

# THE SPIRE

JULY 23, 2025

FIRST ST. CHARLES UNITED METHODIST CHURCH // ISSUE 14 // VOLUME 54





Dear Friends,

This is my last *Spire*, and I have all the feelings! I'm grateful to have walked alongside you for 6 years in ministry—through COVID, lots of changes, and more! I'm thankful for the ways you've shown love to our kids, youth, and their families. I'm also sad, knowing I will miss you when I leave. Joy, grief, and gratitude all exist at the same time!

I keep thinking of things I wish I could have done differently and know things will be left undone. That's how it is with all transitions, right? Ministry, and life, are never ending, and are always messier than we'd like. I apologize for the ways I've fallen short and am thankful for your (and God's) grace in the midst of that. I will continue to pray for you and am proud of how you are the presence of Christ to our community and world! I'm so thankful to have had such wonderful colleagues during my time here. They are brilliant, kind, and have a heart for our congregation and our community!

I pray that you can continue to be a safe place where everyone is safe, welcome, and wanted, including our youngest friends. I pray you continue to equip, lead, and empower our congregation's children and youth, for they are the church of today! I look forward to seeing you continue to be the presence of Christ in the world.

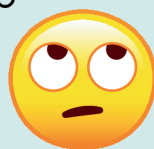
**Here's a few fun things I've learned during my time at First St. Charles:**



- ★ It takes more than 2 people to put up a giant inflatable water slide (sorry Katie)
- ★ Ale-8 soda from Kentucky has caffeine (learned the hard way on a mission trip)
- ★ Our kids and youth rock at leading worship!
- ★ Bible stories are best remembered when acted out (yes Funday School students)
- ★ Using Gen Z slang as a Millennial will guarantee eye rolls from Gen Z students



#ALWAYS





★ Mary Sheets makes the best desserts of all time

✓FACT

★ When in doubt, ask Pastor Debby! Her wisdom is out of this world

TRUE

★ You can have deep conversations about the existence of dinosaurs or what it means that God is Triune while playing games like 9-square



★ Our congregation lives in 3 different counties

★ Pipe cleaners are the best fidget toys



★ Tarantulas can and should be blessed!



★ The game Romans and Christians will outlast us all

★ Something big and unexpected will always happen at VBS, and God still shows up (hello water main break)



★ Be silly and have fun—whether it's on an online devotional, in a sermon, or with kids and youth. God loves our joy!

*love*

★ At the end, it's all about loving Jesus and loving our neighbor.



Thank you for being a loving church that has grown me, and for the kindness you've showed to Steve and me. We love you and will miss you, and know good things are ahead!

Love,  
Pastor Kate





## REV. DR. KATE HANCH APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF THE BAPTIST HOUSE OF STUDIES AT PERKINS

**DALLAS (SMU)** – Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University has appointed Rev. Dr. Kate Hanch as the new director of the Baptist House of Studies (BHS), effective August 11. A pastor, theologian and scholar, Hanch brings more than a decade of experience in congregational ministry and theological education across denominational lines.

Hanch currently serves as associate pastor at First St. Charles United Methodist Church in Missouri. Ordained at Holmeswood Baptist Church in 2011, she has ministered in both Baptist and United Methodist contexts and is widely recognized for her inclusive and justice-centered leadership. Her appointment reflects Perkins' mission to equip persons for faithful leadership and Christian ministry in a changing church and society.

Bryan P. Stone, Leighton K. Farrell Endowed Dean at Perkins School of Theology, welcomed the appointment as a key development in the ongoing growth of the program. "I am happy to announce the appointment of Rev. Dr. Kate Hanch as the new director of the Baptist House of Study at Perkins School of Theology," said Stone. "Dr. Hanch's appointment signals a new day and a significant step forward for our Baptist House of Studies, thanks to the Baugh Foundation and to the years of groundbreaking hard work provided by Rev. Dr. Jaime Clark-Soles, Rev. Dr. George Mason, and Rev. Annette Owen. As Dr. Hanch takes on this leadership role, she brings rich congregational experience, an imaginative vision for supporting Baptist students, and a lively research agenda that will take Baptist studies to the next level within our institution and in the wider region. The Baptist House of Studies is one of our most important ecumenical initiatives at Perkins, and I'm delighted that Dr. Hanch will be partnering with us in outreach, nurture and support, research, and study."

Hanch holds a Ph.D. in theology and ethics from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, where her dissertation – *Prophetic Humility: A Feminist Theological Account* – examined themes of power, justice and divine love through the lens of humility. She earned her M.Div. from Central Baptist Theological Seminary and a B.A. in religion from Missouri Baptist University.

Her research spans feminist theory, Black and womanist theology, and Christian mysticism. Her first book, *Storied Witness: The Theology of Black Women Preachers in 19th Century America* (Fortress Press, 2022), highlights the theological contributions of Black women in American religious history.

A dedicated educator, Hanch has taught at the Baptist Seminary of Kentucky, Central Baptist Theological Seminary and Lindenwood University, among others. She has presented nationally at the Society of Biblical Literature, the American Academy of Religion and the College Theology Society. Her articles appear in *Review & Expositor*, *Liturgy and Perspectives in Religious Studies*, and she contributes regularly to *Baptist News Global* on issues of inclusion, spirituality and social transformation.

"I look forward to joining Perkins and being a part of a seminary that cares deeply about the church and the world," Hanch said. "I hope to empower and equip students to live out their call through an education that is creative, ecumenical and rooted in community."

"Having worked in the church for many years, I know we need to think differently about long-held traditions," she added. "I'm excited about exploring new models for theological education – whether that's through online learning, ecumenical partnerships or equipping students with skills to serve not only in the parish but also in the wider world."

The Baptist House of Studies at Perkins supports Baptist students in their theological formation through mentorship, coursework, worship and vocational discernment. Established in 2021, BHS advances one of Perkins' most vital ecumenical initiatives—promoting collaboration, leadership development and spiritual depth in the Baptist tradition within a welcoming and inclusive theological community.





*Pastor Kate's*

# ICE CREAM SOCIAL

**SUNDAY, JULY 27<sup>TH</sup> AT NOON**

**JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE PASTOR KATE'S  
MINISTRY & BLESS HER ON HER NEW JOURNEY!**

**OUR YOUTH &  
FAMILIES HELD  
A SPECIAL  
GATHERING TO  
WISH PASTOR  
KATE  
FAREWELL.**



**A SPECIAL  
WEIRD AL  
THEME WAS  
JUST  
PERFECTION!**



## MEET THE STAFF

REV. KIM MITCHELL

REV. DEBBY BARTLEY

REV. KATE HANCH, PH.D.

REV. STEVE WILLIAMS

PATTI ADAMS

KARLA CURRY

STACEY DAVIS

ERIC HEIEN

MARSHA HUNT

KERRI JOHNSON

BETH KELLEY

JACK MCCORMICK

JIM NICHOLS

OLIVIA OSTERHAGE

KATIE ROAM

# FIRST *friends*

AVAILABLE ON OUR  &  PAGES!



OLIVIA WOULD LOVE TO INTERVIEW YOU! LET HER KNOW  
IF YOU'RE INTERESTED. SHE'LL EVEN COME TO YOU!

## REMINDER

THE CHURCH OFFICE IS  
CLOSED ON FRIDAYS.



# Next Gen Summer

YOUTH  
GROUP



AUGUST



3

POOL PARTY [AT] KATHY  
AVERY'S HOUSE

FOR NEXTGEN MINISTRIES DURING AUGUST, WITH A COUPLE OF EXCEPTIONS, WE WILL BE TAKING A SABBATH. THIS WILL GIVE US TIME TO PLAN FOR THE TRANSITION AND PREPARE FOR ALL THINGS BACK TO SCHOOL! WE WILL RESUME SUNDAY MORNING AND EVENING PROGRAMMING THE FIRST SUNDAY IN SEPTEMBER AFTER LABOR DAY!



FUNDAY  
SCHOOL



TIME FOR A  
BREAK.

WE ARE STILL GATHERING, BUT ARE MORE RELAXED AND FLEXIBLE THAN WITH OUR NORMAL FUNDAY SCHOOL ACTIVITIES. ON JULY 27, WE WILL BE LEARNING ABOUT HOW TO USE OUR BIBLES, AND WHY THE BIBLE IS IMPORTANT! IT HELPS US KNOW ABOUT JESUS AND HOW HE WANTS US TO LIVE. JOIN US AT 10 AM IN THE UPSTAIRS GYM OF THE LEARNING CENTER!



## Discerning where the Spirit leads

With the announcement of Pastor Kate's transition, we have the opportunity to craft a vision of what we hope NextGen ministries looks like in the future, and how our church can support our youngest disciples. *Here's what a team of parents discerned:*

- We do well at creating a welcoming environment for children & youth who feel safe and comfortable with congregational members.
- Youth group provides a sense of connection and community, as does Confirmation.
- Special events provide a sense of connection & joy for people of all ages.
- Parents & kids want consistent youth & children's Sunday School year-round.
- Kids want Sunday leaders who aren't their parents - this way they can know God's love from many people!
- Parents want their own Sunday School class for learning, connection, & community.
- Parents want more bible-focused small groups for our 3rd-5th graders and our youth Sunday School classes.
- Music is important! We'd like to reintroduce music programming to elementary-aged kids on Sundays.
- Our kids want to serve! They want to be involved in the ministries & missions of the church.
- If an adult mid-week study or special event is offered, parents with small kiddos would like a nursery option.
- Parents are willing to teach Sunday School or help at Youth Group once/month or every 6 weeks.
- It's the hope that any new leader to be organized, have good communication skills with staff & youth of all ages, and align with our church's inclusive mission.

Pray

Please pray for our leadership, kids, youth, and their families as we discern how First St. Charles can continue to be a place where all ages feel safe, welcome, and wanted!







## 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR ENROLLMENT

✓ Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum that follows the Missouri Early Learning Standards

✓ Loving Christian Caregivers

✓ Low Student-Teacher Ratio

**ENROLL NOW**



**636.947.9380**



**[kjohnson@firststcharlesumc.org](mailto:kjohnson@firststcharlesumc.org)**

**THERE ARE STILL SPACES AVAILABLE  
FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR!**



Before we know it, **Summer** will be winding down  
and our Pre-K kiddos will be off to Kindergarten!





# worship WITH US



**In-Person Services  
at 9 a.m. & 11 a.m.**

**Live Stream via**



## **CONNECT ON THE GO**

**WITH OUR NEW PODCAST!**

Catch up on sermons in the car, or share them with a friend across the country! Our new sermon podcast is now available on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, and Spotify. Find it by searching "First St. Charles" in your podcast app.



Apple Podcasts  
(iOS)



Google Podcasts  
(Android)



Spotify  
(Android & iOS)

## **FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!**



[@firststcharlesumc.org](https://firststcharlesumc.org)



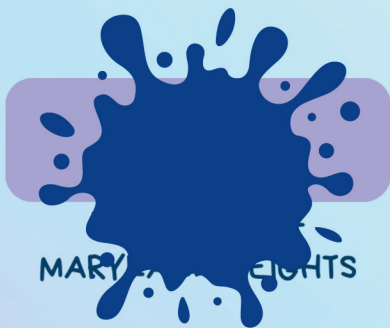
# SMALL GROUPS & MINISTRIES

## TINY TOT TIME

*Summer of*

## SPLASH PADS

4 PM



**AUGUST 10**

WESTHOFF PARK -  
O'FALLON

**Just meet us at the park or contact BETH with any questions:**  
[bkelly@firststcharlesumc.org](mailto:bkelly@firststcharlesumc.org)



An Adult Study led by Katie Roam

Wednesdays at 6:30pm  
July 2<sup>nd</sup> - August 23<sup>rd</sup>

# SMALL GROUPS & MINISTRIES

## WATER WALKING

THURSDAY, JULY 10TH &  
24TH AT 7:30 AM

WAPELHORST WATERPARK

COST: \$6.50

CONTACT OLIVIA IF INTERESTED:

[OOSTERHAGE@FIRSTSTCHARLESUMC.ORG](mailto:oosterhage@firststcharlesumc.org)



**HELLO**  
**MY NAME IS**


*Welcome Team  
Member*

Join our  
**Welcome Team!**  
It's the best way  
to meet members  
& guests on  
Sunday mornings!

For more info, contact **Olivia Osterhage:**  
[oosterhage@firststcharlesumc.org](mailto:oosterhage@firststcharlesumc.org)



# SMALL GROUPS & MINISTRIES



Now meets  
on the 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Tuesday of  
each month!

## LGBTQ+ SMALL GROUP

BRING YOUR OWN DINNER AND  
ENJOY A TIME OF FELLOWSHIP!

AUGUST 19TH  
CATHERINE COLLIER ROOM  
@ FIRST ST. CHARLES  
6:00 PM

## Caregiver *Support Group*

*Third Tuesday of the month  
6:30-7:30 pm in room 301*

QUESTIONS? CONTACT NICKI REYNOLDS:  
NREYNOLDS6@CHARTER.NET





# SMALL GROUPS & MINISTRIES

## *August 55+ Lunch*

AUGUST 12TH AT 11:30 AM

Menu: Chinese chicken and broccoli, fried rice, egg rolls with sweet sauce, salad, rolls, dessert, and drinks.

Entertainment: Dan Fuller will present the program "Photographers of Bellefontaine Cemetery."

Cost: \$18/person.



## *Showers of Blessing* *July*

DONATIONS  
NEEDED:

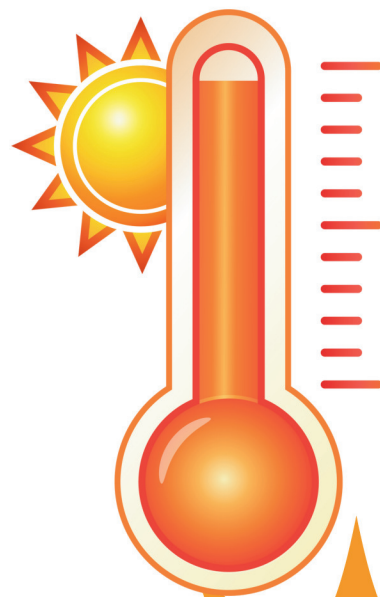
SHOWERS  
VOLUNTEER SIGN UP

- ☀️ INDIVIDUAL BUG REPELLANT
- ☀️ INDIVIDUAL SUNSCREEN
- ☀️ COOLING TOWELS
- ☀️ HATS
- ☀️ MEN'S JEANS → SIZES 30, 32, 34





Our church has been active with Cooling Center since Saturday, averaging 15 guests each day. We're thankful for our volunteers who jumped in to help and we're thankful that we can be a safe, cool space for our community to beat this extreme heat.



Even though we're wrapping up our last assigned week to host Cooling Center, August will likely continue to have extreme heat.



We want to support our unhomed friends and keep them as safe as possible & would love to offer them some cooling supplies & sun protection.



You can drop donations in Church Office

## DONATE

- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Instant Cold Packs
- Cooling Towels
- Popsicles  
(shelf stable)

# SMALL GROUPS & MINISTRIES

## FISH PANTRY

### ITEMS NEEDED:

PORK & BEANS, JELLY, CAN PINEAPPLES, SPAGHETTI SAUCE, BOX POTATOES AU GRATIN, BOX JELLO MIX, SALTINE CRACKERS, SHAMPOO/CONDITIONER



## Little Food Pantry

### ITEMS NEEDED:

mac n cheese cups - fruit cups - tuna packs - individual peanut butter cups - ritz crackers - chili - canned pasta (spaghetti o's/ravioli) - granola bars - pudding cups - oatmeal packages - peanut butter crackers



\*All canned items need to have pull-tab tops\*





# RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

**AUGUST 20**  
**8:30AM-12:30PM**

Visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) to schedule an appointment!

**DON'T MISS THE PARTY OF THE SUMMER!**

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 23RD**  
**7:30 - 9:30 PM**

the  
**last  
splash  
of summer**

**FREE DRINKS | FREE FOOD | FREE ENTRY**  
**THE COVE @ ST. PETERS REC PLEX**

# July & AUGUST

			23 <i>Thursday</i>	24 <i>Friday</i>	25 <i>Saturday</i>	26
	COOLING CENTER		SPIRE	WATER WALKING!!	CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	
27	<i>Monday</i> 28	<i>Tuesday</i> 29	<i>Wednesday</i> 30	<i>Thursday</i> 31	<i>Friday</i> 1	<i>Saturday</i> 2
PASTOR KATE'S LAST SUNDAY & ICE CREAM SOCIAL PARTY!			AUGUST	CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED		
<i>Sunday</i> 3	<i>Monday</i> 4	<i>Tuesday</i> 5	<i>Wednesday</i> 6	<i>Thursday</i> 7	<i>Friday</i> 8	<i>Saturday</i> 9
			FIRST FAMILY FOCUS	WATER WALKING!!	CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	
<i>Sunday</i> 10	<i>Monday</i> 11	<i>Tuesday</i> 12	<i>Wednesday</i> 13	<i>Thursday</i> 14	<i>Friday</i> 15	<i>Saturday</i> 16
TINY TOT TIME		55+	SPIRE		CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	
<i>Sunday</i> 17	<i>Monday</i> 18	<i>Tuesday</i> 19	<i>Wednesday</i> 20	<i>Thursday</i> 21	<i>Friday</i> 22	23
INCLUSIVITY MATTERS	GRIEF SHARE BEGINS!	COMMUNITY CARE LGBTQ+ CAREGIVERS	DONATE		CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	Pool PARTY