

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
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## “Glorifying God—Offering Christ Making Disciples—Serving Others”

### Church Staff:

Ron Fisher, Pastor

Jacqueline Mason, Children’s Minister

Crystal Ragan, Youth Minister

Margareth Urias, Music Minister

All Christians, Ministers

Anne Wilson, Administrative Asst.

Melinda Hendricks, Custodian

Patricia Richesin, Organist

Janet Standridge, First Kids Director

## REFLECTIONS FROM PASTOR RON

### From Bishop Mary Virginia Taylor concerning Holston Annual Conference June 9-12-2019.

“Stretch out your hand to bring healing and enable signs and wonders to be performed through the name of Jesus, your holy servant.” Acts 4:30. Two years ago, we got to take the trip of a lifetime that we had dreamed about for years. Rusty and I boarded a plane and flew with several members of my family to Hawaii. Growing up watching old movies of Elvis Presley singing “Blue Hawaii,” caused my expectations to be really high. Our first morning in Honolulu, we put on our sandals and ventured out on the sandy beach in the direction of Diamond Head. The image of the tropical island paradise was shattered as we saw a man injecting what we assumed was heroin into the arm of a young woman, there on that beautiful beach. It is projected that as many as 650,000 people will die from opioid addiction over the next decade. This year our annual conference will focus on what the church can do in the face of this health crisis. Our theme for the 2019 Annual Conference is “Healing Hands.” It is an invitation to love those around us and walk with them on their journey toward healing and wholeness. Every community in our region is faced with the challenge of addiction. The good news of Jesus is filled with stories of Jesus meeting and healing broken people. As the church, we can and must offer hope and healing to all who are affected, those who are addicted and the families who love them. I am excited about our time together at Lake Junaluska. We will elect delegates to the 2020 General Conference. We will ordain

and license those who serve as our pastoral leaders. For me, Annual Conference is like a family reunion as we get to visit friends from across Holston Conference. It is my prayer that June 9-12 will be a time of Holy Conferencing as we prepare to impact our neighborhoods through our ministries of healing. Grace and peace, Dindy Taylor

**Holston’s response to the Opioid Crisis** - By now, there is no doubt you have seen and heard the statistics surrounding our national opioid epidemic. Statistics like:

- ◇ More than 140 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose. • In our Holston Conference area, more people died from opioid overdoses than perished in traffic accidents, homicides, or suicides in 2015, 2016 and 2017. • Opioid overdose deaths totaled 1,186 in 2016, up 14.7% from 2015. • According to the 2018 Drug Enforcement Agency report, Georgia, Tennessee and Virginia are in the top 10 states impacted by opioid overdose deaths. • Tennessee is ranked first in the nation in opioid sales.

The problem is real. The results are scary. And the effects are astronomical, because let’s face it, we are all affected by this epidemic. We all know someone or some family that has been directly impacted by opioid addiction. Church, it is time we step up and do something about this! So here is what we are asking you to do:

Start praying now. • Begin by asking God how  
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## “Reflections from Pastor Ron” Continued from Page 1

you and your church can get involved to help stop this epidemic. • Consider creating a task force or committee to research the needs within your community and how you can begin meeting these needs. • Join with other churches in your areas to form a Missional Hub that focuses on an opioid recovery ministry. • Give to this year’s Annual Conference Offering.

While you are doing these things, here is what we want to do for you. Our 2019 Annual Conference offering will be used for grants to help churches and missional hubs begin new, or strengthen existing, ministries addressing the opioid crisis. We understand entire communities are being destroyed, and we believe it will take entire communities to turn things around. We also understand each area, church, or missional hub may need to focus on different areas of the crisis in order to meet the needs of their community. Some churches may start a Celebrate Recovery ministry while others focus on ministering to families who have been affected. We will need training, and we may need additional help identifying the social justice issues that need to be addressed as we battle opioids in our communities, and this will take money.

FUMC of Sweetwater took a special offering in May that will be used to help end this crisis. You can still make a love offering if you haven't given. Give, so we can make a difference in our communities. Give, so we can change these statistics we are hearing and seeing. Give, so we can remind the world The United Methodist Church is a Connectional Church that exists to “transform the world.” Give, so we can help end the opioid epidemic that is destroying our nation. Thank you for your generosity. • Thank you for your faithfulness.

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## EVENTS FOR THE LADIES

### LADIES BREAKFAST

**Saturday, June 8  
9:00 am @ Cup Runneth Over**

Ladies, bring some friends and join us for a yummy breakfast and fellowship. It’s a great place to get to know new people.



snappObjects  
Free Corporate Breakfast Vector

### SECOND TUESDAYS FOR WOMEN OF ALL AGES

Second Tuesdays is a place to connect with other women on the second Tuesday of each month in Knoxville. You are welcome to join us at 6:45 pm for light refreshment and good conversation, then we’ll dive into worship and the Word. If you are interested, please meet in the church parking lot on Tuesday, June 11, and we can carpool. We must leave by 5:15 pm (**Note change of time.**) Contact Karen Sadikoff for further information.

The location sometimes changes, so if you are driving separately, please check with Karen.





## CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES

*You make us so very Proud!!*



### HIGH SCHOOL

**Andrew Armstrong**

Peggy Dupes' Grandson  
Graduated with honors from  
St. Josephs Catholic HS, Greenville, SC  
Attending Benedictine College in Kansas on full  
scholarship in the fall

**Austin Littleton**

Ann Littleton's Grandson  
Graduated from Sweetwater HS

**Will Mortimer**

John & Susanne Mortimer's Grandson  
Graduated from Lakewood Academy in  
Kenosha, WI

**Evan Lee Niles**

Joe & Carolyn Purdy's Grandson  
Graduated from Loudon HS  
Attending MTSU in fall for flight training

**Gavin Viall**

Patsy Goodman's Grandson  
Graduated from Signal Mountain HS  
Signal Mountain, TN

**Brannon Watson**

Ann Watson's Grandson & Blair & Dawn's Son  
Graduated from Sweetwater HS

**Grant Wilson**

Larry & Rhonda Ruebush's Grandson  
Graduated from Science Hill HS, Johnson City,  
TN

### UNIVERSITY

**Jake Armstrong**

Peggy Dupes' Grandson  
Graduated with honors in Communications from  
Clemson University, Clemson, SC  
Entering PhD program on scholarship at Clem-  
son in the fall

**Carl Carter**

Dennis & Cynthia Richesin's son-in-law  
Graduated from Michigan Tech University in  
Houghton, MI with a degree in Computer Sci-  
ence

**Kelsey Richesin Carter**

Dennis & Cynthia Richesin's daughter  
Will graduated this summer from Michigan Tech  
University in Houghton, MI with a PhD in Forest  
Science

**Anna Marie Lee**

Joe & Julia Lee's daughter & Carol Ann Vestal's  
Granddaughter  
Graduated from Gatton College of Pharmacy at  
ETSU with a Doctor of Pharmacy Degree.  
She will do her residence in Oncology Medicine  
in Charlotte.

**Cori J. Shope**

Dolores Shope Walton's Granddaughter  
Brian & Beth Shope's Daughter  
Graduated from UT College of Pharmacy with a  
Doctor of Pharmacy degree.

## KIDS NEWS

### VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

July 21-25 from 6:00-8:45 pm



#### ATTENTION KIDS & PARENTS

Are you ready for an African adventure that engages the whole herd? Roar is a VBS experience where you will discover a ferocious faith that will power you through this wild life.

There will be five days of learning about faith and having fun. Supper will be served every night from 6-6:30 pm.

**We need your help. Please sign up to assist and for shirts by May 31 on the bulletin board by First Kids.**

#### A NOTE FROM MISS JACQUELINE

I was so proud of our Preschool and Choir Kids as they performed their Spring Musical. Thanks to the kids and the parents for a wonderful, fun, and very enjoyable program. A very special note of appreciation to Pam Haislip, Jill Stover and Wil Cofer for their help with the kids both with the program and throughout the year. We could not have managed without them.

**Watch for pool party dates very soon.**

#### FIRST KIDS

### “SUMMER KIDS”

Hands-On Activities

Tuesdays & Thursdays from 9 am—2 pm

Ages: 2-7 yrs.

Call 423-404-4885 to Register

First United Methodist Church

501 Church Street, Sweetwater, TN



**“YOUNG AT HEART” NEWS**

**SPECIAL BIRTHDAY GREETINGS  
TO OUR SENIORS BORN IN**

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TO OUR SENIORS BORN IN**

**JUNE**

Jun 3 Lloyd Langley

Jun 8 Julius Bruce

Jun 10 Ann Littleton

Jun 15 Mort Thomasson

Jun 20 Bill Price

Jun 26 Don Layman

Jun 26 Susanne Mortimer

Jun 29 Nancy Lange

Jun 30 Florian Meeks

**JULY**

Jul 3 David Toomey

Jul 11 Flora McGuire

\*Jul 16 Anna Wallace

Jul 16 Margarette Cleveland

Jul 17 Janey Richesin

Jul 20 Theresa Walker

Jul 20 Bobby Richesin

Jul 23 Bill Edmondson

Jul 29 M.C. Viar

Jul 30 Greg Goodman

Jul 31 Carolyn Clark



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**HOLSTON CONFERENCE  
OFFERINGS FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**CHANGE FOR CHILDREN**  
This offering funds grants for Holston-  
related children’s ministries for  
children in poverty (50%)  
and to children in Africa (50%).

**Our Change for Children Offering  
Will be on  
Sunday, June 2  
Please make checks payable to FUMC**

# Financial Update

## Capital Update

I just wanted to update everyone on our great progress toward retiring our debt for the Family Life Center. As of May, we have reduced the amount we owe on the FLC to about \$240,000. We continue to make accelerated payments on a monthly basis in addition to periodic additional principal payments. In the last year, we have reduced the outstanding balance by about \$230K. At the current rate, I would anticipate having the debt retired in total within the next two to three years (hopefully sooner). The early payoff (and tremendous overall savings) is only possible because of our church family's generous giving, so thank you for each and every contribution you have made over the years. Personally, I am always amazed each and every time I look at the history of how we have reduced this debt over the last few years. I continue to look forward to the day when this debt is totally retired and we are able to embark on more ministries for our church, the Sweetwater area and the family of Christ in general.

## Operating Budget Update

We finished up our first quarter of the year in reasonable financial condition. However, we are entering into what has typically been a challenging time of the year for our Operating Budget. We are currently showing a deficit of approximately \$17K, which while concerning is not unusual for this time of year. I do want to ask everyone to remain vigilant in their giving since the summer months are typically the lowest months of giving due to members being busy with friends, family and vacations. I do hope everyone enjoys the summer, but please try to remember the importance of your continued support to our church and its ministries.

If you have questions or comments about either the Capital or Operating Budgets, feel free to contact me and I'll be more than happy to answer or clarify any and all of your questions.