



# CLARION CONNECTION

JANUARY 2025

GROW IN FAITH | SHARE IN WORSHIP | SERVE OTHERS

2123 Forest Ave.  
Great Bend, KS 67530  
(620) 792-2148

Rev. Robert Selvakumar  
(620) 282-2349  
pastor@gfumc.org  
www.gbfumc.org

## SUNDAY WORSHIP

9:00 & 11:00 a.m.

Live-stream worship:

YouTube Channel  
GBFUMC  
\*\*\*

Special Sundays  
Worship  
10 a.m.

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

January Worship / Covenant Prayer	2
EYG	3
Noah's Ark	4
Children's Ministry	5
Christmas Blessings	6-7
Church Activities	8
Calendar	9
Celebrations & Prayer List	10
Scholarship Info	11

## BEST WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR

Dear Members and Friends of Great Bend First UMC,

Greetings in the unchanging name of Jesus Christ!

As we step into the new year of 2025, I want to take a moment to wish you all a blessed and joyful year ahead. May this fresh start bring us hope, renewal, and a deeper connection with our Lord and one another. Prayerfully and patiently, as we reflect on the past year, we remember the triumphs and the challenges. We recall the moments of joy and the times of sorrow. Through it all, we have learned valuable lessons that will guide us in the year to come. One of the most important lessons we can carry with us is the importance of **HOPE**. As the apostle Paul writes in Romans 5:5, "Hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." Hope is the anchor that holds us fast, the light that guides us through the darkness, and the promise that gives us courage to face the unknown.



As we embark on this new year, I encourage you to hold onto hope. Remember that God is always with us, guiding us, and empowering us to live out our faith with confidence and joy. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, once said, "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can." May these words inspire us to live out our faith with intentionality and above all, divine guidance.

Pay attention to this, that when we navigate through the complexities of life, we are reminded that our faith is not just a set of beliefs, but more importantly, a **LIFESTYLE** - a breathing relationship with God and a building friendship with one another. As C.S. Lewis so eloquently put it, "Faith is the art of holding on to things your reason has once accepted, in spite of your changing moods." May our faith be the root that keeps us grounded firmly, even in the midst of uncertainty and doubt. As we look to the year ahead, I encourage you to stay focused on the things that truly matter. As Timothy Keller reminds us, "The gospel is this: We are more sinful and flawed than we ever dared believe, yet at the very same time we are more loved and accepted than we ever dared hope." May this truth shape our lives, our relationships, and our community in the year to come.

In closing, I want to express my gratitude for the privilege of serving as your pastor. I am excited to see what the new year holds for us, and I look forward to walking alongside you on this journey of faith. May God bless us, guide us, and empower us to live out our faith with hope, joy, and purpose in the year ahead.

With love and appreciation,  
Rev. Robert Selvakumar  
Senior Pastor, Great Bend First UMC

**SHARE in Worship**

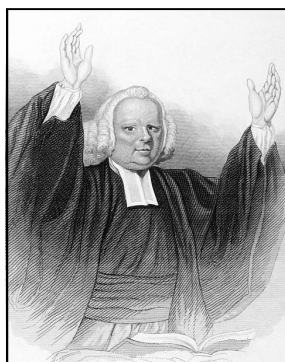
**LET'S COME WORSHIP TOGETHER**

- **Second Sunday after Christmas (January 5)**  
 Topic: "Guided by the Star"      Scripture: OT - Isaiah 60:1-6    NT - Matthew 2:1-12
  - **First Sunday after the Epiphany (January 12)**  
 Topic: "Beloved and Baptized"      Scripture: OT - Isaiah 43:1-7    NT - Luke 3:15-18, 21-22
  - **Second Sunday after the Epiphany (January 19)**  
 Topic: "The Master's Touch"      Scriptures: OT - Isaiah 62:1-5    NT - John 2:1-11
  - **Third Sunday after the Epiphany (January 26)**  
 Topic: "Proclaiming Good News"    Scriptures: OT - Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10    NT - Luke 4:14-22
- \* Service worship times are **9 a.m. — Traditional Service** and **11 a.m. — REVIVE! Service**.
- \* If you can't worship with us in person, the services may be found on our YouTube channel, **GBFUMC**.



**Covenant Prayer For the New Year**

Join Pastor Robert Selvakumar as he begins his ministry at First UMC on January 5<sup>th</sup>. The Service will be an observance of "Covenant Sunday, in the Methodist (UMC) tradition. In this service we will renew our covenant with God by using the Wesleyan Covenant Prayer."



John Wesley

**The Wesley Covenant Prayer**

"I am no longer my own, but thine.  
 Put me to what thou wilt,  
 rank me with whom thou wilt.  
 Put me to doing, put me to suffering.  
 Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee,  
 exalted for thee or brought low for thee.  
 Let me be full, let me be empty.  
 Let me have all things, let me have nothing.  
 I freely and heartily yield all things  
 to thy pleasure and disposal.  
 And now, O glorious and blessed God,  
 Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, thou art mine,  
 and I am thine. So be it.  
 And the covenant which I have made on earth, let it  
 be ratified in heaven. Amen!"

<b>December Attendance</b>			
	9:00	11:00	TTL
1 —	57	45	128
8 — One Service			149
15 —	75	36	111
20 — Blue Christmas			27
22 —	57	32	89
24 Candlelight-7 pm			163
24 Candlelight -11 pm			39
29 — One Service			66

These numbers are for those who attended worship for the Sunday Services and Special Worship Services in December.

# GROW in Faith



**EYG**  
 Meets on  
 Wednesdays  
 5:30-7:15 p.m.  
 \*\*\*

All youth 3-6 grade  
 are invited to come  
 join the fun and  
 fellowship

## NEW YEAR'S BRINGS FURTHER STUDIES OF THE BIBLE

Happy New Year!

Elementary Youth Group (EYG) will start meeting again January 8<sup>th</sup>. They will continue learning the books of the Bible and how to find specific verses in the Bible.

As 2024 was closing, members of EYG finished a 30-day Thankful Challenge (see picture of chart) and building a float for the city Christmas Parade, as well as spending several weeks rehearsing for and presenting their play, "Campfire Carols" with other member of First Kids (pictured at top).

After the seriousness of the play, the youth spent time going on a scavenger hunt in the church looking for candles, Bibles, crosses, Christmas trees and presents.

To "prove" they found an item, they had to strike a pose and snap a picture.

To close out December, the EYG kids went shopping for special items with the Bible



The First Kids' float in the City Christmas Parade was a delight for all who saw it. It won two awards: the Grand Marshal's pick for **Best in Show** and the **2024 Best Youth Group**. Awards and a picture are on the bulletin board outside the church office. **CONGRATULATIONS!** to everyone who participated.

bucks they had earned during the fall semester by attending EYG meeting on Wednesdays, memorizing

verses and by helping and doing other things in their class.

**Vivian Harbaugh**  
 EYG

# GROW in Faith



**NOAH'S ARK  
PRESCHOOL  
(NAP)**



Photos: NAP's Christmas Program was December 18th, with the Grinch, above, and Santa Claus, lower right, joining in during the refreshments. Other pictures: NAP students enjoy their craft classes, but Ms. Kaylee has added family projects — craft projects the kids take home and do with their families.

**Kaylee Keilman,**  
NAP Director

## NAP Working on Adding an All-Day Program Option for Students

As some of you know, we have been working on changing our license to be able to offer all-day classes to the families that are interested (this does not change for the families wanting to stay half days.) As soon as we get approval from KDHE, we are ready to move forward. We will keep you posted.

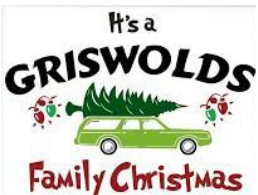
During January, students will be reviewing letters A-L and numbers 1-10;



working with shapes and colors, and continuing



practicing writing their names.



## Another Successful Season for Griswolding

Tana and Mike Newkirk raised \$3,000 this year for the Barton Food Bank.

This is a \$800 more than last year.

Businesses and people were very generous this year, said Tana, adding that some of the businesses really got into the Griswolding spirit.

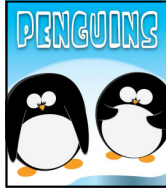


## GROW in Faith — Children's Ministry

### Penguins Exemplify Living for Jesus

**Kids Klub Wednesday Nights**  
**Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m.**

Penguins come in all sizes, and every penguin species has something unique about it.



Each penguin species has something they can teach us about living for Jesus.

**January 8<sup>th</sup> : Gentoo**

**Penguin** - Gentoos are the fastest swimmers of all penguins and excellent at catching fish. Jesus wants us

to be fishers of men, and share the gospel with others.

Matthew 4:18-22  
 Fishers of Men

**January 15<sup>th</sup> : Emperor Penguin** - The Emperor towers over all other penguins, the biggest and the tallest of its kind. God doesn't want us to be prideful, but to humble ourselves before him and others.

Matthew 20:20-28  
 The last will be first.

**January 22<sup>nd</sup> : Galapagos Penguin** - The Galapagos

penguin lives on the equator where its warm. God wants us to have warm, loving hearts and not be cold to others.

Luke 10:25-37  
 The Good Samaritan.

**January 29<sup>th</sup> : Rockhopper Penguin** - Rockhopper penguins love hopping their way to rocky peaks.

God wants us to keep our eyes on Jesus and not be distracted by the world.

Matthew 17:1-8,  
 The Transfiguration



**Larissa Graham,**  
 Director of  
 Children's Ministries

### Children's Church Rings in the New Year

**Children's Church**  
**Sundays at 11:00 a.m.**

**January 5<sup>th</sup>: Happy New Years, A Praise Party.**

Every day is a chance to praise the Lord!



Just like the party on New Year's Eve when the clock hits midnight, everyday we can be excited to wake up and live for God.

**January 12<sup>th</sup>: Tick Tock: Joy that Never Ends.**

New Year's Eve is a big party. It celebrates an ending, but also a beginning.

God wants us to understand that while we often have new beginnings in life, this life will one day have a final ending. If we placed all of our hope and trust in things of this life, we're going to be eternally disappointed. But if we place our trust in Jesus, he's promised us a life of joy and peace that has no end. Kids will learn, "I can have eternal life through Jesus."

**January 19<sup>th</sup>: Martin Luther King Jr. : Love Your Neighbor.**

"Love your neighbor" is a command that has been around since the time of Moses. But who is my

neighbor? Jesus answered that question in a way no one expected. Luke 10:25-37, The Story of the Good Samaritan. Learning to Love Others as You Love Yourself.

**January 26<sup>th</sup>: Prayers for the New Year.**

A New Year, a Fresh Start. The start of the New Year is an opportunity for us to take time to pray and ask God to do great things in the coming year. Kids will look at some of the many passages in the Bible about starting new, which will inspire them to craft their own personal prayer for the New Year.



**Bible Verses**  
 Psalm 98  
 A New Song

Isaiah 43:18-21  
 A New Thing

Lamentations 3:22-23, New Every Morning

2 Corinthians 5:17-21, New in Christ

**Larissa Graham,**  
 Director of  
 Children's Ministries

# GROW in Faith

★  
 JOY  
 NOEL  
 ANGEL  
 JESUS  
 PEACE HOPE  
 WISEMEN  
 CHRISTMAS  
 BELIEVE FAITH  
 PRINCE OF PEACE  
 THANK YOU

## DECEMBER 2024 PROVIDED MANY BLESSINGS



Our pulpit was blessed to have several Kansas pastors share a message with us before our new pastor takes over.



The Angel Tree Project provided gifts for 76 children in need this year.

*To our Amazing FUSA Family -*  
 We would like to thank everyone who contributed to this year's Angel Tree. (Wow!) You all have helped to make a "Merry Christmas" for many children!  
 The St. Clare gifts have been delivered and the Boys & Girls home gifts will be delivered on Dec. 30th. In total we provided over 70 gifts for the children!  
 Thank you for donating, purchasing, wrapping & delivering everything to the church & our friends. You helped to make it all so meaningful!  
 You all really are our amazing caregivers!! Thank you & may God bless each of you!!  
 We want to give a special Thank You to our church secretary, Roseann, for her awesome guidance!!  
 The Angel Tree Committee



Several families helped during worship services by lighting the advent candles and reading the candle-lighting liturgy. The candle lighters included Mike and Chrystal Marzolf, our newest church members, and our new pastor Rev. Robert Selvakumar and his family. Thank you to all the families who helped!



Our special Christmas services, lead by our Pastor. Robert, with Pastor Diana Webster and Rev. Richard Fitzgerald, included a Blue Christmas service and two candle-light Christmas Eve service, left, which inspired those who attended.

# GROW in Faith

★  
 JOY  
 NOEL  
 ANGEL  
 JESUS  
 PEACE HOPE  
 WISEMEN  
 CHRISTMAS  
 BELIEVE FAITH  
 PRINCE OF PEACE  
 THANK YOU



CHRISTMAS Holiday activities included (above) caroling our shut-ins, nursing home residents and diners at the Dream Center, followed by the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Chili (and Soup) Cook-Off. The Golden Ladles were won by Andrea Bauer and Taylor Calcara. (Below left) Our servers at the Dream Center meal and, right, the culmination of the Christmas Food Box delivery of 78 food boxes.



# SERVE Others



## John Chapters 1, 2 & 3 Focus of Bible Study

Melanie Calcara's ladies' Bible study will resume on Wednesday, January 8<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 in the conference

room. They will be taking a break from "The Chosen" videos they have been viewing and discussing.

The Bible study group will start a New Testament 10-week study using the first three chapters of John.

Questions:

Melanie Calcara  
620-617-3261



## CKDC THANKS CHURCH



*Pastor of Congregation,  
I thank you for your  
Commitment to serve  
Community meals here  
at the D.C.  
Thank you for making this  
a special time for everyone on  
Sunday evening - serving a  
great meal to those  
who came & shared Christmas  
carols with everyone!  
you all are awesome!  
May you all be blessed for  
blessing others in the  
community.  
Merry Christmas &  
blessing throughout 2025!  
C.K.D.C. staff & volunteers*

Next Dream  
Center Meal  
February 16<sup>th</sup>

To Volunteer  
contact:  
Dort Hertel  
316-650-7143

## Methodist Women Provided Christmas Cheer for Our Shut-ins



Our women's group provided their usual Christmas cheer by distributing cookies to our shut-ins, nursing home bound and recently bereaved. The project includes baking and boxing up about 50-dozen homemade cookies and distributing them to the recipients.



LaVonne Gerritzen  
President



# First United Methodist Church — January 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		<p>Find our Calendar Online</p> 	<p><b>1 New Year's Day</b> CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED No NAP Classes</p>	<p><b>2</b> 5:30 pm CORE Community 7 pm NA 7 pm Praise Band</p>	<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>4</b></p>
<p><b>5 Epiphany</b> 9 am and 11 am – Services in Sanctuary 9 am on YouTube &amp; 11 am on Facebook 10 am Discovery Hour</p>	<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>7</b> NAP Classes Resume 5:30 pm TOPS 6 pm Girl Scout 7 pm Vintage Wheels</p>	<p><b>8</b> 9:30 am Bible Study 5 pm Chancel Singers 5:30 Kids Klub/EYG/YG 5:30 pm MOMCo</p>	<p><b>19</b> 5:30 pm CORE Community 7 pm NA 7 pm Praise Band</p>	<p><b>10</b></p>	<p><b>11</b></p>
<p><b>12 Human Relations</b> 9 am and 11 am – Services in Sanctuary 9 am on YouTube &amp; 11 am on Facebook 10 am Discovery Hour</p>	<p><b>13</b> 6 pm Girl Scouts 7 pm Education</p>	<p><b>14</b> 6 pm Girl Scout 5:30 pm TOPS</p>	<p><b>15</b> 9:30 am Bible Study 5 pm Chancel Singers 5:30 Kids Klub/EYG/YG</p>	<p><b>16</b> 5:30 pm CORE Community 7 pm NA 7 pm Praise Band</p>	<p><b>17</b> 9-3 Quilt Guild</p>	<p><b>18</b></p>
<p><b>19 Ecumenical</b> 9 am and 11 am – Services in Sanctuary 9 am on YouTube &amp; 11 am on Facebook 10 am Discovery Hour</p>	<p><b>20</b> No NAP Classes 4:30 pm Trustee 5:30 pm Finance</p>	<p><b>21</b> 5:30 pm TOPS</p>	<p><b>22</b> 9:30 am Bible Study 5 pm Chancel Singers 5:30 Kids Klub/EYG/YG 5:30 pm MOMCo</p>	<p><b>23</b> 5:30 pm CORE Community 7 pm NA 7 pm Praise Band</p>	<p><b>24</b></p>	<p><b>25</b></p>
<p><b>26</b> 9 am and 11 am – Services in Sanctuary 9 am on YouTube &amp; 11 am on Facebook 10 am Discovery Hour 7 pm BCAC UNITY Service at Central Baptist Church</p>	<p><b>27</b> 6 pm Girl Scouts</p>	<p><b>28</b> 5:30 pm TOPS</p>	<p><b>29</b> 9:30 am Bible Study 5 pm Chancel Singers 5:30 Kids Klub/EYG/YG</p>	<p><b>30</b> 7 pm NA 7 pm Praise Band</p>	<p><b>31</b> :</p>	

**SHARE in Worship — CELEBRATIONS & PRAYER CONCERNS**



**January Birthdays**

- 2 Easton Stalcup
- 5 Bill Koelling
- 6 Jack Yarmer
- 9 Eli Keilman
- 10 Rylee Yarmer

- 12 Janis Link
- 12 Brad Brack
- 15 Jack June
- 18 Mike Marzolf
- 20 Larry Gale
- 20 Kaycee Smith
- 22 Doug Fuhr
- 23 Janice Schmidt
- 28 Merle Evers
- 28 Greg Hinson



**January Anniversaries**

- 12 Greg & Alina Hinson
- 15 Jason & Kristen Yarmer
- 29 William & Linda Carpenter

- 28 Alice Walter
- 29 Connor Furrey
- 30 Donna Knipe
- 31 Megan Burnham



**WE REMEMBER THESE IN OUR PRAYERS:**

**The Family of Rev. Melvin Crane** (Diana Webster's father)

**Special Prayers** for Linda Essmiller, Janice Schmidt, and **Anyone** ill from colds and flu

**All Those Who are Involved in Cancer treatment and recovery:** Roberta Bartlett, Lisa Baum, Carol Bird, Amnee Brown (April Harbaugh's sister), Leonard

Bunselmeyer, Dana Cheney, Linda Essmiller, Suzie Evans, Bill Koelling, Dick Lytle, Valerie Peak, Kathy Rogers

**All Those Who Reside in Nursing Homes/Care Facilities or are home-bound:** (*Aster Estates*) Jackie Curtis, Claire Stephenson, and Ivy Webster; (*Azria*) Mary Ann Boyle and Cindy Phillips; (*Brookdale*)

Harriet Herzberg and Eileen Ingersoll; (*Medicalodges*) Mary Carpenter and Janice Schmidt; (*River Bend*) Imogene Christianson and Carol Thier; (*other facilities*) Roberta Bartlett, Larned; Barbara Lear, Colorado

**All Those Serving Our Country in the Military:** *All our men & women in the armed forces including Bryan Farthing*



Dear Friends at First United Methodist Church,

Thank you so very much for the food box! Your thoughtfulness brought tears to my eyes.

My daughter will help me

make many wonderful meals!

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your kindness.

Sincerely,  
*Tina Weber*

**GROW in Faith**

**APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE  
FOR SCHOLARSHIPS PROVIDED BY OUR CHURCH  
DEADLINE IS MARCH 15**



Now's the time for high school seniors and college students to apply for the scholarships offered by or administered by Great Bend First United Methodist Church.

For the 2024-2025 school year, First UMC awarded 27 scholarships to new recipients and 10 renewals to past recipients.

This year, First UMC has updated their website to include the application forms for our scholarships.

Forms are also available in the church office.

Applications for all scholarships must be turned into the church office by **March 15<sup>th</sup>**.

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The **Charley C. Byers and Wayne and Betty Banks scholarships** are available only for active members of First United Methodist Church of Great Bend.

Criteria are financial need, a desire for further education and a firm Christian belief.

Both scholarships are renewable. Renewable applications are only

available by contacting the church office.

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The church also administers eight other scholarships available for graduating high school seniors. The criteria sheet and application forms are on our website at [www.gbfunc.org](http://www.gbfunc.org)

**Anol W. Beahm scholarship**

Criteria: Barton- or Rush-county residence, medical major, firm Christian belief, 3.0 grade point average.

**Richard C. Brining scholarship**

Criteria: Education major at a Kansas college, exhibit financial need, strong character.

**Henry and Jennie Fanshier scholarship**

Criteria: Full time at accredited college, financial need, desire for further education.

**John and Charlotte Henry scholarship**

Criteria: Financial need to attend college, genuine desire for further education. *Also available for graduate students.*

**HH and Jennie Kopke scholarship**

Criteria: Barton- or Comanche-county residence, financial need to attend college, genuine desire for further education. Student must be attending a Kansas college.

**George and Doris Penner scholarship**

Criteria: Any accredited college, trade or technical school, financial need to attend college, genuine desire for further education.

**Stone-Reinhardt scholarship**

Criteria: Students of Great Bend, Ness City or Ransom high schools, must demonstrate a desire for further education, and to make future contribution to their community. *Not renewable, for freshman year only.*

**Dan and Jean Swartz scholarship**

Criteria: Based on desire for further education, and show good citizenship and character, and good to above-average grades.

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If you need further information, or forms, please contact the church office or visit our website.

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Direct link:

<https://www.gbfunc.org/studentscholarships>

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NOTE: Some scholarships may be renewed.

To get renewal applications, contact the church office — [finance@gbfunc.org](mailto:finance@gbfunc.org) or call 620-792-2148

**Please Note:**  
Deadlines are important.  
Don't lose out on a scholarship by not meeting the deadline.

**First United Methodist Church**

**2123 Forest**

**Great Bend, KS 67530**



P: (620) 792-2148

**[www.GBFUMC.org](http://www.GBFUMC.org)**

**[FaceBook.com/GBFirstUMC](https://www.facebook.com/GBFirstUMC)**

Contact the office to receive this newsletter by email or find it on the website, [www.GBFUMC.org](http://www.GBFUMC.org).

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**WORSHIP @ FUMC!**

**SUNDAY**

9:00 a.m. Worship Service

10:00 a.m. Discovery Hour

11:00 a.m. REVIVE

**Virtual Worship Services:**

Both Services on YouTube channel GBFUMC

**SPECIAL SUNDAYS & 5<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAYS**

10:00 a.m. Worship Service (see church calendar)

**COMMUNITY GROUPS** that meet each week, bi-weekly or monthly at FUMC are CORE Community, Girl Scouts, NA, TOPS, The MomCo (MOPS), Central Kansas Thread Benders Quilt Guild, and Vintage Wheels of Great Bend.

**Contact us:**

**Rev. Robert Selvakumar**

[pastor@gbfumc.org](mailto:pastor@gbfumc.org)

**Children's Director, Larissa Graham**

[grahaml@bartonccc.edu](mailto:grahaml@bartonccc.edu)

**Secretary, Rebecca Peak**

[secretary@gbfumc.org](mailto:secretary@gbfumc.org)

**Treasurer, Sarah Schwartz**

[finance@gbfumc.org](mailto:finance@gbfumc.org)

**Coordinator of Worship Arts, Marc Webster**

[kmsband@yahoo.com](mailto:kmsband@yahoo.com)

**Noah's Ark Preschool Director, Kaylee Keilman**

[NAPdirector@gbfumc.org](mailto:NAPdirector@gbfumc.org)

**Custodian, Marc Webster**

[custodian@gbfumc.org](mailto:custodian@gbfumc.org)