



# Staying Connected

Newsletter

## January 2022

I write this newsletter piece realizing that a new year has a begun. There are new thoughts. New energies. New hopes. New aspirations. New is a big theme within a new calendar year.

2022 comes with a set of challenges for us a family of God. We are still coping/ dealing with Covid. We are coming into a new year with financial concerns from the beginning. The effort and desire is always for ministry (no matter the form it takes) to be relevant and meaningful.

In looking ahead to this new year, I revisit some "compasses" that guide and direct. One such "compass" is the selection below from preacher and writer Mark Batterson. Please, give it a close and reflective read.

"Quit living as if the purpose of life is to arrive safely at death.  
Set God-sized goals.  
Pursue God-ordained passions.  
Go after the dream that is destined to fail without divine intervention.  
Keep asking questions.  
Keep making mistakes.  
Keep seeking God.  
Stop pointing out problems and become part of the solution.  
Stop repeating the past and start creating the future.  
Stop playing it safe and start taking risks.  
Expand your horizons.  
Accumulate experiences.  
Enjoy the journey.  
Find every excuse you can to celebrate everything you can.  
Live like today is the first day of the last day of your life.  
Do not let what is wrong with you keep you from worshipping what's right with God.  
Burn sinful bridges.  
Blaze new trails.  
Do not let fear dictate your decisions.  
Take a flying leap of faith.  
Quit holding out.  
Quit holding back.  
Go all in with God.  
Go all out for God."----

All In, Mark Batterson

These words are something of a rallying cry for me. Rally to lead and do and be. Rally to live and love and serve. Rally to give and pray and trust.

I hope these words might rally us all to be the family of God. First Marion... being disciple so as to make disciples.

Peace, James



1:00 - 4:00 pm  
January - October  
4th Tuesday of the month  
November & December  
3rd Tuesday of the month

Most of the food given out by the Food Pantry is purchased from Feeding America in Abingdon, Virginia. But, because of the pandemic and food shortages, Feeding America has not been able to purchase as much food from suppliers. The donations the Food Pantry has received from individuals and local businesses has allowed us to purchase food from local grocery stores at retail prices. The cost is higher when we purchase from stores.

God has provided through the generous monetary donations and boxes of non-perishable food from individuals, local businesses and churches. These donations are used to provide food for people in need in our community.

**Thank you to local businesses such as:**

**Royal Building Products ,  
Bank of Marion,  
Food City and WalMart**

**AND grants from:**

**Smyth Strong and the state of Virginia,**

**For your generous donations to the First UMC Food Pantry.**

### Are you up for a challenge?



Let's Read Together through the Bible in one year.

## IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO START

The entire 2022 Read Together plan is available for download & it includes a calendar, bookmarks and other resources.



[www.holston.org/readtogether](http://www.holston.org/readtogether)

You can also follow the Read Together group on FaceBook at: [Facebook.com/holstonconferenceumc](https://www.facebook.com/holstonconferenceumc)

**AND**

You can listen to weekly podcasts at: <https://umcna.podbean.com/>

**OR** you can pick-up a printed copy of the Read Together plan at First UMC outside the sanctuary and the church office.



# First Youth

Laura Robinson  
Director

Open to all youth  
grades 6 - 12

## Weekly Bible Study

Sundays 6:00 - 7:30 pm, includes supper

## Breakfast Club

Thursdays - 7:15 am @ McDonald's

# First KIDS

Ginger Moore  
Director

Open to all kids  
grades preK - 5

## First Kids Fun

Sundays: 6:00 - 7:30 pm, includes supper



## Join First Kids Choir

Wednesdays at  
7:00-7:45pm  
Starting January 26

Ages 3-5 (with a parent)  
And Grades K-5

This will be a fun time learning songs and singing together. It is also a time kids will need to focus on singing and learning how to stand still as a group. The First Kids Choir will be singing during worship services soon.



First UMC

## Nursery Club

Thursday, January 27 at 5:15am  
in the Nursery.

Parents and children ages newborn - 2 are invited to have fun learning and playing together.

# UPWARD

BASKETBALL & CHEERLEADING

Games will start on February 3, 2022  
Watch your email, FaceBook and our website for sign-up dates and times.

# First Music

Jim Regin -  
Director of  
Music &  
Worship Arts

## Hand Bells

rehearsal is Mondays at 5:00 pm.

## CHOIR IS BACK!

Starting Wednesday, January 12

6:45 - 7:30 pm

In the Fellowship Hall

Singers must be fully vaccinated and boosted in order to participate.

## Praise Band

rehearsal is Thursdays, at 6:30pm.

# TOGETHER AGAIN

## Resurrection 2022

Hebrews 10:23-25  
January 21-23, 2022



Last year Resurrection (REZ) was virtual due to the pandemic. This year it is in person again in Pigeon Forge, TN at the LeConte Center.

30 First Youth and adults will be heading to Tennessee to worship and learn together on Friday, January 21.

**Please pray for the group** that they will stay healthy and that their hearts and minds will be open to Jesus. For many youth this event is when they make a commitment to Jesus.



## MOVIE NIGHT

Sunday  
January 9 @ 6pm

Enjoy a movie with friends at First UMC



Child care available.

*Prayer is the key  
of the morning  
and the bolt of  
the evening.*

Mahatma Gandhi

Thursdays - 10 am

**Thursdays at 10am or anytime during the day, let's pray together.** As a church family let's pray for the staff, ministries and programs at First UMC. We need God's guidance in these challenging times. Thank you for your prayers.

# CHOIR IS BACK!

STARTING: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12  
6:45 - 7:30 PM

in the Fellowship Hall

**Giving Back  
CLOTHING  
CLOSET**

Free Clothing for the Community

Weekly: Wednesday - Thursday 2 - 4:30 pm

Thank you to the volunteers who have signed up to work weekly at the Clothing Closet. The Clothing Closet stays open and stocked because of their help.

## January Calendar

### SUNDAY: Worship

- 9:00 am Contemporary Worship
- 10:00 am Sunday School
- 11:00 am Traditional Worship with Children's Church

### Morning Classes

- 10:00 am Adult Seekers Class - Fellowship Hall Teacher - Tony Graham
- 10:00 am First Youth - grades 6-12 Teacher - Mike Albano
- 10:00 am First Kids - grades K-5 Teacher - Ginger Moore
- 10:00 am Pre-K I Wonder Class Teacher - Amy Martin

### Evening

- 6:00 pm First Youth Bible Study including supper

### Activities

- 6:00 pm First Kids Fun including supper

### MONDAY:

- 5:00 pm Hand Bell Practice

### WEDNESDAY:

- 6:45 pm **CHOIR** - starts Jan 12
- 7:00 pm **First Kids Choir** - starts Jan 26

### THURSDAY:

- 7:15 am First Youth Breakfast Club
- 10:00 am **Prayer In Action**  
**Time to pray for First UMC and each other**
- 11:30 pm Food & Fellowship
- 6:30 pm Band Practice

### Events & Activities:

- Jan 9 6:00 pm Movie Night
- Jan 14 1:00 pm Red Cross Blood Drive
- Jan 25 1:00 pm First Food Pantry
- Jan 27 5:15 pm Nursery Club

### Committee & Ministry Meetings

Board of Trustees  
Monday, Jan 10 at 5:00 pm

Finance Committee  
Tuesday, Jan 11 at 6:30 pm

Administrative Board  
Tuesday, Jan 18 at 6:30 pm

**James Bennington** - Pastor  
jlb@marionfumc.org

**Denton Staley** - Program Dir.  
denton@marionfumc.org

**Jim Regin** - Director of Music & Worship Arts  
jim@marionfumc.org

**Laura Robinson** - First Youth Dir  
laura@marionfumc.org

**Allen Johnsey** - Dir of Ministries  
allen@marionfumc.org

**Ginger Moore** - Director  
ginger@marionfumc.org

**Alicia Martin** - First Preschool Teacher

**Lisa Moore** - Business Admin.  
lisa@marionfumc.org

**FUMCares - Community Assistance Fund**  
Our little church banks have been shelved because of Covid.

**Our Community Assistance Fund has not been shelved.**

There are still many people in our community that need assistance with utility bills, doctor bills, gas to get to work, etc. Before Covid, funding for the Community Assistance Fund came from the church banks and offerings left at the communion rail monthly. Those funds have stopped and this account is low.

Please look for the Community Assistance basket next to the offering plate as you exit the church on Sundays. All change, bills or checks left in this basket will be used to fund the First UMC Community Assistance Fund and help folks right here in Smyth county Virginia.



### NEEDED: Sundays at 9:00am

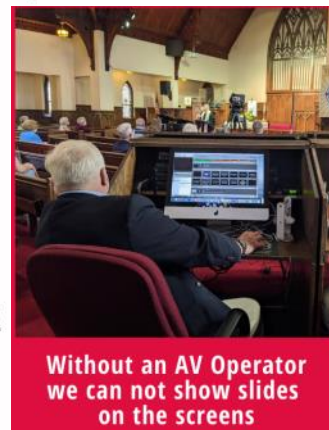
### AV (Audio Visual) Operator

Click on the correct slides to view on the screens during worship

Plenty of training provided, promise.

If you can use cellphone you can do this!

\*Please call or email us if you can serve on the Media Team.



**FOOD PANTRY**  
Tuesday, January 25 1 - 4 pm

**Help save lives. Give blood.**

**Friday Jan 14 1-6 pm**

**First UMC Fellowship Hall**

**Teri McCall** - Admin. Asst.  
teri@marionfumc.org

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*First with First*  
Podcast

