

Sunday, March 15, 2026

UMCOR SUNDAY

ORDER OF WORSHIP

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

601 North Cedar, Abilene, Kansas 67410

785-263-2623 — www.abilenefirstumc.org

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME, GOD SIGHTINGS, AND JOYS

Please fill out the insert in today's bulletin to register your attendance and place in the offering plate when it is passed.

***THE CALL TO WORSHIP** (congregation response in **bold**)

We wonder why things happen the way they do.

We come looking for answers and deeper understanding.

Illuminate us, Lord. Teach us.

Be near to us God--comfort us, love us.

***UNISON PRAYER**

Why, Lord? Is there a pattern, a plan, a purpose to the pain of the world? While our minds seek answers, our hearts seek comfort. Gentle God, we are hurting; hold us close. Amen.

***PASSING THE PEACE**

*May the Peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.***

***GATHERING HYMN**

His Eye is On the Sparrow

FWS 2146

FAMILY TIME (children of all ages are invited to come forward)

SPECIAL MUSIC (8:15)

Run to the Father (Cody Carnes)

Jack Hunter, Soloist

CHOIR ANTHEM (10:30)

I Will Arise and Go to Jesus

Chancel Choir

SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 137 (NRSVA)

- 1 By the rivers of Babylon—
there we sat down and there we wept
when we remembered Zion.
- 2 On the willows there
we hung up our harps.
- 3 For there our captors
asked us for songs,
and our tormentors asked for mirth, saying,
'Sing us one of the songs of Zion!'
- 4 How could we sing the LORD'S song
in a foreign land?
- 5 If I forget you, O Jerusalem,
let my right hand wither!
- 6 Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth,
if I do not remember you,
if I do not set Jerusalem
above my highest joy.
- 7 Remember, O LORD, against the Edomites
the day of Jerusalem's fall,
how they said, 'Tear it down! Tear it down!
Down to its foundations!'
- 8 O daughter Babylon, you devastator!
Happy shall they be who pay you back
what you have done to us!
- 9 Happy shall they be who take your little ones
and dash them against the rock!

The Word of God for the People of God.

All: Thanks be to God

***GLORIA PATRI**

UMH 70

SERMON

Where Is God When Bad Things Happen?

Rev. Libby Themis

RESPONSIVE HYMN*O Sacred Head, Now Wounded*

UMH 286

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, we confess that there are moments in our lives when, like those in exile, we cannot bear to lift up songs of praise. In our times of pain and suffering, unable to see anything but darkness, all we can do is weep. Forgive us, O Lord, when we fail to sense your comforting presence. Help us to remember that we are to know you as Emmanuel, God with us, for you share in our weeping and light the way to new life, even as we walk in the shadow of death. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE**PRESENTING OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS****OFFERTORY** (10:30)*Run to the Father* (Cody Carnes)

Jack Hunter, Soloist

THE DOXOLOGYPraise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*

UMH 95

PASTORAL PRAYER**THE LORD'S PRAYER****PRAYER RESPONSE***Canticle of Prayer (vs. 2)*

UMH 406

ANNOUNCEMENTS***SENDING HYMN***It Is Well*

UMH 377

THE BENEDICTION**POSTLUDE**

PRAYER CONCERNS

Prayer concerns will be listed in the bulletin for 4 weeks unless the church office is notified otherwise.

MEMBERS AND FRIENDS:

Myckie Spencer broke her hip, Rehab at Village Manor, #202

Family & Friends of Rhea Jerrell

Family & Friends of Bonnie Byers

Luke (4 year old great grandson of Lehmans)

The Family of Delores Schmidt (Mother of Velda B.)

Leonard Schmitz (friend of Kent & Diane W., treatment for Acute Myeloid Leukemia)

Al Jones

Jim Leyerzapf

Pam Jackson

Carl Hansen

Scot Budden (Pastor Libby's brother)

COMMUNITY PRAYER CONCERNS:

Lancie Gantenbein, Steven & Mary Cairns, Mike Jantz, Bob Dishman, Rachel Prichard, Tom Litke, Kathy Ducker, Barbara Webster-Haynes, Nathan Robbins, Deb Daniel, Jamye Comp, Kim Decker, Jacque Havice, Macie Heller.

THOSE WORSHIPPING FROM HOME: Norris Marshall, Karen & Steve Crump, Dorothy Veach, Dorothy Snider, Linda Chase, Carl Hansen, Charles Spidell, Hope Higgins, Jim Leyerzapf, Evelyn Carter, Al Jones, Jolene Hunt, Glen & Joan Dawson, Don & Mary Rickley, Phyllis Welton.

THOSE SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES:

Please contact the office or write the name of your loved one serving on the back of your attendance sheet. Cory Donley, Colby Miller, Evan Middleton, Kayla Lee, Derek Lipson, Daelan McKnight, Tanner Harwood

THOSE IN AUTHORITY: The World Leaders, The President, the Governor, the Mayor, County Commissioners, the County Attorney, and other elected officials and the judiciary (1 Timothy 2:1-4)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RADIO BROADCAST

If you would like to sponsor a radio broadcast, contact Chris in the office. The cost is \$70.00 a Sunday. You can choose who you want in honor or memory of.

UMCOR SUNDAY

What Does My Giving Support?

Special Sundays give us a chance to focus our prayers and support on important ministries all year long—uniting our gifts to multiply our impact. Your generosity helps the Church be prepared before disaster strikes—and able to stay for the long haul afterward. It supports behind-the-scenes work that makes on-the-ground response possible. Some of the major areas UMCOR serves include:

- U.S. Disaster Response: Helps communities in the U.S. recover after floods, fires, tornadoes, and more.
- International Disaster Response: Offers emergency food, shelter, hygiene kits, and support after global crises.
- Global Migration: Assists vulnerable refugees and migrants with necessities, legal aid, and safety.
- Environmental Sustainability: Partners with churches to care for the earth and prepare for eco-disasters.
- Yambasu Agriculture Initiative: Trains and equips churches in Africa to improve food security and self-sufficiency.

THE SALINA CHORALE CONCERT

An extraordinary Spring concert to be held on Sunday March 22, 2026 at 4pm at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Salina, KS. It will be an experience you will not want to miss. Information is on the flyer on the kiosk in the narthex.

COMMUNITY MEAL

The Community Meal is served the 2nd and 4th Monday of the month, at 5:00 p.m., Sterl Hall, 619 N. Rogers. Please contact Jacque Saffell, 785-342-6223 or Toni Schwarting, 785-479-6353 with questions or to volunteer.

EASTER LILIES

There will be a limited number of Easter Lilies, \$8.00 each, available in the office for Easter Sunday. Please call (785) 263-2623, to reserve yours. You are also welcome to bring your own. Please let the office know if you would like to have it be in Honor or Memory of someone. The information needs to be to the church office by Monday, March 30th to be included in the Easter Sunday bulletin.

LENTEN LUNCH & LEARN

Our next Lunch and Learn is Thursday, March 12 from noon to one in room 200. Each week we will discuss questions related to the previous Sunday's sermon question. "Study Guides are available on the entry table in the Narthex for your own use or if you plan to join us for the study. I hope you can join in this study offering during the Lenten Season.

2026 SCHOLARSHIP

Scholarships for high school and post secondary students are available on the church website. abilenefirstumc.org This application must be completed in full and submitted to the church office by 12 Noon or the AHS Counselors' office by 5 p.m., Monday, April 13, 2026, to be eligible for consideration.

AUBURN MEDICINE LIDS AND BEST CHOICE LABELS

The Questors Sunday School class continues to collect Best Choice labels and Auburn Medicine lids to raise money. You can bring your donations to the office any time during regular hours or on Sunday mornings.

COOKIES/BREAD FOR SUNDAY MORNING

We are always in need of cookie/treat donations for Sunday mornings and bread for our visitors. Please bring donations to the office on Sunday mornings or during office hours M-Th 8-12. Thank you for your generosity!

WE ARE ON THE RADIO AND STREAMING ONLINE

If you can't make it to church, but would like to listen to our service live, simply tune into KABI 1560 AM or 95.9 FM at 10:30 a.m. You can also stream the worship service at abilenefirstumc.org.

OFFERING Needed each Sunday - \$ 5870.81 Last Sunday - \$2398.00

CHURCH CALENDAR

SUNDAY, MARCH 15

- 8:15 a.m. In-Person Worship Service
- 9:20 a.m. Small Groups & Sunday School Class
- 10:30 a.m. In-Person Worship Service / KABI 1560 AM or 95.9 FM

MONDAY, MARCH 16 OFFICE HOURS 8-12 NOON

Happy Birthday Bette Engelhaupt!

- 10:00 a.m. Card Ministry Group - 208
- 5:30 p.m. Core Meeting - 204
- 6:30 p.m. Women's AA/NA Meeting - B9
- 6:30 p.m. Church Council Meeting - 200

TUESDAY, MARCH 17 OFFICE HOURS 8-12 NOON

- 10:00 a.m. Exercise Group - Narthex

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18 OFFICE HOURS 8-12 NOON

- 10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting - Office
- 12:45 p.m. United Women in Faith Meeting - 200
- 5:15 p.m. Bell Choir Practice - Sanctuary
- 6:00 p.m. Youth Group - Peatling Hall
- 6:15 p.m. Chancel Choir Practice - Sanctuary

THURSDAY, MARCH 19 OFFICE HOURS 8-12 NOON

- 12:00 p.m. Lenten Lunch & Learn - 200

FRIDAY, MARCH 20 OFFICE CLOSED

Happy Birthday Joann Hettenbach!

SATURDAY, MARCH 21

SUNDAY, MARCH 22

Happy Birthday Marilyn Jordan!

- 8:15 a.m. In-Person Worship Service
- 9:20 a.m. Small Groups & Sunday School Class
- 10:30 a.m. In-Person Worship Service / KABI 1560 AM or 95.9 FM

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

Please note that **bold type** indicates congregational participation. An asterisk (*) indicates that you are invited to stand as you are able. "UMH" stands for *The United Methodist Hymnal* (blue book); "FWS" stands for *The Faith We Sing* (black book); and "WS" stands for *Worship and Song* (green book).

OUR MISSION AND VISION

Mission: To make disciples of Jesus Christ.

Vision: A church of Open Hearts, Open Minds, and Open Doors.

ASSISTING IN TODAY'S WORSHIP

Piano: Angie Hoerner

Liturgists: Jason Vinduska & Linda Rist

Slides/Sound/Livestream: Heather Heger & Tray Green

Gospeltality Greeters 8:15: Kevin & Ann Bailey

10:30: Dwight & Leslie Hoffman

FIRST UMC STAFF

Libby Themis, Pastor

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Darrol Dunham, Director of Maintaining the Church

Cecilia Clemence, Treasurer

treasurer@abilenefirstumc.org

Pam Jackson, Parish Visitor Emeritus