



THE WITNESS

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

Let's Celebrate Making Music Together

From Janet Gingerich,
Director of Music and Worship:

Dear Friends,

For almost 38 years, FUMC Conway has been my home away from home. It wasn't long after I arrived here that I started working with children's choirs. In the Fall of 1993 I found myself conducting Chancel Choir in an "interim capacity," while SPR looked for someone who actually knew what they were doing. Almost 29 years later, here I am, still!

As I approach my final weeks on staff here and think back through the years, there's a LOT to celebrate. To touch on just a few things:

DID YOU KNOW...

- that every week at Conway FUMC there are around 90 musicians who come to a weekly music rehearsal of one kind or another?
- that about 50 of those people help to lead worship on a weekly basis, while the rest rotate in and out according to a carefully planned schedule?
- that a good number of singers and ringers were already doing their thing before I started, and will be doing it long after I'm gone?
- that before I started attending church here, I had never seen or heard a handbell?
- that our choirs and handbell choirs start working on Easter music in January and on Christmas music in August?
- that in the late 1990s, before we had a regular First Service choir, I "recruited" Sunday School classes to take turns leading the singing, and we had a monthly "choir" made up entirely of retired Methodist clergy from our congregation?
- that (at least prior to COVID) our music program had something for kindergarteners, 90-yr-olds plus, and everyone in between?
- that there has been an organist in our church since at least 1888, and the first mention of a Director of Music was in 1909?
- that Stuart Holt, the director of our Praise Band, was first invited to play in the band at its inception in 2003 "just for 4-5 weeks."?



- that since its beginning, the Praise Band roster has grown from 7-8 to 20 plus!?
- that during the early 2000s our youth bell choir (don't tell our adult ringers) was our STRONGEST bell choir?
- that our Chancel Choir and Ringers took a tour to England in 2004. We sang in three cathedrals, played/sang two concerts and had SO MUCH FUN?

What a great joy and privilege it has been!

As a practical way to celebrate these years of ministry together, the Music Department is putting together a concert for Sunday, May 15. We will hear from all our major ensembles, enjoy some rousing hymn-singing with the congregation, hear our fabulous Praise Band, and throw in a surprise or two. These are some of the hardest-working people I know, and I know they will pull out all the stops that afternoon.

I do hope you will be able to join us at 3p.m. May 15 in the Sanctuary to celebrate many years of music ministry together.

With all best wishes to the most supportive congregation ever.

P.S. I wish I had kept a list of everyone who had participated in our music program for the past 29 years. We would love for any former (or even wannabe) FUMC musicians to join us for this occasion. If you'd like to participate at any level at all, please contact me, or any member of the music staff.

FUMC and Library Partner to Combat Hunger

In March, FUMC was awarded a \$1,500 grant from 200,000 More Reasons, an initiative of the Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church focused on eradicating childhood hunger in our state. This specific grant will help fund a new summer lunch and literacy program.

In partnership with the Faulkner

County Library, FUMC will provide sack lunches three days a week throughout the summer (along with at least one book per month). These will be delivered to the library, where their staff will serve the lunches and distribute the books.

Would you like to help? Donations can be sent to the church ("Summer Lunches" in the memo).

Information on how you can volunteer to prepare and pack lunches will be available soon!

Questions can be directed to Kisha Bumpers (kbumpers@conwayfumc.org) or to Mission Committee Co-Chairs, Tricia Burris (tburris@conwaycorp.net) and Lori Mulhearn (lmulhearn@conwaycorp.net).

He is Risen! Easter at FUMC



Along the Graceful Way: Methodist History and Doctrine

A Video Series from Pastor Michael

It is good to do a faith-assessment every now and then! Pastor Michael has published 12 short lectures that are being used for an online class for beginning pastors, and he has also made them available for us.

These lectures cover the teachings of John Wesley, the Methodist movement, and the basic beliefs of those who call themselves United Methodist Christians. These videos will be used as support resources for the upcoming Sunday School class on Methodism and can also be used for your own personal discernment and growth.

The lectures can be found on You Tube, on a playlist titled "The Graceful Way - Methodist History and Doctrine."

Along the Graceful Way: A New Sunday School Class on Methodism

If you are new to our congregation, or a long-time member but want to know more, join the pastors during the Sunday School hour for a four-week class on Methodism, beginning this Sunday, April 24, in Room 220. The videos mentioned above are available as resources to be watch outside of class and to spark our discussion.

News from Church & Society

Support for Afghan Refugees in Conway

The Conway FUMC Church and Society Committee and Forum Class have been assisting Afghan refugees relocating in our area. Two 23-year-old gentlemen moved to Conway last week. They are from Kabul, where Bilal had a small store on the US base selling Afghan cultural items to soldiers from many countries. Mohammad worked as a currency exchanger in Kabul Green Zone (where our embassy was). Pam Johnston, our local contact, became acquainted with them while she was stationed in Kabul. She and her husband decided to be their sponsors.

While most of their immediate needs have been met, they still need a sofa and a dresser and hope to locate a used washer and dryer. Thanks to Sherry Owen, a member of the Forum Class, they have the sofa.

Do you have or know where we can acquire a dresser and washer and dryer (we may be able to help with the costs of the washer and dryer)? Down the road we hope to assist them by reprovisioning their "common necessities." If you would like to support these efforts with a financial contribution, you may make a check out to Conway FUMC and note "Afghan Refugees" on the Memo line.

For more information about these gentlemen, their status and needs, please contact Jack Frost at frost@hendrix.edu or by calling (501) 472-9952.



Congratulations to Sarah Mulhearn!

Congratulations to our very own Sarah Mulhearn for being elected as the 2022-2023 At Large Representative to the Executive Council of the Arkansas Conference Council on Youth Ministries. Sarah is an active member of the Conway FUMC C1Youth Ministries, and is a daughter of Lori and Dawson Mulhearn.

This is Going to Take Forever'

**(Worship series on key passages
from the Book of Revelation)**

It was written by a child on a bulletin and found by the pastor after worship. Sometimes we feel this way in life. The book of Revelation shares the same message but in a different light. In the midst of much fear and turmoil that can seem to go on forever, we are given a revelation of hope and reconciliation, love and life, that indeed goes on forever. We are all invited into this good news.

This series will continue through Sunday, May 29.

Pastor's Bible Study on the Book of Revelation

Four Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m., starting April 27. Please join us!

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In Honor & In Memory

In memory of Doris Carrithers by: Bill & Cecilia Patterson, Linda Tyler, Jeff & Norma Kelley, Carol Schedler, Sam & Carole Teague, Jamie Bird, Lorlie March, Fletch & Sherry Smith, Nancy Hefley Moore, Robert Hefley, Jim Hefley, Lillian Hefley, Joy Hefley, Kim Hefley, Pat & Beverly Bowles, Pam Wren, John Collier, Claudia Davis, Linda Hollis

In memory of Richard Collins by: Jeff & Norma Kelley, Carol Schedler, Sam & Carole Teague

In memory of Frankie Reynolds by: Butch & Sue Siria, Nancy Mulhearn

In memory of Ted Hammett by: Sam & Carole Teague

In memory of Liz Workman by: Dottie Patterson, Pat & Beverly Bowles

In memory of Wendy March by: Sam & Carole Teague

In memory of Patti Wilkerson by: Sam & Carole Teague

In memory of Carolyn Harmon by: Sam & Carole Teague

In honor of Pastor Michael Roberts by: Bill & Cecilia Patterson

In honor of Pastor Dede Roberts by: Bill & Cecilia Patterson

In honor of Kish Jones by: Charles Pittman

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](http://www.facebook.com/conwayfirstumc) OR
www.conwayfumc.org

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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