

Rooted In God's Love—  
Passionate | Relevant | Life Changing

# FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH Weatherford, OK

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580-772-5565

local church website . . . [fumcmethodistok.org](http://fumcmethodistok.org)  
pastor's email . . . [firstu@sbcglobal.net](mailto:firstu@sbcglobal.net)  
find us on Facebook at . . . Weatherford Fumc

Our Mission . . . Making disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ  
for the transformation of the world,  
with more people, younger people, and more diverse people.  
January 2023



## Come to our Planning Retreat

### Discerning God's Will for Our Future

This year our congregation like thousands of other UMCs will need to discern whether God is calling us to remain affiliated with the United Methodist Church or if the church should go another direction. I am not anticipating that Weatherford FUMC will choose to disaffiliate from the UMC, and would be greatly surprised if we did; however, I believe that it is essential for every congregation to purposely evaluate and fully live into whatever we believe is God's will for our church.

If we believe that remaining United Methodist is God's will, then we ought to live into it as fully as we can. If we believe God is calling us to move another direction we ought to do that unambiguously and courageously.

At our planning retreat on January 14, 2023, from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. we will determine together how we will do this discernment work and, as needed, place dates and times on our church calendar for discussions and decision-making. We will also seek to look at our disciple making plans, our ministry plans, or facility plans, and our stewardship issues. We are asking every member of our church to come to this important meeting. We have moved the planning retreat in our own Fellowship Hall. We will NOT hold it at Canyon Camp this year. Please register in advance by signing up at the Ryden Welcome Center in the hallway by our sanctuary so we can order enough lunches.

### Come and Learn About and Discuss the Issues

Come to the Planning Retreat. We will have a guest leader and speaker for the discussion on disaffiliation, The Rev. Tish Malloy. Tish has been appointed by Oklahoma's bishop, Jimmy Nunn, as "Director of Transitional Ministries" to help churches deal with this time of denominational change. She is a former District Superintendent and has many leadership gifts and talents. She has the most up to date and accurate information that we need to know. She will give a presentation and make suggestions for us as to how we, as a church can pray and decide, and she can answer our questions.

### Come and Have a Voice in the Discussion

At the Planning Retreat, we are not going to decide to disaffiliate. That requires special pre-work and Church Conferences to which all members will be invited. What we ARE going to decide at the Planning Retreat is HOW we are going to decide as a congregation.

### Come and Help Us Set Dates

To pursue investigating the possibility of disaffiliation further, we will need to have some meetings both of the whole congregation and of some with a leader who will have to gather information. If it comes to that we will need your input on dates and times.

### How I See My Role as Pastor

As pastor of this church, I decided a long time ago, that the decision to disaffiliate or not must be made by the congregation and not by me. Through the years pastors come and go. One pastor may prefer things one way and the next pastor may prefer it another way. But the decision to stay in the UMC or to leave the UMC should be the congregation's decision, not the pastor's. The fact that this is clearly how the Book of Discipline sees this issue is found in the requirements that this be a 2/3rds vote of the congregation, so that the pastor or a small group of leaders cannot by themselves make the decision to disaffiliate. The point is the decision must belong to the people and not to the pastor. There is a strong temptation among pastors, district superintendents, and bishops to do everything they can to prevent their churches from leaving the denomination, to try to let the time expire on the disciplinary requirements including slowing things down, discouraging people from voting upon it, holding votes in advance to prevent disaffiliating pastors from influencing other pastors and churches, and even appointing pastors to churches who can distract or derail congregational decision making. There are other pastors who want to do everything they can to encourage their churches to leave the denomination including secret meetings and priming the pump to encourage leaving. Both of these show a lack of integrity and a lack of pastoral ethics.

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### **Pizza With the Pastor January 29**

Pizza With the Pastor will start back up Sunday, January 29th after the 2nd service in the Fellowship Hall. This is a good time to meet new people and have an opportunity to get to know the pastor and ask him any question about the church. Sign up in the Welcome Center so we know how many pizzas to order.

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### **Prayer Ministry to Begin**

One of our dreams is to develop a prayer ministry for not only our church but also for the community. A Class will be starting in January and we, like the disciples, will be asking "teach us to pray". As we Go through this class you will be equipped for your own prayer life and to be able to pray with friends and family. At the end you will be asked if you would like to be part of a prayer team. If have any questions you can call Nancy Horton at 918-849-1736.

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### **Acolyte Assistant Coordinator Needed**

Charlie Dillard is doing a great job training, preparing and teaching the children the meaning of their job as acolytes. They have been doing a wonderful job bringing in the light to light the candles to represent the very presence of God in our Worship Services. Charlie would appreciate someone to help him and be present when he is not in town or available. If you would like to help, please let Nancy Horton know, 918-849-1736 or the church office 580-772-5565.

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### **Apportionment and Wesley Giving**

When writing a check for an apportionment or for the Wesley Foundation, please clearly label them in the memo. Please write "Apportionment" or "Wesley Foundation". Please do not put Campus Ministry. This will help us make sure your giving goes to the correct place. Thanks!

**Children Chat**

**Preteen Ministry**

Preteen Ministry and Children's Ministry will be continuing classes Jan. 11

**United Women in Faith (UWF) NEWS**

The December meeting was productive even though it was slightly delayed in starting. The women who came enjoyed lunch and visiting until the traffic-delayed “GEMS lotion project” arrived and was completed by those who attended. Each Dec. holiday season, UWF Weatherford delivers lotions to the long-term care residents at Corn-Weatherford and also to our FUMC GEMS (our homebound or assisted living residents). Thank you to Barbara Baxter and helpers who had already completed the lotion assembly and delivery for the Corn LTC residents. A special thank you to the UWF members for the Personal Care items donated for delivery to the women’s shelter in Clinton in Dec. We also provided gift cards and wrapping paper so that moms could shop for their children. Attendees enjoyed an ornament exchange.

The Daytime Circle will meet on **January 10 at 12:00 noon in the Activity Room of the Pioneer Community Center on Gartrell Blvd.** We will begin our meeting with lunch and then have time for a program and fellowship. Members can bring a Pioneer Center lunch or brown-bag lunch. Every woman in the church is invited – come for the 12-12:50 lunch, program and fellowship. We are going to extend our gathering time so that planned adjournment is 1:50 pm. This extended time will allow for the mission projects, a meaningful program, fellowship plus this group is now the decision-making body, and we will be keeping members informed about local and district activity plus taking actions as needed for UWF Weatherford business.

Welcome to 2023 – we have an exciting year to look forward to this year. Weatherford, Clinton, and Hydro UWF units will be hosting the OK-UWF Annual Meeting in Oct. 2023 so we have planning and lots of ways that people can be involved this year as we prepare for this gathering.

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**APPORTIONMENT TREE UPDATE from Faye Henson, Lay Leader!**

As a member of the Finance Committee, I would like to give an update about the participation so far with the “Giving Tree” that helps the church meet its 2023 Apportionment assignments. We have had a little over \$9,200 in slips selected representing 18% of the amount needed for this next year. That is a wonderful start. We still have these important mission areas that you may recognize: African University, Black College Fund, Camps & Conferencing Programming, Community Engagement which includes Volunteers in Mission and Disaster Relief, Criminal Justice and Mercy Ministry (CJAMM), Hispanic/Latino Ministries, Lydia Patterson Institute, OK City University, Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference, and Skyline Urban Ministry plus additional ministry support areas. You can find the updated Master List posted at the Ryden Welcome Desk. The Church Office has the updated Master List so you can call (580-772-5565) if you see an area you would like to adopt. Thank you for any help you can offer.

As people picked up slips, the available spots were filled with slips that could be adopted. You can still find the color-coded slips for various mission areas. The key for the slips is as follows: Gold = \$1,000, Blue = \$500-\$999; Purple = \$100-\$499; and Pink = less than \$100. When you adopt an apportionment, you write a check for this amount separate from your yearly pledge amount as the item is accounted for in separate areas of the finance system. You can pay the apportionment amount all at once or extend the payment throughout the year.

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**COME JOIN THE FUN!**

**Make a Joyful Noise to the Lord, all the earth. Ps.98:4 (NRSV)**

**Ju-Bellation handbell choir invites anyone that would like to join them Wednesday at 4:30 p.m.**

**Skill Classes for beginning bell ringers will be offered at a different time.**

**The Bell Choir Members are a cheerful group, and they have a lot of great fun.**

**Contact the Church Office, Maxine Page, or a Bell Choir Member.**




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# Teen Talk

Youth will begin meeting again on Wednesday nights at 6:00pm on January 11. On Sunday, January 22, we will meet at the church at 6:00pm to make blankets and have a game night. The CLUE Winter Retreat at Canyon Camp is on Friday, January 27 – Sunday, January 29. Youth that want to go need to sign up online at [Sign-in | Oklahoma United Methodist Camps \(campbrainregistration.com\)](http://Sign-in | Oklahoma United Methodist Camps (campbrainregistration.com)) by Friday, January 13. Youth funds will pay for the retreat so just mark that your church will be sending the payment.

The Church Retreat is on Saturday, January 14, from 9:00am to 4:00pm. Youth are invited to come be part of this retreat and help make plans for the future of our church. All individuals that plan to attend need to sign up so there is plenty of food for lunch for everyone.

First United Methodist Church		January 2023						
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
1	8:30am Worship Service 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service	2 Office Closed	3 10:00am Staff Meeting 5:30pm Trustees 6:15pm -7:15pm Men's Bible Study	4 6:00pm Youth Council @ Hamer's	5 Public Schools Begin	6	7	
8	8:30am Worship Service 9:30am Fellowship Breakfast/Inquiry Hosts @ Wesley Foundation 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service	9 SNOSU Classes Begin 10:00am Staff Meeting 6:00pm Take Down Christmas Decoration 6:15pm -7:30pm Study of Isaiah	10 12:00pm UMW @ Pomeroy St. Center 6:15pm -7:15pm Men's Bible Study 7:00pm Wesley Worship	11 4:30pm Hand Bell Choir 6:00pm Childrens/Pretleen/Youth 6:45pm Chancel Choir	12 11:30am -1:30pm Wesley Luncheon 1:00pm Kingdom Connection	13  10:00am -4:00pm Staff Planning Retreat @ FUMC 6:00pm Staff/Parish Relations Committee @ FUMC	14  9:30am -4:00pm Church Planning Retreat @ FUMC	
15	8:30am Worship Service 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service	16  Martin Luther King Day - Office Closed 5:30pm Finance	17 10:00am Staff 6:15pm -7:15pm Men's Bible Study 7:00pm Wesley Worship	18 4:30pm Hand Bell Choir 6:00pm Childrens/Pretleen/Youth 6:45pm Chancel Choir	19 11:30am -1:30pm Wesley Luncheon 1:00pm Kingdom Connection	20	21 10:00am Worship Team	
22	8:30am Worship Service 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service 4:00pm Mission Team 6:00pm Youth, Games & Mission	23 10:00am Staff Meeting 6:15pm -7:30pm Study of Isaiah	24 6:15pm -7:15pm Men's Bible Study 7:00pm Wesley Worship	25 4:30pm Hand Bell Choir 6:00pm Childrens/Pretleen/Youth 6:45pm Chancel Choir	26 11:30am -1:30pm Wesley Luncheon 1:00pm Kingdom Connection	27	28	
29	8:30am Worship Service 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service 12:15pm "Pizza With The Pastor"	30 10:00am Staff Meeting 6:15pm -7:30pm Study of Isaiah	31 6:15pm -7:15pm Men's Bible Study 7:00pm Wesley Worship	1 4:30pm Hand Bell Choir 6:00pm Childrens/Pretleen/Youth 6:45pm Chancel Choir	2 11:30am -1:30pm Wesley Luncheon 1:00pm Kingdom Connection	3	4	

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