



First Church NEWS

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



NOTES FROM PASTOR MIKE

Change my heart Oh God, make it ever true.

Change my heart Oh God, may I be like You.

Change my heart Oh God, make it ever true.

Change my heart Oh God, may I be like You.

You are the potter, I am the clay,

Mold me and make me, this is what I pray.

Change my heart Oh God, make it ever true.

Change my heart Oh God, may I be like You.

These lyrics from *The Faith We Sing* # 2152 let us know how we should look at change.

When we think of the New Year, we tend to think of new opportunities/ possibilities, and more times than not, change. Some change is of our own doing, while some is the result of God working in and through our lives. We may not always welcome change with open arms, but we should remember that God's plans for our lives are always good, we simply must put our trust in God.

When I was appointed here, a large part of my job description was that of Youth Pastor. During the course of the past five years, my position has changed. Instead of being Youth Pastor, a large part of my job is Congregational Care which entails providing support and comfort for the members of the congregation in times of need. The Covid pandemic has changed how Congregational Care is done, with much of it being via telephone calls to help keep everyone as safe as possible. Many times we find out afterwards that someone has had a procedure, or has had or is undergoing a health issue. Please let us know so we can provide the best Congregational Care possible.

If you have had changes in your contact information whether it be moving, or possibly doing away with a landline, or getting new telephone numbers, please be sure to contact the church office so that we can update our database, and provide the best Congregational Care possible.

We are the clay, and God is the potter, allow him to mold you and change you, if you do, you will be amazed at what the result will be.

Blessings,
Pastor Mike



35th Anniversary Concert... On January 11, 1988, organist Dean Wagner joined the staff of First Church. He has delighted the church and community



with his talent ever since. On Friday, February 10, at 7:00 p.m. Dean will again treat us to a wonderful concert to celebrate his 35 years here. He will be joined by

NEO5 Brass and guitarist Ian Ross. He will play: *Te Deum* by Charles Callahan, *Cantabile* by César Franck, *Poème Héroïque* by Marcel Dupré, *Four Celtic Preludes* by Charles Callahan, *Fantaisie* by Camille Saint-Saëns, and *Sonata on the 94th Psalm* by Julius Reubke. Please join us for this evening of beautiful music.

Heart4theCity... is a mission church of the East Ohio Conference. It is located at 954 Eastland Ave. in East Akron. They provide a weekly food pantry, along with a store where they offer items at a very reduced rate and other programs. They are currently in need of blankets, bedding, towels, small electric kitchen appliances, and heavier work style insulated gloves. Donations may be left in the bin outside the church library.

Blessing Box... our blessing box certainly lives up to its name by blessing those in the community who need assistance with food. If donating items, please avoid items in glass, as these may shatter and injure someone due to the cold weather. Items may be placed in the box directly,



or brought inside and placed on the donation table located outside the church library. We are starting to run low on items, so please consider donating canned foods, individual oatmeal packets, ramen noodles, individual fruit cups, individual mac-n-cheese, travel size hygiene items, etc...

Teacher Appreciation Brunch... We would like to offer our thanks and appreciation to all those who have served in our Discipleship ministries this past year with our adults, youth and children as teachers, leaders and helpers by inviting you to Brunch reception on February 12 in the parlor from 9:15am to 11:15am. We have set the time so that those who attend or teach a class on Sunday can come before or after. Those who teach or lead at other times are welcome to come during the Sunday School hour. We will have light refreshments and share about the gift that is being made in your honor to ZOE ministries to help empower children head of households to be able to provide for their siblings in Africa and India.

Hat & Mitten Mission... If you are out shopping and you find gloves/ mittens/ winter hats, or socks, please consider purchasing them for this mission project. We will also collect very gently-worn items. 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 Trail & 3rd Street.



Febru“wear”y Sock Mission... In the month of Febru “wear”y, The Acts of Grace Circle invites you to donate new socks which will be distributed to the folks who come to our monthly First Church Feeds. You may put the socks in the bin beside the church library.



Ushers ... We are looking for folks who would be willing to serve as ushers for the 11:00 service beginning the first Sunday in Lent (February 26.) It's an easy, but very necessary way of serving the church. It consists of passing out bulletins, helping folks to their seats if necessary, and passing the offering plates. Please contact Linda Demeter (740-334-9290) or the church office if you feel you'd like to serve in this way.

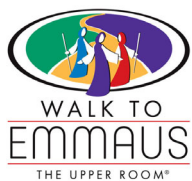


Weekday Christian Preschool... Registration has begun for the 2023-2024 school year. We offer a Christian preschool program for children who will be 3, 4, or 5 years old by September 30, 2023. The program is state licensed and staffed with degreed lead teachers and trained teachers' assistants. We believe that learning takes place through discovery and play. Each classroom environment is child led and teacher facilitated. Our main objective is to foster a positive self-image in each child while nourishing their social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth.

Ramsey+ and Financial Peace University... Do you want to create a life without financial stress? Learn how to steward your money well? We've invested in a Ramsey+ site license so every family in our church has access to a one-year membership full of tools and resources to help you honor God with your money. It includes access to Financial Peace University and other money courses, the premium version of the EveryDollar budgeting app, unlimited live coaching session, free federal tax filing and more. If you're ready for this go to <https://www.financialpeace.com/hosts/fumccuyahogapc> and sign up. A Financial Peace class will begin on Sunday, February 5, from 4 to 6 p.m. There is a \$50 fee per family.



Walk to Emmaus... Have you taken part in the Walk to Emmaus, either locally or in a different state or country? We would like to put together a participant list of people who have. Please send Pastor Mike the following information: name, phone number, email address, and your Walk information.



If you've not taken part please consider the following: Are you interested in taking your relationship with our Risen Savior to a whole new level? Or does spending a weekend with Jesus sound like something you need or would enjoy? Then the Walk to Emmaus may be just the thing you need.. Don't let the name scare you, there is not a lot of walking involved during the weekend. The men's walk will be April 13-16, and the women's walk will be April 20-23. If you have questions or would like to find out more about the Walk to Emmaus, please contact Pastor Mike.

First Church Feeds... At our monthly distribution, we give out more than food. We are often able to get items like soap, paper towels, and pet food from the Food Bank. However, personal hygiene items, especially bladder control products for men and women (such as Poise pads or disposable underwear) are frequently requested by our clients but are rarely available from the Food Bank. We would love to be able to offer these products on a regular basis.

We are requesting donations of these products. Please drop off items in the bin behind the Welcome Center.

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 cmeyersfallsumc@gmail.com or Ext. 210.

Picture Directory... A new picture directory will be done this year. All details are not yet settled, but pictures will be taken during the first week of August. More information to come.

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First United Methodist Church

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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 **Leola Newell**.

Our Sympathies to Nancy Yeager and family on the death of her father, member **George Kirk**, on 1/21; to **Marlene Mercurio** and family on the death of her husband, member **Gus Mercurio**, on 1/22.

Did You Know? We will be glad to publish (space allowing) milestone birthdays, anniversaries, births and other special events in your family if you send a note c/o Kathy Kuzas, call us at 330-923-5241 x212 or email kkuzasfumccf@gmail.com.

WORSHIP

Sunday, February 5

Pastor Karol Lewis preaching
8:30 am - Epworth Choir
11:00 am - Chancel Choir

Sunday, February 12

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

Acme Receipts... There is still time to turn in those Acme receipts to help with the projects done at Work Camp. Any receipts dated Aug. 4 to Dec. 24 will be accepted.

The deadline for the next FCN is **Friday, February 10**. Please submit your articles to Kathy at kkuzasfumccf@gmail.com.