



JULY 9, 2025

THE SPIRE

FIRST ST. CHARLES UNITED METHODIST CHURCH // ISSUE 13// VOLUME 54

Dear Friends,



I have some exciting and bittersweet news.

I've accepted a program director position at Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. I will be the Baptist House of Studies Director. They reached out to me because of my familiarity with both United Methodist and Baptist settings in both church and academic life, and because of the connections and research I've done in both worlds. I am excited and nervous about this new opportunity! This wasn't something I was seeking, but the position aligns with my calling, experience, and ministerial gifts.

I will take many things I've learned during my time here at First St. Charles with me as I help students become pastors and leaders who serve churches and communities helping people know they are safe, welcome, and wanted by God.

I'm so thankful to have partnered with you in ministry for the last 6 years. We've made many good memories! We've laughed and cried, celebrated and grieved. More importantly, you've shown me what grace looks like when you've cared for the marginalized, supported one another in difficult times, and forgiven me for my failures. You represent Christ well to a world who so needs to hear some good news!

My last Sunday with you will be July 27th. In the meantime, I will be working with leadership to ensure a smooth transition.

Again, I'm grateful for this congregation, and will continue to pray for you as you share Christ's love with all generations. I entrust the gifts of our staff to guide you and pastor you well, and I know you are in good hands. Recalling Philippians 1:6, I know "the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ."

With much love and gratitude,
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.



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.**

Lift Up in Prayer

**JANET LASHLEY, WHO PASSED
AWAY JULY 2ND**



Summer

Next Gen

YOUTH
GROUP

July

13 ROMANS VS. CHRISTIANS WITH CHURCH
OF THE SHEPHERD & POTLUCK!!

21-25 UNITE CONFERENCE

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!



WE ARE STILL GATHERING, BUT ARE MORE RELAXED AND FLEXIBLE THAN WITH OUR NORMAL FUNDAY SCHOOL ACTIVITIES. ON JULY 13, 20, AND 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

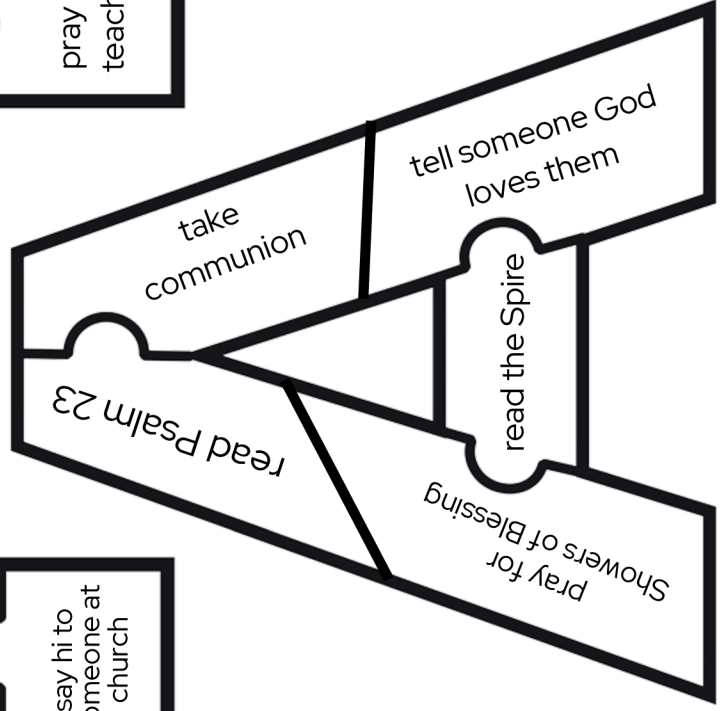
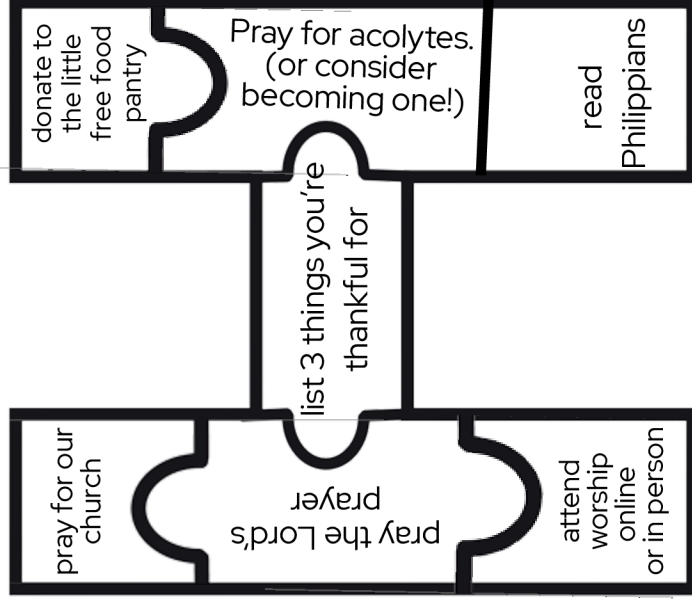
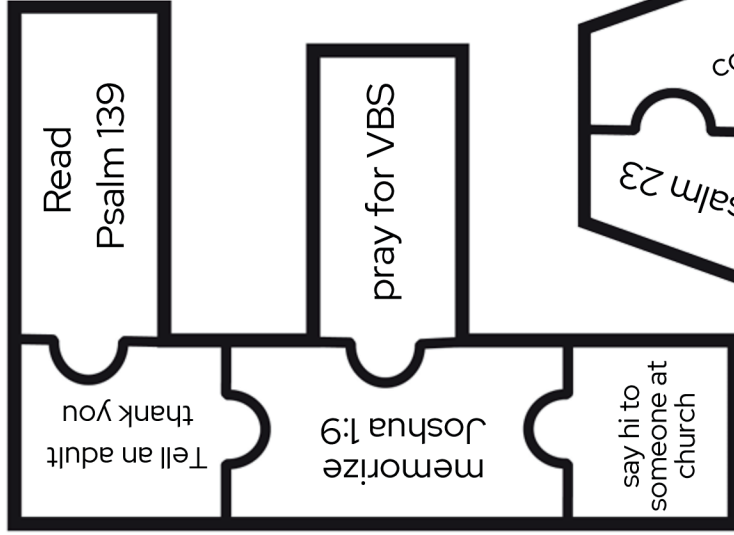
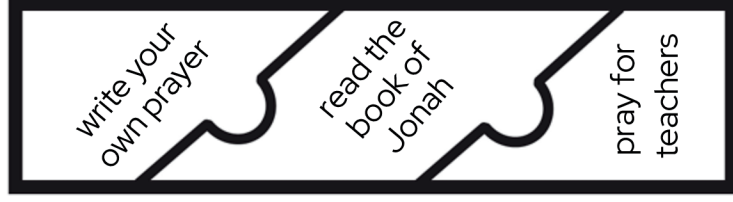
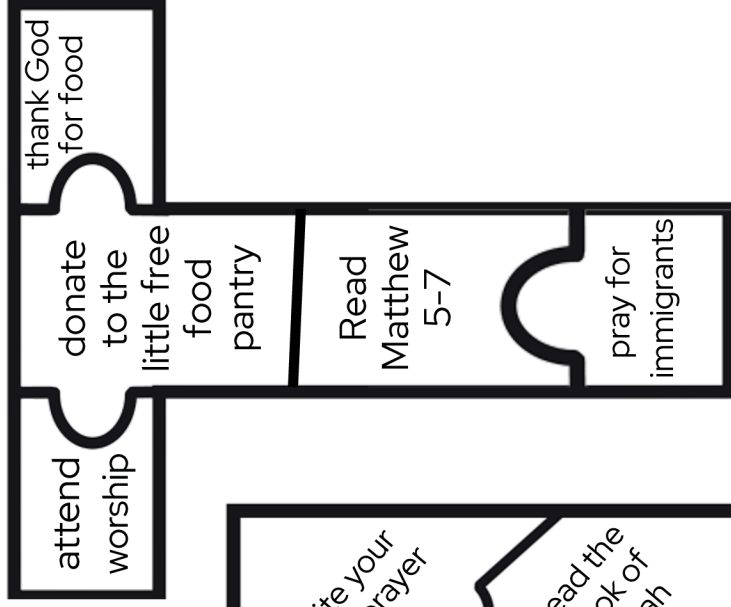
With the announcement of Pastor Kate's transition, we have the opportunity to craft a vision of what we hope NextGen ministries looks like in the future, and how our church can support our youngest disciples. *Here's what a team of parents discerned:*

- 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!





HAVE YOU HAD TROUBLE FINDING A WAY TO LIVE OUT YOUR FAITH? LET THE FAITH CHALLENGE AT FIRST UMC HELP YOU! SIMILAR TO A LIBRARY SUMMER READING CHALLENGE, OUR FAITH CHALLENGE ENCOURAGES YOU TO READ YOUR BIBLE, PRAY, AND SERVE. PICK UP A CHALLENGE BOARD IN THE GATHERING SPACE OR IN THE SPIRE. OUR FAITH SUMMER CHALLENGE IS OPEN TO ALL AGES AND IS HAPPENING FROM JUNE 2 THROUGH AUGUST 9. LET'S GROW OUR FAITH TOGETHER!



First Kids
kiddos made
special 4th of
July projects
and did fun
sensory
activities



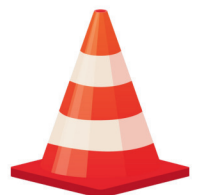


**MANY THANKS TO ALL THE TRAVEL
GUIDES, YOUTH HELPERS,
VOLUNTEERS & KITCHEN CREW
THAT MADE THIS A WONDERFUL VBS
FOR OUR COMMUNITY!**





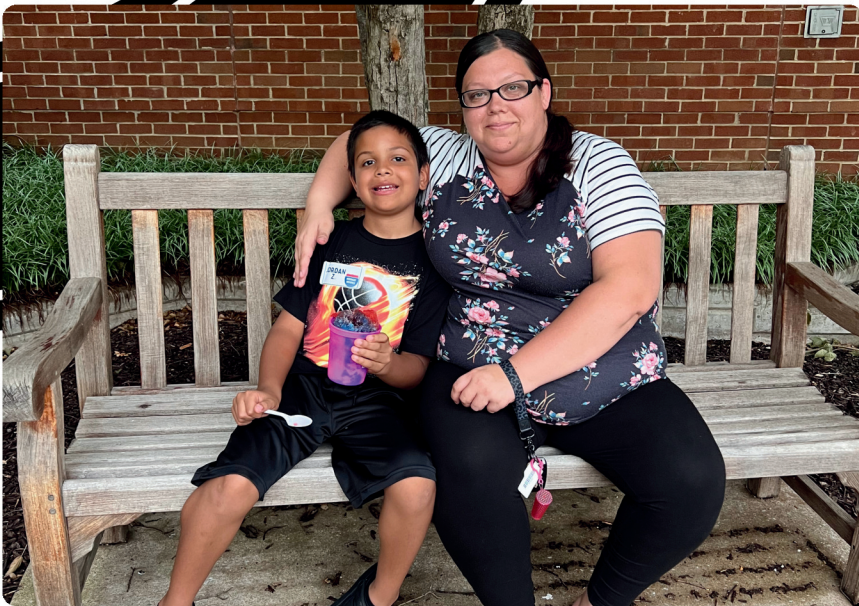
**God is
with us
on the
journey**





**WE HAD THE
MOST NUMBER
OF NEW VBS
VOLUNTEERS
IN 6 YEARS!**





God is
with us
when we're
lonely





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

July 13

VAGO PARK -
MARYLAND HEIGHTS

AUGUST 10

WESTHOFF PARK -
O'FALLON

**Just meet us at the park or contact BETH with any questions:
bkelly@firststcharlesumc.org**




An Adult Study led by Katie Roam

Wednesdays at 6:30pm
July 2nd - August 23rd

TO REGISTER, EMAIL MARSHA: MHUNT@FIRSTSTCHARLESUMC.ORG

SMALL GROUPS & MINISTRIES



Now meets
on the 3rd
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



**JULY DATE
CHANGED TO
THE 22ND**



**WE WELCOME NEW
PEOPLE WHO WANT A
SAFE SPACE TO FEEL
SUPPORTED!**

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

SMALL GROUPS & MINISTRIES

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



SHOWERS OF BLESSING HIT A NEW
RECORD OF 58 GUESTS THIS WEEK!



AS THIS LIFE-SAVING MINISTRY
CONTINUES TO GROW, SO DOES THE
NEED FOR HYGEINE ITEMS, CLOTHES,
MEALS & MORE.

TOGETHER, WE CAN HELP CARE FOR OUR MOST
VULNERABLE NEIGHBORS.

COOLING CENTER

The St. Charles County Emergency Weather Response Team is piloting a Cooling Center program this summer. **The cooling center will be open from 1-5pm on days when a heat advisory has been issued**, and will rotate between local churches who will be on-call for one week at a time. We'll provide snacks and drinks along with games and puzzles to help pass the time.

First St. Charles is signed up to cover the weeks of July 13-26. We need 3 volunteers (including at least 1 male and 1 female) for each shift we are activated. Volunteers will simply sign guests in, distribute snacks and drinks, and monitor our guests to ensure everyone is safe.

If you have availability during the afternoons (including weekends) this is a great way to serve the unhoused and housing insecure in our community in a relaxed and fun environment. **If you're willing to serve, you can sign up for shifts by scanning the QR code below or by visiting:** <https://tinyurl.com/495rap8t>

You can also support the cooling center by donating the following items for our guests. You can place items in the wagon in the atrium.

DONATE

- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Instant Cold Packs
- Cooling Towels
- Peanut Butter Crackers
- Hard Candy
- Popsicles (shelf stable)

VOLUNTEER



SMALL GROUPS & MINISTRIES

FISH PANTRY

ITEMS NEEDED:

JELLY, CAN CARROTS, CAN TOMATOES, CAN PASTA, BOX PASTA RONI, PLAIN RICE, BOX POTATO AU GRATIN, TUNA HELPER



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 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

				9	Thursday 10	Friday 11	Saturday 12
				SPIRE	WATER WALKING!!	CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
TINY TOT TIME	UNITE	COMMUNITY CARE			CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED		
		CAREGIVERS					
		LGBTQ+					
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
27	28	29	30	31	1	2	
PASTOR KATE'S LAST SUNDAY & ICE CREAM SOCIAL PARTY!					CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED		
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
			FIRST FAMILY FOCUS		CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED		

AUGUST