

The Clarion

December 2017

First UMC is a welcoming, accepting, caring and diverse Christian community committed to teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to all people through faith-based worship, exciting programs and outreach ministry.

Ponderings from your Pastor

Dear Friends,

I am finally home and readjusting to my North American life. I find that it is easier to adjust back rather than adjusting to the environmental limitations of the beautiful country of Guatemala. My overall experience was wonderful and I thank you for your prayers and support. I also want you to know that my team mate Jeff, made a miraculous recovery that day. I truly give God the glory and believe that your prayers were very effective.

I find that the hardest part of readjusting is experiencing the waste and individualism of our country. In the mountain villages where I was, nothing goes to waste, and all resources are expended for the safety and the security of the family and village.

Toward the end of our VBS the children were given a time to pick out a few trinkets to take home and very seldom did any pick anything for themselves, and in some cases you had to literally “make” them take something for themselves. Most of them were looking for “mama” or “papa” or the “hermano” (brother) or “hermana” (sister). In some cases, when I could convince them to take something for themselves, they would take a toothbrush, pencil, or a small pad of paper.



I want to remind us as we approach Christmas that this time of year, is not about our abundance or commercialism, but it is about love and each other. It is a time of family and friends and those precious to us. It is an opportunity to know that giving is not about giving to ourselves, but in giving to others. When we do that, we are the ones who are blessed.

I feel very blessed to be a part of this congregation and I feel we have a very bright future ahead of us. I know that as we keep focused on what God calls us to do here in Mount Clemens, that we will be blessed in the abundance of God’s love and grace.



Blessed by you,

Rev. Maureen

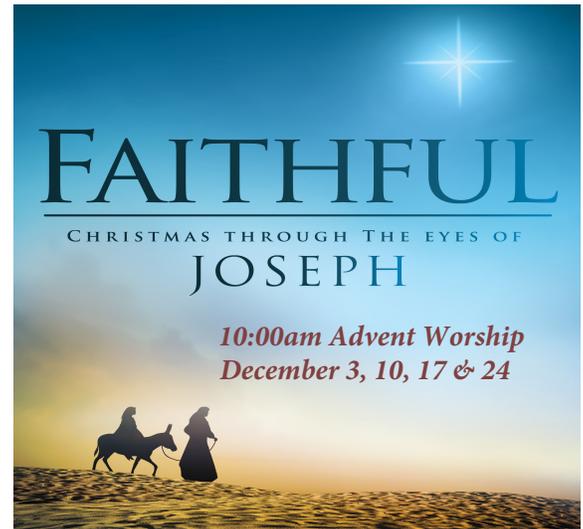
Justice Moment with Rev. Alicea...



Beginning on December 31 until January 7 and again on February 4 until February 11, we will open our doors to those who need to come inside for warmth. We will feed them a hearty and warm dinner and get their next day going with breakfast. Sandy Paul, who coordinates the meals for our Warming Center weeks figures we will serve over 3,000 meals during those two weeks. Each year on Sundays from April until October, we host the Community Meals where anyone may come in for a meal. Who are all these people we feed? They are the face of homelessness, hunger, and poverty in our community. The need is continuous and we actively practice loving our neighbor by providing these times for meals and a warm place to stay. In the midst of visiting with Simon in Bethany a woman with an alabaster jar came and began to anoint Jesus' feet. When the disciples became angry because the oil in the jar could have been sold for a good amount, Jesus reminds them that the poor will always be with them but he would not always be with them. Homelessness, Hunger, and Poverty are realities that are with us each and every day. Simply knowing about these social issues is not enough. As Christians we are called to act out of God's love for us to be the hands and feet of Christ in the world. Matthew 25 calls us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, give drink to the thirsty, heal the sick, and visit the prisoner. We must live out our faith by walking alongside those who suffer in this world. Make your New Year's Resolution to find an organization in the area with which to volunteer or support.

Here are some suggestions, this is in no way an exhaustive list but a place to start: Salvation Army, Second Hand Rose Thrift Shop, The Warming Center, Community Meals, Macomb Family Resource Center, Macomb Homeless Coalition, Feeding the Need: A Community Kitchen. There are many other agencies and non-profits in our community filling the needs of those who live around us. As you ponder ways you can help those in need, check out the Justice Board outside my office for some facts and United Methodist perspective on Hunger and Poverty plus a list of local agencies that are involved with alleviating homelessness, hunger, and poverty in Macomb County. Let's be agents of change in our community and spread Christ's Good News of love and grace as we work with those who are in need.

Peace, Rev. Alicea



***Christmas Eve Celebration of
Lessons & Carols at 10:00 am
and Traditional Candlelight Service at 7:00 pm***

Our Advent Study will begin **December 3 at 11:15am in the Library.** During Christmas, we usually follow Mary, the mother of Jesus and her journey. But this year, we will look at the Faithfulness of Joseph the adoptive father of the Messiah. So little is told about the man that loved Jesus, provided for him, mentored and taught him. This Advent season we will begin to look at the Christmas journey through the eyes of Jesus's earthly father, Joseph. What does God say about faithfulness and what faith legacy are we leaving to our children? Fathers, grandfathers, Mothers, grandmothers, aunts and uncles all help to shape the children who come after them. We will look at the Christmas story with fresh eyes, and follow Joseph, because I believe that we can see Joseph's influence in the stories of Jesus. Join us as we look at Christmas through, the story of Joseph.

MISSION MOMENTS TO READ AND PONDER

ALUMINUM TABS REACH 80 POUNDS

Thanks to the congregation at First Methodist, a total of almost 80 pounds of aluminum can tabs have been delivered to the Ronald McDonald House in Ann Arbor. According to the people there, each pound represents 1200 tabs so, collectively, we turned in 96,000 tabs!!! The House staff were extremely appreciative of our endeavors. This was a very easy and cost-free mission to do that will benefit the children affected by severe illnesses and their families who love them. The collection was for one year only and we have now completed this mission. God bless all who contributed.

FIDGET QUILTS ARE A HIT!

In the spring, the Prayer Quilters offered to make lap-sized fidget quilts for the children and adults diagnosed with autism and other disorders serviced by Macomb County Community Mental Health. After the offer, we were asked if we would make 700 of these quilts!!! With the help of the people of First Church providing textured materials, thread, zippers, buttons, lace, etc., and continuing to buy handmade products from the Quilters so that we could buy the batting and textured backing for the quilts, we will have completed and delivered 200 of the requested 700 by the end of 2017. This has so much been a labor of love as we hear back from the caretakers of these consumers letting us know the impact our fidget quilts have had. Please continue to donate items that you no longer need or no longer want as we certainly are going through a lot of materials in order to reach our ultimate goal. Did you know the average age of the Quilters is 75? This mission does not require athletic skills or even intellectual acuity! All that is needed is a willingness to learn (if you don't know how to sew, we will teach you) and give some of your time to make products for children and adults who are disabled and for congregation members going through difficult times. Contact Marsha Lynch or any of the Quilters for more information or just join us any Tuesday in the Multipurpose Room between 10:30am and 2:30pm to see what a wonderful time we have. You can bring a lunch or we can fill you up with delicious snacks!

FUMC BREAD MINISTRY CONTINUES TO THRIVE

For over 15 years now, First Methodist's Bread Ministry has supplied Panera Bread Company unsold but still fresh breads, bagels and pastries to Macomb County agencies serving the poor and the homeless of the county. We collect the products every night except Friday from the Panera on Hall Road in Shelby Township and on Tuesday nights from the Panera at Lakeside Mall. These products are wrapped on three mornings a week and then delivered to the Salvation Army in Mount Clemens on Tuesdays and Thursdays, to the Lighthouse in Roseville on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays and to The Refuge on Thursdays.

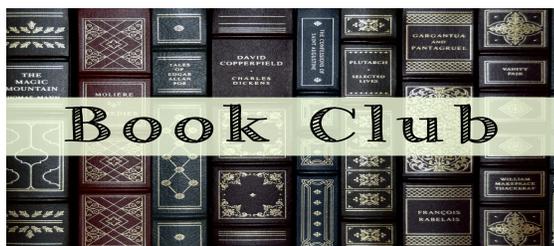
Products are also offered to every MCREST (Macomb County Rotating Emergency Shelter Team) church throughout the entire year. During the winter months, the Warming Center churches are also in receipt of the breads. The MCREST churches service 30 men or 30 women/children each week and the Warming Centers (like FUMC for TWO weeks this winter) service up to 100 homeless people each night!! Panera foods are also offered to the Community Meals program at FUMC when we feed the homeless every Sunday for seven months out of the year. Did you know the age average for Bread Ministers is 78 years old? Join us for this wonderful mission. We especially need young-uns below the age of retirement! Contact Junia Querio or Marsha Lynch for more information and a chance to "do all the good you can whenever you can, wherever you can".

401G

No, this is not a new type of retirement or pension plan. We have now donated 401 pairs of Glasses to Lions International! The Lions, in turn, distribute these spectacles to agencies which revamp them for use in under-developed countries. This is an on-going ministry requiring no time and no monies. All you need do is check your kitchen what-not drawers, your bedside tables, etc., for unused glasses and bring them to church to place in the bins located just outside the Multipurpose Room. Your thoughtfulness will allow another individual to see the same beautiful world that you do. Thank you, First Church, for being so faithful in this ministry.



There will be an American Red Cross Blood Drive on **Sunday, December 10th in the Multi-Purpose Room from 8:00am to 2:00pm**. Volunteers will be needed in several areas. If you can help or have any questions, please call Jordan Olszewski at (586) 498-4647 (home phone) or email olzewski.jmo@gmail.com. If you cannot donate, please spread the word to family and friends.



The book club meets **Tuesday, December 12, at 10:00** in the library. We are reading *The Dinner*, by *Herman Koch*.



Children's Worship for Advent

During Advent our Children's Worship will focus on the time of preparation for Christmas. We will tell the story of the Prophets, the Holy family, the Shepherds, and the Magi and Christmas. This is a wondrous time of year leading to the mystery of Christmas. Come each Sunday to hear a new part of the story and spend time wondering about the birth of our Savior!



YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY!!!!

Join us on **December 17 at 4:15** in the afternoon to embark on a Christmas party adventure. The party will be a progressive dinner with the kicker that you have to figure out where you are going next. Each car full of students will be given a clue as to where the next stop will be. There will be one Mystery Stop in the midst of the evening and you will end with dessert and a gift exchange. Each youth should bring a "White Elephant" Gift wrapped to place under the tree that costs no more than \$5. Parent drivers who want to join in on the gift fun should also bring a gift. Please let Rev. Alicea know if you are joining in on the festivities by December 10 in order to let the hosts know how many to expect for food planning. MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!

Christmas Decoration Adventure – On December 10 after our lunch together we will load up the vehicles and drive to folks houses and help them either bring up their decorations from the Basement or help them actually decorate their home for Christmas. We should be back by 4:00 at the latest.

Church Members: If you would like some assistance in bringing up your decorations or actually decorating your home, please let Rev. Alicea know by December 6.

Warming Center Assistance – Please plan to stay after church on Sunday December 31 to help Dan McClatcher prepare for the opening of the Warming Center that evening. You might want to bring some clothes to change into in order to help.

Confirmation – Confirmation will begin on **Sunday December 3 at 11:30 in the Youth Room**. Parents and/or Grandparents are requested to attend this first meeting. Please bring a lunch, beverages will be provided.

Joys to Share



December Birthdays

Mason Munn	12/01
Melissa Richardson	12/01
Herbert Brush III	12/02
Robert Keller	12/02
Scott Reece	12/04
Aiden Viggiano	12/04
Aaron Gimm	12/06
Meah Higbee	12/07
Zachary Kinic	12/07
Christopher Miller	12/07
Rev. Maureen Baker	12/08
Crosby Lynch	12/10
Camille Moore	12/10
Tina Tinkham	12/10
Nicole Evans	12/11
Thomas Hill	12/11
Thomas Northrop	12/11
Justine Olszewski	12/12
Constance Hall	12/13
Emily Beebe	12/14
Barbara Dodd	12/14
Jazmin Schutt-Pointer	12/14
Tyler Plets	12/15
Lorri Petty	12/16
Monica Benson	12/17
Nancy Donahue	12/18
Larry Alger	12/19
Carol Ballard	12/19
Bob Hill	12/20
Wyatt Minarik	12/20
Mary Philo	12/20
Brian West	12/24
Janet Hudock	12/26
Junia Querio	12/26
Malina Haxer	12/28
Murray Shelson	12/29
Sandra Paul	12/31



December Anniversaries

Rolland & Gayle Bumler	12/21
Wesley & Loretta Ballard	12/26
Fred & Shanda Golda	12/29
Steven & Claudia Waid	12/29
Thomas & Lois Hill	12/31



31+ YEARS of PASTY MAKING and NOW AVAILABLE AGAIN FOR \$4 EACH UNTIL THEY ARE ALL GONE!!

(See Keith Rosso on Sundays or visit the church office Mon.-Thurs. 9am to 2pm to purchase.)

The second Pasty Bake of 2017 was held the night of November 7 for cutting of the veggies (potatoes, carrots, rutabaga and, of course, onions). All day November 8 and 9 was spent making the delicious pasty dough, mixing the veggies with the dual meat mixture and assembling the pasties for baking. At final count, one thousand and eighty (1080) pasties have been made for sale. And, due to the insatiable aroma of baking that wafted both inside the church and out, over 300 of these had gone out the door by the end of the last day! Also 200 pasties have been reserved in order to serve the homeless during our hosting Warming Centers for a week in January and a week in February of 2018!

Special, special thanks goes to Sue Tregembo for all the planning, the ingredient buying and the managing of the entire three-day mission. Additional special, special thanks goes to her second-in-command, Junia Querio, who made sure everything keep rolling like a well-oiled machine especially when it came to quality control! And, hearing her laugh every now and then made the work go easier! God bless Jean Cain and Linda Strait for providing wholesome and delicious lunches for all of the volunteers. So much heavenly food including desserts was a wonderful reward for jobs well done. Last, but perhaps best, thank you to all of the volunteers who cut veggies, did set-ups, mixed meats, made dough, weighed and divided dough, rolled dough, cupped pasty mixture for filling, washed dishes, filled pasty shells, labeled and wrapped cooled pasties, schlepped trays, and baked-baked-baked pasties for hours on end. Without all of you, it would not have been possible to do this mission which provides monies for church materials such as kitchen service wear and equipment, Fellowship Hall tables, and other needs of the church without having to use general funds. God is good all the time and so are His faithful servants of First Church.



Join us!! Sunday afternoon, **December 10th at 4:00pm** - "Beautiful Savior" Christmas Performance featuring the **Michigan Chamber Chorale!**



Divine Hope Ministries will be here on Thursdays in our Fellowship Hall area from 12:30-2pm beginning on 11-30. They are in need of hangers, please drop them off anytime during office hours. This is a ministry open for all that are in need of warm clothing, headed up by Rev. Kelly, from our community. Please be in prayer for this important ministry.



Please save all of your old, used or new Christmas cards that you would like to donate instead of throwing them away. We recycle them and make them new for our next year's giving to the Martha T facility residents. A box will be provided to drop them off or give them to Diane McDougall. Thank you



Women with Faith

Women With Faith will meet **December 7th at 1:00 P.M. at the Mt. Clemens Library.** Dan McLather will give our program - updating us on Warming Center and Blessing in a backpack. For those who wish to donate we will have a in-gathering of socks and underwear which are greatly needed for our guests during our warming center week.



Warming Center returns to FUMC!

We will again host the Warming Center for those without shelter or means. The need is even greater this year so we have agreed to take on an extra week. The two weeks are **12-31-17 through 1-6-18 and again on 2-4-18 through 2-10-18.**

There are many opportunities for volunteers. Please see the sign-up sheets in the multi-purpose room or see Sandy Paul or Dan McLatcher for more details. Don't forget to consider donating socks, underwear, hats, scarves, gloves or other winter essentials. Thank you for being a part of this important ministry and for being the great church that we are. We truly do open our hearts, minds and doors!



Attendance, Gifts and Tithes for the month of November 2017

	<i>Amount Received</i>	<i>Needed</i>	<i>Attendance</i>
November 5	\$10,896.00	\$6,500.00	154
November 12	\$2,763.00	\$6,500.00	104
November 19	\$6,455.00	\$6,500.00	133
November 26	\$4,809.00	\$6,500.00	139

Our Thoughts and Prayers are with...

Our Church Family

Carol Dorsey, Walt Sugierski, Ray Buchanan, Rev. Emerson Arntz, John Bober, Joyce Wells, Tracy Beebe
Debbie Tchakerian, Denette Ballard

Our Friends and Family

Andrea Hart, Barb Lyon, Jeanne Trost, Ester Campbell, Beverly Cinglin, Eric Smith, Ray Champion

Our Homebound

Rev. Emerson Arntz, Myrna Born, Marilyn Jean Borow, Dawn Brass, Shirley Champion, Irene Cloud,
Polly Darling, Marjie Eckhout, Mike Foy, Karen Loos, Charlotte Randolph, Mary Schmidt, Murray Shelson,
Fred Thielk, Rosalie Tinkham, Patsy Weagel, Gladys Wiggins, Bernie Weideman

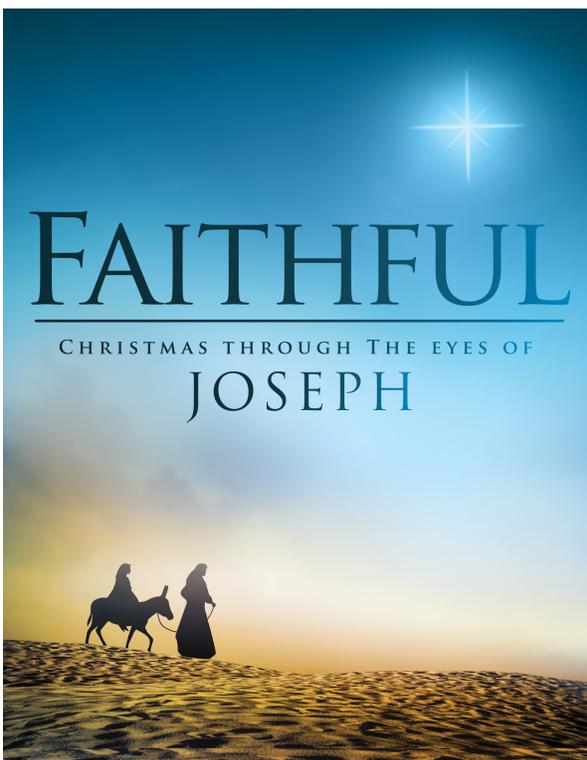
Those Serving in the Armed Forces

Adam Donahue, Tami Grigsby, Sean Kiernan, Tony Kiernan, Brian Hill

College Students

Sarah Akers, Kyle Blaszkowski, Emily Beebe, Melanie Blaszkowski, Leah Clifton, Matthew Durham,
Emily Fowler, Jordan Gould, Josh Gould, Kyle Hill, Nina Hill, Ashley Krynski, Megan Kupser,
Makayla Landrum, Stephanie Lyskawa, Tighe Maclean, Madeline McInnes Sword, Theo Miller,
Sydney Olszewski, Kevin Perry, Martin Querio, Kyle Sieben, Amy Beth Simon, Jordan Spratt,
Tina Tinkham, Sam Van Camp, Jake Williams, Morgan Wiza

Contact Information



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