



JULY/AUGUST 2023

The Flame



A Word from Our Pastor

Greetings Paragould First United Methodist Church,

What an encouraging summer of shared ministry at Paragould First United Methodist Church! Vacation Bible School "Hero Hotline" was one of the most fun and smoothest VBSs ever! Thanks to Children's Director Angela Newby, families and children of the church, and countless volunteers for an awesome week! At the same time, some youth and adult chaperone, Jeani Wallace, were working hard around Forrest City & Wynne serving neighbors in need through Ozark Mission Project. Upon their return, I heard stories of fun and fellowship, service and care. Danielle Honeycutt and Angela lead a busy and exciting week of Ready, Set, READ! where community elementary students grew in their literacy skills. So great to see our church host such an encouraging ministry. Thanks to everyone who joined the "Bach Mobile" concert with Louis Menendez in the Worship Center. It's so nice to share a church that values the fine arts.



We are thrilled to welcome FUMC's new Assoc. Pastor, Sarah Ellzey. Sarah's seminary degree is from Truett Theological Seminary at Baylor University. Sarah's background, skills, and focus are a great fit for FUMC. She has experience in counseling, preaching, and missions/service work. Sarah is pursuing ordination in the Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church. Pastor Sarah is off to a fast start, including helping lead worship, working closely with pastoral care, and will soon get more involved with the Missions and Hospitality teams. One particular effort I am enthusiastic about is a new adult Sunday School class under Sarah's guidance-beginning Sept. 10!

FUMC celebrated an Open House for the newly renovated first-floor office suite on Sunday, June 4. The new space is wonderful and working well. The new offices include Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor, Communications Director, Church Administrator, Children's & Youth Director (shared), Media Room, Conference Room, and Copy/Work Room! Some other changes include the "Pairs & Spares" class returning to their Welcome Center Classroom. The "Sisters in Spirit" class now meets in Karoline's former office in the Welcome Center. Music Director Brian Pearson now offices in the former Senior Pastor's office on the second floor outside the Choir Room. Thanks to everyone for their support for this important project, as it is already paying dividends. Stop by anytime!

Another transition that came along with the new office space was relocating the FUMC Library to the First Floor Welcome Center (Denise's old office). I am thrilled to have the Library more accessible. The church owns lots of great material including Biblical reference, curriculum, and theological texts. Stop and browse

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anytime. You may take and return books on an honor system. With respect to curriculum, FUMC owns many versions with multiple copies for small group studies. And the Library includes a wonderful conference table and chairs - great for many classes and meetings.

The Next 100 Years campaign began last May with a five-year plan to pay off our construction debt and tackle a couple of necessary facility improvements. One of those projects was the first-floor office suite with a budget of \$200k. This project was completed on time and at budget. We still plan to take on a few issues in the Sanctuary including paint/plaster maintenance (funds secured) and technology upgrades. We have reduced our debt from \$3.19m last Spring to \$2.7m as of today. Thank you for your constant support of your church, including the financial needs of the Next 100 Years Campaign! You can see campaign updates online at fumcparagould.org/100years.

As of June, this year's general giving totals \$416k compared to \$421k at this point last year. General expenses year-to-date are \$469k vs. \$426k last year. Giving is nearly the same, while expenses are up about 10%. The increased expenses are not unique to the church as the economic trends have led to greater costs. Plus, the church has incurred a number of unanticipated expenses, including necessary maintenance projects. It is not uncommon for expenses to run ahead of giving through most of the year as we tend to receive our greatest gifts in the final month of the year. Still yet, we do not want the difference between giving and expenses to grow too large. The FUMC Staff & Finance Committee will be cautious with spending in the days ahead. You can give any Sunday, by mail, electronic transfer, or online at fumcparagould.org/giving.html. Thank you for your continued attention to the financial needs of the church.

It is with great excitement we turn the calendar toward the school year and a change of season at church. On August 13, we will celebrate "Backpack Sunday"! Lots going on, including children singing at 9am & 11am, prayers for the school year, keychains for students' backpacks, free books to go along with new sermon series, and Sunday School promotion. As the school year restarts and summer travel winds down, we look forward to seeing you in church! The FUMC Staff and Church Leaders have been planning an exciting and busy Fall. See you soon!

Rev. Dane Womack
Senior Pastor, Paragould FUMC



THE NEW LIBRARY LOCATED IN THE WELCOME CENTER

Women's Painting Party

About 20 women participated in a painting event led by Allie Robbins in July. More women's events are upcoming—we will share details as they are available.



BACK TO SCHOOL SUNDAY

This will be a big Sunday for our children and youth! On Sunday, August 13, we will have prayers for all students, schools and educators in each service. We encourage students (PreK through college) to bring their backpacks so that they can be prayed over. We are giving kids keychains for the backpacks. Children in Kindergarten, 2nd grade, and 4th grade will promote to a new Sunday School class. All of these classes happen on the first floor children's department. Fifth graders will meet in a classroom upstairs. Sixth graders will promote to youth Sunday School on the second floor. As a church, we will be doing the "Three Simple Rules" sermon series; we will give kids books to go along with it. Also, children will sing selections from VBS in the 9 & 11am services.



EVERY MEMBER IN MINISTRY

Members of United Methodist Churches vow to support their local congregation and participate in its ministries through Prayer, Presence, Gifts, Service, and Witness. In that spirit, we have prepared a booklet that outlines all of the ministries where you can serve at FUMC, along with a description of each. We will be handing them out to everyone during church services on August 6. We are asking you to prayerfully consider where you can join us in ministry and to turn your form in by August 27. You can also find the same information and form on the website at <https://www.fumcparagould.org/every-member-in-ministry.html>.

PRAYERS | PRESENCE | GIFTS | SERVICE | WITNESS



Paragould First United Methodist Church
Disciple's Path

**Every Member
in Ministry
2023-2024**

A NOTE FROM Pastor Sarah

Hello church!

This summer during Sunday morning worship, we've studied several of Jesus' teachings in the gospel of Matthew. A few weeks ago, I came across this verse in Matthew 13:52:

"Every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

The Message translation puts it this way:

"You see how every student well-trained in God's kingdom is like the owner of a general store who can put his hands on anything you need, old or new, exactly when you need it."

As someone who just moved a family of 5 into a new space, I can relate to this on a tangible level. Suddenly, everything I own has a new home! I can't just automatically find anything in its usual place! Habits are an important part of everyday life, and all of our habits were shuffled around. We are discovering a new neighborhood and finding new favorites for eating, shopping, and everything else. (I'd love to hear your recommendations.) The kids are joining new sports teams and dance classes. And of course, we have been getting to know everyone here at our new Church. It's been a lot of fun, and it's also tiring!

On a deeper level, Jesus is talking about treasuring and making the most of both what is new and what is old. Some of us have an easy time valuing what already is but struggle to imagine what could be. Others have abundant vision for the future but forget to value the heritage and hard work that brought us to this day. As a faith community, we value the traditions and stories and people who've gone before and shaped who we are. We find comfort in knowing that God never changes. At the same time, we make space to treasure what is new - what is now. God builds new things on the foundation of the old. New people and new callings come into the fold. God invites us to remember we are "never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream." (C.S. Lewis said that!)

Whether this is a season of newness and change for you, or a time of relative sameness - God invites you to bring your full self in submission to and service for God's Kingdom. I look forward to serving the Kingdom with you in the coming year, and I can't wait to get to know you better.

- Pastor Sarah



Pastor Sarah invites you to join a new Sunday school class for adults who are younger than the typical age range for the existing classes. Whether you are single, married, or anything else, you are welcome to this class where we will build an authentic community and prioritize discipleship that applies to our lives. The class starts on September 10th in the old Coffee Break Classroom on the second floor.

NEW MEMBERS



Daniel, Jennifer, and Erin Potter



Drew and Hanna Smith

Hello FUMC Friends!

I hope you are having a great summer! This summer has been a busy and wonderful time for the Children's Ministry at FUMC. We had a huge turnout for VBS and Ready, Set, READ! I am so thankful to those that volunteered and made an effort to get their children here for those events. As July winds down and we look ahead, I would like for you to be in prayer for our Children's Ministry. This includes our children and their families, the multitude of volunteers it takes to make all of our children's programs run smoothly and safely, and for my family and me. I would also like for you to pray and ask God how you can help as we start back in August. We are working on a new rotation of teachers that will allow all

Sunday School and Connect Wednesday teachers that have faithfully taught for years to take some time off to be in an adult Sunday School or Wednesday night class. If you have questions or would like to help in any way, please let me know!



Blessings!
Angela, Director of Children's Ministries

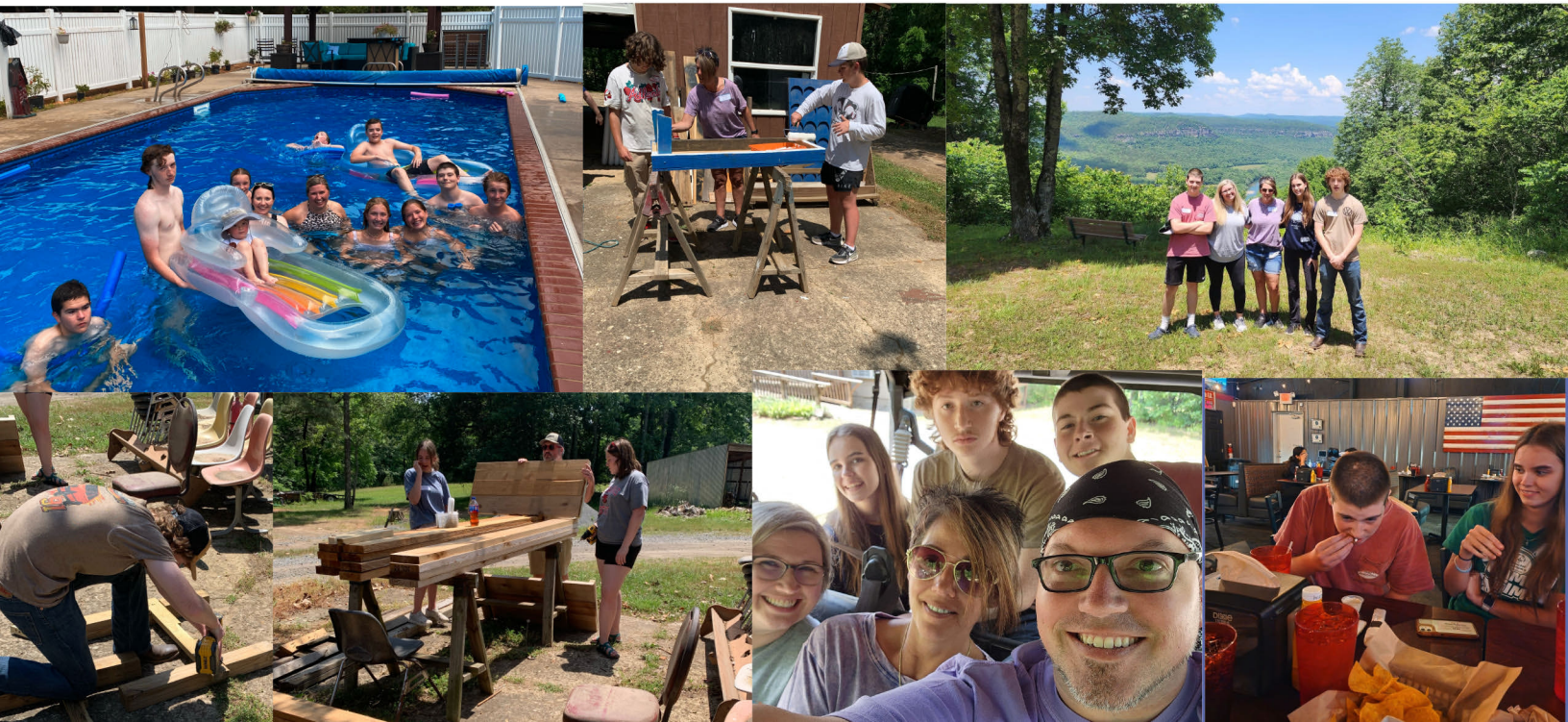


Greetings FUMC Friends-

As the summer break is quickly passing, I pray you have enjoyed a more relaxing time of the year with family and friends. Over the summer, the youth participated in some great activities and fellowship time with each other. Some of the activities included attending the DCYM retreat at Mt. Eagle, Ozark Mission Project at Wynne, volunteering with Vacation Bible School, and Pools and Parables at the Finch's home. I want to extend a very grateful Thank You to all the volunteers that have made these events possible and the youth for attending. I am really enjoying my position as the FUMC Director of Youth Ministry working with the youth and appreciate all the support I have received.

With back-to-school season approaching, I am currently working on the fall schedule of youth activities and have our annual back to school trip planned for August 5-6 with a trip to Six Flags in St. Louis. As we get back into the swing of things in September there will be lots of opportunities for the youth to get involved. I would also like to take this time to encourage adult partners to consider volunteering with the youth ministry and completing the Safe Gatherings training as soon as possible. Please reach out to me with any questions or if I can assist in any way. I am looking forward to another great season ahead at FUMC.

Mary Hickox
Director of Youth Ministry





paragould fume
save the date **fall**

- Aug. 13 Backpack & Promotion Sunday
- Aug. 20 YOUTH Parent Meeting
- Aug. 27 YOUTH Welcome Back Party
- Sept. 3 One Service Sunday 10am Sanctuary
- Sept. 10 Third Grade Bible Sunday
- Sept. 13 Connect Wednesday Kickoff Party
Connect Wednesday Sept. 13-Nov. 15
5pm Dinner & 6pm Classes/Activities All Ages
- Sept. 24 YOUTH Serve Sunday
- Oct. 1 World Communion Sunday
- Oct. 15 Laity Sunday
- Oct. 21 YOUTH at Pumpkin Hollow
- Oct. 29 Trunk-or-Treat
- Nov. 5 All Saints Sunday
- Nov. 5 YOUTH Bonfire
- Nov. 7 Turkey Tuesday 5th-6th at Witt House
- Nov. 10-12 YOUTH Refuge (Jr. High)
- Nov. 14 Turkey Tuesday YOUTH at Witt House
- Nov. 26 College & Caree Young Adult Sunday
- Nov. 26 YOUTH Hanging of Greens Service

Ongoing:

- Women's Bible Study Wednesdays 9:30am
- Men's Breakfast 1st/3rd Thur. 6am Ironhorse

Connect Wednesday

September 13-Nov. 15

We will begin the fall semester on Wednesday, September 13 with a Block-party style kick off with bounce houses, and outdoor grilling.

Classes for adults will begin the next week.

We do need kitchen help for our Wednesday night meal. We need cooks, clean up help, and people willing to make desserts. Contact Janice Wilcox at (870) 215-1274.

September 13

SAVE THE DATE

CONNECT WEDNESDAY
KICKOFF

- Dinner at 5
- Bounce Houses

SAVE THE DATE

Choir Rehearsal Returns August 2

HANDBELLS RETURN AUGUST 13

One Service Sunday

One Service at 10am - 2023

May 28 - Sanctuary
July 2 - Worship Center
Sept. 3 - Sanctuary
Dec. 31 - Worship Center

*No Youth/Children Sunday School
*Adult Sunday School meet at their discretion

Worship together with us!

Young at Heart Upcoming Events

- August 14 at 1:00 pm Movie "Amazing Grace"
- August 25 at 10:00 am Lunch outing to Gina's Place in Jonesboro
- August 24 at 5:30 pm Game night

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Please keep the church up to date! We want to stay in touch with you, but without a correct address, phone number or email, it is hard to do. Just as you inform friends and family of changes, inform us also. If you don't think your records are current at the church, please contact the church office at 870-239-8541 or email denise.chipman@fumcparagould.org. Thank you, Denise Chipman

POOL PARTY AUGUST 9
6 - 8 : 30 P M

Summer Events at FUMC

Vacation Bible School



Ready, Set, READ!



Churchwide Redbirds Game



Louis Menendez Bach Concert



Financial Report JULY-AUGUST

General Contributions:

May: \$61,625

June: \$61,952

Building/100 Year Contributions:

May: \$10,044

June: \$33,906

A Dollar A Week total to date: \$3,871

Building Loan Principal Balance: \$2,779,836

In Memory of:

Holly Swihart by Bob Branch, Larry & Denise Chipman, Moud & Sharon Gazaway, Drs. Mack & Vern Ann Shotts, John & Carrie Cook, Theresa & Kristin Kirk, Diane Blossom

Steve Adams by Davey Joe & Rena Jackson, Roto-Rooter, Hedges Portable, Betty & Randy Hedge, Bill Fisher, Davin Jones, Robin Patten, Martha Jean Swindle, Chester & Nancy Key, Larry & Denise Chipman, Tim & Lani Mangrum, Charles & Donna Brazil, Diane Blossom, Dr. Gary Black, Bob & Carolyne Childress, Kay & Herb Bland, Doug & Carol Vail, Theresa & Kristin Kirk, Phillip & Paige Wooldridge, Shelia Ragsdell, Don & Lissa Tabor, Drs. Mack & Vern Ann Shotts, John & Carrie Cook, Rev. Dane & Jill Womack, Gene & Jill Weeks, Joe & Jackie Barnett

Dewitt Shotts by Bob Branch, Bob & Carolyne Childress, Kay & Herb Bland

Jeffery Evans by Janice Wilcox

Roy McSpadden by Billy & Karen Farley

Mary Ann Stallcup by Shelia Ragsdell

April Biggs by Theresa & Kristin Kirk, Shelia Ragsdell

Cody Noel by Shelia Ragsdell

Danny Thomas by Deanna Thomas

In Honor of:

Rev. Chase Burns by Dannelle Rogers

Karoline Risker by Shani Barnhill

Pastor Sarah Ellzey by Robin Patten



LOVE GOD. SERVE PEOPLE. MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Church Office

8:30AM-4:30PM MON-THURS
8:30AM-NOON FRIDAY

*Witt House
Food Pantry*

4:30PM-6PM TUESDAY
9:30AM-11:00AM FRIDAY



Bishop Laura Merrill
District Superintendent Zach Roberts
Pastors Dane Womack (william.womack@arumc.org,
Sarah Ellzey (sarah.ellzey@arumc.org)
Music Director Brian Pearson
(brian.pearson@fumcparagould.org)
Director of Youth Ministries
Mary Hickox (mary.hickox@fumcparagould.org)
Director of Children's Ministries
Angela Newby
(angela.newby@fumcparagould.org)
Dir. of Media/Communications Karoline Risker
(karoline.risker@fumcparagould.org)
Organist Bernard Raley
Church Administrator Denise Chipman
(denise.chipman@fumcparagould.org)
Custodian: Mike Rutherford

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FOR MORE INFORMATION



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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