



Volume 30, Issue #10

October 2026

The

Connexion



On the Christian Journey... With Pastor Christopher

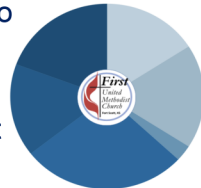
Connexion. In John Wesley's time that was the correct spelling, now it looks funny to us. In our time we spell it Connection. The dictionary defines it as "an association or relationship" and "reference or relation to something else." When I revamped the newsletter a few years ago, I intentionally chose the spelling of John Wesley's time because I want us, as a congregation of the United Methodist Church in this time and place, to be deeply rooted in our shared history and to be listening for and working towards God's dream for us here, now, and in the future! Wesley used "Connexion" to talk about his understanding of Christianity and its Methodist expression in particular. He wrote: *"Christianity is essentially a social religion, and that to turn it into a solitary religion is indeed to destroy it. By Christianity I mean that method of worshiping God which is here revealed to man by Jesus Christ. When I say this is essentially a social religion, I mean not only that it cannot subsist so well, but that it cannot subsist at all without society, without living and conversing with other men."* Wesleyan scholar Randy Maddox shares that John was also fond of saying "To be human, is to be an individual who could be wrong, who could make an error." We don't know the way God knows. We don't have perfect knowledge. We must engage with and listen to others with the humility of knowing we could be wrong, even as we share our understanding. Maddox says Wesley first read that on a gravestone, yet used it to help shape the life and fruitfulness of his Methodist movement. Wesley insisted that Christians need the benefit of conversation with one another and of self correction among one another to help keep them on the journey faithfully and to help them in their understanding of doctrine. For example – the quote above, Wesley, in the style of his time, and indeed most of human history up until recently, used "men" to include all humans, yet "women" were not seen as fit for ministry. In conversation with members of his movement, over and over, John saw and became convinced that his reading of scripture - assuming it excluded women preachers - was incorrect and incomplete. It was some of his followers, many women who were clearly gifted by the Spirit, who helped him to see and hear other passages in scripture that said, "When the spirit's poured out, your young women will prophesy!" It still took until 1959 for women to be ordained, and even today my clergy sisters face challenges for acceptance that I don't, but John helped plant the seed, helped water seeds already planted, and helped harvest the good fruit ready in his day. He affirmed the leadership of women in his classes, bands, and societies. **My point is that the way things are and the way we, often incorrectly, think things have always been, may not be correct or complete.** We are to continue to learn from one another, seek possibilities, to be open to new insight, and follow the example of Jesus, who reveals God to us and who so very often upset expectations and challenged assumptions. *"He has shown you, O Mortal, what is good..."* Within the church and beyond its walls, we are call to know, grow, serve, and share – to exemplify Christ in all that we do. Blessed to be walking on the journey with you. ~Pastor Christopher

A Note on Finances:

We plan to have 3rd Quarter Giving Statements available on Sunday, October 11th. We'll give them out at church for a couple weeks to save on postage, then mail those that haven't been picked up.

This formally begins our process of setting a sustainable budget for 2027 and, candidly, that may require some changes to what we are used to. A letter with more information and ideas will be with the statements. I assure you God has plans and purpose for this congregation and that in the words of Julian of Norwich in the 14th Century: **"all will be well and all manner of things will be well"** – yet it may require relying on our "connexions" and being willing to step into different ways of doing fruitful ministry. We'll be having conversations about it all in the coming months!

I trust our process and I'm excited to see what God will do here! ~Pastor Christopher





October Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays: 7-Linda Leachner 10-Randy Hessong
10-Wilma Hibdon 13-Charles Hoffmeyer
13-Patty Smilie 14-Carlyle Dunshee 14-Amanda Widder
15-Doug Altic 24-Minnie Lou Allen

Anniversaries: 18-David and Debra Woods



United
Women
in Faith

The next UWF meeting will be held Thursday, October 8 at 1:30. Deb Anderson will be a guest speaker sharing information about their Elk Farming, and the various elk products on the market. Deb Ford will share the devotion, Carol Majors has the program from "The Response," with Dorothy Kivett and Joan Hembree serving as hostesses. Thank offering will be discussed, and most importantly, election of officers for the year 2026. All women are invited to attend as we learn to know God, experience and share his gifts.

Women in Faith are Uniting in Fellowship with their Sisters in God in the Presbyterian Village Dining Room, October 14, 2:00.

The Annual Fall Tea will have refreshments, devotions and special *musical numbers by the FSCC Choir!* All are invited and welcome, please bring a friend!



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

Faith Builders will begin a multimedia study "Why Did Jesus Have to Die?" by Adam Hamilton. The cross holds a central place, but what if the cross isn't a transaction, but a Living Word from God meant to transform who we are? The New Testament offers few clear answers about how Jesus saves, or why exactly he had to die. Scholars have advanced theories, and understanding these will deepen our faith.

HOCROC!

Community Relations Team in Action



Fall Fellowship Soup Luncheons will begin on Friday, October 23rd from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. They will be serving soup, chili and pie, along with crackers and drinks. A freewill offering will be collected. Bring your friends! Due to the way Thanksgiving and Christmas fall, we will not do the Luncheons in November and December, but resume on January 22.

Trunk or Treat Time! Join our 6th Year, Saturday, Oct.31, 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm. Bring your car, truck, or chairs and table for decorating! Please



come to hand out candy and enjoy all the kiddos in their costumes! We especially encourage stations to have short, kid friendly, simple games to "earn" candy and encourage engagement! We will be in the parking lot on Third and Main behind the church; set up at 5:00 pm. Or you are welcome to bring your kiddos to Trick-Or-Treat us! Donations of candy, any kind, may be brought to the office to help those set up to hand out.

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

Feeding Families In His Name, Feeding Families

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.



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!

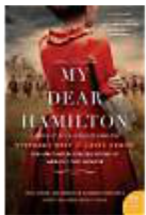
Thank you!

Update on the September Beacon Food Drive:

We have collected 859 food items and \$700 in cash toward our goal of 1000 items! Thank you to all that have contributed! The Beacon wins!

The Presbyterians are going to continue for a few weeks into October, so we can keep adding to our total and we'll announce a winner when they are done.

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.

Tuesday, October 27 at 2pm
CREDO Senior Living
820 South Horton, Fort Scott
Everyone is invited to play and be a Bingo Buddy with the Credo Crew! Wear a Halloween Costume and have some friendly competition with some of the First UMC members and Credo friends! BINGO!



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.

Saturday night,
October 31st,
before bed, or at 2:00 in the morning, change the clock, or be an hour early to church!



Judge **Congratulations** / 20 years of ser... ke to invite his church family to his retirement reception to be held on Monday, October 19, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. on the third floor of the Bourbon County Courthouse, 210 S. National.

ASP Second Sunday Sandwich Sale, Oct 11!



These sandwich sale goals, originally designed to build our funds for the next year's ASP trip, have already been met!

Today's freewill donations are 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!
Jennifer Carnes has stories to tell:

Bring Your Own Book Club, Mondays at 2:00pm
Story Time with Mackenzie and Sam, Tues. 10:15am
Unraveling the Clues with Sam, Tuesdays at 2:15pm
Golden Aces with Jennifer GF, Wednesdays, 10:00 am
Spooky Book Club with Jenn C, Oct. 20 at 6:00 pm,
reading "The Sun Down Motel" by Simone St. James.
Come be a bookworm, travel the world in your mind...

Feeling Stretched as a Caregiver?

K-State Extension, along with Alzheimer's Association, has a free, two part program, along with a light meal, on Tuesdays, October 6 and 13 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at FSCC in the Burris Ag Hall. A caregiver fulfills a valuable roll, but carries a high level of stress. This program will help you build a caregiver foundation, teach you to balance your life, communication techniques and locate helpful resources. For questions, and to register, call Tara at 620-244-3826.

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 various funds, including our General Fund, and you have an opportunity to pick up holiday goodies for yourself, or invite a friend to buy! Please call Cindy Valdez to let her know what you can bring, at 620-224-8515. God Bless!

Charge Conference 2026



October 25, 2026 — 2:30 p.m.
At Mound City UMC
280 Main St, Mound City, Kansas

Churches: Beagle • Bronson • Fontana
• Fort Scott First • Hiattville • Mapleton • Mildred
• Moran • Mound City • Parker • Pleasanton
• Prescott • Uniontown • West Liberty



Great Plains
UNITED METHODISTS

Southeast Kansas District

The Conference wants to have well-represented attendance from all of the churches. These gatherings will be a time of fellowship as well as an opportunity to turn in our formal copies of paperwork.

The 23rd Annual
GORDON PARKS CELEBRATION
OCTOBER 1-3, 2026



Photo Exhibits, Photo Contest and Poetry Contest.
Viewing of the films “The Learning Tree” and “Moments Without Proper Names.”
Many meals, coffees and 2 Celebration Dance Parties! A 4 day schedule can be seen at <https://www.gordonparkscenter.org/events> or the Fort Scott Chamber website.

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

Return Service Requested

*Here is your October 2026
Newsletter from:*



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Great Plains
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Southeast Kansas District