
1. Call to Order & Prayer	2
2. Old Business	2
3. 2024 FUMC Lay Leadership & Staff Structure	3
2023 → 2024	8
4. Feedback from Jan. 2023 Leadership Orientation:	8
5. Key Ministries/Celebrations 2023	8
6. Attendance & Participation	9
7. Witt House & Missions/Outreach	9
8. Neighbor Conversation (take notes)	11
9. 2024 Meeting/Events Schedule	13
FINANCES & FACILITIES	16
10. Various Notes	16
12. Next 100 Years Spring '22 Debt Reduction Campaign	17
13. 2023 Financial Overview	18
14. 2024 Proposed Budget ACTION ITEM	20
UMC UPDATE	21
15. Recent History	21
16. Current Data	21
17. 2024 General Conference Reflections & Questions	21
18. UMC Rules Reminders	22

1. Call to Order & Prayer

- a. Pastor Sarah - Opening Prayer
- b. Brian - Opening Song

2. Old Business

- a. Sept 17, 2023 Church Council Meeting Minutes

Church Council
Paragould First United Methodist Church
September 17, 2023

The meeting of Church Council was brought to order by Gene Weeks, Lay Leader. Kelsey Matheney, chair, was running late from work. Approximately 25-30 were in attendance:

Rev. Dane explained that this meeting was to approve reports for the Charge Conference, date TBD.

Staff-Parish Relations Committee - Robert Thompson, chair, reported that they have completed the updating of the employee handbook and job descriptions. The transition of Rev. Sarah Ellzey has been good.

Pastor's salaries must be approved prior to Charge Conference. The committee reviewed the history of salaries along with 2024 COLA increases. The Finance Committee were presented with the increased 2024 salaries and approved. Robert Thompson motioned that a 3% raise be given to all employees for 2024. This increases the salaries for the Senior Pastor to \$126,365 and the Associate Pastor to \$69,336. Gene Weeks seconded the motion. With no further discussion or questions, Kelsey Matheney asked for a vote. All in favor, none opposed.

Finance Committee – Seth Dearing, chair, reviewed the operating budget for month ending August 2023 (copy attached). There were no questions.

Trustee Committee – Mike Bruce, chair, gave the Trustee Report. A Vulnerable Persons Policy and ARUMC Safe Gatherings Training were approved this year. A Defibrillator was purchased for the Witt House, the office renovation was completed, along with updates at 417 W Main St parsonage. (written report is attached)

Long term, the committee is still looking at repair of stained glass, sanctuary sound system, 320 W Main, organ repairs, broken curbs, no CDL required bus with easier access to enter.

Nominations & Leadership Committee – Rev. Dane presented the nominations for 2024. A subcommittee regarding denominational matters has been added which includes the pastors and all the chairs of the committees. He asked if there were any recommendations and/or changes to the presented nominations of which there were none. Rev. Dane then presented the motion from the committee to accept the Nomination & Leadership Report for 2024 as presented. Kelsey Matheney seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

In closing, Rev. Dane reviewed the upcoming fall calendar.

With no further business or discussion, the meeting was adjourned by Kelsey Matheney.

- b. Nov. 5, 2023 Charge Conference files available at <https://www.fumcparagould.org/resources>

3. 2024 FUMC Lay Leadership & Staff Structure

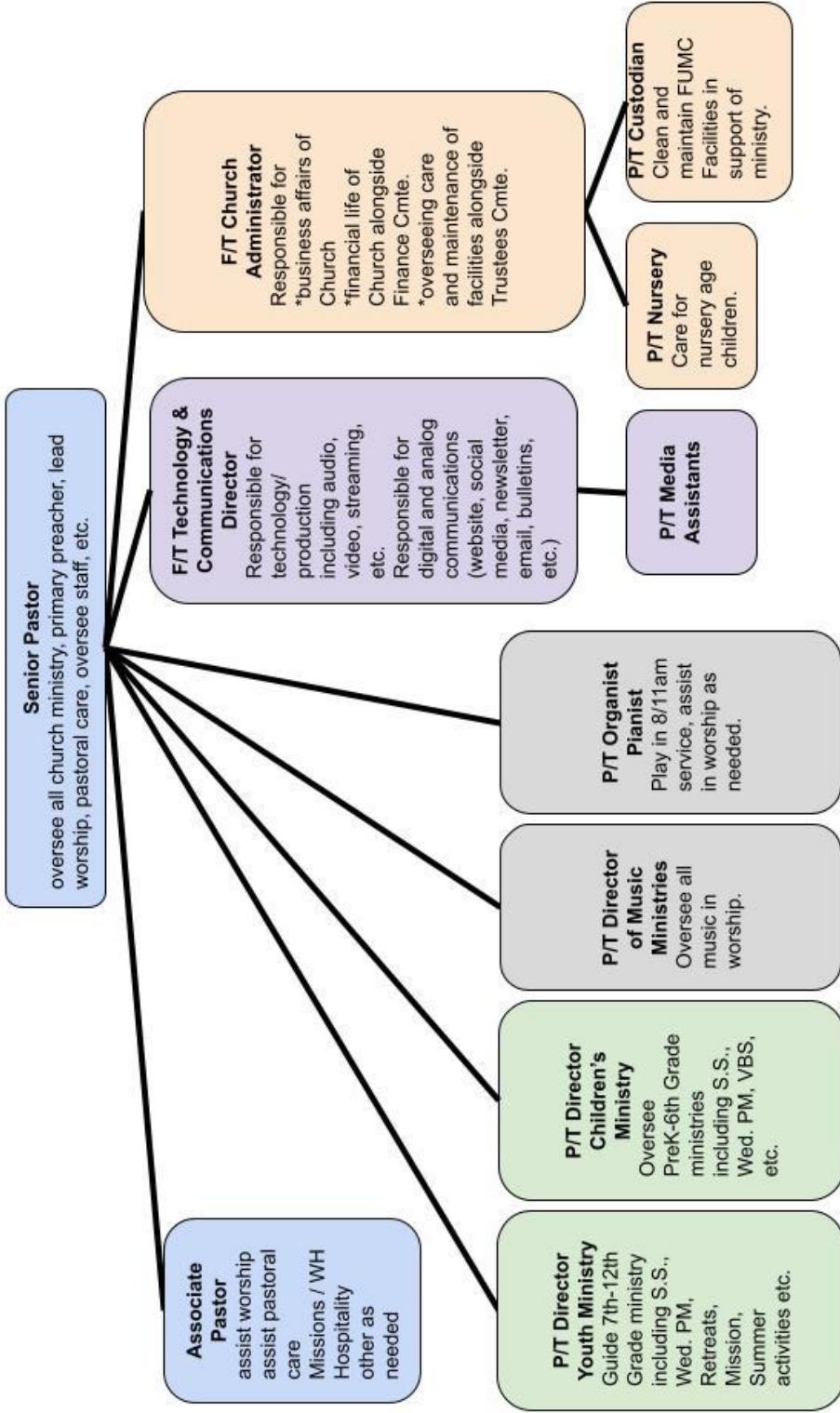
Church Council		
Council Chair:	Kelsey Matheney	
Lay Leader/Member to AC:	Gene Weeks	
Lay Member to AC:	Mary Justice	
Alt. Lay Member to AC:	Susie Cook	
Chair of SPRC:	Hayley Richardson	
Chair of Finance:	Mary Ann Allen	
Chair of Trustees:	Bill Phillips	
Church Treasurer:	Greg Graham	
Mission Team Chair:	Tracy Finch	
Hospitality Team Chair:	Nancy Cupp	
Pastors:	Dane Womack & Sarah Ellzey	
Administrative & Program Staff: Angela Newby, Mary Hickox, Brian Pearson, Bernard Raley, Karoline Risker, Denise Chipman		
At-large Members:		
<i>Class of '24:</i>	<i>Class of '25:</i>	<i>Class of '26:</i>
Kelsey Matheney	Jonathan Peel	Jeff Phillips
Dixie Lawrence	Kevin Moslander	Jeani Wallace
Kay Luter	Tina Russell	Pam McAllister
Josh McMunn	Audra Brown	Ann Honeycutt
Brenda Anderson	Linda Glickert	Tim Roswell
Payton Brown	Carter Beliew (youth)	Addison Mann (youth)
	Kinlee Weatherford (youth)	
Finance Committee / Chair: Mary Ann Allen		
<i>Class of '24:</i>	<i>Class of '25:</i>	<i>Class of '26:</i>
Kay Bland	Mary Ann Allen	Shani Barnhill
Cindy Shepherd	John Jacob Cook	Mike Gibson
Martha McCain	Ryan Lawrence	Joy Sills
Ex officio w/ vote:		
Treasurer:	Greg Graham	
SPRC Chair:	Hayley Richardson	
Trustees Chair:	Bill Phillips	
Church Council Chair:	Kelsey Matheney	
Lay Leader/Member to AC:	Gene Weeks	
Lay Member to AC:	Mary Justice	

Staff-Parish Relations Committee / Chair: Hayley Richardson		
<i>Class of '24:</i>	<i>Class of '25:</i>	<i>Class of '26:</i>
Neva Shewmaker	H T Moore	Tracy Brengard
Sandra Wamock	Dannelle Rogers	Dale Schenk
Hayley Richardson	Natalie Bland	Rona Waits
Ex officio w/ vote:		
Lay Leader/Member to AC:	Gene Weeks	
Lay Member to AC:	Mary Justice	
Trustees / Chair: Bill Phillips		
<i>Class of '24:</i>	<i>Class of '25:</i>	<i>Class of '26:</i>
Joe Barnett	Mona Tullos	Shelia Ragsdale
Bill Phillips	Julie McHaney	Jerrod Brown
Clint Beliew	Rusty McAllister	Matt Hobbs
Committee on Lay Leadership & Nominations / Chair: Senior Pastor		
<i>Class of '24:</i>	<i>Class of '25:</i>	<i>Class of '26:</i>
Mauri Rogers	D. J. Jackson	Vance Cupp
Jessica Brewer	Tori Thompson	Nancy Bruce
Stan Phillips	Jason Weatherford	Sharon Grooms
Ex officio w/out vote: Assoc. Pastor		
Ex officio w/ vote, Lay Leader:	Gene Weeks	
Memorial Committee		
<i>Class of '24:</i>	<i>Class of '25:</i>	<i>Class of '26:</i>
Carolyn Samuel	Mack Shotts	Diane Blossom
Bob Thompson	Rena Jackson	Kay Bland
Endowment Committee		
<i>Class of '23:</i>	<i>Class of '24:</i>	<i>Class of '25:</i>
Robert Branch	Mary Ann Allen	Kay Luter
Official descriptions of Committee and Chair Responsibilities are found in the UMC Discipline. A free online version of the Discipline is available at: https://www.cokesbury.com/book-of-discipline-book-of-resolutions-free-versions		
The UMC website offersite summary information: https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/local-church-officer-job-descriptions		

The following teams are organized to help oversee the ministry efforts of the church. These are allowed for and encouraged under the UMC Discipline as needed in each church's context. These are less formal in their title/structure than required committees. People may serve on these groups as well as committees listed above. Leadership in these groups may include persons not listed formally on this Nominations report.

Discipleship Ministry Co-op		
Pastors:	Dane Womack & Sarah Ellzey	
Administrative & Program Staff: Angela Newby, Mary Hickox, Brian Pearson, Bernard Raley, Karoline Risker, Denise Chipman		
Chair of Church Council:	Kelsey Matheney	
Lay Leader:	Gene Weeks	
Mission Team Chair & Rep(s):	Tracy Finch	
Hospitality Team Chair & Rep(s):	Nancy Cupp	
Youth/Children's Teachers/Leaders:	S. Barnhill, R. Jackson, S. Cook, S. Lahaie, K. Matheney, etc.	
Connect Wednesday Leaders:	Janice Wilcox, Susie Cook, ...	
Women's Ministry Rep(s):	Andrea Pearson, Jill Womack, Lesley Hobbs, others...	
Men's Ministry Rep(s):	Rev. Dane, others...	
Adult SS Teachers/Leaders(s):	Jeff & Kerry Combs, Jim Jackson, Everett Rogers, Shelia Ragsdale, others...	
Mission Team		
Chair: Tracy Finch		
Judy Dacus (Secretary), Kerry Combs, Linda Faulkner, Tracy Finch, Guyla Jackson, Jim Jackson, Rena Jackson, Mary Justice, Betty Rutherford, John Shepherd, Charlotte Thompson		
Hospitality Team / Chair: Nancy Cupp		
Linda Faulkner, Linda Futrell, Mary Justice, Susie Cook, Janice Wilcox, Carol Moreland, Robin Newby, Kevin Moslander, Rusty McAllister, Matt Hobbs		
Subcommittee Regarding Denominational Matters		
Council Chair:	Kelsey Matheney	
Lay Leader/Member to AC:	Gene Weeks	
Lay Member to AC:	Mary Justice	
Alt. Lay Member to AC:	Susie Cook	
Chair of SPRC:	Hayley Richardson	
Chair of Finance:	Mary Ann Allen	
Chair of Trustees:	Bill Phillips	
Mission Team Chair:	Tracy Finch	
Hospitality Team Chair:	Nancy Cupp	
Pastors:	Dane Womack & Sarah Ellzey	

Paragould First United Methodist Church Staff Responsibilities & Alignment 2024

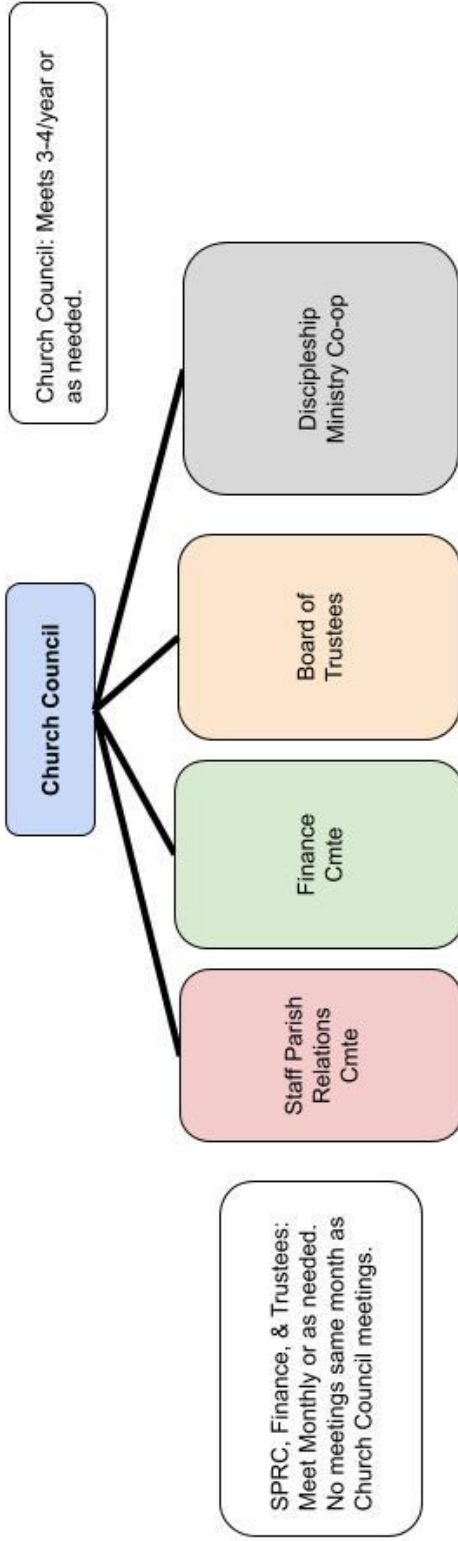


The Staff-Parish Relations Committee is the personnel agency of First United Methodist and oversees all local church staff, including consultation with the Bishop of the Arkansas Area and the appointive cabinet relating to clergy under appointment to First United Methodist Church. The pastors of First United Methodist Church are appointed by the Bishop of the Arkansas Area in consultation with the Staff-Parish Relations Committee, and the Senior Pastor (when an Associate Pastor is under consideration). The Bishop has the final authority in the appointments of clergy.

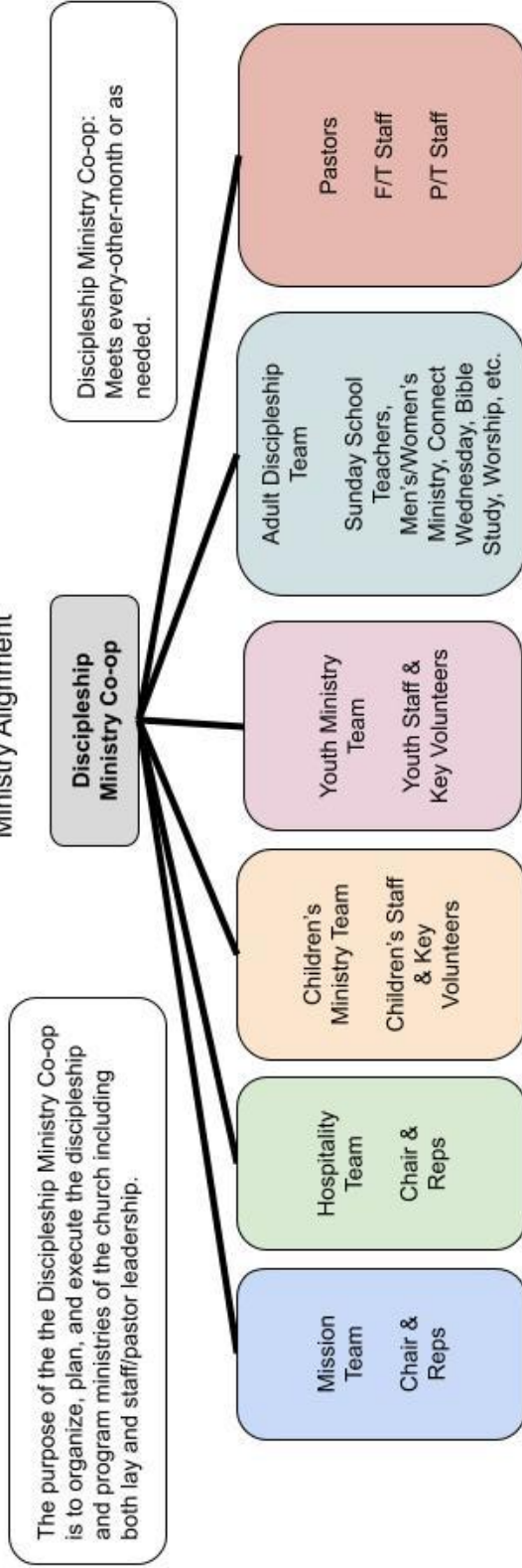
* Updated (2023) Job Descriptions available at <https://www.fumcparagould.org/resources>

2024 Paragould First United Methodist Church

Administrative Alignment



Ministry Alignment



2023 → 2024

4. Feedback from Jan. 2023 Leadership Orientation:

- a. SERVING IN MINISTRY: Fall Every Member in the Ministry Form - everyone responds for the coming year; Ministry directory of everything and opportunities to serve; Strengthen volunteer recruitment & training
- b. ADULT DISCIPLESHIP: Marriage class/retreat; Men's Ministry - now twice monthly breakfast - retreat?; Women's Ministry - beyond daytime activities - quarterly? Monthly?; New Sunday School Class
- c. OTHER: Music - emphasize guests in worship including handbells, fine arts/organ concerts, children singing; Guests Speakers/Presenters/Teachers (Pastors); Schedule conflicts within church - more things outside of SS10am or Wed6pm hour?; New member moment in newsletter; Witt House warming/cooling center extreme temps (Mission Team); Consistency & creativity in youth ministry; Overusing same volunteers

5. Key Ministries/Celebrations 2023

- a. Quarterly Discipleship CoOp Meetings helping to guide the ministries of the church.
- b. Youth and Children's Ministries including Sunday School, small groups, Connect Wednesday, Ozark Mission Project, VBS, Easter Egg Hunt, Christmas celebrations, Backpack Sunday, Trunk-or-Treat, ARUMC Retreats, etc.
- c. Ready, Set, READ! Children's literacy program is an important community ministry of FUMC.
- d. FUMC hosted special events & ministries including:
 - i. ARUMC Bishop Merrill preached and joined FUMC for a reception
 - ii. "Bach Mobile" concert with pianist Louis Menendez
 - iii. "Jubilation Jazz" big band concert & meal
 - iv. Lenten Soup & Sermon
 - v. Women's Ministries including Studies, Galentines Social, Tea Party, Painting Party
 - vi. Men's Breakfast First & Third Thursdays and occasional basketball games
- e. FUMC received Assoc. Pastor Sarah Ellzey in July. Pastor Sarah is thriving in her work and role at FUMC including leading a new adult Sunday School. We also welcomed Sarah's family: Dennis, Bella, Korban, and Evie.

6. Attendance & Participation

WORSHIP							
	IN-PERSON				ONLINE		TOTAL
	8am	9am	11am	Total		2.5/house	
2022	24.22	148.7	85.62	256.08	48.06	120.05	375.66
2023	28.26	161.06	106.36	294.79	36.23	88.92	383.51
+ / -	4.04	12.36	20.74	38.71	-11.83	-31.13	7.85
2023 PODCAST: 333 Total downloads, ~5-6/week							

***NOTE:** PLWC Ch. 6 no longer exists as of 2024. FUMC services previously played three times/week on Ch. 6. FUMC never received “ratings” from our services on Channel 6. At PLWC’s advice, FUMC is investigating the option of streaming on “Tech TV” Ch. 26.

***NOTE:** FUMC will no longer broadcast on FM radio in 2024. That service was introduced in 2020 as a part of the pandemic response, but is not deemed essential going forward. We never received ratings on the radio service.

*FUMC pastors/staff assume most of our non-in-person worshippers do so via streaming.

	SUNDAY SCHOOL		WEEKLY OTHER	CHRISTMAS EVE					
	Children/Youth	Adult		12p/11a	5pm	7pm	11pm	TOTAL	~online
2022	42.92	42.62	44.04	127	323	104	40	594	32
2023	44.13	47.19	86.4	186	302	95	65	648	61
+ / -	1.21	4.57	42.36	59	-21	-9	25	54	29

7. Witt House & Missions/Outreach

Witt House Summary	Jan 2023	Feb 2023	Mar 2023	Apr 2023	May 2023	Jun 2023	July 2023	Aug 2023	Sept 2023	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Total 2023
# Client HH Served	304	270	291	285	304	364	407	367	415	437	344	331	4119
# Client Individuals Served	825	731	848	816	876	1052	1,133	1,094	1,183	1350	1078	1025	12011
Witt House Mobile Summary	Jan 2023	Feb 2023	Mar 2023	Apr 2023	May 2023	Jun 2023	July 2023	Aug 2023	Sept 2023	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Total 2023
# Client HH Served					48	116	48	167	112	91	108	142	832
# Client Individuals Served					170	365	172	534	359	206	213	355	2374

Witt House Year Over Year Report						
	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Households	4,119	3572	2,203	2,105	2591	2513
Individuals	12,011	10,672	7,093	2,879	5,111	4765

***NOTE:** FUMC must begin thinking about a future, larger Witt House facility. Need to research advantages/disadvantages of moving Witt House to its own 501C3.

page intentionally left blank

8. Neighbor Conversation (take notes)

a. Discuss your joys & celebrations of 2023

b. How did you grow in your personal discipleship this past year?

c. What hopes might you have for the coming year?

d. Where is God calling FUMC next?

page intentionally left blank

9. 2024 Meeting/Events Schedule

2024 Key Events Schedule - **SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

<p>Jan 7, Sun - 4pm Leadership Orientation Church Council Mtg</p> <p>Jan 14 AM Celebrate Witt House 2023 5pm Confirmation</p> <p>Jan 21, 5pm Sun "Let's Taco 'Bout Marriage" Date Night Event</p> <p>Jan 28, 5pm Confirmation</p> <p>Jan 31 Connect Wednesday Returns</p> <hr/> <p>Feb 4, Sun STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT SUNDAY 4pm Discipleship Ministry Co-op Mtg 5pm Confirmation</p> <p>Feb 10 (Sat.) 10am Galentines Women's Social</p> <p>Feb 11 Super Bowl Sunday Souper Bowl Fundraiser Missions? (No meetings. Youth party?)</p> <p>LENT BEGINS</p> <p>Feb 14, Ash Wednesday Noon & 6pm Soup & Sermon?</p> <p>Feb 18 5pm Confirmation 4pm - SPRC Meeting 5pm - Finance Meeting 6pm - Trustees Meeting</p> <p>Feb 23-25 Youth @ Veritas (Fort Smith)</p> <p>Feb 25, 5pm Confirmation</p>	<p>Mar 3, 5pm Confirmation</p> <p>Mar 10 UMCOR Sunday with Missionary Guests 5pm Confirmation 4pm - SPRC Meeting 5pm - Finance Meeting 6pm - Trustees Meeting</p> <p>Mar 18-22 Spring Break</p> <p>HOLY WEEK</p> <p>Mar 24, Palm Sunday</p> <p>Mar 28, Maundy Thursday Noon & 6pm Sanctuary</p> <p>Mar 29, Good Friday Noon & 6pm Sanctuary</p> <p>Mar 30, Holy Saturday Children's Egg Hunt</p> <p>Mar 31, Easter Sunday</p> <hr/> <p>Apr 7, Confirmation Sunday in Worship 4pm - Discipleship Ministry Co-op Mtg</p> <p>April 8 ECLIPSE</p> <p>April 14, Sun 4pm - SPRC Meeting 5pm - Finance Meeting 6pm - Trustees Meeting</p> <p>April 23-May 3 UMC General Conference</p> <p>April 24 Final Connect Wednesday</p> <p>April 28 or May 5 Senior Sunday??</p> <p>May 11 - Ladies' Tea ??</p> <p>May 12, Sun Mother's Day</p> <p>May 19, Sun Pentecost Sunday 5pm Church Council Mtg</p>
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

2024 Key Events Schedule - **SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

<p>June ??, Sun 4pm - Discipleship Ministry Co-op Mtg</p> <p>? VBS ? Ready, Set, READ</p> <p>June ??, Sun 4pm - SPRC Meeting 5pm - Finance Meeting 6pm - Trustees Meeting</p> <p>June 9-14 YOUTH @ OMP CONWAY</p> <p>June 16, Sun Father's Day</p> <p>June 19-21 ARUMC Annual Conference</p> <p>July 29-31 OMP 101 5th-6th local mission??</p>	<p>Oct/Nov - ARUMC Charge Conf DATE TBD</p> <p>Oct 27, Sun - Trunk-or-Treat</p> <p>Nov 3, Sun All Saints Sunday 4pm - Discipleship Ministry Co-op Mtg</p> <p>Nov 10, Sun 4pm - SPRC Meeting 5pm - Finance Meeting 6pm - Trustees Meeting</p> <p>Nov 24, Sun - Hanging of the Greens (Thanksgiving Nov. 28)</p>
<p>Aug - Every Member in Ministry Recruitment</p> <p>Aug 4, Sun 4pm - Discipleship Ministry Co-op Mtg</p> <p>Aug ?? TBD Backpack Sunday</p> <p>Aug 11, Sun 4pm - SPRC Meeting 5pm - Finance Meeting 6pm - Trustees Meeting</p> <p>Aug. ?? Nominations</p> <p>Sep 8, Sun Third Grade Bibles</p> <p>Sep 15, Sun 4pm - SPRC Meeting 5pm - Finance Meeting 6pm - Trustees Meeting</p> <p>Sep ?? Nominations</p>	<p>ADVENT BEGINS</p> <p>Dec 1, Sun - First Sunday of Advent College & Career Sunday</p> <p>ANY NEED TO CHANGE??</p> <p>Dec 8, Sun - Youth Progressive Dinner</p> <p>Dec 15, Sun - Children's Christmas Pageant</p> <p>Dec 22, Sun - Choral Christmas Concert</p> <p>Dec 24, Tue - Christmas Eve Noon, 5pm, 7pm, 11pm</p> <p>One Service Sunday 10am: - Memorial Day Wknd- May 26 - Sanctuary - Independence Day Wknd- July 7 - Worship Center - Labor Day Wknd- Sept. 1 - Sanctuary - Sunday after Christmas- Dec. 29 - Worship Center</p>

***NOTE:** Bob Reynolds has special interest in FUMC partnering with the city for "Eclipse on the Ridge" on April 8. Rev. Dane's recommendation: Bob lead an ad hoc team to make FUMC available for parking/viewing including restrooms and refreshments.

STEWARDSHIP SERIES & STUDY

Jan. 14 Ch. 1 "When Dreams Become Nightmares"
 Jan. 21 Ch. 2 "Wisdom & Finance"
 Jan. 28 Ch. 3 "Cultivating Contentment"
 Feb. 4 Ch. 4 "Defined by Generosity"
COMMITMENT SUNDAY

books available at church
 video lessons available on **AMPLIFY MEDIA**

**PARAGOULD FIRST UNITED
 METHODIST CHURCH**

ADAM HAMILTON
Author of Engagem and Why?

Enough
 REVISED EDITION

Discovering Joy Through Simplicity and Generosity

**LET'S TACO
 'BOUT MARRIAGE**

January 21 at 5pm

A Date Night and Marriage Event

	CONTACT	LOCATION/TIME
SUNDAY SCHOOL (10am)		
Coffee Break	Jim Jackson	Gathering Room near Kitchen
Fellowship	Shelia Ragsdell	2nd Floor Classroom near Choir Room
Homemakers	Mary Justice	Library (in Welcome Center)
Pairs & Spares	Everett Rogers	Classroom in Welcome Center
Sisters in Spirit	Sally Martin, Linda Glickert	Classroom in Welcome Center
Wesley Class	Jeff & Kerry Combs	Community Room near Gym
Real Good Class	Pastor Sarah Ellzey	2nd Floor Classroom (behind Choir Loft)
OTHER SMALL GROUPS		
Women's Bible Study	Karoline Risker	Community Room; Wed 9:30am
Wednesday Prayer Group	Betty Rutherford	Community Room; Wed 11am
Threads of Faith	Kay Bland	Welcome Center; Fri 10am
Men's Breakfast	Rev. Dane Womack	1st & 3rd Thur 6am Ironhorse BBQ
Young At Heart Retiree Minsitry	Mary Justice	Movie 1st Mon/Month Meals/Outings 3rd Thur/Month Game Night 4th Mon/Month
Connect Wednesday	Pastors/Staff	Seasonal

CONNECT WEDNESDAY SPRING '24 Jan. 31 - April 24		
4:00 PM	Adult Bible Study	Community Room
5:45-7:00 PM	Nursery Available (birth - 3)	Nursery
5:00 PM	Dinner	Fellowship Hall / Gym
6:00 PM	Children's Activities (PreK-6th)	Children's Area (1st Floor)
	Youth (7th-12th) Small Group	Youth Room (2nd Floor)
	Adult Bible Study	Community Room
	Choir	Sanctuary
7:30 PM	Praise Band Practice	Worship Center

NOTE: Feb. 14: Ash Wednesday services Noon & 6pm. Dinner 5pm.
 No 6pm classes/activities.

NOTE: March 20: Spring Break. No meal or activities.

FINANCES & FACILITIES

10. Various Notes

- a. FUMC Vulnerable Persons Policy & SafeGatherings Trainings were edited by Trustees & adopted by Church Council. Instructions and links at <https://www.fumcparagould.org/resources>. **Continued Requirement for all Youth/Children Volunteers**
- b. Shifted from Breaking Bonds to JanPro custodial services (saving ~\$800/month)
- c. FUMC agreed to a “Permissive Use Agreement” with the Greene County Historical & Genealogical Society at 320. W. Main. GCHSGS Open House Jan. 17.
- d. **ATTACHED** Safety Standards Developed & Adopted by Trustees. **ACTION ITEM: needs approval by Church Council.**

11. Facilities Notes

- a. COMPLETED 2023
 - i. Office Suite Remodel (Next 100 Years Campaign. See Below.)
 - ii. Added Defibrillator to Witt House
 - iii. Handicap door opener Welcome Center
 - iv. New hardware & seals courtyard doors
 - v. Waterproofing courtyard. Roberts-McNutt sealed holes (July) possibly causing basement flooding. Water in the basement is better.
 - vi. Parsonage 417 W Main
 1. Install mini-split HVAC den
 2. Masterbath remodel complete, then new tile floor replaced
 - vii. Parsonage 102 Cypress Pt
 1. HVAC cleaning
 2. Technology repair
 3. Dishwasher replacement
 - viii. HVAC maintenance/repair multiple
 - ix. 2 HVAC units replaced (Office Suite & Education Building)
- b. UPCOMING/ONGOING
 - i. Sanctuary Paint/Plaster Repair (Stracener Painting). All but complete.
 - ii. Organ Maintenance. All new electronics/computer. Expected February 2024. ~\$100k costs. ~\$90k designated gifts received to date.
 - iii. Parsonage 102 Cypress Pt
 1. Additional HVAC maintenance (\$3k)
 2. Plumbing leak/repairs
- c. LONG-TERM PROJECTS/CONCERNS
 - i. Witt House Facility (see earlier)
 - ii. Laity request to add gates between gym & playground for child safety
 - iii. Drainage issues entering Welcome Center
 - iv. Stained ceiling tiles throughout building, especially in hallway outside courtyard & Community Room
 - v. HVAC issues sanctuary annually, aged units
 1. Repair as needed?
 2. Prepare long-term strategy?

- vi. HVAC improvements Kitchen & Chapel & Youth Room (2023 mini-splits quote \$16k/each)
- vii. 4th & Main concrete/curb water damage repairs
- viii. New gutters around sanctuary/courtyard to replace black piping
- ix. Requests to improve lawn/landscaping
- x. Improved exterior signage
- xi. Interior room numbers & campus map
- xii. Worship Center prayer kneelers
- xiii. Request bus that does not require CDL

12. Next 100 Years Spring '22 Debt Reduction Campaign

Goal - Five Year Campaign culminate '26 celebrating 100 years & Debt Free.

Debt - The construction loan closed at ~\$3.7million and the current debt owed is ~\$2.7million. The annual payment on our note is ~\$270k for a 5/20 year note. We will soon transfer a large additional sum toward principal.

NEXT 100 YEARS / DEBT	
Sanctuary Side Flat Roofs COMPLETE	\$120,000
Additional Interior Paint/Plaster Repair ALL BUT COMPLETE	~\$10k remaining
Stained Glass exterior protective glass & frames (2020 quote)	\$75,000
First Floor Office Suite COMPLETE	\$200,000
Sanctuary technology improvements (2020-1 quote)	\$50,000
CURRENT DEBT	\$2.77m

Current cash on hand in Building /100 yr Fund: \$475,515. Will soon make a transfer to loan principal.

~\$45k available for Sanctuary Upkeep & Repairs.

What is the expectation/appetite of church leadership regarding Next 100 Years projects in 2024?
Presumably the Stained Glass repairs would come next.

13. 2023 Financial Overview

First United Methodist Church

2023 Operating Budget \$1,306,698

Month Ending - December 2023

Fund Balances	BEGINNING BAL	DEPOSITS	TRANSFERRED	DISTRIBUTED	ENDING BAL	Notes
General	21,612	127,953		99,437	50,128	need \$20,000 for automatic payroll
Building / 100 Yr Campaign	247,096	228,419			475,515	
Memorial	32,261				32,261	
Benevolent	106,096	72,822		12,050	166,868	loan to General fund for payroll
Youth	18,128			3,000	15,128	
Witt House	21,291	11,070		4,362	27,999	
Family Dinner	9,740	281			10,021	
AR Community Foundation - Maint	35,344				35,344	available to grant
AR Community Foundation - Child/Youth	5,911				5,911	available to grant

Monthly/YTD Comparison

	NOVEMBER		DECEMBER		YEAR TO DATE	
	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022
Operating Budget - YTD						
Received - General Funds	74,151	127,953	108,813	1,163,368	906,970	892,793
Distributed - General	73,111	99,437	88,395	954,557	969,800	954,557
Received - Building Funds	43,276	228,419	179,774	688,603	564,224	688,603
Distributed - Building	8,720	-	9,670	361,382	531,402	361,382
Operating Budget Total Received	27,998	84,173	25,126	1,581,396	1,471,194	1,581,396
Operating Budget Total Distributed	7,142	19,412	11,013	1,315,939	1,501,202	1,315,939
Other Designated Receipts	145,425	440,545	313,713	1,737,194	1,674,942	1,737,194
Other Designated Distributed	88,973	118,849	109,078	1,507,073	1,681,688	1,507,073
Total Overall Received						
Total Overall Distributed						

Apportionments - 2023

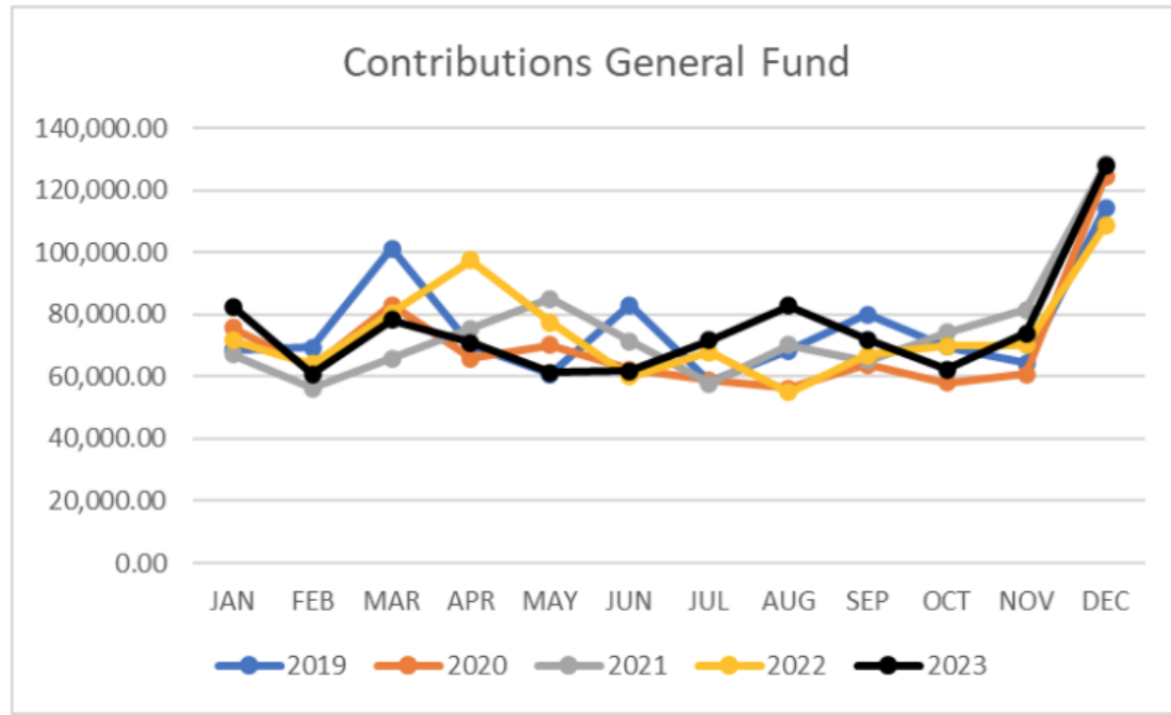
	September	October	November	December
District Mission Apportionment (set by conference)	paid in October 76	paid in November 76	paid in December 76	pay in January 76
Conference consideration (10% of contributions)	7,202	6,234	7,418	12,794

Project Cost: \$5,976,073 (beginning Jan 2018)

Original Loan \$3,735,613
 2022 Interest Paid \$116,125
 2022 Principal Paid \$220,000
 2023 Principal Paid \$200,000
Principal Remaining \$2,778,547
 Interest Rate 3.95%

Note: Had \$14,753.75 insurance payment and with lower contributions is was necessary to transfer funds to keep balance above \$20,000 for payroll.

December 2023



DECEMBER 2023 BENEVOLENT FUND BREAKDOWN

<i>FUND</i>	<i>BEGINNING</i>	<i>IN</i>	<i>OUT</i>	<i>ENDING</i>	
Hospitality Shirts	-\$215.11			-\$215.11	Hospitality t-shirts ordered
Sanctuary Repair/Upkeep	\$46,110.36			\$46,110.36	Specific donations for sanctua
Assistance/Communion/Usage	-\$508.15	\$1,137.00	\$738.84	-\$109.99	utility assistance
Ready Set Read/200K Grant	\$1,085.64			\$1,085.64	reading program
Praise Team	\$1,152.00			\$1,152.00	Specific donations
Choir	\$77.51	\$25.00		\$102.51	specific donations
Wedding / Usage Fees	\$880.00		\$250.00	\$630.00	
Flowers (Lily/Poinsettia)	\$270.53	\$410.00	\$620.65	\$59.88	
Bereavement Lunch/Lay Pastoral	\$2,387.00			\$2,387.00	contributions for bereavemen
Threads of Faith	\$530.56	\$30.00	\$54.31	\$506.25	for expenses the knitters incur
Kitchen	\$609.44			\$609.44	donations for kitchen items in
Wheelchair Ramps	-\$78.51			-\$78.51	supplies for handicap ramps
Van	\$26,708.00			\$26,708.00	
Decorating	\$4,071.59			\$4,071.59	set aside for committee to up
Dollar a Week 2023	\$7,167.00	\$925.00		\$8,092.00	
Diggs Estate	\$10,749.44			\$10,749.44	annual distribution from Meth
Library	\$646.00			\$646.00	donated for library shelving, e
OMP	\$178.73			\$178.73	
Sunday School	\$20.00	\$20.00	\$40.00	\$0.00	
GC Tax Collector	-\$6,669.19			-\$6,669.19	
Loan to General Fund	-\$15,000.00			-\$15,000.00	needed to cover payroll 10/31
Organ Renovation	\$20,050.00	\$70,130.00	\$10,301.20	\$79,878.80	
Methodist Children's Home		\$100.00		\$100.00	
Activities		\$45.00	\$45.00	\$0.00	
	\$100,222.84	\$72,822.00	\$12,050.00	\$160,994.84	

14. 2024 Proposed Budget **ACTION ITEM**

2024 Proposed Operating Budget		
LOCAL CHURCH BUILDINGS		
Church Maintenance	70,000.00	GENERAL EXPENSE
Parsonage (320 W Main)	1,000.00	Office Supplies / Newsletter
Parsonage (417 W Main)	2,500.00	Postage
Property/Auto Insurance	66,100.00	Equipment Repair or Replace
Transportation/Vans	4,000.00	Lights/Water
Parsonage (102 Cypress)	4,000.00	Summтт (Centerpoint)
	147,600.00	Telephone/Internet
		Copier
		Kitchen & Cleaning Supplies
	15,000.00	Professional Services (accountant)
	100.00	
	15,000.00	132,800.00
PROGRAMS		
Education		
Adult/Senior Ministry (Young @ Heart)		
Youth Ministry - 7th-12th	15,000.00	STAFF
Children's Ministry (confirmation/Bibles/pool/etc.)	2,500.00	Senior Pastor
Children's Programs (Easter, Back to School, Fall Festival, etc)	1,500.00	Associate Pastor
Vacation Bible School	5,000.00	Pastors Expense Reimbursed
First Core (Young Adults)	150.00	Support Staff
Music Ministry - Adult (musicians, music, cantata, robe clear	4,500.00	Custodial Outsource (Jan-Pro)
Music Ministry - Children	200.00	Nursery
Handbells	200.00	SS WH and State Tax
Keyboard Instruments (organ and piano tuning)	3,500.00	Annual Conference Expense (Lay members)
Music Ministry - Praise Band	500.00	Continuing Education
Worship (candles, communion supplies, acolyte supplies, etc	3,000.00	Civic Club
Hospitality (first time visitor gifts, donuts, etc)	5,000.00	
Outreach/Evangelism/Missions	3,500.00	478,243.00
Witt House	10,000.00	APPORTIONMENTS
Advertising/Technology/Comm	25,000.00	Tithe Initiative
	94,650.00	District Mission Apportionment (Wesley)
		Direct Billed Pension
		131,200.00
		CONNECTIONAL BENEVOLENCES
		Emergency Benevolence
		<i>Sub-Total</i>
		984,593.00
		BUILDING LOAN
		Building loan interest
		Building loan principal
		TOTAL BUDGET
		1,314,593.00

UMC UPDATE

15. Recent History

- a. **1972 General Conference:** The first statement regarding homosexuality was published in The Book of Discipline
- b. **2016 General Conference:** Legislation enacted assigning Council of Bishops responsibility to find a solution for our denomination that has been divided on matters of human sexuality.
- c. **2016: The Commission on the Way Forward Appointed:** This group was created by the Council of Bishops to assist it in leading the denomination forward. It offered the Council of Bishops three options: The One Church Plan, The Connectional Conference Plan and The Traditional Plan. The Council endorsed the One Church Plan, but also offered the other two options for consideration by a special called session of the General Conference.
- d. **2019 Called Session of General Conference:**
 - i. The “Traditional Plan” was enacted by a 53% - 47% margin.
 - ii. Legislation ¶2553 (**DISAFFILIATION**) was adopted allowing those to disaffiliate and depart who could not remain for reasons of conscience. Originally intended for more ‘Progressive Churches’, but Judicial Council decisions broadened the application so any church can pursue it. **Expired December 31, 2023.**
- e. **January 2020:** “The Protocol of Reconciliation & Grace Through Separation” unveiled. Most held that the 2020 General Conference would enact the Protocol. 2020 GC was postponed. The rescheduled 2020 General Conference set to begin August 29, 2022 was canceled due primarily to international visa issues.
- f. **May 2022:** The Global Methodist Church formed
- g. **Nov. 2022, May 2023, & Oct 2023** ARUMC Special Sessions of Annual Conference to approve Disaffiliations

16. Current Data

- a. UMC: total of 7660 disaffiliations over the past four years
- b. ARUMC: 160 disaffiliations / ~415 churches remain UMC
- c. Disaffiliations represent approximately 25% of the (former) denomination. The US UMC is “less southern”.

17. 2024 General Conference | Reflections & Questions

- a. April 23 - May 3; Charlotte, NC
- b. 2024GC is the rescheduled 2020GC
- c. 2020GC legislation is still on the table as well as additional legislation submitted since then.
- d. 2026GC will be what would have been the 2024GC.
- e. 2028GC is a return to normal schedule.
- f. Therefore there will be three GCs in the next 5 years.

- g. Some 2020 GC delegates/churches are no longer UMC. Churches/conferences have elected new delegates in the past year.
- h. Previously ~862 delegates to GC (half laity, half clergy)
 - i. ~ 55% US, 32% Africa, 6% Philippines; 4.6% Europe; Etc.
- i. This past season of disaffiliation has been difficult, sad, and complicated for all parties. Legal issues continue in some cases. Disaffiliation did irreparable damage to churches of any size.
- j. Paragould FUMC has been impacted by denominational challenges, but has come through the last few years very strong. Paragould FUMC still stands in and represents the broad, diverse middle of the United Methodist Church.
- k. Predicting what will happen at the upcoming GC is impossible. GC practically always surprises us. Who will attend ? How will they vote?
- l. Will ¶2553 allowing for disaffiliation be extended or will new, similar legislation be introduced?
- m. Will language/prohibitions around sexuality be changed or removed?
- n. “Regionalization” is a key concept being debated and possibly legislated at upcoming GCs. Put simply, regionalization legislation attempts to create greater regional control and local autonomy. Currently Article IV, ¶31.5 allows central conferences to reject or alter decisions of the General Conference to better fit their context. US jurisdictional conferences do not have the same authority or flexibility. Some examples where central conferences have altered General Conference teaching include ordination of deacons and tenure of bishops. In 2024 the Standing Committee on General Conference will ask for ongoing collaboration with worldwide church leaders to reorganize the Discipline (and denomination) by regional conferences. Many believe the UMC needs more “connectional customization” but the legislation to make it possible is complicated and will take multiple General Conferences.
- o. The UMC is not a static institution and has been constantly changing since its inception. The future of UMC & the ARUMC is being shaped now and over the next 5-10 years. Methodism (and Christianity) are & will continue to change in coming years.

How will/should FUMC approach and respond to 2024 General Conference? Churchwide meeting closer to GC? Following GC? Small group meetings with Rev. Dane?

18. UMC Rules Reminders

- a. The UMC is committed to Theological Orthodoxy. See UMC Discipline Part III “Doctrinal Standards & Our Theological Task”. The UMC Celebrates The Apostles’ Creed & the Nicene Creed. We share the Anglican/Methodist traditional Articles of Religion & Confession of Faith. We celebrate Wesleyan theology including our teaching on grace.
- b. The UMC has a rich history of theological resources, scriptural interpretation, and careful work on important issues (slavery, African-American participation, women’s ordination/leadership, alcohol, divorce, global missions, abortion, war, etc.). See UMC Book of Discipline Part V “Social Principles”.

- c. The “Restrictive Rules” of the The United Methodist Church specify six things the General Conference of The United Methodist Church may not do including: The General Conference may not "revoke, alter, or change" the Articles of Religion, the Confession of Faith, or the General Rules of the Societies.
- d. Accusations that the UMC is not “orthodox” (belief in Trinity, Virgin Birth, Resurrection, Divinity of Christ, etc.) are untrue. UMC orthodox theological commitments have not changed.
- e. Unity is a theological hope and goal though centrism is unpopular. The church is called to work together to navigate social and theological challenges with care, grace, and patience. There are too many kind, loving, thoughtful, and faithful Christians who disagree on these matters to write off either side. Unity is a goal worth pursuing.