



THE WITNESS

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

Blessing of the Animals Set Oct. 1



Our annual Blessing of the Animals will be held from 4 to 5 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 1, in the parking lot at Conway First United Methodist Church, weather permitting.

Activities will begin with a very short worship service led by our Children's Choirs. The service will include reciting the Blessing of St. Francis of Assisi, known as the Patron Saint of Animals.

In addition to options for pets and families to park and walk up for a blessing, we will also have a drive-through, in-vehicle option for pets with "social anxiety." Pets must be leashed or crated.

Pets will be blessed as a special creation of God. Even if you don't have a pet, you are welcome to attend and enjoy. If your pet can't make it to the blessing, you are invited to bring a photo of them to be blessed. Children are also invited to bring their favorite stuffed animal for a blessing.

The event is free and open to the public, so please invite your friends, family and neighbors! Questions? Contact Linda Ball at lbball@conwayfumc.org.



Food Pantry to Receive Funds from Citywide Event at The Kitchen Store

The Conway First United Methodist Church Food Pantry will be the beneficiary of funds raised during a truly unique event coming up in downtown Conway during October.

Oktoberfest activities — scheduled from Oct. 9 through 14 — are being hosted by The Kitchen Store & More. All proceeds from ticket sales for the main activities on Thursday, Oct. 12, will go to support the food pantry at our church.

Tickets cost \$25, and can be purchased at the Kitchen Store on Locust Street (cash, check and card) or at Conway First United Methodist Church on Sunday mornings (cash and check only) beginning Sept. 17. Ticket sales booths will be set up in the Lobby of the Trinity Building and the Hospitality Area of the Sanctuary building. You may also text "TICKETS" to 501-358-2001 to buy tickets.

On Oct. 12, for the ticket price of \$25, you can enjoy tastings from nine food and drink sponsors, demonstrations and tours by Zwilling Airstream, live music by The Boomers and door prizes. In addition, The Kitchen Store will be open from 6:30 to 9 p.m. and the owners have pledged 20 percent of sales during this time to also benefit the food pantry.

On Saturday, Oct. 14, a corn hole tournament will be held to benefit the food pantry — text "CORN" to 501-358-2001 to register for the tournament or visit form.jotform.com/232415471766055

Free knife sharpening will be held all week. By bringing four non-perishable, non-expired food items for the food pantry, you can get one knife professionally sharpened. Knives are to be dropped off at The Kitchen Store.

Other activities during the weekend include more live music, happy hour food offerings, knife skills classes, and a kitchen essentials class.

For more information about the events, visit the Kitchen Store website at conwaykitchen.com/pages/oktoberfest.



Launching Our 'Generosity Campaign'

We (Still) Do

From Rev. Nathan Kilbourne,
Senior Pastor, Conway FUMC:

On Oct. 8, we will be launching our "Generosity Campaign." More traditionally, it has been called the "Stewardship Campaign." When most people hear the word "Stewardship" they automatically think money. But I want us to expand our understanding of stewardship to think on the lines of generosity of our whole person. I'm referring to this campaign as the "generosity campaign" as it calls us to consider how we respond in gratitude to the gifts God has given us with our entire lives.

This year, the title of the campaign is, "We (Still) Do." The theme is built around the idea of a wedding vow renewal. I've had an opportunity to be part of several vow renewals in which couples once again commit to their partner after years of marriage. One I distinctly remember was of a couple who had been together 50 years and had participated in vow renewals multiple times throughout their marriage. Each time was an opportunity to reflect upon the promises made and commit once again to the covenant established years ago.

These renewals I've participated in have always been a reminder that any relationship, whether married or not, requires ongoing commitment. It doesn't matter if it is a friendship or a marriage. For relationships to thrive, each party must be committed to the relationship. Moreover, such commitment requires us to be generous with our time, energy, and resources. If we aren't willing to share our time with another, engage in conversations, assist one another in shared responsibilities, then a relationship is doomed to fail. But the more we give ourselves over one to another, the more we discover the vitality and blessings of a relationship.



With this in mind, our campaign will be a time of reflection regarding our commitment as disciples of Jesus Christ. After all, whether we have done so publicly or privately, we have committed ourselves to following Jesus. But what does it mean to follow Jesus? What does it mean that the church is the "bride of Christ?" What are the ways we can renew our commitments and what do these commitments involve? Like any relationship, it's important for us to examine where we might grow in our relationship to Christ. Throughout the series, we will be thinking about the vows we make as members to support and love Christ and his Church by our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness. My hope and prayer is as we walk through this series, our response as a whole will be, "We (still) do love you Jesus, and this is how we plan on displaying our love..."

Over the course of the next couple weeks, you will be receiving a "Generosity Packet," to consider how you might renew your covenant with Christ. Take time to pray through that covenant and consider each aspect of Discipleship. We will invite you to turn those in at the end of our series.

Moreover, save the date for Oct. 8 from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. We will be having a "Ministry Fair" as part of the series. We have so many wonderful ministries here at Conway First UMC. This will be a time to explore those ministries and learn more about them. We will have booths set up in the Fellowship Hall so you can drop by and learn more about our varied ministries and how you can get involved in them.

I look forward to hearing and seeing what God will do to renew us in this time. May a sense of gratitude continue to grow in our hearts for what God has done for us. And in response to God's great gifts, may we commit ourselves once again to Christ.

Ministry Fair

9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 8
Fellowship Hall

Drop by the various booths to learn more about how you can get involved in all the ministries offered at Conway FUMC

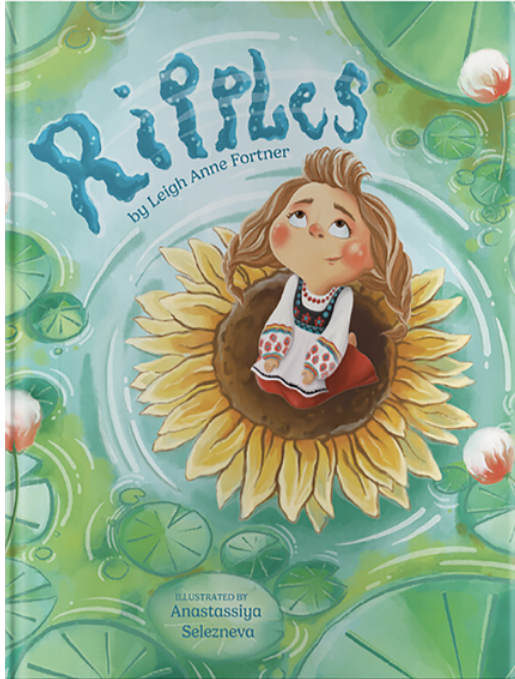
One Service Sunday



On Sept. 3, we held one worship service at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary and then a service project following in the Trinity Building. It was a wonderful opportunity to gather as an entire congregation for worship and service together by making 1,000 United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) hygiene kits.



Children's Book Signing, Reading Set Sunday, Oct. 22



A book reading and book signing by Leigh Anne Fortner, a member of the Conway First United Methodist Church family, will be held during the Sunday school hour on Sunday, Oct. 22, in the church library.

Leigh Anne, a self-published children's book author, recently released the book "Ripples," a picture book for ages 4-8. The book is described as "a simple, yet profound, story of hope written from a child's perspective. Children will learn that no matter how small, our actions can create ripples of kindness, love, and unity in this world."

To encourage this feeling of empowerment for both children and adults, all net proceeds from "Ripples" will be donated to the Liberty Ukraine Foundation, a non-profit organization committed to providing humanitarian aid, medical supplies, protective gear, and rehabilitative therapy to the people of Ukraine. To learn more, please visit www.libertyukraine.org.

The Oct. 22 events in the church library will begin at 10 a.m. and will include a reading of the book and a craft for children. Cookies will be served. Children and adults are invited to come hear the story, have a book signed, and check out the other offerings in our church library.

The book signing coincides with the church's observance of Children's Sabbath, a time to reflect on God's gift of children, and ways congregations and individuals can renew their commitment to care for, protect and advocate for all children.

If you would like a signed copy of "Ripples," you may purchase it online in advance to bring with you, or you will be able to purchase a book (or two!)

at the Oct. 22 event from Leigh Anne. All three of Leigh Anne's books can be found on her website, www.spreadthelightbooks.com, or by searching Amazon or other online book retailers.

Leigh Anne is the creator of Spread the Light Books, started in 2021 with a mission to create inspiring stories for kids that give back. All net proceeds from each book are donated to non-profits in hopes of spreading light and love to the community and beyond. Her 2021 book, "The Light," donated net proceeds to Vine and Village and The CALL of Arkansas. Her 2022 book, "Mariposa," donated net proceeds to Our House Shelter in Little Rock. Leigh Anne's books have been featured by many media outlets, including "Storytime with Fergie and Friends."

Leigh Anne says she was inspired to write "Ripples" when the news about the war in Ukraine broke. "In a very chaotic world, I wanted to write something to give kids hope for a better future. My illustrator (Anastassiya Selezneva) actually has family living in Ukraine, so she also felt very strongly about making this book. We are hopeful that our story will create its own ripples in those that read it."



Did You Know?

Did you know that the church has a library? We do! The library can be found on the first floor of the Sanctuary building near the elevator. It includes many books of all subjects, with an emphasis on children's books, religious commentaries, fiction and non-fiction, and the United Women in Faith Reading Program books. Any of these books can be checked out, just like at the Faulkner County Library. Donations of **new release books** for adults and children would be appreciated.

In addition, we have a collection of puzzles that can be checked out. All sizes, shapes and designs of puzzles can be found. If you have puzzles that you would like to donate to the collection (with all pieces included), please just leave them in the library with your name on them so we know who donated.

We even have our own church librarian! Mrs. Sandra Humphreys takes care of the offerings in the library and beautifully decorates the display windows for different seasons and worship series. Please say thank you to Mrs. Sandra when you see her next for all of her hard work!



1610 Plan: Investing in Stories

Each fall, the Conway First United Methodist Church family is asked to begin or renew its commitment to invest in our C1Youth ministry through the 1610 Investment Plan.

This investment program is simple: invest \$16.10 per month for one year beginning Oct. 15, for a total of \$193.20. In return, the church will use all your investments to send our youth to three conference events — Refuge, Veritas, and Assembly — our own spring retreat ReConnect, and one summer mission trip for FREE!!

We are praying we reach the 335 investments for a total of \$65,000 that it will take to accomplish that goal this year. Last year the 1610 investment plan sent 30+ youth and adults to Veritas, 40+ youth and adults to ReConnect, 50+ youth and adults on mission trips, and 41 youth and adults to Assembly.

The 1610 Investment Plan continues to be a success. Not only have stories been created from the trips that have had their costs covered by the investments made, but it is also reaching its goal of bringing new faces into our ministries and giving Youth and MidYouth a place where they feel safe, loved and accepted for who they are. And that means they feel safe to invite their friends, too.

Key points about the payments:

- This investment is for 7th - 12th graders currently, but it's not just a youth family investment. It's the whole community's opportunity to invest in the now and the future.
- This is a commitment ABOVE AND BEYOND the pledges made to stewardship and Blessings to Blessings campaigns.
- All new payments will begin on October 15.
- The entire investment is tax deductible.
- You can easily set up a new draft — just fill out the draft authorization form and attach a voided check to it.
- You can set up an online payment right with the QR code on your bulletin.



- You can pay it all in one lump sum of \$193.20 for 1, \$386.40 for 2, or \$579.60 for 3 — you can write a check to Conway FUMC and attach it to the investment form or write in the memo line 1610 plan and place it in the offering plate. You can easily add to an existing automatic draft if it's set up through the church already.
- You can make monthly payments — we have envelopes that are already addressed and marked for each month if you need reminders.
- You can pay it all in one lump sum of \$193.20 for 1, \$386.40 for 2, or \$579.60 for 3 — you can write a check to Conway FUMC and attach it to the investment form or write in the memo line "1610 plan" and place it in the offering plate.

We have tables in both the main hospitality area and the Trinity building with all the paperwork and someone to answer any questions you may have.

Final thought: What might be the new story this year that your investment could create?

Now Accepting Donations for the Christmas Coffee House Silent Auction Nov. 12th, 3:00–5:00 p.m.

Suggested donations include themed baskets, vacation stays, gift cards, homemade food items, acts of service, craft items, etc.

Donations can be dropped off
at the church welcome desk
or call Lori Mulhearn,
501-472-4307

Looking Ahead

Sunday, Oct. 29 -- Fall Festival,
4 to 6 p.m., parking lot

Sunday, Nov. 5 -- All Saints Sunday

Sunday, Nov. 12 -- Third Grade
Bible Sunday

Sunday, Nov. 12 -- Christmas
Coffeehouse, 3 to 5 p.m., Great Hall

Wednesday, Nov. 29 -- Children and
Family Advent Workshop
6 to 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 29 -- UCA Wesley
Advent service, 7:30 p.m.,
all are invited

Latest from the UCA Wesley



Join UCA Wesley to
tailgate at UCA Games!



October 7: Join us for free Nachos
(and pick up some Thundersticks to
take to the game!)

October 28: HOMECOMING GAME
We will have free snow cones and
face painting!



Meet us on Bruce Street from
1:30-4 pm!



Fall Schedule

mondays
7:30 pm - Bible Study @ the Wesley

wednesdays
7:30 pm - Worship in FUMC Chapel

sundays
10:10 am - College Bible Study @ FUMC

  @ucawesley
1903 College Ave | www.ucawesley.org

We are now officially back in the swing of things, with Bible Study on Monday nights, Wesley Worship in the Trinity Chapel on Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m., and a variety of fellowship and mission events each week! If you are a young adult (or know a young adult) in the area, we would love to have them join us!

www.ucawesley.org

ashores@conwayfumc.org

Communion Server Training Set Oct. 1

As we celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion we become one with Christ that the world might be transformed.

On World Communion Sunday we celebrate Communion with Christians globally across denominations. This year, we are excited to host a training for anyone who would like to be part of the communion process that takes place across our church through the efforts of many helping hands. These efforts range from baking bread, organizing servers, and offering the bread of life and cup of a new covenant to any who want to receive God's grace.

If you are interested in being part of the communion team, join us on Oct. 1 for a brief overview and training. We will meet directly following the 8:30 service in the sanctuary and following the Good News Celebration



*"By your Spirit
make us one with
Christ, one with
each other, and
one in ministry to
all the world."*

service in the Great Hall so you can learn the specific process where you would like to serve during worship.

If you have questions like "Who do I talk to to get involved?", "Where should I stand?", or "What if someone needs gluten free?" this training will equip you to serve communion with the confidence you are a Child of God.

Contact Pastor Miranda at mhornsby@conwayfumc.org for more information.



Grief Care Group Starting Oct. 4

Join Nancy Mulhearn and Lynn McClure for a multi-week study walking through the book, "Life After Loss." The group will begin at 6:15 p.m. Oct. 4. Come have dinner at Wonderful Wednesdays starting at 5:30 p.m. if desired!

In Memory and In Honor

In memory of Norma Kelley by: Larry & Marilyn Williams, Bill & Cecilia Patterson, Carol Schedler, Pat & Beverly Bowles, Jay & Kathy McDaniel, Martha Windelborn, Claudia Davis, Margaret Bowen

In memory of Ken Stephens by: Rick & Becky Rasnick, Rick & Bernee Thurow, Paulette Kilmer, Norma Rowe, Jeremy Peppas, Rebecca Mills

In memory of Ramsey Daugherty by: Kim & Ellis Arnold

In memory of Allan Bruner by: Jeremy Bruner

In honor of Rev. Nathan Kilbourne by: Bob & Nancy Dornblaser, Jeff Kelley

In honor of Pastor Dede Roberts by: Matthew & Heidi Crane, Nancy Graddy, Nancy Mulhearn, David & Jackie Daugherty, Kevin & Ruthann Browne, Tom & Cathy Goodwin, Ed & Mona Lea, Rick & Becky Rasnick, George & Christine Mayo, Clint Johnson

In honor of Kish Jones by: Charles Pittman

In honor of FUMC Members, Past & Present, Serving on the Oak Grove Cemetery Board by: John & Claudia Courtway

In honor of FUMC Food Pantry Workers by: Men's Prayer Breakfast

In honor of Jason Saugey by: Jeff Kelley

In honor of Betty Cohen by: Jeff Kelley

In honor of Chancel Choir by: Jeff Kelley

In honor of Rev. Sam Teague by: Jeff Kelley

In honor of Rev. Chris Cooper by: Jeff Kelley

In honor of Luncheon & Reception Hosts by: Jeff Kelley

In honor of FUMC Forum Sunday School Class by: Jeff Kelley

In honor of Bailey Harris' many years of Acolyte Service by: Stan & Marilyn Ott

In honor of Joe Heird by: Fred & Valera Tate

CALLING ALL INTERESTED 2023 FUMC CHRISTMAS PLAY! INFORMATION MEETING

**WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 4 @ 5:40
FELLOWSHIP HALL**

GRAB YOUR DINNER AND JOIN US!

**We'll read the play and look at rehearsal schedule.
ALL AGES ARE NEEDED**

More info: Ruthann Curry Browne: 501-339-3165

THE BLUE ANGEL ORNAMENT

**A CHRISTMAS PLAY
ADAPTED FROM THE BOOK**

Performance on Sunday, December 3

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
1610 PRINCE ST.
CONWAY, ARKANSAS 72034
501-329-3801

(USPS 625-840)

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MidYouth Director Sought

We're still looking for someone to lead our MidYouth Ministry for students in Grades 5-7.

Conway First United Methodist Youth Ministry's mission is to help students build faith for life by welcoming them to an inclusive and supportive environment, cultivating strong mentor relationships with adults who care, and engaging students in service, with attention to challenging and intentional conversations about discipleship, United Methodist theology, and justice.

For more information about the job, visit www.conwayfumc.org and click on the Job Postings link. You may also contact Zach Schrick at zschrack@conwayfumc.org.



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