



MAY 2026

# RICHMOND FIRST TODAY

*Growing Disciples who make a Difference*

News from Your First United Methodist Church Family

## Celebrate Pentecost: Arrival of the Holy Spirit

Pentecost tells the story of the disciples, who once cowered, joyfully proclaimed the gospel. The word Pentecost itself means 50 days, specifically 50 days after Easter. Take time to read Acts Chapter 2 and celebrate the power the Holy Spirit brings.

## Summer Kick-Off Picnic Unity Sunday May 31



Let's start the summer off right with a Unity Sunday celebration at 10 a.m. May 31 in the MMC gym. The May Birthdays will be honored and a picnic lunch will include grilled burgers and hot dogs. **Please bring a side dish or dessert to share.**

The congregation welcomes Comunidad Cristiana de la Cruz as a full partner and members of Richmond First. And, we must say at least a temporary farewell to the Rev. Eliza Love, our outstanding associate pastor and Wesley Foundation minister, who will be greatly missed. She will lead Scottsville First UMC, a congregation in western Kentucky. Finally, **get out your baking pans for the Dessert Auction.** Let's raise funds to paint and spruce up the MMC Building.

## Read and grow with UWF



Join a new Richmond FUMC reading program from the United Women in Faith. A group is forming to encourage reading a wide range of books and the UWF magazine response. Women and men are welcome.

The first meeting will be at **6:15 p.m. Thursday, May 7 in the church library.** The group will pick a choice of books from the reading program and the best time and day for monthly meetings. Zoom may be possible for those who cannot attend in person. Come participate in the program, be it for fun or to work toward a Certification of Recognition of your reading achievements.

For more information, contact Jo Lynn Linville at [jolinville@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jolinville@sbcglobal.net). Please reference "Reading Program" in the subject line.

## May Birthdays

Stacy Russell: 4th  
Matthew Taylor: 7th  
Millie Velazquez: 8th  
Craig Myers: 11th  
Don Calitri: 12th  
Ruth Babbitt: 12th  
David Southgate: 16th  
Zach Myre: 17th  
Kendra Myers: 18th  
Rindy Russell: 26th  
Larry Shearer: 30th  
Carol Rogow: 31st



*Celebrate birthdays at Unity Service on Sunday, May 31.*

# The Emmanuel Experience

*God is with us*

**United Women  
in Faith Spring Retreat  
at Nazareth Center  
May 16-17**

**\$90 Registration due  
May 3 in church office or on  
Pushpay. Scholarships  
available. Please ask.**



Mission u 2026

## *Unity in Prayer*



Painting by Jen Norton

### **Empowered by the Spirit**

Faith                      Community                      Pentecost

*"... You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere ... In Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."  
(Acts 1:8)*

May we be empowered by the Holy Spirit to be the hands and feet of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as we walk in unity to serve our community. Amen.

**Join us for "One Hour of Prayer" at 5:15 p.m.  
each Monday in the MMC Chapel.**

**Join your family at:**

**First United Methodist Church  
401 West Main Street  
Richmond , KY 40475  
Phone: (859) 623-3580  
office@richmondfumc.org**

**Sundays:**

**9:30 a.m. Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)**

**11 a.m. Thrive (MMC Gym)**

**12 p.m. Lunch**

**Wednesday Night Live:**

**5:30 p.m. Family Dinner (MMC Gym)**

**6:15 p.m. Class for Children, Youth, & Adults**



## Register now for VBS

Summer is coming fast. Vacation Bible School is just around the corner on the **evenings of June 8 thru 12**. Kids will go on the ultimate Alaskan adventure and learn how Jesus is their True North. They will take on the wild world of the tundra's mountains, meet new friends, and see the beauty of God's creation in the northern lights and sparkling glaciers. They will hear the stories of Jesus' life, learn about his miracles, and discover what it means to truly follow Christ.

Sign up children, age preschool to thru 5<sup>th</sup> grade, now using the QR code. There is no cost but please make reservations. Each evening begins with a snack supper at **5:15 p.m. in the MMC Gym**, followed by programs of scripture, singing, science experiments, crafts, and Bible stories. Children should be picked up by **8:30 p.m.** For more information, contact Amanda Bonner at [children@richmondfumc.org](mailto:children@richmondfumc.org)



## Amy. C King Scholarships awarded to four

The Richmond FUMC Permanent Endowment Committee is awarding the the Amy C. King Scholarship to four Eastern Kentucky University students. Each will receive \$2,000. Recipients are:

Brinley Taylor is a Nursing student, member of Richmond First, and active in the EKU Wesley Foundation. She will serve as a counselor on Summer Staff at Aldersgate Camp.

Lainie Alsabrook will be a third year Psychology student in the fall. She is a member of Richmond First, active in the EKU Wesley Foundation, attends Wednesday Night Live classes and will serve as Support Staff at Aldersgate Camp.

Rachel Strain is pursuing a degree in Environmental Health and Safety. She attends Richmond First, is active at the EKU Wesley Foundation, and attends Wednesday Night Live classes. She has been instrumental in planning and executing special events at the Wesley Foundation.

Nate Ebright-Gray is majoring in Accounting. His home church is in Maysville, but considers Richmond First "home" and supports church programs wherever help is needed. He is active at the EKU Wesley Foundation and helps with Tuesday dinners and worship.



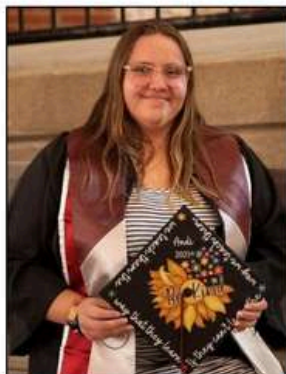
**Shannon Ackerman** is graduating from Eastern Kentucky University with an MBA (Marketing Analytics). Shannon is working as a Clinical Study Specialist. Her goal is to become a Clinical Project Manager in the Neuroscience.



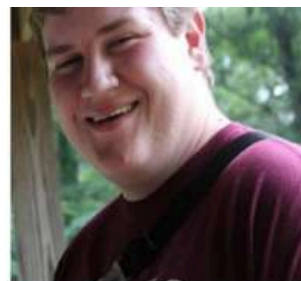
**Monda Singai** will graduate from the Vanderbilt School of Engineering in Nashville with a



**Kaitlyn Cain** will graduate from the University of Kentucky with a BS in Science: Human Health Sciences. She will attend the University of Cincinnati beginning in May in pursuit of her Doctorate in Physical Therapy.



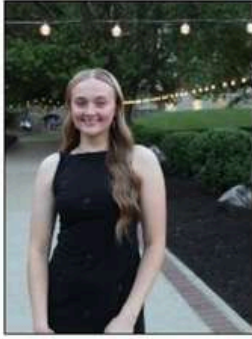
**Andi Mantor** will graduate from ECU with a BA in General Studies. She plans to be a Special Education Teacher and hopes to become a Director of Special Education



**Paul Combs** graduated from ECU with a BS in Aviation-Aerospace Management and will pursue a job in airport operations. He hopes to earn a Master's Degree and work in aviation education.



**Graham Nystrom** will graduate from Sewanee University with a BS in Biology: Ecology & Biodiversity and a BA in Music: Piano Performance. He will join Copperhead Environmental



**Leah Wells** is graduating from Morehead State University with a BA in Legal Studies. She will attend the University of Cincinnati College of Law on the Taft Scholarship.



**Haley Cartwright** is graduating from Madison Southern High School. She will attend the University of Kentucky in the Fall pursuing a Nursing Degree.



**Deacon Stone** is graduating from Madison Southern High School. He will attend Eastern Kentucky University. His goal is to become a Commissioned Officer in the US Air Force.



**Daniel Jones** graduates from Madison Southern High School. Daniel will explore his future options by working and volunteering this summer.

*Jeremiah 29:11 declares:  
"For I know the plans I have for  
you, plans to prosper you and not to  
harm you, plans to give you hope  
and a future."*

*Your graduation is just the  
beginning of God's amazing story  
for you.*



### Seeking Church Golf Buddies

Good weather is upon us! Stacy Russell is putting together a list of FUMC church golfers interested in playing every 2 or 3 weeks this summer at different area courses, probably on a Tuesday and Thursday rotation.

Join this great opportunity to test your golf skills and have Christian Fellowship. Interested? Text Stacy Russell your phone number and e-mail address to stacy.russell51@gmail.com

### Join the 8th Annual Malcolm Poulter Memorial Golf Scramble

Put together a four-person team and join the Malcolm Poulter Golf Scramble at Richmond's Battlefield Golf Course on Saturday, July 11.

Funds raised will support community programs. Proceeds go towards the Malcolm Poulter Memorial Fund and Men's Ministry Outreach.

Cost is \$50 per player or \$200 per team. Lunch will be provided. Sign up deadline is Wednesday, July 8. Contact Dave Alexander at 859-200-4288 or armycoach@gmail.com



Help United Methodist Men make a difference in our community. If you have a Kroger Plus Shopper's Card, go to Kroger's webpage: <https://www.kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow#!>

Register your card number, then please LINK your Kroger Plus Shopper's Card to First United Methodist Church Men's Ministry (#11679).

If you do not yet have a Kroger Plus Card, you can obtain one from the Customer Service desk at any Kroger or from a member of Men's Ministry.

## Message from our pastor

# Encountering the Risen Lord



Dear Church Family,

The season of Easter is not simply a moment we celebrate — it is a reality we are invited to live. Week after week, we have reflected on the powerful truth that Christ is risen and yet the deeper desire remains: that we encounter the risen Lord.

In recent sermons, we have walked alongside the disciples through fear, doubt, absence, and ultimately, transformation. Like Thomas, many of us wrestle with wanting tangible proof. Like those gathered behind locked doors, we sometimes let fear keep us from fully stepping into faith. And like the disciples on the shore, we can return to what is familiar when we are uncertain about what comes next. Yet in every story, one truth stands firm: Jesus comes to meet us where we are. When we truly encounter Him, everything changes.

We have been challenged to move beyond a faith defined by attendance and step into a faith marked by experience. We want to move from attendance to encounter. The resurrection is not just something we believe; it is something we live. It is power. It is presence. It is transformation. The risen Christ does not simply comfort us: He commissions us.

Just as the disciples were called to become fishers of people, we too are sent. The resurrection power at work within us is not meant to stay within the walls of the church. It is meant to flow outward into our neighborhoods, our workplaces, and our communities.

One question we explored: “What about me?” It is the question Peter asked. It is the question we ask when we compare, when we doubt, when we wonder about our role in God’s story. Jesus’ response is clear: “Follow me.” Our calling is deeply personal.

As we move forward in this Easter season, our prayer is simple yet profound: That we would truly encounter the risen Lord, that we would experience His resurrection power in our daily lives, that we would be sent with purpose to reach our neighbors. We are living the Resurrection. This is not just a hope; it is our calling.

Imagine what could happen if each of us stepped into our neighborhoods with resurrection faith. Imagine the lives that could be touched, the hope that could be restored, the communities that could be transformed. He is risen. He is alive. And, He is sending us.

Grace and peace, Your Pastor Rev. Eric Espada