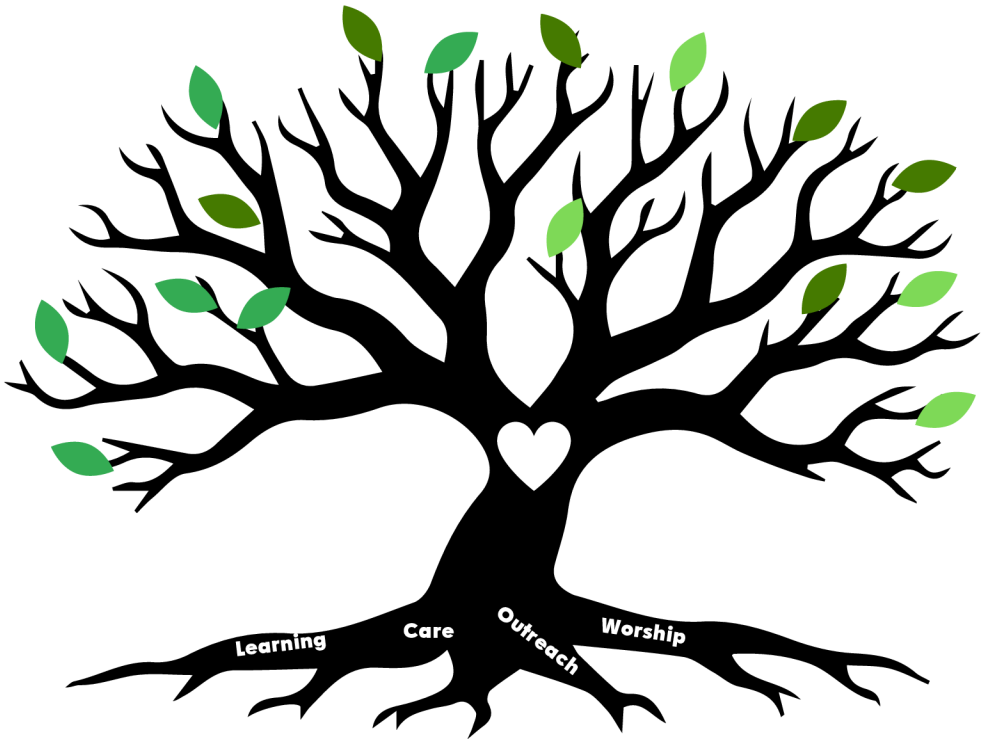




FIRST  
united methodist  
CHURCH

# THE TENDING SEASON



**NOURISHING WHAT WE LOVE, TOGETHER.**

# Will You Commit to Nourishing Our Hope?

**Welcome to The Tending Season.** At First Church, our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ who love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously. Our ministries are like a garden—they require intentional care, consistent hydration, and a community of "gardeners" to help them reach full bloom.

As we look ahead to 2026, we are facing a significant financial gap between our projected budget and our regular giving. To bridge this divide, we invite you to participate in a unique season of "over-and-above" giving. The Tending Season will run for 6 weeks, ending on June 28, 2026.

## How to Tend Our Deep Roots

By selecting a specific branch of our ministry—Care, Worship, Learning, or Outreach—you can directly nourish the programs you are most passionate about. Whether it is the music that moves you, the youth programs that inspire you, or the outreach that serves our neighbors, your gift directly nourishes the "roots" of that work.

## Where to Find Updated Progress

Updated progress can be found on our website [vanwertfirst.net](http://vanwertfirst.net). Just click on "The Tending Season." Totals will be announced weekly on Sunday. As you review the realtime progress on the website, please note that when a ministry is labeled as reaching 100% of in "Percentage of Budget Funded" column, it means the core financial underwriting is secured. This is a milestone to celebrate!

## Your Next Steps

- **PRAY:** Please pray for these ministries and the leaders who tend them.
- **REFLECT:** Consider where you are called to nourish our mission and ministries financially.
- **ACT:** Pledge forms are available in this bulletin or at the church office. Online giving is also available.

## Questions can be directed to any member of the Finance

**Committee with Susan Burchfield as the chairperson.** Thank you for your "over-and-above" heart. Together, we are nourishing the hope of First Church and our community.

Join us in this season of tending:

- **Explore the Branches:** Read through the descriptions to see which areas of our ministry speak to your heart. Pray for God's will and guidance in all the areas. The most current giving statuses are available at [vanwertfirst.net](http://vanwertfirst.net) - Click on "The Tending Season."
- **Select Your Impact:** You may choose to fully underwrite a specific ministry budget, partially fund with a Growth Gift (a gift amount is suggested, but every amount helps us reach our goal), or contribute a Watering Can donation to sustain our work through smaller, faithful increments. **ALL TENDING SEASON GIVING IS ABOVE AND BEYOND YOUR CURRENT REGULAR TITHING.**
- **Complete the Enclosed Pledge Form:** The included form is your way of telling us where you want to place your gift.
- Each funding gift will become a leaf on the canopy of our well-rooted tree.

***Together, we are nourishing what we love.***

**CARE** ministries represent the way we look after one another. Whether it is celebrating a milestone, visiting the homebound, or sharing a meal in hospitality, this root ensures that no one in our church family stands alone.

#### COLLEGE STUDENTS

Total Budget: \$500

#### **BUDGET GOAL MET**

Keep our students connected to their church home when away and warm welcomes when they return.

#### VISITATION

Total Budget: \$1000

Growth Gift: \$250

Deliver tangible love through meals and cards to our members who are homebound or facing difficult seasons.

#### FAITH MILESTONES

Total Budget: \$1500

#### **BUDGET GOAL MET**

Provide the sacred gifts—like 3rd Grade Bibles and Confirmation symbols—that mark a faith milestone.

#### FAMILY LIFE

Total Budget: \$2600

Growth Gift: \$325

Fuel the laughter and bonding of our intergenerational events, from Advent festivals to community game nights.

#### HOSPITALITY

Total Budget: \$3000

Growth Gift: \$500

Ensure a warm welcome for every guest with the simple joy of coffee, donuts, and shared community meals.

#### USHERS GREETERS

Total Budget: \$200

Growth Gift: \$100

Provide the supplies our welcome teams need to make sure every person who walks through our doors feels seen and at home.

**WORSHIP** is how our church reaches toward God. When we tend to this root, we are nourishing the music, the arts, and the sacred spaces that allow us to experience the Holy Spirit together each Sunday.

CHRISTMAS MUSICAL

Total Budget: \$700

Growth Gift: \$350

Gift our children the music and costumes they need to tell the story of the Nativity in their annual musical.

LITURGICAL ARTS

Total Budget: \$600

Growth Gift: \$200

Create a sacred atmosphere through the beauty of seasonal banners, flowers, and candles.

PRAISE BAND

Total Budget: \$750

**BUDGET GOAL MET**

Support our praise band team with the music and equipment needed to lead us in praise.

GUEST SOLOISTS

Total Budget: \$900

Growth Gift: \$300

Enrich our worship experience with the unique talents of guest instrumentalists and vocalists.

HANDBELLS MUSIC

Total Budget: \$250

Growth Gift: \$250

Keep our bell choir ringing with fresh, beautiful arrangements for worship.

SUB HANDBELL DIR.

Total Budget: \$400

Growth Gift: \$100

Support the leadership and continuity of our handbell ministry.

CHOIR ACCOMPANIST

Total Budget: \$3900

Growth Gift: \$300

Provide the essential musical foundation for the voices that lead us in worship.

SR CHOIR MUSIC

Total Budget: \$700

Growth Gift: \$175

Provide our choir with new anthems and hymns to inspire the congregation each Sunday.

ROBE CLEANING

Total Budget: \$750

Growth Gift: \$250

Care for our tradition by keeping our choir's vestments fresh and ready

SUB CHOIR ORGANIST

Total Budget: \$500

Growth Gift: \$100

Ensure our worship remains seamless and soul-stirring even when our staff is away.

**LEARNING** ministries ensure that our faith—from the smallest sprout in Sunday School to our most seasoned Bible studies—is grounded in scripture. By tending here, we are planting seeds of wisdom.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Total Budget: \$3000  
Growth Gift: \$300

Provide the snacks, crafts, and 'worship boxes' that make the Bible come alive for our children every week.

KID CHECK

Total Budget: \$900  
Growth Gift: \$300

Ensure a safe, peaceful environment for our youngest families with reliable check-in technology.

HS STUDENT MINISTRY

Total Budget: \$1500  
Growth Gift: \$500

Shepherd our oldest students through graduation and beyond with specialized programs and heartfelt gifts.

MS STUDENT MINISTRY

Total Budget: \$800  
Growth Gift: \$200

Create a space where middle schoolers can explore their faith through age-specific programs and fun.

LAY CONTINUING EDUC

Total Budget: \$1500  
Growth Gift: \$500

Empower our leaders with the training they need to keep our ministries thriving.

LIBRARY

Total Budget: \$450  
Growth Gift: \$50

Keep our library shelves stocked with fresh inspiration and study resources

**OUTREACH** provides shade and fruit for others through ministry beyond our walls. By tending these vines, we are nourishing our local missions, feeding our neighbors, and making sure the love of Christ reaches every corner of our community.

VBS

Total Budget: \$2000

**BUDGET GOAL MET**

Ignite a love for Jesus in the hearts of community kids during our biggest outreach week of the summer.

MISSIONS COMMITTEE WORK

Total Budget: \$10800  
Growth Gift: \$600

Serve and love our neighbors through local missions like the Fall Meal Pack, H2O Mentoring, Thanksgiving Blessings, Cougar Huddle, and Agape Outreach.

YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

Total Budget: \$4800  
Growth Gift: \$600

Empower our students and their peers to be the hands and feet of Christ. Fund the snacks, trips, and fellowship for our youth.