

SPRINGFIELD FIRST

200+

Good Tidings

1821 THE BEST IS YET TO COME 2021

MAY 2021
200th Anniversary Edition



1900



1920



1948



1940s



1950s



1960s



1993



1990s



2006 - present

Our church staff is here to help each of us live as a disciple of Jesus Christ who transforms the world. Feel free to contact them.

PHONE 217.793.9760
WWW.SPRINGFIELDFIRST.ORG

PASTORS & MINISTRY STAFF

Dr. Roger Grimmett | Lead Pastor

Rev. Justin Snider | Associate Pastor

Lana Salomonson | Executive Director

Carli Burton | Director of Senior Ministries

Chase Carlisle | Director of Worship Arts

Elyssa Carlisle | Director of Children's & Youth Choirs

Dr. See Tsai Chan | Associate Director of Music Ministry

Brennan Pappas | Director of Technical Arts

Sydney Pappas | Family Ministry Coordinator

Sharon Sweeney | Director of Connections

Jordan Thomas | Student Ministry Lead

SUPPORT STAFF

Kevin Behl | Facilities Manager

Kacey Belitsos | KidLife Assistant

Dara Bose | Accountant /
Publications & Social Media Manager

Dayton Emery | Technical Arts Assistant

Renoldo Gayton | Lead Custodian

Austin Geist | Print Shop Specialist

Sally Howard | Executive Assistant

Jenny Hutcherson | Financial Administrator

Kathy Kerr | Administrative Assistant

STAFF EMAILS:

First initial and Last name@springfieldfirst.org

*Special thanks to Historian Steve Beilstein.

SPRINGFIELD FIRST



1821

THE BEST IS YET TO COME

2021

You are invited to the 200th Anniversary Celebration of Springfield First United Methodist Church!

Saturday, May 22nd

1:00-2:00pm and 3:00-4:00pm

Enjoy live music (contemporary, traditional, StudentLife band, and more!), experience period games and activities for the whole family (snacks too!), participate in a mission project, and view historical displays to remember our 200-year history.

2:00-3:00pm

Attend an old-fashioned revival service!

Hear from our former pastors, with a sermon preached by Bishop Frank Beard.

(Bring lawn chairs. Live music, games, and activities will temporarily stop during this time.)

NOTE: Live music and activities will be similar for the hour before and the hour after the revival.

Sunday, May 23rd

9:00am Contemporary Worship

10:45am Traditional Worship

Celebrate our 200 years and look ahead to where God is leading our church. Hear about our Vision plan for the future, worship together, and enjoy special treats in honor of this day.

We hope to see you there!

WEEKEND WORSHIP EXPERIENCES

Sunday 9:00AM Contemporary
10:45AM Traditional



Facebook · SpringfieldFUMC



Instagram · springfieldfumc



Twitter · SpringfieldFUMC

www.springfieldfirst.org

A LETTER FROM OUR LEAD PASTOR

Happy 200th Birthday, Springfield First!

200 years – wow! I am awed by the past and present ministry of our church. Every era in the life of our great church has been faced with significant challenges. Yet, God has summoned the very best from laity and staff over the years to make this church a vital and robust ministry in the Springfield area. Thanks be to God for his faithfulness!

I so much appreciate the opportunity to look back and reflect upon our rich heritage as a church. In the booklet, *First Methodist Church: 125 Years*, by W.G. Piersel, there is a significant paragraph that is the very fuel and DNA for our past, present, and future ministry:

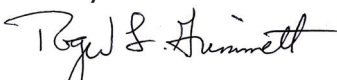
The Methodist people were always willing to preach the gospel wherever they might find an audience. The preacher in charge proposed holding a preaching service or prayer meeting once a week in the four parts of the city. So, one man went southeast, one went southwest, a third went northeast, and the first two went together to the northwest part of town.

We have such a rich heritage that inspires us as a people to embrace a thriving, gospel-centered, Biblically-based congregation moving forward into our next 200 years. What a perfect opportunity to invite your full participation into our **LifeVision 200**. I want to offer you a preview of what we will be introducing to you on Sunday, May 23:

LifeVision 200 – By the end of 2026, we dream of the day when Springfield First is multiplying disciples, bringing compassion, and sharing the hope of Jesus with the Springfield community and beyond.

This is just the beginning. The next chapter will be written by all of us together as we step forward in faith and live fully into this God-sized Vision! Truly..... **THE BEST IS YET TO COME!**

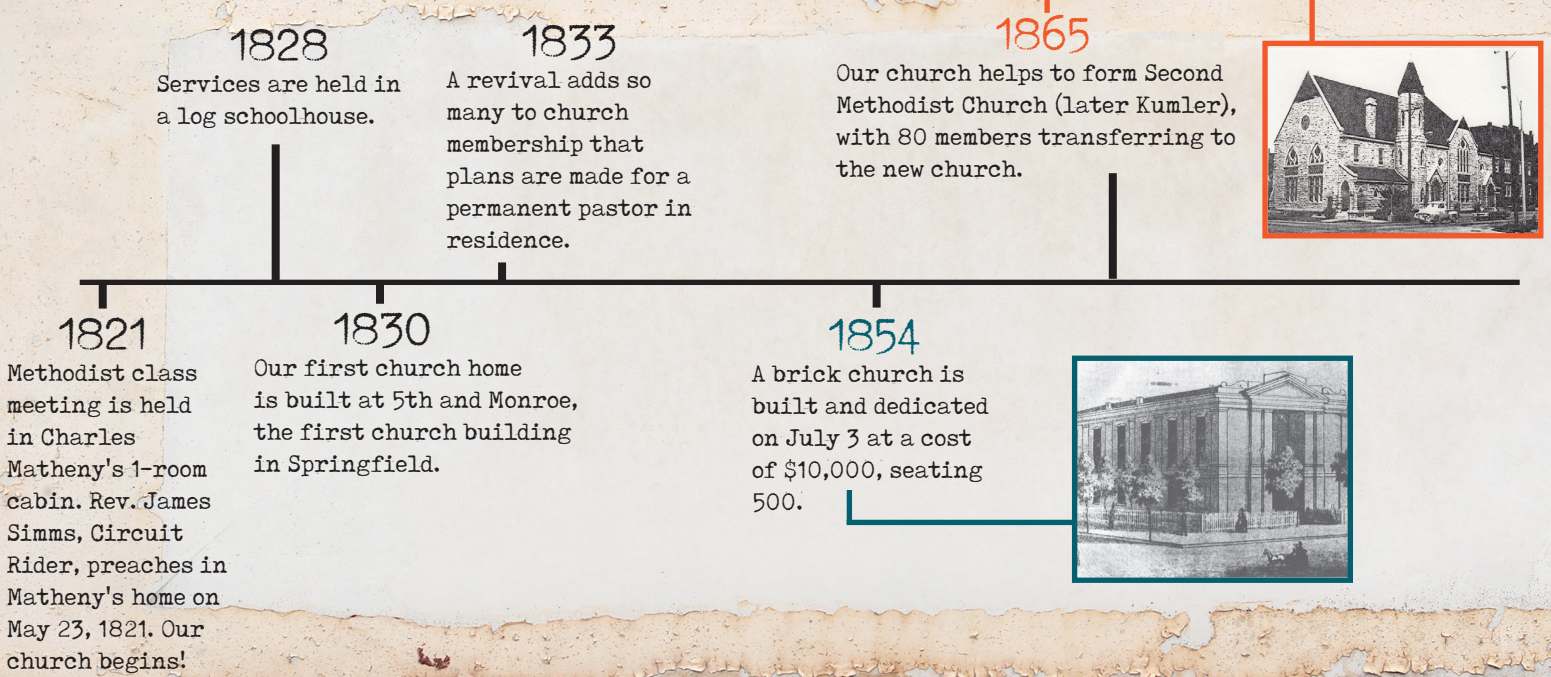
Warmly,



Dr. Roger Grimmett
Lead Pastor
2017 - present



OUR CHURCH HISTORY



A MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTORS

Several of our former pastors will be here for our 200th Anniversary Celebration! Here are messages from a few of them, along with our current Associate Pastor.



Dr. Daymond Talkington
Associate Pastor
1992 – 2002

I thank God for every remembrance of you... continue to be faithful and bold for Jesus Christ.



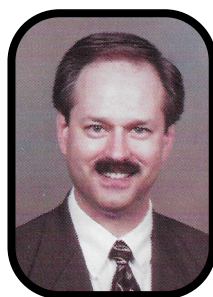
Dr. Bob Swickard
Associate Pastor
2002 – 2014

As you go from this place, you are not going alone. God is going with you. He's going before you to lead you along the way; behind you to encourage you along the way; he is going underneath of you to support you along the way; beside you to be your friend along the way; and he will go inside of you, if you let him, to be your light along the way.



Dr. Roger Rominger
Senior Pastor
1978 – 2007

The people of FUMC have demonstrated over and over their willingness to step out boldly and take great risks for the salvation of future generations. Their great love for God and people continually propels them forward to expand the Kingdom of God on earth.



Rev. Dan Seibert
Associate Pastor
1994 – 2008

In all my years of ministry, the crown jewel for me has been serving the people of Springfield First United Methodist Church and working together with such wonderful staff. Truly we witnessed God doing some amazing things in our midst, and for that I am forever grateful.



Dr. Roger Ross
Senior Pastor
2007 – 2017

Congratulations, First United Methodist Church! What a

OUR CHURCH HISTORY: CONTINUED

1886

Famous Harrison Revival is held with 2,020 converts in 15 weeks (500+ join First Church).

1898

First Church raises money to start Laurel UMC.

1918

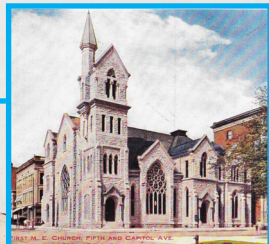
Springfield churches close due to Spanish flu pandemic.

1940

Two morning services are started at 8:30 and 10:45, with Sunday school at 9:30 and 10:30.

1885

Stone church is completed at 5th and Capitol, dedicated October 25, seating 700.

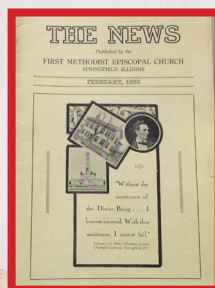


1896

Our church helps to start Douglas Avenue Methodist Church.

1911

First Associate Pastor arrives.



1936

First monthly newsletter is published in February, called, "The News."

1979

New Sanctuary is completed at 5th and Capitol - our 4th building.



phenomenal spiritual influence you have had on Springfield, the surrounding area, and so many places around the world in your first 200 years. As you look forward to sharing Christ's love and leadership in your third century, trust that the best is yet to come!



Rev. Justin Snider
Associate Pastor
2018 – present

My hope is that Springfield First will continue to be a vibrant expression of the body of Christ that lives out a counter-cultural unity, a wide and relevant welcome of all people, and allegiance to the living Christ over all other things. I'm grateful for how the Vision Team has listened to God and our community in offering an exciting way forward to begin the next 200 years.



Rev. Nicole Cox
Associate Pastor
2014 – 2019

200 years, Springfield First! 200 years of being the hands and feet of Jesus in our community and around the world! From helping our homeless and at-risk neighbors in Springfield, Detroit, and the Appalachian Mountains, to helping our brothers and sisters around the world in places like Haiti and Liberia, I have been so blessed to see you all unleashing compassion and sharing the love of Christ with others. Here's to 200 more years of missional ministry!



Mission Focus

Springfield First has always focused on mission projects and reaching outside of our walls. In fact, our church helped to start these churches in Springfield:

- Kumler United Methodist Church
- Laurel United Methodist Church
- Douglas United Methodist Church
- Asbury United Methodist Church
- Cotton Hill United Methodist Church (Woodside)
- Jerome United Methodist Church

Our church also helped to establish the former MacMurray College in Jacksonville, and the first school for African American children in Champaign after the Civil War. Springfield First has built schools and medical facilities, and done a variety of missions work over the years in Liberia and Haiti internationally, and has supported communities hit with tragedies throughout the United States.

1991

New contemporary service is added on October 5 at 10:00am.

1995

FUMC West (Family Life Center) opens with 4 services each weekend.



2020

In February, congregation packs 19,240 bags of food to feed 115,440 people in Haiti from funds received during Christmas offering. In March, church temporarily closes due to coronavirus pandemic; worship services are conducted online.



1992

66 acres are purchased at Wabash and Koke Mill.



2006

1st worship service is held on March 5 in new west Sanctuary.



2021

Springfield First United Methodist Church celebrates all that God has done in our 200-year history and looks forward to what God has planned for our future!



OUR MEMBERS: MEMORIES & REFLECTIONS OF SPRINGFIELD FIRST



Upon our arrival in Springfield as newlyweds, the FUMC Choir Director invited us to “come to choir practice next Thursday night.” That simple invitation led to 63 years singing with this choir and attending the IBT Sunday School Class. Many Cantatas later, and sometimes with 6 Augspurgers singing in the choir, FUMC has been the foundation of our lives. From the Old Stone Church – to Koke Mill Road – we found a church home.

-Don & Pat Augspurger
Don is the longest serving member of the New Life Choir.



For over 70 years, our lives have centered around First United Methodist Church. We met at Camaraderie (a group of young professionals), married, and are members of the IBT Class. Our ministers, choirs, and staff members have provided our family with meaningful religious experiences: our two adult children are devout Christians. We have had many opportunities to serve: Ed was the chairman of the building committee for the 1968 Education Building. At the IBT Sunday School Class, Ed and I met couples with similar interests and formed lifelong friendships.

-Ed & Helen Brooks



One of my favorite memories: At the 1995 "Share the Vision" all-church service at the State Fair Exposition Building, as we were lining up to bring our pledge cards, the organist (Janet Schmidt) began ad-libbing the hymn tune, "I Surrender All"! I looked around to see if anyone else found this humorous but found no indication of this.

-Steve Beilstein
Church Historian

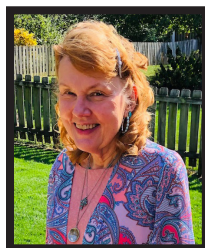


FUMC has been a part of my whole life, a second home and family: attending worship services, learning to sing the old hymns, and loving the wonderful organ; singing in choirs (children's through high school); Methodist Youth Fellowship; teaching 4-year-old Sunday School; ushering downtown at the early service with my dad; United Methodist Women; serving on the Historical Council; volunteering to record attendance; and making many friends who are caring, comforting, and inspiring.

-Karen Camp
Lifelong Church Member



The children, youth and adult choirs of our church joined together to sing "A Wesley Hymn Concertato" during the Share the Vision All-Church Brunch and Worship Service held Sunday, May 21. About 1600 members and friends of our church attended the festivities held in the Exposition Building at the Illinois State Fairgrounds.



FUMC is the guiding pulse of my spiritual life. Her pastors and people are my heart and my forever

family. Serving God by introducing souls to Jesus and the FUMC faith family are the joy and passion of my life.

- Alyce Foster

*Director of Guest Orientation/
New Members (1980 – 2014)*



My hope for our church in the next 200 years is for future generations to walk through the doors of FUMC and feel the love and presence of God as I did.

-Patti Fricke



FUMC Bible School has come a long way! Since the mid-1980s it has evolved from a few classrooms to a one full day event at a local campsite, to an evening time, to the present: practically taking over the entire church! WOW! So many more children hearing God's Word!!

-Eleanor Mack



1980s FUMC Bible School



In one of my talks about fundraising for the new location (before we moved to the west side of Springfield), I said something about our new church: It would be a cathedral on the prairie, but we wouldn't

have spires, towers, or beautiful stained glass windows. Our welcome would be our greetings of smiles and love.

-Alice Post

Trustee in the mid-1990s, when land was purchased to move our church to the west side of Springfield.



My favorite memory of FUMC was when Martin and I got married in the downtown church 40 years ago, on March 28, 1981. The church is always there when you need them, for good times and bad times.

-Crystal Russell



For over 40 years, we have been members of the Couples and Families Class. We started as friends and became family as we grew together in faith, raised our families together, and supported each other through life's ups and downs. We, along with our two children, their spouses, and our four grandchildren have all been blessed and supported through this small group connection at FUMC.

-Rich & Gina Solomon

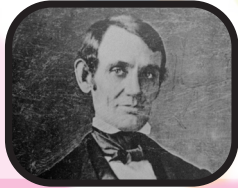


Serving has always been near to the spiritual journey of my heart. My first trip to Guatemala (2010) where we helped rebuild homes affected by Volcano Pacaya will stay with me forever. Without the support of our Missions Council, this trip would have never happened.

-Bill Stephens

Did That Really Happen? Unexpected Historical Facts

- Springfield First really was the **first church in Springfield, Illinois!**
- Our church started on May 23, 1821, when Rev. James Simms preached at a Methodist class meeting held in Charles Matheny's **1-room cabin**, shared with his wife and their 7 children. The family also opened their home for visiting preachers to stay while in Springfield.
- In 1829, the congregation decided to raise money for a church building. Pascal Enos offered \$50 or two lots of property. Circuit Rider Rev. Peter Cartwright accepted the land, which became the location for our 1st church building.
- With Springfield as the new state capital in 1839, our church building was used as a meeting place for the Illinois House of Representatives and Senate until the Capitol building was completed on the square. It was from this building that **Abraham Lincoln** jumped out of a 1st-floor window in 1841 to prevent a quorum in the House. It didn't work.



- By vote of the congregation in 1857, church funds were raised by the renting of pews for \$25 to \$30 for one year.
- Also in 1857, the church established a "poor fund" as one of its **first mission projects**. It continues to this day as the "pastors' discretionary fund."
- After more than 60 years of classes at 2:30pm, Sunday school was moved to a morning time in 1892.
- In the 1910s, with large Victorian hats in style, church ladies were asked to **remove their hats** just before the sermon, following complaints from people not able to see around them.
- In 1915, Trustees minutes were typed for the first time. The length and detail of the minutes went from a few lines the previous month to one and a half pages.



UPCOMING EVENTS

MAY

- 22/23 - 200th Anniversary Celebration Weekend
- 30 - StudentLife Sunday (9:00 & 10:45am)
- 31 - Building Closed for Memorial Day

JUNE

- 6 - Pavilion Service begins (8:00am)
- 8 - Grief Share begins (6:00pm)

JULY

- 5 - Building Closed for July 4th
- 31 - (July 31-August 4) StudentLife Mission Trip to Memphis, TN

WEEKEND WORSHIP EXPERIENCES

Sunday 9:00am Contemporary
10:45am Traditional



Facebook · SpringfieldFUMC



Instagram · springfieldfumc



Twitter · SpringfieldFUMC

Stay up on ALL future events of Springfield First · visit our website www.springfieldfirst.org