



The Ambassador

August 2024

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From the Pastor

Dear Friends,

I love back to school time. The school supplies filling sections of stores, the long days of summer transitioning to routines, school parking lots become more populated, and marching bands gather in fields to practice. For me, the beginning of new school year is full of possibilities and learnings. Although I will miss vacations and the freedom summer offers, I am always eager to greet this season each year.

When I think about a new school year beginning, I am always reminded that our God is the God of new beginnings. Lamentations tells us that God's mercies are new each morning, Revelation records these words of Jesus, "Behold, I make all things new", and Paul tells the Corinthians that if anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation. Our God is the God of new beginnings, always calling us to new life, offering us fresh starts, and giving us grace to begin each moment anew.

We are celebrating new beginnings this month at First UMC. On Sunday, August 4, our Adult Sunday School begins a new series (see article on page 4). Then on Sunday, August 11th we will be blessing backpacks (see article on page 4). We have new equipment in the sanctuary (see article on page 3). When this newsletter comes out we will be in the midst of a new ministry, MAD Camp (see article on page 2). And even though our Friends worship series ended in July, we have the opportunity to make new friends at the Friends Road Rally (see article on page 2). So many new things!

Your days of shopping for back to school supplies may or may not be over, but no matter what season of life you find yourself in, God is offering you a new beginning. My prayer is that we all may hear and heed this divine invitation to receive a fresh start.

Peace,
Pastor Kim <><

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Worship With Us

Online & In Person
Worship @10:30 am
Sunday School @ 9

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 **first
church**
MIDDLETOWN
a united methodist community

MAD CAMP UPDATE



As this newsletter is arriving in your hands, First UMC's Music, Art, and Drama Camp – MAD Camp – is underway! Over thirty children in preschool and elementary school are learning about the Parable of the Good Samaritan in creative ways. Here are a few pictures for you to see some of what is going on. Please plan on joining us on Friday, August 2nd for the art show and theater performance. Doors to the art gallery open at 6:30, the theater at 7:00 and ice cream to follow.



And...make sure you check out next month's newsletter for more pictures and MAD Camp reflections!

WORSHIP PLANNING

Pastor Kim will be taking two weeks to plan worship series for the upcoming year. Beginning August 12th she will be praying, working creatively with Mary Ellen and Pastor Daniel, and planning engaging worship for First UMC. During these two weeks Pastor Kim will be leading us in worship but Rev. Amy Haines and Rev. Joel Harbarger will be preaching, and Pastor Daniel will be covering pastoral care. If you have any questions about this time or about worship planning in general, please do not hesitate to ask Pastor Kim or contact the church office. Please keep Pastor Kim in your prayers during this time of reflection and planning. Thank you!

FRIENDS ROAD RALLY

Sunday, August 11th at 2:00

We had such a great response to our Summer Road Trip Rally last year that we are hosting another one this summer. Join us at 2 p.m. in the church parking lot where you will get directions of where to go and instructions of what to do as you journey to our final destination. We're not sharing where that will be – but we can tell you that it involves cold and delicious treats! Hope to see you there!



Music and Worship Notes

When Larry Kreps gave the message and led worship one Sunday in July, he mentioned that during his substituting for churches in this season, ours was the only choir that sang through the Summer. "Behind his back" while I was at the organ, I gave the choir a thumbs up for their dedication. But actually, it's more than just dedication! Worshipping God should be a time without a break. In every season we should give thanks to God for what he has given us. In the Choir, we recognize that God has given us this wonderful community in which to share our joys and sorrows with one another, encourage one another, and join together in making music.

During choir rehearsals throughout the year, we revel in fellowship, joy, and music. On Sunday mornings we do the same.

So here's a shameless plug for joining the choir---if you need a way to connect with the people of our congregation, start in the choir! When I first attended this church nearly 30 years ago, the choir and the music program was my first step in getting to know so many of you. Yes, we sing all year long, but we love the offering we bring to God each Sunday. Talk to me after church or contact me at music@myfumc.net or call the church office—I would be glad to get you started!

Mary Ellen

CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATE

Thanks to the efforts of everyone in the church, we are at nearly 100% participation in the church directory. A record breaking number without a doubt! We have almost everyone's picture taken, or about to be taken! If we've contacted you and we haven't heard from you, we won't make any additional phone calls regarding a photo, but your name and address will still be in the directory. Now begins the long and tedious process of doing layout, data input of membership information, and proofing before we go to print. Thanks to everyone who made phone calls, follow-up phone calls, emails, and visits. A special thanks to Phil and Sandy Yapple who have spent many hours snapping pictures, editing, and being available to all the different schedules of our congregation.

SOUNDBOOTH UPDATE

In July two cameras were installed in the sanctuary! See if you can find them! These cameras will allow us to zoom in on some of our most prominent spots in the sanctuary (pulpit/choir loft, Children's Moment area, Communion area, Piano area) and have different angles. After many years of using "Easy Worship" as our software for creating content on the screens and at home, we will be transitioning to "Pro Presenter". Please keep the tech team in your prayers during this transition AND if your interested in serving on the tech team, please call the church office and let us know.

WE COULD USE SOME HELP!

Years ago the church was given a Cricut machine. Would you happen to know how to use it? Or do you want to learn how to use it? Mary Ellen and Pastor Kim are planning fall worship series ideas and would love to have some help creating graphics. If you are interested in sharing your Cricut skills, or want to develop some Cricut skills – please call the church office and let us know. We'd love to have your help!

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS

Sunday, August 11th during worship

Where has our summer gone? Before we know it, school buses will be out, kids with backpacks will be headed to school, and fall will be following quickly. Here at First UMC we are honoring this passage of time with a Blessing of the Backpacks.

Students are invited to bring their backpacks to worship on Sunday, August 11th for a special blessing. Backpack tags will be given to each student and some faith formation resources for families. If students forget their backpack or do not use one – no need to worry as blessings, tags, and resources are still available!

Let's send our students and their families back to school knowing that we are praying for them and our schools.

WELCOME NEW NEIGHBORS!

On Sunday, Aug. 4 Crosspointe Church of Christ will begin worshipping and working out of the former Bethlehem Lutheran Church building. As their service starts at 11, let us be good neighbors and not use their parking lot so that there is plenty of space for their members. If there is no on street parking or spaces in our church lot, please park in the library lot.



YOU ARE INVITED TO COME TO SUNDAY SCHOOL!

On Sunday, August 4th, our adult Sunday School class begins a NEW series, "Women of the Bible: Old Testament". There will be eleven lessons, each one stands alone. The adult Sunday School class meets in the chapel at 9:00. They finish in time for folks to get to choir or enjoy fellowship before worship. If you have any questions, please contact Johnny Schmitt or call the church office.

WELCOME BACK PASTOR DANIEL!

Pastor Daniel has been on Paternity leave since the birth of Elliette. He will be returning to the office and full time duties starting Aug. 11.

THANK YOU!



Thank you to our church family for your generous support of MAD Camp! Because of your generosity, no child was turned away because of an inability to pay the registration fee. Each child has their own craft kit and snacks are plentiful. Thank you to those who are donating their time and talent to making MAD Camp a great experience for each attendee.

The family of Jessica Harris would like to say Thank You for all the prayers, food, and help that you extended to us during this very difficult time. We have felt your love, concern, and prayers. To Linda S., Betsy K., and Mary Ellen C.—we can't thank you enough for the time and effort you spent on serving our family dinner after the funeral. We are truly humbled by the care and concern that has been shown to us.

Tyler, Gabi, Gavin, & Georgia Harris
Pam & Rick Fugett
Deanna & Alvin Bever
John Painter



Thank you First UMC for all of the cards and care you have shown to our friends that cannot be with us, in person. The Congregational Care team has received many words of appreciation for the outpouring of love from you.

Have you noticed how well groomed the outside of our church is looking? Well, you can thank those persons who have volunteered to maintain different parts of the landscaping. You may have seen Dr. Mark Frazer or Barb Balsmeyer or Brenda Byrd going about the business of keeping our grounds looking great! So if you see one of these people, or any others who are busy working outside the church tell them "Thanks"!



Mission Moment

An update from Dr. Les and Debbie Dornon, missionaries to Nepal working in the Tansen Hospital

Sita, 33, supports her family with daily labor, often carrying heavy loads. Her husband has only one leg, so she is the chief wage earner.

Life is hard for this family of 4, so arguments were common in their home. One evening, however, Sita left the room still muttering, but her husband noticed it got suddenly very quiet. He went and found Sita hanging with the same rope that she used every day to carry goods to earn money for the family.

Leaning on his crutches, he supported his wife's body and shouted for help. Neighbors came and she was taken to United Mission Hospital Tansen within 20 minutes. As first aid was administered, her breathing began to change to shallow, gasping breaths. Her husband noticed, and feeling guilty, started begging, "Save my wife!" Their daughter arrived then at the ER and was also angry with her father. This family had no money, but they knew that treatment was never denied at UMHT. They confidently asked the doctors to save her.

Dr R. knew that recovery was unlikely, but he remembered his senior doctors' teaching, "We serve patients with God's love and care for them like our own family." He admitted her into our HDU and put her on our ventilator. As he prayed for her recovery, he was glad to know our Medical Assistance Fund would cover the costs.

Sita survived, and as she woke the next day slowly recognized her husband and daughter. They smiled through their tears! After we extubated her, Sita thanked us and hugged her daughter – very happy to be alive. Before discharge, Sita and her husband had counseling and help from our Pastoral Care staff.

Four days later, Sita's husband said, "I love you" to her in front of the staff – showing his genuine love as they left happily together. We felt thankful that we were able to use the HDU and ventilator to be able to serve this family.



August Birthdays

- 1 John Tack
- 2 Imogene Orts
- 4 Debbie Hazelbaker
- 5 Karen Cooper
- 9 Steve Urso
- 12 Linda Snyder
- 13 Bev Urso
- 15 Ted Wilson
- 19 Charles Orth
- 20 Karol King
- 23 Nick Murphy
- 25 Rachel Hurley
- 26 Kathleen Darling,
- Cheryl Irwin
- 28 Bill Schaefer
- 29 Linda Fillnow

Happy Birthday!

August 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>Dates to Remember in September: September 2: Labor Day/Church Office Closed September 6: First Friday Concert @ Noon</p>						
<p>4 COMMUNION 9 am Sunday School 10:30 Worship</p>	<p>5 8 am Breakfast Club</p>	<p>6 1 pm SPRC 2 pm Pantry</p>	<p>7 No Choir</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>11 BLESSING OF BACKPACKS 9 am Sunday School 10:30 Worship 2 pm Friends Road Rally</p>	<p>12 8 am Breakfast Club 6 pm Legal Clinic</p>	<p>13 10 am Memorial Mtg. 2 pm Pantry</p>	<p>14 7 pm Choir</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16 AMBASSADOR DEADLINE</p>	<p>17 9 am Hope Circle @ Bob Evans</p>
<p>18 9 am Sunday School 10:30 Worship</p>	<p>19 8 am Breakfast Club</p>	<p>20 2 pm Pantry 5:30 pm Finance 6:00 pm Council</p>	<p>21 NO Choir</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>
<p>25 9 am Sunday School 10:30 Worship</p>	<p>26 8 am Breakfast Club</p>	<p>27 2 pm Pantry 6:30 pm Trustees</p>	<p>28 7 pm Choir</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>





2024 First Friday Concert & Artist Series

**August 2, 2024
Edde Osborne**

**Beat the heat and hear some of the
coolest sounds of summer.**

**First UMC - Middletown
@noon
Free Admission**

first church
MIDDLETOWN
a united methodist community
120 South Broad Street
Middletown, OH 45044