

# First Connection

Vol. 45, No. 11

November 14, 2018

**First United  
Methodist Church**  
600 East Okmulgee Street  
Muskogee, Oklahoma 74403  
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Reverend Jack Kemper  
Senior Pastor

***Our Mission Commitment...***  
*To be Christ's disciples to others — within our  
church, our community,  
and around the world —  
and to diligently strive to make our church  
exciting, vital and alive.*

## SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES

First Tuesday each month  
New Days Cancer Support Group  
6:15-7:15 pm

September 10-December 3  
GriefShare  
Monday evenings 6:15-7:45

Wednesday/Thursday, November 21-22  
Offices Closed

Sunday, December 2  
Thomson Baby Shower 2:00-3:00

Sunday, December 16  
Potluck Dinner/First Family Christmas 5:30

Monday, December 24  
Candle Light Service  
Traditional 7:00/Contemporary 11:00

Offices Closed  
Tuesday, December 25

Check the calendar to see other opportunities in which you  
may wish to participate.

### Come Worship with Us

9:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship Service  
10:00 a.m. Sunday School  
11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship Service  
5:00 p.m. UMYF

When I was a child of about 10, Eva, the lady who kept my brother and I would take us fishing. On one of our trips we stopped for gas and a soda and some bait. Right there at the side of the road I saw a frog caught by a snake. His legs were still kicking so I knew he was alive, so I had to make a choice. Liking frogs and not liking snakes I got a stick and whacked the snake until it let go of the frog.

Immediately that little frog darted for the dirt road. It didn't stop to say thanks or anything. It just kept hopping right past me to the other side of the rocky road. I helped that little critter and he didn't even stop to say thanks.

As an adult, I have to admit that I see people who continually forget to say thanks. It's something my mom taught me as a boy. But, life has shown me that the lesson of saying "thank you" is taught to kids a whole lot more often, than adults apply it themselves.

Stop and thank those who help you. Start making it part of a good habit for your life. It's amazing what it can do, because so few folks do say thanks.

**Grace to you, Jack, from the church**

### SYMPATHY AND PRAYERS

Condolences to Sharyl Davis who's niece recently lost her battle with cancer.

### ANGEL TREE MINISTRY DATE REMINDERS



Here are the dates you need to know:

**Sunday, November 18<sup>th</sup>**- Angel Tags will be placed on the Angel Tree in the East Lobby area for pick up.

**Sunday, November 25<sup>th</sup>**-Angel gifts are due back to the church. Make sure the Angel Tag is in the sack or on the gift. You can set it in the Ministry Assistant's Office located in the East Lobby area.

**Sunday, December 9<sup>th</sup>**- Wrapping of gifts. Time 11:00—till we get done

**Sunday, December 16<sup>th</sup>** -Begin delivering gifts.

**Senior Adult Luncheon  
Thursday - December 20 - Noon**

### CHRISTMAS PARTY

**Christmas Carols Led By  
Steve Thomson**

**Christmas Remembrances**

### COOKSON HILLS CHRISTMAS STORE

The United Methodist Women will once again be collecting gifts for the Cookson Hills Christmas Store. The boxes for members to place their new, unused gifts in will be in the education hallway. Donations will be taken during the month of November. Please have your donations in by Sunday, December 2 so they can be delivered the first week of December.

Gifts will need to be for ages 0-100+ for male and female. Examples can include toys, gloves, scarves, caps, clothing, kitchen and/or bath items, and tools.

Thank you for your generosity.

The Frost on the Pumpkin Committee would like to thank all the many people who helped make this year's Frost on the Pumpkin a huge success. Even though the temperature dropped and it was really cold outside, we had a record number of vendors (over 70), an estimate of 800 shoppers, and a record number of volunteers.

We couldn't make it happen without our crew of loyal volunteers. Plus the youth and their parents were awesome – great food, great customer service, and great help moving all the many tables and chairs it takes to accommodate each vendor.

We really are proud of this event and the opportunity it affords us to show off our hospitality. We had many positive comments from both shoppers and vendors.

Thanks,

Frost on the Pumpkin Committee  
Cindy Keeling, Kim Winston, and Francie Wright

### Way Forward

On February 22-24, 2019, a special called General Conference will be held in St. Louis, Mo. with the purpose of discerning the direction our church will go regarding the Human Sexuality questions we have debated over many years. We encourage every United Methodist in Oklahoma to be in prayer concerning this conference. We also have available a weekly devotion (written by Oklahoma leaders) that can supplement your prayer time. Use the following links to subscribe to that resource. Here are two of the "Way Forward" websites –

<https://www.umnews.org/en/news/court-one-church-plan-largely-constitutional#.W-GUwJd3KPZ.email>  
<https://okumc-reg.brtapp.com/28WeeksActsDevotions>

### CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

Order your Christmas Poinsettias in "honor of" or in "memory of" a special person to help decorate our sanctuary during the Christmas season. The plants will be in place for worship December 16th, 23rd and Christmas Eve. Order envelopes will be available on the altar rails, in the Narthex, Education hallway and at the front desk. The cost is \$8.00 per plant. Payment is due at the time of order. Deadline to order is Tuesday, December 11. Plants may be picked up following the Christmas Eve Candlelight services.

### FIRST FAMILY CHRISTMAS

Sunday, December 16th ~ 6:30 pm  
Potluck Covered Dish ~ 5:30 pm

### UMW MEETINGS

**December 18, 11:30 am Luncheon/Response  
Program**

**Local Missions:**

**September-December: Gospel Rescue Mission**

**November-December: Cookson Hills  
Christmas Store**

### NEWSLETTER

**Deadline is noon, Tuesday, December 18.**

You may leave a message at the church  
or e-mail Pat Murr at pmurr53@hotmail.com  
Leigh Ann Matthews at leighann@fumcmuskogee.org



Wow kids it's time to get ready for Christmas!!! But first, we have our annual Thanksgiving Dinner THIS Sunday following our combined "ONE" worship - so, Sunday School this week is at 9:30, worship at 10:45 and lunch at noon. As in the past, the children's department will set tables (flatware, napkins, etc.) Saturday morning at 10:00 - please be there if you can - it's fun and it's how we can help with the dinner!

Also, our children's choir will sing THIS SUNDAY in worship - they are also working on their contribution to our annual First Family Christmas Program, which will be December 16 - then Monday, December 17, our choir kids will deliver their smiles and songs to some of our church family on our annual caroling trip. We'll have pizza at the church before we leave - parents, we'll pick choir kids up at school as usual - and should be back at the church around 8:00.

December 4th our 4th - 6th graders will meet at the church at

6:30 for our annual trip through the Garden of Lights and either the Castle Inflatable Kingdom or some well decorated neighborhoods before a stop at Braum's for a snack - we should be back at church by 8:30. Please let me know if your kids plan to go so I can make sure we have vans and drivers!

And, NEW THIS YEAR - We're entering a float in the Muskogee Christmas Parade December 8! I know many of our kids will be involved with Sadler's production of "The Nutcracker" (a fantastic program), but according to a parent poll, we should still have enough kids for the parade. The plan is for a nativity scene with kids in costume and Christmas carolers - we'll put the "float" together the week before the parade in a downtown warehouse and have it all ready for the parade - thanks to Lana Breedlove for helping me with this new adventure!!! Please let me know for sure if your kiddos want to participate so I can keep you updated!

It's an exciting time of year and we have so much to be thankful for - please take time to remember how blessed we are!

**In God's Love,  
Ms. Leigh Ann**



### Here's what the youth are doing.....

The FUMY Café was a HUGE success this year and we are so thankful for the people who ate breakfast and lunch with us. We served lots of chicken and dumplings, taco soup and yummy desserts to the craft show vendors and shoppers. Our kids and adults worked over 260 hours on this large, amazing event and enjoyed the hectic pace of playing restaurant. Our kids learned a few new skills this year.... How to count back change to a customer, how to properly cut onions, how to take an order and how to provide customer service to our café customers and the vendors. Love the life skills these opportunities provide!!

We have some of our favorite activities coming up and we're adding a few new items. We've added Turkey themed games

and fun before Thanksgiving, we're helping decorate the sanctuary and enjoying one extra Sunday in December. We're carrying on the tradition of the Traveling Dinner, First Family Christmas and Caroling at the VA Hospital.

If you ordered a wreath or garland from one of our youth, they will arrive at the church during the first week of December. I'll sort them and the kids will pick them up and deliver them to you. We have a few extra of each wreath and garland, so let me know if you would like one or additional items.

Our ski trip to Crested Butte during spring break is FULL!!!!!! The kids and adults are all excited for this great week in the mountains and have been reminiscing about their previous trips. Our last fundraiser for the ski trip will be the rummage sale on February 2. Hey church family.... Items can be stored on 3<sup>rd</sup> floor at west end of the building or they can go on the stage. Thanks for always donating great treasures to this event!!

**Love those FUMYs... Cindy**

**You're invited to a Baby Shower** Sunday, Dec. 2 at 2:00 p.m. in the FUMC Choir Room for Owen Thomson and his family, Chrissy, Braden and Izzy Thomson.

### YOUTH RUMMAGE SALE

Beginning after Christmas, you may bring your Youth Rummage Sale donations to the stage in the Activities Center. NOTE: PLEASE do not bring them to the stage during the other 11 months of the year! The stage is occasionally used for "non storage" purposes. There is a place on third floor where rummage sale items are stored year around. Thank you for your cooperation.

### Christmas Recital Benefiting "Coins for Critters"

Dance students, both young and adult, will perform an evening of Song and Dance celebrating the Christmas Season on Thursday evening, December 20th at 6:30 pm in the FUMC Fellowship Hall. Donations will be greatly accepted to sustain the good works of the "Coins for Critters" organization.

Merry Christmas!  
Bob and Isabel Cockle

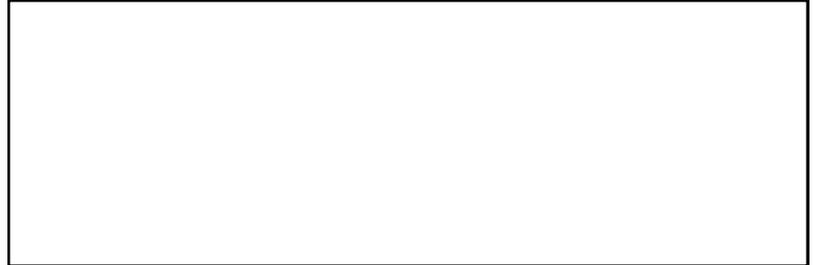


First United Methodist Church • 600 E. Okmulgee • Muskogee, OK 74403

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*Return Service Requested*



**9:00 GREETERS for December:**

Tom and Janet Wiseman

**11:00 USHERS for December:**

Barbara Beach, Beau Mathews, Bill Standridge,  
Crawford Gable, Jake Evans

**Keep in Your Prayers**

Ann Briggs, Ken Webb, Sarah Grayson, Alice Hendrickson, Elizabeth Remer, Kevin Key, Nancy Marklewitz, Sue Ann Melton, Mark Webb, Don Wade, Bert Irwin, Teri Edge, and Robert Haxton. Remember to pray for each other.

**ATTENDANCE**

| Date        | 9:00 a.m. | 11:00 a.m. | Total |
|-------------|-----------|------------|-------|
| October 28  | 107       | 68         | 175   |
| November 4  | 127       | 75         | 202   |
| November 11 | 115       | 75         | 189   |

**December Food Pantry Item:**

**Check the weekly bulletin for food item.  
Your support is greatly appreciated.**

**CHURCH OFFICES CLOSED.**

The church offices will be closed Wednesday, November 21.  
They will also be closed Tuesday, December 25.

**Broadway Manor Schedule:**

- November 18 Crossroads
- November 25 Adult Alternatives
- December 2 Horizon
- December 9 Children
- December 16 Wesley
- December 23 Youth
- December 30 Turning Point