

I want to congratulate our choirs and musicians on not only a fantastic concert, but a wonderful month of preparation and collaboration. This is my dream-job because of your attitudes, humor, and love of music making. I truly love being your music director.

I've noticed that many church choirs take a month off at some point during the summer. There are a variety of reasons for this. My instincts tell me to do the opposite. When I look at the energy of children during the summer, I think to myself "they have the right idea!" They take time to be outside, see their friends, and expand their knowledge in areas that really interest them. Summer could be a season where we focus more on a relaxed walk with Jesus. We know He desires a deeper connection with us, so why not slow down by connecting with Him more often and in new ways?

This summer, our musical groups will continue practicing on Wednesday nights, and worshiping on Sunday. Please join us any time and see what it is like. In June, VBS will be filled with positivity as we teach our children how God connects to us in a variety of ways. We will also have our inaugural Music Camp in July. We are trying to pack as many genres, experiences, and inspiration into a week. Please consider donating to our music camp to help us bring amazing bands and clinicians to FUMCA. I'm wishing all of you an amazing summer that increases your faith, decreases your worry, and leaves you inspired.

Sincerely,  
Elizabeth Nix



Welcome to Summer!

Even though summer is not official until June 21<sup>st</sup>, it has begun around the preschool. Preschool graduation was Thursday, May 19<sup>th</sup>. We had a nice program celebrating thirteen beautiful children, one fantastic teacher, Shelley Hislop, and one wonderful preschool aide and full-time childcare provider, Caleb Dixon. We said "au revoir" to our French teacher, Ms. Denise, prayed one last prayer with Ms. Janet, our Godly Play teacher, attended our last chapel with Ms. Jean Sanders, and sang goodbye with Ms. Coreen. Ms. Marie has been getting supplies ready and teachers are planning for a summer of fun. Our children hope to attend FUMCA's VBS in June as well as the music camp in July. Teaching does not stop for us in the summer, but we do have summer fun activities planned. We hope to share with you pictures of our adventures so stayed tuned!

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**John Thomas Peyton**



J.T. will be attending ULM in the fall to pursue a degree in Forensic Science.

**Emily Atwood**



Emily will be attending LSUA's New Aviation Program in the fall to become a commercial pilot.

## Leadership Board Update

Lately I've been attempting to expand the limited repertoire of foods I can prepare in the kitchen. Guacamole, homemade pizza, boiled crawfish, and salmon with anchovy butter are among some recent attempts. For Mother's Day, grilled garlic butter shrimp was on the menu. I was pleasantly surprised to see how the shrimp, marinated in tomato paste, olive oil, garlic, lemon, and parsley, took on such a rich flavor. As a beginner cook, it is rewarding to see how foods are changed and enhanced through different culinary practices and techniques. Brisket, hanging out in that warm, smoke-filled chamber over time, is infused with that characteristic smoked barbecue flavor (speaking as a consumer, not the chef, on this one 😊). Crawfish are left in the pot of seasoned water after boiling to take on the taste of the spices. And for some foods you might hear the chef say, "it will taste even better tomorrow," as the flavors are able to mingle together overnight. In the kitchen, the chef works to infuse their food with characteristics and flavors to make new creations that others can experience and savor.

Our Christian practices and our life together as a church can range from the seemingly ordinary and mundane to the deeply moving and awe-inspiring. We go to worship - we sing, we stand, we sit, we pray, we give, we greet, we stand and we sit again...and again, we hear a scripture and sermon, receive the bread and juice, we depart. We meet in classes and visit in the halls. We pray. We decorate and provide fun and learning for children at Vacation Bible school and music camp. We are moved and inspired by our experiences at Buddy Camp. We are challenged. We can be frustrated. We can see things differently from others in the church and also learn to see things differently than we once did. We forgive. We practice hospitality to all. We pause to consider the suffering of the world. We give our attention and our empathy to those around us. We reflect on and consider our preconceived notions and biases to see with new eyes. We remind ourselves that we aim to create a community where the insecurities, anxieties, and emotional pain of ourselves and others can be embraced, loved, and healed.

Like the many new creations that come out of a chef's busy kitchen, as we practice our faith, worship, and seek to love others, we are being shaped, seasoned, and flavored by the loving hands of God. John Wesley encouraged the church in the means of grace, individual and communal works of piety and works of mercy. The United Methodist Church describes these means of grace as "ways God works invisibly in disciples, hastening, strengthening, and confirming faith so that God's grace pervades in and through disciples" (umc.org). As we engage in these formative practices of turning our attention to God and striving to love the world, ourselves, and others as God loves, God's grace is seasoning us, changing us. Living through the Advents, Christmases, Lents, Easters, Pentecosts, and Ordinary times together, we do so in God's kitchen. Here, the Chef is making us anew, imparting the flavors and essence of the fruit of the spirit - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control - so that each one of us and those whom we encounter might taste and see that the Lord is good.

Bryan Fillette  
Leadership Board Member

### April Financial Picture

Revenues:	257,051	Budgeted	208,616
Expenditures:	277,684	Budgeted	318,559
Net Gain/(Loss):	(20,633)		
Budgeted Gain/(Loss):			(109,942)

If You would like a breakdown of further information, contact Dawn in the office at 318-443-5696 for a P&L.