

STAYING CONNECTED @



November, 2023

United Methodist Church
Marion, Virginia

Prayer

for Israeli/Palestinian Conflict

Dear Friends,
I know that many of us are frequently keeping Israelis, Palestinians and all those in the Middle East in our prayers as tensions escalate in that region of our world. Below is a prayer I offer today.

Blessings,

Debra Wallace-Padgett
Resident Bishop
Holston and North Alabama Conferences

God of us all,

Our hearts are heavy and grief-stricken at the brutality, hostage-taking, deaths of those of all ages-including children- and growing conflict in the Middle East. The horror and pain being experienced by those involved in the war, including innocent civilians, is beyond our comprehension.

We pray for:

- comfort for those who are grieving,
- aid for those who are injured,
- food and housing for those who are displaced,
- a deep sense of your presence and guidance for those in the middle of the conflict,
- and wisdom for those in charge of decisions that affect the region.

You are the God who created the world and has brought peace in difficult circumstances throughout history. We ask that you bring the best possible outcome out of this complicated, heart-rending, and devastating situation.

We also ask that you use us as instruments of your peace in our personal relationships, families, work environment, nation, and world. These things we pray in the name of the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ. Amen.

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND

ONE SERVICE AT 10AM
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29

Our whole Church Community came together for one service on the 5th Sunday in October.

The First Kids Choir and the Chancel Choir came together to sing an old favorite, "This Little Light of Mine".



First Youth members helped with announcements and the morning prayer.

The Praise Band closed the service with a beautiful and Spirit filled version of "I Speak Jesus".



Before the sermon, Allen Johnsey surprised Pastor James with a gift from the congregation. October is Pastor Appreciation month. The leadership, staff and congregation quietly worked together and raised money

for an autographed football from the Green Bay Packers, Pastor James' favorite football team. Plus Pastor James was given a check. To say he was surprised is an understatement. It is wonderful when a plan comes together.

Thank you Pastor James for all that you do for this congregation and the community. We appreciate you, Tami and Kaylee.



First UMC
Appreciates our Pastor!

Rev. Dr. James Bennington

First SUNDAY DINNER

Sunday, December 3
@ 6pm Fellowship Hall

Bring a dish to share and
enjoy dinner with
church family!



**Join us this Advent as we celebrate
a Vintage Christmas!**

We will be exploring together the prophecies of Isaiah and experiencing what it might have been like for those waiting for the promised Messiah.

Christmas Memory Book

Share your Christmas memories with your church family. Send us your memories, stories, recipes or pictures from Christmas's long ago and recent.

The memories you share with us will be printed in a Christmas Memory Book.

Please email your memories to:
info@marionfumc.org

Or go to marionfumc.org/memorybook

Or bring them by the office.
We will be glad to scan your memories for you.

Deadline: Wednesday, November 29



AN APPALACHIAN CHRISTMAS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2023 AT 6PM

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
115 SOUTH CHURCH STREET, MARION, VA 24354**

Join us Sunday, December 17th at 6pm here in the sanctuary of First UMC for a very special holiday presentation.

This musical evening will set hearts soaring with the joyful sounds of American folk songs, spirituals, bluegrass-styled carols and original gospel songs.

Our own choir will be joined by the choirs of Ebenezer Lutheran Church, Marion Baptist Church,

and Joyful Noise. Accompanying the chorus will be a consort made up of guitar, banjo, fiddle, mandolin, upright bass, and percussion.

Our storyteller/narrator for the evening will be Rev John Graham.

This is a free event, but plan to come early and grab a seat!

First UMC*Connects*

LUNCHBOX THEOLOGY - A small group for men
Bring your own lunch:
On the 2nd & 4th Wednesday monthly.
November 8 & 22 at 12:00pm

FIRST SUNDAY POTLUCK

Sunday, December 3 at 6pm
Let's have a meal together and take time to talk and catch up with each other.

WOW! THANK YOU FIRST UMC CHURCH FAMILY for all of the Halloween candy donated! Your donations not only helped the First Kids and First Youth ministries financially, your simple bag of candy was a way to reach out to our community. Our mission is always to make disciples of Jesus Christ who transform the world around them.

A piece of candy, a warm smile, a conversation, an invitation to First UMC....all of these "simple things" show we care because Jesus cares.

Scouts @ First

Cub Scouts - Boys & Girls, grades K-5
Tuesdays at 7:00pm - First UMC Fellowship Hall
For more info call Scoutmaster
Christina Plummer 276-782-7902

Troop 93 B - boys & Troup 93 G - girls
Tuesdays at 7:00pm - First UMC Fellowship Hall
For more in call Scoutmasters
Chris Hash 276-759-6779 & Teresa Blevins 276-780-0483



Thank you to everyone who came to give out candy to our Preschool students!



First KIDS

Kids & their friends
grades K-5

WEEKLY

AFTER SCHOOL FUN

Weekly on *Wednesdays, beginning September 6 in the Fellowship Hall.
Ms. Ginger and the First Kids volunteers are excited to welcome the kids back. Snack will be provided.
Parent pick-up is 5:15pm.

*There will be NO After School Fun on Wednesday if Smyth County schools are **closed or dismiss early.**

EVENTS



Save the date for "A Very Mix-ed Up Christmas Pageant". First Kids are working hard on this hilarious and heartfelt Christmas pageant. You won't want to miss it.

PIZZA & A MOVIE AT FIRST UMC

Saturday | October 14 6-8pm
The pizza was yummy and the movie was funny! We had a great time. If you missed it, don't worry we are planning more fun events soon.





Worship, candy, a warm smile, conversation, laughter, an invitation to First UMC.

All of these "simple things" show we care.

Why do we care?

Because Jesus cares.



First Youth Youth & their friends grades 6-12

WEEKLY

FIRST YOUTH BREAKFAST CLUB Weekly on Thursdays at 7:15am

Meet us at the SCCH cafeteria for breakfast. The food is great and prices are reasonable! Spread the word and let's get excited for the 8th year of Breakfast Club!!!

EVENTS

FIRST YOUTH 2023 CONFIRMATION RETREAT

The September 22-23 Confirmation Retreat was held at the Lutheran Retreat Center at Hungry Mother Lake. Thank you to Pastor James and Allen Johnsey for teaching us and worshipping with us. Thank you to the parents who helped and to the church family who made stoles and helped in many ways. It was a beautiful, spirit filled weekend.



One Day, One Message, One Stand

Fields of Faith is a peer-to-peer movement where thousands of students from across the nation and world gather on their school's athletic field to share faith stories and challenge each other to apply the Bible as their "game plan for life."

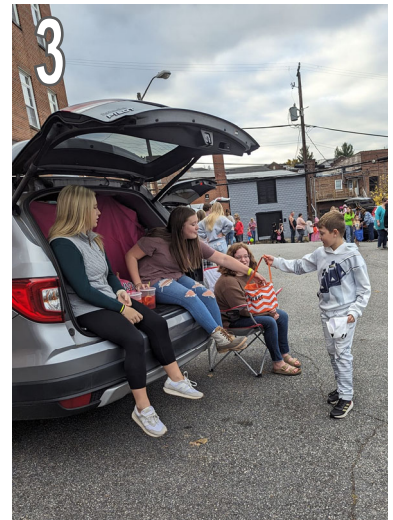
Fields of Faith for Smyth County was September 27, 2023 at Chilhowie High School.

It was an awesome evening at Fields of Faith with our group! Our own Zoe Sage did awesome sharing her testimony.



Sunday, October 29 was a busy Sunday for First Youth.

1. Several youth assisted with worship.
 2. After worship they spent a beautiful afternoon at the pumpkin patch in Wythe County.
 3. After fun in the sun they headed back to the church for the community worship event "In Search of OZ" and hosted several trunks at the Trunk or Treat.
- Whew! It's hard to keep up with First Youth!



First UMC *Serves*

What an amazing day of ministry October 24, 2023 was! Tuesdays are always great, as we host **Griefshare** and have a wonderful group.

But, October 24 was extra special. We served about 70 baked potatoes, with all the fixings and desserts, to the students at Emory & Henry School of Health Sciences for CHATS, a program from Mount Rogers Community Services. Thank you to all that prepared and helped serve today. The students were very grateful.



Then, Virginia Employment Commission held a Job Fair during our monthly Food Pantry Distribution Day, where we gave out about 170 boxes of food. There were many opportunities to explore for folks looking for a job.



THANK YOU FIRST UMC CHURCH FAMILY to everyone who came out on Wednesday, October 18 and helped pack and load **Food Pantry boxes** for the October Food Pantry. 147 boxes were packed and loaded. We did not run out of boxes this month!

November Pack & Load Day

We need at least 6 people to help pack boxes and load the truck to get ready for the November Food Pantry.
When: Wednesday, November 8 at 10am
Where: Food Pantry storage building at the end of Gill St - Marion, VA across from E&H College



FIRST YOUTH SERVES

These youth, who spent the previous evening dancing at their homecoming, showed up Sunday, October 15 to First Youth to put together hygiene kits for One Day At a Time!



First UMC *Serves*

SANCTUARY DEEP CLEAN-UP DAY

Friday, November 10 beginning at 10:00am
Please bring cleaning supplies such as vacuum's, long extension cords, cordless dust-busters, dusting & cleaning supplies, etc.

First UMC *Cares*

GRIEF SHARE Memorial Service
& Potluck Meal

Tuesday, November 7 @ 5:30pm



Tuesday
November 14

You have a choice of
two sessions:

10:00am - 12:00pm or
5:30pm - 7:30pm

We meet in the church
conference room at the
church office entrance.

When you are grieving a loved one's death, the holiday season can be especially painful. Our **Surviving the Holidays** seminar helps participants prepare for the holidays and even discover hope for the future.

During worship, Sunday, October 28th, I experienced a great surprise! I was recognized for Pastor Appreciation month. I received a signed football by a Green Bay Packer legend, a wonderful card, affirmation from the congregation and many well wishes. It did my heart so much good! I am grateful to pastor First Marion UMC.

Thank you First Marion for your kindness, thoughtfulness and generosity! Pastor James



December will be here soon and it will be time for the **annual Youth Christmas Project**. This has been an ongoing youth outreach ministry at FUMC since the 1970's! Wow! I am so thankful to serve in a church that sees this as a priority.

We will receive 30 to 40 names of children who are eligible through the Department of Social Services for the Santa's Elves program. Through your support our youth get to shop for, organize and deliver gifts to the children this Christmas.

This project is so impactful to our youth and frankly they are amazing super shoppers! I am always humbled and blessed watching them scour our local Walmart shopping with their hearts and savvy math brains. They blow me away each year!

Please consider supporting this project through your financial gifts. We could never take on this project without your financial support and prayers.

You may place your contribution in the offering plate, bring it to the Church office, drop it in the mail or give online at marionfumc.org/give, choose Youth Christmas Project. If giving by check please note on your check "Christmas Project"

First Youth *Cares*

*Dear Laura and your amazing group,
God blessed me the day you all visited me in my home. The flower you brought me is so bright and cheerful. I've moved it to the kitchen window beside my chair, so that I can enjoy it while I eat and it reminds me of your thoughtful visit.*

You and your group of thoughtful young people brought more joy in my faith journey and that the future looks much brighter with these amazing young people at the helm.

Bless you and thanks! Tissie Greer

Linda Crowder



The little flower your sweet group brought to me is growing and blooming like crazy. Love does blossom!

I think of you ALL every day since I'm keeping it on the front porch.

My sincere thanks. God bless you. Linda Crowder

First UMC *Gives*

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sun	9:00 am	CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP & Children's Church
	10:00 am	Sunday School
	11:00 am	TRADITIONAL WORSHIP
	7:00 pm	First Youth Bible Study
Mon	6:00 pm	Alpha @ Moon Dog <i>Through Nov 13</i>
Tues	7:00 pm	Scouts
Wed	8:30 am	Prayer Breakfast @ Atkins Tank
	3:30 pm	First Kids Fun
	6:00 pm	Hand Bell Choir
	7:00 pm	Choir
Thur	7:15 am	First Youth Breakfast Club
	11:30 pm	Food & Fellowship
	6:00 pm	Praise Band

MONTH AT A GLANCE

GriefShare Memorial Service and Potluck
Tuesday, November 7 at 5:30pm

Food Pantry Pack & Load Day
Wednesday, November 8 at 10:00am

Lunchbox Theology - 2nd & 4th Wednesday
Men's Bible Study - Bring your own lunch
November 8 & 22 at 12:00pm

GriefShare Surviving the Holidays
Tuesday, November 14
Choice of 10:00am - 12:00pm or
5:30pm - 7:30pm

First Food Pantry
November 21, 1:00pm-4:00pm

CHURCH OFFICES CLOSED FOR THANKSGIVING
Thursday, November 23 & Friday, November 24

Christmas Memory Book Deadline
Wednesday, November 29

2023 General Budget:	\$ 485,088.00
Giving Needed Each Month	\$ 40,424.00
Giving - Year to Date - Oct	\$ 337,879.15
Expenses - Year to Date - Oct	\$ 384,988.09
Balance Year to Date	\$ (47,108.94)

Copies of the First UMC Budget are available
outside the church office.

UNITED WOMEN OF FAITH

Sarah Circle - 1st Tuesday monthly
November 7 at 7:00pm

Faith Circle - 1st Wednesday monthly
November 1 at 10:00am

Deborah Circle - 1st Thursday monthly
November 2 at 6:00pm

Grace Circle - 2nd Tuesday monthly
November 14 at 6:30pm

COMMITTEE & MINISTRY MEETINGS

Board of Trustees Meeting - 1st Monday monthly
Monday, November 6 at 5:00pm

Finance Committee Meeting
Monday, November 6 at 6:30pm

SPR Committee Meeting
Wednesday, November 8 at 12:00pm

James Bennington - Senior Pastor
jlb@marionfumc.org

Bryan Underwood -
Director of Music & Worship Arts
bryan@marionfumc.org

Allen Johnsey - Director of Ministries
allen@marionfumc.org

Laura Robinson - First Youth Director
laura@marionfumc.org

Ginger Moore - First Kids Director
ginger@marionfumc.org

Susan Hansel - Bookkeeper
susan@marionfumc.org

Teri McCall - Administrative Assistant
teri@marionfumc.org

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