

# THE DISCIPLE

Abilene First United Methodist Church 601 N. Cedar Abilene, KS 67410

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ABILENEFIRSTUMC.ORG

## Get to Know David Haight

There are many heroes from Abilene, Kansas and David Haight is one of them. It was my honor and privilege to interview him for this article. He has a gift of speaking to you as if you are an old friend and has so many interesting stories.

–Chris Seets

David Haight grew up in the small town of Cheyenne, OK with his parents and sister, Ruth. He found his love of history early in life, in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. His least favorite class was math, but as he told me, that is ok, he ended up marrying a math major. There were 21 kids in his graduating class. He participated in track, baseball and was a 3-year benchwarmer for the basketball team.

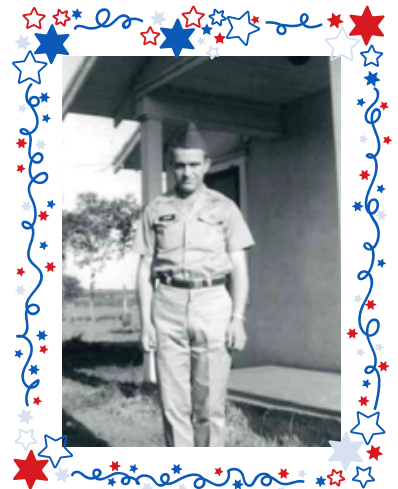
David was drafted into the U.S. Army November 1966. He attended basic training in Ft. Bliss, TX and Advanced Individual Training (AIT) in Ft. Polk, LA. From there he served in Vietnam from 1967-1968 with 1<sup>st</sup> Air Cav as an Infantryman. He was attached to 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored Division in Ft. Hood when he returned from Vietnam. He was Honorably Discharged from the Army and received the Combat Infantryman's Badge. He recommends reading We Were Soldiers to learn more about the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Cavalry and their role in the Vietnam War.

He graduated from Southwestern State in Weatherford, OK and received his Masters from Wichita State University in 1972. It was during this time that he went on a double date with someone his cousin knew. They attended a WSU basketball game; he believes that they lost terribly that night to Louisville. Her name was Pam; I think we all know how that ended up. They were married November 4, 1972.

David and Pam welcomed twins Lisa (passed in 1999) & Phillip (stillborn) in 1975, Kevin in 1976 and Michael in 1978. They settled down in Abilene where David was an Archivist at the Eisenhower Library for 37 years and then he volunteered as the same for an additional 11 years. He now uses that vast knowledge, with the help of wife Pam to assist Kevin Bailey, to organize our history here at FUMC.

(Continued on page 5)

Pictures Top to Bottom: David Haight 2026 Member Directory photo, 1966 after Army Basic Training, 1967 photo of a Bell UH-1 Iroquois (Huey) helicopter used in Vietnam War by The United States Army.



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## A Word From Pastor Libby



Friends,

I want to express my gratitude to the congregation for allowing me the time off I needed to heal and be ready to return to join you in further ministry starting June 30. I'm especially thankful for our excellent lay leaders who took responsibility for meetings, ongoing ministry, and Sunday School leadership. I am extremely thankful we have such committed and competent staff who have worked to keep things going while I was away. I am fortunate to be in ministry with all of you.

As the month of July begins, we invite you to join us on July 5 to sing songs celebrating the 250th anniversary of the United States, a continuation of the many celebrations we'll have the day before. I encourage you to wear red, white, and blue if you want to show your patriotic spirit. July 5 will also mark the start of a four-week lectionary worship series called Core Faith, as we look at core elements of our faith found in the letter to Romans. Scriptures will be as follows.

July 5 Romans 7:15-25a

July 12 Romans 8:1-11

July 19 Romans 8:12-25

July 26 Romans 8:26-38

While I have been healing, I have been exercising as much as I can, practicing watercolor painting and drawing, going to grandkids ball games, and spending time with family and friends. There is something very healing about all of these things, particularly doing creative work and learning new things that bring me closer to God.

I look forward to being back with you in worship, fellowship, and service as we continue seeking God's presence and guidance together. Thank you again for your prayers, kindness, and support during this season of healing. May July be a month of renewal, gratitude, and deeper faith for each of us as we gather to be the church in the community and the world.

Love, Pastor Libby

“Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens,  
and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28)

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Wendy Robinson  
Director of Children & Youth Ministries



# VBS 2026 was a success!



This year's Vacation Bible School was held every Wednesday afternoon in June. There was an average of 15 kids, grades K-5, in attendance. There were a variety of games, Bible Stories, crafts, and snacks each week. A big thank you goes out to Jordan M. and Claire C. for being the chaos coordinators for Wendy and Karlene. Fun was had by all.



**Pumpkins for All**



On Wednesday May 27, the youth once again gathered to plant pumpkins for a money maker this fall. With an earlier plant date and the volunteer pumpkins that came up, we are off to a great start to have pumpkins nice and early for all your fall decorating needs!

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## MUSICALLY SPEAKING

Clark Williamson, Director of Music Ministries



Here are some Special Music prospects for the month of July worship services.

I would like to bring back a solo on July 5 entitled “Thank God, I Do”. Written/recorded by Lauren Daigle during the time of the COVID virus; when churches were shut-down and we were all homebound. Also in the works will be our Vocal Quartet, who will adapt one of the Choir’s Anthems on July 12. Singers in the 4 some include Anna Gugler (soprano), Velda Becker (alto), Steve Lang (bass) and myself (tenor). We very much hope to hear Jack Hunter sing and play guitar, now that he’s returned from a mission trip in the Czech Republic. One of my friendships I’ve made in the last several months at the Senior Center lunches has been with Barth Amend. He will be playing a trumpet solo accompanied by me on the piano. We’ll play that first at our church and then repeat it at Barth’s Church, Brethren In Christ on Buckeye, on a different Sunday because both of our worship services start at 10:30. Our very own trumpet trio will play on July 19. They are Chuck Brussow, Chuck Zernickow, and David Carlson.

Other activities in our Music Ministries during July and August include:

Bells to Buffer with the goldy cloths to remove smudges and finger prints on the hand bell castings. And to pinpoint any mechanical problems. Plus I could use any volunteers to help me with re-organizing the music filing cabinets in my office. Volunteers are always welcome and needed to be liturgists and assist in the balcony on Sundays to show the slides, run the sound board, and operate the live streaming. Please contact me if you’re interested in helping in these areas.

And now it’s time for a HYMNOLOGY MOMENT. Quoting from the book by Spann & Williams, Presidential Praise (2008). Here are the favorite hymns by some of our presidents.

Harry S. Truman	“America, the Beautiful”
Dwight D. Eisenhower	“What a Friend We Have in Jesus”
John F. Kennedy	“Holy God, We Praise Thy Name”
Lyndon B. Johnson	“Onward Christian Soldiers”
Richard M. Nixon	“He Will Hold Me Fast”
Jimmy Carter	“Amazing Grace”
Ronald Reagan	“The Battle Hymn of the Republic”

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## THE LITTLE FREE PANTRY



**Amazon link for TLFP.**

The Little Free Pantry on the southeast corner of 1<sup>st</sup> United Methodist in Abilene, is always in need of donations. Area wide groceries are primarily purchased, but for your convenience, we have set up a wish list on Amazon. This has been especially helpful for individuals that don't live in the Abilene area, but still would like to help. Use the QR code above to take you to the website. Don't feel that you should only buy what's on the list. Thank you so much for your contribution.

Larry and Lisa Divel

### MAY GIVING

\$ 19,242.28

Expenses

\$ 23,559.61

YTD Giving

\$ 105,037.07

YTD Expenses

\$ 135,933.70

For a list of ways to give, visit our website

[www.abilenefirstumc.org](http://www.abilenefirstumc.org)

Click on the GIVING tab at the top.

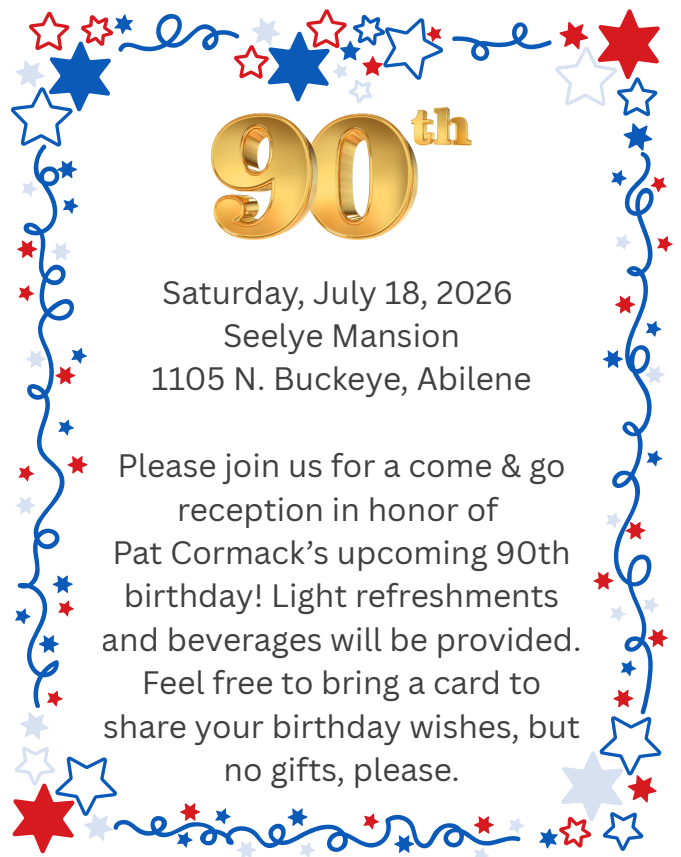


Liam B. is going to be at camp in Maine for the next seven weeks. If you would like to send him a card or note, he would love that! The camp doesn't use 'snailmail', instead they have a digital link that his mom can use to scan everything and then the camp will print it out and give it to Liam.

Send your letters to Stacia:

[stacia@tyware.com](mailto:stacia@tyware.com)

or text to 972-841-3600.



# 90<sup>th</sup>

Saturday, July 18, 2026  
Seelye Mansion  
1105 N. Buckeye, Abilene

Please join us for a come & go reception in honor of Pat Cormack's upcoming 90th birthday! Light refreshments and beverages will be provided. Feel free to bring a card to share your birthday wishes, but no gifts, please.

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Get to Know David Haight continued from page 1

David was recently part of the Kansas Honor Flight #107 Charter that visited Washington DC a few weeks ago. This amazing program has sent over 300,000 veterans to our nation's capital. The group left from Wichita airport and toured Ft. McHenry, The Air Force Memorial, the Navy Memorial, Arlington Cemetery, Iwo Jima Memorial, The Vietnam Memorial, as well as many other sites around the DC area. He is the recipient of a Quilt of Valor quilt, presented by Toni Schwarting a few months ago during the 10:30 service.

David spoke about how much he loves God. He has a kind, generous heart for others. He feels strongly about taking care of God's creation, social justice, that we are all made in God's image, and that we should respect and love each other. Growing up he attended Cheyenne Methodist Church, baptized at the age of 14. He attended First UMC after moving to Abilene. Around 1989 he and his family began attending Emmanuel Church where they were part of the "Reclaim Eden" program that focused on environmental programs. They helped bring the recycling center to the community as well as participating in Adopt a Highway program. He and Pam also were part of the nursery staff for 17 years. In 2022 after Covid and some political turmoil, the family returned to FUMC.

He told me about a few hiking adventures he had over the years, recalling his favorite, in the Crestone Peak area in Colorado with a few friends. He is a member of the Audubon Society, enjoying many years of bird watching with his family. His top three best birds viewed are the White Winged Crossbill (seen in his backyard in 1996), Whopping Crane, and a Snowy Owl. He shared many pictures of time spent at Cheyenne Bottoms and other places enjoying the birdwatching.

Other hobbies include reading something he referred to as "Drum and Trumpet" military history and being a K State Sports fan.

David attends 10:30 service with his wife Pam and children Kevin & Michael.



Pictures Top to Bottom:  
Hiking trip in Colorado L. to R.  
David Haight, Steve Groninga,  
& Frank Jordan.

David and Pam as 1992 AHS  
prom chaperones.

Quilt of Honor presented May  
17, 2026.

The 93 members of the  
KHF#107 Charter at Arlington  
National Cemetery.

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# FROM THE ARCHIVES

Kevin Bailey, David & Pam Haight

Excerpts gleaned from minutes of Board of Trustees meetings and other records from over a hundred years ago.

- Excerpted from a report to the Kansas Conference—Salina District, Abilene M. E. Church, 1873-74 by Jas. Lawrence, P. E. “Abilene was a few years ago the place of the Texan cattle trade. Since the trade has been removed the people are settling down into steady habits.” . . . “40 members and 1 probationer” also in that report.
- From the Quarterly Conference Minutes of Aug. 30, 1880 . . . “Church Records are reported properly kept.” (I hope we are doing the same almost 146 years later)
- 1887-87 . . . “a 20’ x 38’ addition on the north side of the church costing \$1,050.00. Bro. M. Nicolay paid \$500 of the cost of same.”
- Jan. 1892 “hitching posts and trees planted.”
- Sept. 1893 the trustees discussed needed repairs to the church roof to stop leaks.
- May, 1894 The trustees considered options on how to reduce the electric lighting bill.
- Aug. 28, 1906 in the minutes of the Trustees’ Meeting
- “Bro. Nerl made the report on the Pipe Organ question, stating that the company he corresponded with, gave their lowest price at \$1,625.00 with 1/2 in cash and balance in installments.

## Happy Birthday!

7/2 Joan Dawson  
 7/3 Jason Vinduska  
 7/4 Dale Emig  
 7/7 Ann Brussow  
 7/9 Herbert Romme  
 7/10 Shirley Emig  
 7/11 Donna Richards  
 Wyllow Romme  
 7/20 Pat Cormack  
 7/22 Ed Becker  
 7/25 Kathy Ford  
 7/26 Chuck Zernickow

## Happy Anniversary!

July 2, 1988  
 Kevin & Ann Bailey  
 July 5, 1969  
 Marvin & Sandy Kuntz  
 July 11, 1980  
 Randy & Barb Leckron  
 July 21, 2004  
 Steve & Chris Seets  
 July 22, 1995  
 John & AnnMarie Schwarting

## Cancer Support Group

If you have lost a loved one or have faced cancer yourself, please know that there is a cancer support group here at FUMC that meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of every month at 9:30 a.m. in the narthex.

## Card Ministry

Meets every Monday morning September-May 10:00 a.m. in room 208 for a morning of creative fun and fellowship.

A large selection of cards are available for purchase in the Narthex on the card stand. Take a look!

## United Women in Faith

No meetings held in July or August.

September 16 11:00  
Members Salad Luncheon in  
Wright Hall.

September 19  
UWF Self Care Retreat

More information to follow.

## Mission and Outreach

Meetings first Wednesday of the month at 5:30 p.m.

### On going projects include:

The Little Free Pantry  
The Bread Ministry  
Operation Christmas Child  
Community Meal  
Card Ministry  
Core  
Care Portal  
Healthy Congregation

# JULY AT ABILENE FUMC

Wed, July 1 10:00 Staff Meeting  
4:30 Missions & Outreach Mtg.

Thurs, July 2 9:30 EOTT Guild Hospice

Friday, July 3 **Office Closed**

Saturday, July 4 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday of USA!

Sunday July 5 8:15 Worship Service  
9:20 Small Groups  
10:30 Worship Service

Monday July 6 5:30 Worship Design Meeting  
5:30 Core Meeting  
6:30 Women's AA/NA Meeting

Tues, July 7 10:00 Exercise Group

Wed, July 8 9:30 Cancer Support Group

Thurs, July 9 4:30 Kids in Crisis Mtg.

Friday, July 10 **Office Closed**

Saturday, July 11

Sunday, July 12 8:15 Worship Service  
9:20 Small Groups  
10:30 Worship Service

Monday, July 13 5:30 Core Meeting  
6:30 Women's AA/NA Meeting

Tues, July 14 10:00 Exercise Group

Wed., July 15 10:00 Staff Meeting

Thurs., July 16

Friday, July 17

Saturday, July 18

Sunday, July 19 8:15 Worship Service  
9:20 Small Groups  
10:30 Worship Service

Monday, July 20 5:30 Core Meeting  
6:30 Church Council Mtg.  
6:30 Women's AA/NA Mtg.

Tues, July 21 10:00 Exercise Group

Wed, July 22

Thurs, July 23

Friday, July 24 **Office Closed**

Saturday, July 25 9:00 Kids In Crisis  
Back to School Event

Sunday, July 26 8:15 Worship Service  
9:20 Small Groups  
10:30 Worship Service

Monday, July 27 5:30 Core Meeting  
6:30 Women's AA/NA Mtg.

Tuesday, July 28 10:00 Exercise Group  
7:00 EOTT Quilt Guild

Wed, July 29 10:00 Staff Meeting

Thurs, July 30

Friday, July 31 **Office Closed**



Abilene First United Methodist Church  
601 N. Cedar  
Abilene, KS 67410

Abilene First UMC

In-Person Sunday Worship 8:15 a.m.

In-Person, Radio, Facebook Worship 10:30 a.m.

KABI 1560AM or 95.9FM

Church Staff

Rev. Libby Themis, Pastor

Wendy Robinson, Director of Children & Youth Ministry

Clark Williamson, Director of Music Ministry

Cecilia Clemence, Treasurer

Chris Seets, Administrative Assistant

Darrol Dunham, Director of Maintaning the Church

Church office hours:

Monday – Thursday 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM