

# How do I Live — and Give — First United?



**Dr. Michael McKee**  
Senior Minister

Have you noticed children carrying scepters around church the last few weeks? Our elementary school children have been learning the Old Testament story of Esther in Sunday School. Testament Travels, our Sunday School for children in grades 1–5, provides opportunities to learn the stories of Jesus through multiple ways of teaching and learning — such as art, science, role playing, and cooking.

This is just one story of ministry at First United Methodist Church of Hurst. Our worship; our ministry to students, children, and families; our pastoral care of the ill or grieving in our congregation; and our mission to the community are all a part of what we do in the name of Christ in this place.

This year's giving theme is "Live First United: Because You Belong; Because You Believe." We give to First United Methodist Church because we belong to the church. We give so that our church's ministries will continue to be a place of belonging for our children, students, adults, and those in our community. We give to First United Methodist Church because we believe in God. We believe in God's intentional will to transform our lives and the world.

I hope you will prayerfully consider your 2012 financial commitment, and how it reflects your belonging and your beliefs.



**Shirley Fleming**  
Live First United Co–Chair

As a child, I vividly remember my father getting the big check pad out on Saturday evening to write our family's monetary gift to our church. My siblings and I would watch anxiously, because when finished, he would choose one of us to take it, tuck it in our Bible, and be the special one to place it in the offering plate at church. We knew if we fussed or squabbled, he would be the one to keep it and do the honors! And that was the way it was viewed in our home ... an honor to return a generous portion of my parents' hard earned money to our church.

Today, we have many ways to give. Many of us still write the weekly or monthly check. My husband Rod and I have chosen to give by authorizing the church to "draft" on our bank account monthly — no paper involved! Some place cash in the offering plate and some choose to give online with a credit card for the ease of consolidating transactions.

The ways we can give may have changed, but the important thing is to make the commitment and to give regularly. Each and every gift is important to our church. It takes all of our gifts to fulfill the missions and ministries of our church. If you have children, I encourage you to involve them — let them see you write the check or place your gift in the offering plate. Talk about the honor that it is to give!



**Alicia Probasco**  
Live First United Co–Chair

The most important thing my family does together is attend church. With our job schedules, school responsibilities, extra-curricular activities, and volunteer work, our lives are wonderful and full, but occasionally only intersecting at the dinner table. But not on Sundays. Sundays are our day to spend together at FUMC Hurst. It's where we belong.

We love our church's ministry and music, mission work, the girls' choirs, their confirmation and youth groups. Starting several years ago, through the Music and Arts programs, and then as teachers in the children's classes, we forged new friendships that have evolved into heartfelt relationships, true extensions of our own family. We see FUMC Hurst as an integral part of our mid-cities community, and we believe that as we share our experiences with others, they might feel the warmth and sense of belonging as well.

We give to FUMC Hurst because it's the way we can help extend our church's footprint on our community. Each of us has a financial responsibility to support our children, our community, and our work through giving to the church. There's no single verse, or sermon, or song that is the church; it's a combination of all things faithful. And a collection of all our faithful gifts is what's needed to keep us growing.



# LiVE FIRST United

Because You Belong ✠ *Because You Believe*

We give to First United Methodist because we belong to this church. We give to so that our church's ministries will continue to be a place of belonging for our children, students, adults, and those in our community. We give to First United Methodist because we believe in God. We believe God's intentional will to transform our lives and the world.

## Ministries with Youth and their Families



Anderson Youth Center is the hub of a vibrant ministry with youth.

More than 120 students representing more than 25 schools come to Anderson Center each week for Sunday School, Youth Group, and Wednesday night worship.



Every year, students engage in local and global missions such as Souper Bowl of Caring, summer mission trips, Harvest Festival, VBS, Music and Arts Camp, Great Day of Service, and others.



**Looking forward:** A team is working on a plan to refresh and update the existing space, which will include new flooring, paint, and furniture. Work will begin on Anderson Center in January.

## Ministries with Children and their Families



We teach the stories of Jesus to our children, so that his story can become their story.

Testament Travels provides enriching opportunities for children to learn the stories of Jesus through multiple methods — such as art, science, role playing, and cooking. Each Bible story unit lasts five to six weeks.



Children learn about service to others through projects such as delivering Meals on Wheels, making cards for homebound members, creating Shoeboxes for Kids, and working at Mission Central.



**Looking forward:** Some of 2012 funds will provide long overdue upgrades to Circuit Riders, the computer lab, and Good News Productions, our video production lab.

# Our 2012 Budget is \$2,516,656:



## Ministries with Adults

In our large congregation, smaller groups provide a place to connect with others through study, spiritual growth, caring and support, and fellowship.

GPS (Grow • Pray • Share) classes, seminars, and small groups offer year-round opportunities for personal growth.

Support Groups: Numerous small groups offer peer support for difficulties such as grief, divorce, addiction, and end of life issues.

**Looking forward:** GPS offerings will continue to expand, and will be offered throughout the year. Data from 2011's small groups will be used to plan topics for 2012 GPS programs.



## Missions

We respond to God's love for us by loving and serving our neighbors. In 2011, we expanded our already rich mission outreach program with the Mobile Food Pantry, which serves 400 families each month; The Village Garden, which provided 150+ pounds of vegetables to Mission Central clients in its first season; and an adult mission trip to Alabama.



**Looking forward:** Continuing to expand local and international missions, we will work on "ground floor" opportunities with Methodist missionaries David and Cindy Ceballos in Panama.

**Your church leaders and staff have been careful stewards of our church resources in this difficult financial climate.** Despite increases in the costs of maintaining and operating our church, 2012's expense budget is essentially equal to expenses of 2009. **Our pledge commitments are increasingly important to support our ministries, as other income sources (such as endowments and special offerings) have been reduced.** Will you consider increasing your pledge by one or more percent to help fund these important ministries?

**Will you think and pray about your commitment to First United Methodist Church in the coming year, and how you will express your belonging, and your beliefs?**



# First United Methodist Church of Hurst

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## **LiVE** FIRST United

Because You Belong ✠ *Because You Believe*  
**First United Methodist Church of Hurst**

- Because you have
- expressed your
- belonging and belief
- through generous giving,
- our church has done
- wondrous things in 2011!

Offered more than 200 worship services • Provided three Festival of Carols concerts for a combined audience of 3,000  
 • Fed more than 1,000 local families for Thanksgiving • Welcomed more than 300 people worshipping in our church for the first time  
 • Educated more than 100 children (ages six months to four years) in our Day School • Supported 24 volunteer Stephen Ministers providing lay pastoral care to our church and community  
 • Engaged more than 100 students from 10+ high schools, even more junior high and middle schools, and seven different school districts in Sunday school, Sunday Youth Groups, and Wednesday night worship  
 • Offered visitation to more than 65 homebound members through Caring Friends and Flower Ministry Team  
 • Provided more than \$300,000 for missions • Provided the Mobile Food Pantry for 1,400 clients each month  
 • Gave \$52,000 in support of local families through Mission Central

**No single gift will come close to funding our annual budget, but all of our gifts together will! Together, we Live First United.**