



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



RETURN SUNDAY – September 7

ONE SERVICE at 10 AM in the Downtown Sanctuary
WORSHIP will include:

Music by our talented Sanctuary Choir and Brass Band,
Dedication of the Repaired, Re-paved Parking Lot,
and an Inspirational Message as we praise God together!
Worship is followed by a PARTY to gather us in fun and fellowship!



Join us for the churchwide Return Sunday Picnic at our downtown Anderson First location right after the 10 AM Worship Service. We'll gather for fellowship over a delicious meal featuring hot dogs and hamburgers, along with fun activities such as Jenga, bubbles, and a bouncy house for families. We are thrilled to celebrate our return to the downtown with our Anderson First UMC family.

We kindly ask attendees to bring sides and desserts to church that morning, which we will keep in the North/South Parlor or the kitchen for additional refrigeration. Carts will be available for transporting food if needed. The meal will be served in the Parlor Hallway immediately after the service, with seating and tables available inside the Parlor and outside by doors 2 and 3 under the awning. While some parking will be reserved on Sunday morning, the awning will be accessible for use before the worship begins. We will need a few volunteers to help with setup during the 10 AM worship service and people willing to man the grill during the event. If you're interested in lending a helping hand or have questions about the Return Sunday Party, please reach out to Ally Hall via email at ally@andersonfirst.org.



Adult Ministries

WORSHIP SCHEDULE – September 2025

For full message: www.inumc.org/2025/08/14/

September 7 RETURN SUNDAY & COMMUNION
"Ships" of Our Faith: Fellowship
1 Timothy 3:14-16; 1 John 1:1-4 (NLT)
Music: Sanctuary Choir & Brass
Sound Tech: Jim Hudson; Visual Tech: Matt Stout

Sept. 7 Block Party following worship, Downtown @ 11:15 AM

GREATER THAN

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. -Aristotle

One aspect of growing as a disciple of Christ means that we are committed to responding to God's wonderful generosity. Being generous is about aligning our priorities with God's priorities, aligning our hearts with God's heart.

We grow in that generosity as part of our individual spirituality, we also grow in generosity within our faith community as the body of Christ. The disciples in the book of Acts understood the power of community and growing together in discipleship.

Together is greater than alone. Generosity is greater than storing up.

And Thriving is greater than survival.

Join us for this series as we consider all that God has shared with us and what it means to live a life that is Greater Than.

September 14 STEWARDSHIP KICK-OFF
We > Me
Key Passage: Acts 2:14-18
Rev. Brian White preaching
Music: Sanctuary Choir
Sound Tech: Mark Murray; Visual Tech: Matt Stout

September 21 STEWARDSHIP
Investment > Quick Fix
Key Passage: Matthew 7:24-27
Music: Sanctuary Choir
Sound Tech: Jim Hudson; Visual Tech: Matt Stout

September 28 STEWARDSHIP
Abundance > Comfort
Key Passage: Malachi 3:10
Music: Wesley Chorale
Sound Tech: Richard Cassidy
Visual Tech: Matt Stout

October 5 WORLD COMMUNION
STEWARDSHIP CELEBRATION

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,

(Recently) we received the concerning news regarding the proposed development of immigration detention centers within our state. Even more troubling is the language being used to describe these facilities—"Speedway Slammer"—words that demean the humanity of those affected and make a spectacle of their suffering. Such rhetoric is not only dehumanizing; it is antithetical to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

(This) is a mockery of the divine image in which every person is created. Many in our Conference have expressed deep concerns about what such facilities would mean for justice, compassion, and the God-given dignity of every person—especially those who are most vulnerable among us. As the body of Christ, we must not remain silent in the face of language or policy that diminishes human dignity.

We recognize the complexities of immigration systems and the responsibilities entrusted to civil authorities. We understand the tensions communities face in navigating safety, law, and compassion. Yet our call as disciples of Jesus Christ is unwavering: to affirm the dignity of every person, to stand with the vulnerable, and to speak truth in love. We remember the words of Jesus in Matthew 25:35: "I was a stranger and you welcomed me."

Here are some of the suggested ways to faithfully respond:

1. Contact your elected officials...You can find guidance on how to contact your representatives on our Conference website's immigration resource page at www.inumc.org/immigration/
2. Pray without ceasing...
3. Reject dehumanizing language...

May we, as the Indiana Conference of the UMC, rise to this moment with courage and conviction, welcoming the stranger as we would welcome Christ himself. Let us multiply love, cultivate joy, and inspire hope—bearing faithful witness to the gospel through our ministry of hospitality, justice, and mercy.

Bishop Tracy S. Malone
Indiana Conference of The United Methodist Church

Music Ministry

MUSICIANS NEEDED!!

Have you given any thought to being part of the music program at FUMC? We will be getting started again very soon and we would love to have you join us!

This is an open invitation to join the Sanctuary Choir! This group rehearses on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 PM -8:00 PM. You do not need able to read music to participate and you will enjoy the fellowship and music making.

If you are interested in this opportunity or have questions, feel free to reach out to Sue Finger at sfinger@acsc.net

CARING HEARTS COMMUNITY CONCERT

Mark your calendars!

September 21, 2025 4:00 p.m. Anderson FUMC Sanctuary

We are pleased to announce that the third Caring Hearts Community Concert will be held on September 21 at 4:00 PM in Anderson FUMC Sanctuary. This year we are joining the "International Day of Unity/Uniting through Music" as the theme for our concert.

We are very excited that in addition to choirs from Anderson FUMC, First Presbyterian, St. Mary's, and the Sherman St. Church of God will be joining us! It promises to be a great afternoon of music and community and you won't want to miss it!

It is a great opportunity to gather together with friends and neighbors from our community and raise funds. This year, all donations will go to "765 Food Desert Project".

Come and join us for this Day of Unity!

J.O.Y. LUNCH September 19

Join us for this month's J.O.Y. Lunch on September 19 at 11:30 AM - 1 PM to hear a presenter from the Victoria Guild of St. Vincent Hospital, Anderson.

Lunch will be provided by the Sorority. Make your reservation by Wednesday, September 17 by notifying the church office, 765-643-6977.

Cost of the meal is \$12 per person and is paid upon arrival. All are welcome!

BOOK SIGNING

Our resident author, DeWayne Landwehr, has published a new book. He will have copies available in the narthex and will sign them before and after worship on Sunday, September 21.

SOCCER AT DAVIS PARK

Thank you to Dick Falkenberry for coordinating all that is required for the YMCA, Liberty Christian and Hispanic Leagues to practice and compete on the Davis Park fields.

During the YMCA Fall soccer season that begins September 6, Ally Hall is coordinating the devotions for the players and coaches before each game.

A powerful witness to God's love and connection to our community!

Thank you to all those involved – mowing the fields, parking cars, cleaning restrooms, offering devotions and so much more!



As we set aside this month to consider how we each give back to our generous God, we are reminded that God "is infinite, **greater than anything we could ever imagine or figure out!**" Job 36:26. The emphasis on stewardship is centered in prayer. You are invited to pray this prayer throughout the month:

Dear Jesus, we long for all the possibilities that you offer for the future. Help us to see how you have empowered us to do greater than what we would expect or dream. Give us the vision to see our ministry, the church and the world when we lean into your power and love with our gifts. Amen.

ESTIMATE OF GIVING FOR 2026

You are a generous and faithful congregation, and for that we say, "THANK YOU!" The 2025 opportunity to share your estimate of giving for 2026 will be in September with a slight change to the giving card format. For the past 2 years you have had an opportunity to give to Family Ministry above your General Fund offering. We ask that you prayerfully consider **continuing to give at the same or increased amount to the General Fund** (combining what you had given in the past). This will allow us more flexibility to plan.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration!

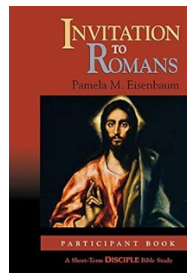
NEW DISTRICT RALLY DAY

West Central Plains District

In the fall, there will be a Rally Day in each of the five newly-formed districts. This will be the first gathering of the new districts and will be a time of celebration to engage our shared mission and vision, to meet the District Superintendent and the district leadership, to connect with pastors and laity within the district, and to meet Conference support staff. Bishop Malone will be present at each Rally Day and will share a message during this worshipful experience.

September 13 from 3 PM - 5:30 PM
Zionsville UMC, 9644 Whitestown Rd., Zionsville

Plan ahead to attend!



INVITATION TO ROMANS

September 8 – November 3, 2025

Monday 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Led by Pastor Brian White

The weekly video segments are presented against a backdrop of a wide variety of church settings followed by a conversation between a church historian and a church theologian about the text. The second weekly video is led by storyteller, Michael Williams, who shares snapshot views of how Romans has been read through history.

- Sept. 8.....1. An Orientation to Romans
- Sept. 15.....2. The Righteousness of God and the Faith of Jesus
- Sept. 22.....3. Abraham, Father of All
- Sept. 29.....4. No class meeting.
- Oct. 6.....5. Christ, the New Adam
- Oct. 13.....6. Sin, Law, and Grace
- Oct. 20.....7. Divine Purpose and Human Responsibility
- Oct. 27.....8. The Salvation of Israel and the Nations
- Nov. 3.....9. Love and Humility Are the Making of God's Kingdom

Books will be available at the church and cost \$11.

Outreach Ministries

OUTREACH NEWS

Hello from the Outreach Ministries,

The Buddy Bag team met to decide which foods would be offered in the back-to-school program. Foods were chosen depending on their nutritional needs and palatability for the age group. We met our goal of increasing the protein content to meet our MCCF grant requirement as well. Thanks to all who participated in the decision making and to all who do assist in implementing Buddy Bags as well. This is such a treat for the school children!

The Grille will end in August and then we're back inside for the rotation of Community Café and Food@First starting September 7th. We are blessed with Mercy Road offering to be our fourth Sunday of the month team throughout the season and Central Community Chapel providing meals for the 5th Sundays. Thanks to the other church team who help make this a reality and a big thanks to our church teams and behind the scene volunteers who all make this ministry viable for the downtown population to enjoy and find an hour so sustenance, comfort and peace.

In His peace, Susan and Davis

HELPING HANDS NON-FOOD PANTRY

The company repaving our parking lot was unable to allow vehicles on the lot until the paving was completed, so we moved the location of our August 13th Helping Hands Non-food Pantry from Door #3 to Door #1. Our carts with all the items for our guests were placed by the Sanctuary doors, then a long table was placed near the sidewalk outside of Door #1. Items on the outside table were replenished as needed. We notified as many people as possible that we would be on 12th Street outside Door #1. Each guest was given a bag with two large rolls of toilet paper, shampoo, condition, lotion, a bar of soap and their choice of laundry detergent or household cleaner. In addition to our regular guests and people attending the Utility Assistance Outreach, a number of people in the area came up to our table and were grateful to receive the same items as our other guests. At the end of the day, we were grateful to learn that we were able to provide 102 guests with items they needed. The donations we receive from our Congregation help us to serve the additional people who are attending our Pantry each month. Your generous giving makes a difference in the lives of those we serve and we are blessed to have such a giving Congregation.

Our next Helping Hand Non-food Pantry is scheduled for September 10, 2025 from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM. For that Pantry we are requesting donations of toilet paper, toothpaste or deodorant for a woman or a man. Your donations will help our Pantry and are appreciated very much. Thank you!

Sincerely—Linda Verhulst, Juanita Slattery, Karen Ambler

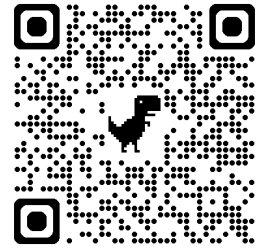
FALLAPALOOZA

Bring the entire family for Anderson first's Fall-a-palooza at Davis Park! This exciting event is happening on October 18th, from 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM. Admission is FREE, granting you access to games, snacks, crafts, inflatables and much more!

Dress in your favorite costumes and get ready for an afternoon filled with fall-themed excitement! We have plenty of opportunities for volunteers to participate and make this community event a success.

Visit our website for more details and click the link to sign up as a volunteer today!

For additional information about the event, feel free to contact Anderson First's Directory of Family Ministries, Ally Hall at ally@andersonfirst.org



Use this QR code and sign up as a volunteer

Candy Donation

Bring individually wrapped, non-chocolate or small toys for us to use at Anderson First's Fallapalooza! Drop off donations in Ally Hall's office by October 12th. Some donation ideas are:

- Skittles
- Tattoos
- Stickers
- Swedish Fish
- Nerds
- Laffy Taffy
- Bubble gum
- Tootsie Rolls
- Lifesaver gummies
- Sour Patch Kids
- Twizzlers
- Starbursts
- Small erasers
- Gummy Bears
- Suckers
 - Fruit snacks
 - Bouncy balls
 - Pencils

SEPTEMBER DEVOTION

by Stephen Anderson

"If we really want to love we must learn to forgive"
Mother Teresa

September signals the end of summer and the ushering in of autumn on September 22 at 2:19 pm. Five days later September 27th marks the National Day of Forgiveness. This day offers a personal opportunity for everyone to take a deep breath and assess where they are on the forgiveness scale. Family and married life is fertile ground for the opportunity for forgiveness. Sometimes people who love one another, in the heat of the moment, will say stupid, hurtful things to one another causing resentment and thoughts of revenge. Resentment and revenge may temporarily break the bond of love. If forgiveness does not occur then a permanent break may happen.

The person who initiated the hurt must first forgive themselves in order to neutralize debilitating guilt and regret for hurting a loved one. The person on the receiving end of the hurt must also forgive freeing themselves of the prison of anger, resentment and revenge.

Forgiveness in this instance restores unconditional love. An earlier example of the power of forgiveness was the fact that Eva Kor, a Nazi concentration camp survivor, publicly forgave her Nazi captors. Eva's public statement freed her from the shackles of hate and anger. Another example of forgiveness occurred in a courtroom where a young man maybe in late 20s was convicted of a DUI resulting in the death of a husband and father. The widow was present in the courtroom. Instead of screaming in hate and agony she arose from her seat and walked toward the defendant. She embraced him and he her in a torrent of forgiving tears. (Matthew 18:22)

We must not only learn to forgive others but also learn to forgive ourselves of our transgressions. Forgiving ourselves restores our capacity to love others. (Ephesians 4:31-32)

The five R's of Christian forgiveness are Repentance, Redemption, Restitution, Reconciliation and Restoration.

"If we really want to love we must learn to forgive" Mother Teresa



Family Ministries

FIRST KIDS BLURB

God designed our kids to be exactly who they are—piece by piece. This month, we are so excited to teach kids the Simple Truth, “I Am Uniquely Designed.” We will share Bible stories that help kids know God made them original, on purpose, talented, and valuable. To wrap things up, we will have a special Game Changer session, teaching kids, “God Says You Matter.” We can’t wait to see you at Anderson First Kids on Sundays at 10 AM and Wednesdays at 6 PM!

PROMOTION SUNDAY

Get ready because Return Sunday is almost here! Anderson First Kids will be back in full swing, and we want you to join us at the downtown Anderson location at 10 AM on September 7th. It's going to be an exciting day, especially since it is also Promotion Sunday! That means the kids and students will be moving up to their new classes.

Here’s the scoop on transitions:

- If your little one was in the Toddler room, has turned three, and is bathroom independent, they’ll be moving downstairs to the Younger Kids classroom in the kids choir room
- Got a kiddo heading into 1st grade? They will be leveling up to Family Worship on the first Sunday of the month and into the Older Kids classroom in the Fireplace room every other Sunday!
- And those entering 6th grade, welcome to the Student Ministry! They’ll be joining us for worship on Sunday mornings, with classes happening on the 2nd and 4th Sundays at 11:15 AM in the your room.

AFS MIDWEEK

Anderson First Students is getting ready to launch AFS Midweek on September 3rd! Our students will meet in the youth room to work on homework, play games, and find community. Students who serve in the Music Ministry can attend their respective rehearsal times. We can’t wait to hang out with you on Wednesday nights!

FIRST KIDS CLUB

First Kids Club is back in session, and we will start meeting at the church on September 3rd. At First Kids Club, we meet in the Older and Younger Kids classrooms every Wednesday evening to extend our Sunday lessons through engaging games, crafts, and discussion. Additionally, we organize Game Nights and Movie Nights once a month. We look forward to welcoming you and your family on Wednesday nights from 6 PM to 8 PM!

FIRST KIDS GAME NIGHT

Join us for the first Game Night of the school year at First Kids Club! We’re excited to invite all children ages 3-5th grade to our Game Night on Wednesday, September 10th, from 6 PM to 8 PM at First Kids club. This event is a wonderful opportunity for kids to enjoy games and have a blast as we celebrate being back downtown. We can’t wait to spend time and play games with our fantastic Anderson First Kids!

FIRST KIDS CHOIR

Do-Re-Me-Fa-So-La-Ti-Do. You know that First Kids Choir is BACK?!

If you’ve got kids aged 3 through 6th grade, we’d love for them to join our First Kids Choir! We meet on Wednesday from 6:20 PM to 7:00 PM and have a blast singing, playing musical games, and worshipping together. Plus, we get to perform several times throughout the year! If your child wants to join in on the fun, just swing by the Younger Kids classroom on Wednesdays. Got questions? Don’t hesitate to contact Sue Finger or Ally Hall.

YOUTH GROUP

Anderson First Students is getting ready to kick off on September 14th! AFS is for people in 6th-12th grade to find a place to learn, serve, and have fun together. We currently worship and serve together on Sundays at 10 AM and gather in the Youth Room on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month from 11:15 AM to 1:15 PM. During our time together, we play games and use Nua Origins curriculum to lead discussions about the bible and how it applies to our lives.