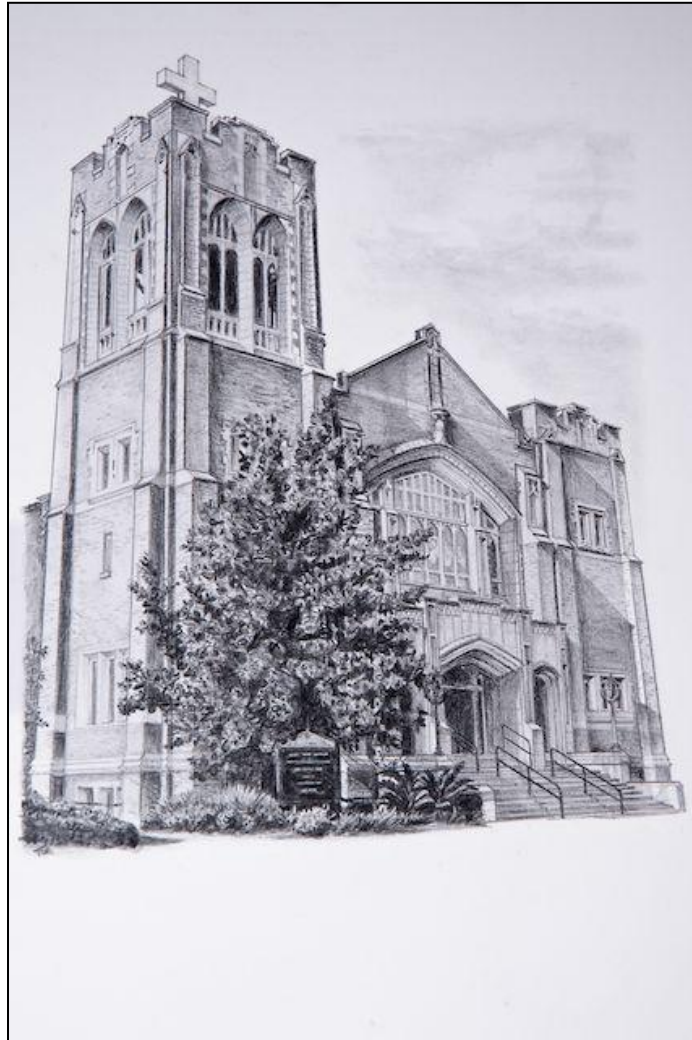


2027 Self-Nomination Form for Church Leadership



Please review this document and then complete the self-nomination form, which is available at [this link](#), *no later than* **Tuesday, September 29, 2026.**



Greetings in the Name of Christ!

Thank you for your interest in serving as an elected leader at First United Methodist Church. A vibrant and active church like ours has no shortage of work to get done and we cannot do all that we do without faithful people like you joining in the effort.

But it's important to understand that being a leader in the church is about much more than the tasks we have to get done. Our leaders, along with our staff, fulfill the biblical roles of elders and deacons, shepherds and teachers in the church. Throughout the New Testament, leaders are called to a higher standard and to be an example to others. The Apostle Paul sets forth lists of attributes for church leaders in his letters to the first century church. Leaders should be "above reproach" and "not be puffed up with conceit" among other things. Peter challenges leaders to be "examples to the flock" and to exercise leadership with a willing heart.

As leaders, we set the tone and pace for the entire congregation. We seek to model the Christian faith, the Christian life, and the attitude and heart of a Christian for our congregation. We seek to shape the heart, character, and life of this Christian community. For this reason, it is vital that we walk the Christian walk. The spiritual health of the congregation is directly related to the spiritual health and growth of its leaders. Christ himself said, "Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

With that in mind, this packet has a three-fold purpose. First is to help you become familiar with the different leadership opportunities at our church. Second is to invite you to a time of prayerful discernment about your life as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Third, is to provide a way for you to nominate yourself to serve as a leader.

I pray that the information in this packet will lead you through what is more than a process, but truly a journey of personal spiritual growth and the discernment of God's direction for you.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brady".

Rev. Brady Whitton
Senior Pastor
First United Methodist Church

Elected Leaders vs. Volunteer Positions: What's the Difference?

Every United Methodist Church has certain committees (see page 4), the members of which are selected by the church's nominating committee and then elected at a special annual meeting of the Church Council. These elected positions, required by the United Methodist *Book of Discipline*, include areas such as Church Council, Board of Trustees, Finance Committee, Staff Parish Relations Committee and others.

Elected leadership positions, however, are not the only areas of Christian service in the church. God has also gifted and called people to teach Sunday School, lead Bible studies, sing in the choir, serve in mission areas, etc. Without people serving in these non-elected areas, the church would be unable to fulfill its God-given mission. Each service opportunity is meaningful and important to the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:12-27).

This packet is specifically for those interested in serving in the first category above, as an **elected leader at First UMC**. If you would like to consider serving in other areas of the church, we invite you to explore your service options by:

1. Looking for service opportunities in the worship bulletin, e-news, etc.
2. Visiting with the leader of the ministry area in which you are interested in serving:
(Visit www.firstmethodist.org for staff emails and phone extensions.)

Mission/Revive225—Sophia Abbott

Adult Spiritual Formation—Cherri Johnson

Congregational Care—Rebecca Mitchell

Children's Ministry—Sarah Wright

Youth Ministry—Kale Wetekamm

Inviting & Welcoming—Chelsey Geeting

Music & Worship—

Small Groups – Katie Davis

Lamar Drummonds (*Sanctuary Service*)

Sophia Abbott (*America Street Service*)

Adult Classes—Reverend Brady Whitton

*This **Self-Nomination Packet** is for those interested in serving in an elected position (listed on pp. 4-5). [The Form](#) should be submitted **no later than Tuesday, September 29, 2026.***

Position Descriptions

Note: All elected positions take effect January 1, 2027.

Church Council

The Church Council is the governing body of the local church. It is responsible for working with the pastor(s), staff, and lay leadership in envisioning, planning, implementing, and evaluating the mission and ministry of the church. The Church Council is composed of At-Large Members and representatives of other committees and departments as specified in the Book of Discipline. *The Church Council meets at least four times per year, typically on the fourth Monday of selected months at 6 PM. The term of service is three years.*

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee develops the annual operating budget based on the goals and strategic plans of the church. This Committee of four to six members maintains and administers a coordinated plan of fiscal and administrative policies and procedures for First UMC. It oversees the financial health of the church and communicates the church's financial condition to the Church Council and congregation. *The Finance Committee meets at least four times per year, typically at 5 PM before each Church Council meeting. Members of the Finance Committee also serve on the Church Council. The term of service is three years.*

Staff-Parish Relations Committee

The Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) acts as a liaison between staff, clergy, and the congregation. The SPRC reflects biblically on the role and work of the pastor(s) and staff as they carry out their leadership responsibilities. The SPRC, composed of six to eight members, works with the pastor to determine necessary staff positions, draft job descriptions, conduct clergy and staff performance evaluations, and set compensation and salaries. This committee helps make First UMC a fulfilling place to work and strives for effective ministry in alignment with the mission of First UMC. Members cannot be related to a First UMC staff member. *The SPRC meets when needed, at least quarterly, at FUMC at 5:30 PM. Members of the SPRC also serve on the Church Council. The term of service is three years.*

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees (six to eight members), along with the Building & Grounds Committee, has supervision, oversight, and care of the church's property and other assets, is responsible for ensuring adequate protective policies and insurance coverage and acts as the legal arm of the church. *The Board of Trustees meet as needed, at least once annually, at 4 PM at FUMC. Members of the Board of Trustees also serve on the Church Council. The term of service is three years.*

Committee on Nominations and Leadership Development, aka Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee is responsible for the identification, development, and evaluation of Christian leadership at First UMC. This Committee of four to six members (plus the Senior Pastor, who serves as its chair) supports staff and lay leaders in caring for volunteers at First UMC by inviting, connecting, equipping, and sustaining volunteers in their Christian service. *The Nominating Committee meets as needed, typically in the fall. Members of this committee also serve on the Church Council. The term of service is three years.*

Lay Delegates/Alternates to the Annual Conference*

Every United Methodist Church has a ratio of one Lay Delegate to the Annual Conference for each clergy on the church's staff. Therefore, the number of delegates a church has depends on the number of clergy the church has. First UMC will have four such delegates in 2027. Elected each year, delegates serve as representatives from our church to the Louisiana Annual Conference. During the (statewide) annual session, action is taken on various issues, programs, and policy decisions which affect every church in the Louisiana Conference. The Lay Delegate must have been an *active participant* in The United Methodist Church for at least four years preceding their election, a *member* of The United Methodist Church for at least two years preceding their election, and an *active member of First UMC* for at least one year prior to election. The Lay Delegates from First UMC should be in alignment with the mission and vision of First UMC, have a willingness to prepare for Annual Conference by reading the Pre-Conference Report, and have a heart for The United Methodist Church and its presence and effectiveness in our community, state, and world. *Lay Delegates to the Annual Conference also serve on the Church Council. The term of service is one year.*

** This position is not to be confused with the "Lay Leader" which has different duties and responsibilities.*

Missions & Outreach Committee

The Missions and Outreach Committee guides the volunteer service work and financial giving First UMC does in local and global missions. In conjunction with the Missions Director, this committee also reviews and plans the work done in the mission field, and coordinates responses to disasters and other needs as they arise. *The Missions and Outreach Committee meets as needed throughout the year, typically at lunchtime at FUMC or by Zoom. The term of service is three years.*

Are you interested in serving?

Self-Nomination Form Must Be Submitted No Later Than **Tuesday, September 29, 2026.**

Our aim in the nomination process is to discover God's leading. As such, special consideration is given to the following criteria to match the appropriate people with the available ministry positions:

- > Has been an active member of First UMC for at least one full year.
- > Is fulfilling the expectations of membership by
 1. worshiping every Sunday unless sick or out of town, and spending time in personal prayer and devotion;
 2. deepening their Christian faith beyond worship either through Sunday school, a Bible study, or other small group experience;
 3. serving in at least one volunteer ministry position;
 4. giving in proportion to their income and working toward the biblical standard of the tithe; and
 5. inviting others to experience First UMC and make it their church home.
- > Has a healthy motivation for seeking elected leadership in the church.
- > Has had prior involvement and/or leadership within the ministries of First UMC.
- > Is in alignment with the mission of The United Methodist Church – “to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”
- > Has the ability to balance and/or diversify the committee. (gender, age, race, etc.)
- > Has appropriate talents, skills, and experience, often including subject matter expertise.
- > Has availability, willingness, and commitment to faithfully attend meetings and fulfill all requirements.

Therefore, the questions on the Self-Nomination Form are to assist you in discerning God's will for your service and to assist the Committee on Nominations and Leadership Development in the nomination process. Please give prayerful thought to the process and consider discussing this matter with a mature Christian in your life.

At the end of the Self-Nomination Form you will also be asked to sign to indicate your agreement with the Volunteer Leader Covenant (page 7).

The Self-Nomination Form is available [at this link](#). It is designed to be submitted electronically. If you prefer to print it out and fill it out, please bring the hard copy to the church office by the deadline.

Volunteer Leader Covenant

I. The Goal of the Christian Life: Sanctification (“Holiness”)

Throughout the history of the Christian faith, God has raised up leaders to guide the church and lead it into the fulfillment of His mission in the world. In the early days of Methodism, John Wesley also called forth leaders and challenged them to the biblical standard of faithfulness in their leadership. In our Methodist tradition, three *General Rules* were designed to help Christians pursue this goal. As leaders we pursue these “rules” as we grow in faith and service together:

“DO NO HARM”

1. Avoid those things which are inconsistent with the life of faith, separate us from God, and bring harm to others, such as:

- a. Self-destructive behavior (addictive behavior, poor self-care)
- b. Moral compromise (sexual misconduct, greed, dishonesty)
- c. Self-centeredness and pride
- d. Malice (harboring resentment, acting in anger, backbiting, gossiping)
- e. Wasting resources (the church’s or personal resources of time, talent, materials, and finances)

“DO GOOD”

2. Do good of every possible sort, such as:

- a. live a life of love
- b. share our faith inside and outside of the congregation
- c. care for our families
- d. build each other up
- e. assist those in need, both inside and outside the church

“STAY IN LOVE WITH GOD”

3. Pursue growth in our spiritual lives, such as:

- a. attending worship unless sick or out of town
- b. participating in an activity, outside of worship, whether it be a Bible study, small group, and/or personal daily devotional, where we grow in our own relationship with Jesus Christ
- c. serving God in some form of ministry according to our God-given gifts and talents, our interests and abilities
- d. giving financially in proportion to our income and intentionally working toward tithing as the goal
- e. taking advantage of every opportunity to invite others to become a part of First UMC and make it a place they too can call home.

II. The Heart and Attitude of a Leader at First UMC

1. What is the heart and attitude of a leader?

- a. Humble
- b. Positive
- c. Team player
- d. Selflessness
- e. Joyful
- f. Committed to Christ
- g. Devoted to the mission of the church – “to make disciples”
- h. Cares more about the mission than personal preferences

2. How will First UMC’s leaders live toward one another?

- a. Demonstrating respect and grace
- b. Accepting differences
- c. Maintaining appropriate confidentiality
- d. Publicly supporting other volunteer leaders, pastors, and staff members
- e. Going directly to the individual, in person, whenever a problem arises

III. The Faith and Character of a United Methodist

First UMC is a United Methodist Church. All leaders, both clergy and laity, are expected to honor our denominational heritage and to pursue ministry in keeping with our tradition.

United Methodists are people who seek to love and serve God with our head, our heart, and our hands. We are orthodox in our faith, liberal in spirit, passionate and deeply devoted to Christ, open-minded to the rich diversity of theological positions and understandings, and wholly committed to intentionally offering Christ to the world.

Methodists are people who value many ways of worship, acknowledging the importance of being biblical, historic, and relevant to the people of today. We are committed to finding ways to reach a constantly changing society by finding new ways to communicate the gospel in both traditional and contemporary ways without compromising the message of Christ. This often means discarding older forms of ministry which are no longer effective and adopting newer and more effective ways of reaching the world with the message of Christ.

This is our heritage, and it continues to shape First United Methodist Church in every area of our ministry.

To indicate your agreement with the Volunteer Leader Covenant, please electronically sign as indicated on the nomination form.

Self-Nomination Form Must Be Submitted No Later Than Tuesday, September 29, 2027. Printed copies can be turned in to Virginia Guffey in the Church Office.)