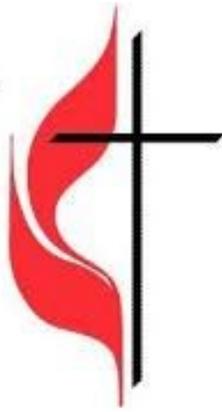


open hearts
open minds
open doors



The First Epistle

First United Methodist Church

900 Spring Street, Johnson City, TN 37604

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January/February 2020

Church staff:

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Finley Cook, Wednesday Night Chef

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Beth Louthian, Tammy Crawford &
Emma Berning, Nursery

THE LAST WEEK: A LENTEN SERIES

Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. Lent comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *lencen*, which means "spring." The season is a preparation for celebrating Easter. Historically, Lent began as a period of fasting and preparation for baptism by converts and then became a time for penance by all Christians.

Ash Wednesday emphasizes a dual encounter: we confront our own mortality and confess our sin before God within the community of faith. The form and content of the service focus on the dual themes of sin and death in the light of God's redeeming love in Jesus Christ. The use of ashes as a sign of mortality and repentance has a long history in Jewish and Christian worship, and the Imposition of Ashes is a powerful nonverbal and experiential way of participating in the call to repentance and reconciliation. This practice is the historic focus of Ash Wednesday observance and gave the day its name.

Holy Week is the final week of Lent, beginning with Palm Sunday and concluding with Holy Saturday. It is during these days that the readings focus primarily on the last days and suffering and death of Jesus. Holy Week is a sacred time for Christians, but the week passes by so quickly that we don't have time to reflect deeply on what it means. Instead of trying to fit everything in one schedule-packed week, we will slow down and take our time.

This year, during the seven weeks of Lent, we will focus on Jesus' last week— discussing one day of the week for each week of the season. On the first Sunday of Lent, we will celebrate Palm Sunday, and each week following we will spend time examining a day-by-day account of what Jesus did during his final week before his crucifixion and resurrection. The primary source is the Gospel of Mark, specifically because that Gospel chronicles Jesus' final week on a day-by-day basis.

You can prepare and participate during the season of Lent in the following ways:

- Attend Ash Wednesday Services February 26: meal at 5:30, worship at 6:30
- Read the final week on your own in Mark 11:1-16:8 using the Daily Readings calendar
- Spend time each day praying about what you have read
- Be present each week during worship and expect to hear from God
- Attend Wednesday Night Fellowship to continue studying Jesus' last week

May the upcoming season of Lent be a time of deep reflection and spiritual growth for each of you and for all at First Church.

Peace,
Pastor Jodie

Gifts and Memorials

- Gifts to the food pantry have been given in memory of Linda Orren by Bonnie Sampson, Ann & Frank Mohap, and Joyce Ottinger/ Circle of Faith.
- Gifts have been given to the Capital Campaign in memory of Ellen Ferguson by Nancy & Ernest Campbell, Bill & Leslie Sams, and David & Rhonda McLaney.
- Polly & Mark Crowder have given a gift to the food pantry in memory of John Collins & Linda Orren.
- Gifts have been given to Holston Home for Children in memory of Jim Crowder by Richard & Margaret Eddy, Deborah Grant, and Miriam & Calvin Robinson.
- Mary Ellen Thomas has given a gift to the food pantry in memory of John Collins.
- Cathy Smith-Slaughter has given a gift to the Food Pantry in honor of Bonnie Sampson.
- Sharon Benner has given a gift to the general fund in memory of Ellen Ferguson.
- Kathryn McClellan has given a gift to the Capital Campaign in memory of Bill & Mary McClellan.
- The Scripture Study Class has given a gift to the Junior High Youth in honor of Fred & Kathie Tucker.
- Steve & Novice Gross have given a gift to the Capital Campaign in memory of Jim Crowder.
- Fred & Kathie Tucker have given gifts to the Capital Campaign in memory of Franny Tucker Knouse, Jim Crowder, Clifton Robinson, Ellen Ferguson, Mary & Buck McClellan, and Steve Robbins' mother.
- Mary Ellen Thomas has given a gift in memory of Jim Crowder.
- Bill & Leslie Sams have given a gift in honor of Samantha Kay Sams.

Capital Campaign Update

Please prayerfully consider additional donations.

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Campaign Goal | \$150,000 |
| Total Donations (6/23-12/31) | \$80,042 |
| Needed to Meet Goal | \$69,958 |

Award for Christian Service

Two of First Church's longtime members, Anna and Karl Kapoor, were honored this year as recipients of the Milligan College prestigious Award for Christian Service. The award was presented January 16th in Seeger Chapel on the campus. It is no surprise to any in our church family that such an honor would go to Anna and Karl. It is very well deserved. Our sincere congratulations go to them both!

Saturday, February 22 & Saturday March 28

Neighborhood Center

10:00 a.m.-12 noon



Please remember your new or slightly used coat donations for this community outreach. A collection box is in the Connector.

*Note: Outerwear of all sizes is needed— infants to adults— including coats, jackets, sweaters, sweatshirts, hoodies, socks, gloves, and mittens.

To volunteer to help with the distribution or to request a pick-up of your items, please call 647-7270.

On January 24-26, 36 Junior and Senior High youth attended Resurrection 2020 in Pigeon Forge, TN. It was a weekend of worship, fun, and fellowship. The lead speaker, Pastor Reggie, challenged our youth to let go of what's holding them back from a true and real relationship with God. He also taught them about forgiveness, surrender, and the hope that comes from a real and genuine relationship with God. Many in the group responded to the invitation to a relationship with our Lord and many responded to invitation into discipleship, ministry, and Christian leadership. To quote one of the youth, "God chose me!" It was an amazing weekend.





FIRST THINGS FIRST

First Sunday of February, April, June,
August, October, & December

9:30 in the Parlor

Meet the pastors,
learn more about the church,
ask questions, meet new people

Oh, the Places You'll Go!

5K Run/Walk sponsored by the ELC will be Saturday, February 29 at 10:00 am. Sponsorship opportunities available! Contact Kathie Battista at 926-0700 for more information or to register or visit runtricity.net

Upcoming Events

Ash Wednesday– February 26: dinner at 5:30, worship at 6:30

Family Promise hosting week February 16-23

5th Sunday Breakfast fundraiser hosted by the youth– March 29

Holy Thursday Service– April 9:dinner at 5:30, worship at 6:30 (*in place of regular Wednesday activities*)

Easter Sunday: April 12: worship at 10:30, breakfast prepared by the men of the church beginning at 8:30

Wednesday Night Schedule

Salad bar opens at 5:30, dinner is served beginning at 5:45

Programming for adults, children, and youth begins at 6:15

We will continue our study of Our Christian Family Tree by Adam Hamilton

We will not meet on March 18 due to Johnson City Schools spring break

UMW Meetings

UMW Executive Board will meet Thursday, February 6 at 10:00. UMW General Meeting and lunch will follow at 11:00 in the Fellowship Hall. A special offering will be taken for Prayer and Self-Denial.

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