



JANUARY

2026

“One YES can transform a church.”
~ Rev. Andrew Sanders

January 2026

Lexington United Methodist Church

*Where We Seek, Serve and
Share Christ*

www.lexmoumc.org
Office: 660-259-2483

Rev. Andrew Sanders, Pastor
sandman1016@yahoo.com
417-770-6731 (cell)

Liz Johnson,
Administrative Assistant
secretary@lexmoumc.org

Janet Thompson,
Music Director

Sarah Black,
Council Chair

Sunday worship: 11 a.m.
Children's Sunday School: 10 a.m.
Adult Sunday School: On hiatus
Young Couples Class: 10 a.m.
Youth Group: Sundays 6 p.m.
Worshiping Winds Rehearsal:
Sundays, 9:30 a.m.
Choir Rehearsal: Sundays 10 a.m.

Looking Back with Gratitude, Stepping Forward with Hope

January has a way of inviting us to slow down just enough to breathe, reflect, and look ahead. As we step into a new year, that pause feels especially meaningful for me. I am currently in my third year serving Lexington United Methodist Church and Waverly United Methodist Church, and it continues to be a true honor to walk alongside you in ministry as we move into 2026.

Like many of you, I have been taking stock of the year behind us, the hard moments and the holy ones. 2025 was one for the books for our world, our country, our community, and our church. We faced challenges that stretched us, yet those same moments revealed something deeper: resilience, faith, and a steady trust that the Spirit was still at work.

When I look back at the beginning of my tenure here, about two and a half years ago, the growth is unmistakable. At that time, average worship attendance was in the mid-twenties, and Sun-

day mornings offered little beyond worship itself. Then people began saying yes.

There are many things happening at LUMC, but let me tell you how **one yes can transform a church**. Even when people faithfully serve for a season and then move on, their willingness creates space for someone else to step in. Ministry does not disappear when it is shared. It multiplies. Each yes becomes an invitation for another.



**Rev. Andrew
Sanders**

That first year, **Bailee Johnson** stepped out in faith and led a Christmas play with a small group of children, ushering in the Spirit of Christmas in a powerful way. The following year, **Bria Dobson** and **Jess Eaton** began teaching Sunday school and led our Christmas special, expanding participation and energy. This past year, that momentum continued as **Donna Slusher** and **Katie Dye** taught our littles songs for the Christmas play during Sunday school, while **Jennifer Coen, Melissa**

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sundays: Worshiping Winds rehearsal
9:30 a.m.

Choir Rehearsal: 10 a.m.

Sundays at 10 a.m.: Adult Sunday School with Liz Johnson, facilitator. On hiatus until February 22 (beginning Lenten study).

Sundays at 10 a.m.: Children's Sunday School with Donna Slusher & Katie Dye.

Sundays at 10 a.m.: Young Couples Class, "A Disciples Path: A Guide for United Methodists" by James Hamish, with Sarah Black, facilitator.

BABY GRACE: Sundays 10-11 a.m.

Mondays: Quilters at 1 p.m.

HARVESTERS DISTRIBUTION: Monday, January 12, 9 to 11 a.m.

YOUTH GROUP: Sundays at 6 p.m.

WOMEN OF THE CHURCH MEET: Friday, January 9, at Noon for carry-in meal in the Choir Room.

CHURCH COUNCIL TEAM MEETING: Monday, January 19, 6 p.m.

COMMODITIES: Thursday, January 22, 8:30 to 11 a.m. (Yet to be confirmed)



January 9	Mary Ann Brooks
January 10	Stacy Davidson, Graecyn Negrete
January 11	Mary Kate Alkire
January 16	Shirley Link
January 17	Izzy Negrete
January 18	Liz Fenner, Nancy Oles
	Scott Slusher & Briggen Johnson
January 22	Steven Fuller
January 24	Karsyn Dobson
January 25	Marcia Hicklin, Jacob Lamb

*Did we miss your birthday? Please reach out to Liz Johnson in the church office: 660-259-2483 to let her know of a missed birthday.

**If you're on Facebook, visit <https://www.facebook.com/LexMOUMC> where we have announcements, photos, and events as well as birthday wishes!

Church COUNCIL

Liz Johnson | Secretary

Present: Teri James, treasurer; Pastor Andrew Sanders; Sarah Black, council chair; David Cooley, media; Cheryl Cooley, PPR; Sharol McMullin, finance chair; Liz Johnson, finance secretary/church admin.; Roger McFadden, trustee chair; Steven Fuller, Lay Member to Annual Conference; Jennifer Coen, Baby Grace; Jim Martin, PPR chair.

- ◆ Sarah called the meeting to order by reading our mission statement.
- ◆ Pastor Andrew offered up a time of prayer.
- ◆ The November 2025 minutes were up for approval. Cheryl motioned, seconded by Sharol. So passed.
- ◆ Finance reporting: Sharol presented the 2026 budget. Teri said she looked through this year to end of October and adjusted appropriately for the 2026 budget. Some areas such as pay and utilities go up automatically, including pension and medical and expenses for the pastor. She reminded council that we are now splitting parsonage bills 50/50 with Waverly instead of only having to pay 1/3. She added that the nursery staff are now working 2 1/2 hours a Sunday versus 2 hours, which increased their pay some. Utilities budgeted close to what we paid in 2025. Insurance for church, parsonage and workman's comp has switched to State Farm and is about \$900 less per month than GuideOne had been. She expects expenses to run about \$166K for 2025.
- ◆ Sharol reported the pledge drive brought in \$120K in pledges – not all attendees/congregants turned in pledges. She also said we still need to pay about \$3,428.50 to contribute half of our 2025 apportionments. Teri asked how we expect to pay toward 2025 apportionments. Liz suggested we see how much we receive from the December 24th March to the Manger and at least apply 1/2 of the \$3,428.50 from March to the
- ◆ Liz will reach out to our GuideOne insurance agent to inquire why we've not received a refund for the December 1st payment yet.
- ◆ Steven motioned, seconded by Cheryl to approve the 2026 budget. So passed.
- ◆ New business:
- ◆ Jen suggested we do a better job of marketing our building rentals. This initiated a discussion on current pricing of our facilities. Liz J already markets via the chamber and on social media – sharing to local groups.
- ◆ **New thermostats:** Steven Fuller announced they will be purchasing six new thermostats at \$800 apiece to replace all other existing thermostats (except for the Family Life Center which has new ones). These new ones will be digitally handled on the cellphones of Liz Johnson, Steven Fuller and Phillip Davis. Payment for the thermostats will possibly come out of Buddy Black's memorial funds.
- ◆ **Quilters:** Sharol reported that the quilting group (My Brother's Keeper) partnered with Jacki Worthington 12 sleeping bags, comforters and blankets to be taken to a North Kansas City shelter.
- ◆ **Old Christmas tree:** Sarah reported that the old Christmas tree was also donated.
- ◆ **Christmas cards:** Sharol sent Christmas cards to the residents of Bristol Manor and the nursing home next door to the church.
- ◆ **Attendance:** Liz J will generate a report listing members and regular visitors who are not attending church frequently so we can look into how we can increase attendance.
- ◆ **Community Involvement:** We distribute Harvesters and Commodities to the food insecure every month. Liz J will keep up with social media advertising regarding these community distributions.
- ◆ **Goals for the next year:**

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Manger to apportionments – which have to be paid by January 7, 2026. Liz suggested we pay online before the end of this year.

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Beal, and I worked with our 5th through 12th grade youth on their play lines.

Each year, the circle widened. The disciples multiplied. It took just one yes to inspire.

Scripture reminds us how faith grows through witness and response:

"How are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim?"

— Romans 10:14–17

Today, the fruit of that faithfulness is clear. We now average worship **attendance in the 60s, and 107 parishioners gathered for our Christmas Eve candlelight service.** This past year, **15 people joined the church**, with more ready to take that step in 2026. Over the past two years, we have also been able to pay **half of our apportionments**, and with faith in God's abundance, we hold **lofty goals for 2026**, including reaching **100 percent apportionment support this year.**

Apportionments: What Are They and Why They Matter

As United Methodists, we are part of a connectional system that serves our churches. We support one another through the **Missouri Conference of the United Methodist Church** and beyond. These shared gifts allow us to do ministry together that no single congregation could accomplish alone. Apportionments support local and global missions, disaster response, the planting of new churches, leadership development for pastors and laity, and care for congregations in seasons of transition.

Faithful participation in apportionments is also one of the ways the wider church recognizes the health and vitality of a congregation. It reflects a church that is engaged, outward-focused, and committed to shared

ministry. In a season when there are fewer Elders such as me serving the United Methodist Church, faithfulness in these areas helps demonstrate that a congregation is growing, stable, and invested in its future leadership and ministry. Paying apportionments is about witness. It tells the story of a church that is alive, mission-minded, and ready for what God is doing next.

All of the ministry that is happening here points to one truth: **the Spirit is evident at LUMC.** Growth is happening because people are responding to the Spirit's prompting. Our Christmas pageants remind us that personal and congregational growth often starts with one brave yes, and from there, **the Spirit continues to spread.**

And as we move forward, we trust this promise:

— Philippians 1:6

If you have not been with us in a while. Join us Sundays at **10:00 a.m. for Sunday School and 11:00 a.m. for worship, in-person or online.** Come see what God is doing in your church.

As we step into 2026, I invite you to reflect on this question: **What yes, is God placing on your heart this year to do good work to completion?**

Grace and peace,
Pastor Andrew



Right: Pastor Andrew helps our youth hang the Chrismons on the church tree.



Ava Herbst, left, lights the first Advent candle while her mom, Jen read the Advent readings.



Pastor Andrew preached a beautiful message on Christmas Eve for our candlelight service to a full sanctuary.



Liz Fenner read the Christmas Eve Advent liturgy, while great-grandson Russell lit the candles.

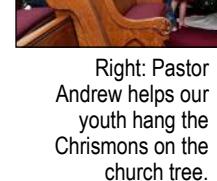
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- ◆ **Sarah challenged the group to figure out how to achieve our goals for 2026.**
- ◆ **Membership.**
- ◆ **Missions: Community-Minded and how to do this? Money?**
- ◆ **Fundraisers.**
- ◆ **Youth: growth, etc.**
- ◆ We will continue to work through our goals beginning in January.
- ◆ The next meeting is **Monday, January 19, 2026.**

Has your contact information changed? Please reach out to Liz Johnson in the church office: 660-259-2483 or secretary@lexmoumc.org to update your phone number, email address, mailing address, birthday(s), interest in joining the church or to be added to any mailing list in which you're not receiving. GOD BLESS!

Advent

We had our traditional Hanging of the Green Nov. 30. Left: the youth hang the Chrismons on our tree.



Ava Herbst, left, lights the first Advent candle while her mom, Jen read the Advent readings.



Pastor Andrew preached a beautiful message on Christmas Eve for our candlelight service to a full sanctuary.



Liz Fenner read the Christmas Eve Advent liturgy, while great-grandson Russell lit the candles.

We now have a way to digitally tithe to Lexington UMC via PayPal. Simply visit our website: lexmoumc.org and click on DONATE in the upper right menu.

You do not need to be a PayPal member to tithe a gift. Just follow the prompts after clicking "Donate." You can even choose to tithe, or gift to the Memorial fund or Endowment. You can also scan this QR code to be directed to our website.



WORSHIP: Sundays 11 a.m.

Children's Sunday School is 10 a.m.
Young Couple's Class: 10 a.m.
Adult Sunday School: 10 a.m. On hiatus.
Choir Rehearsal: 10 a.m.
Worshiping Winds Rehearsal: 9:30 a.m.
ONLINE: lexmoumc.org

DEC.: 2025



Treasurer's Report

December Offering:	\$ 9,669.00
Dec. Expenses:	<u>-\$15,349.90</u>
Total (tithe)	<u>-\$ 5,680.90</u>
Year to Date (as of 11/30):	-\$ 12,934.09
**December 2025 full expenses are not available at this time.	
*Avg. Expenses 2025	\$ 13,641.00 (per month)
Building Rentals Dec.:	\$ 675.00
March to the Manger:	\$ 9,496.00
Apportionments PD Dec.:	\$ 3,429.00
(For church missions)	

Teri James: Treasurer

Liz Johnson: Finance Secretary

Janae Fuller, Mary Kate Alkire: 2026 Finance
Co-Chairs

Sarah Black: 2026 Council Chair

Jim Martin: 2026 PPR Chair

Pastor: Rev. Andrew Sanders

"Whoever has a bountiful eye will be blessed, for he shares his bread with the poor." ~ Proverbs 22:9

DID YOU KNOW?

PARENTS: We have coloring pages with markers and crayons on easy-to-use clipboards available from our greeter every Sunday for the little ones to use during the service. Feel free to ask for one, rather than the children using the offering envelopes to draw on.

FOR RENT: We rent out parts of our facility. Our Buddy Black Family Life Center, kitchen, Hicklin Hall, Music Room and Sanctuary are all available for rent based on availability. We have plenty of parking, restrooms, air-conditioning & heat! Check with Liz Johnson in the church office for your next meeting, party, or shower. Our events are also listed on the calendar on our church website so you can check availability: lexmoumc.org.



Church staff were recognized with gifts by our PPR, at right Jim Martin & Cheryl Cooley, at the December 21st worship service. From left: Jordyn Ortega, Lauren Negrete, Rev. Andrew Sanders, Liz Johnson, Jan Thompson, Bill Fricke, Phillip Davis and David Cooley.