



THE MESSENGER

The mission of Springfield First United Methodist Church is to love God and love people, so that the Gospel is shared and disciples are shaped.

August 2025

From the Pastor's Pen

Greetings in the name of Christ our Lord!

August is a strange month. It doesn't have the fresh start of January or the joy of the holidays. It isn't quite summer anymore, but it's also not yet fall. The gardens are tired, the heat lingers, and school is just around the corner. In many ways, August feels like an in-between time: a season of transition where we're not entirely sure what to hold onto and what to let go. But that's precisely where God does some of God's best work.

Scripture is full of in-between moments. The Israelites wandered the wilderness between Egypt and the Promised Land. David waited in caves between his anointing and his kingship. The disciples lingered in the upper room between Jesus' ascension and the coming of the Spirit. And we, too, live in the "already but not yet" of God's kingdom—between what is and what will be.

In-between times can feel uncertain, even frustrating. But they can also be holy. Because these are the moments when God shapes us in quiet ways. When there's no spotlight, no resolution, no clear next step—just the daily invitation to trust.

In her book *When the Heart Waits*, Sue Monk Kidd writes, "The soul often speaks most clearly in the quiet, in the slowing down, in the waiting." Maybe that's the gift of August. It slows us down—and in so doing, teaches us how to listen again.

So if you feel like you're waiting for something—clarity, healing, renewal—take heart. God is with you not just in the destination, but in the in-between. This might not be the most exciting time of year, but it may be one of the most spiritually fruitful, if we let it be.

Let's be faithful in the waiting. Let's lean into the slowness. And let's remember that even in the in-between times, perhaps especially in them, God is at work.

Peace,
Pastor Jason



Printed Prayer Lists are located
in the gathering space outside
of the Moore Center
& the Sanctuary.



Given By:

Mindy Mosier
Viola Cherry
Mary Nicholson
Suzy Jones
"
Mary Nicholson
& Family

In Memory of:

Mary K. Goan
Alfred Cherry
Kathy Gains
Mary K. Goan
Tom Bennett
John B. Nicholson

Fund:

Budget
Budget
Blessing Box
UWF
Budget
Blessing Box



Springfield First United Methodist Church
511 S. Oak Street, Springfield, TN 37172

Rev. Jason Jones
Pastor

Kevin Nooner
Lay Leader

Laura Gotcher
Office Administrator

Andrea Hunter
Treasurer/Communication Coordinator

Travis Gotcher
Director of Technology

Jon Gower
Director of Music Ministries

Chris Keller
Associate Director of Music Ministries

Jamie Harris
Nursery Coordinator

Charlotte Herndon
Nursery Caregiver

Andrew Hunter
Facilities Manager

Zoila Lara & Team
Custodians

Church Office
615-384-4800

Chancel Flowers

Available Dates:

October 26
November 9
December 14, 28
January 4, 11, 18, 25



The Counselor's Corner

by Burns Rogers



From Loneliness to Belonging: Seeking Connection in a Disconnected World

Many clients I see talk about experiencing loneliness. In a world where we have multiple ways to connect, i.e., social media, e-mail, Zoom, FaceTime, telephone, etc., often I hear people describe feeling disconnected, invisible, or having a sense that they are out of place and just don't belong anywhere. Loneliness does not discriminate, and it can feel particularly harsh when someone feels lonely in a place that seems to be synonymous with connection—with family, friends, in community organizations, and even in church.

In the second chapter of Genesis, we read that God recognized that loneliness is troublesome. "Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.'" (Genesis 2:18) We were all created to be social beings, to be in relationship, not only with God, but with our brothers and sisters. Even with this Biblical acknowledgement that we need one another, many of us suffer and struggle in silence as we try to carry our burdens alone. We offer excuses that we don't want to bother anyone, or we try to convince ourselves that everyone has their own problems so we should not trouble them with ours. Sometimes we might even find it hard to reach out to someone who could help, or we chose not to, because we question whether or not we would even get a response.

It is important to understand that there is a difference between being alone and being lonely. Perhaps you are an introvert. If so, you understand the need to be alone. Introverts are often good at pretending to enjoy the company of a large crowd, but when such a gathering comes to a close, an introvert needs some alone time to recharge and regroup. Being around people and having to be 'on' is exhausting for an introvert. Conversely, being lonely is not necessarily simply a matter of not being around a crowd. A person who feels disconnected or invisible can be in the midst of a crowd and still feel alone. To avoid feeling lonely, a person must be able to connect, be seen, be valued, and be accepted.

In today's world, we have myriad ways to connect with friends, family, and co-workers. Yet many more people than ever before experience loneliness. Loneliness can result from many of life's transitions—moving to a new city, the loss of a friend or spouse, divorce/separation, changing jobs/retirement, or sending your children off to school or the workforce. For others, loneliness is the residual effect of emotional wounds—self-perception of being an outsider, mental health issues, or shame. We might tell ourselves, 'If they get to know who I really am, they will not like me.'

There is a powerful antidote for loneliness—community. In the 4th chapter of Ecclesiastes, the portion of the chapter entitled "The Value of a Friend" we read, "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help." (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10) This wisdom from over three millennia ago remains true today.

Becoming an incorporated member of a community does not happen spontaneously. Sometimes it may be difficult to find the right community. Some people might find it intimidating to be the newest member and therefore initially on the fringe of an established group. To immerse yourself in a community may require you to be vulnerable and intentional. It requires we extend grace to ourselves and others alike and even a willingness to accept that, for a time, it may be uncomfortable. We can all work to invite others into community. Look for the person you don't recognize that may be sitting alone. Invite someone new into conversation over a cup of coffee. And if you are the visitor to an established community, understand you might have to come back more than once to become fully integrated.

If you find yourself feeling lonely in your current station in life, do not be discouraged.

Acknowledging your loneliness is not a sign of weakness, rather it is a sign of self-awareness and the first step toward seeking connection.

The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. This ancient proverb is sound advice for someone experiencing loneliness. Take a step outside your routine and comfort zone. Join a Sunday School class. Speak to someone you have seen sitting in the pew close to you. Get involved in service opportunities or social activities that have an open invitation. Moving toward belonging can simply mean showing up.

No one should be expected to travel his/her journey alone. Maybe you would benefit from a conversation with Pastor Jason. Maybe having a Stephen Minister during a difficult season is appropriate for you. Maybe you need to come talk to me where you will find a confidential, safe place to tackle whatever it may be that is resulting in your feelings of being lonely and disconnected.

Lean into your faith, not only your faith in God, but your faith in the process. God will graciously meet you where you are, and there are people in this community ready and willing to help you in any way they can.

The promise of the gospel is that we are never truly alone. Jesus experienced deep loneliness—rejected, misunderstood, even abandoned in His final hours—so that we might never be separated from the love of God. In Christ Jesus, we are fully known and fully loved.

My prayer is that SFUMC continues to be a place where every person feels seen, heard, and valued—a place where no one walks alone. Since 2001 the United Methodist Church has promoted itself as a place where people can find "Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors." My experience of SFUMC has been that it is a place guided by the inclusive love of God for each of us and a place where one another's burdens are shared and where grace, concern, and care are abundantly present and freely offered to all. I unequivocally believe that this church family is here to celebrate with you, as well as, to walk with you through life's challenges. Please know that I'm here for you too.



Lighthouse Ministry began just under 2 years ago with an interest meeting in August 2023. We now have members representing at least 4 different denominations and 11 different churches in the surrounding communities. In order to continue to grow this ministry, we recently embarked on a shoe drive. We chose this fundraiser because it didn't require any upfront costs and not only would it benefit us, but it would allow individuals in underdeveloped countries to support themselves. It sounded so easy - we had 2 months to collect 2500 pairs of shoes. That's all we had to do. Once they were collected, we would just rubber band each pair together and place them into bags containing 25 pairs each. Easy, right? There were many days when we questioned our ability to meet our goal (and our sanity) but on July 23rd, a truck pulled away from SFUMC carrying 2,670 pairs of shoes!

To God be the glory!



Greetings from the Finance Committee!

The financial update through 6/30/2025 is below. While our general contributions were low to budget, designated contributions exceeded \$48,000 for the six-month period. Some of these contributions remain within ministries of our church (Youth Ministries as an example) but others support missions and ministries throughout our community and beyond (such as My Father's House or COPE or the many ministries supported by communion offerings). Our church has a heart for missions! I have learned that many persons are not fully aware of how Designated Contributions work. Designated contributions are earmarked for a particular activity or mission. Except for those that are designated for a specific SFUMC ministry, the money for each is sent to the particular ministry shortly after receipt of the contribution. Designated Contributions for SFUMC ministries (Stephen Ministry as an example) remain in an account until used for that particular activity. If the total is not used before year end, it carries forward to the next year. Those contributions cannot be used for anything other than the ministry designated. In reviewing the summary below, please remember that contributions designated for a particular activity, cannot be used to support general church operations. We are so grateful for your faithful giving, but encourage you to also remember the need that we are experiencing for gifts that support our general operating budget. As of end of June our total general fund operating cash loss for the year exceeded \$58,000. As you consider how grateful you are for what our Church represents to you, please consider how you can help strengthen its financial position.

Year to date Operating Fund as of 6/30/2025:

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
General Contributions:	\$290,064	\$372,534
Other Income	\$ 14,812	9,000
Designated Contributions	\$ <u>48,374</u>	
Total Receipts:	\$353,250	
Total Expenses (Cash basis):		\$411,362
Net Loss (Cash Basis):		(\$ 58,112)
Mortgage Payable:		\$1,441,561

If you have questions, please contact Andrea Hunter in the office or Jane Murphy.

Blessings!

The Finance Committee
Jane Murphy, Chair

Stewardship

This quarter we are focusing on the HEART part of our Narrative budget. These spiritual gifts include: Knowledge, Faith, Teaching, Healing, Prophecy, Evangelism, and Exhortation. Our committee would like to encourage the church members to complete the red cards in their bulletin and on the table outside the Moore center. There are several areas of the HEART part in which members can connect.

Additionally, this portion of the budget is 25% or roughly \$191,667.25 of the money needed to complete these expenses.

HEART CONNECT

with SFUMC

Spiritual Gifts include: **Knowledge, Faith, Teaching, Healing, Prophecy, Evangelism, Exhortation**

I am interested in participating with (please mark all that apply):

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading Scripture in worship | <input type="checkbox"/> Drama Team ministry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greeting for worship | <input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation teaching |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ushering for worship | <input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation helping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Serving Communion in worship | <input type="checkbox"/> Worship arts/design |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Choir | <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer Team ministry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Praise Team or Band | <input type="checkbox"/> Christmas decorations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth C choir | <input type="checkbox"/> Blessing of the Animals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communion steward | <input type="checkbox"/> Handbells |
| <input type="checkbox"/> After-worship Communion | <input type="checkbox"/> Worship technology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Instrumentalist | <input type="checkbox"/> Idea to start something new |

NAME: _____



Are you interested in being involved with our upcoming Fall Social on October 25th? If so, join the Event Team on September 9th @ 6 PM in the Fellowship Hall as they meet to discuss and plan this wonderful event!

Contact: Andrea Hunter @ 615-384-4800

andrea.hunter@springfieldfumc.org



A FEW HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS TO BE AWARE OF...

When you are leaving any of the church buildings, please be sure that the door LOCKS BEHIND YOU. I'm sure you conscientiously check the doors to your house/car when you exit, so please do the same for God's house.



You are welcome to adjust a thermostat in the area you are using so you can be comfortable while you're using the space, but please reset the temperature before you leave. On Monday, we discovered a thermostat set on 64 degrees, which means the AC ran all day Sunday, (if it was adjusted on Sunday morning and not Saturday morning) all night Sunday night and until it was found on Monday attempting to reach 64 degrees.

Community Breakfast Volunteers



Let's have breakfast!
August 16th 8am-10am
511 S. Oak St., Springfield, TN



Pictured: Alan Sparkman, Cindy Strever, J.C. Kellar, Jill de Graauw, Rae Strever, Joe de Graauw, Ken Allen

Not Pictured: Brenda Allen, Ben Dorris, Doug Quick, Scott Allen, Sharon Hargraves, Jennie Justice, Jared Goodfred, Cassie Goodfred



Psalm 107:9

For He satisfies
the thirsty and
fills the hungry
with good
things.



Blessing Box

Volunteers:

Bill Mathieu, Donna Clinard,
Charlotte Reedy, Larry Eden,
Alan Sparkman, Sandi & Richard
Swink, J.C. Kellar, David Allen.
(Not pictured: Pete Clinard)



Thank you to all
who make the
Blessing Box
ministry
possible!



Attendance in Worship...

Sunday, June 29

In person 9am.....	89
In person 11am.....	63
Sunday School.....	65

Sunday, July 6

in person 9am.....	94
In person 11am.....	59
Sunday School.....	62

Sunday, July 13

IlIn person 9am.....	107
n person 11am.....	60
Sunday School.....	98

Sunday, July 20

In person 9am.....	92
In person 11am.....	66
Sunday School.....	71

Sunday, July 27

In person 9am.....	89
In person 11am.....	73
Sunday School.....	79



We invite you to gather with us each Wednesday in the Prayer Room outside the Sanctuary. This is an opportunity to surround each other in prayer and lift up requests, concerns and celebrate joys.

"For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."

Matthew 18:20

"And let us consider how to encourage one another to love and good deed, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day is near."

Hebrews 10:25

August 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 Back to School Bash 5-7pm	4 Stephen Ministry 6pm	5	6	7 Frances Rosson Picnic 5pm Praise Team Meets 7pm	8	9
10 Blessing of the Backpacks	11	12	13 FLOW Resumes	14	15	16 Community Breakfast 8-10am Lighthouse Ministry 9:15am
17 190yr Celebration One Service @ 11am	18 Worship Planning 5pm	19 Finance Committee 6pm	20 FLOW	21	22	23
24	25	26 OWLS Game Day 1-4pm Stewardship 6pm	27 FLOW	28	29	30
31	1 OFFICE CLOSED Labor Day	2	3 FLOW	4 Staff Retreat	5 OFFICE CLOSED	6



COMMUNION OFFERING MONTHLY SCHEDULE

2025

January \$665	February \$800	March \$1,626	April \$566
Human Relations Day	The Masters Table	UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief)	Native American Ministries
May \$315	June \$419	July \$642	August
Trinity Community Commons	Peace With Justice	Open Door Pregnancy Center	Project Transformation
September	October	November	December
Reelfoot Rural Ministries	WORLD COMMUNION	United Methodist Student Day	My Fathers House Ministries

OUTREACH UPDATE

August Communion Offering will go to the Peace with Justice effort of the United Methodist Church. This day is used to speak out for peace and justice. Our Social Principles call us to love our enemies, seek justice, and serve as peacemakers in resolving conflict. Fifty percent of funds collected stay in the UMC annual conference to enhance and support local social justice ministries. The other fifty percent collected goes to support national and international peacemaking ministries and grants.

Please Prayerfully consider your gift
to August's Communion Offering
Peace with Justice.

July's Communion Offering towards Open Door Pregnancy Center totaled \$642. Many thanks to all who contributed towards this wonderful ministry!



SFUMC WISH LIST

This will be a regular article for the newsletter. Keep your eyes on this section as it will be updated with new wishes and wishes that are fulfilled. **Any group or SS class can put their wish list items here! Just let Laura know what you need.**

Here's an opportunity for you assist the church by serving in ministry!

CURRENT WISHES:

A Refrigerator the refrigerator in the Fellowship Hall kitchen has given up the ghost. If anyone has a standard freezer above/fridge below unit they could donate to the church, we are in need.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Adam Wilks	8	1	Grace Shoemaker	8	12	Elaine Haley	8	25
Randee Masters	8	1	Montie House	8	13	Michael Austin Boggs	8	26
Bailey Dodd	8	1	Linda Kumar	8	13	David Seay	8	26
Bobbi Lemay	8	2	Jason Cherry	8	13	Daniel Dye	8	26
Kevin Fisher	8	3	Andrea Hunter	8	13	Alyssa Curry	8	26
Katie Woodard	8	3	Thad Krueger	8	14	Clint Coffelt	8	26
Mia Britton	8	4	Brian Fann	8	14	Daniel Dodd	8	26
Carrie Griede	8	4	Jenny Taylor	8	15	Wyatt Korth	8	26
Justin Walker	8	4	J. C. Kellar	8	16	Lindsey Walker	8	27
Adley Smith	8	4	Derek Stroud	8	16	Noah Waltz	8	28
Lakeyn Smith	8	4	David Stroud	8	16	Easton Thompson	8	28
Jim Lindsey	8	5	Jaxon Wilkins	8	16	Bryce Baldwin	8	29
Henry Hargraves	8	5	John Thompson	8	17	Buddy Corlew	8	29
Jeff Glodoski	8	5	Lauren Holman	8	17	Abby Wilkerson	8	29
Samantha Sapp	8	6	Michael Baldwin	8	17	Brittney Adkins	8	29
Carter Waltz	8	6	Laura Gotcher	8	17	Tori Browning	8	29
Caralee Beirne	8	7	Ann Clinard	8	18	Joe Vinson	8	29
Kathi Phillips	8	7	Taylor Mays	8	18	Sharon Garnett	8	29
John Doble	8	7	Jessie Seeley	8	19	Alan Hartman	8	30
Florence Fisher	8	7	Glenn Dye	8	20	Jeb Lax	8	30
David Smith	8	8	Adam Binkley	8	20	Andy Wright	8	30
Jack Wilkerson	8	8	Meredith Shannon	8	21	Austin Nooner	8	30
Jerry Wallace	8	8	Rachel Dorris	8	21	Clint Russell	8	30
Kim Abraham	8	8	Hannah Smith	8	22	Eddie Moore	8	31
Libby Lax	8	9	Rob Ary	8	22	Billy Peck	9	1
Debbie DeValk	8	9	Austin Wood	8	22	Carter Marvin	9	2
Emily Kellar	8	10	Ella James Moore	8	22	Roy Gibson	9	3
Hannah Thomas	8	10	Jacob Richards	8	23	Shane Shoemaker	9	3
Margo Pascoe	8	11	McKenna Snider	8	23	Lisa Crabtree	9	4
Nancy Baker	8	11	Michelle Whited	8	24	Richard Beirne	9	5
Gavin Dorris	8	11	Mason Clark	8	24	Emily Richter	9	5
Morgan Russell	8	11	Hunter Butler	8	24	Lew Holt	9	5
Scott Rice	8	12	Finnley Hunter	8	24	Bonnie Laylon	9	5

Remember in your prayers . . .

Our Members & Constituents: Ronnie Brooks; Jane Eden; Julie Godwin; Rev. Jason Jones & wife, Kristy; Kathy Keegan; Linda Lang; Andy Lang; Sandy Long; Wanda Lockwood; Carrie Malone; Donna Morton; Lee Anne Morton; Sue Osborne; Jamie Harris; Ryan Herndon; Mindy Mosier; Donnie Jones; Amy Haynes; Virginia Sory Brown; JoAnne Nicholson

Our Extended Church Family: Randy Beeman & family (Pastor Jason's brother-in-law); Marlene Rathbun (Kristy Jones' mother); Shelia, Shane & Tamara Jones (Shelia came in and requested prayer); Michelle Pentecost (Andrea's mother); Renee (Chris Keller's aunt); Nick Bernard (Friend of Sheri Daly); Brad & Pat Fellows (friends of Gene & Norma Beck); Joyce Hawkins (Mindy Mosier's mother); Katheryn Grafton (Sharon Hargraves' sister); John & Tammy Ellis (Neighbors of the church); James Lee (church mail carrier's husband); Steve Parker (Betty Moore's grandson-in-law)

Military: Sergeant Samuel Bratcher (Husband of Emma Castle Bratcher, son-in-law of Curtis and Amy Castle)

Our Shut-ins: Beverly Bunch; Vicky Cherry, Catherine Clark, Shirley Dunn, Jackie Ebright, Martha Hammond, Mary Hayes, Wayne Hutcheson, Wanda Lockwood, Carrie Malone, Janet Reed, Linda Watts; Sue Osborne

Prayer concerns will be listed for six weeks unless the Prayer Ministry Committee is otherwise notified. Please call the church office (615) 384-4800 to extend or remove your prayer concerns.