

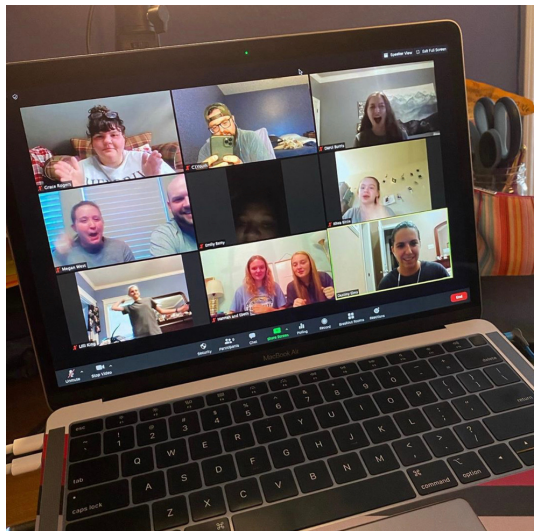


# THE WITNESS

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
1610 PRINCE ST., CONWAY, ARKANSAS, 72034



## THE STORY OF OUR CHURCH BUDGET



## BEYOND A PANDEMIC: A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR MICHAEL



What a year 2020 has been! We started this year using "2020 Vision" as our theme, with a focus on "seeing ourselves as God sees us." We were seeking clarity of vision. Then a pandemic hit, and instead of clarity we were all moved into a time of deep uncertainty and concern. We were challenged to trust, more deeply, in God's grace and steadfast guidance. In March, almost overnight, we stopped doing ministry the way we were accustomed to doing it and turned our energies towards discovering how to stay connected to God and to each other in totally new ways. With God's grace and guidance, and through the faithful support of a great congregation, we have found new ways for God's love to grow in us and through us.

Now we are looking towards 2021 and believe that God is guiding us into new fields of ministry.

We look forward to the day when we can re-launch in-person ministries without the restrictions currently in place. In addition, we are committed to growing an online campus and continuing to develop ministries in this new way.

We are not making any changes right now in terms of the bottom line of our annual operating budget of \$1.2 million. We are, however, rethinking all areas of ministry.

Inside you will find the story of our budget for 2021. It is so much more than numbers!

## PROGRAM MINISTRIES:

In 2020, we have seen adaptations and changes in every area of ministry in order to be faithful in the midst of a pandemic – Worship, Music, Children, Mid-Youth, Youth, Congregational Care, and Adult Discipleship. In 2021, our goals are to expand and offer hybrid opportunities – online and in-person. Your faithful giving will help make this possible. **Our budget for programming and program staff is around \$350,000.**



## ADMINISTRATION & SUPPORT FOR MINISTRY:

We are so grateful for all who work behind the scenes to support our wonderful ministries. From copy machines, to bookkeeping, from communications to cleaning, we do so much to provide opportunities for you to grow in God's love. **Our budget for this area, including staff, is around \$200,000.**



## PASTORAL STAFF:

We are faithfully served by two appointed pastors, Michael Roberts and Michelle Morris. We are thankful for their leadership through this challenging year and their guidance as we move into a fruitful future. **Our support for our pastors -- including housing, insurance, and pensions -- is around \$200,000.**

## FACILITIES AND SACRED SPACE:

In past years, we have highlighted how much our building is used every day. This year has been different. At the same time, the size of our space has allowed gatherings to happen in safe ways. We have also taken the opportunity to make updates to our facilities. Our hope is to carefully move back into a building full of ministry with children playing, voices singing, basketballs bouncing, meals eaten, and Bibles being opened. **The budget for our facilities -- including utilities, insurance, maintenance, and custodial needs -- is around \$250,000.**

## MISSION AND SHARED MINISTRY:

We will continue to be involved in missions all over the world. **Through Conference Tithe and Missionary Support, we will give around \$200,000 to this work.** Because of your tithes and offerings, a young person will graduate from seminary; a retired pastor will be supported; a youth director will be trained; people will be fed; lives will be transformed. You are a part of it all!



# AGE TO AGE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

## WHAT IS A CAPITAL CAMPAIGN?

A capital campaign calls for sacrificial commitments, over and above your regular tithes and offerings – often from stocks, insurance, proceeds from a sale, second-mile giving, etc. What can you do to make it possible for us to be debt free as a congregation and help generations to come to grow in God's love?



**The primary focus of the effort here is to pay off our current debt of \$1.5 million on a \$7.5 million-dollar project, which included the Trinity Building and major renovations to the Sanctuary Building. Our current monthly payment is \$20,000. Removing this debt on the shared church home would open the way for new missions and ministry.**

### AN IMPORTANT NOTE:

Due to the pandemic, we made the decision to postpone a capital campaign and are entering the fourth year of a three-year campaign. We are asking current participants to continue giving until we are able to have a formal campaign. We also welcome new commitments and additional support. Please pray about this!



## METHODISM AND MONEY

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, once reminded us that money is not evil. In the hands of God's children, it is an "excellent gift," answering the "noblest ends." From this point, **Wesley gave us three time-honored principles** for how we are to use our money so that we might grow in God's love and serve God's purpose for us.

### GAIN ALL YOU CAN

Some translate it as "earn," but this can connote the gaining of wealth only. The rule suggests that we gain much more -- knowledge, relationships, fulfillment in life -- all gained through diligences and work, and by practicing the higher ethical standards and not bringing harm to ourselves, others, or the world.

### SAVE ALL YOU CAN

Here, Wesley is not talking about accumulating and keeping goods in reserve, as in a bank account. He is talking about not wasting anything, living more simply, and avoiding elaborate expenses. Following this rule helps to keep pride, lust, gluttony, envy, and all forms of vanity from growing within us and bringing harm to ourselves and others.

### GIVE ALL YOU CAN

The first two principles lead to this third one. Organize your life so that you can give all you can and thus "lay up treasures in heaven." By giving we make room in our hearts from God to come in and give to us "the immeasurable riches of God's grace." By giving we fulfill our call to be stewards, not only of what we are given, but also stewards of the gospel and of how God's love is shared in the world.

While the discipline of tithing and giving first to God is honored in scripture and by the church, Wesley cautions us from giving out of a legalistic obligation. Tithing and giving first to God is an important part of that. God does not, however, want us to give "reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Corinthians 9:7). He also called us to remember that all of life is holy and we are to use all of our resources to the glory of God.

With every purchase, expense, and act of giving we can ask: Does this glorify God? Am I being a good steward of all that God has given me? Stewardship, in this way, is a daily discipline and a means of grace for our daily growth in God's love.

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## MAKING A COMMITMENT

Commitment Forms are available online and will come by email and mail. On this form, you have options for both the Operating Budget and our Capital Campaign.

You have options of pledging a specific percentage or income or amount, or simply letting us know that you are making a personal commitment to give, without naming a specific amount. This is up to you. Of course, we understand these pledges are statements of intent and may be changed at any time.

Thank you!

### OPTIONS FOR GIVING?

Options for Giving include:

- Automatic Draft
- Text "give" to 501-500-5335
- Giving through the Website (either as a recurring contribution or a one-time contribution.)

Information is available on the Connection Tables outside worship areas, on the Website at [www.conwayfumc.org](http://www.conwayfumc.org) and through the Church Office. An online giving form can be found at [THIS LINK.](#)

## First United Methodist Church Staff Directory

Senior Pastor — Michael Roberts  
Associate Pastor — Michelle Morris  
Dir., Music/Worship Ministries — Janet Gingerich  
Director, Children's Ministries — Pam Lentz  
Director, Lay Ministries — Kisha Bumpers  
Director, Youth Ministries — Zach Schrick  
Director, MidYouth Ministries — Sandra King  
Assoc. Dir., Music (Children) — Linda Ball  
Praise Band Leader — Stuart Holt

Church Administrator — Jill Hankins  
Business Assistant — Todd Burris  
Supervisor, Hospitality Ministries — Ed Spears  
Financial Assistant — Laura Bounds  
Communications Assistant — Colleen Holt  
Kitchen Coordinator — Kathleen Caruthers  
Elementary Assistant — Catherine Gatlin  
Nursery Assistant — Paula Bruner

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