

The Messenger

A publication of
Smyrna First United Methodist Church
Welcoming All, Loving All, Serving All

November, 2025

FROM THE PASTOR

Greetings friends,

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I am so very grateful for the time to experience rest and restoration for body, mind, and spirit during my spiritual renewal leave this fall. It was long overdue and badly needed. During my leave, I have had opportunities to study, worship, retreat, travel, and spend extra time with family. I experienced Methodist history come to life as I walked in the literal footsteps of John Wesley in England from his birthplace in Epworth to his grave in London. I have found peace as I've reconnected with God through focused times of prayer and scripture reading. One of my spiritual highlights was a course on prayer at Sarum College in Salisbury, England with Anglican clergy and committed laity seeking to deepen their prayer lives. I pray I will continue to create the needed space for my physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being even when I return to the regular rhythms of life and work.

I am profoundly grateful for all our guest preachers who filled in during my absence. Thank you to Rev. Dr. LeNoir Culbertson, Rev. Michael Waldrop, Andromeda Steinberg, Rev. John Weaver, and Rev. De Hennessy for preaching and/or offering pastoral care while I was away. I pray you were blessed in hearing different voices from the pulpit. I also deeply appreciate all of the staff and laity who stepped up and served in additional ways. I pray that you have learned strengths and gifts that perhaps you didn't know you had as you used your gifts and abilities to make sure the work of God seamlessly continued while I was away.

You have continuously been in my prayers the last two months. I have missed you even while I've enjoyed this time apart. I look forward to learning all the ways that God has been at work in our church and in your lives while I've been away. I look forward to being back in the pulpit on November 2 for our All-Saints' Sunday celebration as we thank God and remember the saints who are now part of that "great cloud of witnesses who've gone before us." It will be such a sacred and meaningful day of worship and is always one of my favorite worship services of the whole year. I hope you will join us at 8:30 or 11 am for this special day of worship.

November is a month in which we often give extra focus to thankfulness and gratitude. I am thankful for you and the privilege of serving in ministry with you. May we all live lives of gratitude and thanksgiving for all that God has given us. And may we strive continuously to bless others this month as God has so blessed us.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Theresa

November Preaching Plan

November 2

Ephesians 1:11-23

"The Inheritance of the Saints"

November 9-23

"The Days are Surely Coming"

Sermon Series

November 9

Haggai 2:1-9

"The Latter Splendor"

November 16

Isaiah 65:17-25

"Rejoice Forever in Creation"

November 23

Jeremiah 23:1-6

"Woe to the Shepherds"

November 30 (1st Sunday of Advent)

Luke 1:5-13

Advent Sermon Series

"What Do You Fear?"

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS FOR NOVEMBER, 2025

Greeters

Nov. 2 Trish Pendleton
 Nov. 9 Sandra Abernathy
 Nov. 16 Bill & Sandra Abernathy
 Nov. 23 Bill & Sandra Abernathy
 Nov. 30 Trish Pendleton

Coffee & Conversation

Sandra Abernathy
 UMM
 Nita Wright, Pam Ashworth
 WINGS
 Combined Worship

Sound Board

Jason & Cynamon Fritschler
 Jason & Cynamon Fritschler
 Jason & Cynamon Fritschler

11:00 Liturgist

Nov. 2 Nita Wright
 Nov. 9 Lynn Patterson
 Nov. 16 Lynn Patterson
 Nov. 23 Nita Wright
 Nov. 30 Mike Ashworth

Children's Message

NA
 Pastor Theresa
 TBD
 TBD
 TBD

Sound Board

Ronald Patterson

11:00 Ushers

Deerwin Brownlow, Barbara Pierce

8:30 Communion Servers

Candy Kane, Carolyn Fox

11:00 Communion Servers

Jeanne McDonald, Jackie Vaughan

Answering the Question That Matters

When someone asks, “Why should I support this church?” it’s not a challenge—it’s an opening. It’s an invitation to tell the story of what God is doing in our congregation and what might yet be possible.

We could answer with duty: “Because scripture tells us to give,” or “Because the budget depends on it.” Those statements are true, but they don’t stir the heart. People aren’t motivated by obligation; they’re inspired by impact.

Imagine instead saying: • “Because here, people find healing and hope.” • “Because our worship and outreach help the community encounter Christ.” • “Because we’re shaping the next generation of disciples.”

Every congregation has stories worth sharing—faith rekindled, hunger eased, loneliness overcome. When we speak from that place, generosity becomes more than meeting expenses; it becomes participation in God’s unfolding story of grace.

As leaders, we also have a holy responsibility to dream aloud. What might happen if generosity grew? Could we launch a new outreach? Strengthen family ministries? Support missions more deeply? Vision inspires commitment; it paints a picture people want to help create.

So the next time someone asks why they should support your church, smile. It’s your opportunity to share the story of God’s movement in your midst and to invite others to be part of it.

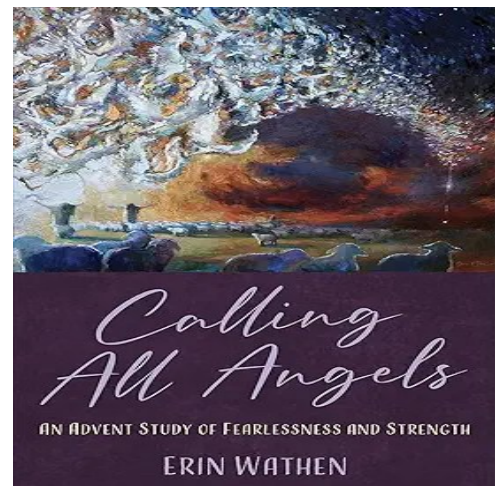
A good answer doesn’t defend your church; it reveals its purpose.

Note: Remember, we are moving our annual giving campaign to January, 2026.

~Ken Sloane



Daylight Savings Time Ends November 2nd.
 Set your clocks back one hour.



PASTOR'S ADVENT BIBLE STUDY
 “Calling All Angels: An Advent Study of Fearlessness and Strength”
 By Erin Wathan.

Sessions will be on:

Wednesday, November 19, 6:00-7:30 pm
 Sunday, December 7 (Time TBD)
 Wednesday, December 10, 6:00-7:30 PM
 Wednesday, December 17, 6:00-7:30 pm
 Wednesday, January 7, 6:00-7:30 pm

The Sparrow's Nest

Mother's Day Out



Hello Families of Preschoolers!

Register now for classes.
Classes meet Monday and Wednesday,
9 am - 2 pm,
August 11 through May 13, 2026



Betsy Jordan, Director



We would love to be a part of your
child's education!

Contact sparrowsnestdirector@gmail.com

A ministry of Smyrna First United Methodist Church

Important Information

Registration \$100 per child
Monthly Tuition \$200 first child
\$180 second child
\$170 for third child
www.smyrna1stumc.org/Sparrow's Nest



NOVEMBER

birthdays

Steve Bradford	11/2
Amy Wise	11/2
Betty Cooley	11/6
Alexander Lansdell	11/9
Nita Wright	11/10
John Hawk	11/16
Marga Zago	11/16
David Hookey	11/17
Tom Walker	11/19
Mike Tabor	11/23
Don Pinc	11/28

If your birthday or anniversary is not listed or is listed incorrectly, please notify the church office: sandra.phelps@smyrnafirstumc.org



NOVEMBER

anniversaries

John & Norma Hawk	11/17
Gary & Jeanne McDonald	11/20
Jeff & Becky Bowles	11/24

Practicing for a tornado drill 10/2025



Classes of 2's and 3's

These children have learned how important it is to position themselves in the hallway during a tornado drill! Great job, Betsy and all the teachers!



It was so much fun sharing treats with the Sparrow's Nest children as they came to the offices for Trick or Treating!

Our preschool teachers are ready for the day.

MISSIONS

Fall is finally here, and the busy holiday season is upon us. The turkey is perched at the back of the sanctuary for you to sign up to provide a Thanksgiving basket for those in our community who struggle to put food on their table. Just choose a large family or a small family and give us your name so we'll know how many baskets we will have to distribute. This has been a popular project for many years, and we hope to continue to bless many of our food pantry participants. We will need the baskets at the church no later than November 16, but you may bring them earlier if needed. We no longer put fresh meat in the basket but a gift card to a local store for \$10-\$15 will give them the option to purchase their own meat and possibly a dessert. We are not including fresh desserts as they will be stale by Thanksgiving but if you feel led to add a box of brownie mix or cookie mix they can make their own.

In addition to the Turkey baskets, the table is in the narthex with shoe boxes that need to be filled so a child in various regions around the world can receive a gift this Christmas. There are only a few of the printed Christmas Child boxes but under the table are suitable boxes that will work just as well. You may even decorate those boxes if you feel you want to make it more festive. There are lists that give suggestions for appropriate items to include in your box. **Remember to remove all items from their package so you can get more in the box.** This gift may be the first time a child has heard of the birth and life of Christ, and you can be part of that mission.

We will be providing an Angel tree again this year so watch for the tree to go up at the end of November. God has provided us with so many ways to bless those less fortunate, and we hope all of you will continue to open your hearts to give to those in need.

November sharing Sunday item is breakfast cereal.

~Trish Pendleton

special visit



BREAKFAST
WITH
SANTA

Please save the date:
Saturday, December 6!

Join us for this fun, community event. We will be serving breakfast from 8:00-10:00 am. We can use assistance with decorating on Friday, serving on Saturday and help with crafts and clean-up. We are so excited to say that we already have our Santa, AND Mrs. Clause will be joining him. Rick and Amy Wise have graciously agreed to be Mr. and Mrs. Clause! We hope you can assist in any way but more importantly, we hope you will join us.

~Diana Hague

SALT

(Senior Adults Living Triumphantly)
For all who are 55+

November Lunch Plans

Tom Goodner, catering

Guests are requested to bring their favorite Thanksgiving sides.

Event will be a speaker from Wounded Warriors

There will be a table set up for guests to put military memorabilia for display.

Next SALT committee meeting is November 5th in the Conference room.

Thank you to all who donated to our local Veterans!

****December 18 event is White Elephant game!!!**

NOTICE:



If you like to mail cards, we need you for our 2026 Church Card Ministry.

Smyrna First has a Church Card Ministry for sending our church

family birthday and anniversary cards as a way to reach out to each other. Each card writing person for 2025 was provided a list of 31 names, addresses, and dates as their part in the card ministry. This is a year long commitment. If necessary, cards and stamps will be provided to you.

If you are interested in volunteering for the 2026 Card Ministry, please contact Gwen Graves at gwenandsam606@gmail.com or text 615-427-8895 or just see Gwen at church and let her know.



Yoga Class

NOVEMBER CLASS SCHEDULE

Tuesday class - 11:00 am

Thursday class - 6:00 pm

Fellowship Hall

November 4, November 6, November 11,
November 13, November 18, November 20,
November 25,

No class on November 27.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

When Rutherford County Schools are closed for weather, the church office will be closed and all activities for the day will be canceled.

When inclement weather occurs on a weekend it will be discerned on an individual basis if the church will be closed and/or services will be postponed, and the membership will be notified.

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Freida Winkley needs prayer as she continues with chemo.
- John Hawk is home recovering from heart surgery.
- Barb Huebel will have surgery on November 3.



**American
Red Cross**
Blood Drive

November 24, 11 am - 4 pm

Fellowship Hall, Door C

Donating blood is as easy as pie!

All donors receive free pair of
PAC-MAN socks!

To schedule an appointment log
onto www.redcrossblood.org &
enter sponsor code
FUMCSmyrna



LEADERSHIP BOARD REPORT

The Leadership Board had its monthly meeting on October 26. One action that was taken was approving and accepting a bid from Dow Smith Construction to install new doors at the entrance to the sanctuary, to have the outside door in the chancel area repaired and to replace the ramp door which takes us into the Chapel and office area. The purpose of this project is: 1. to replace old doors that can no longer be repaired; and 2. to provide doors that are more secure and will create a safer environment for our membership and visitors. Thanks to Scott Buchholz and Derwin Brownlow for their work on this.

As pastor Theresa will return to the pulpit November 2, we will begin putting into motion some of the suggestions we received from Small Fish Branding. One of the suggestions was that we take our hospitality toward our visitors a little further. To that end, we need more ushers and greeters. At this time, there is a very small pool from which the Worship Team can pull from. There will be training held soon. Please prayerfully consider volunteering for this important ministry. If you are willing to help, please contact Lynn Patterson or Mary Ann Rogers.

We will continue to implement more suggestions as time goes by. This is a wonderful, caring church, and it is our hope and prayer that we will all step up when more requests for service come up. Let's work together to uphold our mission statement: "Welcoming All, Loving All, Serving All"!

Nita Wright
Leadership Board Chair



WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!

Can you help? Are you willing to be included in the rotation for any of the following areas:

Liturgist? Ushers? Greeters?
Sound Booth? Children's Message?

If you are available, please contact Mary Ann Rogers, Lynn Patterson, Tom Wright, or the church office.



YOUTH INFORMATION

***Confirmation Sunday is November 9th.**
Youth will begin meeting at 4 pm in fellowship hall.

***Youth Friendsgiving Dinner is November 23 at 5 pm in fellowship hall for youth and their families.**

FINANCIAL UPDATE BUDGET VS ACTUAL

Tithes & Offerings Received	\$ 21,644.00
Oct. budget Needs	\$ 31,442.00
Oct Over/(Under) Budget	\$ (9,798.00)
Balance Forward	\$ (22,201.00)
YTD Over/(Under) Budget Needs	\$ (31,999.00)

Use this QR code to access the VANCO donation page for a one time online donation or to set up recurring donations.



Baby SHOWER

**Jesse & Emi
Bobick**

**November 9, 2:00 pm
Church Fellowship Hall**

Please find below the link for
Jesse and Emi's baby registry,
including their address.
<https://my.babylist.com/emilyn-badgley>

R.S.V.P. to Nita Wright
615-828-9279
Nita_wright@bellsouth.net



WANTED: RINGERS, SINGERS AND PLAYERS

We would love for you to come join our music program! We will begin practicing Advent and Christmas music soon. If you are interested in singing in the choir, ringing in the handbells, or singing and/or playing in the Praise Band, please see our Music Director, Branson Clark. Come join us!



A special thank you to those who donated items for the Mountain T.O.P. Fall Festival. 315 people came. They ran out of hats, gloves and scarves, so

keep those in mind for next year, along with tennis shoes for all ages and men's work boots. Thanks again.

~Jan Schilling



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SUNDAY SCHEDULE:

8:30 AM Modern Worship
9:30 AM Coffee & Conversation
10:00 AM Sunday School
11:00 AM Traditional Worship
4:00 PM Youth

MONDAY SCHEDULE:

9:00 AM Sparrow's Nest
6:00 PM Cub/Boy Scouts
6:00 PM Sinfonietta Rehearsal

TUESDAY SCHEDULE:

11:00 AM Yoga Class
5:30 PM Girl Scouts (once a month)

WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE:

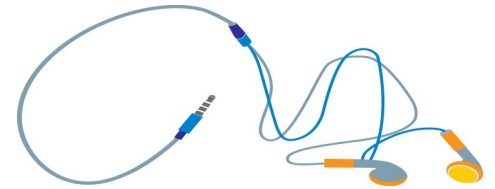
9:00 AM Sparrow's Nest
3:00 PM Food Pantry
6:00 PM Pastor's Bible Study
(as scheduled)
5:30 PM Brownies (twice a month)
6:00 PM Hand Bells
7:15 PM Chancel Choir

THURSDAY SCHEDULE:

6:00 PM Praise Band
6:00 PM Yoga Class

FRIDAY SCHEDULE:

10:00 AM Morning Glories
(as scheduled)



Stay Connected

November



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					Church Office Closed on Friday.	
						1
2 COMMUNION See Schedule "Sharing Sunday" All Saints Sunday Daylight Savings Time Ends	3 See Schedule 6:00 Worship Committee	4 See Schedule	5 See Schedule 10:00 SALT Committee – CR	6 See Schedule 5:30 Pack Backpacks	7 See Schedule	8
9 Confirmation Sunday 7:30 am Men's Breakfast 12:15 UWF 2 pm Baby Shower	10 See Schedule	11 See Schedule Veterans Day	12 See Schedule 6:00 Charge Conference Fellowship Hall	13 See Schedule 12:30 Sparrow's Nest Board Meeting 6:30 Scouts Committee	14 See Schedule	15 FH Reserved 3 pm - 8 pm
16 See Schedule 12:15 Leadership Board Meeting	17 See Schedule	18 See Schedule	19 See Schedule	20 See Schedule 12:00 pm SALT Lunch Catered Meal	21 See Schedule	22
23 See Schedule Christ the King Sunday Youth Friendsgiving 5 pm	24 See Schedule Blood Drive 11 am - 4 pm	25 See Schedule	26 See Schedule	27 THANKS Giving Day	28 Church Office Closed	29 FH=Fellowship Hall
30 See Schedule 1st Sunday of Advent COMBINED WORSHIP	Complete Cleaning is on campus Thursday and Friday 1:00-5:00 pm to clean our facilities.					
	**Soup & Sandwich potluck following the combined worship service.					

SMYRNA FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

301 Sam Davis Road
Smyrna, TN 37167

Tel: 615-459-2826

Visit us on the web:

smyrna1stumc.org

Facebook: [@sfumc.tn](https://www.facebook.com/sfumc.tn)

Instagram: [@sfumc.tn](https://www.instagram.com/sfumc.tn)

Twitter: [@sfumc_tn](https://twitter.com/sfumc_tn)

Sparrow's Nest Parents Day Out Educating Children

Since 1960

Monday &

Wednesday

9 am - 2 pm

For more info, email

[sparrowsnest](mailto:sparrowsnestdirector@gmail.com)

director@gmail.com

A ministry of
Smyrna First UMC.

"Smyrna First UMC

*is a community
who is passionate
about welcoming
all, loving all and
serving all so that
we may offer Christ
to all."*

WORSHIP with us

Modern Worship, 8:30 am; Traditional Worship, 11:00 am

GET CONNECTED WITH A SMALL GROUP AT SMYRNA FIRST

Sunday school classes available each week:

Fellowship, 10 am, room 201

MINGS (Men in Need of God's Strength),
10 am, room 312

Motley Christians, 10 am, room 303

Pairs & Spares, 10 am, room 307

Searchers, 10 am, room 305

WINGS (Women in Need of God's Strength),
10 am, room 310

YOUTH (6TH-12TH GRADES), 10 AM,
rooms 315-317

3RD-5TH GRADES,
PRESCHOOL-2ND GRADE,
10 am, room 311

2025

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor.....	Rev. Theresa Johnson
Worship Music Leader.....	Branson Clark
Office Manager.....	Sandra Phelps
Organist.....	Bobby Medlen
Pianist.....	Jesse Bobick
Financial Secretary.....	Andi Steinberg
Youth Ministries Director.....	Andi Steinberg
Sparrow's Nest Director.....	Betsy Jordan
Custodial.....	Complete Cleaning Concepts

**CHARGE
CONFERENCE**
NOVEMBER 12, 2025
6:00 PM
FELLOWSHIP HALL
Mark your calendar!

This meeting is open for any member to attend and we
welcome your attendance.

