



THE WITNESS

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



A JOURNEY THROUGH HOLY WEEK

www.conwayfumc.org
www.facebook.com/conwayfirstumc

Conway First United Methodist Church

SUNDAY, APRIL 10

Palm Sunday worship

8:30 & 11 a.m. in the Sanctuary
9:05 a.m. in the Great Hall

THURSDAY, APRIL 14

In-person worship with communion

6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary

FRIDAY, APRIL 15

The Way of the Cross

6:30 p.m. in the Great Hall

EASTER

SUNDAY, APRIL 17

Online worship at 9:30 a.m.

Facebook, YouTube and conwayfumc.org

In-Person worship:

8:30 & 11 a.m. in the Sanctuary
9:05 a.m. in the Great Hall

SATURDAY, APRIL 16

Easter Egg Hunt

10 a.m. at Laurel Park



The Way of the Cross on Good Friday

On Good Friday, we will observe The Way of the Cross at 6:30 p.m. April 15 in the Great Hall.

To commemorate the passion and death of Jesus, we will walk with him spiritually from Pilate's Stone Pavement to the Skull Place. We will see him taken from the cross, laid in the arms of his sorrowful mother, and ultimately placed into the borrowed tomb.

The ancient devotion known as The Way of the Cross has been common among pilgrims to the Holy City for centuries, whose custom it is to follow the steps of Jesus on that first Good Friday. Over the years, the number of stations has varied, finally coming to be standardized at 14. Some of these are taken directly from the Gospel accounts of Christ's Passion, some are inferred from tradition. At each station we hear Scripture proclaimed, we pray, and we sing.

At our Good Friday Way of the Cross, we will remain in place, seated or standing, as an artwork image is projected before us onto a screen to offer a visual context for each passage of Scripture, each prayer, and each stanza of the beloved Passiontide chorale "O Sacred Head now wounded."

Traditionally, the images accompanying each station are erected in order along a path or along the walls of a church. We will also create physical stations in the Great Hall, which you may visit on your own, one station after the next along the walls of the room, following our praying of the stations in community.

The interior of the Great Hall will be a place of quiet prayer and contemplation on this sacred day, reserving space for fellowship before and after in the gathering areas outside the doors into the Great Hall. The Good News Celebration music team will provide contemplative gathering music in the Great Hall before the service and will continue for a time afterwards as you linger to pray if you wish. The hymn stanza following each station will be sung either without accompaniment or with a single instrument.

Please join us at 6:30 p.m. on Good Friday for this moving service of commemoration in which we walk with our Lord and experience spiritually, as first-hand participants, the mystery of our salvation.

**CHORAL
EVENSONG
PLANNED
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ISSUE**

Sunday Worship

In-person:

8:30 a.m. in the
Sanctuary
9:05 a.m. in the
Great Hall
11:15 a.m. in the
Sanctuary

Online:

9:30 a.m. Sundays
www.facebook.com/conwayfirstumc OR
www.conwayfumc.org

Join Us for Choral Evensong on April 3

On Sunday, April 3, First United Methodist Church, Conway will offer the office of Solemn Choral Evensong at 5 p.m. for the Fifth Sunday in Lent. Evensong will be held in the Sanctuary. All are welcome.

In a broad historical sense, Evensong is an ancient rite of the Church, directly related to the monastic tradition of prayer throughout the day, from sunrise to sunset, known as the Liturgy of the Hours, the Canonical Hours, or the Divine Office. Our practice of Noonday Prayer on Lenten Fridays is also such an office, a time to stop our day's activities to allow for prayer, the recitation of Psalms, and hearing the Word. In the liturgical life of the Church, an office is a liturgical rite that is not a celebration of the Holy Eucharist, a gathering in community at an appointed time for prayer and hearing Scripture. Wedding ceremonies and funerals, for example, might also be called offices.

English Evensong is rooted in the ancient service of Vespers (Latin for "evening"), a formal rite consisting in Psalms and appointed canticles and antiphons (repeated sung refrains with Scriptural texts). During the English Reformation, the service of Vespers was transformed from an evening rite common mainly to the monastic schedule, into a larger scale public service of evening prayer and song by the first non-Roman-Catholic Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556) and codified in the Book of Common Prayer of 1549.

Since then, the general format of Evensong has changed very little: the opening section of "Preces" (a "prex" is a short preparatory prayer, differentiating from a "collectio", a more elaborate, formulaic prayer which occurs threefold later in the service), appointed Psalmody, an Old Testament Lesson followed by the Canticle of Mary (the Magnificat), a Gospel Lesson followed by the Canticle of Simeon (the Nunc dimittis), the Apostles' Creed and Lord's Prayer, the Suffrages (prayers of petition consisting of an exhortation sung by the cantor and a response sung by the choir), the three collects (the Proper Collect of Sunday, the Collect for the Presence of Christ, and the Collect for Mission), a choral anthem, concluding prayers, and the Grace. Over the years, hymns have been inserted in various places among these required sections for congregational singing. Typically, however, almost the entirety of Evensong is executed by the choir and the officiant, allowing the congregation to experience this music as a spiritual wave that carries them along. Whereas the celebration of the Eucharist is a means to be present before the throne of Heaven, Evensong is a time of respite within the forecourts of God — yet the difference between the two experientially is not great (as we are instructed in Psalms 84).

Whereas the office of Vespers is sung solely to plainchant melodies, English Evensong relies heavily upon polyphonic settings of the Preces and Responses and often quite elaborate settings of the canticles, although plainchant still remains chiefly in the portions sung by the officiant or the cantor. That Evensong is entirely sung, is what marks it liturgically as "Solemn". That term does not mean "sombre" or "sullen", but is merely a liturgical demarkation that indicates "sung in its entirety".

The hallmark of Evensong is the Psalmody. Plainchant psalmtunes were conceived for singing based on the natural lilt of the Latin translations of Scripture. As English became the vernacular of common worship in the 16th century, metrical psalm-singing developed, a method uniquely suited to singing the Psalms in English. The Anglican Chants, as they have come to be called, are four-part musical formulas for Psalm-singing, quite similar to hymn tunes. Over the more than 500 years of English psalming, countless such chants have been composed and continue to be. No one setting is ever associated with any particular Psalm. The chant is chosen to reflect the content of the Psalm, its themes, and its mood. The texts are then "pointed" or marked such to fit the musical line of the chant.

On April 3, we will use two chants devised by British composer Herbert Howells (1892-1983) for the singing of the appointed Psalm 145.

The Psalm(s) and Scripture Lessons are taken from what is known as the Daily Office Lectionary, which has varied little from Cranmer's original edition. It is divided into two one-year cycles, one for odd numbered years, the other for even for every day (including weekdays) Advent I through The Final Sunday after Pentecost. The Collects are taken from those customary to the office of Evensong as well as from the Propers of the day. The Lessons for the Daily Office are often longer than the typical Sunday Lessons, and are taken frequently from portions of the Scripture, particularly those from the Old Testament that do not occur in the three-year cycle Sunday Lectionary.

Evensong is a rite of the church that has enjoyed increased popularity over the past decades, not only because it always includes some of the greatest sacred music ever written, but also because it is a service that is non-demanding, in that its only requirement of the faithful is to think of the word "to be" as an action verb. Just come and be. In word and song, the message of God's goodness, mercy, and grace is presented such that it flows across your heart and into your soul and shuts out the chaos of the world, leaving room to talk to God quite personally and in the beauty of holiness.



On Sunday, May 15, at 3 p.m., the whole music department will hold a musical celebration featuring all of our ensembles - choirs, bell choirs and praise band - to mark the retirement of Janet Gingerich, Director of Music and Worship. A reception will follow in the Fellowship Hall.



2022 Mission Study

Conway First United Methodist Church's United Women in Faith (formerly United Methodist Women) will hold the 2022 Mission Study on Sunday, April 24, and Sunday, May 1 from 4 to 6 p.m., in the movie room and courtyard of the basement at Conway FUMC.

The topic for this year's Mission Study is "Push Out – The Criminalization of Black Girls in School". The study materials include not only the book authored by Monique Morris, but also a movie by the same title.

This all-important topic is especially relevant today as more and more people are speaking out on the differences between "White America" and "Black America". Brenda Gullett will be our Mission Study leader. Brenda is an active member of Central UMC in Fayetteville and the Social Action Coordinator for the Arkansas Conference of United Women in Faith.

Mark your calendars to join us in this important Mission Study. There will be more information to follow concerning this Zoom/hybrid meeting.

In Honor & In Memory

In memory of Wendy March by: Linda Tyler, Jamie Bird, Mr. & Mrs. Larry Mazinski, Martha Bumpers, Pam Wren, Ellen & Walter Doerle, Jerald & Ruth Holbrook, Paul & Debra Sikora, Mr. & Mrs. James Smith, Ron & Pam Chastain

In memory of Dustin Lea by: Jamie Bird, Chris & Kathy Cooper, Suzanne Smith, Pat Crowder, Martha Bumpers, Chris & Thea Spatz, Skeet & Mary Jane Morse, Glenn Mechanical Co. Inc., Rick, Becky, & Justin Rasnick, Beth Ruple, Bill & Elaine Reid, Ron & Pam Chastain, Smith Ford

In memory of Liz Workman by: Sharon Thompson, Chris & Kathy Cooper, Claudia Davis, Larry & Marilyn Williams, Marsha & Harold Rogers

In memory of Zelda Ward by: Martha Bumpers

In memory of John & Liz Workman by: Rick & Becky Rasnick

In memory of Jewell Moore by: Pam Wren

In honor of Carol & Barbara Means by: Fred & Valera Tate

In honor of Stan & Marilyn Ott by: Fred & Valera Tate

In honor of Kish Jones by: Charles Pittman



Painting Psalm 23

Sandra Humphreys completed her "painting Psalm 23" canvas, and it looks fantastic! As you can see, she didn't use paint -- rather, she creatively used different types of paper, buttons and other notions to create a perfect pastoral scene. We still want to see what you created with your canvas! Submit the actual canvas to us for display around the church campus, or take a photo and send it to cholt@conwayfumc.org for use on social media. If you need a canvas, please contact Kisha Bumpers at the church. You may also share it on your own social media and use the hashtags #believingpsalm23 or #psalm23.

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(USPS 625-840)

The Witness is published monthly by
First United Methodist Church
1610 Prince St., Conway, AR 72034.
Periodicals postage paid at Conway, AR

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
"The Witness,"
c/o Colleen Holt, editor;
First United Methodist Church,
1610 Prince St., Conway, AR 72034

Church Women United Plan World Day of Prayer on April 1

The Faulkner County Unit of Church Women United will celebrate World Day of Prayer at 10 a.m. Friday, April 1, in person at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 925 Mitchell Street, and virtually via Zoom.

The theme for this year's gathering is "I Know the Plans I Have for You," and the materials for the celebration were prepared by the World Day of Prayer Committee of England, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

All are welcome to attend this time of prayer and reflection. For more information or to receive a Zoom link, please contact Jamie Bird at jsbird@conwaycorp.net.

Noonday Prayers Continue on Fridays at Conway FUMC During Lent

12:10 p.m.
Friday,
April 1 & 8,
in the
Sanctuary



All Are Welcome!

First United Methodist Church Staff Directory

Senior Pastor — Michael Roberts
Executive Pastor — Dede Roberts
Dir., Music/Worship Ministries — Janet Gingerich
Interim Dir., Children's Ministries — Catherine Gatlin
Director, Lay Ministries — Kisha Bumpers
Director, Youth Ministries — Zach Schrick
Director, MidYouth Ministries — Sandra King
Assoc. Dir., Music (Children) — Linda Ball
Campus Dir., Wesley Foundation -- Amy Shores

Assoc. Dir., Music (Praise Band) -- Stuart Holt
Organist -- Jason Saugey
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

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