

JUNE 2023

# Arkansas City UMC *Newsletter*

**MISSION: *Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. (Matt. 28:19-20)***



## ***STEADY AS SHE GOES***

It is amazing to me that a year has passed already since I became your pastor. As I stop for a moment to take stock and to look down the road a bit, a nautical term comes to my mind: “steady as she goes.”

I’ve never been a sailor, but this phrase seems apt for us. “Steady as she goes” is something said to the helmsman of a ship. It means what it appears to mean. Keep the speed steady. Head forward. Stay consistent. I am thinking about “steady as she goes” for our congregation in two ways.

First, we live in volatile circumstances. Our times are no joke. In spite of the economic ups and downs, we live in a very prosperous society. Yes, there are people really struggling with inadequate resources, but even – maybe especially – for people who have abundant resources, a good job, a relatively stable family life, and other blessings, they report a near-overwhelming degree of anxiety about life in general. So many of the institutions and social supports that seemed rock-solid are now shaky and vulnerable. “Steady as she goes” is difficult to maintain.

Compassion, patience, and empathy are much needed these days. The people who belong to Christ are especially well suited to offer these relational gifts. We can start by showing them to each other in our community of faith. (I have been so gratified with your good faith attitudes, your willingness to jump in and do things in the year that I’ve been with you.) We don’t come by them naturally. We receive them ourselves from the One who abundantly gives what we need. “Steady as she goes” means a loving, patient presence in our community.

Second, this mariner’s phrase means consistency in the practices of our faith. Let’s admit our tendency to let down during the summer months, even though summer seems as busy as the other nine months of the year. It is the time, of course, when many people take vacations, mainly because of how the school year operates. Everyone needs down time. But we don’t need down time from following Jesus. Let me encourage you to continue in the means of grace, especially searching the scriptures, prayer, and worship. Let’s stay steady through the summer.

To this end, we offer two Sunday School classes. Russell McAlister is leading one group, using the Cokesbury adult Sunday School material. The theme is “Inspired by God,” with units on the rich literature of the Bible, on wisdom, and heroes and anti-heroes. I am going to lead an effort that I called “Bible Reading Unadorned.” It’s a way of pointing to a close, detailed reading of scripture by learning actively to ask questions and follow the contours of Bible texts that we will read.

Finally, our leaders are looking forward. The Administrative Council is doing some review and analysis of our ministries and possible ministries. We are talking about some new efforts. Stay tuned.

And keep your life in Christ steady as she goes. God bless you.



We want to thank our church family for all the cards and good wishes sent to us as we celebrated our 60th Anniversary and Larry's Birthday. We had a wonderful party hosted by our amassing family. We estimated that we had around 100 there to celebrate with us and so many were our church family. Thanks again. God Bless you all.

Larry and Billie Swanson

Coffee, hot tea & sweet treats are available *every* Sunday morning in the Fellowship Hall.



**PLEASE JOIN US!**

**9:30 AM**

**before Worship Service.**



Nancy Waggoner has a new great-grandson who was born on Tuesday, May 23, 2023 at 10:04 am in Belton MS. He weighed 9 lbs., 2 oz. His name is **Maverick Ray Hall**. He is the son of parents, Crystal Waggoner Hall & Austin Hall. He is the grandson of Chris & Kelly Waggoner. May he be richly blessed and be a blessing to his family.



**446 SHARE MEALS**  
SERVED IN **MAY 2023**

### Finance Report

**TIP:** Please specify on checks whether offering is for General Fund or Building Fund.

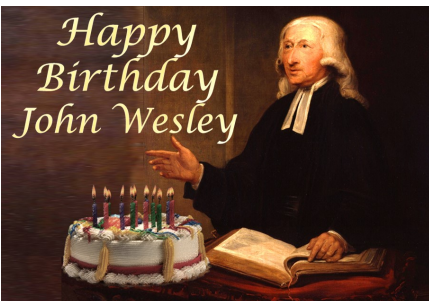
#### April 2023

Income	\$ 16,016
Expenses	<u>18,510</u>
	\$ -2,494

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO  
**HOWARD AND SHIRLEY GRIFFIN**  
WHO CELEBRATE THEIR  
**65TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY**  
ON **JUNE 8TH.**



Shirley reports that Howard has left Presbyterian Manor and is back home, and doing well.



The Methodist Church celebrates John Wesley's birthday on June 28th because he was born on June 17th, 1703, according to the Julian calendar used in England at that time. However, when England switched to the Gregorian calendar in 1752, the date changed to June 28th.



-Philippians 4:4-



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				<b>1</b> SMP LIVE 7:00 pm	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b> Adult Sunday School 8:30 am Bible Reading Unadorned 8:30 am Fellowship Time 9:30 am Worship (Communion) 10:00 am	<b>5</b> Small Group 7:00 pm	<b>6</b> Seeking Sisters 10:30 am	<b>7</b> SHARE Meal 5:30 pm	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b> Adult Sunday School 8:30 am Bible Reading Unadorned 8:30 am Fellowship Time 9:30 am Worship (Bucket Sun) 10:00 am	<b>12</b> Small Group 7:00 pm Boy Scouts 7:00 pm	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> SHARE Meal 5:30 pm	<b>15</b> SMP LIVE 7:00 pm	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b> Adult Sunday School 8:30 am Bible Reading Unadorned 8:30 am Fellowship Time 9:30 am Worship 10:00 am Fellowship Meal 11:15 am Finance Meeting 12:15 pm	<b>19</b> Small Group 7:00 pm Boy Scouts 7:00 pm	<b>20</b> Seeking Sisters 10:30 am  NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	<b>21</b> UWF 1:30 pm SHARE Meal 5:30 pm	<b>22</b> SMP LIVE 7:00 pm	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b> Adult Sunday School 8:30 am Bible Reading Unadorned 8:30 am Fellowship Time 9:30 am Worship 10:00 am Administrative Council 11:05 am	<b>26</b> Small Group 7:00 pm	<b>27</b> Seeking Sisters 10:30 am	<b>28</b> SHARE Meal 5:30 pm	<b>29</b> SMP LIVE 7:00 pm	<b>30</b>	

# AC UMC SHARE Meal, 15 Years and Counting

**By Darla Mann, June 4th, 2023 Page 1 of 2**



June marks 15 years since the St. Paul UMC SHARE Meal started serving the Ark City community. Over the years, the workers, the way meals are served, and even the church name have changed, but the intention is still the same. Free evening meals are given out to community members, no questions asked.

During Lent in 2008, the Ark City First Presbyterian Church decided to serve a free soup meal hoping to serve the community. The church members learned there was a great need in our community and decided to continue their meals beyond the Easter season. The St. Paul UMC secretary brought the idea to St. Paul and suggested the church serve a meal on a different night. The pastor and a few members took on the meal and started the SHARE Meal on Wednesday evenings in June 2008. Different church members volunteered to cook for the meal as it became clear there was a need for free evening meals in Ark City. In January 2009, the St. Paul pastor and several members left to start Shepherd's Grace Church. The remaining St. Paul members took over the leadership of the meal and continued serving on Wednesday evenings. Accurate records were not kept in the early days, so it is not clear how many meals were served. Over time, Calvary Chapel, Northside Baptist, and Shepherd's Grace joined First Presbyterian and St. Paul serving evening meals on Sunday through Thursday. Lack of volunteers, aging congregations, and COVID have played a big part in changes and the closing of some meals. Currently, meals are served on Mondays at Northside Baptist, Wednesdays at St. Paul, and Thursdays at Shepherd's Grace.

Over 30,000 meals have been served out of the St. Paul kitchen in the past 15 years! Before 2020 and COVID, meals were served inside in a sit-down manner. People were counted, but not the number of meals. People were allowed to eat as much as they needed as long as there was food. The average number of people served ranged between 27 and 46 each week when meals were served inside. When preparing the meals, the plan was to make enough for at least 80 meals. Church volunteers made cookies and baked cakes for desserts. There was not a church budget for the meal as it survived on donations of both money and food. A church member was a para in a high school life-skills classroom. She used the church kitchen to help teach measurement, math, and cooking skills to help prep for the meal. The students also did some shopping. The youth group members also volunteered to help make and serve the meals. Numerous high school and Cowley students have used the meal to earn volunteer hours for their classes. Tables were set out as a way for church members to give away clothing, household, and pantry items to those attending the meals.

In 2017, the declining number of church members lead to the St. Paul and Grandview Parish to dissolve and a pastoral change. The pastor of First UMC filled in as Pulpit Supply. The pastor invited the members of First UMC to help with serving at the SHARE Meal. Many members started to bake desserts, and a few came to work at the meals.

COVID changed the SHARE Meal in many ways. The meal switched to a Grab 'n Go Meal, and this style continues today. The number of workers was limited to stop the spread of possible infections. The number of meals planned was still

# AC UMC SHARE Meal, 15 Years and Counting

By Darla Mann, June 4th, 2023 Page 2 of 2



throughout the week. Manna Ministry at the First Baptist Church started offering weekly donations of desserts, bread, fresh produce, meat, and lots of other miscellaneous items based on the donations they are given from our local Walmart and Dillons.

In 2022, St. Paul UMC and First UMC legally changed names and joined as one church now known as Ark City UMC. One church, two buildings.

The Ark City UMC SHARE Meal continues to serve a free community grab 'n go meal on Wednesday evenings. The 2023 average is currently 83 meals served each week. The menu is planned based on the donations from Manna Ministry on Monday, shopping is done on Tuesday to get the items needed to complete the menu, and the meal is handed out on Wednesday evening at 5:30. The SHARE Meal continues to serve others because of the very generous donations of church members and friends, the Cowley College ACES, the ACMS KAY Club, Manna Ministry, and God's amazing grace.

***Thank you for your continued support of the SHARE Meal! If you ever want to visit or help, plan a meal, or serve a meal, let us know. :)***

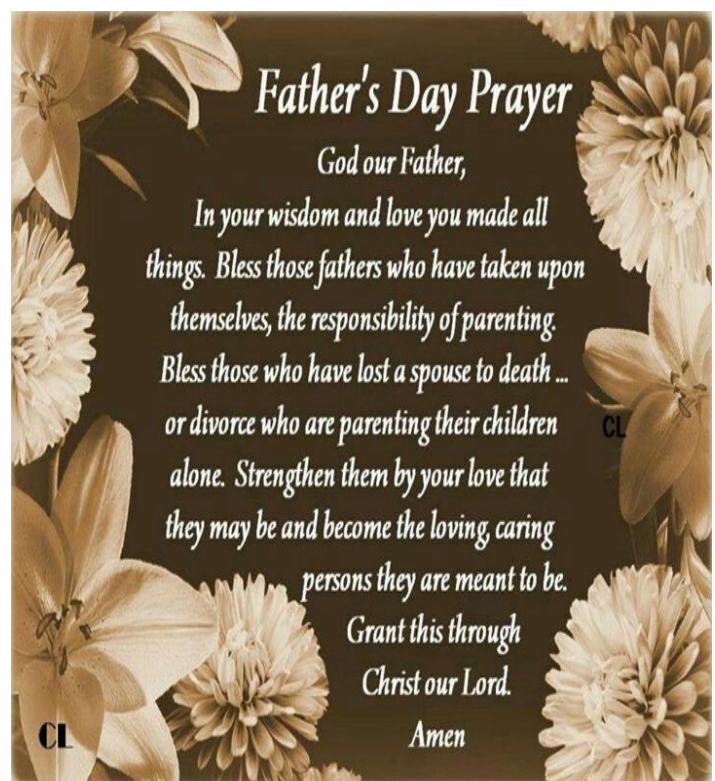


***Summer Sunday School  
Beginning June 4th @ 8 :30 am***

**Bible Study Unadorned      Pastor Steve Rankin**  
**Adult Sunday School/      Russell McAlister**  
***Activities for Children of Ages in Nursery***

***On Break thru Summer***

**Handbells and Choir**  
**Sunday Night Faithbuilders Group**  
**Kids Club and Youth Group**  
**Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts**



Arkansas City  
United Methodist Church  
2448 Edgemont Drive  
Arkansas City, KS 67005

*Return Service Requested*

Phone: 620-442-4530



## Birthdays in



June 01	Geneva Rains, Kayla Dykes
June 13	Terese Call
June 16	Curt Freeland
June 17	Jon Oak
June 20	Cassandra Lile
June 22	Gerald Loomis, Zachary Stoy
June 23	Alisha Call, Shanna Graham
June 25	Mary Anna Sentel
June 27	Ann Hastings, Cathy Wilcox
June 28	Darrin Green

