

The Clarion

November 2019

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

18 "I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. 19 In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live."
John 14: 18-19

Dear Friends,

After a wonderfully full October, we move into November with much to anticipate and appreciate! I appreciate the connection this church has to the community, I appreciate the faithfulness of this congregation to look into the future with joy, I appreciate the power of worship together and having fun together, and I appreciate the way this church loves God and our neighbors. I can also say, I am so thankful for the beautiful baptisms and the faithful commitments of our new members that have joined our church! I appreciate the faithfulness of this church to be stewards of their resources in a mindset of abundance and possibility. What a blessing it is to be part of this church.

This November we will move from looking at the power of our those who have come before in order to motivate us to see what we can be together as we move into the future. We will start by celebrating the saints of our church. The first Sunday of November will be our All Saints Sunday, where we will honor those in the church and those in our lives who have passed in the last year. Over the rest of November, we will also be looking at History Makers in the Bible and in Christian tradition that have made bold steps in faith in a way that can inspire us! We will celebrate the ministry of the laity, celebrate thankfulness, and lean into advent with joyous anticipation.

I am also excited about youth raking, and pasty baking. I am excited about worship, and welcoming. I am excited about faith growth, and fellowship. As we journey into the holiday season, I am thankful for all we have going together! I can't wait to share it all with you.

With Thanks,

Pastor Dan





The decorating of the church for the advent season will take place on **Saturday, November 30th, at 10:00 a.m.** There will be jobs for all abilities. Hopefully, we will be finished by noon. Lunch will be provided.



Children's Ministry Christmas Wish List - As part of the Children's Worship Center redecoration project, Rev. Alicea sorted through all the books that were in the Responding Room. Many were out dated, very old (1939 was the oldest), and worn out. In an effort to resource our families with books about faith and the Bible, Rev. Alicea has put together a Wish List of book titles. If you would like to help build this Children's Library please pick up a list in the Church Office. All titles may be ordered from Cokesbury.com or Amazon.com. Remember every time you order something from Cokesbury, a portion goes toward the Clergy Pension fund.

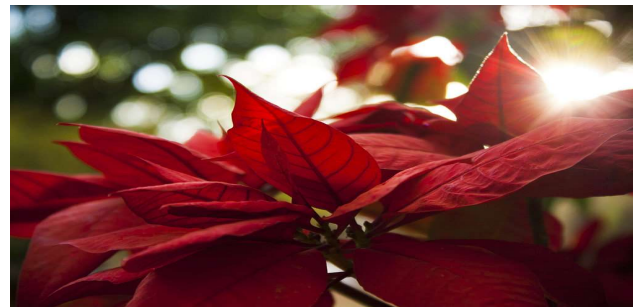
Wesleyans

The Wesleyans will gather at **Noon on November 16** in Wesley Hall for a sack lunch and 2020 Activities Planning Session. If you have something you really like that the group would enjoy, contact Ken Fowler or come to the meeting.



Let's Get Crafty!

Let's Get Crafty! The Youth Group is sponsoring an afternoon of crafting, fun, and fellowship on Saturday, **November 23 from 3:30-5:30**. Teenagers and adults are invited to create a beautiful advent wreath or wooden, holiday-themed sign to take home. The cost of this event is \$20. Proceeds will go toward the youth mission trip to Henderson Settlement in Kentucky. Childcare provided!! Sign up with our youth after church in Wesley Hall during Coffee Hour or use the following link to an online signup: www.signupgenius.com/go/8050C4EA8AE2FA2FF2-advent



It's Poinsettia Time!

We are taking orders for Christmas poinsettias to dedicate in honor and/or in memory of loved ones, while lending beauty to our Sanctuary and holiday worship. Pick up a form at the office and fill it out or we will have the forms available at all three of the Sanctuary's main floor entrances. Each plant will cost \$10.00 (6 inch pots). They will be presented to the glory of God in our Sanctuary on **Sunday, December 22nd**; please feel free to take your poinsettias home following the Christmas Eve Worship Services. Completed order forms may be placed in the collection plates or dropped off at the church office. We must have all orders in by **Tuesday, November 19th**.

Justice for Our Neighbors

For three years now, I have been a member of the advisory board for Justice for Our Neighbors (JFON) Detroit. This year I began working as the Chair person for the Advocacy Work Group. Our primary roles include: sponsoring a book club that meets to discuss a book about immigration, leading Immigration 101 events at churches and other community gatherings, sponsoring a visitation team that visits the detainees in the Monroe Detention Center, networking with other immigration advocacy organizations, and encouraging participation in calling and letter writing campaigns to U.S. Representatives to advocate for immigration reform. Here are some upcoming events we are sponsoring:

1. *Hope-for-the-Holidays Card Campaign* – each year JFON participates in sending Holiday Cards to the families living in Detention Centers in our country. **Each Sunday in November** there will be a table in Wesley Hall during Coffee Hour with supplies for making a holiday greeting card for a family currently in detention. There will be sample messages in English and Spanish for you to use. The cards will be gathered and mailed back to Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services who will distribute cards from around the country to these families. Please be in prayer for those families who are seeking asylum or refugee status who will spend the holidays in detention centers.

2. On **January 11 from 10:00 until 1:00** at Dearborn First UMC there will be a JFON Advocacy 101 Training event. If you are interested in becoming an advocate for immigrants and want to know more about how, then speak with me and I will give you more details.

3. The current JFON Detroit Book Club book is titled: *Girl in Translation* by Jean Kwok. If you are interested in attending the book club, see me for details.

If you have questions or would like to speak with me regarding any of the above events, I am happy to chat with you.

Rev. Alicea



Stop the Bleed and AED Training

Captain Mike Olszewski, a Clinton Township firefighter/paramedic, will be offering a Stop the Bleed and an AED training class. The Stop the Bleed class is for bystanders to be trained for a bleeding emergency before professional help arrives. He will also show how to use the AEDs that have been installed. The class will be Saturday, November 23 at 9:00 a.m. in the Wesley Hall. It will run about 2-2 1/2 hours. The class is free of charge and he can take up to 15 people. There will be a sign up sheet on the window. If you have any questions please call Justine Olszewski at (586) 350-5664.



On Tuesday, November 12th, Reading Club will read *Behold the Dreamers* by Imbolo Mbue.

Endowment Committee Report

For the 3rd Quarter (September 30), the Endowment Fund generated \$2,447.39 for the Trustees to use for building maintenance and improvements. The current value of the Fund is \$402,970.70.

Ken Fowler



November is a busy month for our Youth Group. We kick off the month with a Leaf Raking Service Project on November 3. We have 5 houses to visit so we need ALL hands on deck. If you've never been to a youth group event before consider joining us as we rake leaves and clean up the yards of some of our members. Lunch will be served in the Youth Room at 11:30. Wear clothes appropriate for the weather and bring rakes, work gloves, and a pack of yard waste bags. Rev. Alicea will sign any and all service hours forms for School related service hours.

Also in November, we have our second fundraiser for Henderson Settlement: An Advent Craft Afternoon on November 23. You will be able to register for this event beginning on Sunday November 3 either after church in Wesley Hall or Online via a Signup Genius Link. See the Advent Craft article in this Clarion.

Save The Date: Do you need a few hours for Christmas Shopping without the children? Our youth group will be on hand on **Saturday December 7 from 10:00 until 2:00** to care for your children while you go Christmas Shopping for a few hours. We will have activities, lunch, and snacks available. We will watch children from infants to age 8. Watch the Worship Bulletin and your email for more details.

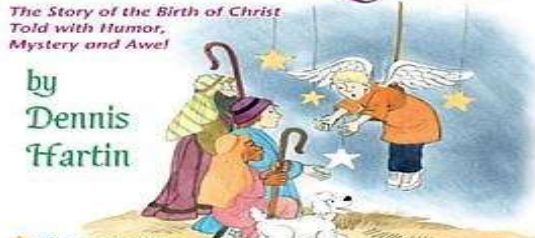
Henderson Settlement

Sign up to attend Henderson Settlement **June 21- 28 by NOVEMBER 17**. A sign up sheet is on the Bulletin Board outside the Youth Room. The deposit for this trip is \$50, if you want to go and need assistance with the deposit, please see Rev. Alicea. In order to go to Henderson Settlement you must have completed the 6th-12th grades at the time of the trip, attend youth group at least once a month, and participate in 3 of the 5 Fundraiser events. This trip is in need of another Male Chaperone. If you are interested in joining us, please see Rev. Alicea.

The *Very* Important Christmas Pageant

*The Story of the Birth of Christ
Told with Humor,
Mystery and Awe!*

by
Dennis
Hartin



Christmas Pageant – The first rehearsal for our Christmas Pageant is **November 14 from 10:00 until Noon**. There are parts for up to 20 people but as of right now we have only a few. Children ages 4 and up are encouraged to participate with youth and adults helping out as well.

Join us as we tell the Christmas story with laughter and joy!



Children's Worship also needs assistants and while it is preferable to have taken the Protection Policy training, There is a sign-up sheet on the Library Window (the names already listed are the leaders, please add your name as an assistant).



child
protection training

The final training session for this year and before our Warming Center Week is **November 18 from 1:30 – 3:30pm**. Anyone who works with children, youth, or vulnerable persons (this includes the Warming Center) must have this training. The exception to this are those who only come in to cook and serve the evening or morning meal. If you work with intake, security, or stay overnight, this training is required. There is a sign-up sheet on the Library Window, please add your name and check which training you will attend.



November Birthdays

Barbara Clay	11/01
Chloe Gawthrop	11/01
Evan Maertens	11/01
Shari Capozzoli	11/06
Nicole Calvert	11/07
Sara Colah	11/07
JJ Eldridge	11/08
Cynthia Donahue	11/11
Michael Zdravkovski	11/11
Darrell Miller	11/12
Caiden Parker	11/12
Dean Benson	11/13
Avery Calvert	11/14
Joyce Wells	11/14
Darcie West	11/15
Jenny Ellis	11/16
Melanie Sugierski	11/17
Sawyer Lefurgey	11/18
Manda Moore	11/18
Jordan Olszewski	11/18
Maurine Deprez	11/19
Jessica Lefurgey	11/21
Wendy Jones	11/22
Nancy Hathaway	11/25
Ken Fowler	11/30



November Anniversaries

Keith & Mary Philo	11/04
Dan & Karen Zdravkovski	11/04
Jeff & Tracy Beebe	11/06
Robert & Agatha Pingley	11/07
Nicholas & Jessica Lefurgey	11/08
Keith & Susan Rosso	11/08
Jim & Linda Willneff	11/26



We received many notes of gratitude for the We Care boxes that were sent out to our college students and to those serving in the armed forces. All were very thankful for the generosity and thoughtfulness of their church family! Many thanks to Joyce Wells and her We Care team helpers!



Seminole Academy School Supplies

Thank you for your response to the gathering of school supplies for Seminole Academy! While we have gathered many supplies, more are certainly welcome! We will continue to gather supplies during the Christmas Season.

After Christmas we will dedicate the supplies before they are taken to Seminole Academy and distributed to the teachers.

Thank you for your generosity and for thinking of the children in our community.



First UMC Finance Report and Ministry Updates

FIRST UMC -FINANCE REPORT

This year has been another year of sustained generosity in our church.

Ministry in the Making

At the end of December 2015, our mortgage balance was \$647,521. The mortgage payments are \$63,000 or 18% of our annual budget. In June 2016 we conducted our Ministry in the Making Campaign with a goal to have the mortgage paid off by 2021 as part of the celebration of the 200th anniversary of our church. To date, we have made lump sum payments of \$155,549. We have remaining pledges of approximately \$40,000. We also believe we are included in seven estate plans, although we do not know the amount of those gifts. The amount we pay in interest monthly has gone from \$1,950 to about \$1,200 with more applied to the principal each month. The current balance of the mortgage is \$334,872. We have reduced the mortgage by more than \$300,000 since December 2015, and we have reduced the payoff date by four years. Without including the remaining pledges and the estate plans and paying only the monthly payment, the mortgage will be paid off by December 31, 2025. The mortgage balance on December 31, 2021 would be \$215,394.25 if only the future monthly mortgage payments are made. We will continue to address the mortgage to be mortgage free as soon as we can.

2019 Budget

The pledge giving and non-pledge giving was budgeted at \$309,480 in 2018 and \$273,808 in 2019. The \$36,000 shortfall is primarily due to serious congregant health issues and members passing away in our congregation, and as a result, the budget of \$351,000 contained a year-end budgetary shortfall of \$24,000. The primary expenses are personnel, building and maintenance, mortgage payments and apportionment, which we are presently paying at 54%. We have consistently increased our apportionment payments annually after paying 10% in 2015 and nothing in 2014. At this time, we have narrowed the budget shortfall as a result of non pledge giving being up approximately \$7,000 more than budget through August and some reduced expenses. We are hopeful that we will be able to eliminate the budget shortfall by the end of the year, but your giving will be important.

Endowment Fund

We have also made significant use of the Endowment Fund in contributing to the new sign, building and maintenance expenses, a new heating unit and a new hot water tank. The Endowment Fund is approximately \$400,000 and will continue to help with building and maintenance expenses.

It has been a challenging year, but under the circumstances, it has been a successful year so far. We have reason to believe that next year will be an even better year as we conduct the Stewardship Campaign for next year. The pledges are critical for our budgeting process, so it is important that you get your pledges in. For those of you with a history of non-pledged giving, we rely on that history in our budgeting.

The Leadership Committee is deeply grateful for the support it has received from all of you this year.

*Tim Howlett
Finance Chair*

Warming Center Update

The next Warming Center week is approaching the week of **Sunday, December 29th through Saturday, January 4th**. We need socks, "hoodies", underwear (both regular and thermal) and/or financial donations. A collection box will be placed at the entrance of Wesley Hall. Please consider supporting this important outreach ministry. Questions? See Dan McLatcher or Sandy Paul. Thank you good people of First Church!



Attendance, Gifts and Tithes for the month of October, 2019

	Amount		
	Received	Needed	Attendance
October 6	\$7,474.00	\$6,500.00	131
October 13	\$9,112.00	\$6,500.00	138
October 20	\$5,303.00	\$6,500.00	110
October 27	\$3,663.00	\$6,500.00	126

Our Church Family

Joyce Wells, Sheila Strunk, Nancy Donahue,
Grieving: Doris Breitreus

Our Friends and Family

Karen Harris' grandson, Matt Juras; Lois Vale, Norma Kosmala, Darcie West's mother,
Christopher Williams' mother, Barb Knuth & Julie Strayer's friend, Tina

Our Homebound

Jo & Joe Beaudette, Myrna Born, Marilyn Jean Borow, Carl Cendrowski, Shirley Champion,
Irene Cloud, Polly Darling, Marjie Eckhout, Karen Loos, Gerald & Barbara Pagett, Murray Shelson,
Fred Thielk, Rosalie Tinkham, Patsy Weagel, Gladys Wiggins, Bernie Weideman

Those Serving in the Armed Forces

Scott Bean, Adam Donahue, Brian Hill, Steven C. Kelly, Tami Morgan, Rande Phan

College Students

Brianna Akers, Michaela Baker, Emily Beebe, Hannah Berg, Annica Brocker, Nathan Buchanan,
Nathan Clifton, Jessica Evans, Draven Forbes, Jaryd Forbes, Jordan Gould, Josh Gould, Sean Hathaway,
Kyle Hill, Nina Hill, Jackson Kelly, Justin Keppler, Ashley Krynski, Stephanie Lyskawa, Tighe Maclean,
Nick Nielsen, Jordan Olszewski, Sydney Olszewski, Hope Reyna, Mitchell Salisbury, Kyle Sieben,
Amy Beth Simon, Alaina Spratt, Tina Tinkham

Contact Information

2019 **First UMC** **Leadership Team**

Linda McLatcher: Chair
Tim Howlett: Finance Chair
Harry Kosmala: Business Manager
Julie Strayer: Pastor Parish Chair
Andrea Kruse: Co-Chair Pastor Parish
Bill Wiza: Chair of Trustees
Tom Baber: Co-Chair of Trustees
Linda L. Johnston: Lay Leader
Lois Hill: Lay Member to Annual Conference
Linda Strait: Secretary
Rev. Dan Hart: Lay Nominations Chair
Rev. Alicea Williams: Children and Youth Ministry



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