



The Monthly Message



September 14, 2025

Friends in Christ,

Our country is more divided than ever. For several years now, I have spoken with you and my previous conferences about these deep divisions and the painful ways they affect our communities, our churches, and even our families. In recent days, these divisions have again been laid bare.

It is our understanding that the National Guard will soon be deployed into Memphis, Tennessee. In our conference, as across our nation, faithful people hold differing views about this development. For many, this raises concerns about escalation, fear, and mistrust between communities and those called to protect them. We must acknowledge that such moments can deepen existing divides and stir strong emotions, even among those who worship side by side.

This past week, we witnessed the tragic shooting of a well-known political activist while in conversation with college students. And once again, our nation mourns yet another school shooting - this time in the suburbs of Denver, Colorado. These events grieve us deeply. They also have the power to widen the distance between us if we are not careful.

As United Methodists, we have historically stood against injustice in all its forms. Our faith compels us to speak truth, to pursue mercy, and to act with courage. Yet just as importantly, our Lord Jesus Christ calls us to be peacemakers. In a world of anger and suspicion, we are to be instruments of peace.

I implore you, therefore, to live into this calling. Reach across the lines that too often divide us - political, racial, geographic, or even denominational. Sit down with someone who does not look like you, vote like you, or pray like you. Listen with compassion. Extend grace. Refuse to let the story of our nation be written only in terms of hatred and violence. Our laity and clergy are called to be spiritual leaders in their communities, modeling the way of Christ through prayer, presence, and action. It is a conference discipleship priority and therefore of utmost importance.

How might you take responsibility for changing the narrative of this country? How might you bear witness to the reconciling love of Christ in a broken and weary world?

The apostle Paul reminds us in Romans 12:18, *"If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."* This is both a challenge and a promise. It is a challenge because peace

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The mission of Bartlett United Methodist Church is to know Christ and to make Christ known to all people, through worship, education, and service in our community and throughout the world.

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OFFICE HOURS

- Monday-Thursday 9:00am-3:00pm
- Friday 9:00am-12:00pm
- Phone: 901-386-4563



Saturday, November 8
8:00am in Fellowship Hall
 All men are invited to the Men's Prayer Breakfast for a light breakfast, fellowship, and speaker Rev. Andy Thompson. Breakfast is \$5 and first timers eat for free!



**United
Women
in Faith**

Tuesday, November 11
10:00am in Fellowship Hall
 All women are invited to join us for an informative program followed by a luncheon. Please join us for food, fun, and fellowship and learn how you can become a vital part of our local, national, and global community of women.

requires effort, sacrifice, and humility. But it is also a promise, because when we take even small steps toward peace, God multiplies them for the sake of the Kingdom.

May God grant us the courage to stand for justice, the patience to listen across divides, and the wisdom to be instruments of peace. And may the peace of Christ, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and minds in these days. Memphis Mayor Paul Young stated in his September 12 News Conference for everyone to come together regardless of our differences. He encouraged the Memphis community to be laser-focused on continuing the good work that has been done over the last two years in moving Memphis to become a great city.

May we United Methodists become laser-focused by loving God, loving people, and seeking to a peacemaker. Use your voice, your influence, and your presence as God leads you.

With hope and prayer,

David W. Graves



Bishop David W. Graves
 Resident Bishop
 Tennessee Western Kentucky Conference



The BUMC staff welcomes Brittany Dawson as our new Communications Specialist!

Hello, everyone! My name is Brittany, and I'm so honored to be joining the Bartlett UMC family as your new Communications Specialist!

To tell you a little about me, I grew up in Southeast Missouri and moved to Munford in December 2024. I have worked as a marketing professional and photographer for the last 16 years, working remotely for a lot of that time. I'm excited to be back in an office again!

When I'm not working, I love to spend time with my family and friends, doing things like having a cookout or bonfire, or hosting game night, and I love to get away to the Smoky Mountains whenever I can!



Many thanks to my anonymous benefactor who purchased a new Alb for me this summer. They even went the extra mile to have the OSL patch sewed on the shoulder as well as a button to secure it near my neck. I kept thinking I would find out who did this for me, and I would thank them properly. This will have to suffice. The picture was taken at the Mercy Conference Center in St. Louis during the annual Order of Saint Luke retreat. The Alb is the foundational habit of the Order. The color for Saint Luke is red; thus, the red cincture (rope). The scapular, also red, is a reminder of our vow to a life of service. The bread, chalice (cup) and shell on the scapular are reminders of our vow to "magnify the sacraments." Thanks again to whoever did this for me. I was stunned but am very grateful.

Youth Ministry (Lynn Thompson/lthompson@bartlettumc.org)

A few weeks back I did a Lesson on trying to keep focused on our faith journey in this crazy world we are living in. I gave the youth a table of 35 items and 1 minute to look at it – then I sent them back to their paper and pens and asked them to write down all that the items they could remember. It was a bit chaotic but



definitely saw how we tend to think in this day and age. Some youth counted and pointed – some said what the items were out loud to keep it in their minds; some youth categorized the items to remember. It was fun just watching their eyes and brain trying to move so fast to focus for that short time to get the best results. I will mention to that there were a handful of youth that tried to take pictures with their phones while no one was looking and some that wrote on their hand or the paper that was supposed to be left back on the floor. In any case, there were some folks who focused on “beating the system”!

Isn't that kind of how life is right now – I know it is for me. I'm trying to focus on the here and now but so many other things are whirling around in my brain that sometimes I have to use clever ideas to remember – word association, screen shots on my phone, voice reminders and the lists go on. You see it's the middle of the holiday season – yes! Thanksgiving decorations and Christmas Season snuck up into our Halloween items at EVERY store you go into.

SOOOO....we need to focus! Focus on what is good and true and right before our eyes! It seems every day is crazy...stressed...and sometimes overwhelming. We think of the lists of things we need to get done, new ideas we would like to try and shopping that needs to be done so that everything is perfect. Well, this month I want you to think about how today already is PERFECT! Sure! May not be YOUR perfect...but it IS God's. Don't waste it focusing on everything else but just WALLOW in the day – focusing on seeing God in little and big things, finding what God wants you to do in this day – maybe just listening or maybe stopping to pray for one another. Being a follower of Christ is not another thing to “put on a list” or worry it won't be perfect if we don't have all the right things lined up in our walk. Being a follower of Christ – is just about focusing on what is good, true, important in your life EACH day– having a God that loves you no matter if you checked off all the items on your list or not. God doesn't need you to talk the talk...or “phone in” your faith...He wants you to focus on Him. When we do that – everything becomes a beautiful masterpiece of HIS design. When we focus on God and not the busyness – we find peace, strength and love that we will WANT to share and the world needs during the holidays in a way God has planned.

In Christ,

Lynn



On **Sunday, November 9** we will honor our Veterans. We will display military uniforms, plaques, and other memorabilia in Oaks Hall. If you have items to display or questions about the display, please contact Larry Bailey at 674-3164 or Eddie Lindsey at 386-4563.



Hanging of the Greens is Sunday, November 23 at 5:00pm. We need readers and volunteers to place wreaths, garland, candles and more as we prepare the sanctuary for Advent. Contact Marcia Kerl at 901-482-9738 or huskers1207@att.net if you or your family would like to participate in this special evening.

Upcoming Events!

November 30

Giving Thanks, Sharing Joy
(During Sunday School)

One Children's Sunday
School class to make Christ-
mas cards for homebound
members.

December 7

Christmas Cantata
(during worship at 9:00am)

December 14

Breakfast with Santa
(5-7:00pm in the LEC)

December 28

Happy Birthday Jesus Party
(during Sunday School @
10:15am)

One Sunday School class to
celebrate Jesus' birth.



**Tuesday, November 18 at
10:00am in the LEC Gym**

Join the Fun Club (ages 50+)
for their meeting with a
special speaker. The
meeting is followed by
lunch. Lunch is \$10 and
requires a reservation.
*Call Charlotte White at
381-4954 or 568-3002 to
make your reservation.*

Thankful Hearts and Helping Hands

Last month, our kids showed how awesome it is to serve God with happy hearts! They did such a great job leading our Children's Service and reminding everyone that *kids can be disciples too!*

We also had so much fun at the Fall Festival and Trunk-or-Treat—thank you to everyone who came, played, and helped make it such a wonderful night!

And those thank-you cards for the Police and Fire Departments? You spread God's love in a big way!

Family Challenge: The Blessing Basket

This month, let's turn our thankfulness into giving! As a family, fill a basket with items to share with someone in need—a neighbor, teacher, or local family who could use a little encouragement. You can include things like:

- *A homemade treat or snack
- *A small candle or cozy item
- *A note that says, "You are a blessing!"

Pray over your basket together and ask God to use it to bring joy to whoever receives it. Giving from the heart is one of the best ways to say *thank you* to God for all He's given us!

"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

— 1 Thessalonians 5:18



Outreach

Thank you for your generous donations for the food pantry in October. For November, we are collecting items for Thanksgiving food bags. **Here is a list of the items we are collecting: 1 box family size tea bags, 2 boxes stuffing, 1 bottle cooking oil, 2 boxes mac and cheese, 1 bag flour, 1 bag sugar, 1 box brownie mix, 1 box instant mashed potatoes, and 2 canned vegetables.** Items can be dropped off in the church office or narthex. Thank you for supporting our food pantry and community with your donations!

Within Our Church Family

Sympathy is expressed to Oscar Moser upon the death of his wife and our church member, Ann Moser. We also express our sympathy to Julia Archer upon the death of her husband and our church member, Gene Archer.

Music Ministry (Donia Rachelle Wade/dwade@bartlettumc.org/ Karen Strawhecker/karens@bartlettumc.org)

Join Our Christmas Cantata Choir!

The Christmas cantata is the perfect way to be involved in choir if you can't make the year-long commitment! This year's cantata will be intergenerational and include the children's choirs, youth choir, and adult choir!

No experience necessary, just a love of music!

We rehearse for the cantata every Wednesday from 7:00-7:30 p.m.

Our children led a beautiful and meaningful service, teaching us that God can even call children to be His disciples. Make sure your hearts and minds are open to hearing them, these young disciples already know so much about loving and serving God!

The Youth Bellhops visited First Baptist Church Memphis last month to play an arrangement of "Holy, Holy, Holy!" by Douglas E. Wagner.



Pray for our Pre-School

- God's protection - safety for the children families and teachers.
- We could provide the best possible growth and development experience for the children who attend our school.
- More families would hear about us, and we could increase enrollment.

Teacher Appreciation

The Teachers work so hard, with an amazing attitude, they are truly here for the children and families!!!

- You could provide a note of appreciation, healthy treats occasionally, or a simple catered lunch 1 time a school year.

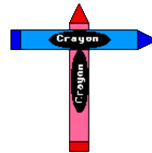
Volunteer

From time to time we need volunteers to help in KDO and PS.

- Chapel & Cheer – Provides a time where parents can gather for coffee to get to know one another and support one another Tuesday and Wednesday mornings.

Tuition assistance

- We want our school to be a place where any child can attend no matter the family's financial situation. It has been my passion for more than 30 years to give children a good lasting foundation to set them up for success in school and life.
- We have 2 funds where you can donate
 - ⇒ Karen Liles – Tuition Assistance
 - ⇒ Annette Stokes – Emergency Assistance Fund



PRE-SCHOOL

Add to Your Calendar!

November 23

Hanging of the Greens
5:00pm in the Sanctuary

December 7

Christmas Cantata
(during worship at 9:00am)

December 24

Christmas Eve Worship
6:00pm in the Sanctuary
11:00pm in the McCarter
Chapel

Recreation

Pickleball— Every Tuesday at 6:45pm (follow *Pickleball-BUMC on Facebook*)

Zumba—Every Thursday at 5:30pm (\$3 per class)

Volleyball— Every Thursday at 6:30pm

Walking Group— Monday & Tuesday at 4:45pm



Rev. Dean will lead a 4-week Advent study beginning on Tuesday, November 25 at 3:00pm in Fellowship Hall. Sign up by Nov. 10 by using the QR code.



Bartlett United Methodist
Church

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If you were in church on Sunday, October 19 you helped us celebrate Karen Strawhecker's 30 years with Bartlett UMC. What an amazing accomplishment for Karen and a wonderful blessing for our church. You also would have heard the incredible gift that the BUMC Fun Club gave in honor and celebration of those 30 years—they purchased the naming rights to the historic organ that we purchased from the City of Memphis back in 2001. This historic organ that once entertained audiences for 70 years in Ellis Auditorium has graced our beautiful sanctuary for decades and will henceforth be known as the Karen Strawhecker Kimball Organ Opus 7035.



Since Rebecca Horton's announcement about our Capital Improvement needs and the funds that will be necessary to fully restore the organ, our congregation has been very generous. To date we have received \$66,280 plus an additional pledge of \$50,000 toward the organ restoration and \$29,895 toward CIP. I can't thank you enough for your incredible generosity toward these two very important campaigns.

In case you missed it, Jim Knight shared that the gift of the organ naming rights was made possible from the commission checks that the Fun Club receives when they book their trips through Collette Travel Tours. The Fun Club has used these commission funds to help support the church in the following ways: purchased the new 15 passenger bus in 2018; paid for the installation of new security cameras; bought a new refrigerator for the LEC parlor; paid for numerous repairs to the church buses; purchased a new A/C unit for the Counseling Center; purchased the naming rights to a pew to go toward Debt Retirement; made contributions toward CIP and our Operating funds; and donated toward tuition assistance for our Preschool program. The Fun Club has contributed to the church since long before I started working here (2011), but their records show that they have made gifts in the neighborhood of \$200,000 to our church. AMAZING! If ever you needed an excuse to travel with a great bunch of folks, I can't think of a better one! Thank you, Fun Club, for all you do for BUMC!