



First United Methodist
 FAITH FIRST. FAMILIES FIRST. ANDERSON FIRST.

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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THE VOICE
 A Newsletter of First United Methodist

IN APPRECIATION...

Dear Friends,

My heart is full — full to overflowing.

Your love and generosity -- your kind words, and the wonderful memories you shared on my final Sunday as one of your pastors, are a blessing that will be with me and encourage me for the rest of my life. My father said to me afterward, "First Methodist knows how to say good-bye." And he is right! Thank you with all my heart.

This is not a final farewell, however. Though I will be trekking many other trails in the months and years to come, our paths will cross often. And after all, I have three "gift certificates" for JOY lunch. □

My prayers are always with you. You truly are a part of my family.

Every Blessing — Don Deena



**RETURN SUNDAY WORSHIP
 SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10**

A special Sunday of uniting our two summer congregations into one! Join us for a celebratory **worship at 10 a.m.** in the downtown sanctuary. Choir and Brass will lead us in music, new staff members will be introduced, photos of the summer will be shared, chapel prayer will begin, and a message of joy will be heard. Join us in launching our hopes and dreams for the Fall as we answer God's call to be faithful.

RETURN SUNDAY PITCH-IN & PICNIC

A tradition of this church is the Return Sunday Picnic at Davis Park. **Join us on Sunday, September 10 at 6:30 p.m.** for great food, fellowship, music and more! Grilled hamburgers and hot dogs, and water will be provided. You are invited to bring your side dish and desserts for the pitch-in. Your lawn chair or blanket will be needed as well. This is a great way to connect with others that you may have missed during the summer!

Happy Labor Day

"And people should eat and drink and enjoy the fruits of their labor, for these are gifts from God." Ecclesiastes 3:13 (ERV)

Adult Ministries

We Worship Together

Worship Schedule for September 2023

September 3	<i>Last Sunday of Summer Schedule</i> Labor Day Sunday & Communion Working Hard or Hardly Working James 2:14-20 (NLT) 9 a.m. Music: Mark & Michele Murray 10:45 a.m. Music: Mark & Michele Murray
September 10	<i>Fall Schedule begins: One service in sanctuary at 10 a.m.</i> RETURN SUNDAY Embracing the Unexpected Acts 16:20-38 (NLT) Music: Sanctuary Choir & Brass Return Sunday Pitch-in & Picnic – Davis Park 6:30 p.m. STEWARDSHIP SUNDAYS Defying Gravity For the next four weeks we will examine the generous life—what it is and why it can be hard to experience. We want to understand why generosity brings people joy and what forces work against it. The Good News is Jesus offers us a way to “defy gravity” and break free from the culture of more. You will be invited to prayerfully consider your relationship with money, possessions and giving as you listen for how God is leading you.
September 17	STEWARDSHIP KICK-OFF/DEFYING GRAVITY Matthew 19:16-26 (NLT) Discovering Gravity Music: Sanctuary Choir
September 24	STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY/DEFYING GRAVITY Luke 15:11-32 (NLT) Breaking Free Music: Wesley Chorale
October 1	STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY/DEFYING GRAVITY Luke 16:10-13 (NLT) When We Get it Right Music: Joyful Sound
October 8	STEWARDSHIP CELEBRATION Galatians 5:1-23 (NLT) Music: Brass Quartet Releasing Bubbles and Celebration Meal Immediately after worship

WE CAN WELCOME “PRAYED-FOR” NEW MEMBERS

Here is an example of what could happen here:

About a year ago, a small group of church members at Forrest Chapel UMC in Hartselle embarked on a prayer journey. The group began meeting right after Sunday morning worship service each week to pray. The time was brief, 5 mins., to the point and happened every Sunday after worship.. The prayer was for God to send the church five new families. "For a small country church, this seemed like a big ask!"

"We didn't have strangers immediately lining up at the door, begging to join," said Andrews. "We had no plan of action other than prayer. We did have a real desire to share the love of Christ with our friends, family and community, offer a place to meet together to worship God and provide space to experience the love of God, the peace of Christ, and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit."

Since the group started praying six new members were added. "We are very thankful for our six new members, and for God's love, mercy and grace." "God is so faithful!"

Join me, Pastor Corinne for prayer in the Chapel every Sunday 11:20-30 a.m. to PRAY!

BOOK SIGNING SEPTEMBER 24

The saga continues! DeWayne Landwehr has released the second installment of his historical fiction trilogy. This one is called "Inside Odenwald", and includes some interesting twists, including a Druid who is also a Catholic priest and a Lutheran minister (!). Follow this story, set in the 17th century, as some of the characters struggle with their understanding of God and try to deal with the events of the day.

You can purchase books after the service, and DeWayne will be available to sign them. He has pledged 20% of the sales to our Family Ministry efforts.

Music Ministries

ARROWS OF THE ALMIGHTY

Members of "Arrows" have decided to take a hiatus for the fall semester. We are grateful for their participation in our music ministry and will lift them in prayer as they take this opportunity to "recharge". We hope they will be back in the second semester of the year. If you have an interest in Arrows, please contact Sarah Taylor at sarahltaylor4@gmail.com.

SANCTUARY CHOIR

Is it too late to join Choir? NOT AT ALL!!.....we are just getting started and we are hoping to have some new voices! All you have to do is show up for rehearsal on any Wednesday evening at 7 p.m. Because our church is blessed with so many musical groups, the choir doesn't sing every week providing lots of flexibility in the schedule. All are welcome!

If you have any questions, contact Sue Finger at sfinger@acsc.net.

WESLEY BELLS

Wesley Bells will begin practice on Wednesday, Sept. 16 at 6:00 pm. All interested in playing bells are welcome and should contact Sarah Taylor.

Other Church News

UMCOR ASSISTS HAWAII FIRE VICTIMS

Wind-driven wildfires on Maui prompted evacuations and caused significant loss of life and widespread damage. UMCOR awarded an emergency grant to the California-Pacific Annual Conference, which includes the Hawaiian UMC, to provide shelf-stable food, water, hygiene items and tools to help survivors recover belongings. As first responders continue to provide initial aid, please join UMCOR in prayer and by making a gift to this disaster in the U.S.

WAYS TO GIVE

You are invited to give through this church and a single check of all the gifts collected will be sent. On a check include "UMCOR Hawaii" on the subject line OR place your gift in an envelope with the same designation with your name.

Your giving record will include a record of your gift to UMCOR.

OR

You may give directly to UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief):

Online at <https://umcmmission.org/advance-project/901670>

By toll-free telephone call: 1-888-252-6174 By check made out to Global Ministries/UMCOR with "Advance #901670-Hawaii" written on the memo line and mailed to Global Ministries/UMCOR, GPO, P.O. Box 9068, New York, NY, 10087-9068

100% of gifts given to UMCOR goes to relief rather than administrative costs.

FREE NARRATIVE BUDGET WORKSHOP

Thursday, September 7, 2023 at Anderson First UMC
7-8:30 p.m. in NS Parlor

Turn your budget into a story of your mission and goals.

Increase the generosity of your givers.

- People don't give to budgets, so what do we do?
- Communicating the story of your mission.
- Matching expenses with ministry.
- Increasing generosity through creative communication.

Creating a narrative budget is a critical step in crafting an informative budget

WELCOME TO OUR NEW STAFF MEMBERS

Special Introduction on Return Sunday, Sept. 10

Ally Hall as the Director of Family Ministries

Ally brings experience and success in building family ministries.

As she works among us and in our community, please remember her and her ministries in your prayers. Support her in this new endeavor by working alongside her, assisting when she calls and volunteering where there is a need.

Susan and David Selby as Outreach Coordinators

Susan and David bring a passion for serving the least and the lost in the community. Your established Outreach ministries will thrive with their support, and new opportunities are being envisioned. Please pray for their ministry among you.

Don't just **GO** to church, **BE** the church!



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Bible Study Circle

Leader: Merrilyn Vance
Meeting Date: August 31
Time: 1:00 pm
Location: North/South Parlor

Friendship Circle

Mary Falkenberry
September 7
10:00 am
North/South Parlor

UWF North Central Fall District Meeting—Saturday, September 16

1:00 pm—3:00 pm Registration begins at 12:30 pm
Carmel St. Marks UMC, 4780 E. 126th Street, Carmel
Program: Overview of this year's Mission U
Contact Peg Peter for more information

FRIDAY BIBLE STUDY

The Friday Bible Study will begin a new study on September 15, 2023 at 9:00 am in the North/South Parlor. All are invited to join us in studying **Twelve Women Of the Bible**. Looking for more information? Ask Peg Peter.

JOY LUNCH

(Just Older Youth)

Friday, September 15 at 11:30-1p.m. in North South Parlor
Join friends or friends-yet-to-be-made for a delicious lunch, a devotion, and a special presentation.

A different presenter each month, we welcome

Mark Finger this month as he shares about his woodworking.

Everyone is welcome!

Cost for lunch is \$12 which can be paid as you arrive.

Reservations are required for the meal.

Contact the church office by Wednesday, Sept. 13.

DEFYING GRAVITY

Stewardship Campaign

What holds you down and keeps you from experiencing the freedom Christ calls us to enjoy.

"It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery." (NASB)

To be free in Christ, we are free of those things – material, emotional, spiritual – that immobilize us and keep us from fully loving God and others.

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

The Men's Fellowship Breakfast will meet on Saturday, September 16, at 8:00 am at Primrose where Jerry Hardacre will be presenting the program.



Next Generation Ministries

MEET ALLY HALL



Hello there! My name is Ally Hall, and I am the new Director of Family Ministries at Anderson FUMC. I have worked in Family Ministry for the last 15 years.

I was born and raised outside of Atlanta, Georgia, and fell in love with ministry as a teenager. I started working in the church Nursery and ended up climbing the ranks there for 7 years as I went to school for Event Management and Design. I wasn't raised in the church, so I was able to learn about Jesus alongside the kids I was serving. It set me up for a lifelong, childlike wonder-filled faith. I served as a Director of

Children's Ministries at two churches in Georgia before moving to Nashville, Tennessee in 2015. I lived and worked there for over 5 years and loved my time in Music City! I served at a church plant as their Director of Children's Ministries, and it was so much fun to come up with so many creative ways to engage with the community.

One of my very best friends I met during my time there is originally from Carmel, Indiana and they moved back in 2020. They had the crazy idea that I should move up here too. I made the move and was the Director of Family Ministries at a local church in Noblesville for the last 2.5 years.

I'm super excited to move into that role at Anderson First! My passion for connecting with families and organizing outreach events will serve Anderson First UMC and the greater community well. Some fun facts about myself are that I have a huge coonhound named Cash, love TV and tacos, hate the snow and snails, practice yoga, think naps are always a good idea but best outside in the sun, and I'm on the hunt for the best sweet tea in Indiana. I also can't wait to serve alongside you and see what God has in store for this new season!

CONFIRMATION

Pray for our youth and their mentors as they begin a journey to learn more about the church, experience the foundations of their faith, and prepare themselves to grow closer to Christ.

CALLED TO SERVE
Called to Serve

God may be calling you to something new in your life. It may be time to re-commit yourself to the ways you have been serving God at AFUMC.

During our upcoming Stewardship focus you will have an opportunity to prayerfully consider how God is calling your to give of your time.

Begin praying for God's guidance now!

Outreach Ministries

HELPING HANDS PANTRY

The next Helping Hands Pantry is scheduled for September 13th from 8:30 AM to 11:00 AM. We would like to request donations of toilet paper, and men's or women's deodorant. The number of our guests has been increasing each month. At our August Pantry, we gave bags of supplies to 97 people. That was an increase from 83 people in July. Each month we continue to have guests who tell us they have not been at our Pantry before and they are so thankful to have the items we give them. Our congregation's generous donations make it possible to help not only these first-time guests, but our guests who attend each Pantry. We are blessed to have such a giving congregation and we thank you.

Sincerely, Linda Verhulst and Juanita Slattery

BUDDY BAGS

September is the beginning of our 13th year for the Buddy Bag Program to feed the children at Anderson Elementary School. We have had to feed as many as 632 students at Anderson Elementary School and when the 5th and 6th grades left the elementary, we were down to feeding 380. This school year, the 5th grade is back at the elementary school so we will feed 500 each month for 8-9 months. We are only feeding them once a month since that was how the program was set up at the beginning. Central Christian Church helps us to pack and deliver every other month so they will deliver in September and we will deliver in October and so on for the balance of the year. We handle all the monetary funding because Central Christian Church can provide us with volunteer assistance. We have 15-20 volunteers from our church that help us to pack and deliver the Buddy Bags in our month. The food is ordered and delivered at no charge. A letter is sent out before the first delivery to all students in English and Spanish; thank you, Maria Falkenberry. If the parents do not want their child to receive the Buddy Bag, they must return the letter, signed to the school.

We look forward to providing food to feed the children for the weekend when they will not have food at school. We thank all of our church volunteers who have faithfully volunteered, especially, Dick Falkenberry and Joe Snyder, all these years to help feed the children and make this a successful program for our church.

Johanne & Ernie Coleson, Coordinators