



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER 2023

Church,

I pray these words find you well! This month, I'm excited to share with you a priority project aimed at revitalizing our governance structure here at First UMC Many. While other matters have diverted our focus from time to time, I believe the time is finally right to share these ideas with you. First, I must acknowledge that our present structure has served us well for many years! However, like any thriving organization, our ability to adapt to emerging challenges is critical. One such challenge we've faced is a persistent decline in church involvement, which leaves fewer members available to adequately cover all essential roles. You likely know that we rely on the same dedicated individuals year in and year out to serve in multiple capacities. If you presently serve in such a way, please know that I am continuously grateful for and inspired by your commitment. You clearly demonstrate church service to be both an honor and a responsibility. It's also fair to say that occasional time away would allow you the opportunity to recharge and reimagine your role, while allowing space for others to learn the ropes.

While appropriate in years past, our current governance structure demands significant time commitments that may deter potential new leaders and limit our collective ability to focus on discipleship and outreach. If we aspire to invite new leadership and unlock the unique gifts they can offer, we must adapt our approach to better align with the busy lives we all lead. To proactively address these issues, our Administrative Council is discussing a transition to a church governance structure commonly referred to as Simplified Accountable Structure (S.A.S.). This model is being implemented to the betterment of churches of all sizes across our conference. In the remainder of this letter, I will delve into the two key aspects of this new model: simplification and accountability.

Simplification

In short, the S.A.S. model combines our current governance committees (Trustees, Finance, Staff-Parish Relations, and Administrative Council) into a single, agile board to be called the Church Council. The primary duty of the Church Council will be to align the resources of the church to our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ. The results of a simplified structure are multifold:

1. Efficiency: With fewer layers in decision-making, actions can be implemented more quickly.
2. Involvement: This structure allows space for new people to familiarize themselves with our leadership structure and will, over time, spread the responsibilities more broadly across our congregation.
3. Focus: Less time spent in meetings means more time devoted to our core mission and ministry activities. Church Council governs to empower Outreach, Discipleship, and Fellowship Teams.

Accountability

Alongside simplification, the S.A.S. model will implement and enhance accountability in crucial areas:

1. **Mission Alignment:** The Council will periodically review if our church's resources and decisions are aligning with our core mission and objectives.
2. **Council Responsibilities:** Those serving on the Council will be held to clearly communicated accountability standards to ensure effective and ethical governance.
3. **Pastoral Leadership:** The model offers a framework for evaluating how pastoral leadership contributes to the spiritual growth of our church as well as to community outreach.
4. **Transparency and Communication:** Regular updates from the board to the congregation will be standard practice, ensuring open communication and mutual accountability.

Though our governance structure would change, the people and teams we rely on to sustain ministry will not. It is my hope and prayer that these teams will experience a fresh wave of energy and purpose! Churches that have transitioned to a Simplified Accountable Structure have regularly experienced clearer understanding of their mission and have found new energy and growth in their church. I believe that this is a unique time in the history of First UMC in which we can leverage the energy and excitement stirring among us to create a positive impact in our church and community.

No changes to our governance structure will be made without a majority vote of the entire church. I will be providing additional opportunities for you to learn more and share your thoughts on this proposed transition in the coming weeks. Your input is invaluable as we discern this path forward. May God's wisdom guide us as we contemplate these changes together.

Grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brian".

Brian

Memorials

Memorial Fund:

In memory of Mary Anne Smith given by Ray & Nancy Spiller

FLC Memorial:

In memory of Janice Rike given by Billy & Becky Lafitte
In memory of John Godfrey given by Billy & Becky Lafitte

Choir Fund:

In memory of Ward Whitfield given by John & Carolyn Norris, Mike & Vicki Simpson, Ted & Carolyn Dove and the Choir

In memory of Grace Kelsey given by Vicki Weaver, Gail Thomas, Joe & Carole Troha, Mike & Vicki Simpson

Committee Meetings for September

Trustees:

Monday, September 11th - 5:30 p.m.

Administrative Council:

Monday, September 25th - 5:30 p.m.

Little Food Pantry

Thank you for all your donations. This has resulted in a good supply of canned vegetables and soup on hand. Suggested donations for May: peanut butter, packaged tuna or chicken, Vienna sausage, pull top pasta meals, fruit cups, pudding cups, breakfast bars or similar items. These items are helpful to people who are unable to prepare or cook food for whatever reason. Cathy and Kristie

GIVING

In addition to our offertory, online giving is available through our website fumc-many.com We can also receive gifts through Text to Give. To use this service, simply text "FUMCM" to 22525. Checks can be mailed to P.O. Box 1210 Many, LA 71449. Please call our church office for additional assistance at 318-256-3632. Thank you.

Missions – Fire Relief

Thank you, with your donations and the missions committee a donation of \$750 was given for those affected by the fire.

If you would like to give directly:

Bank of Montgomery is taking donations for people affected by fire.

City Bank is taking donations for ice machines for the firefighters.



Autumn Prayer

O God of Creation, you have blessed us with the changing of the seasons.

As we embrace these autumn months,

May the earlier setting of the sun
Remind us to take time to rest.

May the crunch of the leaves beneath our feet
Remind us of the brevity of this earthly life.

May the steam of our breath in the cool air

Remind us that it is you who give us
your breath of life.

May the scurrying of the squirrels and the
migration of the birds

Remind us that you call us to follow your
will.

We praise you for your goodness forever
and ever.

Amen

– Author Unknown



Preschool Open House kicked off with 21 children enrolled. Our preschool teachers will have a busy school year!

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
P.O. Box 1210, 1000 Main Street
Many, LA 71449**

September 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																				
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #ffffcc;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Aug 2023</p> <table border="1" style="font-size: small;"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #ffffcc;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Oct 2023</p> <table border="1" style="font-size: small;"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> </div> </div>					S	M	T	W	T	F	S		1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31					1	2
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*Carolyn Norris	Boy Scouts- FLC- 6:00 p.m.	**Dean & Amanda Lambert	Choir Practice 7:00 pm. PreK- 4th Grade 5:30 pm. Youth 5:30 p.m.	UWF 9:30 a.m.	*Susan Hills 6:00 PM Women's Fellowship	*Becky Lafitte																																																																																				
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	Boy Scouts- FLC- 6:00 p.m. Trustees Meeting 5:30 p.m.		Choir Practice 7:00 pm. PreK- 4th Grade 5:30 pm. Youth 5:30 p.m.	*Bret Courtney		*Julianne Boudreaux																																																																																				
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*Hayden Courtney	*Ellen Abington Administrative Council Meeting 5:30 p.m. Boy Scouts- FLC- 6:00 p.m.		Choir Practice 7:00 pm. PreK- 4th Grade 5:30 pm. Youth 5:30 p.m.			*Jerry Lombard																																																																																				

PRAYER CONCERNS

September 2023

Church Members

Bobbie Kratz

Family of Church Members

Sandra Bishop

Juliane Boudreaux

David Cox

(Linda Boudreaux's brother)

Jason & Diane Davis

(Amanda Lambert's cousins
& niece)

Jason Fluitt

Judy Boudreaux Jones

(Chuck Boudreaux's sister)

Family of Grace Kelsey

Tyler Mason

(Ted & Carolyn Dove's great
grandson)

Buck Phillips

(Carolyn Gates brother-in-law)

Family of Ward Whitfield

(Carole Troha's brother)

Friends of our Community

To keep our Prayer List current, we plan to **RE-SET** it at the beginning of every month.

If you know someone who needs to be placed on or remain on the prayer list for another month, please call the church office at 256-3632. In the evenings or on weekends call our Pastor, Rev. Brian Coplin. He may be reached by cell phone 318 614 5050 or send him an e-mail: rev.coplin@gmail.com.

Please do not respond to e-mail prayer concerns from the office. E-mail prayer concerns are for your information only. Please check your church directory for individual e-mail addresses so you can respond directly. If you need an e-mail address please call the office.