



THE WITNESS

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

What Do Altars Mean For Us?

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the final article in a series about the history of Altar Arts and what it means to us in today's church.)

Altars are a memorial of the places where God meets us. We may not always be able to make a physical altar, but there can be one established in our hearts. When we celebrate communion, we are celebrating the grandest altar of all, the Cross of Calvary. The Son of God was the ultimate sacrifice, and his work on the Cross reconciled all humankind to God, made possible for our lives to be infused with meaning, for our sins to be forgiven and to give us the promise of eternal life." (Jack Hayford)

After Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice, sacrificial altars as used in the Old Testament were no longer deemed necessary. Altars became the place where we could meet, remember, and honor God. Pastor Jack Hayford writes that God has a place of 'altar' for us – a place of 'altar' and a price of 'altar'. When we come to the altar, God intends that something be altered in us. That is the price. To receive the promise, we must make way for the transformation. We must be willing to accept that God's plan for us may not look the way we thought it would. We must acknowledge that God's love for us is also his promise to care for us, to help us grow, and to help us live up to the promise of the ultimate sacrifice.

Hayford writes that what it takes to build an altar "are rocks, broken things. The geological application is relevant, there are volcanic explosions in our lives, seismic events, the grinding of life. You can take hard things and arrange them before the Lord or you can drag the rocks around and be burdened by them. Or when you're frustrated at lugging them around, you get mad and throw them at somebody else. The way you build an altar is to bring those hard, broken things before the Lord and put them there. The price of 'altar' is that you have to pour your life out over it, saying "Lord I come and present myself to You! At the altar, the price is paid for renewal when we've been at a distance, for securing hope we may have thought was lost and for receiving promise, even if it's in an unpleasant environment. Come to the ultimate altar and receive the ultimate promise and provision made offered in our Lord Jesus Christ."

So we've learned how altars came to be, what they meant for the early church, and what they mean as reflected in Jesus' ultimate sacrifice for us. But what now? What does our church do about altars? Let's find out.

How Does Conway FUMC Altar?

At Conway FUMC, there is an altar in each of our three worship spaces: the Chapel, the Sanctuary, and the Great Hall in the Trinity Building.

The Chapel, situated in the Trinity Building and accessed from the north side of the lobby, is an intimate space for worship and, for many, a quiet refuge for prayer. For our college students, the Chapel is home to their weekly Wednesday evening Campus Ministry Worship Services. The Chapel altar is simple, lit from behind by the Holy Spirit window.

The altar in the Sanctuary is located in the Chancel behind the communion rail and below the pulpit. Here, with pulpit above



For Easter in 2023, the altars were adorned with flowers, candles and crosses. (Above) the Sanctuary altar. (At left) the Good News Celebration altar in the Great Hall.

altar table below, we experience visibly the relationship between Word and Sacrament every time we worship or visit during the day for personal prayer and meditation. The baptismal font is also located in a Chancel, which, even when not in use, stands as a constant reminder of our Baptismal Covenant and our inclusion in the family of God.

Because the Great Hall is a multi-use space, there is no fixed altar here nor is there a permanent Chancel. For worship services in the Great Hall, the Altar Arts team create an environment, or altarscape, which transforms the room from an ordinary gathering place into a Sanctuary with the focal point being the altar, by means of directed lighting and the inclusion not only of a portable altar table, but also of various seasonal displays and banners with symbolism corresponding to the liturgical and Scriptural themes of the Service.

See **ALTAR** on Page 3

Come One, Come All!

WOW Camp 2023



150th Anniversary of Methodism in Faulkner County Celebration

This year marks the 150th anniversary of Methodists worshipping in Faulkner County! Our earliest documentation of our Church establishment was when we started by gathering for worship in box cars in the early 1870s.

In honor of that, a committee is being formed that can help throw a celebration day during the month of November 2023.

If you would like to be on this committee please text or email Emily Walter at 501-269-8688 or emilywalterrealtor@gmail.com or email Colleen Holt at the church at cholt@conwayfumc.org.

Summer Lunch Ministry Continues to Grow! Monetary Donations Needed

The Summer Lunch Ministry at the Faulkner County Library is in need of donations. The library has seen another sharp increase in participation from the public. The need is great!

Our church is trying to meet that increased need by providing more lunches (120 lunches on three days a week rather than just 100 lunches)

Our goal is to raise another \$2,000.

If you would like to help in this effort, donations can be sent to the church ("Summer Lunches" in the memo of your check). You can also give online: please choose "Special Giving" and type "Summer Lunch Ministry" in the notes.

<https://www.shelbygiving.com/app/giving/lovegrowshere>

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Altar Arts and Altar Guild – how can I help?

At Conway FUMC, there are plenty of opportunities to serve with fellow parishioners to prepare our various worship spaces for celebrations of Word and Sacrament.

The Altar Guilds

The Altar Guild for Services in the Great Hall chiefly prepare the Table for the celebration of Holy Communion, setting out the communionware with the loaves and chalices of unfermented wine. The Sanctuary Altar Guild care for and curate the adornments of the altar (the altar lamps, the cross, the Book of Scripture, and the like) and keep and place the paraments and fair linens used atop the altar seasonally.

The Altar Arts Teams

The Altar Arts team for services in the Great Hall transform the ordinary into the extraordinary. Using fabric, platforms of all kinds and sizes, greenery, flowers, candles, canvasses, crosses, and glass pieces, they have portrayed lakeshores, the journey of Magi, the Nativity, and countless other Scriptural scenes and themes.

Whereas Great Hall Altar Arts must create an environment from a hard space, the Sanctuary Altar Arts Team augments the naturally existing architecture of worship with additional creative focal points that heighten awareness of liturgical and Scriptural themes, both seasonal and weekly. Along with the Altar

Guild, they create seasonal banners used both for fixed display and as part of festive processions at the start and close of Services. Altar Arts Sanctuary displays may appear adjacent the altar, on the Chancel stairs, or even hang from within our soaring dome.

Both the Sanctuary and Great Hall Altar Guilds, as the well as the Altar Arts Teams who serve in both of these spaces, are made up of volunteers who collaborate directly with our worship shaping committees.

All four of these teams are always seeking new members eager to help with “altaring”! These are unique areas of ministry – service not only to our Lord, the People of God, but also to the Liturgy itself. In serving at the altar in any capacity, either during the service or in preparation for it is an act of worship, a sacrifice of praise. Please prayerfully consider serving!

For more information on how and when to serve, please reach out to any of the following ministry coordinators:

Sanctuary Altar Arts:

Jill Hankins, jhankins@conwayfumc.org

Great Hall Altar Arts:

Brenda Porter,
brendadudleyporter@outlook.com

Sanctuary Altar Guild:

Beverly Bowles, bowles72bev@gmail.com

Great Hall Altar Guild:

Nancy Mulhearn, nmulhearn@conwaycorp.net

SAVE THE DATE**Back to School Sunday**

Aug. 20, 2023

Start of Wednesday Evening Activities

Aug. 30, 2023

More Information on Both Coming Soon!

Summer Music Camp #2

**Monday, Aug. 14 -
Wednesday, Aug. 16
8 a.m. to noon**

Morning snack provided
Open to rising 2nd graders
through high school.

Registration deadline is
Monday, Aug. 7.

Will include: singing, ringing
chimes, drumming,
dramatics, and other fun!

Please email Linda Ball
(lball@conwayfumc.org)
to register.



FUMC's Wesley Foundation staff had the annual planning retreat in Shreveport on July 7-9. They planned, prayed, and prepared for the upcoming school year. The worship theme for this year is "Ask Yourself," where we will explore John Wesley's Holy Club questions each week. Wesley Worship is held each Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. (beginning Aug. 30) in the Trinity Chapel, and is open to all young adults! Please join us as we pray for all the students preparing to move to Conway over the next month. Pictured are (front, from left to right): Samantha Vacarella (Hendrix Junior/Fellowship Intern); Caitlyn King (UCA Junior/Outreach Intern); Nathan Fryar (UCA Sophomore/Discipleship and Mission Intern); Sarah Ross (Hendrix Junior/Worship Intern), and (back row) Amy Shores, Wesley Foundation Director.

MOVE-IN SUPPLY DRIVE

The Wesley Foundation/FUMC College Ministry is collecting supplies to help ease the transition of new International students and welcome them to Conway!

We are wanting to provide supplies they may not think to bring with them, but that they will need living on campus!

UCA is anticipating about 75 students, so we are trying to collect 75 of the following items:

- Pack of Clothes Hangers
- Scotch Tape
- Cleaning Wipes
- Cleaning Sponge
- Small Waste Basket (Dollar Tree)
- Shower Caddy (Dollar Tree)
- Kleenex
- Roll of Paper Towels
- Liquid Hand Soap
- Scissors
- Dish soap

DEADLINE: AUGUST 6

If you would like to help, items can be left in the church lobby.

If you would like to contribute funds, please indicate "Supply Drive" on the memo line, and we will purchase the needed items!

Contact Amy Shores with any questions!
(ashores@conwayfumc.org; 501-733-7870)

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Back to School

Help our children's department collect school supplies to pack backpacks for kiddos at our food pantry. Items needed are listed below, or you can donate via the QR code link! Thank you!



On Shelby Giving page -
Fund: Special Giving
Note: Back to School

- glue sticks
- children's metal scissors
- washable markers (10 per box)
- black dry erase markers
- regular pencils
- Box of 24 crayons
- wide ruled loose leaf paper
- colored pencils
- composition notebooks
- pocket folders with brads

Sunday Worship

In-person:

8:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary
9:05 a.m. in the Great Hall
11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

9:05 and 11 a.m. services are livestreamed on Facebook and YouTube

First United Methodist Church Staff Directory

Senior Pastor -- Nathan Kilbourne
Associate Pastor -- Miranda Hornsby
Dir., Music/Worship Ministries -- Jason Saugey
Co-Dir., Children's Ministries -- Catherine Gatlin
Co-Dir., Children's Ministries -- Jules Koen
Director, Lay Ministries -- Kisha Bumpers
Director, Youth Ministries -- Zach Schrick
Campus Dir., Wesley Foundation -- Amy Shores

Assoc. Dir., Music (Praise Band) -- Stuart Holt
Assoc. Dir., Music (Children) -- Linda Ball
Church Administrator -- Jill Hankins
Business Assistant -- Todd Burris
Supervisor, Hospitality Ministries -- Ed Spears
Financial Assistant -- Laura Bounds
Communications Assistant -- Colleen Holt

Contact staff by email at:
first initial of first name plus
last name
@conwayfumc.org

Example: nkilbourne@conwayfumc.org