

# The Connexion



## On the Christian Journey... With Pastor Christopher

We journey in a time of change. We are saying "farewell" to Marla and all she's done for us for so long, and "welcome" to Zandra Hood, our new secretary. I want to emphasize that Zandra is not "replacing" Marla. She will need time to get to know us and she will be working less than half the hours Marla was. She simply cannot *and will not be expected to* do everything Marla was doing. We are divvying those tasks up in various ways and will continue to live into this change in the coming weeks and months. If we need to make adjustments, we will!

This staff change is not one I would have chosen - but when Marla notified me of her intent to retire, I recognized the challenge and focused on the opportunity and reality that "*God can do abundantly far more than we can ask or imagine*" (Ephesians 3). We desperately need to find ways to connect with young families and be more active in the community as a congregation beyond hosting the wonderful Feeding Families ministry. Working with Ron Wood and Susan Carnes as key leaders, I began brainstorming how we could better align our staff and budget with that need. See "The Rest of the Plan" later in this newsletter for more information on our intended next steps.

Recently I spoke a bit about Methodist history. One of the key things about a Wesleyan approach to faith is our emphasis on the connectional nature of the church. We are not on our own - we work together in small groups, congregations, networks, districts, conferences, etc. Joint efforts like UMCOR represent Methodism at our best - and so I have named our redesigned newsletter "the Connexion" - using the spelling of Wesley's day. This publication is about connecting and equipping us as members of First UMC. **Welcome to the next step on our journey together!**

**Sympathy to** Mark and Lisa Ward and Rebecca Allen as well as all family of Bobbe Ward, who died at age 91 on January 29<sup>th</sup>



And to Joey Beerbower and family on the death of his grandfather Earl Beerbower (96) on February 10<sup>th</sup>.

### **New Office Hours:**

Our new secretary, Zandra Hood, will be working in the office from **9am to Noon Mon - Thurs**. When we get to summer, her planned hours will be 10am to 1pm Mon-Thurs.

The church office will now be officially closed on Friday's - although Robert and Pastor Christopher will often be in.

### **Welcome Zandra!**

Many of you have recognized her, as Zandra's first job was at a donut shop (remember Floyd's?) For the last 15 years she has been the secretary at Trinity Lutheran, where she is a member. She was born in Wisconsin, has lived in Wyoming and has been in Fort Scott for about 65 years. She has 2 daughters, 4 grandsons and 2 great grandkids! Her favorite hobby is reading. *Come by and say hello soon!*

## Valentines Thank-You's!

We had such fun creating "old-school" Valentines boxes for our assisted living and homebound friends. Thanks to the HOCROC committee for bringing this project together and to everyone who brought or made cards and treats. Here are a few of the responses we've gotten from recipients!

*What a surprise!* Thanks to all the terrific people at FUMC! I received a lot of goodies and special messages...and a few I didn't quite understand: such as the ones with sharp pointed objects, the duck I assumed was candy (*yuck*), and the small aluminum pan. LOL! It was a very special thing for me. Thanks a lot, everyone ~**Jerry Elliott**



Thank you for the Valentine box full of valentines from everyone at FUMC. It was so nice to go through the cards in my box. ~**Estalee Simpson**

It brightened my day. Much love and thanks to ALL for thinking of me. ~**Bertha Nichols**



I want to express my sincere and heartfelt thanks to all who have stopped by and/or called to extend their congratulations on my retirement; to those who have sent cards and/or gifts; to those who planned and/or attended my retirement reception; to Pat Harry who composed a beautiful anthem for my retirement and to the choir who sang on February 20.

Also, thank you for the special retirement figurine and floral bouquet. You all hold a special place in my heart!

In God's love,  
~**Marla Gorman**

**March Anniversaries:** 7-Christopher & Robin Eshelman, 9- Steve & Stephanie Denton, 13- Doug & Tracy Altic, 27-Perry & Peggy Bloesser

**March Birthdays:** 7-Ryan Hunziker, 10-Curtis Shankel, 14-Morgan Regan, 15-Chris Allen, 15-Reece Stapleton, 17-Christa Chaplin-Vaughn, 17-Amber Hunziker, 18-Jill Fritter, 18-Jim Stevens, 20-Shannon Fletcher, 20-Noah Wolf, 22-Don Tucker, 23-Charlotte Swaim, 25-Steve Denton, 26-Pat Galan, 28-Janet Braun, 28-Susan Foster, 29-Ron Sharp, 29-Charlie Springer, 30-Lisa Ward, 31-Keith Gibson



## Mission Committee Soup Lunch Rescheduled!



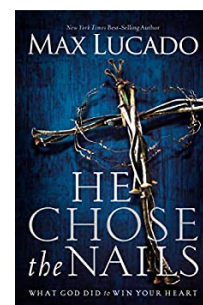
The weather played havoc with our February plans and so the Mission Committee soup lunch fundraiser was rescheduled for **March 18<sup>th</sup>!**

Come by between 11:30am and 1pm for delicious soup or chili and desert to-go.

**Freewill donations accepted.**

## Faith Builders in March

In March, we will begin a Lenten study, "*He Chose the Nails*," a multimedia presentation by Max Lucado. We explore the many gifts that Christ provided to us at his crucifixion. These include not only the gift of the cross but also the gift of the thorns that pierced his brow, the nails that tore his flesh, the seamless robe that he removed for us, and the empty tomb where he forever defeated sin and death. The study will continue on through the first two Sundays in April. If you have thought about getting started in Sunday school, here is your opportunity. Please come join us in discussion and fellowship!  
~**Ron Wood**





## Beacon Collection Month

### March Beacon Sundays

- bring canned goods and nonperishables for the

Beacon! Last fall, while once again besting our Presbyterian friends in the challenge, we averaged about 200 items per week - let's keep that pace going this spring. **Pastor Christopher challenges us to bring 800 items this month!**

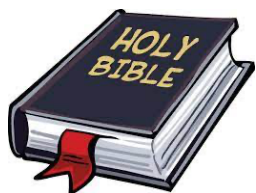


### ASP Mission Fundraiser

**Update:** As of Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>, we've raised over \$2250! - or 563 miles worth! If we average \$4 given

per mile, the trip is paid for. Sponsor one or more of the roughly 1800 miles the annual June mission trip will travel. See pledge sheets near the entrances for more info. Note "ASP Mission" on your check or envelope memo line!

**Be thinking about joining us on the trip as well - talk to Doug Altic or Tom Braker for information.**



### Liturgists Spots

**Available:** We have an opening in our normal rotation (and there's always room for more) for folks to

help lead the worship service by reading the call to worship and scriptures each Sunday.

Call the office or chat with Pastor Christopher about helping in this way - training available and Pastor prepares a "script" each week so you don't have to improvise!



The Gospel of Matthew

### The "New Sunday School

**Class"** will be focusing on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Chapters of the Gospel of Matthew during March. We will be looking at Jesus' message

about going the extra mile, loving our enemies and keeping the left hand in the dark (Not letting it know what the right hand is doing.)

Anyone interested is welcome to join us in the Library at 9:30am Sundays. ~Tom Braker



### History and Current Events

**Volunteers Needed** - One of the tasks we need help with as Marla departs is folks who know the congregation and their families to

watch local news - especially sources like the Tribune and FortScott.biz - for mentions of our folks' involvement in the community or honors and accolades they might receive. We'd like to feature these stories on the bulletin board at church as well as in other ways. What we need a few folks to do is watch for such stories and call them to our attention - if it's printed, cut it out, note the source and then bring or send it to the church office. This could be a great role for some of our assisted living and homebound folks! We'd also like a couple of people to further take on the formal role of Church Historians - archiving this material here at the church and writing summaries of events for posterity and future celebrations. Is this a way you might be called to serve? Please chat with Pastor to get started!

### An Invitation To A Holy Lent



### Ash Wednesday begins Lent

Join us at 7pm Wednesday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> for a special service drawing from tradition and offering some new ways to center yourself in God's presence. Pastor will share about "the Basket and the Box" and "Time Out." We'll ponder how "Sunday's Palms Become Wednesday's Ashes" and we'll claim the hope of Easter as we enter in to the season of penitence and preparation that is Lent. What burdens do you carry? What needs to be given up? What might God be equipping you to take on? As we begin our "Soul Reset" Lenten series, come experience renewal and learn practices that can equip and empower you!

## New Website Launched:

After several months of research and development, we are pleased to have launched a new, much more functional web site recently.

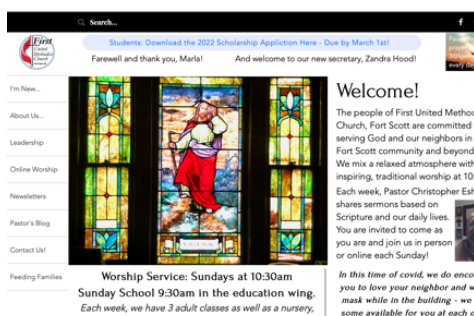
You can now confidently refer friends and neighbors to our site, knowing it has current information in an attractive, easy to navigate format!

The "I'm New..." and "About Us..." pages are geared towards helping visitors connect. The *Leadership* page is still in progress and we'd like to feature short bios of many of you - if you're a chairperson, class leader, or just one of our most active laity, we'd love to use this to help new folks know who to talk with about their interests and getting involved! Talk to Pastor Christopher about adding your bio today!

You can also find links to our online worship streams, social media accounts, and a blog where Pastor Christopher shares each week's worship theme in advance and summarizes the sermon in a written form after.

Check it out at:

[www.firstumcfsks.org](http://www.firstumcfsks.org)



**The Rest of the Plan...** You may know that Marla had been working about 28 hours a week (fewer in summer). Zandra will be working 12. The plan for the balance of those hours is to hire a "Church and Community Engagement Coordinator" who will help the congregation accomplish its mission by building relationships with volunteers, community partners, schools and especially young families who live in Fort Scott. This person, hopefully a seminary student needing a ministry setting, will plan and execute an average of 2-3 activities / events each month that target primarily adults between the ages of 18-40, and/or children and youth ages birth to 16. These monthly activities will include events held on our grounds as well as off-site in a community location, ideally at least one of each per month. Examples of off-site events could include support of school events, Buck Run Community Center activities, and church participation in community events as well as events First UMC creates itself.

We realize this will be an adjustment - we ask for your patience and kindness as we make this transition. We will be looking for volunteers to help cover things like church history, visitor's and children's bags and other specific tasks. Feel free to chat with Pastor Christopher if there is a particular need you think is not being addressed.



## Healthy Congregations Update:

### \$1000 Grant Received!

Thanks to Peggy Stark, who stepped up as team leader, and the HOCROC members who have begun training, First UMC Fort Scott recently received our first

\$1000 grant from the Great Plains Conference Healthy Congregations program. We will use these funds to engage in or support one or more projects that *"improves the spiritual, physical, social, and emotional health in our congregation and community."* We will be doing a required "Needs Assessment" soon to help guide the process. One idea we are beginning to explore is becoming the host site for a "Shepherds Center/Adventures in Learning" type program focused on helping older adults continue to learn, discover, and grow. Pastor Christopher has been a part of two churches in Wichita that host such programs and has seen how many connections they can make. The basic format is a shared meal with a speaker, then breakout sessions that cover a wide variety of topics - just about anything you can think of - information, hobbies, crafts, you name it! Each Adventures in Learning session is developed by a local committee of volunteers based on the interests and needs of older adults in their community. The sessions are led by class instructors who themselves are mostly retired older adults or community experts who bring their special interests and backgrounds to enrich lives and keep minds strong and vibrant.

Remember to save Best Choice UPC labels to help UMW fundraising efforts. Leave your UPC labels in one of the jars located by the doors at the entrances of the church. Thank you!

# March 2022

First United Methodist Church 301 S. National Fort Scott, KS 620-223-1950 www.firstumcfsks.org

Each Wednesday:  
\*9:00 to Noon-Work session at the church

>5:30-6:30 p.m. (FFiHN) Feeding Families in His Name meal served

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	<p><b>March 1– Deadline for submitting Memorial Scholarship applications</b></p>	<p>1 9 a.m. Sewing group-Parlor</p> <p>Noon Mahjong-Parlor</p> <p>7 a.m. to 7 p.m.—Fellowship Hall is reserved</p> <p>Men's Kiwanis Pancake Feed-Drive-through to go meal (see serving times in newsletter)</p> <p>5:30 to 8:00 p.m. Parlor is reserved</p>	<p>2  <b>ASH WEDNESDAY</b></p> <p>9 a.m. *Wednesday work session</p> <p>1:30 p.m. Reading Group-Library</p> <p>&gt;FFiHN—to go meals</p> <p>7 p.m. Ash Wednesday service - FUMC</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Noon-Fellowship Hall is reserved</p> <p>4-9 p.m. First Thursday Stitchers-Fellowship Hall</p>	4	5
<p>6 Communion</p> <p></p> <p><b>Beacon Sunday</b></p>	7	<p>8 9 a.m. Sewing group-Parlor</p> <p>Noon Mahjong-Parlor</p> <p>7 p.m. Board of Trustees meeting-Parlor</p>	<p>9 a.m. *Wednesday work session</p> <p>1:30 p.m. Reading Group-Library</p> <p>&gt;FFiHN—to go meals</p> <p>7 p.m. HOCROC meeting-Parlor</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Noon-Fellowship Hall is reserved</p> <p>1:30 p.m. Miriam UMW meeting-Parlor</p>	11	12
<p>13 <b>Daylight Saving Time begins</b></p> <p></p> <p><b>Beacon Sunday</b></p> <p>1 to 5 p.m. Fellowship Hall is reserved</p>	14	<p>15 9 a.m. Sewing group-Parlor</p> <p>Noon Mahjong-Parlor</p>	<p>16 9 a.m. *Wednesday work session</p> <p>1:30 p.m. Reading Group-Library</p> <p>&gt;FFiHN—to go meals only</p> <p>6 p.m. Memorials &amp; Gifts Committee meeting-Parlor</p> <p>7 p.m. Administrative Board meeting - Parlor</p>	<p>17 </p> <p>Noon-Fellowship Hall is reserved</p>	<p>18 April newsletter items due</p> <p>11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Friendship Soup Lunch serving to-go meals, sponsored by the Mission Committee</p>	19
<p>20 <i>First day of Spring</i></p> <p></p> <p><b>Beacon Sunday</b></p>	21	<p>22 9 a.m. Sewing group-Parlor</p> <p>Noon Mahjong-Parlor</p>	<p>23 9 a.m. *Wednesday work session</p> <p>1:30 p.m. Reading Group-Library</p> <p>&gt;FFiHN—to go meals only</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Noon-Fellowship Hall is reserved</p>	25	26
<p>27 <b>UMCOR Sunday</b></p> <p></p> <p><b>Beacon Sunday</b></p>	28	<p>29 9 a.m. Sewing group-Parlor</p> <p>Noon Mahjong-Parlor</p>	<p>30 9 a.m. *Wednesday work session</p> <p>1:30 p.m. Reading Group-Library</p> <p>&gt;FFiHN—to go meals only</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Noon-Fellowship Hall is reserved</p>		
		<p><b>Watch the bulletin for calendar changes or updates.</b></p>			<p><b>Dates, times and activities may change. Watch the bulletin for</b></p>	



**You are invited to join us at First United Methodist for our 2022 Lent and Easter sermon series. "Soul Reset: Breakdown, Breakthrough and the Journey to Wholeness." This March & April, we will seek the "unforced rhythms of grace" and "discover how love has already won."**



All are welcome at Christ's table!  
[www.firstumcfsks.org](http://www.firstumcfsks.org)

**You won't want to miss it!  
 10:30am Sundays @ 301 S National**

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

Return Service Requested

Here is your March 2022  
 Newsletter from:



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