



**First United**  
METHODIST CHURCH

**THE MESSENGER**  
**MAY NEWSLETTER**

VOLUME 05: 2026

## Tending the Garden

I'm a little concerned about something in my life right now.

This spring, Brittany and I have been spending a lot of time working in our yard. It needed some attention—pulling weeds, planting, cleaning things up...

That's not the part that worries me.

The part I'm not sure what to do with is this:

**I think we're actually enjoying it.**

Which raises a real question...

*does that mean we're getting old?*

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## How Growth Really Happens

But being out there has reminded me of something simple:

**Growth doesn't happen overnight.**

You don't plant one day and harvest the next. It takes time, attention, and consistency.

That's true in a yard—and it's true in the life of faith.

We love big moments.

Easter.

Serve Day.

Worship that just clicks.

And those moments matter.

But the Kingdom of God doesn't grow like a fireworks show—

**it grows like a garden.**

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## Seeds We've Planted

Think about what God has been doing among us:

- Fostering friendship
- Serving side by side
- Sharing our stories

Those aren't just moments.

**They're seeds.**

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## Now We Tend

Now comes the part that matters just as much:

We keep showing up.

We keep serving.

We keep investing in relationships.

Because you don't plant in April and harvest in May.

You water.

You wait.

You trust that something is happening—even when you can't see it yet.

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 **Keep Growing**

Real growth happens in the middle—in steady, quiet faithfulness.

So don't rush it.

Don't lose heart.

And don't drift back to "business as usual."

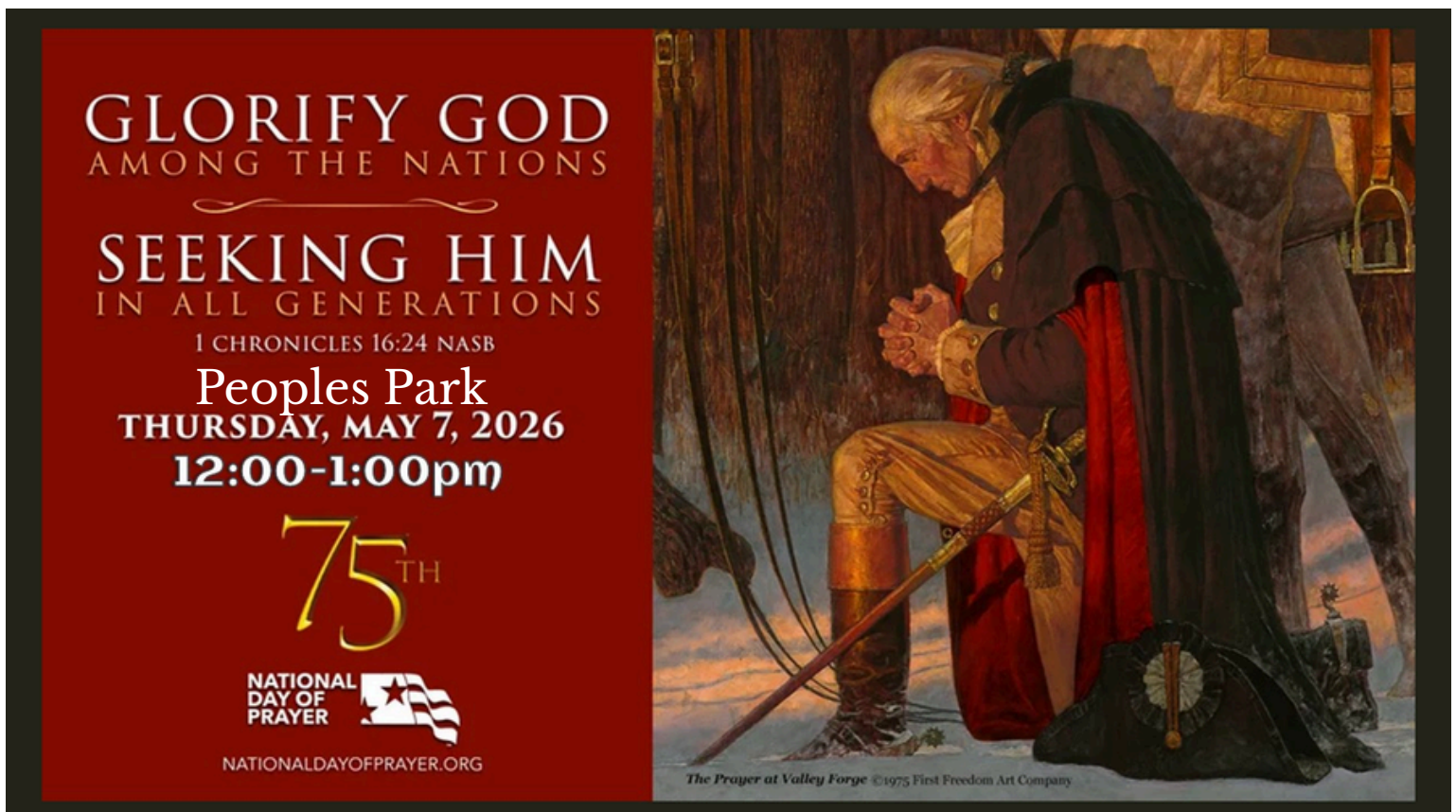
God is growing something among us.

And as we keep fostering friendship—serving side by side and sharing our stories—  
**we're not just having moments... we're becoming something.**

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I'm grateful to be part of it with you.

— **Pastor Sean**




**GLORIFY GOD**  
AMONG THE NATIONS

**SEEKING HIM**  
IN ALL GENERATIONS

1 CHRONICLES 16:24 NASB

**Peoples Park**  
**THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2026**  
**12:00-1:00pm**

**75<sup>TH</sup>**

**NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER** 

NATIONALDAYOFPRAYER.ORG

*The Prayer at Valley Forge* ©1975 First Freedom Art Company

# Knowing God's Will

God's will isn't mysterious. His Word is the record of His will for man and His creation. Learn what pleases God as you meditate on these verses.

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|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Thessalonians 5:16-19 | <input type="checkbox"/> Colossians 3:1-2      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Thessalonians 4:1-4   | <input type="checkbox"/> Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 5:15-21       | <input type="checkbox"/> Philippians 2:13      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Micah 6:8               | <input type="checkbox"/> Psalms 37:3-5, 23     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Peter 2:13-20         | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Peter 4:1-2         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 6:5-9         | <input type="checkbox"/> Psalms 143:10         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mark 3:34-35            | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Corinthians 5:15    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Romans 12:1-2           | <input type="checkbox"/> Proverbs 16:3         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 John 2:15-17          | <input type="checkbox"/> Colossians 1:9-14     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Peter 3:14-18         | <input type="checkbox"/> Hebrews 10:10         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proverbs 3:5-6          | <input type="checkbox"/> Romans 8:27           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Timothy 2:3-4         | <input type="checkbox"/> James 4:17            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colossians 3:15-17      | <input type="checkbox"/> Proverbs 16:9         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 1:8                | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Timothy 2:8         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Peter 3:9             | <input type="checkbox"/> James 1:5             |



“  
*Teach me to do thy  
will; for thou art my  
God: thy spirit is good;  
lead me into the land  
of uprightness.*  
Psalms 143:10  
”





**Serve Day was hard to miss—and not just because of the bright shirts.**

More than 100 people from our church stepped out to serve in tangible, meaningful ways across our community. In total, 114 of us showed up ready to make a difference. Together, we cleared 29 bags of debris along three miles of roadway, packed 105 emergency response buckets filled with essential supplies, and partnered with Habitat for Humanity to help prepare a future home site.

We also shared a special celebration with 32 individuals with special needs, complete with BBQ and games, and our students and leaders spread love through yard work at two different locations.

Serve Day was a powerful reminder of what it looks like when we don't just gather—we go.

*In Loving Memory*

Joann Lowe

Mark & Diann Garnett  
William & Pam Hutchings  
Jane Kramer



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
SENIOR RECOGNITION

MAY 3 2026

JOIN US AT 8:30 AND 11:00



American  
Red Cross

**CELEBRATE MORE**

*Life*

**Blood Drive**

**First United Methodist Church**

Fellowship Hall

**Tuesday, May 19, 2026**

**11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

YOU ARE INVITED TO A CELEBRATION OF

*Cindy Roseman's  
Retirement Party*

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
503 WEST MAIN STREET  
WEST PLAINS, MO 65775

May 22, 2026

6pm CLC

COME CELEBRATE THE MANY YEARS MISS CINDY HAS  
TAUGHT AND LOVED THE CHILDREN OF WEST PLAINS.

*United Methodist Women*



Crystal Hammack will present information on  
"Being Prepared In Case Of An Emergency"

**Tuesday May 12, 2026**

**9:00a.m. FUMC**

**Everyone Is Welcome!**

April 5<sup>th</sup>

Attendance: 127  
Gifts: \$22,009.80

April 12<sup>th</sup>

Attendance: 158  
Gifts: \$7,870.91

April 19<sup>th</sup>

Attendance: 156  
Gifts: \$6,418.03

April 26<sup>th</sup>

Attendance: 113  
Gifts: \$3,693.00

# Gifts & Numbers

**\*\*Currently we need \$8,689.00 per week to meet our 2026 budget\*\***

## Important dates for your calendar

### Every Sunday:

8:30am Contemporary Service  
Christian Life Center

9:45 am Sunday School

11:00am Traditional Service  
Sanctuary - 2nd floor

5:30-7:30pm Youth Group  
Christian Life Center

### Every Wednesday:

5:30-6:30pm God's Crew

6-7pm Handbell Practice

7-8pm Choir Practice

### Every Monday:

6:30 am Men's Group - Fellowship Hall  
2nd Monday of the month, will meet at  
Ozark Cafe for breakfast

May 3<sup>rd</sup>

Highschool seniors recognized at 8:30 & 11:00 services

May 5<sup>th</sup>

Friendship Circle Preschool Graduation - CLC, 6pm

May 5<sup>th</sup>

In Stitches - Parlor, 10am

May 7<sup>th</sup>

National Day of Prayer - Peoples Park, 12-1pm

May 10<sup>th</sup>

Mother's Day

May 11<sup>th</sup>

Church Council Meeting - Fellowship Hall, 5:30pm

May 12<sup>th</sup>

UMW Meeting - Fellowship Hal, 9am

May 19<sup>th</sup>

In Stitches - Parlor, 10am

May 19<sup>th</sup>

Blood Drive - Fellowship Hall, 11-3

May 22<sup>nd</sup>

Retirement Party for Cindy Roseman - CLC, 6pm

May 25<sup>th</sup>

Memorial Day - Church Office & Daycare Closed

## Friendship Circle Child Care and Preschool

Exciting things are happening in May!! Our Summer Program will begin as well as the opening of our new one year old class. Our children will have these themes for May: Summer, Water Play, Sea/Sand, and Camping. The children will be learning bible stories about Jesus' Return, Creation, Adam and Eve, and Noah's Ark. Our special event this month will be Muffins with Mom on May 7th at 8:30am in honor of Mother's Day.

Our Preschool Children will be wrapping up their school year with 4-year-old Graduation and a family picnic for our three-year-olds. Graduation will be May 5th at 6pm. On May 22nd at 6pm we will celebrate the Retirement of Cindy Roseman. Cindy has been an important part of Friendship Circle for more than 3 decades. If you or your children attended Friendship Circle over that time, please come and celebrate with Cindy.

## Children's Ministry

During May, our Nursery and Elementary Children will learn that Jesus is the Good News. Our stories will be Philip and the Ethiopian Man, The Early Church, the Holy Spirit, and Timothy Spreads the Good News. The Stories are found in the books of Acts and 2 Timothy.

During Sunday School, we will be learning about Peter's Denial of Jesus. Our lessons will include a Movie, Art, Cooking, Storytelling, Science, and Games.

VBS is fast approaching!! Our VBS this year is Rainforest Falls: Exploring the Nature of God. This year VBS will be July 13th-16th. God's Crew VBS will be July 12th and 15th, and July 19th and 22nd. If you are interested in working or helping in VBS, please fill out a form located in the church lobby and place in the basket provided. We will need music leaders, crew leaders, station leaders, game leaders, kitchen helpers, and many youth helpers. Can't wait to share God with our community of children here in West Plains.

## Crystal Houston

Director of Friendship Circle Ministries/

Director of Children's Ministries



**New friends** 🌿 **Surprising adventures** 🌿 **Creative games**  
**Super-fun snacks** 🌿 **Amazing experiments** 🌿 **Incredible music**



Chair's Update: April Board Meeting Highlights

**By Shaun Duggins, Council Chair**

Our April 14th Board meeting was centered on our 2026 goal: Fostering friendships by sharing our story and serving side-by-side. As we look toward the future of First UMC WP, here are the key takeaways from our time in the Fellowship Hall.

### **Ministry Celebrations & Growth**

We have much to celebrate! Our youth ministry is thriving under Crystal Houston's leadership of the 7th and 8th graders, and a generous donation was recently made to the program following the inspiring "Passion" presentation. We also celebrate Bambi Wheeler, who has been approved as a Certified Candidate in the SE District.

In our community, the Ladies Sewing group continues their outreach with handmade blankets for those in grief, and the Jamaica Medical Team recently provided vital funding for international medical care. Thank you also to Melody Martin and Karen Ryburn for sharing their musical talents on the piano lately.

### **Facility & Finance Updates**

The Trustees have been busy keeping our home in shape. Repairs were completed on broken windows in the Fellowship Hall and Youth Room, a sanctuary pew was mended, and the AC in the youth area is back up and running.

Financially, we are in good standing. While the Friendship Circle is currently \$1,000 behind, this is a significant improvement over previous months. The Stewardship Team is also finalizing our updated Financial Policy to ensure continued transparency.

### **Facing Our Challenges**

We must be honest about our attendance trends. Our Easter numbers have declined from 290 in 2023 to 214 this year. This highlights the urgency of our mission to make new disciples. To address this, the Board is focused on:

**Leadership Recruitment:** Every ministry needs a designated leader to build team descriptions and manage budgets.

**Community Engagement:** We are encouraging members to interview local unchurched leaders to better understand our neighbors' needs.

**Gifts Assessment:** We invite you to complete a Personal Gifts Assessment (available in the office) to see where your unique talents can best serve the Kingdom.

Let's continue to serve side-by-side as we transform our world through Christ.

Shaun Duggins- Church Council Chair 2026

Wanda Byrd – Secretary - UMW Representative

Lay Leader-

Finance Team: Melody Martin, Nancy Davidson

Trustees Team: Greg Weeks, Scott Womack, Amanda Rutledge

Staff Parrish: John Ackerson, Mallory Snodgras, Carol Powell

Youth Representatives: Drew Bauer, Ella Orr

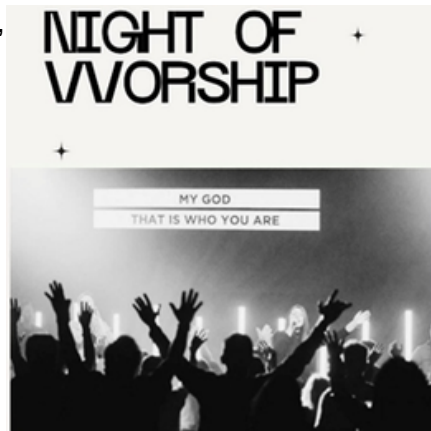
## FUMC West Plains High School Youth Ministry

High School Youth Ministry meets on Sunday nights from 5:30-7:30PM. Each night includes supper, games and a lesson. We thank those who have been gracious enough to serve a meal for our Youth group! Attendance has been great because youth are inviting friends, creating disciples and helping spread God's word through their testimonies.

Thank you SO much to the volunteers who have graciously provided Supper for our Youth this year! It is a chance to interact with this great group, always looking for more volunteers!

### LOVE Boldly, SERVE Joyfully and LEAD Courageously!

On April 21st, there was a Youth led "Night of Worship" held at Genesis Church in West Plains. Our very own Ella Orr and Lucy Hafer gave amazing testimonies! The night was filled with prayer and music as well.



Youth worked VERY hard on Serve Day on April 26th alongside our church family! We had a few landscaping projects within our community; 5 adults and 9 youth worked hard for 4 hours.



### Upcoming Events:

- May 3rd – Senior Recognition Sunday
- May 6th – Baccalaureate Service
- May 10th – Last Youth Night of the School Year

**Special thanks to our core group of adult volunteers that make this ministry possible! Joy Ross, Joanna Patillo, Bryan Moore, and John Ames are a HUGE blessing!**

**God Bless,  
John Ackerson - "Interim" Youth Director**



# In Our Thoughts & Prayers

May 3, 2026

## PRAYER CONCERNS:

- ◆ Billy Wade - health
- ◆ Charlene Case - health
- ◆ Brad Burdon (Sue Risner's nephew) - grief
- ◆ Deborah Whittington - health
- ◆ Amy Smith - health issues
- ◆ Jessica Pospisil - health/depression/grief
- ◆ Desirea Baker - health/depression/grief
- ◆ Patty Pospisil - health/depression/grief
- ◆ Shirley Hinkle's daughter
- ◆ Jim Peterson - health
- ◆ Rhonda - health

Mike Ross had surgery on 4/22 to implant a brain stimulator for tremors. Continued prayer for the upcoming battery implant surgery. 1401 Stoney Dr., WP

Charlotte (Charley) Woodworth has recently been diagnosed with childhood vision loss that is causing her to lose her central vision. Prayers for her and her family as they navigate this condition. They are friends of the Schultz.

Jim Weathers is currently undergoing treatment for leukemia. He has a long road ahead. Prayers for comfort and recovery. P.O. Box 694 Salem, AR 72576

Annie Noblin was involved in a serious car accident on 4/20. She is hospitalized at Cox South recovering from her injuries. She has made progress by responding to commands such as opening her eyes to moving her legs and squeezing hands. Prayers for comfort during her recovery.

Terri Pearsall (pianist from traditional service) is home after recently being hospitalized with double pneumonia. Prayers for her recovery and to regain her strength.

Marjorie Farmer's son, Maj. Alexander Farmer was recently deployed. Prayers for him and all of our service men and women.

Miriam Ward - Continued prayers for her and her family. PO Box 803, WP

Bud & Marie Nale each continue having ongoing medical issues: 1619 Evergreen, WP

Donna Cook's nephew, Mark Cook has been diagnosed with melanoma. He is receiving treatment at Barnes in St. Louis. His mom, Sue Cook recently passed away. Prayers for their family.

Continued prayers for Wanda Byrd's brother, Mike. He recently had a bone marrow transplant and will be confined to home for 3 months.

Jeff Keubler's brother Ronald, recently passed away. Please keep him and his family in your prayers.

## CANCER

- Ivan Kochubey - lymphoma
- Sheri Hedrick - cervical cancer
- Veda May - breast cancer (Barry Fielder's aunt)
- Steve Tumer
- Trina Johnson
- Gary Foster - Leukemia

## Home

Matt & Regina Janocko: P.O. Box 385, WP

Daryl Leonard-2325 St. Rt. 14, WP

Bud & Marie Nale: 1619 Evergreen, WP

Charles & Carole Cooper: 2694 S. St. Rt. 17, Mt. View, MO 65548

## NURSING HOMES & ASSISTIVE LIVING

Larry Pope-Rm 7B, NHC

Barbara Gingles-Whispering Pines, 2313 Bradford Circle

Neane Dorris-Whispering Pines: 2313 Bradford Circle,

Helen Birdsong: 213 Davis Dr., Apt. 403

Connie Long: 408A, Brookhaven

Billy Wade - Room 15, Cedar Hurst

Dee McCormack - Room 503, Pleasant Valley

## Nursing Home/Assisted Living Addresses:

West Vue-210 Davis Dr.

Pleasant Valley Manor: 213 Davis Dr.

NHC- 211 Davis Dr.

Brookhaven: 1410 Kentucky Ave.

Greenhouses: 2313 Bradford Circle (Oak, Pine Place, Dogwood

Cedarhurst-1521 US Hwy 63

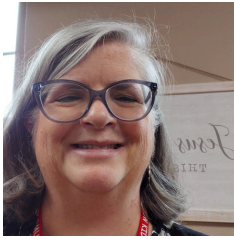
# STAFF & LEADERS



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**Falana Boze**  
Office Manager  
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**Crystal Houston**  
Director of Friendship  
Circle Ministries / Children's  
Ministries  
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- **Administrative Council Chair**  
Shaun Duggins
- **Columbarium Committee**  
Janice Bowden

- **Librarian**  
Donna Cook
- **Methodist Women**  
Wanda Byrd
- **Treasurer**  
Amy Murphy

## Contact Information

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