



# THE WITNESS

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



## Eat Chocolate

### (A Different Approach to Lent in a Pandemic)

During the season of Lent last year, it was said: "This is the Lentiest Lent ever!" Since then, it has been said that we never really got out of Lent. We are still in the midst of giving up and making sacrifices. In this reality, we are suggesting a different approach to Lent this year. Eat Chocolate! As a metaphor, we are inviting you to find a time every day to enjoy and experience something good in your life and then invite God into that moment.

Each week we will focus on a different passage from scripture with words like savor, mindful, delight, awe, and extravagance. We will also provide teaching resources for individuals and classes, along with several fun and inspiring events, like a "cooking show" with opportunities to submit Pandemic recipes, a virtual art gallery, a photography lesson, a hiking expedition, and more. Through it all, we will learn how to be mindful and to enjoy the blessings of God that are right before us.

The season of Lent starts with Ash Wednesday on Feb. 17.

Following an online devotion, you will be invited to the church to receive ashes, a personal prayer, and yes, a piece of chocolate! Yes, we will put this all together in a meaningful way! We will have three times: 7 to 8 a.m., noon to 1 p.m., and 5 to 6 p.m.

We hope that you will start to anticipate a Lent full of blessings as we delight in the greatest gift of all – the gift of God's life and love through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### Inside This Issue



BE SOMEONE'S  
VALENTINE!

.....  
LOOKING FOR A FUN  
ACTIVITY? CHECK OUT  
A PUZZLE FROM THE  
CHURCH LIBRARY.

## C1Youth Update for Lent

Even though we can't gather in person, the youth will have a couple of things going on in February. We will still have our weekly Converge conversations on Wednesday nights via Zoom, and a bi-weekly Sunday night gathering that we are rotating between game nights and spiritual practice nights.

We also have a couple of activities in which we will be participating. Starting on Ash Wednesday, we will begin our 40-day Lenten photo challenge that will take place on our social media where the youth will post photos each week with a different theme.

We will also be keeping a tradition of making Valentine's cards for our homebound members. Youth will be able to pick up a packet to participate Jan. 31 through Feb. 10.





# In Memory and In Honor

**In memory of C.R. Trent by:** Connie Trent

**In memory of Ben Bakker by:** Betsey Bakker

**In memory of Lauren Church by:** Gordon Wilbourn Family

**In memory of Blanche Ball by:** Larry & Hilda Malpica, Jeff & Carol Jorgensen, Jim & Carolyn Bruce

**In memory of James & Carolyn Hancock by:** Larry & Hilda Malpica

**In memory of Derwin & Blanche Ball by:** Cliff & Maribeth Garrison, Sherry Owen, Sam & Carole Teague, Jamie Bird, Zettie Caudle, Rob & Kristi Desaulniers, Bill & Sue Higgs

**In memory of Ed & Frances Clark by:** Cecille Boyd, Dan & Kaye Clanton

**In memory of Norma Johnson by:** Cecille Boyd

**In memory of Vernagene Moore-Kelly by:** Cecille Boyd

**In memory of Renee Branton by:** Pam Wren, Dan & Kaye Clanton

**In memory of Derwin Ball by:** Stan & Marilyn Ott, Marion Baker, Jackie Downs, Jim & Carolyn Bruce, Frances Fritz, Eldon Lee & Susan Olthoff

**In memory of Bill Ledbetter by:** Dan & Kaye Clanton

**In memory of Julian & Lucille Reames by:** Dan & Kaye Clanton

**In memory of Howell & Dorothy Clanton by:** Dan & Kaye Clanton

**In memory of Shirley Gamble by:** Jamie Bird, Zettie Caudle

**In memory of Barbara Henry by:** Nancy Crook

**In honor of Bob & Weese Clifton by:** Jennifer Pearce

**In honor of Mary Louise Rogers by:** Jennifer Pearce

**In honor of Larry & Hilda Malpica by:** Harold & Betty Horton

**In honor of FUMC Staff by:** Cliff & Maribeth Garrison, Dan & Kaye Clanton

**In honor of Gene & Meredith Wilbourn by:** Marion Baker

**In honor of Janet Gingerich by:** Bill & Janie Craddock

**In honor of Janet Gingerich & FUMC Music Department:** Roger & Linda Mills

**In honor of Pastor Michelle by:** Melinda Adams

**In honor of Brit Ball by:** Eldon & Susan Olthoff

**In honor of Kish Jones by:** Charles Pittman



## Be Someone's Valentine!

Let's send some love to our homebound folks this Valentine's Day!

Contact Kisha Bumpers, [kbumpers@conwayfumc.org](mailto:kbumpers@conwayfumc.org), for a list of names. If you would like to mail your own cards, please let Kisha know you would like a list with addresses. We will also have a box available for you to drop off cards in the church hospitality area (9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Thursday) or you can drop them through the mail slot in the Sanctuary ramp door at your convenience.

If you are bringing yours to the church please drop them off by Wednesday, Feb. 10.

## Discipleship Coaching Opportunity

Wondering what the next step is in your discipleship? Seeking ways to serve Christ in new ways? Wanting guidance for your purpose in following Jesus?

Pastors Michael and Michelle have times available to sit down and begin to map out with you what your discipleship can look like this year. To begin these conversations, contact one or both of them by email to work out a good time for you.

**Pastor Michael:**

[mroberts@conwayfumc.org](mailto:mroberts@conwayfumc.org)

**Pastor Michelle:**

[mmorris@conwayfumc.org](mailto:mmorris@conwayfumc.org)



We Have  
Puzzles!

The Conway FUMC church library now has about 175 puzzles that can be checked out to be enjoyed at your home.

Our church librarian, Sandra Humphreys, started the project about three years ago. "In that time, we have had about 175 puzzles donated. Some have been duplicates. I keep one and give the duplicates to Kisha (Bumpers) to give out to those who come for the food pantry. Maybe by sharing what we have, we will bring families together to work together."

Sandra's desire to start the project came from her childhood. "I have such fond memories of my mother and my siblings working puzzles. Someone always hid a piece or two so they could be the one to finish. My mother is not here to defend herself as she is in Heaven, but she hid more pieces than any one of us! Sometimes she made us look for them and sometimes she put the last piece in to finish."

All of the puzzles have all their pieces, and Sandra even has help determining this! "My 86-year-old neighbor works all of the 300-piece puzzles before I ever place them in the library. She loves it. She calls me the puzzle missionary!"

The procedure for checking out a puzzle is just like it is for checking out a book – write your name on a card and place it in the library box on top of the card catalog. "I would like for anyone who works a puzzle and finds that a piece is missing to leave me a note on the puzzle that a piece is missing. I do have some pieces which don't have a home. I can try to locate the missing pieces if I know a piece is missing."

Due to the large number of puzzles, there is not enough space to put them all out at once. The puzzles are wiped down before they are put on the shelves, and again when they are returned and re-shelved. "We have far more puzzles checked out than we do books, especially in the winter months when people are staying in the house. Our only limitation is having enough space to put all the puzzles out at one time. I move them in and out often," she said.

The library is on the first floor of the Sanctuary building next to the Hospitality desk. During our time of physical distancing, the library is open during office hours from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

## UMW Mission Study Set

The United Methodist Women of Conway First United Methodist Church are offering a churchwide mission study in late February and early March.

"Women United for Change: 150 Years in Mission" by Ellen Blue commemorates the 150th anniversary of United Methodist Women in 2019.

With more than 800,000 members, UMW is the largest women's mission organization in the world. This study is about women who established this vibrant ministry that in many ways changed the face of mission.

Participants will learn about these women who formed new "mission societies," learned leadership skills and found the courage to use them.

"They have been responsible for positive change within the church itself, in their own communities, and all around the world. To know a little about the stories of even a few of them is to enrich our lives. ... When women dared to change the world for the better, they discovered that they too were changed."

This study will be led by Lynn Baker, a UMW president of her local unit in Eureka Springs and a director on the 2016-2020 national board of UMW. She has served many offices, including Conference president and a Mission U study leader. Lynn has led Zoom studies before and comes highly recommended as a very knowledgeable, energetic and fun leader.

Join us for the exciting and inspiring Zoom Mission Study at 3 p.m. Sundays, Feb. 21 and 28, and March 7 and 14. All are welcome.

A study book is available for \$10 at [www.umwmissionresources.org/](http://www.umwmissionresources.org/). It is recommended that each participant has a book, but it is not required.

Participants must pre-register at the following link:

<https://zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tJwsdOGhqTkjE9WTWK62ND13TvN1bqmpWDR>.

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with information about joining the Zoom sessions.

Don't miss this 2021 Mission Study - a celebration of women in mission!

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## Fellowship Hall Restroom Remodel

At our last meeting, and after surveys to the congregation, the Trustees approved a major remodeling of the restrooms in the Fellowship Hall, with one being for females and the other a Family/Accessible restroom. Both will be completely remodeled within the existing footprint.

If you would like to contribute to this effort, beyond the budget, please include a memo for the Restroom Remodel. If you would like more details information about the plans and/or cost, email Pastor Michael at [mroberts@conwayfumc.org](mailto:mroberts@conwayfumc.org) or send a message to the trustees at [welcome@conwayfumc.org](mailto:welcome@conwayfumc.org).

We are excited about this project. These restrooms are used more than any others in our building and have needed this for sometime.

## Spiritual Practices Video Series

Continue to join us on Monday and Friday through February 12 as we share a different Spiritual Practice with you.

Spiritual Practices are meant to connect us to God, to give new and different pathways where we might experience the Holy. Spiritual Practices we are sharing include musica and visio divina, journaling, traveling a labyrinth, centering prayer, as well as others. We hope that giving you space to learn these different ways of connecting with God will help you find peace and presence in the midst of unsettling times.

**Join us on Monday and Friday mornings on our church Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/conwayfirstumc](http://www.facebook.com/conwayfirstumc) (we'll release the video sometime between 7:30 and 8 a.m.). You may also view the videos on our church's YouTube Channel at [conwayfumc](http://conwayfumc) any time after they appear on Facebook.**

## 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

Contact staff by email at:  
first initial of first name  
plus last name  
[@conwayfumc.org](mailto:@conwayfumc.org)

Example: [mroberts@conwayfumc.org](mailto:mroberts@conwayfumc.org)