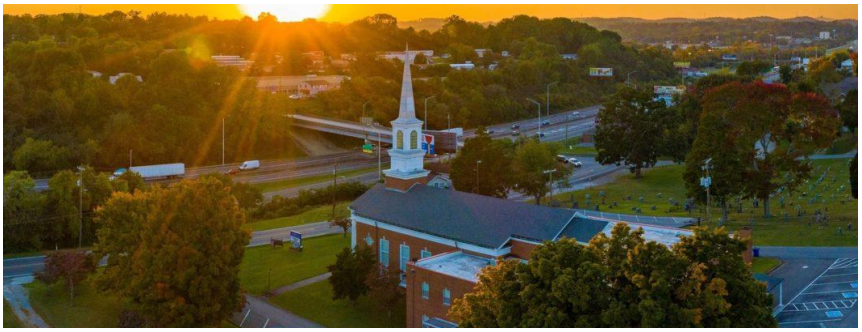

Bookwalter United Methodist Church

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May 2026

Bailey Hueser, Choir Director
Todd Spangler, Pianist

Reverend Stephen K. Doyal, Pastor
Betsy Payne, Secretary

Edie Jo Hall, Children's Director
Taylor Stephens, Youth Director

Sharing God's love with our neighbors,
inviting them to share in the joy of Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE

I recently posted on Facebook something that happened here at Bookwalter. I was asked to expand it into an article for the Holston Messenger. Here is the result.

I remember hearing a preacher way back in my college days who referenced a line from a Janet Jackson tune popular at the time. "What have you done for me lately?" the 1986 song asked, and I was stunned that a stuffy old codger (*He might have been 30*) would use a current hit like that from the pulpit. It seemed so cool and relevant that it made quite an impression on my 21-year-old self. When I answered the call to ministry several years later, I was determined to be just as hip.

Movies, music and pop culture in general have always been interests of mine. My best friend who is a radio personality refers to me on air as "The Minister of Movies" when he has me call into the station on occasion. From the beginning of my ministry, I have always enjoyed peppering my sermons with film quotes and song lyrics when it seemed to fit. Those early days were frustrating, however, when my Tom Petty or Top Gun citations seemed to go over the heads of the people in my congregations.

At the time, the pews were filled with folks who were 30-40 years older than me. I should have probably tried Frank Sinatra or Gone with the Wind instead.

I recently came to a painful realization, however. In a sermon talking about Christianity coexisting peacefully with other religions, I sang a few bars of "Live and Let Die" the Paul McCartney and Wings song from the James Bond movie of the same name. Almost everyone nodded and laughed. They finally get me! Then it dawned on me that the people in the pews are still about the same age as my original congregations, but now that I am 60 years old, so am I. *Sigh.*

This old dog is not going to try to learn any new tricks at this stage of my life, though. I just do not have the same treasure trove of Bad Bunny and Billie Eilish lyrics as I do those of Jimmy Buffett and Billy Joel. I could try to appeal to the Swifties, but I do not want to be disingenuous. I will leave that to the up-and-coming preachers who see me as the stuffy old codger in the pulpit now. I will just keep Livin' on a Prayer and letting people know that Jesus is Just Alright With Me. *Steve*

MEETINGS

The **Church Council** will meet on **Monday, May 11th** at 7:00 PM in the Chapel Class at the church. We will also offer an online option. Look for the link the week before.

There will be an **Outreach Meeting** on **Saturday May 9th** at 11:00 a.m. Anybody with ideas and/or willing to start a small group, please contact Pat Newman and/or plan on attending this meeting.

The **Devotional Books** will be ready in **July**. The books are non-dated, which allows the reader to read a story a day, a story per week, or the entire book in one sitting. Be on the lookout for Bookwalter moments of encouragement and inspiration coming in July.

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

This Sunday, May 3, will be the last opportunity to donate $5 for a "Virtual" Food Bucket for Zimbabwe.

In addition to the Change for Children Offering, our 2026 Conference Mission Offering centers on two initiatives that emphasize leadership development. The first is "Ripples of Faith: Kenya Mission Project" led by Rev. Robert Kariuki that equips leaders to serve people in their communities and church.

The 2026 Miracle Offering will also make it possible for more clergy and lay leaders in Africa, Europe and the Philippines to develop as leaders through theological education. Please mark any gifts accordingly.

RUMMAGE SALE

The Rummage Sale is Friday and Saturday May 29-30. On Friday the hours will be 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. and on Saturday 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. and this will be a half-price day. We need volunteers to help on sale days.

Church members are invited to a preview sale on Thursday afternoon and evening.

THANK YOU FROM TAYLOR AND THE YOUTH

The Bake Sale raised almost $900 for Assembly. Between that and Conference Scholarships, they are set. We have 4 youth and 2 volunteers attending this July. Thanks!

EASTER IN PHOTOS

(Photo credit Becky Doyal)