

the
Vine

January 2024



The Church in the Heart of Town, with the Town at Heart.



COMMISSIONING SERVICE

Wednesday night programming resumes on **January 17th**. We will have signups that night for kitchen crew and childrens assistants.

Bro. Mark will be leading an adult study on the Gospel of Matthew. Other study opportunities may be forthcoming.

Wednesday Meals begin at 5:30 and small groups meet at 6:30.

JANUARY 7

We will commission our new leadership for the year. This will also be a great time to get to know our leadership and how you can assist them.

New leaders coming in are:

Jerry Wilhite
Gem Mitchell
Whitney Jones
Andy and LeAnne Shelton
Keith Raines
Leah Nuckolls
Will Wilhite
Suzanne Rhea
Mandy Baker



Happy Birthday to:

- 4- Suzanne Wiggins
- 8- Melissa Denton
- 9- Nancy Brint
- 10- Norris Ross
- 11- Lisa Wilhite
- 15- Peyton Shelton
- 16- George Walters
- 21- Laynee Foster
- 22- Ann White
Turner Raines
- 23- Emma Cody
- 27- Payton Rhea Coffman
- 28- Bruce Bennett

Thoughts from *Bro. Mark*



Another year is gone, but of course will never be forgotten as one of the defining years at First Methodist Church of Bolivar. We started the 2023 as part of the United Methodist Church but are now an independent Methodist congregation. We have held 5 infant baptisms, 3 adult baptisms, and welcomed 6 new members. This is true growth not just for our congregation, but for the greater Kingdom. I want to take this opportunity to thank those persons who have joined with us for trusting this congregation with a piece of your spiritual life. I would also like to thank the parents of the infants for doing the same with their most important gift from God. For the rest of us, let us live into the vows we have taken to support and nurture them in the coming years.

These additions to our congregation are the result of our church being a loving, spiritual, and faithful place where people feel welcomed and spiritually fed. This is due to the people of this church being faithful to God's call on their lives. What a wonderful blessing. Yes, we have suffered the loss of several faithful members of our church family, but because they belonged to the LORD, they knew where they were going. We can take great comfort in this knowledge and focus on the testimonies they left behind.

The past year also saw us adopt a new name, which ironically was the old name of over fifty years ago. We have a new logo which beautifully represents both our connection to the Branch which is (Christ) as well as to our local community. This is significant as much of what we are about is creating connections between our LORD and Savior and our neighbors. Many in this church have roots which run deep in the soil of Hardeman County. Many in this community are your lifelong neighbors, friends, and even family members. You know them and their needs. We cannot lose sight of this and this congregation's importance in building up relationships and making disciples.

However, things are changing. Many have moved into this community in recent years, including my family, and many more are coming with the building and opening of Blue Oval. This means we as a congregation need to be prepared and flexible. New faces, from other place are coming and we need to ready to welcome them and serve their spiritual needs. No one is sure what this will look like, but we do know it will be different. This is an exciting time in the church as we get use to our new situation while preparing for more changes that are coming.

The New Year finds us installing a few new members to the church leadership, while at the same time saying thank you to those who are

leaving their positions. I want to express my appreciation once again for the time and energy which our leadership has given to the church in the past few months during this transition. I would also like to thank those who have stepped up to fill those positions left vacant. Much has been accomplished in the past year, but there is still much to be done. For two thousand years the Church has been about the holy work of "Offering Christ" and that has not changed. What has changed is some of the methods and techniques we have at our disposal. Let us strive in the coming year to combine the old and new to be the church that God is calling us to be in this place in this season.

Finally, I am looking forward to serving another year as your pastor. The past two and a half years have been a wonderful experience, but I believe we are just beginning our journey together. It is my prayer that we can continue to grow First Methodist Church of Bolivar and its footprint in this community.

Blessings,
Bro. Mark



In case of inclement weather

We always hope that weather will not be a factor in planning and carrying out church activities. However, the weather is not always cooperative. In the event of a snow or ice event that our leadership decides is cause for canceling Sunday gatherings, the church office will get the word out in several ways. It will be announced on our Facebook page (Friends of First Methodist), by email and/or the church voicemail outgoing message (731.658.5114).

Church programming outside of worship (Scouts, UMM, UMW, Wednesday evening Bible Study, etc.) will follow the public school schedule. If the public schools are cancelled, programs will be cancelled.

As always, we encourage you to live within your comfort zone. Don't take any chances. Your safety is our primary concern.



During the month of January, the Methodist Women are sponsoring a food drive to replenish shelves that were emptied during the holiday season.

Bring your non-perishable goods and place them in the designated collection points in the Life Center and just outside the sanctuary.



8:30 Choir

8:45 Coffee in Library

Come join us on
Sunday mornings!!

HERE'S WHAT'S GOING ON THIS MONTH:

9th-6:30 Methodist Men

16th-5:00 Administrative Council meeting

17th-5:30 Wednesday night Recharge resumes

28th-12:00 Methodist Women



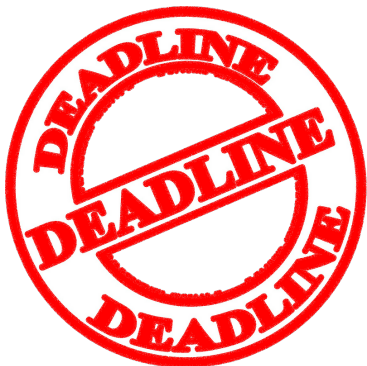
Thursday mornings

5:30-7:30 @ Backwoods

**The church offices will be closed
until January 3 for Christmas
and January 15
for Martin Luther King, Jr. day**



This month's
Communion offering
Benefits



Information for the
February issue of
"The Vine" needs to be
turned into the
church office no later than:
January 22nd

Keeping Us Connected

First Methodist Church
218 W. Market St.
Bolivar, TN 38008

Website: www.firstmethodistbolivar.org

Facebook: Friends of Bolivar 1st Methodist

Email: office@firstmethodistbolivar.org

Phone: 731-658-5114

Fax: 731-658-9112

Worship

Sunday Morning Worship: 9:30-10:30

Sunday School: 10:45-11:45



Friends of Bolivar 1st

STAFF:

Pastor: Rev. Mark Templeton
pastor@firstmethodistbolivar.org
615-655-4457

Office Administrator: Dawn Cody

Facilities Manager: Jerry Avent

Lay Leadership:

Lay Leader: Carla Wilhite

Staff-Parish Relations Chair: Gem Mitchell

Finance Chair: Jerry Wilhite

Treasurer: Lindsey Denton

Trustees Chair: TBD

Administrative Council Chair: Michelle Gooch