" right now around prayer, as the *Heart of the Matter*. I hope you'll continue this journey with me as we know, grow, serve, and share together . ~Pastor Christopher

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HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

- Maundy Thursday, April 2nd – 7pm**
Remembering the Last Supper
- Good Friday/Tenebrae, April 3 – 7pm**
Remembering the Crucifixion
- Easter Sunrise Service, Apr. 5 – 7am**
We'll gather in the parking lot behind the church to greet the new day with a special service to conclude our "the Way" series with a breakfast following.
- Easter Morning Service – 10:30am**
*Join us for our full service celebrating the Resurrection of Christ!
 He is Risen, Indeed!*



FEEDING FAMILIES NEWS Submitted by: *Bonnie Milburn*
 On February 23, 2026, we received a grant in the amount of 4,000.00. This was from our friends at the Fort Scott Elks Lodge #579. Thanks to Cathy Bishop this is the third such grant we have received from them.

We can buy paper goods with this money, which is a blessing as, they are our largest expense. I placed a large order this past week and I believe, it will take us thru the end of 2026.

Our two new refrigerators, through our 2025 grant from the Fort Scott Area Community Foundation were delivered on March 16. I will be placing an order for fruits and vegetables that grant will also underwrite in the coming week.

I am so pleased with the support of many individuals and groups that have stepped up to help with this much needed program. I feel blessed to have the help of the many workers involved. Cake bakers, can openers, cooks and servers. Don't forget Robert for cleaning up our messy floors on Thursdays.

FROM KATHY PROBIS – CRAFT FAIR INVITE

The First Southern Baptist Church, 1818 S. Main, Fort Scott, will be holding their annual Spring Craft Fair from 8:00 am - 5:00 pm on Friday April 10th & 8:00 am - 3:00 pm on Saturday April 11th. Kitty Fowler & I will both have booths there. Kitty crochets all kinds of animals including Highland Cows, chickens & dragons. She plans to have an assortment of items in her booth. I will be sharing a booth with my son, Rick. He works with plastic canvas and plans to bring various styles of coasters, gift card holders & small tissue holders. I recycle & sew denim into various items. I plan to bring gift card holders, purses, totes & throw pillows. The First Southern Baptist Church will have homemade chicken noodles or pulled pork sandwiches with sides for sale both days. Come see all the homemade items for sale on April 10th & 11th.



KANSAS RENEWAL INSTITUTE SEEKS LUGGAGE DONATIONS

- from *Shanda Stewart at KRI:*

"The Kansas Renewal Institute is in need of donations of luggage, backpacks, and duffel bags . We use these donations when a child is ready to return to their home/ placement . This replaces trash sacks or paper bags they brought their things in when they arrive to us. The phone number is 1-888-306-4718 or info@kansasrenewal.com

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN SEEKS FURNITURE / HOUSEHOLD ITEMS – from *Pastor Sarah*

First Presbyterian has a furniture ministry. They are in need of beds in good shape, bedding and blankets in good shape, dressers, nightstands, and kitchen items (pots and pans, kitchen utensils, appliances, etc.) They are assisting people out of Redemption house, CORE, and there have been a few house fires over the last couple of months. If you have items to share, give them a call at (620) 224-2055.



APRIL BIRTHDAYS:

Lynn Chaney- 02, Alyssa Popp- 3, Douglas Barlet-4, Rose Stoughton- 6, Kristin Bishop-9, Darren Tucker-19, Leslie Reynolds-19, Janice Fewins-19, Kyle Altic-23, Linden Bishop-25

April Anniversaries:

Tom and Marlene Braker - 26



United Women in Faith

United Women in Faith News - Spring, 2026

For 2026, the UW Faith membership at First United has eighteen members. Everyone is welcome to attend programs occasionally or regularly and we'd love to have you join us. The remaining dates and programs this year:

- Oct. 8- Thank Offering and officer election
- Dec. 10- Christmas gifts for homebound and install officers.
- June 11 – Redemption House
- Aug. 13-Outreach in Bourbon County
- Sept. or Oct.-Fall Tea at Presbyterian Village

March 23rd was the 157th anniversary of United Women in Faith and the website explains our history. “ in 1869, Clementina Butler and Lois Parker, wives of missionaries to India, made a plea to a group of eight women in Boston about the spiritual and physical needs of poor women in India. They could not be treated by male doctors. Schooling for girls was almost non-existent. Help was desperately needed. In what would become a lasting legacy of “showing up and getting things done,” the attendees were moved to action. They quickly called another meeting of more women. They wrote a constitution. And in short order, they organized the Methodist Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society (WFMS).

Copied from uwfaith.org/who-we-are/our-history.

Save Best Choice Labels for United Women in Faith!

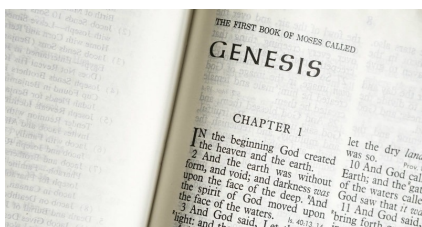
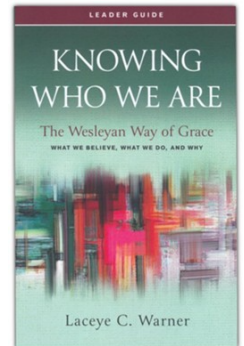
You can leave them in the glass jars by the entrances each week.
Thank you!



Our 2026 contains Our Purpose.”..... to connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship and education so that they can inspire, influence and impact local and global communities. We are a powerful fearless force driven by God’s love and united in sisterhood.”

Faith Builders in April

In April, we will be discussing “Knowing Who We Are: A Wesleyan Way of Grace,” a multimedia study of what we believe, what we do and why. This study is authored and presented by Dr. Lacey Warner, an elder in the Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church, a faculty member at Duke University Divinity School and author of several books. The study is an overview of Wesleyan Christianity and the values, beliefs and practices that grow from it. Please join us in learning and fellowship. Note: We will not meet on Easter Sunday morning.



MUGG (Multi-Generational Group) SUNDAY SCHOOL – by Don Tucker

Our Sunday school class is working through the book of Genesis in the Old Testament. This class has a wide range of ages and all are welcome. We meet in the library and have coffee available.

OFFICE CHANGE COMING IN MAY

After faithfully serving as our Administrative Executive for the past two years, Kristin Bishop has decided to step down. When she started, she had numerous family available to stay with the boys, and due to the passing of her dad and Will's mom, that has changed. Child care cost would exceed what we can pay her and so she will end her time in the office in May. SPRC is meeting to evaluate our needs in the office and develop a plan for our next steps soon. We thank Kristin for her great hospitality, service, and love of our congregation and look forward to continuing to worship with her, Will, and the boys, but will miss her in the office. Details on our new job description will be available soon.

FORT SCOTT LIBRARY ACTIVITIES from Jennifer Carnes



Here are the programs going on at the library. All events take place downstairs in our events room.

Monday April 6th at 2:00 is Bring Your Own Book Club with Jennifer C.

Tuesdays at 10:30 is Story Time with Mackenzie and Sam.

We have a new program on Tuesday afternoons from 2:00 to 4:00 called Unraveling the Clues with Sam, a fiber arts book club. They listen to an audiobook and work on their fiber arts.

Wednesday mornings at 10:00 is Golden Aces with Jennifer GF.

XANDRIA FOWLER has been invited to All-State Marching Band at the Kansas Shrine Bowl and is looking for sponsorships. Since 1974, the Kansas Shrine Bowl has donated more than \$3.3 Million to support Shriner's hospitals. Your support of Xandria's participation will impact the lives of children at Shriner's Children's Hospital – many of whom are from Kansas! Donations, sponsorships, and advertisement options are available – talk to Xandria for a flyer with more information! The deadline is in May.



MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING EVENT

Saturday, April 18th 8:30am to 4pm

Hosted by First UMC, Aging Forward, Healthy Congregations, and SEKMHC. More details soon!

Southeast Kansas
Mental Health
Center



What is Mental Health First Aid?

Mental Health First Aid is a course that teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. The training gives you the skills you need to reach out and provide initial help and support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem or experiencing a crisis.

What You Learn

Just as CPR helps you assist an individual having a heart attack, Mental Health First Aid helps you assist someone experiencing a mental health or substance use-related crisis. In the Mental Health First Aid course, you learn risk factors and warning signs for mental health and addiction concerns, strategies for how to help someone in both crisis and non-crisis situations, and where to turn for help.



APRIL 2026



randomactsforkindness.org

SCIENCE SPARK: SPENDING TIME IN NATURE REDUCES STRESS AND BOOSTS MOOD. PAIRING THAT WITH ACTS OF CARE FOR THE PLANET DOUBLES THE FEEL-GOOD DOPAMINE REWARD.

RANDOM ACTS IS A KINDNESS FOUNDATION™

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

MARCH							MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	26	27	28	29	30	1	2
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
29	30	31	1	2	3	4	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	31	1	2	3	4	5	6

Visit our site for even more kindness ideas: <https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/kindness-ideas>

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DID YOU KNOW?

Almost 40% of people who first attend a church do so because someone they know invited them. Research also says it takes about 14 exposures – all of the things on the list working together, to have someone walk through the door. We certainly don't need to be pushy about it – but we are called to bear witness and be invitational. Who are you inviting to share the Way with you? What better time than Holy Week?



How did you first find out about this congregation prior to coming here for the first time? (Mark only one.)

Someone I already knew (relative, friend, or acquaintance) mentioned it or invited me	37.9%
Noticed it as I passed by	18.0%
Grew up in this congregation or had belonged previously	13.3%
I was looking for the local congregation of my denomination	10.2%
Through my participation in another congregation in the community	2.8%
Child or family member attended day care, preschool, school, or other activity here	2.4%
Someone I did not previously know invited me	1.6%
Saw it in the phone book	1.1%
Noticed an ad (TV, radio, newspaper)	0.8%
Attended a wedding, baptism, or funeral here	0.5%
Received a letter or pamphlet	0.3%
Saw it on the Internet	0.3%

Maundy Thursday – 7pm
Good Friday – 7pm
Easter Sunrise – 7am Easter Morning 10:30am

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

Return Service Requested

**Here is your APRIL 2026
 Newsletter from:**



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