



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

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THE VOICE

A Newsletter of First United Methodist

A GIFT THAT KEEPS GIVING

by Jim Ault, Lay Leader

What a blessing that we are fortunate to have members of this congregation that over the years gave gifts which we invested. With the earnings, those gifts are still giving today!

We have had several questions wondering how someone can be a part. It's simple. You can make a gift at any time....just indicate that it is for the Church investments. You can also leave a gift in your will. Whatever is comfortable....and it can be any amount. The main point is to give a gift that keeps on giving. You will be a part of the Church's mission forever.

Think about how the current investments are used to maintain the facilities and support the programming. I'm proud of what we do and, I know I want to be a part of that forever.

YOU PUT THE "MERRY" IN CHRISTMAS!

You blessed many lives during December, showing others the love of Christ by supplying a need. You provided Christmas gifts for 72 children at Gateway, 199 towels for needy donated to St. Vincent De Paul, gift bags and gift cards distributed to our Community Café guests, and your generous donations to the Outreach Christmas Offering. In addition, showering "snowballs" of socks & gloves will additionally fill a desperate need in our community.

Thank you for who you are and all you give!

giving /giviNG/ (adjective)

providing love or other emotional support; caring.

"they were very giving and supportive"

definition from Oxford Languages Dictionary

NEW YEAR PRAYER

Lover of all souls, help us enter the New Year joyfully,
 willing to laugh and dance and dream,
 remembering our many gifts with thanks
 and looking forward to blessings yet to come.

May we welcome your lavish love. May we cast fears.
 May the grace and peace of Christ bless us now and in every day
 ahead. Amen.

Adult Ministries

WORSHIP SCHEDULE – January 2026

January 4	EPIPHANY & COMMUNION No Angels, No Shepherds, No Star John 1:10-18 (NLT) Music: Hadessah VanGilder <i>Snowballs of Hope following worship</i>
January 11	FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY Recognizing Jesus Acts 10:34-43; Matthew 3:13-17 (NLT) Music: Elizabeth Murray
January 18	UNITED WOMEN OF FAITH SUNDAY Staying Power Psalm 68:4-11; Luke 8:1-3 (NLT) Music: Sanctuary Choir
January 25	THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY Pastor Brian White preaching Music: Sanctuay Choir

UWF SUNDAY

United Women in Faith (formerly UMW)
January 18

In 2026, our theme will be Experiencing Emmanuel. The United Women in Faith is a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

in 2025 our UWF unit successfully merged our Bible Study Circle and Friendship Circles. Thanks to Pat Walker for volunteering as circle chair. Also thank you to Mary Falkenberry for volunteering as unit treasurer. We continue our studies to draw closer to God and support the missions of the State Chapter.
Submitted by Peg Peter UWF president.

Employee Phone Extension Directory

Corinne Boruff—1001

Ally Hall—1002

Outreach (Dave & Susan Selby) - 1003

Heather Ashton—1006

Office Hallway—1008

Judy Whitney—1012

Brian White 1014

Outreach Ministries

OUTREACH NEWS

Dave and I would like to take this time to thank you for your sincere giving to the Christmas Offerings that are dedicated to the Outreach Programs. We celebrated our Community Cafe Christmas dinner Sunday, 12/21/25. Thank you again to the United Women of Faith who provide gifts to our downtown guests annually. We thank you for your prayers and your kind acts toward our guests. This year United Women of Faith provided chocolate bars and candy canes. Outreach provided a \$10.00 Taco Bell gift card to each guest. Taco Bell requested to sponsor and serve our Christmas dinner once again this year. A special thank you to Meredith Selby for coordinating this event for our guests. Ally, Family Ministries Director, ensures that the Snowballs of Hope proceeds are donated to our downtown guests after each January event. We distribute the hats, gloves, and socks to our guests during a January Community Cafe/ Food at First event. They are truly appreciated and much needed at this time of year. This church is so generous. Thank you for all you do for the Anderson community.

Psalm 41:1-3 "Blessed is the one who considers the poor!"

Sincerely, Susan

HELPING HANDS NON-FOOD PANTRY

Despite a very cold day, we were able to serve 109 people. We served a total of 1,189 people this year. Each person that attended our Pantry was given a bag of personal hygiene items, including two large rolls of toilet paper, shampoo, conditioner, lotion and a bar of soap. We also provided each person with a bottle of laundry detergent. We are glad to see our regular attenders, and we welcome people who are attending our Pantry for the first time. Whether our guests are regular attenders or someone coming for the first time, we tell each one the date and time of our next Pantry and let them know it is always the second Wednesday of the month. We appreciate the support our Congregation provides by donating supplies that help us serve our increasing number of guests. Our Congregation is a blessing not only to our Pantry, but also to those we serve.

Our next Helping Hands Non-Food Pantry is scheduled for January 14, 2026 from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM. For that Pantry, we are requesting donations of toilet paper, toothpaste or a toothbrush, and/or deodorant for a man or woman. Your donations help us serve more people and we appreciate them very much. Thank you! We would also like to thank our regular volunteers who help us with the Pantry: Kristie McCleery, Cheryl Bayer, Christine Cox and Nancy Cox.

Sincerely—Linda Verhulst, Juanita Slattery, Karen Ambler

A MESSAGE FROM THE NEW CHURCH HISTORIAN

My name is Matt McClintick and I have agreed to be the new Church Historian. Back in October, Pastor Corinne hosted an open house dinner at the parsonage. My wife, Holly, and I attended that event. There, someone asked Pastor Corinne about her "vision" for the future of Anderson First UMC. In her response, she mentioned how she would love to have an official Church Historian. I told my wife later that I felt like Pastor Corinne had looked right at me when she said that. As a local Social Studies teacher at Frankton Jr./Sr. High School, the sponsor of the school's Jr. High History Club, and a self-described "history nerd"; I was instantly intrigued at the idea. The more I thought about it and prayed about it, the more certain I became that this could be a way for me to serve our church.

My family is relatively new to Anderson First UMC. We began attending last year during Advent. That being said, I grew up in the United Methodist Church, I have always attended a United Methodist church, and consider myself a proud United Methodist. I think one of the strengths of the Methodist movement is our strong sense of history. Going all the way back to John Wesley over 300 years ago, our church has deep roots. Roots that have helped us grow...and change. As someone who feels like "the new guy", part of why I agreed to take on this role as Church Historian is because it will give me a chance to explore and learn about the deep roots here at First Church. Learning a church's history is very much like studying its soul. I'm enjoying getting to know this church through taking a look at its soul. Also, not being someone who has grown up in this church, I have no interest in turning the historical work I do into some "trip down memory lane" solely for nostalgia's sake. In my first conversation with Pastor Corinne, I told her that my focus and intention in studying history here at Anderson First UMC will be to help us shape our future. Looking back so that we can better look forward.

Thus far, I'm still in my inventory process. This is a fancy way of saying I've been hanging out in the church basement searching through treasure. I've begun identifying, documenting, and organizing a variety of materials ranging from photographs, original artwork, hundreds of slides, newspaper clippings, and other documents. The plan is to eventually have certain items on display in a History Room that will be located on the 2nd floor (room 200), but that's going to take some time. I also have several ideas on what I'd like to do for future projects and displays, but I want to be able to take my time. I want it to be meaningful for you all. My hope is to have the History Room ready around Labor Day; when we return to downtown worship.

If you have any questions or items you'd like to donate, or something you'd simply like to talk to me about please leave a message for me in the Church Office. I look forward to it!

ASKING GOD

Instead of *telling* God what you want to accomplish in the New Year,
ask God what He wants from you this year!

WELCOME TO THE 2026 LEADERS

Your chairpersons for 2026 are a dedicated group of individuals who have answered "yes" to serving God by leading. Your chairpersons, etc. for the coming year are:

Joe Snyder – Church Council
Jessica McCleery – Church Council/Charge Conf. Secretary
Marissa Childs & Maria Falkenberry -- Co-Chrs. For Staff Parish
Elizabeth Murray-Sherron -- Finance
Jim Ault -- Investment Committee
Tim Kline -- Board of Trustees
Jim Ault -- Lay Leader
DeWayne Landwehr --- Grant Committee
Susan & David Selby -- Outreach Coordinators
Ally Hall – Director of Family Ministries
Dick Falkenberry -- Security Team
Dorinda Cassiday – Lay Member of Annual Conference
Sarah Taylor ~ Alternate to Annual Conference
Peg Peter -- UMW President

THANK YOU!

**For all those who served faithfully and creatively in the past year.
You are greatly appreciated!**

J.O.Y. LUNCHES 2026

As we pause in January and allow winter to rule, we also anticipate the warmth of being together again at JOY Lunch beginning in February. Our first 6 month of 2026 lunch speakers will include:

February 20 – DeWayne Landwehr – "2nd Continental Congress"

March 20 – Steve Jackson – America's 250 Birthday – "Events and Causes of the American Revolution"

April 17 -- Sharon McNabney -- Sear's Homes

May 15 – Susan Eichhorn – Education Coordinator as Anderon Recycle Center

June 19 -- TBA

July 17 – Kay Marcuson and Ann Bull, Master Gardeners on Prison

from 9:25-9:55, all kids are welcome to join us upstairs in the Choir room for the First Kids Choir. We will 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 Kids check-in on Sunday mornings, and we will take the kids to the Choir room and then back to their appropriate classroom following rehearsal.

Got questions? Don't hesitate to contact Sue Finger or Ally Hall.

FIRST KIDS CLUB

First Kids Club is on winter break, but will resume for a Game Night on January 14th and continue every Wednesday after that! At First Kids Club, we meet in the Older Kids and Younger Kids classrooms every Wednesday evening to extend our Sunday lessons through engaging games, crafts, and discussions.

Additionally, we organize Game Nights or Movie Nights once a month. We look forward to welcoming you and your family on Wednesday nights from 6 to 8 PM!

YOUTH GROUP

Anderson First Students is meeting on January 11th and January 25th for youth group. 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 and gather in the Youth room on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month from 11:15-1:15. 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.

200 ENVELOPES

Our Family Ministry Fundraiser is back, starting in February!

Follow the instructions below for a super simple way to support the Family Ministry's 200 Envelopes Fundraiser!

1. Grab an envelope out of the Narthex
2. Fill the envelope (cash or check) with the amount of money listed on that envelope
3. Bring the envelope back to church by March 1st

All the money goes straight to the Family Ministry! Thank you for supporting our Kids, Students, Young Adults, and Families. Reach out to Ally Hall for any specific questions or to explore more ways to serve the Family Ministries.



Family Ministries

FIRST KIDS

This month, our kids will learn that "I am known" with the new theme, "Aha!" Kids will understand that God knows everyone, every detail, every hurt, and every situation. We can't wait to give your kids an aha moment when they realize that God knows them and loves them just as they are. We can't wait to worship with you and your families on Sundays at 10am and Wednesdays at 6pm.

Our Anderson First Student Ministry will continue in their NUA Origins series with a lesson on *Connection: Prayer and the Ways of Connecting to God* on January 11th. Our next lesson will be on January 25th on *Story: God's Story and How to Read the Bible*. Join us on the 2nd and 4th Sundays at 11:15-1:15 for youth group and every Wednesday at 6pm for AFS Midweek!

SNOWBALLS OF HOPE

Join us on January 4th for snowballs of Hope!

It's time to loosen up your throwing arm and donate new gloves, socks, and hats for adults and children in need this winter. Ball them up and "deliver" them to ally and Pastor corinne with your best shot during worship at 10 AM.

Donations benefit our community members in need. If you have additional questions, please reach out to Ally Hall.

FIRST KIDS CLUB GAME NIGHT

First Kids Club is kicking off the year with a Game Night on January 14th!

We're excited to invite all children ages 3- 12 to our Game Night on Wednesday, January 14th, from 6 to 8 PM. This event is a wonderful opportunity for kids to run, play games, and have a blast together. We can't wait to spend time with our fantastic Anderson First Kids!

AFS MIDWEEK

AFS Midweek is on winter break but will resume on January 14th! AFS Midweek takes place every week on Wednesday nights. We 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 and the rest of our awesome students!

KIDS CHOIR

First Kids Choir 2026 kick-off is on January 18th! All kids aged 3 through 6th grade are encouraged to join our First Kids Choir. On Sunday mornings



An Invitation to Read Through the Bible in 2026

You are invited to read through the Bible in 2026 with Pastor Brian. If you want to connect with a group for support and discussion, you can join a closed Facebook group led by Pastor Brian. You can pick up a reading schedule in the church office or contact Pastor Brian (brian@andersonfirst.org) for more details.

Amplify Media - A New Learning Opportunity at Anderson First

Anderson First has purchased a subscription to Amplify Media, an online Christian streaming video service that offers the video components of many of your favorite Christian resources. Our subscription also includes Cokesbury Kids which has resources for kids and families. As part of our subscription, we can have up to 100 users from the congregation. There is an app for any smart TV or phone so you can watch anywhere. If you are interested in exploring this wonderful resource talk to Pastor Brian or to Ally Hall for more information.

ART GIVES GOD ANOTHER VOICE

We are blessed greatly throughout the season from Advent thru Epiphany with the presence of the Shepherds and Wise Men.

Award winning artist, Dorinda Cassiday created these masterpieces to enhance our experience of Emmanuel – God-with-us.

She states the following about the “Shepherds”, “While some people will ‘just’ see a painting, my brushes fashioned these faces as if writing an icon, filling in details of their experience with the Divine Mystery we have named Trinity. It is an invitation to join these shepherds in contemplation that divine mystery they encountered as well as the daily life we live as co-creators with the divine Trinity.”

To view these creatively beautiful pieces of art in color, they can be seen online at www.andersonfirst.org or, better yet, they will be a part of our worship in the sanctuary through Epiphany.



DEVOTION FOR JANUARY

by Steve Anderson
Philippians 3:13-14

Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing is I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

The most recognizable song sung just past midnight on January 1st is Auld Lang Syne. Its origins date back to the Middle Ages. It was eventually written down and published by the famous Scottish poet Robert Burns.

Old Auld Lang Syne means for old times sake or olden days. The lyrics of the song begin with “Should old acquaintances be forgotten? Should old acquaintances be forgotten and old auld lang syne. We’ll take a cup of kindness yet for old auld lang syne.”

People singing this song are affirming their love for longtime friends and family by also toasting them with a favored beverage. The toast is an acknowledgement that we are taking with us into the new year the positives that the life blood of love made possible for us.

We are also leaving behind the negative pitfalls of the past year. Paul tells it best in Philippians 3:13-14 when he tells us not to dwell in the past but to move forward spiritually. The driving force behind moving forward spiritually is love.

Jesus Christ has taught us how and what to love to bring us closer to him. The story of the Good Samaritan comes to mind asking the question “who is our neighbor? It is the person next door from Samaria who speaks no English and needs help in accessing the American Dream.

Mark Twain said that “history doesn’t repeat itself but rather it rhymes”. Two thousand and 25 years ago a young mother named Mary gave birth in the squalor of an animal shelter called a manger. Due to the oppressive rule of the authorities the little family became refugees.

This past year the Holy Land continued to be the victim of oppression, hate and relentless war. Also, this past year a young girl, about the age of Mary, laid down amidst the rubble of war and experienced the miracle of birth. Moving forward in spiritual development requires us to love our neighbor and to adhere to Matthew 25 by taking care of the least among us.