



2023

First United Methodist Church  
**FOUNDATION**  
ANNUAL  
REPORT

# Dear friends in the church family,

As I look back on nine years as the senior pastor of Fort Smith First United Methodist Church, one of the ministries that I take great pride in (This kind of pride is not a sin!) is the development of our FUMC Foundation. Over the last few years, we have made the Foundation an integral part of our total ministry. We have started and maintained robust community grants to non-profit mission partners in Fort Smith. We have held two seminars on estate planning. We have started a Friends of the Foundation organization to promote our work.



We are truly blessed to have the Foundation as a partner in our ministry. The primary mission of the Foundation is to support the ministry of FUMC, which it did in 2023 in excess of \$300,000. Without the Foundation's support, we would have to endure significant reductions in staff and program ministries, building upkeep, and outreach into the community.

Through our Community Grant program, we have seen wonderful things happening through the many non-profits operating in Fort Smith, and we have increased the witness of FUMC as a church that cares about the community with the love of Jesus.

We are so grateful for the faithful disciples a generation ago who set up the Foundation and for the leaders in our church who have served as directors to continue this vital work. We are also grateful to the families who already have and are anticipating supporting the Foundation through gifts and bequests. Without the support of the congregation, we would not be able to do all that we do.

As you read this annual report, I hope you will feel the same sense of (non-sinful) pride in the history and continuing ministry of the FUMC Foundation. The support of the Foundation does not relieve anyone of the need to give faithfully to support God's ministry through the church. But with the supplemental support the Foundation provides, we can do bigger, better, and greater ministry for the Kingdom of God in our midst.

Let's give thanks to God for our Foundation and the saints who established and supported it with gifts. Let's celebrate what we have been given and what the future holds for our church. And may each of us prayerfully consider how we can support the Foundation through our gifts, estate planning, or other means as we build up the Foundation for the future of First United Methodist Church!

Thank you, and God bless you on behalf of the FSFUMC Foundation!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "wmoReeves".

Rev. Dr. William O. (Bud) Reeves  
Senior Pastor



# FIRST UMC FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**CHAIR:** Barry Hunter

## **CLASS OF 2024**

John Alford  
Bill Culp  
Beth Knox

## **CLASS OF 2025**

Eric Bunnell  
Hui Apple  
Barry Hunter

## **CLASS OF 2026**






Bill Priakos  
Charles Palmer  
Sherri Staggs

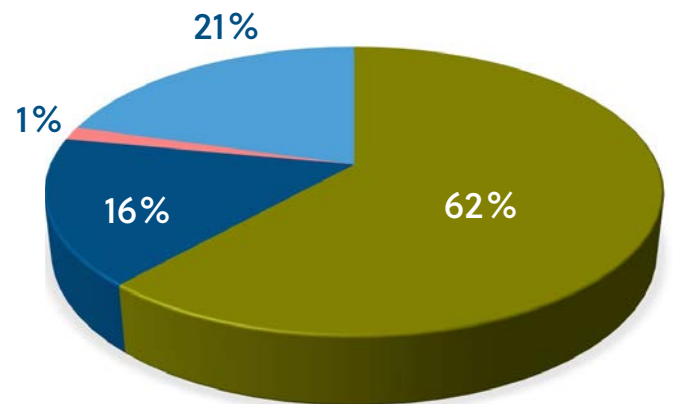
**EX-OFFICIO:** Bud Reeves, Abbie Cox, Diane Wing, DeeDee Autry, Richard Beauchamp, Dwight Curry

## IMPACT OF THE FSFUMC FOUNDATION

Our spending policy limits the disbursements of the Foundation to 4% of the aggregate value of the endowments annually. This policy protects the endowed principal of the Foundation. In 2023, the Foundation was able to make disbursements under its policy to support the ongoing mission and ministry of First United Methodist Church.

## FOUNDATION DISBURSEMENTS FOR 2023

-  Funds disbursed to FSFUMC ministries: \$300,598.54
-  Grants to Community and missional projects: \$80,040 (included were 3 that were church projects)
-  Grant to Guatemala Mission trip--\$7,200
-  Grant to the Trustees' Fund, a maintenance fund administered by the church Board of Trustees: \$100,000
-  Total disbursements for 2023: \$487,838.54



**TOTAL VALUE OF FOUNDATION ENDOWMENTS 12/31/2023**  
**\$12,359,080.26**



# 2023 COMMUNITY GRANTS

In the last five years, the FSFUMC Foundation has provided over \$480,000 to deserving non-profits in the Fort Smith region who are doing amazing ministry for God's children. Our community grants help human needs and broaden the scope and reputation of our church in the community. The recipients of the 2023 Community Grants were:

- Antioch Youth and Family—Weight scale for food; van maintenance
- Beds for Families—FS Public Schools providing beds for kids
- Cancer Support Foundation—program support
- CASA—training for child advocacy volunteers
- Children's Service League—hygiene program for students
- Community Clearinghouse Back Pack Program—hunger program
- Community Rescue Mission—outdoor equipment for families
- FUMC Back to School Bash— shoe vouchers for kids starting school
- FUMC Feed the Fort/Neighborhood Eats—church feeding ministries
- FS Boys and Girls Club—gardening project
- Girls Shelter—washer/dryer
- Golden Rule Clothes Closet—program support
- Good Samaritan Clinic—New clinic rooms
- Hope Campus—utilities expenses
- Methodist Village—training for nurse assistants
- Next Step—transitional housing for homeless
- River Valley Widows Club—FUMC ministry to widows, feeding program
- Sack Lunch Program—supplies and preparation for feeding ministry
- Salud Y Paz—Clinic in Guatemala, ongoing support
- Salvation Army—box fans for summer
- Single Parent Scholarship—scholarships and food baskets
- Sleep in Heavenly Peace—beds for children in Fort Smith
- UAFS Emergency Student Services—emergency assistance for college students



"Thanks to your kind and generous donation, we are were able to fully fund three deserving students, who are working full time and raising children, full scholarships! Thank you so much for your support! Fort Smith is stronger because of your generosity!"

Christi Brown  
Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund





"Your contribution is allowing us to broaden our range of amenities, care, health and wellness options. With your support, we can continue caring for those who cared for us. We are grateful for the kindness you have shown to our mission. Your support is appreciated."

Melissa Curry  
CEO Methodist Village



"The contribution from Fort Smith First United Methodist has provided us more than just what the money could buy. Through your generous donation, we have been able to transform our garden club into a vibrant and thriving space for the youth at our Clubs. Your support has provided essential resources such as the chicken coop, worms, peat moss, seeds and soil, enabling Fort Smith Boys & Girls Clubs to expand our garden and expose our Club Members to new, additional meaningful activities. Your generosity has truly made a difference in our garden club, allowing us to sow the seeds of growth and inspiration in our community."

Beth Presley  
CEO



"On behalf of our students, thank you for your generous support of the Student Emergency Fund. When you support UAFS, you support our students, their families, and the greater Fort Smith region. We are all changed as our students graduate and enter the next part of their lives."

Blake Rickman  
Vice Chancellor for University Advancement, UAFS

# THE BOYD AND JANE SAVIERS TRUST FUND

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Boyd Saviers was a beloved physician in the Fort Smith community, but at First United Methodist Church, he was known more as a teacher of Bible studies, including Sunday School classes and Disciple Bible Study. Janie passed away in 2000, and Boyd in 2018, but even before his death, they established an endowment account to support the work of Christian Education and Bible Study. Over the years, this endowment has been used to support our Christian Education ministry, Bible study classes, and even to renovate some of our educational classroom spaces. The legacy of Boyd and Janie Saviers continues today through their children, Dr. Jim and Barbara Saviers, and Dick and Ann Appleton.

## FRIENDS OF THE FOUNDATION TO MEET IN MAY

The Friends of the Foundation group was formally established with a luncheon and program in 2023. Made up of donors and supporters of the Foundation, as well as any interested church member or friend, the FOTF celebrates the history, growth, and future of the First United Methodist Church Foundation. As we seek to share the wonderful work of the Foundation today, we want to thank those individuals and families for their prayerful continued support in the past. This year's luncheon will be on **May 15, 2024**, and include updates on the Foundation and words of gratitude from some of our grant recipients.

## THERE ARE MANY WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT THE FOUNDATION

**Charitable Gift Annuities**  
Through a charitable gift annuity, you can donate money to a non-profit like the FSFUMC Foundation, enjoy a tax benefit, and receive a stream of income for the rest of your life.

We often think of charitable gifts as outright gifts of cash, or stocks, or real estate. Many of us make gifts through our estate plans or simple wills. Did you know there are other ways to give which can provide income and additional tax benefits?

### **Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT)**

A CRT is a tax-exempt irrevocable trust that generates a potential income stream for the donor to the CRT, or to other designated beneficiaries, for a period of time with the remainder of the donated assets then going to a favorite charity or charities.

### **Life Insurance**

Did you know many Americans buy a policy to provide a charitable gift to organizations or causes important to them? You can designate a charity like the FSFUMC Foundation to receive the payout from a life insurance policy and create a legacy of support for the church in the future.



# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Fort Smith First United Methodist Church Foundation exists to endow and support the ministry of First United Methodist Church and its mission. Established by forward-thinking church members in the 1960s, the Foundation continues to grow its resources, mission, and ability to truly serve our congregation and community in meaningful ways.

The Foundation endowment funds totaled more than \$12 million after disbursements in 2023 of more than \$400,000 to our church, and more than \$80,000 to community projects through Year Five of the FUMC Fort Smith Community Grants Program. The Methodist Foundation for Arkansas actively stewards the Foundation endowment through this challenging market period, all the while keeping your FUMC Foundation board informed through monthly reports and responsive leadership.

The vision of the Community Grants Program is taken from Matthew 25:40 and is simply to shine the light of Christ in the community, region, and world through a grant program designed to empower and engage others in meaningful mission. The Foundation received 40 proposals in 2023 (the highest number ever received); eight proposals were from first-time applicants. A grants committee appointed by Rev. Bud Reeves reviewed the requests totaling \$400,000, and our Board of Directors awarded full or partial grant funding totaling \$80,040.



We are pleased to share some of the wonderful pictures of all the grateful folks as checks were delivered and prayers lifted to bless the work of the many volunteers in our community. (You can find others on our website, [fsfumc.org](http://fsfumc.org).) The full list of grants is included elsewhere in this report. Our congregation is a giving and growing congregation. You will hear more this year about the impact of giving through donations, estate gifts, bequests, insurance policies, securities, or property. People give to a foundation for many reasons – sometimes a one-time gift in honor or in memory of someone, for a particular purpose or cause, or to build a foundation for future ministry.

This much, however, is very clear: because of gifts to the Foundation over the past 50 years, the Foundation has been able to support the work of our church and reach out into our community to be the hands and feet of Christ. I look forward to talking with you about ways to support the Fort Smith First United Methodist Church Foundation.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Abbie Taylor Cox".

Abbie Taylor Cox  
Executive Director





"Together we provided much-needed medical and dental care to 419 patients from the Mayan indigenous highlands of Guatemala, communities that face many barriers to accessing essential services."

Laura Shearer  
Salud y Paz



The Methodist  
Foundation  
for Arkansas

## FOUNDATION ENDOWMENT MANAGED BY THE METHODIST FOUNDATION OF ARKANSAS

The Methodist Foundation for Arkansas (MFA) currently manages over \$217 million in assets. It works with 170+ churches across the state of Arkansas and distributes nearly \$6 million annually to its local church/institutional clients. The Foundation is committed to partnering with clergy and church leaders to promote a culture of faithful living and faithful giving. Churches can rest assured that their money is invested in socially responsible ways; the fees are extremely competitive; and they have complete control and access to their account. Additionally, the Foundation uses its profits and earnings for grants to churches and institutions for ministry in Arkansas. In 2023, these grants totaled \$1.52 million, the largest amount of any United Methodist Foundation in the country. MFA invests with Wespath, which is an agency of the United Methodist Church that handles all of the pension plans for Methodist clergy around the world.

**FUMC**  
FOUNDATION

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