

WELLS SPRING

A Publication of Wells Church

A United Methodist Congregation

September 2025

WellsFest '25 Changes, but Spirit Same

By Susannah Grubbs Carr
Senior Pastor

Can you feel it? It's very subtle, but definitely here...the first hints of fall.



Carr

I can feel it in the early mornings before the sun gets high in the sky in these dog days of summer. The changing of the seasons reminds us that one thing we can count on in life is change. Change is not always easy, but it is a realistic part of life, sometimes a necessary one for growth and vitality. Speaking of seasons, WellsFest season is here, and this year we have some changes to this historic festival that bring some unfamiliar things *but* some very exciting opportunities.

The change of venues for our festival came out of necessity due to the issue of the dead trees yet to be removed in Jamie Fowler Boyll Park. And so, in the face of this needed change, it was the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum that presented the answer.

As your pastor I can say with confidence that your church leadership has risen to the occasion to faithfully work through what is needed to be sure that WellsFest, even in the face of change, continues to embody the gift to the community it has always been. Our WellsFest Logistics Committee, with Anne Karges and Charles Aruajo at

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WellsFest Helps Jackson Free Clinic Give Care, Hope

By Natasha Burrell-Etheridge
JFC Outreach Officer

The first time I went to the Jackson Free Clinic, I wasn't sure what to expect. It was a Saturday morning, and I pulled up around 9:30 a.m. The streets surrounding the clinic were already full with cars belonging to other students like me, and patients waiting to be seen. I made my way to the back of the building and entered through the volunteer entrance, where I quickly signed in and took a seat in a crowded room filled with medical, pharmacy, and undergraduate pre-med students.



Burrell-Etheridge

After morning announcements from the executive team, I was assigned to Team #7 with a third-year medical student. That day, we saw two patients: one who had recently been incarcerated and was trying to rebuild his life, and another who lived in a home without running water or electricity. I was face-to-face with the reality of health care disparities in my own community.

I learned a great deal from the medical student and the attending physician supervising us that day — but I learned even more from the patients themselves. I left exhausted, emotionally and physically, but deeply fulfilled. I knew immediately that I wanted to return — and I did.

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- Sept. 1 Sarah Gayden Hammond, Porter Furniss
- Sept. 2 Taylor Eide
- Sept. 3 Luran Buchanan, Donald Campbell, Sally Nash
- Sept. 4 Haley Dollarhide
- Sept. 5 Rosemary Lockett
- Sept. 6 Bryant Johnson
- Sept. 8 Kim Coalter, Martha Johnston
- Sept. 9 Richard Ayres, Julia Cloy, Beth Farmer
- Sept. 12 Maddox Ferrell
- Sept. 13 Reginald Nichols, Gayle Spencer, Lindsey Smith
- Sept. 14 Teresa Parker
- Sept. 15 Brenda Donald, Ken Farmer, David Hampton
- Sept. 16 Nancy Halfacre
- Sept. 17 Michael Allen, Tiffany Bobbs, Tracy Tonkel Furniss
- Sept. 19 Anna Everly, Jana McNair
- Sept. 20 Alynda Ponder
- Sept. 21 Raphael Semmes, Brenda Trigg
- Sept. 22 Jamie Ward
- Sept. 23 Sarah Campbell
- Sept. 28 Mark Dendinger, Leslie LaRue, Mike Tynes
- Sept. 29 Ken Simon
- Sept. 30 Shelli Bobinger

If your birthday isn't listed or is incorrect, please let us know.



Get ready for WellsFest 2025 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Oct. 4 at the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum on Lakeland Drive. Tell your friends and sign up to volunteer for our church's largest ministry.

WellsFest Changes

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the helm, have been working tirelessly to lead us into these changes with faithful flexibility, tender care and creativity.

WellsFest will not only be in a new location, but also on a different date, Oct. 4. Even though it will look a little different this year, the spirit of loving, caring and sharing remains, and even some new opportunities have arisen to add new traditions to WellsFest — such as the Paw Party in Fondren that will be a new opportunity that we have to reach our wider community on the Thursday night leading up to the day of the festival.

Navigating these changes has allowed us to lean in and trust that the "why" in our commitment to WellsFest as a ministry of our church is much less about a place than it is about a people.

In particular, the people of Wells UMC, who believe that the gift of a safe, family friendly festival that raises money for a really important cause in our community, is something that should never change, regardless of the changes that come along with the commitment.

I hope you will join me in praying for our WellsFest Committee as they get us over the finish line in just a few short weeks, for our beneficiary, The Jackson Free Clinic, and for all who will feel the love we have to share in the name of our Lord because of this beautiful and faithful offering we put so much of our heart into each and every year, changes and all.

See you at WellsFest!

Write Susannah at
revsusannahc@gmail.com.

2025 Wells Church Giving

Jan. \$32,276	July \$36,926
Feb. \$38,392	Aug.
March \$51,892	Sept.
April \$33,480	Oct.
May \$40,881	Nov.
June \$46,982	Dec.

Based on the 2025 budget, \$46,893 is needed monthly to support operations and ministries of the church in 2025.

Wells Memorial United Methodist Church Staff

Susannah Grubbs Carr, Pastor | Sue Keen Hyland, Associate Pastor

Chuck Reynolds
Choir Director

Jamie Ward
Accompanist

Ashley Rogers
Children's Ministry Director

Jane Everly
Pastoral Assistant

Kay Olliver
Treasurer

Elaine Collins
Nursery Coordinator

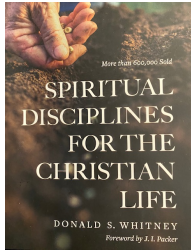


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Wells Notes

Study Examines Disciplines

The Serendipity Sunday School Class in conjunction with the Prayer Ministry will be offering a seven-week study



“Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life” by Donald S. Whitney. The class will begin Oct. 12, and will meet from 8:45-9:45 a.m. in the Tonkel Fellowship Center. Topics to be

Covered are: The Spiritual Disciplines, Bible Intake, Prayer and Fasting, Worship and Evangelism, Serving and Stewardship, Silence/Solitude and Journaling, and Learning and Perseverance.

All are welcome!



Tacos & Trivia

It's time for Tacos & Trivia, a chance to test your trivia knowledge while enjoying food and fun with the Wells family.

We will gather Wednesday, Sept. 3, in the Tonkel Fellowship Center for all the fun. The taco bar opens at 5:45 p.m. and the trivia begins at 6:15.

The trivia match will be led by Jane Everly and Jim Pollard, who have lots of fun categories to test your skills.

Bring your appetite and bring your A-game for Wells team trivia.

Preaching Schedule

Sept. 7: “Giving Up,” Luke 14:25-33, Jeremiah 18:1-11 (Rev. Jason Coker, director of Together for Hope guest preaching as our community partner.)

Sept. 14 — “Losing and Finding,” Luke 15:1-10 (Rev. Susannah)

Sept. 21 — “All in the Family,” Luke 13:10-17 (Rev. Susannah)

Sept. 28 — “Faith Friends,” Luke 5:17-26 (Rev. Susannah)

Jackson Free Clinic

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The Jackson Free Clinic is a student-run nonprofit that provides free medical care every Saturday to uninsured adults. Its mission is to lead in care, education and outreach through a steadfast commitment to providing high-quality health care to underserved Mississippians —prioritizing equity, accessibility, compassion and respect for our patients.

The clinic was founded in 2002 by Dr. Joyce Olutade, a family medicine physician with a vision of creating a health care space for the underserved in Jackson. Since then, JFC has expanded significantly. Specialty services such as rehabilitation, psychiatry, and dental care were introduced in 2014. Our in-house pharmacy launched in 2020, alongside dermatology and ultrasound services. Gynecology followed in 2021, and vision care was added in 2022. This year, we were proud to introduce our neurology clinic.

We also run a Social Health Clinic that provides hygiene products and connects patients to additional support services like Stewpot and We Will Go Ministries. These partnerships help ensure our patients don't just leave with a prescription — they leave with resources to support every aspect of their wellbeing.

Because of our rapid growth, we're now building a 2,195-square-foot facility behind the existing clinic with dedicated exam rooms, telehealth space, a large storage room for medical equipment, and dedicated rehabilitation and vision care areas. Thanks to generous grants and donations, we've already broken ground. But we're not finished yet. We're honored to be the beneficiary of this year's WellsFest. We will use the proceeds to finish paying for the construction, purchase updated medical equipment, expand parking, and continue offering the kind of care our community deserves. Your support will do more than just build walls or fund supplies. It will foster hope and allow someone to receive care when they have nowhere else to go.

Since my first day at JFC, I've continued to fall deeper in love with the clinic and everything it represents. I now have the privilege of serving as the clinic's Chief Outreach Officer, where I help lead efforts to address the social determinants of health — like access to food, transportation, hygiene and education — that deeply impact the lives of our patients.

Volunteering at the Jackson Free Clinic has shown me the impact I can make right now, even before earning my medical degree. It's helped me understand how deeply health care is intertwined with community work, education and advocacy. I've met patients who have come to the clinic for years, and I've seen others leave because they found jobs, gained insurance, and no longer needed us. That's the goal.

JFC is more than a clinic — it's a small community within the greater Jackson area. It's a place where students like me not only learn how to care for patients, but also how we want to practice medicine in the future. We get to spend time with patients, hear their stories and address the social determinants of health that often go unspoken.

When I think back to that very first day — nervous, unsure, excited — I'm grateful I walked through those doors. It changed my life. And every time I return, I'm reminded of why I chose medicine in the first place: to serve, to listen and to make a difference.

Electronic Service Requested



May God Open Our Eyes and Hearts to See

By Sue Keen Hyland
Associate Pastor

One hot and steamy August afternoon, I noticed a white jeep sitting in our church parking lot. More nosey than anything, I decided to see what was up. As I pulled into the lot, I noticed a young mom and her two sons with her truck up on a jack. She obviously had a flat tire, and based on the looks on her son's faces that she must've been there in the heat for a while. I rolled down my window to speak and noticed a man knelt down by her truck, fixing her tire. He looked up and said, "Hey Pastor," and it was one of our very own.



Hyland

Knowing that they were taken care of, I parked my car and ran inside to see what we might have for snacks out of the fridge. I grabbed a few ice cream sandwiches (churches should always

have ice cream bars in their freezer), and I went back to meet this young woman and her kids. I introduced myself, and began to listen to their story. What I thought might be an average encounter turned into something entirely different. As we visited, she asked me if I'd heard the news about Blossom Apartments and the water being shut off due to the lack of payment from the property owner. I told her I had, and quickly asked what their next steps were. She let me know they were so grateful for the outpouring of love they'd received, caused by a bad situation that had nothing to do with their decisions. She was good, the boys were good, they'd just started school at Galloway, and they were in the last few steps of securing new housing. Thanks be to God! After a bit more visiting, an invitation to church, we exchanged contact information and went on our way — me, thanking God for this

special moment, and her, thanking God for the angel who fixed her tire.

As I prepared my sermon, I was brought back to thinking about that woman, not because of anything I did, but because of the young man that helped her. Luke 13:12 says, "When Jesus saw her..." Think about those words. "When Jesus saw her..." What a good and wonderful thing it is to be seen, and what a gift God has given to each of us to open our eyes and our hearts to see what is right in front of us. I've had no better example of someone seeing than our friend, Eric James, walking through our church parking lot, seeing and helping this woman, and sending her on her way. Eric was the hands and feet of Jesus that day, and they were both Jesus to me. Simply put, may we see this week!

Write Sue at
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