



Murphy First

United Methodist Church



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FUMC Communicator — August 2026

*"Be still and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations,
I am exalted in the earth." Psalm 46:10*

"Are you settled yet?"

That's the question I've been getting almost daily for the past month. I honestly don't quite know how to answer it. As I walk through rooms in the parsonage with cardboard boxes still stacked high and play the game of "which box has the lamp I'm looking for," I wonder if I will ever be settled. And at the church, almost every other day I'm learning about some other great ministry of Murphy First, and I wonder when all this information will be settled and ordered in my head.

Yet, in another sense, I have found that my soul is settling. I am happy to be in the mountains again. I am happy to be meeting you all. I am happy to be worshiping in our beautiful sanctuary. I am even happy to see how God is stretching me as a pastor. I know that the Lord has put me in the right place at the right time, and there is a peace in that knowledge.

What I haven't done when I've been asked that question is to turn it back on the other person. "Are *you* settled yet?" Because the truth is that your lives have been unsettled as well. The transition you all have endured for the past several months has not been easy. It's created all kinds of additional work on top of the usual ministries of the church. Plus, there's been the emotional weight of saying goodbye and the anxiety of not knowing how things are going to work out. In a time of transition, we are *all* a little bit unsettled.

So, as I was reflecting on this unsettled feeling that we share, I remembered that classic verse from Psalm 46, "Be still and know that I am God!" Yes, there is much that is up in the air right now, but Jesus is still Lord, the gospel is still true, and God is with us. There is genuine relief in trusting in these truths. We don't have to be hurried or worried; we can simply be still and rest in our faith in God.

Except, as I learned when I went to study the verse, it doesn't actually say "be still." That translation doesn't quite capture the meaning of the Hebrew. A better translation might be "let go" or "leave it alone."

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It hits different, doesn't it? I hear that, and I am no longer thinking about sitting in stillness and letting God do all the work. Instead, I am thinking about the things I'm holding onto that are preventing me from receiving what God wants to give. What unhelpful expectations do I have that need to be released? What false assumptions do I need to drop? What responsibilities should I share with someone else? Which old habits need to be left behind? What sins have lingered for long enough?

Maybe being unsettled is not such a bad thing. When furniture gets moved around and out of place, we see it in a new light. If dust gets stirred up when things get moved around, perhaps we should do more than just wait until the dust settles again. Perhaps that's our sign that we should do a little dusting.

In this unsettled time, may the Lord give us the wisdom to know what we need to let go, the strength to release it, and the grace to receive the good things that God has in store.

With peace and gratitude,

Pastor Evan

GREETINGS FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Six months have passed in the year already. We have seen many accomplishments around the church. Two of the biggest would be the completion of the Harshaw Chapel and the parking lot that is now usable. As of the end of June we have \$171,549.80 in general operating funds. \$43,200.00 of this is money that came in from the credit union for the use of parking places. This will be used to pay toward the construction bill when it comes in.

Some of you have made donations toward the parking lot. We want to thank you for your extra giving. Some of you made commitments to pay for one monthly loan payment a year toward the loan. Once we get the final bill, we will know what the monthly loan payments will be. If you are still able to do so, great! We invite others to join in the cause and enable us to pay off the loan sooner.

All of the accomplishments that the church has seen this year have been because of your generosity. For all the hard work and the financial donations that you all have given, we want to say **Thank You**. Your generosity is helping us to fulfill our vision to build communities of hope where all people experience belonging and abundant life. If you want to see your statement year-to-date, you can do so in the church app.

Thank you.

Finance Committee



Bill Hughes



Within the historic setting of Harshaw Chapel, join us on Thursday, **August 13 at 6 p.m.** for a Taizé service, providing a time for peaceful reflection. Invite a friend! Led by Ann Smith.

Soul Table — June 2026 Update

Soul Table had another meaningful month of connection and nourishment, welcoming 1,060 guests through June — an average of 41 people each week — and serving up 1,881 meals. None of this would be possible without our incredible volunteers, who gave their time at an average of 11 people per week. If we had to pay for that labor at \$15.00 an hour, it would have cost us \$17,940.90 — a powerful reminder of just how much heart goes into this ministry. (And we can always use more hands, so if you have been thinking about joining us, now is a great time!)

We are also proud to keep investing in our local farming community, having spent \$3,265.94 through the end of June on locally produced food. Our tables were graced with potatoes from Happy Valley Farm in Andrews, beef from Bass Hyatt in Brass-town, carrots from J.C. Campbell Folk School, eggs from Casa Canaan Farm, and cabbage from SMM in Hayesville. Every dish served is a taste of our region — grown, raised, and shared by neighbors caring for neighbors.



**Keep the following in
your thoughts and
prayers:**

Ukraine and its people;
members of the Armed Forces; people on the island
of Mindanao Philippines; Barbara Hughes; Carl Auvil;
Cissy Dyer; Marion Forsyth; Rex Odom; Gary Hall;
Bob Parker; Eric Brant; Keisha Licata; Karen Forker;
Matt Heltzel; Natalia Donley-Telmosse; Evangeline &
Mother Sonia; Sheila Snow; Laura; Venezuelan earth-
quake victims; family of Martha Cane; Joni Langston;
Mario Howdeshell; grandson Allen; Gail Peck; Joe
Ebbing; Scott Kleinhanzl; Tammy Pulliam; Kathy; fam-
ily of Charles Forrister; John Sato; Beth McClure.

Prayer Team: prayfumc@gmail.com.

*In an effort to have room for all prayer requests we
will rotate off the names every 3 weeks unless
indicated, either by a notation on the blue prayer
request card or by calling the church office.*

828-837-2718 or email:
admin@murphyfirstumc.org

***Prayer Requests can be submitted through our
mobile app, on our Facebook page, YouTube live
stream or by calling the church office.***

**Trustee on Call for August
Ursula Lasky**



Contacts

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Maggie Corrigan—Admin Asst

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Jack Frahmman—Treasurer

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Bridget Esterhuizen—Preschool Dir.

preschool@murphyfirstumc.org



FUMC Family, the work of the church is serving the Lord. That means everything from feeding the hungry (as in Soul Table), to teaching the children (as in VBS), to supporting the staff (as in covering the phone or counting the offering, or supporting technology), to welcoming the

stranger (as in being a greeter), to ministering to the sick (assisting with congregational care), to celebrating each other (attending potlucks), to serving in worship (serving as usher, lay reader, communion server, musician, etc.).

Them is us, and it's only through us that any of this happens. We are a congregation of volunteers, not



staff, and we each need to help in whatever way God calls us, using the unique gifts He has given each of us. Our membership covenant calls us to "faithfully participate in the ministries of the church by our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service and our witness, that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ".

**Volunteer
Recruitment Fair**



On **August 9** following worship, Administrative Council will host a Volunteer Fair in the hopes that we can recruit willing helpers in a number of areas. If you are leading an effort and need helpers, contact Vera Confer (919-626-7892) to reserve a table to advertise your ministry and your needs. If you are someone interested in plugging in, plan to stay that afternoon and explore all the places where your gifts can bless others.

The church is US! Let's be the church.

august anniversaries

08/09—Rick & Penny Dieffenderfer
 08/16—Geo & Nancy Carr
 08/18—Bruce & Gail Peck
 08/19—Martin & Celia Fish
 08/22—Carl & Anne Hymen
 08/26—Dennis & Paula Widstrom
 08/31—Ricky & Marji Hill

If your anniversary does not appear above, we do not have a valid date for you. Please contact Maggie in the church office to correct this.

**A HUGE THANK YOU!!
 TO EVERYONE WHO
 VOLUNTEERED TO HELP
 WITH OUR VACATION
 BIBLE SCHOOL WHICH WAS
 A FANTASTIC SUCCESS!!**



**American
Red Cross**

The Willing Hands circle of the United Women in Faith will be hosting another blood drive on Friday, August 21 in Fellowship Hall. Stay tuned for the opportunity to sign up to donate.



On Thursday morning, September 10, Ann Smith will begin leading a women's book study on *Julian of Norwich: The Showings: Uncovering the Face of the Feminine*

in *Revelations of Divine Love* by Mirabai Starr. Contact Ann at annsmith828@gmail.com if you have any questions or are interested.

august birthdays

08/02—Harold Blackmon; Jason Forrister
 08/10—Gary Woods
 08/11—Janet Jones
 08/12—Elaine Svitil
 08/13—Rob Eicher; Larry Westmoreland
 08/15—Carole Goffus
 08/18—Lochlan Rogers
 08/19—Roger Lachance
 08/21—Millie McClure
 08/26—Martin Fish
 08/27—Joan Marble
 08/28—Sheila Snow
 08/30—Carl Auvil; Alex Budzinski
 08/31—Gerri Schutes; Foster Stroup

If your birthday does not appear above, we do not have a valid date for you. Please contact Maggie in the church office to correct this.



“United Women in Faith seeks to connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship, and education so that they can inspire, influence and impact local and global communities.” In 2026, it is our intention to lean into this, focusing on the four listed requirements to produce the predicted outcome.

July was a busy month for the United Women of Faith. After saying goodbye to Pastor Wil and the Posey's, we welcomed the Hills by stocking their pantry and providing other household goods. We hosted a potluck to honor Pastor Evan's first sermon. The Greeting Card Ministry met, followed by the monthly UWF Willing Hands meeting, where Janie Forrister shared the benefits of the Tri-County Summer Travel Program. UWF Willing Hands hosted the first Vacation Bible School meal on Sunday evening, with many members serving in other VBS roles. We are now preparing for our August projects.

The Greeting Card Ministry is sponsored by UWF and meets every 3rd Wednesday at 10:30am in the Fellowship Hall. Sharon Francis, our Leader of the Greeting Cards Ministry, designs and creates the cards the group prepares through an assembly line fashion to generate approximately 100 cards each month. It's a creative and fulfilling ministry and allows the participants to engage with each other in a relaxed and enjoyable way. Please join if your schedule allows.

The Annual Backpack Donation/Blessing is slated for the August 16 Church Service with sorting and distribution on the 17th. Our goal for this year is to donate 75 backpacks to be distributed amongst the Murphy Elementary, Middle and High Schools. Please participate by donating a backpack, supplies, or money. We will do the shopping to purchase remaining backpacks and supplies. Please bring them to the Church on Sunday, August 16, 2026. We will also place a collection box in the Narthex if you wish to bring the items in prior to August 16.

Upcoming Events:

August 9th, Volunteer Fair, following service in the Fellowship Hall. Come see our display and more about what we do.

August 15th, Smoky Mountain District Annual Celebration, gathering in Murphy Fellowship Hall from 9:30 am to 12:00pm. The meeting will include a Brunch with a ZOOM meeting to follow.

August 16th, Blessing of the Backpacks during Sunday Service 11:00 am Sanctuary. Bring all backpacks and/or supplies ready for the new year.

August 17th, Sorting and distribution of Backpacks at 9:00am in the Fellowship Hall.

August 19th, 10:30am Greeting Card Ministry, 11:30am United Women of Faith monthly Meetings in the Fellowship Hall.

August 21st, Blood Drive, 10:00am - 2:30pm, in the Fellowship Hall

Anyone interested in additional information regarding United Women of Faith, please reach out to Sarah June, (828) 361-1330 or Gail Peck (407) 529-9354



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26 9:45 a.m. Adult SS 11 a.m. Worship	27 10:30 a.m. Yoga 11:30 a.m. Chair Exercises 5 p.m. SPPRC	28 Newsletter Input Deadline 10:30 a.m. Bible Study	29 10 a.m. Worship Staff Mtg 11:30 a.m. Chair Exercises 1 p.m. Bible Study	30 10 a.m. Quilters 11:30 a.m. Soul Table 6 p.m. Common Ground	31 11:30 a.m. Chair Exercises	01 9:30 a.m. Al Anon
02 9:45 a.m. Adult SS 11 a.m. Worship 4 p.m. Youth	03 10:30 a.m. Yoga 11:30 a.m. Chair Exercises	04 10:30 a.m. Bible Study	05 10 a.m. Worship Staff Mtg 11:30 a.m. Chair Exercises	06 10 a.m. Quilters 11:30 a.m. Soul Table	07 11:30 a.m. Chair Exercises	08 9:30 a.m. Al Anon
09 9:45 a.m. Adult SS 11 a.m. Worship 12 p.m. Volunteer Fair 4 p.m. Youth	10 10:30 a.m. Yoga 11:30 a.m. Chair Exercises	11 10:30 a.m. Bible Study 5:30 p.m. Trustees	12 10 a.m. Worship Staff Mtg 11:30 a.m. Chair Exercises 1 p.m. Bible Study 5:30 p.m. Choir	13 8 a.m. Harshaw Mowing 10 a.m. Quilters 11:30 a.m. Soul Table 5 p.m. Preschool Committee 6 p.m. Taize Worship @ Harshaw	14 11:30 a.m. Chair Exercises	15 9:30 a.m. Al Anon 9:30 a.m. UWF Annual Celebration (mtg. and brunch)
16 9:45 a.m. Adult SS 11 a.m. Worship 4 p.m. Youth	17 10:30 a.m. Yoga 11:30 a.m. Chair Exercises	18 10:30 a.m. Bible Study	19 10 a.m. Worship Staff Mtg 10:30 a.m. Greeting Card Ministry 11:30 a.m. UWF 11:30 a.m. Chair Exercises	20 10 a.m. Quilters 11:30 a.m. Soul Table 5:30 p.m. Finance Committee	21 BLOOD DRIVE (10am) 11:30 a.m. Chair Exercises	22 9:30 a.m. Al Anon
23 9:45 a.m. Adult SS 11 a.m. Worship 4 p.m. Youth	24 10:30 a.m. Yoga 11:30 a.m. Chair Exercises 5 p.m. SPPRC	25 Newsletter Input Deadline	26 10 a.m. Worship Staff Mtg 11:30 a.m. Chair Exercises 1 p.m. Bible Study	27 8 a.m. Harshaw Mowing 10 a.m. Quilters 11:30 a.m. Soul Table	28 11:30 a.m. Chair Exercises	29 9:30 a.m. Al Anon
30 9:45 a.m. Adult SS 11 a.m. Worship 4 p.m. Youth 4:30 p.m. AA Dinner	31 10:30 a.m. Yoga 11:30 a.m. Chair Exercises	01 9 a.m. Mountain Project	02 10 a.m. Worship Staff Mtg 11:30 a.m. Chair Exercises	03 10 a.m. Quilters 11:30 a.m. Soul Table	04 11:30 a.m. Chair Exercises	05 9:30 a.m. Al Anon



Murphy First

United Methodist Church

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TO:

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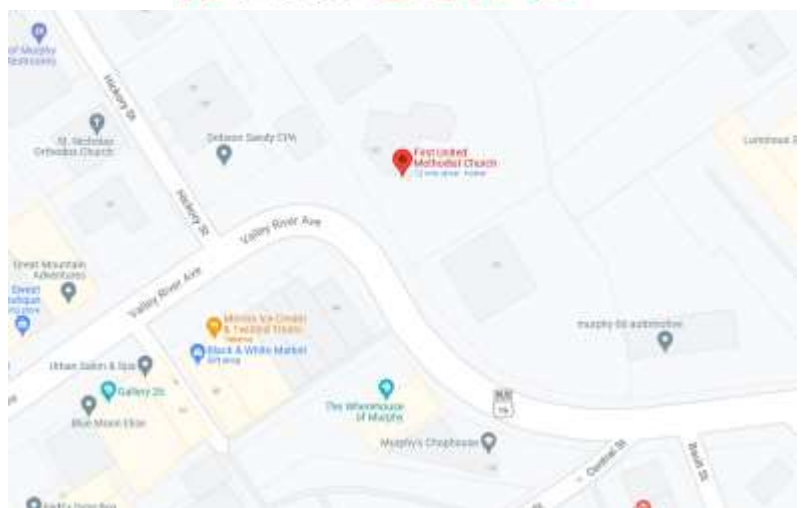
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#BeUMC



Our **Mission** is to live as a community transformed by God's grace, sent to love and serve like Jesus.

Our **Vision** is to build communities of hope where all people experience belonging and abundant life.