

# First Church NEWS

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## WORSHIP

### Sunday, November 27

Pastor Mike Ward preaching  
8:30 am - Epworth Choir  
11:00 am - Chancel Choir

### Sunday, December 4

Pastor Jon Priebe preaching  
8:30 am - Epworth Choir  
11:00 am - Chancel Choir

Sunday School/Confirmation at 9:45  
Nursery/Preschool Care at 9:30 & 11  
Children's Worship at 11



## A NOTE FROM PASTOR JON

Luke 2:19 – *“But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.”*

For me, the Christmas season is often a blur. There's a rush to get ready for worship services, wrapping presents at home, trying to fit in friends and family and so many things. By the time we get to the candlelight services on Christmas Eve, I find the peaceful and reflective liturgy and songs to be so refreshing. It mirrors the serenity that Mary embodied on that night so many years ago.

This year, Dean and Pastor Mike and I have been preparing for Advent hoping to make space for that reflective, peaceful sense over the whole season. Each week, we'll take a glimpse of what may have been in the heart of



one of the witnesses to that first Christmas night. I know that you'll find some of the joy and peace that Jesus gives through this season of worship. I'd encourage you invite someone to join you who could benefit from experiencing that Christmas peace this year.

In addition, some of us are looking for a way that we can explore and experience the magic of Christmas even more deeply. I'd invite you to a four week Advent study that we'll be hosting here at First Church on Thursdays at 6 pm during Advent, starting December 1. We'll be sharing some devotional reflections based on the Advent series, "From Generation to Generation" by A Sanctified Art. The other pastors from Church Square and I will be taking turns leading.

Blessings,

Jon



**Advent Remembrance Service...** On Wednesday, December 21, at 7:00 pm we will hold our Advent Remembrance Service in the Chapel. This worship service is a way we can remember loved ones we've lost, or other losses experienced in the past year. If you plan to attend, please bring an ornament to hang on the Christmas tree in memory of your lost loved ones for the service. You may take the ornament home after the service ends.



## “Is the UMC Really...”

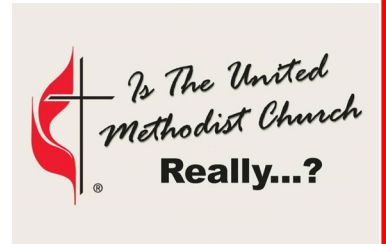
Over the last six months, some misleading information has been shared online about the United Methodist Church by those who are choosing to leave and start a new denomination. United Methodist Communications has put together a very helpful resource that addresses six of these misleading bits of information. I’ve included the link at the end of this article. I believe that this is a valuable resource to keep us all informed of the truth about our Church.

Our survey in September was the last thing we’ll be doing before General Conference meets in 2024 on the matter of proposed changes to the denomination regarding the ordination of LGBTQ+ inclusion and same-sex marriage. Those of you who participated shared your views and we are grateful for your having done so. The lay and clergy leaders of First Church are using those results to guide the steps we take as a congregation over the next few years. If you didn’t get a chance to participate and would like to, give me a call or email and I’ll walk you through things. If the 2024 General Conference makes any changes to LGBTQ+ inclusion, we will consider how our congregation might be engaged in further discussion **at that time**, possibly in some form of voluntary small group gatherings.

In addition, the clergy and lay leaders who comprise our church council have been in dialogue with a person in our congregation who has become convinced of some of this incorrect information that is being shared online. You may have received an invitation to a Facebook group by this person where these things are being shared. You may also receive a letter from him in the near future which includes some of this misleading information. Before that might happen, I wanted to make sure you have the correct information about the United Methodist Church and First Church. If you have any further concerns or questions, please reach out.

In Christ’s Love, Jon

Video link: <https://www.umc.org/en/content/ask-the-umc-is-the-umc-really-part-1>



**OPEN M Missions...** Once again it is time to help those less fortunate than ourselves. We are collecting money for Christmas turkeys and gifts for children. Last year we provided 156 turkeys and gifts for 78 children. Turkeys run about \$15.00 and children’s gifts \$50.00 per child for two gifts. When donating please use separate checks and do not include it at the same time as usual church gifts. You may drop your donation off or place it in the offering plate. Please designate OPEN M Christmas or OPEN M turkeys. **Donations are due by Thursday, December 1.**

**Socks!** The Acts of Grace Circle will continue to collect socks during the month of November for the men and women at Haven of Rest/Harvest Home. Please bring in new socks and place them in the basket located outside the church library.



**MEN'S TIME OUT** All the men of the church and the community are invited to attend Men’s Time Out on Saturday, December 3, from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. in Asbury Hall. It takes place regularly on the first Saturday of each month. Join them for a time of fellowship, discussion, and breakfast - a wonderful way to connect with the men of the church.

**Hat & Mitten Mission...** We are starting our Hat & Mitten mission now that the weather is growing colder. We are asking for new or gently-used gloves/mittens/winter hats, or new socks. The donation table is located across from the church office, outside of the chapel. Items may be left there, or if the line is empty, please feel free to bag the items, then place them directly outside on the line at the corner of Portage & 3rd.



**Parents Morning Out...** We will sponsor a Parents Morning Out for infants through grade 6 on Saturday, December 10 from 9 am to noon. The children will enjoy a pancake breakfast, will be able to shop at the Santa Shop (included in the cost,); will see and hear the message of Christmas through a movie, and participate in a mission project. The cost is \$10 per child and \$25 max of families of preschool and elementary children. Families with more than 3 children, will need to pay an additional \$10 for each child under 3 as we will have a paid person coordinating the crib room for our infants and toddlers. You may register at the Welcome Center or in the church office.



**Register Now!** Senior High Retreat will be January 13-15 for students in grades 9-12. Registration and deposits are due December 19th to secure your spot!

**Epworth Choir Alumni...** are invited to join the choir on Sunday, November 27 to sing "Every Valley" and share a light breakfast after first service. We look forward to catching up with everyone!

**2023 Altar Flowers...** We are taking orders for altar flowers in 2023. The cost is \$38 and the church takes care of the ordering and delivery. If you would like to reserve a date, contact Christy Meyers at cmeyers-fallsumc@gmail.com or Ext. 210.



**Holiday Nut Sale...** Nuts are on sale in Asbury Hall each Sunday between and after church services and in the church office during the week. You may also pre-order them and indicate the date you wish to pick them up. We will offer Deluxe mixed nuts and whole cashews for \$10/lb and raw pecans for \$12/lb. You may pick up and drop off pre-order forms at the Welcome Center.



**Santa Shop Items Needed...** We are again having a Parents' Morning Out with a Santa Shop on Saturday, December 10, from 9 am to noon. We are in need of items for the shop especially for children, teens and men. We are also in need of Christmas gift bags of all sizes, wrapping paper and scotch tape. The kids will be wrapping their own gifts this year, but we are looking for some folks who will be able to help the kids shop or help hand out wrapping paper and gift bags to the kids so they can wrap their items. You may drop off your items in the bin by the Welcome Center by **Wednesday, December 7**. Please contact Karol Lewis to help with the Santa Shop or Donna Curfman to help with shepherding the kids or with the pancake breakfast.

**ROCK Advent Celebration...** will take place on December 4 from 5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Children will be having a snack supper and doing several activities related to Christmas at First Church. Please sign the registration sheet at the Welcome Center or in the church office. This is the last ROCK evening until January 8, 2023.

**Acme Receipts...** Remember to save your Acme receipts for their Community Cash Back program. Buy store brands and save the receipts dated August 4 through December 24. The church receives 5% on qualifying products. The money is used to fund the projects done at Work Camp. Receipts may be turned in at the Welcome Center.



**Blessing Box...** Our blessing box has been blessing many people as of late, and our inventory of items on hand is dwindling quickly. If you are able, please consider donating the following items: ramen noodles, flavored rice/noodle packets, granola bars, canned soup/vegetables/fruit, spaghetti's/ravioli, canned tuna/meats, individual oatmeal packets, individual cereal boxes, toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, soap, shampoo. Donations may be left on the table outside the library, or you may be the hands of Jesus by placing the items directly in the blessing box.

# First Church News

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Jon Priebe - Lead Minister x211; Mike Ward - Associate Minister x217; Forrest Waller and Marvin Brown - Senior Ministers Emeriti; Dean Wagner - Director of Music Ministries/Organist x221; Karol Lewis - Director of Spiritual Formation x218; Jennifer Brooks - Director of Weekday Preschool x220; Jen McKenna - Youth Ministries Coordinator; Tim Zuschin - Assistant Choir Director; Donna Curfman - Children's Ministry Coordinator x219; Kathy Kuzas x212; Christy Meyers x210; Nancy Yeager x216; Ann Kaiser; John Fox; Joe Demeter; Kathy Just



*The Gift/Memorial Book* is located in the parlor and is open to **Denise LaFollette**.

*Our Sympathies* to the family of member **Alice Becher** on her death on 11/4; to the family of member **Doris Warnick** on her death on 11/7; to **Bill Copeland, Denise Craze, Ron (Janet) Craze** and family on the death of wife and mother, member **Donna Copeland**, on 11/17; to the family of member **Gary Kinsey**, on his death on 11/20.

*Thank You Expressions... From Pastor Mike...* I would like to thank those who sent cards or sentiments on my completing Course of Study. It means a lot to me that you all thought of me for completing Course of Study, as it was demanding to complete everything required of me while also completing my responsibilities here. Thank you all once again.

**First Church Clothing...** Here's an easy way to get your Christmas shopping done AND help the Mission Committee give more to our local missions. We are selling shirts with our church name and logo. You order and pay through Bonfire. They will send you the shirt(s). We have two links with the Bonfire Company:



1. A simple design with church name only on the front of whatever type shirt you'd like - we even have a hoodie: <https://www.bonfire.com/fumcs-mission-committee-fundraiser/>

2. Shirt with church name front and back: "I go to a great church" on back also available in different colors and styles: <https://www.bonfire.com/fumcs-mission-committee-fundraiser-1-1/>

The deadline for the next FCN is **Friday, December 9**. Please submit your articles to Kathy Kuzas at [kku-zasfumccf@gmail.com](mailto:kku-zasfumccf@gmail.com).

