



THE WORD

A publication of Dyersburg First United Methodist

Volume LI

September 8, 2026

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PASTORAL THOUGHTS

Rev. Emily Sanford

Church Family,

It's fair week! I can remember a comment that one of my coworkers once shared when people would say, "That's not fair." She would respond to them, "the fair only comes once a year." This Sunday, we will continue in Matthew's gospel with a focus on grace and forgiveness. Matthew 18 offers the parable of the unforgiving debtor along with a challenge for us to forgive our brothers and sisters. In fact, it says we must forgive them "from our heart." True forgiveness is more than simply saying sorry. God is who makes us free to forgive. As we confess our sin before God, your forgiveness is not based on how little or how much you've sinned or even what you've done. What matters is what Christ has done for us on the cross. When Jesus said, "It is finished," he meant it. It's done.

Yet as forgiven and reconciled people who are recipients of God's amazing grace, we are to engage in the work of forgiveness with our brothers and sisters. The first step is taking responsibility to identify what you have done wrong. Where there is a misunderstanding, consider where you contributed to that misunderstanding and hurt. Then, ask for forgiveness and make a commitment to repair the relationship and learn from your mistakes to act differently in the future. It takes a lot of willingness and practice to see life from God's perspective, especially when we are hurt or angry. Perhaps nothing goes more against the grain of human nature than forgiving those who wound us and accepting forgiveness from others. But practicing forgiveness will transform your life and help you grow in the heart and mind of Christ. It will free you from a self-made prison of resentment and allow you to receive Christ's peace and healing.

I humbly ask for your forgiveness for where I have fallen short, let you down, or caused hurt even in my short time with you here at Dyersburg FUMC. I accept responsibility for times that my words could have been more carefully chosen and for when I've made mistakes in caring for you and leading our church. I value being a person and pastor of integrity, and I welcome a conversation to hear what I have done wrong and what I might do to begin making our relationship right through God's grace and love. I want to live as someone who forgives not just seven times but as one whose math of forgiveness has lost count because it is simply part of who I am.

(Continued on page 2)

SEPTEMBER 13, 2026

USHERS

Joe Yates
Lowell Beck
Charles Brown
Amy Lewis
Pierce White

GREETERS

Vicki Dunagan
Carolyn Helton

LITURGIST

Beth Feith

VIDEO RECORDER

Will Bird



Monday - Friday

8:30am - 12:00pm

1:00pm - 4:00pm

Our Mission Statement

*To Know, Love, Share,
and Serve Christ*

Our Vision Statement

*We seek to love God above
everything and to love our
neighbors as ourselves*

Our Values

*Hospitality, Outreach, Loving,
Tradition, Community,
Teaching, Family*

RECORD OF LOYALTY

ATTENDANCE (9/6/26)

Online Worship	70
In Person Worship	83
Sunday School	35

OFFERING

Income Year to Date	\$299,627.80
Expenses Year to Date	\$391,752.92
Income (July)	\$57,540.96
Expenses (July)	\$44,574.64
Communion (Project 20/20)	\$392.00



*** DYERSBURG ***

FIRST UNITED METHODIST Church

For Children

- 9:15 AM - Birth-Pre-K Sunday School
- 9:15 AM - K-5th Sunday School
- 10:15 AM - Birth-Pre-K Children's Church
- 10:15 AM - K-2nd Children's Church
- 4:00 PM - Blankets (2yr-5th Grade)

For Youth

- 9:15 AM - 6th-12th Sunday School
- 5:30 PM - UMYF (6th-12th Grade)

For Adults

- 9:15 AM - Koinonia Sunday School
- 9:15 AM - Sojourners Sunday School

For Everyone

- 10:00 AM - Coffee and Fellowship
(Gathering Space)
- 10:15 AM - Worship Service (Sanctuary)

We have a place for you!



MEMORIALS/HONORARIUMS

RESPITE FUND

In memory of:

Max Maddox
Max Maddox

Given by

Elva Burks
Betty Lynn Collier

PANTRY FUND

In memory of:

Katherine Evans

Given by

Merrill Lemon



SOAP

SMALL BOXES MAC N CHEESE

PASTA SAUCE

SMALL JARS OF JELLY

(Continued from page 1)

As we approach the 25th anniversary of 9-11, I was moved to see the image of a double rainbow over the skyline of New York City several years ago. While we remember the pain and hurt from the attacks, we also have a powerful reminder of God's promise and faithfulness.

I invite you to consider your math of forgiveness. If you're holding on to bitterness toward someone, take some quiet time with Jesus. Think deeply about how often and how completely you have been forgiven. May you be freed by the One who has paid it all that we might receive and offer forgiveness to others.

Grace and peace,
Emily

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Seeking leaders for the conference Board of Laity,
District Lay Leaders, and District Committees

Nominations are due by
SEPTEMBER 15, 2026

Congregations thrive through the ministry and spiritual leadership of its laity. The conference Board of Laity provides vital direction for lay ministries, supports local church lay leaders, and fosters deeper connections across our conference. The TWK Nominations process is now open for accepting nominations for the conference Board of Laity, District Lay Leaders, as well as a few required District Committees.

We especially seek passionate, dedicated lay members willing to share their gifts and help empower laity across the annual conference. Both self-nominations and nominations are welcome; nominations are due by September 15.

Key Details & Timeline

Submission Deadline: September 15 2026

(Scan QR for submission form)

Selection/Election Date: November 15, 2026



CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS

This quarter's contribution statements have been sent out. If you do not get yours or need to update something, please call or email, Karen in the church office. 731-285-6454, kkesterson@fumcdyersburg.com.

MOVING FORWARD WITH THE FLC

We are grateful for our FLC Team who will meet to explore our best options for moving forward following the YMCA closure at the end of the month. We will keep you updated once we have recommendations.

David Wagner (chair)
Kristen Bird
Mark Hayes
Joe Yates
J Dan Gullett
Tori Armstrong
Nancy West

SEPTEMBER 16, 2026 WEDNESDAY

NIGHTS AT FUMC

Men's Bible Study

"Quiet Strength" - Tony Dungy

Dr. Rev. Phillip Cook will lead an eight-week study on "Quiet Strength" by Tony Dungy, which combines Dungy's NFL career, Christian faith, and family values. Participants will explore personal questions about their game plan, strength, success, security, significance, and legacy. The book is available for \$5.



Walking Group

Rev. Emily Sanford will lead a Wednesday Night Walking Group for eight weeks, highlighting the health benefits of walking with others. Each session starts with prayer and a brief devotional, followed by a 30-minute walk outdoors or in the gym, depending on the weather. Join for a fun and healthy experience!



Adult Craft Class

Jane Bradshaw is hosting an Adult Craft Class. The first project will focus on "mod-podge" pumpkins. Participants should bring faux or paper-mache pumpkins to decorate with provided seasonal napkins, or they can bring their own. Included supplies are white paint, brushes, seasonal napkins, and mod-podge. Please text Jane Bradshaw by Sept 10th at 731-445-8729, if you're planning on joining.



Meal Starts at 5:00pm

This Week's Menu:

- Chicken Pot Pie*
- Green Beans
- Rolls
- Sweet Tea
- Water

*There will be offerings weekly for the kids, who may not want the main entree. Kids alternative choices may be Pizza or Chicken nuggets.

More info to come for Children's programming, but there will be offerings for them as well.

1ST THROUGH 5TH GRADE

19-20 SEPT

1:00 PM -
10:15 AM

KIDMIN FUMCDYERSBURG

**LOCK
IN**

REGISTER AT:

<https://min.link/dsm>

Prayer Requests

In order to keep our teams informed about persons you've requested prayer for, please send updates every **three weeks**.

Linda DeBerry
Rebecca Sanders (Vicki Dunagan's mother)
Kelly King
David Hayes
Tiffany Riggins (Elaine McCormick's daughter)
Bill Troy
George Robertson
Cherry Robertson
Linda Jones

**Please continue to remember the Home Bound.
*If you'd like to send cards, contact the church office for
addresses if you need them.*

TITHES AND OFFERINGS

The mission and ministry of Dyersburg FUMC is now more vital than ever. Although you can bring your offerings with you to church on Sunday, you can also still mail them or go online. It's easy: mail your check to the church at P.O. Box 452, Dyersburg, TN 38025 OR give online by going to <https://fumcdyersburg.com/donate>.

Send form #3579 to The Word, P.O.Box 452, Dyersburg, TN 38025, FUMC

**#13490
Periodicals
Paid at
Dyersburg, TN**

Sunday, September 13, 2026
**Sixteenth Sunday after
Pentecost**

Revised Common Lectionary
Readings:

Exodus 14:19-31

Psalms 114

Romans 14:1-12

Matthew 18:21-35

9:15 am Sunday School

10:00 am Fellowship Time

10:15 am Worship

4:00 pm Blankets

(2yr-5th Grade)

5:30 pm Youth Group

(6th-12th Grade)

Rev. Emily Sanford, Preaching

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