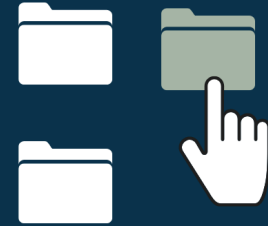


# leadership orientation

All FUMC members serving in leadership in 2025 are encouraged and expected to attend including Church Council, Finance Cmte, SPRC, Trustees, Mission Team, Hospitality Team, Children/Youth Leaders, Outreach Cmte, Women's Leaders, etc.



2PM  
**12**  
SUNDAY  
JAN 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER & PRAYER	3
2. 2024 MINISTRY STRENGTHS & HIGHLIGHTS	3
3. 2025 FUMC LAY LEADERSHIP & STAFF STRUCTURE	3
4. ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION	9
5. WITT HOUSE & MISSIONS/OUTREACH	10
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9. NEXT 100 YEARS '22 DEBT REDUCTION & UPGRADES CAMPAIGN	19
10. SAFETY & SECURITY	20
11. FUMC ONLINE MERCH STORE	20
12. ONGOING ADULT MINISTRIES	20
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14. UPCOMING NED MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES	22
** BREAK **	23
15. EXAMEN PRAYER	24
16. TABLE DISCUSSION	24
17. THE SECULAR AGE	26

## 1. CALL TO ORDER & PRAYER

- a. Call Council Meeting to Order - Chair Gene Weeks
- b. Pastor Sarah - Opening Prayer
- c. Rev. Dane - Welcome & Introductions

## 2. 2024 MINISTRY STRENGTHS & HIGHLIGHTS

+ Commitment to excellence in worship across spaces, times, and styles.

+ Quality Youth and Children’s ministries including Sunday School, small groups, Connect Wednesday, Assembly, OMP, OMP101, VBS, Easter Egg Hunt, Christmas celebrations, Backpack Sunday, Trunk-or-Treat, Ready-Set-READ, etc.

+ Missions/Witt House continues to be a flagship ministry. The lay leadership creatively serves as many people as possible with fresh food each month. The Witt House is facing financial pressure as demand grows and food prices increase.

+ Special events & ongoing ministries including: “One Service Sunday” 10am holiday weekends; Lent Soup & Sermon Rotation; Women’s Ministries (Wednesday Bible Study, Galentines Social, Tea Party, etc.); Men’s Breakfast monthly; “Let’s Taco ‘Bout Marriage” Date Night & Marriage Event; Young @ Heart Ministry; Pecan Grove initiative (See Pastor Sarah’s report for more details.); FOCUS Birthday party monthly; Cookies & Communion @ Chateau (See Pastor Sarah’s report for more details.); Knitters (Fridays); Sewing Group (Mondays); Men’s Basketball weekly; Monthly luncheon potluck; Newcomers “Coffee with Pastors”; PickleBall available in church gym; Particularly large & strong Confirmation class; Regular blood drives; Host local school events/testing; Dollar Per Week Grant Program; UMCOR Sunday celebration including guests speakers David & Elizabeth McCormick; Together We Foster Association Christmas Gift Wrapping; Junior Auxiliary Christmas Gift Collection/Party host; Connect Wednesday (seasonal)

## 3. 2025 FUMC LAY LEADERSHIP & STAFF STRUCTURE

Church Council		
Council Chair/Lay Member to AC:	Gene Weeks	
Lay Leader/Lay Member to AC:	Tracy Brengard	
Alt. Lay Member to AC:	Janice Wilcox	
Chair of SPRC:	H T Moore	
Chair of Finance:	Mary Ann Allen	
Chair of Trustees:	(Trustees elect chairperson)	
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		
<b>At-large Members:</b>		
<b>Class of '25:</b>	<b>Class of '26:</b>	<b>Class of '27:</b>
Jonathan Peel	Jeff Phillips	Heather Watson
Kevin Moslander	Jeani Wallace	Briget Williams
Tina Russell	Pam McAllister	Daniel Potter
Gene Weeks	Ann Honeycutt	Whitney Miller
Linda Glickert	Tim Roswell	Carolyn Moreland
Kinlee Weatherford (youth)	Victoria Thompson (youth)	Riley Pearson (youth)
<b>Finance Committee / Chair: Mary Ann Allen</b>		
<i>Class of '25:</i>	<i>Class of '26:</i>	<i>Class of '27:</i>
Mary Ann Allen	Shani Barnhill	Melvin Wamock
John Jacob Cook	Mike Gibson	Donna Brazil
Ryan Lawrence	Joy Sills	Philip Poston
Ex officio w/ vote:		
Treasurer:	Greg Graham	
SPRC Chair:	H T Moore	
Trustees Chair:	(Trustees elect chairperson)	
Church Council Chair/Member to AC:	Gene Weeks	
Lay Leader/Member to AC:	Tracy Brengard	
<b>Staff-Parish Relations Committee / Chair: H T Moore</b>		
<i>Class of '25:</i>	<i>Class of '26:</i>	<i>Class of '27:</i>
H T Moore	Linda Futrell	Hardy Thompson
Dannelle Rogers	Dale Schenk	Kenny Kuenzel
Hayley Richardson	Rona Waits	Cori Hinkle
Ex officio w/ vote: Lay Leader/Member to AC:	Tracy Brengard	

Ex officio w/ vote: Lay Member to AC:	Gene Weeks	
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**Trustees / Chair:**

<i>Class of '25:</i>	<i>Class of '26:</i>	<i>Class of '27:</i>
Mona Tullos	Shelia Ragsdale	Jill Weeks
Julie McHaney	Dick Dame	Judy Dacus
Rusty McAllister	John Dodd	Brock Wooldridge

**Committee on Lay Leadership & Nominations / Chair: Senior Pastor**

<i>Class of '25:</i>	<i>Class of '26:</i>	<i>Class of '27:</i>
D. J. Jackson	Vance Cupp	Kelsey Matheny
Tori Thompson	Nancy Bruce	Sandy Rogers
Jason Weatherford	Sharon Grooms	Linda Faulkner
Ex officio w/out vote: Assoc. Pastor		
Ex officio w/ vote, Lay Leader	Tracy Brengard	

**Memorial Committee**

<i>Class of '25:</i>	<i>Class of '26:</i>	<i>Class of '27:</i>
Mack Shotts	Diane Blossom	Larry Mohler
Rena Jackson	Kay Bland	Carolyn Samuel

**Endowment Committee**

<i>Class of '25:</i>	<i>Class of '26:</i>	<i>Class of '27:</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 offers site summary information:

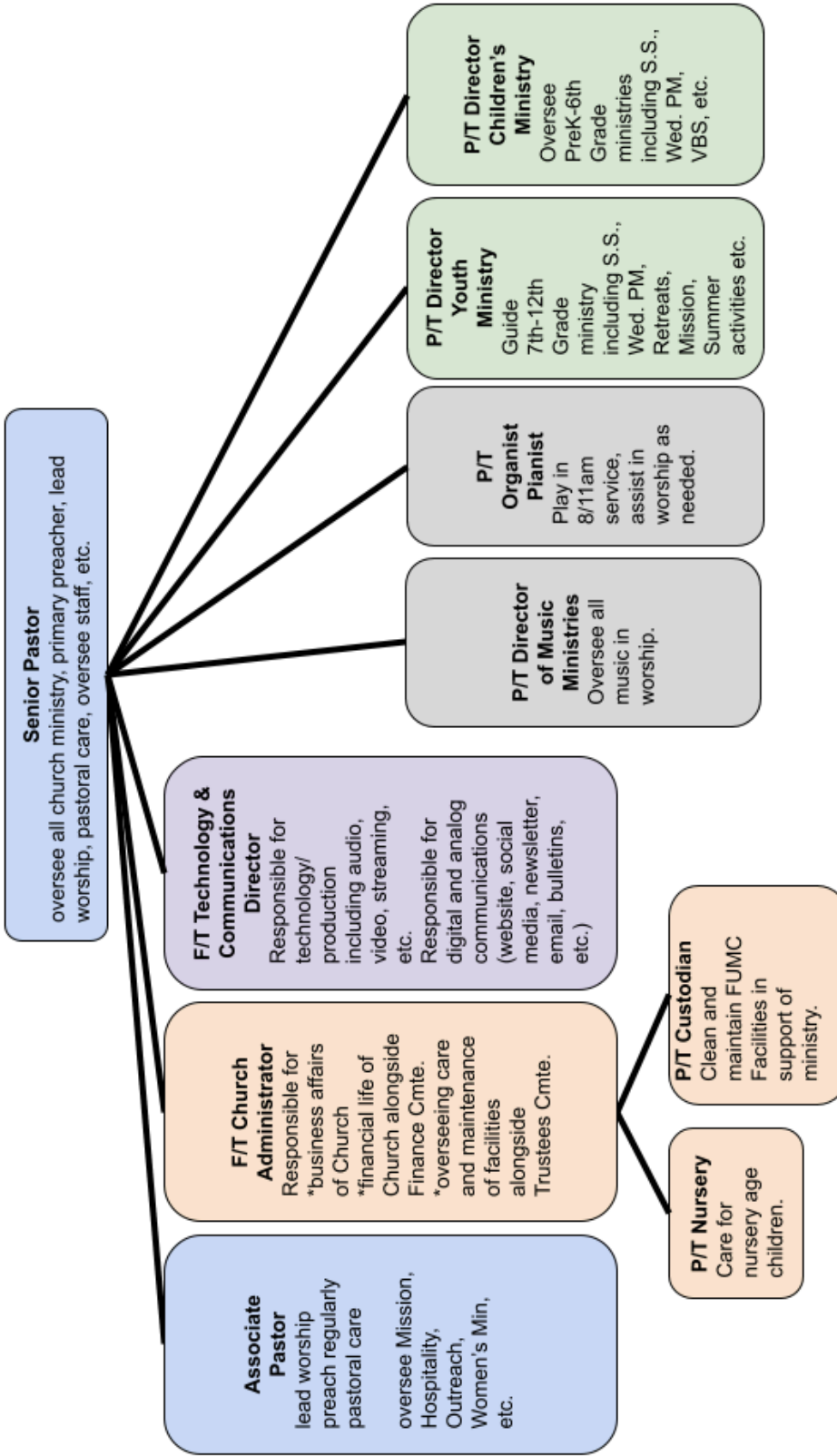
<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/local-church-officer-job-descriptions>

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.

<b>Discipleship Ministry Co-op</b>		
Pastors:	Dane Womack & Sarah Ellzey	
Administrative & Program Staff:	Angela Newby, Mary Hickox, Brian Pearson, Bernard Raley, Karoline Risker, Denise Chipman	
Chair of Church Council:	Gene Weeks	
Lay Leader:	Tracy Brengard	
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. Matheny, etc.	
Adult Ministry Leaders (SS, Connect Wednesday, etc.):	Jeff & Kerry Combs, Jim Jackson, Everett Rogers, Shelia Ragsdale, Janice Wilcox, Andrea Pearson, Jill Womack, Mary Justice, etc.	
<b>Mission Team</b> (focus on Witt House, other feeding/service ministries, UMCOR opportunities, etc.)		
Chair: Tracy Finch / Judy Dacus (Secretary), Kerry Combs, Linda Faulkner, Tracy Finch, Guyla Jackson, Jim Jackson, Rena Jackson, Mary Justice, Charlotte Thompson		
<b>Hospitality Team</b> (focus on on-campus ministries/events including greeters, ushers, receptions, etc.)		
Chair: Nancy Cupp / Linda Faulkner, Linda Futrell, Mary Justice, Susie Cook, Janice Wilcox, Carol Moreland, Robin Newby, Kevin Moslander		
<b>Outreach Team</b> (new 2025!) (focus on off-campus relationship-building & service opportunities e.g. Pecan Grove)		
Jim Jackson, Rena Jackson, Danielle Honeycutt, Allie Robbins, Renee Golas, Jennifer Harper ... others welcome		
<b>Women's Ministry Leadership Team</b> (new 2025!) (focus on Women's discipleship and event programming)		
Laura Wooldridge, Mary Justice, Allie Robbins, Jill Womack, Andrea Pearson, Traci Finch, Tracy Brengard, Angela Newby, Tori Thompson ... others welcome		

Paragould First United Methodist Church Staff Responsibilities & Alignment 2025

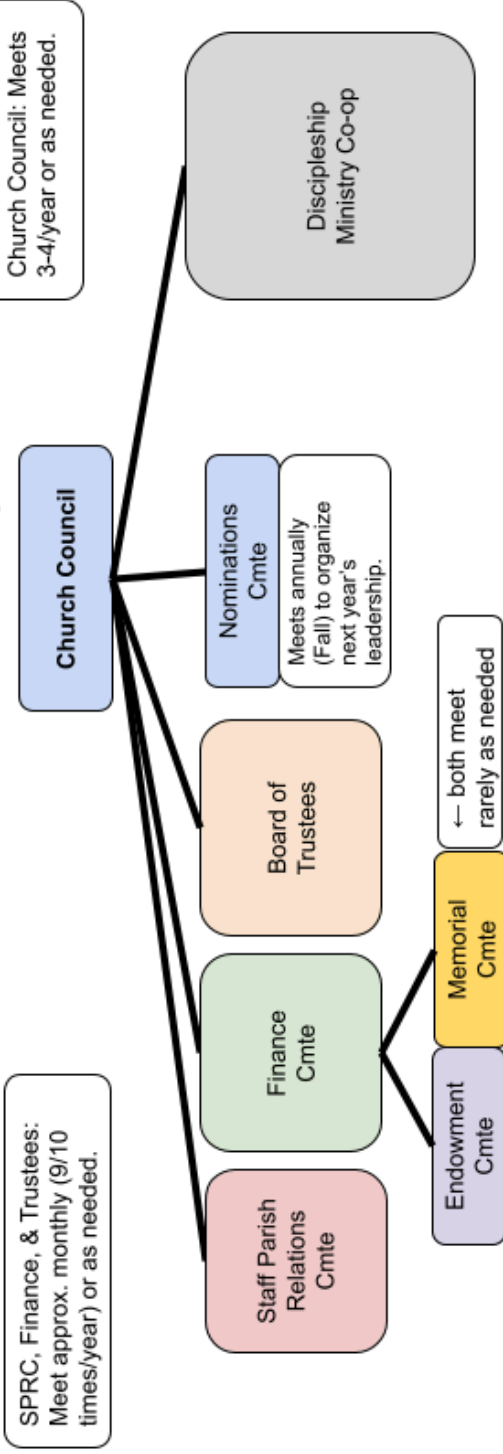


The Staff-Parish Relations Committee is the personnel agency of First United Methodist and oversees all local church staff, including consultation with the Bishop of the Arkansas Area and the appointive cabinet relating to clergy under appointment to First United Methodist Church. The pastors of First 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.

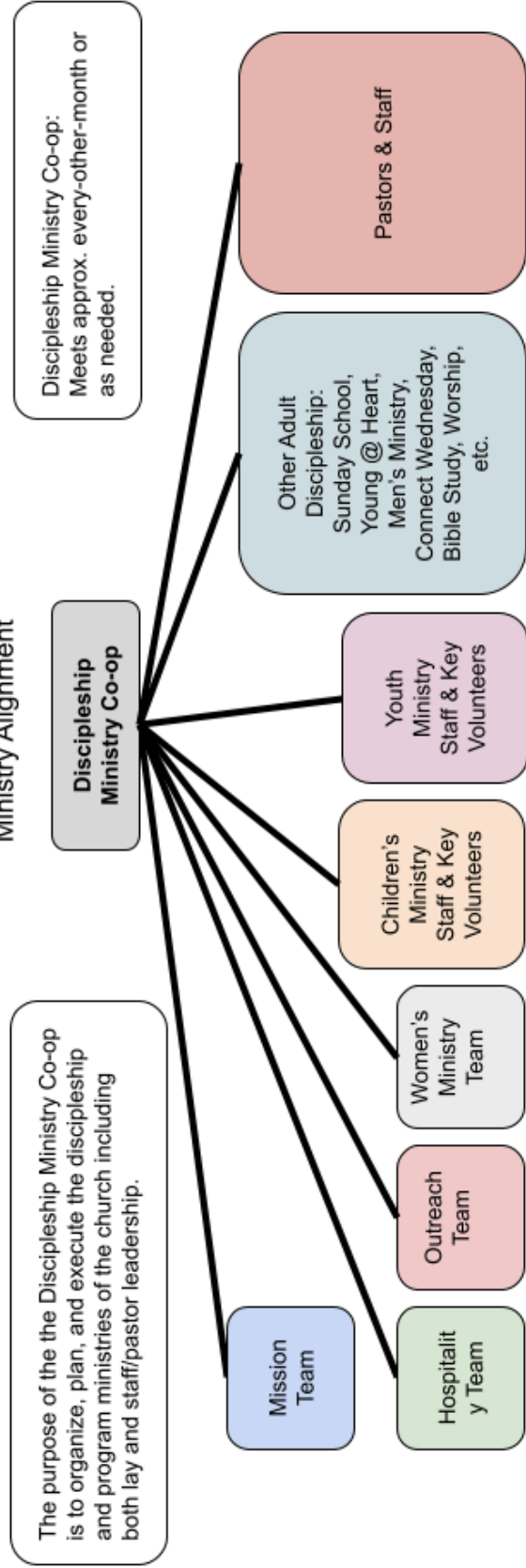
\* Updated (2023) Job Descriptions available at <https://www.fumcparagould.org/resources>

## 2025 Paragould First United Methodist Church

### Administrative Alignment



### Ministry Alignment



## 4. ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION

	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
2	<b>WORSHIP PARTICIPATION AVERAGE</b>								
3	<b>IN-PERSON</b>								
4			8:00 AM	9:00 AM	11:00 AM	TOTAL	units	<b>ONLINE</b>	
5		2022	24.22	148.70	85.62	256.08	48.06	2.5/unit	120.05
6		2023	28.26	161.06	106.36	295.68	36.32		88.92
7									
8		2024	27.71	154.56	108.00	281.19	36.33		91.63
9		2024 Jan - Aug	28.00	161.69	106.91	285.06			
10		2024 Sept - Dec	27.13	140.31	110.19	273.24			
11									
14	<b>SUNDAY SCHOOL</b>								
15			Children/Youth	Adult					
16		2022	42.92	42.62					
17		2023	44.13	47.19					
18		2024	56.19	52.19					
19	<b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b>								
20		12p/11a	5pm	7pm	11pm	TOTAL			
21	2022	127	323	104	40	594			
22	2023	186	302	95	65	648			
23	2024	147	224	117	63	551			

## 5. WITT HOUSE & MISSIONS/OUTREACH

Year To Date 2024													
Witt House	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Households	344	318	310	379	363	395	386	356	337	379	378	498	4443
Individuals	1106	945	893	1122	1065	1088	1171	1130	1039	1219	1172	1,528	13478
Mobile	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Households	200	213	212	314	270	220	283	196	232	273	292	242	2947
Individuals	559	492	487	747	660	625	596	430	548	690	742	530	7106

WITT HOUSE 2018 - 2024								
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
HH Served	2,274	2,355	1,213	1,928	3,478	4,119	4,443	19,810
People Served	4,526	4,875	2,520	6,250	10,672	12,011	13,478	54,332
WITT HOUSE MOBILE 2023-2024								
	2023	2024	Total					
HH Served	832	2,947	3,779					
People Served	2,374	7,106	9,480					

### Month Ending December 2024

#### WITT HOUSE FOOD PANTRY / Mobile Account

<u>Expense / Income</u>	<u>In</u>	<u>Out</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Beginning			\$23,048.29
Hays		\$3,918.60	
Wal-Mart		\$640.56	
Aldi		\$227.05	
Dollar General			
NEA Food Bank		\$1,263.20	
	2-Dec	\$10,725.00	
	4-Dec	\$141.73	
	9-Dec	\$4,305.00	
	10-Dec	\$100.00	
	16-Dec	\$900.00	
	17-Dec	\$570.00	
	19-Dec	\$1,100.00	
	23-Dec	\$1,000.00	
	30-Dec	\$141.73	
	30-Dec	\$70.00	
	31-Dec	\$489.10	
Total		\$19,542.56	\$6,049.41
	Ending		\$36,541.44

\*NOTE: In December the Witt House received two grants:

1. \$10,000 from the Methodist Foundation of Arkansas
2. \$2,500 from the Arkansas Community Foundation of Greene County

## 6. 2024 FINANCES

### First United Methodist Church

Month Ending - December 2024

2024 Operating Budget \$1,314,593

Fund Balances	BEGINNING BAL	DEPOSITS		BORROWED	DISTRIBUTED	ENDING BAL	Notes
		2024	2023				
General	26,790	189,478			113,626	102,642	<i>must keep balance of \$20,000 for paym</i>
Building / 100 Yr Campaign	455,574	139,360		8,891	8,891	586,043	
Memorial	20,888	190	\$10,000 on 6/24			21,078	
Benevolent	104,170	6,060	\$15,000 on 10/23		3,738	106,492	
Youth	10,807		Due to low cash flow			10,807	
Witt House	21,787	19,542			6,049	35,280	
Family Dinner	10,635				41	10,594	

### Monthly/YTD Comparison

	NOVEMBER		DECEMBER		YEAR TO DATE	
	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023
Operating Budget - YTD						
Received - General Funds	69,746		189,478		994,924	906,970
Distributed - General	61,692		113,626		960,279	969,800
Received - Building Funds	85,079		139,360		545,456	564,224
Distributed - Building	7,060		8,891		467,798	531,402
Operating Budget Total Received	154,825		328,838		1,540,380	1,471,194
Operating Budget Total Distributed	68,752		122,517		1,428,077	1,501,202
Other Designated Receipts	14,596		25,792		160,622	203,748
Other Designated Distributed	7,000		9,628		211,631	180,486
Total Overall Received	169,421		354,630		1,701,002	1,674,942
Total Overall Distributed	75,752		132,145		1,639,708	1,681,688

### Apportionments - 2024

	August	September	October	November	December
District Mission Apportionment (set by conference)	Pay in Sept 137	Pay in Oct 137	Paid in Dec 137	Pay in Dec 137	Pay in Jan 137
Conference consideration (10% of contributions)	5,549	9,000	6,537	6,975	18,948

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## Endowments

	Balance	Available to Grant
AR Community Foundation - Maint	\$ 220,626.02	\$ 43,066.16
AR Community Foundation - Diggs Child/Youth	\$ 157,262.39	
Methodist Foundation for Arkansas - Diggs General Ministry	\$ 73,211.18	
Georgia Wright Scholarship		
Centennial Bank Savings	137091810	10,637.15
Centennial Bank Time Deposit	136979621	2,059.57

*(next maturity date is 12/10/24)*

**Loan** Project Total: \$5,976,073 (beginning Jan 2018) 3.95% Interest

Original Loan	\$ 3,735,613	Total Interest to Date: \$769,421
Principal Paid	\$ 1,319,298	
Principal Remaining	\$ 2,416,315	

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## Notes:

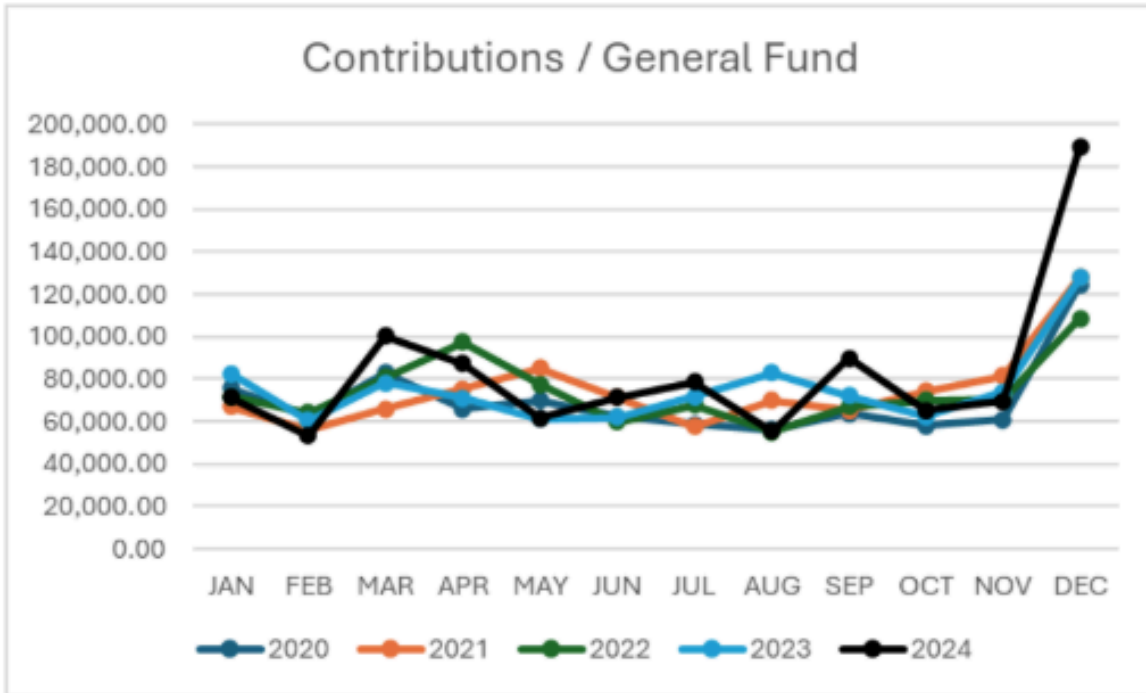
October '23 borrowed \$15,000 from Benevolent fund to General Fund to make payroll  
June '24 borrowed \$10,000 from Memorial Fund to General Fund to help with bills  
October '24 paid \$6,669.73 property taxes on 102 Cypress from building fund - should get this refunded

### Insurance Claim for media/video damage:

Claim opened May 26 2024 - we have replacement cost coverage on this  
HomeTronix sent quote to Insurance  
Guide One Insurance requested NICE Network to verify/evaluate scope of damage  
July 15 Dane electronically approved and signed quote of \$35,676  
July 16 received bill from HomeTronix for 65% deposit to get parts ordered  
Check mailed July 17 for \$25,520 from building fund  
Mailed copy of invoice to Guide One Insurance  
Insurance mailed check for \$12,838 - when receive final bill and project complete I will mail to insurance for reimbursement  
HomeTronix sent final bill to Guide One in amount of \$53,225  
Guide One sent us \$35,387 plus previous \$12,838 totals \$48,225  
Still waiting on final bill from HomeTronix (estimate final to be \$27,705)

**DECEMBER 2024 BENEVOLENT FUND BREAKDOWN & YOUTH FUND**

<u>FUND</u>	<u>BEGINNING</u>	<u>IN</u>	<u>OUT</u>	<u>ENDING</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
<b>Ministries</b>					
Assistance/Communion/Usage	\$34.84	\$1,231.00	\$399.08	\$866.76	utility assistance
Bereavement Lunch/Lay Pastoral	\$3,147.30			\$3,147.30	contributions for bereavement meals/stamps, cards mailed
Threads of Faith	\$435.96	\$30.00		\$465.96	for expenses the knitters incur
Dollar a Week 2024	\$7,131.00	\$864.00		\$7,995.00	
UMCOR	\$403.00		\$403.00	\$0.00	
Pecan Grove Initiative	\$2,295.00		\$477.70	\$1,817.30	
Prison Ministries	\$0.00			\$0.00	
Foster Families	\$260.00		\$260.00	\$0.00	
<b>Programs</b>					
Ready Set Read/200K Grant/Child Minis	\$619.17	\$50.00		\$669.17	reading program
OMP / OMP 101	\$458.73			\$458.73	
Sunday School	\$0.00			\$0.00	
Praise Team	\$1,152.00			\$1,152.00	Specific donations
Choir	\$1,282.51			\$1,282.51	specific donations
Wedding / Usage Fees	\$602.08			\$602.08	
Flowers (Lily/Poinsettia)	\$159.88	\$785.00	\$1,486.54	-\$541.66	
<b>Building</b>					
Sanctuary Repair/Upkeep	\$46,110.36			\$46,110.36	Specific donations for sanctuary
Kitchen	\$609.44			\$609.44	donations for kitchen items in honor of Judy Cole
Van	\$26,708.00			\$26,708.00	
Decorating	\$4,071.00			\$4,071.00	set aside for committee to update church décor
Library	\$646.00			\$646.00	donated for library shelving, etc.
Organ Renovation	\$3,542.16			\$3,542.16	
Handbells	\$0.00			\$0.00	transferred from Memorial for the handbell restoration
<b>Other</b>					
Witt/Toilet Paper	\$0.00	\$3,000.00	\$411.64		donation for purchase of toilet paper to give at Witt House
Jubilation Jazz	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$100.00		
Hospitality Shirts	-\$215.11			-\$215.11	Hospitality t-shirts ordered
Diggs Estate/General Ministry	\$13,550.75			\$13,550.75	annual distribution from Methodist Foundation to be used in ministry
<b>Fund Totals</b>	\$113,004.07	\$6,060.00	\$3,537.96	\$115,526.11	
Loan to General Fund	-\$15,000.00			-\$15,000.00	needed to cover payroll 10/31/23
Account Total	\$98,004.07	\$6,060.00	\$3,537.96	\$100,526.11	
<b>Youth Account</b>					
	\$ 10,807.19		\$	10,807.19	



**a. Possible Finance Action Items:**

- i. Consider a transfer \$10k from General to Memorials to pay back \$10k loan from June 2024  
 Approved at Church Council 1/12/25
- ii. Consider a transfer \$13,500 from Benevolent Fund Diggs Estate Returns to broader Benevolent Fund to pay back \$15k loan from Oct. 2024. Essentially an accounting edit.  
 Approved at Church Council 1/12/25
- iii. Consider a transfer from Building/Next 100 Years Fund to Loan Principal. How much? Do we also want to set aside some cash for Next 100 Years work this year? (See below)  
 Church Council approved transfer of \$360k from Building/Next 100 Years fund to Loan Principal 1/12/25

## 7. 2025 BUDGET REVIEW/APPROVE

2024 Budget		2025			
A/C	Line Item	2024	Actual	Difference	Proposed
	<u>LOCAL CHURCH BUILDINGS</u>				
701	Church Maintenance	70,000.00	37,766.79	32,233.21	50,000.00
702	Parsonage (320 W Main)	1,000.00	2,317.17	(1,317.17)	1,500.00
703	Parsonage (417 W Main)	2,500.00	4,747.99	(2,247.99)	3,000.00
704	Property/Auto Insurance	66,100.00	66,452.00	(352.00)	66,100.00
706	Transportation/Vans	4,000.00	2,260.65	1,739.35	4,000.00
707	<b>Parsonage (102 Cypress)</b>	4,000.00	10,646.39	(6,646.39)	8,000.00
		<b>147,600.00</b>	<b>124,190.99</b>		<b>132,600.00</b>
	<u>PROGRAMS</u>				
710	Education	15,000.00	18,005.41	(3,005.41)	15,000.00
711	Adult/Senior Ministry (Young @ Heart)	100.00	62.32	37.68	100.00
712	Youth Ministry - 7th-12th	15,000.00	16,850.25	(1,850.25)	15,000.00
	Children's (combine ministry & programs)				4,500.00
713	Children's Ministry (confirmation/Bibles/pool/etc.)	2,500.00	3,678.44	(1,178.44)	
714	Children's Programs (Easter, Back to School, Fall Festival, etc.)	1,500.00	1,656.72	(156.72)	
715	Vacation Bible School	5,000.00	4,049.42	950.58	5,000.00
716	First Core (Young Adults)	150.00		150.00	-
	Music Ministries (combined line items)				8,000.00
720	Music Ministry - Adult (musicians, music, cantata, robe cleaning, m	4,500.00	10,071.18	(5,571.18)	
721	Music Ministry - Children	200.00	123.49	76.51	
722	Handbells	200.00	55.86	144.14	
723	Keyboard Instruments (organ and piano tuning)	3,500.00	2,775.00	725.00	
724	Music Ministry - Praise Band	500.00	-	500.00	
725	Worship (candles, communion supplies, acolyte supplies, etc.)	3,000.00	2,988.85	11.15	3,000.00
729	<b>Hospitality</b> (first time visitor gifts, donuts, etc)	5,000.00	4,939.15	60.85	5,000.00
730	Outreach/Evangelism/Missions	3,500.00	3,013.68	486.32	3,500.00
731	Witt House	10,000.00	15,759.48	(5,759.48)	15,000.00
740	Advertising/Technology/Comm	25,000.00	22,061.13	2,938.87	25,000.00
		<b>94,650.00</b>	<b>106,090.38</b>		<b>99,100.00</b>





## 8. FACILITIES UPDATES/NEEDS

### a. ONGOING FACILITY ISSUES/REPAIRS:

- i. **NEW** - water damage first floor office suite Jan. '25
- ii. Paint/Plaster repair Sanctuary. Ongoing damage rear/organ.
- iii. Redo fence/gates between Gym & Playground for child safety. Quote \$2,800.
- iv. Drainage issues entering Welcome Center & Playground.
- v. 4th & Main concrete/curb damage/repairs
- vi. Stained ceiling tiles and throughout building, especially in hallway outside courtyard. Roof leaks? HVAC condensation?

### b. BIG PICTURE ISSUES/NEEDS

- i. HVAC improvements (mini-splits?) in Kitchen & Chapel & Youth Room
- ii. Parking Lot Seal & Stripe
- iii. Improve lawn & landscaping on 4th street.
- iv. New gutters around Sanctuary/Courtyard
- v. Improve exterior signage, interior room numbers, campus maps
- vi. Worship Center prayer kneelers
- vii. Low-entry bus that does not require CDL

### c. OTHER:

- i. 100 Families non-profit office space 2nd floor. Need to develop "use agreement" and/or expand arrangement.
- ii. 102 Cypress Pt Parsonage Property Tax issue

## 9. NEXT 100 YEARS '22 DEBT REDUCTION & UPGRADES CAMPAIGN

NEXT 100 YEARS / DEBT	
Sanctuary Side Flat Roofs COMPLETE	\$120,000
Stained Glass exterior protective glass & frames (2024 quote)	\$105,371.63
First Floor Office Suite COMPLETE	\$200,000
Sanctuary technology improvements (2021 quote)	\$50,000
CURRENT DEBT	\$2.4m
CURRENT CASH ON HAND BUILDING/100YR FUND	\$586k

Original Goal - Five Year Campaign culminates '26 celebrating 100 years & possibly Debt Free.

Debt - The construction loan closed at ~\$3.7million and the current debt owed is ~\$2.4million. The annual payment on our note is ~\$270k for a 5/20 year note.

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

What is the expectation/appetite of church leadership regarding Next 100 Years projects in 2025? Presumably the Stained Glass repairs would come next.

Church Council gave their blessing for Trustees to begin exploring quotes and plans for Sanctuary Stained Glass work supported by Next 100 Years campaign 1/12/25

## 10. SAFETY & SECURITY

- a. FUMC Vulnerable Persons Policy & SafeGatherings
  - i. Adopted by Church Council in 2023.
  - ii. Training & instructions & links at <https://www.fumcparagould.org/resources>.
  - iii. Continued Requirement for all Youth/Children Volunteers.
  - iv. Preferred Training for all regular volunteers/leaders.
  - v. Expires every three years.
- b. Reminders/Updates:
  - i. Children's/Youth Areas need information sheet on each minor. Easily accessible. Alphabetic order. Emergency contact including who is/not allowed to check them in out. Health concerns (e.g. allergies). Etc.
  - ii. Pre-K--4th MUST check in/out with Angela in Children's Area
  - iii. Pre-K--4th MUST be accompanied by adult on campus at all times
  - iv. 5th-12th can walk themselves from space to space but must do so quickly/responsibly
  - v. No children/youth are allowed to "hang out" around church without adult supervision
  - vi. No children/youth should be alone with one adult (excluding parent/guardian). Two adult rule at all times.
  - vii. Connect Wednesday safety/security
  - viii. 5th & 6th grade will move "back" downstairs to children's area to make room to split Jr. High & Sr. High more often in youth area

## 11. FUMC ONLINE MERCH STORE

- a. <https://www.fumcparagould.org/shop.html>
- b. Takes you to the FUMC Bonfire shop:  
<https://www.bonfire.com/store/paragould-first-united-methodist-church/>

## 12. ONGOING ADULT MINISTRIES

- a. Young @ Heart (Movie 1st Mon/Month; Meals/Outings 3rd Thur/Month; Game Night 4th Mon/Month)
- b. Pecan Grove Initiative (2pm last Sunday/month)
- c. FOCUS Birthday Party last Monday/Month 1pm
- d. Cookies & Communion @ Chateau (Monday following Sunday Communion)
- e. Knitters (Fridays AM) & Sewing Group (Mondays AM)
- f. Monthly Luncheon Potluck (Fourth Thursday/month)
- g. Newcomers Coffee with Pastors 10am approx. every other month next
- h. Women's Ministry

- i. Women's Study Wednesdays 9:30am
  - ii. Women's Ministry Team first meeting 12/1/24
  - iii. Off-campus Retreat? / Social opportunities/Meals?
  - iv. Book Club - Jan 30
- i. Men's Ministry
  - i. Breakfast 1st TUE of Month @ Ironhorse
  - ii. Additional men's evening events?
  - iii. Men's Basketball (Thursdays 7:30pm)
- j. Confirmation 2025 - Jan 5 through mid/March Sundays 6:30pm + off campus stuffs

### **13.2025 UPCOMING DATES/SCHEDULE** (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

- Jan 16 Young @ Heart lunch at Chow
- Jan 19 (Sun) - 6:30pm Confirmation
- Jan 20 - MLK Day (FUMC Offices Closed)
- Connect Wednesday Jan. 22 - April 30 (Ash Wednesday = March 5) (Spring Break = March 26)
- Jan 24 (Fri) Confirmation @ Shabbat Service Temple Israel in Memphis
- Jan 26 (Sun)
  - 10am Coffee w/ Pastors
  - 6:30pm Confirmation
- Jan 30 (Thur) 6pm Women's Ministry book club: *Seven Sacred Pauses* by Macrina Wiederkehr (<https://a.co/d/5vmqSSO>)
  
- Feb 2 (Sun)
  - 5pm Discipleship Co-Op
  - 6:30pm Confirmation
- Feb 4 (Tue) 6am Men's Bfast
- Feb 8 (Sat) - 10am Galentines Women's Social
- Feb 9 (Sun) - SOUPer Bowl Sunday (soup cook-off & canned chilli collection)
- Feb 16 (Sun) - 3pm SPRC | 4pm Finance | 5pm Trustees | 6:30pm Confirmation
- Feb 22 (Sat) Confirmation @ St. Mary's Mass
- Feb 23 (Sun) - 6:30pm Confirmation
- Feb 21-23 Youth @ Veritas (Fort Smith)
  
- Mar 2 (Sun) - 6:30pm Confirmation
- Mar 5 Ash Wednesday
- Mar 9 (Sun)- 3pm SPRC | 4pm Finance | 5pm Trustees | 6:30pm Confirmation
- Mar 11 (Tue) Confirmation Serve at Witt House
- Mar 12 Lent Soup & Sermon begins; Weds 12noon; DETAILS TBD
- Mar 16 (Sun) - 6:30pm Confirmation

- Mar 24-28 Spring Break (No Connect Wednesday)
- Mar 30 - UMCOR Sunday
- April 6 (Sun)
  - CONFIRMATION SUNDAY
    - Confirmands attend all services & serve communion.
    - 10am Brunch. Invite Family/Friends. RSVP.
  - 3pm SPRC | 4pm Finance | 5pm Trustees

#### HOLY WEEK

- April 13 Palm Sunday
- April 17 Maundy Thursday
- April 18 Good Friday Tenebrae
- April 19 Holy Saturday (Children's Egg Hunt 9am)
- April 20 Easter Sunday
- May 4 - 5pm Discipleship Co-op
- May ?? Senior Sunday
- May 10 - Ladies Tea
- May 11 Mother's Day
- May 18 - 5pm Church Council Meeting
- May 22 Last Day/Week of School (PSD)
- May 25 One Service Sunday

## 14. UPCOMING NED MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES



There will be TWO opportunities for you to attend informational Zooms about how Lay Servant Ministry benefits every church. So please save this date and whichever time works best for you: **Monday, January 13, 1 pm**, via Zoom; **Monday, January 13, 6 pm**, via Zoom



Want to move from transactional to more relational connections with your church



neighbors? Be a good neighbor and join a GNE Cohort Experience!

A good neighbor is defined as a person who intentionally develops relationships with the people living near them while focusing on giftedness, joy, and abundance.

In-depth training offered to local church teams will focus on asking churches questions about themselves (core values); their neighborhood (existing assets); their neighbors (identifying gifts); and their communities (working together for a stronger community). 1-2 Cohorts will begin as churches sign up, starting as early as January 2025.

Church teams will have access to:

- Worship and Small Group Study materials
- Curriculum for the team to be completed at a pacing that feels right
- Coaching on neighboring for up to 1 year

The ARUMC is offering One More Question Regional Training events to help congregational teams to begin conversations to be stronger neighbors.

Our goal is for you to leave with actionable items to try in your community around neighboring and equipped to continue these conversations in your home church.

February 2 at Newport UMC



**\*\* BREAK \*\***

## **15. EXAMEN PRAYER (8 mins)**

Begin with a few minutes of personal silence & prayer using the “Examen” for the year:

- **Become aware of God’s presence.**
- **Review the year with gratitude.**
- **Pay attention to your emotions.**
- **Choose one feature of the year and pray from it.**
- **Look forward to the new year.**

Write any notes that come to heart/mind. The Daily Examen is a technique of prayerful reflection in order to detect God’s presence and discern his direction for us. The Examen is an ancient practice in the Church that can help us see God’s hand at work in our whole experience. The prayer method is adapted from a technique described by Ignatius Loyola in his *Spiritual Exercises*. It’s a habit that Jesuits, and many other Christians, practice to this day. In this case we are using the Examen prayer to reflect on the last year and the year to come. Discuss your Examen reflections with your table.

## **16. TABLE DISCUSSION (15 mins)**

- a. Is Paragould FUMC a large, medium, or small church? What challenges and/or strengths come with our church’s size?
- b. Which ministries do you most celebrate from 2024?
- c. Which ministries need attention/support to grow in the coming year?
- d. Are there new ministries you have in mind for FUMC in 2025 and beyond?
- e. What is the church’s appetite for subtle changes to “regular” programming/worship this year? For example, what if Ash Wednesday or Good Friday was in the Worship Center?
- f. Why is ministry hard(er)?
- g. What comes to mind when you think of “secular”?

## 17. THE SECULAR AGE

Following notes inspired by a lecture (and books) by Professor Andrew Root.<sup>1</sup> Also inspired by Charles Taylor (*A Secular Age*) and Phyllis Tickle (*The Great Emergence*).

1. Why is ministry hard(er)? “The Secular” What is “the secular”?
2. **Secular ZERO**
  - a. Pre-modern times. Everything is spiritual/enchanted.
3. **Secular ONE**
  - a. Medieval world/Protestant Reformation/Enlightenment
  - b. Begin public/private divide. E.g. never talk about money, politics, religion
  - c. Begins the “Secular Age”
    - i. E.g. cosmos becomes the universe (blood moon, eclipse). Spiritual becomes scientific/mathematical.
  - d. Belief becomes a private matter of personal will.
  - e. Church is the place to demonstrate private beliefs publicly
4. **Secular TWO**
  - a. Fewer people go to church/participate therefore resources are limited
  - b. Compete with the secular! Best pastor/church wins the most participation.
5. **Secular THREE**
  - a. All forms of belief are contested and fragile
  - b. We are aware that others could/do belief other things
  - c. *Negative*: Transcendent imagination of the living God is now unbelievable to many. Begin to function as if there is no God.
  - d. *Positive*: Public is deeply longing for meaning, but must find it themselves. Surplus of spiritualities.
  - e. Secular THREE is fragile
    - i. IF you are someone who believes, you will invariably find your belief “fragilized”. *“Why do I believe this? If I was born elsewhere would I believe something else? Is religion a myth?”*
    - ii. IF you do not believe, you will invariably find your unbelief “fragilized”. *“Maybe I do believe? Or should believe? Do I sometimes experience God’s presence?”*
6. In the West, why in 1500 was it impossible not to believe in God? Why in 500 years has it flipped?
7. We live in the “Secular Age” and now the “Immanent Frame” where the world is entirely natural.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TdvC4ypP6Go>

8. Experiences and expectations of the Spiritual/Transcendent are largely an afterthought.
9. God is still a reality, but very subtle.

There are a couple of tensions at work in this current moment:

“If we just had better coffee.” vs. Does God still speak?

1. We should strive for excellence and growth in all things ministry-related.
  - a. Reality of the religious “marketplace” and surplus spiritualities
  - b. Facilities
  - c. Finances
  - d. Hospitality
  - e. Technology/Communications/Social Media
  - f. Age-level ministries
  - g. Outreach/Service
  - h. Grow sense of community/strengthen relationships within church
  - i. Staff development and growth
2. We cannot program our church into spiritual depth or experiences of the Divine.
  - a. There is no business plan for a real church.
  - b. We must acknowledge the “Secular Age” and confess the reasons people do/do not participate in church are not understood or controlled by us.
  - c. We must not confuse busy-ness with spiritual growth/depth.

Discuss at your table:

- a. When was the last time you experienced the divine presence or voice of God? Have you shared about that moment with anyone? Why or why not?
- b. Do you sense our children, grandchildren, siblings, neighbors, etc. seem less naturally, spiritually inclined? How do we engage them, invite them, and include them?