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PARAGOULD FUMC

Love God. Serve People. Make a Difference.

Sept Oct Nov 2025

A Note from the Pastor Rev. Dane Womack

Hello, Paragould FUMC!

So good to be reconnecting after my 10-week sabbatical. Y'all were busy while I was gone! Beautiful weekly worship, Ready Set Read, OMP101, Youth Back to School trip, Sanctuary Stained Glass maintenance, new audio and streaming improvements in the Sanctuary and more. From what I can tell, the church did not miss a beat! What a great summer for FUMC!

THANK YOU! Thank you to everyone across the congregation who supported the church and me in this intentional time away. HUGE THANKS to Pastor Sarah for bearing the additional workload in preaching, leading worship, pastoral care, and more. Thank you to Denise and Karoline for keeping things running smoothly. Thank you to Brian, Jon, Mary, Angela, Bernard, and Mike for all the hard work this summer. Each time I bumped into a church member these last few weeks, their first comment was, "the staff have done an awesome job!" Amen!

And of course I am deeply indebted to the church leadership including SPRC Chair H. T. Moore and Council Chair Gene Weeks for guiding this process and helping to oversee the church in my absence. Furthermore, I thank all the church leaders and servants who stepped up in many ways these last couple of months. And though they will not necessarily read this newsletter, I know you share my appreciation for our guest preachers: Riley, Dennis, Lynn, Zach, and U.C.! I listened to their sermons, and each was a blessing to our church. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

What did I do on my sabbatical? It took a couple of weeks to disconnect from the regular pace of work. I learned to quit checking email or my calendar so often. Our family traveled quite a bit. We visited friends and family across Arkansas, shared in a close friend's wedding, enjoyed the summer holidays and more. We took a family vacation to the Outer Banks in

North Carolina. This trip allowed Jill and me to return to Duke Divinity School (where I attended seminary) and Duke Hospital (where Jill worked) for the first time in years. The days on the beach were peaceful and restful. I enjoyed some special time with Jill and the kids including concerts, plays, rafting, and ball games. I speak for myself and for my family when I say how much our time together meant to us this summer. It was truly special.

This time away allowed for other opportunities for spiritual and personal growth. I attended other local churches on



Sunday mornings and worshipped as a regular attendee for the first time in many, many years. My spirit was strengthened by old and new prayer practices. I continued to focus on my physical health following my diagnosis of diabetes in January. I have better learned how to manage my diet, exercise, and medicines. I am happy to report my most recent doctor's appointment went very well. I am feeling great!

I enjoyed a Wesleyan Heritage Tour of England as part of the "Emerging Clergy Network" under the direction of Rev. Adam Hamilton at the UM Church of the Resurrection in Kansas City. This trip took us from Epworth (childhood home of John & Charles) to Oxford University (where John & Charles were educated, ordained, and began meeting in a 'holy club') to Bristol (where John began preaching to the masses outdoors and revival led to the building of the New Room) to Aldersgate Street (where John's heart was "strangely warmed") and finally to Wesley's City Road Chapel in London (the formal Methodist preaching house and eventual church in capital city). The historical details of the Wesleys lives and the early Methodist movement were made real in a way I never could have imagined! So encouraging to visit these sights! Read below to see how my travels and studies will shape our worship and discipleship efforts this Fall. During our travels, we shared in "leadership lessons" with Rev. Hamilton and other large-church pastors. This was meant to be a crash course in senior, pastoral ministry. Those sessions were informative and inspiring. I am deeply indebted to Rev Hamilton & COR, Methodist Foundation of Arkansas, and Wespeth Investments for supporting this journey.

After returning from England I enjoyed one-on-one mentor conversations with various colleagues across the denomination. I quizzed them on life-stage and ministry, personal and professional work calendar and schedules, church mission and vision processes, and more. I was pleasantly surprised by the number of pastors who agreed to meet with me. I was encour-

aged and challenged by their feedback and already have plans to include their guidance in my own work and life.

What's next? I have been working hard on our Fall plans at FUMC! A few things to keep in mind:

+ Sept. 10: Connect Wednesday kicks off with dinner, games, and ice cream! No classes. Just fellowship and fun.

+ Sept. 14: Third Grade Bible Sunday in 9am & 11am services!
+ Sept. 14: 3pm SPRC; 4pm Finance; 5pm Trustees; 6pm Nominations Committee

+ Sept. 17 - Nov. 19 : Return to the full Connect Wednesday schedule. I will be leading the 4pm & 6pm Adult study titled "Altogether Christian: A Study of John Wesley's Sermons". In this group we will be reading 10 of Wesley's most famous and important sermons then discussing them each week.

+ Sept. 21 - Oct. 26: "The Wesley Way" sermon series will focus on the life and ministry of John Wesley and the early Methodist movement. Each Sunday we will visit a different location in the history of our faith to better understand our past and shape our ministries in the present and future!

+ Sept. 21: 7pm An Evening with Comedian Brian Bates! This will be a great night of fun and fellowship. Buy tickets. Bring friends and family.

+ Sept. 28: 5pm Church Council Meeting

+ Oct. 5: Sun. 5pm Discipleship Co-op Meeting

+ Oct. 12: Sun. 5pm The Rev. Barkley Thompson author presentation & reception. So honored to have Barkley (back home!) with us as he shares about his latest book *The Ache for Home*.

+ Oct. 26: Sun. 4pm Trunk-or-Treat

Beyond studying Wesleyan history or planning for this Fall, this sabbatical gave me a genuine chance at rest and renewal. I am feeling revived and inspired! The time away from daily work helped me to reconnect with my call and my passion for ministry. And I was able to dream about our church's future. How will we further partner with our community and schools in serving the needs of our children? How can we strengthen hospitality and ministry for and with youth and children at

our church? How will we grow our Witt House ministry and what kind of facility will allow us to do so? How will our church respond to the growing need for decent, affordable housing? Is FUMC membership interested in a shared Wesleyan Heritage Tour? How will we celebrate our Sanctuary centennial in November of 2026? How quickly can we pay down our remaining debt? I look forward to sharing these dreams with you and learning more about your dreams for our church's future!

I'll be back in the office on Monday, Sept. 8 and back in the pulpit on Sunday, Sept. 14! Look forward to seeing you!

Grace & Peace,
Rev. Dane

Women's Book Club

Ladies, we are pleased to announce our next book club selection, and we can't wait to share it with you! Join us on October 6 at 6pm for an evening of connection, growth, and inspiration as we read "Sundays at Tiffany's," a novel by James Patterson. Enjoy dinner (\$5 suggested donation) and lively discussion with like-minded women. All are welcome, whether you're a seasoned book clubber or just looking for a new adventure!

This book club really is for everyone! We had about a half dozen people who attended in August who had never come to our book club before. We also had people who were not FUMC members join us—and they were very much welcome! All ages are showing up and enjoying talking about the book in both small- and large group settings. Come see what it's all about!



Ladies at the August book club discussion

Ladies: Mark Your Calendars!



Amy Hammon

We are very excited to announce that our Galentine's Event on February 21 (time TBD) will feature Amy Hammon!

Amy Hammon is a preacher's wife, a mom of three, and she is the face of Euna Mae's, a hospitality lifestyle branch adored by people nationwide. Amy is the heart of a broad media platform that has included hosting a daily cooking show on Northwest Arkansas' NBC affiliate, authoring three books, engaging her online community, as well as curating culinary experiences for guests from coast to coast. Amy's love for Jesus and the table are inspiring many to embrace her Love Welcome Serve message of biblical hospitality.

Tickets for this special event will be \$25 and will be on sale soon.



This article and photo appeared in the Paragould Daily Press on September 10, 1982. We thought it might be of interest to our congregation to reproduce it for you here.

There is a very special group of women at the First United Methodist Church in Paragould, Arkansas. They are fourteen women from First Church and several other denominations. They meet every Tuesday from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm to share in fellowship and donate their time and talent to the art of quilting.

Recently, I had the privilege of spending the morning with these ladies. At that time some of the ladies were quilting on a pieced quilt called the flower garden. The rest of the ladies were working on a beautiful embroidered quilt.

The quilters began in 1975 when they all worked on a quilt for a church bazaar. They didn't formally organize until 1976. During that year they quilted a total of 40 quilts and received \$847.31. They donated their money to the Women's Society for Christian Service.

Since 1976 until the end of 1981, the quilters have quilted a total of 248 quilts and received \$8,996.98. The ladies have donated a majority of their money to the building fund of First Church. A portion of their earnings was given to aid in the restoration of the stained glass windows in the sanctuary. Each year a memorial gift is given to the church.

The quilters work on all sizes of quilts, from infant to king size. They piece, apply appliques and some handle the finishing work of binding the edges. Their customers are not exclusively from this area. One of the ladies told me they had made quilts for people up East, on the west coast, as well as several southern states.

October 2, 1982, the public will be invited to First United Methodist Church to see some of these ladies handy work. They will be showing others quilts as well as the ones they have done. The categories for the quilts will be: grandma's quilts, pieced quilts, friendship quilts, infant quilts, appliqued quilts, embroidered quilts, string quilts and unusual quilts.

I suppose what makes these ladies so special is the dedication they have toward their church and genuine care they have for each other. While visiting with them one of the ladies said to me, "We don't do this just for the money but for the wonderful Christian fellowship we share in." Another lady spoke up and said, "We keep a close watch on each other. Just like this morning one of us didn't show up so we called her to see why she wasn't here."

My visit with them that morning was such a delight. To hear the swish of the thread through the quilts, the creaking of the wooden frames, and to share in Christian fellowship, I suppose the main reason that I enjoyed my morning is because I plan someday to join them and be proud to say, "I'm a quilter at First United Methodist Church in Paragould, Arkansas."

GUEST SPEAKERS AT FUMC

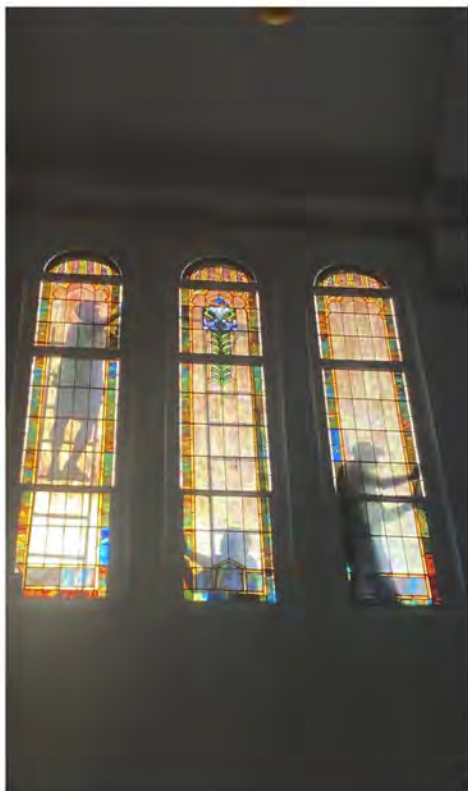
With the senior pastor out on leave for few weeks, FUMC was host to guests who preached every other week with Pastor Sarah preaching the rest. We were honored to have each one and are thankful that they brought a message to us. The first was Riley Pearson, a 10th grade Brookland High School student and son of Brian and Andrea Pearson. The second guest pastor was Dennis Ellzey, husband of Pastor Sarah and the Wesley Foundation's A-State Director and Campus Minister at ASU in Jonesboro. He was followed by Rev. Lynne Kilbourne, Director of Development at the Methodist Foundation. Our fourth guest was Rev. Zach Roberts, our District Superintendent and FUMC's former associate pastor. The last guest was Rev. Dr. U.C. Washington, retired District Superintendent for the Central District.

Sanctuary Improvements

We have made two significant improvements to our church Sanctuary this summer. We approved the quote from The Glass Shop to replace the exterior plexiglass protecting the Sanctuary stained glass. That work will be completed soon. It was funded through designated funds.

We've also been working with Gateway Sound on tuning/improving the Sanctuary sound system and replacing the video system that was more than a decade old and used in online streaming for our church services and special events. The team from Gateway replaced all three cameras and added spotlights for use in evening services and low-lit Sundays so that the camera capture will still be well-lit. Our new system looks significantly better and is a better representation of our church for people who are checking us out via our online presence and, of course, for those members who need to watch the services online.

Volunteers are always needed to run sound and video. See Karoline Risker at the church for a quick and easy training on sound and/or video. Volunteers are asked to serve one week a month unless other arrangements need to be made.



Above: guest speakers at FUMC this summer in the order in which they spoke

Focus on *our Youth*

Growing up in the church, I can confidently say I've always known who Jesus is. However, it was not until I started attending ACCYM (Arkansas Conference Council on Youth Ministry) events that I had a relationship with Him. When I got the chance to be a part of ACCYM in April of 2024, I jumped at the opportunity. Getting to spend the last year as a part of the Veritas Task Force had been a dream come true!



This past April I ran for Chaplain on the executive council of the council. I was blessed to be elected into this position as well! This year I will also have a higher role in leadership as chair of Junior High Assembly, which is our church camp that takes place every summer. I had the privilege of speaking at Assembly this year as the incoming chaplain. Furthermore, I have been super happy to encourage Luke Wooldridge and Bennett Hobbs to screen for ACCYM as well. Our youth group is now one of the most represented in the state! Finally, over Labor Day weekend I attended the South Central Jurisdiction Youth Leadership Training where I ran, and was elected, to the Jurisdictional youth council! This means I am the sole representative for the Arkansas Conference! God has given me many blessings, and I'm forever grateful for this church for being a great environment to grow up in.

—Riley Pearson

I decided to become part of ACCYM because I want to grow in my faith and strengthen my relationship with God. I believe this will happen through being surrounded by the youth who are already involved in ACCYM, as they are such a supportive and inspiring group of people.

ACCYM is divided into regions across Arkansas, with some areas having more representation than others. Our district is in the northeast, and because we have so few representatives, Luke Wooldridge and I were able to join immediately.

ACCYM is a youth-led council for students in grades 10–12 who come together to plan and lead events for youth across the state. Some of the events ACCYM organizes include Refuge, Veritas, and Assembly, all of which I would strongly encourage others to attend. This year, I am looking forward not only to these events but also to the council meetings, where we will plan for upcoming events and build connections with other members of ACCYM.

Overall, I would highly recommend being a part of ACCYM. It is a unique opportunity to grow in faith, serve others, and connect with amazing youth across Arkansas.

—Bennett Hobbs



Bennett Hobbs, left, with Luke Wooldridge

Special Upcoming Event



Brian Bates, Nashville-based comedian

Tickets are now available to the public for this special event! On Sunday, Sept. 21 at 7pm, FUMC is hosting "An Evening with Comedian Brian Bates" (this is a date change from its previously scheduled date of Sept. 14)!

Brian is a Nashville-based comedian who tours the country performing at comedy clubs, theaters, and churches. You may have seen his Dry Bar Comedy specials or heard him on The Grand Ole Opry. When not on the road, Brian joins fellow comedians Nate Bargatze, Aaron Weber, and Dusty Slay as one of the hosts of the "NateLand Podcast," which is heard by thousands of listeners each week. Nateland is making clean, family-friendly comedy, fun and popular again! We are thrilled to have Brian at FUMC!

Tickets are \$20 in-person & \$21 online General Admission. Tickets can be purchased in-person at FUMC during regular hours or on Sunday 10-11am at the Welcome Desk. Tickets can be purchased online through the Church Center app (<https://www.fumcparagould.org/bates.html>) and can be picked up at FUMC during business hours or at Will Call the night of the show. Doors will open at 6 pm. Attendees ages 3 and up need a ticket. No nursery/childcare will be provided.

Go to [fumcparagould.org/bates](https://www.fumcparagould.org/bates) for more information including a video of one of Brian's funny bits!

Special guests will include Shannon & Sam Freeman providing live, low-key music before the show begins!

Spotlight: Mobile Witt House

Every Tuesday, a group of about 10 volunteers meet and begin setting up boxes, filling them with meat, bread, produce, desserts, and other items. The boxes are given away to the crowd who has started lining up as soon as the Witt House mobile truck pulls up. The food is donated mostly through the Northeast Arkansas Food Bank and then distributed by Witt House volunteers.

The effort is spearheaded by John Shepherd, who began the ministry about 3 years ago. "I never thought we'd be doing what we're doing," John said. The group started with 10 boxes, then got up to 20. Now, they give away about 80 boxes each week, rotating among different communities in the area. Volunteers put a sign out on the road so people know that they are in the area. But most people are there because they learned about it through word of mouth. The only criteria for people to receive a box is for them to be a Greene County resident. People can come to all four mobile programs and receive food each week. This is in addition to being able to get food once a month at the main Witt House building.

According to Toni Bazzell, a long-time volunteer with the program, the work begins before the weekly distribution. Every Monday, Toni, along with Mike Rutherford and Martha McCain, make the boxes. They are then filled with the other items during set up.

The Witt House mobile can be found at Hillside Manor the first Tuesday of each month, Pecan Grove the second, the Mini Rise on the third, and Labor Park on the fourth. They give out the boxes from 11am-1pm, or until they run out.

"We love what we're doing and we love feeding people who need to eat," said John. He adds: "It's more of a blessing to us than it is to the people we're giving food to."



Event Highlights

FUMC was busy this summer! Events included a water kick ball event for youth, Vacation Bible School, Ready, Set, READ, and our Back to School Sunday!



A Note From Associate Pastor Sarah Ellzey



Hi Church,

As I look back on this summer, I have much for which I am thankful.

I am thankful for the five gifted guest preachers who came and shared their talents and knowledge. It's good to hear different voices and styles, and I'm also grateful for their help in this busy season. At the same time, it also felt good to get back into the "swing" of preaching regularly, as it is something I both enjoy and appreciate the opportunity to grow in.

Similarly, I'm grateful to the laity who stepped up to help me during Rev. Dane's renewal leave. From leading liturgy on Sunday morning, or joining our guest preachers for lunch, to teaching Sunday school and extending grace for my sometimes (often) faulty memory. I've worked more closely with our staff and can confirm what you already know - they are fantastic at what they do as they lead with care in their various areas of service. Thank you to all who gave me words of encouragement, making me feel like I had cheerleaders who believed in me.

I look back on the events of the summer and give thanks for the memories of the gym seemingly bursting at the seams with kids during VBS and Ready, Set, Read. I am thankful for the discipleship and fun our children and youth experienced on their various trips, and that they returned bursting to share about it with their church.

Finally, I'm thankful that Rev. Dane has rejoined us and didn't decide to stay in England or North Carolina! I appreciate his leadership and wisdom even more now, and I know many of you do as well. I look forward to hearing what he has to share from his experiences during his time away, and I pray that it brings renewed energy and purpose. I always say he's a much better "rememberer" than I am, and I'm looking forward to offloading the task of keeping everyone up to date and on task with the calendar. (It will be Advent before we know it!)

I hope you find space for gratitude as you look back on this summer, as well. Some of you travelled, some of you rested, some of you celebrated. Of course, some of you had a rougher season than we would wish, and we make space for that as well.

What does the coming season hold? Grief and sickness and pain? Celebration? Stormy days and sunny days and moments of joy and anger - sometimes all in one day? "To everything there is a season," as the writer of Ecclesiastes says. In all these things, we are "more than conquerors," and we know that God has promised to be with us. Whether you are feeling weak or strong, whether your faith is vibrant, weary, or lacking, the Kingdom of God needs you; our church needs you. Wherever you find yourself in the coming days, I hope you find yourself joining us at church.

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you, wherever he may send you,
Pastor Sarah

One More Question

I have enjoyed leading "One More Question" trainings around our district, but this one was especially special because I got to lead it in our church with participants from our congregation! Typically, these trainings have 15-20 participants, so it was a delightful surprise when we had 60 registered for this one! With an emphasis on group conversation and brainstorming, the sound bouncing off the walls of the gym sometimes brought a sense of chaos. Creativity thrives in these kinds of joyful environments, though, and I know our time was productive.

One of the last things we did was create a "mini-experiment" for each individual or church to try in the coming days.

A motto from One More Question that I've carried into my daily life is "Good enough for now, safe enough to try." Building meaningful relationships and helping our community can feel overwhelming, but we learned together that it's okay to fail sometimes. It's also OK to take the next step without knowing how everything will turn out. After all, we so often pray that "God's will be done," and God is in the business of surprises!

—Pastor Sarah



Young at Heart September Schedule

Movie Club

September 8 at 1pm in the 3rd floor movie room
"The Straight Story"

Lunch

September 18 leaving the church at 10am
The Post Bakery & Bistro in Walnut Ridge

Game Night

September 22 at 5:30 pm in the Welcome Center

Upcoming Events SEPT | OCT | NOVEMBER

For more information: www.fumcparagould.org


CONNECT WEDNESDAY

September 10-November 9


Dinner begins at 5
Bible Study at 4, 6
Children/Youth/Chancel Choir at 6



AUTHOR PRESENTATION
AND RECEPTION
with Rev. Barkley Thompson



October 12
5pm



BLOOD DRIVE

Together we're strong.
Give blood, saves lives

Monday, November 3
1:30pm - 5:30pm
Church gym



PARAGOULD FIRST UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH

ALTOGETHER CHRISTIAN

CONNECT WEDNESDAY
STUDY OF JOHN
WESLEY'S SERMONS

SEPT. 17 - NOV. 19
4PM & 6PM




FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
MEN'S BREAKFAST

1ST TUESDAY OF MONTH 6AM
IRONHOUSE BBQ
ALL ARE WELCOME

NEXT MEETING OCTOBER 7,
NOVEMBER 4

Paragould First United
Methodist Church



The Methodist
Foundation
for Arkansas

CENTRAL ARKANSAS METHODIST LAWYERS CONFERENCE

Thursday, September 18, 2025
Pulaski Heights UMC Little Rock



the Wesley way

SEPT. 21 - OCT. 26 | 8, 9, 11 AM
PARAGOULD FIRST UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH
fumcparagould.org

Betty's Potluck

Noon
September 25
October 23



All are welcome!

Children's Ministries

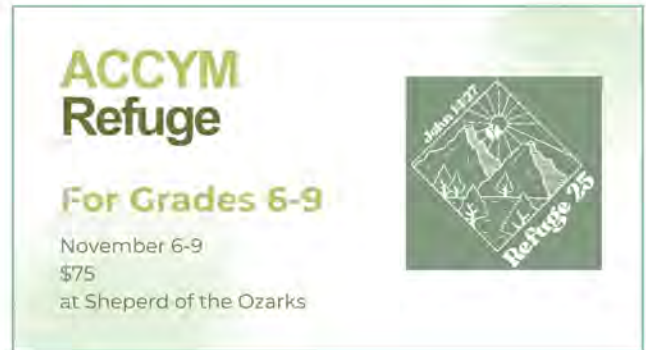
Hello FUMC Friends!

Summer has flown by, and September is already slipping away! As fall approaches, it's the perfect season to re-establish meaningful routines with your children. Sunday School and Connect Wednesday offer wonderful opportunities to reconnect with church and community. It's also a great time to invite a friend to join you!

Be sure to mark your calendars for upcoming events like Trunk or Treat, the Paragould Christmas Parade, and the Children's Christmas Pageant.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone as we settle into this new season together.

Blessings,
Mrs. Angela



FUMC friends,

Just like every other season in the church and life, the summer months have come and gone so quickly. The Youth had a wonderful summer with many activities and lots of fellowship and growth together as a group.

I hope everyone enjoyed hearing from our youth and gaining some insight into all the events our youth attended. The youth and I truly appreciate the support of our church family as the events would not be possible without the support of everyone in church from monetary gifts to the volunteers who give their time to ensure we can attend events.

As all things seem to be, these activities the youth attend are expensive, so the youth are interested in and brainstorming ideas on how to raise money to lessen the expense of attending activities throughout the year. Be on the lookout for some youth fundraisers and if possible, please support them in these endeavors. As always, we appreciate your prayers all the time.

As many of you may remember the youth started the Bible study "The Chosen" last spring; we have already restarted the study at the beginning of August. I want to say a big thank you to Pastor Sarah and Karoline Risker for being willing to be my partners to make this Bible study happen each week.

Now that Connect Wednesday will be starting back up there may be weeks that I need other volunteers for various reasons. If you'd like to be an adult partner on any activity, please reach out.

Another fall event that would be a great opportunity to be involved with the youth is our annual progressive dinner, scheduled for December 6th. I am looking for one more person to open up their

home for the appetizer or dinner stop.

The youth added a new event to try out this semester: we are planning to attend the Bellevue Baptist Singing Christmas Tree on Saturday, December 13th in Memphis, TN. If anyone would like to attend this event with the youth you are welcome to. I just need to know in advance about getting tickets when purchasing the youth tickets. Tickets will be available for purchase in November. If you've never been to this performance, it really is something to see, and I am hopeful all will enjoy the event. We are planning another activity while in Memphis, so it is fine for anyone wanting to attend to provide their own transportation, as well.

The youth also have the regularly scheduled activities going on for the fall semester, such as Refuge, Sunday Youth, and opportunities to serve our neighbors. All activity dates are available on the church calendar. You can always reach out to me if you'd like to be an adult partner or help the youth out in any way.

As always, just a reminder that adult partners do need to complete safe gatherings training to attend events and volunteer in the children and youth ministries. The process is very easy, and I will assist in any way, if needed.

Again, I want to thank everyone who has a part in making all these activities happen and be a success for our youth. Please reach out anytime if you would like to assist and get involved with our great youth program.

Mary Hickox
FUMC Youth Director

Early Response Team Training

If you want to be prepared, certified, and badged the next time a disaster strikes, this Early Response Training event is for you! Volunteers will be shown specific skills, such as tarping a damaged roof, sorting debris, and mucking out a flooded house. More importantly, the training prepares you to be an effective, caring member of the team when volunteers deploy to help in a disaster. Please note that all those wishing to specialize in chainsaw work must first complete ERT training. This one-day training allows volunteers to also pass a background check, get certified, and receive an official UMCOR badge. This training will be held on September 20 at St. James UMC in Little Rock from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tickets are \$10. Lunch will be provided. Please register by September 17. For questions, please contact Roy Lee (cedisaster@arumc.org).



Healthy Church Academy

The ARUMC Healthy Church Academy for Laity in Leadership with Rev. Dr. Ron Bell will be held via Zoom from 7-8 p.m. on Mondays in the fall and winter: October 6, November 3, December 1, and January 5. Thanks to a grant from The Methodist Foundation for Arkansas, the lay leaders, SPPR chairs, and any members in leadership of Arkansas United Methodist Churches are being offered a five-month "Healthy Church Academy" being led by Rev. Dr. Ron Bell, director of Healing and Resilience for Discipleship Ministries at the Upper Room. You can register at: <https://healthy-church-academy-2025.---.com/>.



Financial Report

GENERAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Through month ending August 2025
\$588,429

GENERAL DISTRIBUTIONS

Through month ending August 2025
\$659,605

BUILDING FUND/

100 YEAR CONTRIBUTIONS

\$200,802 in contributions

\$360,000 to principal

\$83,712 to interest

\$51,654 for 100-year campaign sanctuary sound/streaming (deposit) and update and balance of lightning strike damage in '24 of which insurance check deposited in this fund last year

DOLLAR PER WEEK

TO DATE

2025 total: \$5,027

Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church Launches New Identity Campaign: Following Jesus, Loving People, Sharing Grace Shares the Core of Arkansas' United Methodists

Bishop Laura Merrill recently announced a new integrated communications campaign to allow Arkansas's United Methodists to share their identity, marked with unity and diversity, as followers of Jesus Christ. The "Following Jesus, Loving Others, Sharing Grace" campaign was announced at the 2025 Arkansas Annual Conference in Hot Springs in June 2025, and it will officially launch statewide on October 1, 2025.

"In the midst of the current crisis and division, we feel called to share the love and hope we have found as people of Jesus Christ in a clear, new way. The voices and hearts of United Methodists in Arkansas are speaking in this campaign, to claim who we are and invite others to a welcoming, life-giving journey," shared Bishop Merrill.

The goals of the campaign are to:

- Deepen Arkansas United Methodists' identity and increase engagement with the new vision statement, conference-wide.
- Build public awareness and trust in the Arkansas Conference as a grace-filled, community-rooted body of Christ.
- Expand the reach and relevance of United Methodist ministries across Arkansas.

The #FollowingLovingSharing campaign will include outdoor advertising, streaming video, digital media, public relations, and grassroots communications. All corners of Arkansas will be touched by this campaign, and different strategies will be employed to include the diverse audiences of the church.

For more information about #FollowingLovingSharing or ARUMC, visit <https://arumc.org/>.



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Mike Rutherford

Church Office

8:30am-4:30pm Mon-Thurs
8:30am-Noon Friday

Witt House Food Pantry

4:30pm-6pm Tuesday
9:30am-11am Friday