



The Ambassador

December 2024

January 2025

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Praying that you are filled with the joy of the season!

Betsy 

Susan 

Pastor Kim 

Daniel 

Mary Ellen 

Pam 

Greg 

Staff

Senior Pastor Kim Armentrout
Assoc. Pastor Daniel Cardenas
Worship Mary Ellen Clinard
Building Supt. Greg Cooper
Office Mgr. Pam Fugett
Treasurer Betsy Koval
Financial Secy. Susan Beagle

Contact Us

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Worship With Us

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

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December Worship Schedule

We are familiar with the Advent words of hope, peace, joy, and love. This Advent we are adding the words humility, splendor, rejoice, and lifted to our vocabulary as we reflect upon this season of preparing for the coming of Christ. You can expand your experience of Advent by signing up for a daily Advent word and meditation at adventword.org

<u>Date</u>	<u>Message</u>	<u>Scriptures</u>
1 December	Humility	Jeremiah 33:14-16 & Luke 21:25-36
8 December	Splendor	Malachi 3:1-4 & Luke 3:1-6
15 December	Rejoice	Zephaniah 3:14-20 & Philippians 4:4-7
22 December	Lifted	Micah 5:2-5a & Luke 1:39-55

Advent Resources

In addition to the AdventWord, There are several coloring pages available in the Commons on the display case, along with examples of how to use them.



Christmas Eve Worship

Join us for one or both of our Christmas Eve worship services. We will hear the Christmas story, sing Christmas carols, have special music, and celebrate holy communion at our morning worship service at 10:30.

In the evening, festive music begins at 7 and worship formally begins at 7:30. In addition to hearing the Christmas story and singing carols, this is our candlelight service and our choir will be singing.

Both worship experiences offer you the opportunity to celebrate the birth of Christ our Lord! Please plan on being with us on this holy day and please invite someone to join you. Invitations will be in the worship bulletin beginning December 8th!



Young People's Christmas Program

Sunday, December 15th

10:30 worship service

Our young people are leading us in Luke's telling of the Christmas story. Join us in worship for carols and scripture. The young people are rehearsing on Saturday, December 14th at 9:30 a.m. If you have a young person that you would like to participate, please call the church office and let us know. We have a part just waiting for you!

Shalom Tree-NEW this year!

Did you know that both Triple Moon Café and Foodez Café downtown have a program called "Friday Place" that offers free meals to the homeless on Fridays? Through donations, these two local downtown business offer the meals and they are paid for through those funds. The meals are offered for free as long as there are funds in the account.

At a recent SHALOM meeting, the SHALOM volunteers were asked what were the most needed donations that people could give. The top 2 items were:

- 1) Adult sized hats and gloves
- 2) Gift cards and donations for laundry cards, and "Friday Place".

A tree will be placed in the Commons where the hats and gloves can be attached with clothes pins. There will be a donation box for cash or checks as donations for laundry cards and "Friday Place" meals. The staff will collect these and divide the contributions between the 3 giving areas. Thanks so much for being so generous this season!



Our Church is on the South Main Street Historic Tour

Our church will be on the South Main Street Historic Homes Tour on Sunday, Dec. 8 from 2-8 pm. Volunteers are needed to greet guests and pass out brochures. There's a sign up sheet in the North Foyer offering ½ hour time slots. Sign up for as many as you can! We will be having a Community Carol Sing at 2, 4, and 6pm. This is a great opportunity to share the beauty of our sanctuary with others and they often share personal stories with us about their memories of our church! Always interesting and fun!



“New Year, new chance”
Joshua 3:1-6



New Year's Eve is a time of reflection and resolution. We usually think of the year we are leaving behind. We remember all the good things we accomplished and try to reform the things we didn't. We set new and old resolutions for the coming year and decide how to reach those goals.

But not only do we set goals and resolutions, most of the time we fear the beginning of a new year. We do not know what the new year will bring us or our family. We fear many things like sickness, accidents, bankruptcy, etc.

New Year's Eve is kind of a mix of emotions: on one side we feel excited to start another year but on the other hand, we feel afraid because we do not know what the year will bring.

That reminds me of the people of Israel. They felt the same way when they faced the Promised Land. They were so excited to go there and take what God promised them. Taking the land meant to be a free nation, to own a piece of land to raise their children. But going into that land meant something new and unknown. Joshua and another eleven men went to check out the land and they brought a report of giants and warriors, so the people were afraid to enter the new land. Like us every new year, the people of God felt happiness and fear.

However, God reminded them that the Lord would guide them through the unknown land. God gave the promise of land to own, so God would stand by that promise. The Lord would be with them to take that land no matter the obstacles or the problems. God would be with them.

In the same way, God promised to be with us when we began in 2024, and God never let us down. Now, facing a new year, we should be sure that the Lord will be with us through 2025. God will guide us; God will strengthen us; God will encourage us; and God will empower us to walk through this coming new year.

“Then Joshua told the people, “Purify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do great wonders among you.” Joshua 3:5 (NLT)

Con cariño y amor.
Rev. Daniel Cardenas





2025 Commitment Cards

The commitment cards for 2025 were sent out in November and we received them as an act of worship on Sunday, November 24th. If you did not receive your card or if you did not turn it in yet, there is still time to do so. Simply send your card to the church office c/o Susan Beagle, our Financial Secretary. If you have any questions, or if you need a commitment card, please call the church office and let us know. Thank you!

Disciplines

A Book of Daily Devotions for 2025

Join other church members in a daily devotional time that will help you deepen your relationship with Christ. Each week the devotional offers a theme, a weekly overview, and questions that guide the daily devotions. Then each day a scripture reading, prayer, and reflection is offered. While the devotional is designed for individual use, other members of your church family will be using the same devotional resource so we will be sharing in the same journey.

Pastor Kim has ordered a regular print and large print for you to glance through to see if this is a resource you want to try. When the sample copies come in they will be on display on the desk in The Commons. A sign up sheet will be there as well for you to reserve your copy. Cost for the devotional is \$18 for regular print and \$20 for large print. Scholarships are available to cover the cost. Call the church office if you have any questions.

Resilient

January Worship Series

A new worship series begins on January 5th as the wise men usher in lessons on being **Resilient**. These travelers were ordered to return to Herod so that he could pay honor to the Christ child. But the wise men were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, so they left the country, refusing Herod's order. In their resistance they show us a way to stay true to who we are and who we are called to be no matter what is happening around us.

Date

5 January
12 January
19 January
26 January

Message

Saying No
Saying Yes
The Extraordinary Ordinary
Knowing Who You Are

Scripture

Matthew 2:1-12
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22
John 2:1-11
Luke 4:14-21

Mission Moment

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

Caron, age 81, fell at her home while doing her morning chores. She lives with her daughter-in-law and 2 grandchildren. She was taken to the local health post, but they referred her to our hospital as they could not help her. Unfortunately, they were not able to come straight away to the hospital due to lack of finances. They received help from their village to pay for transport, and finally came to the ER. She was seen by the orthopedic surgeon who said she needed to be admitted for treatment. The family at first refused this and just asked for a plaster cast to be put on so that they could return home. However, the orthopedic surgeon counselled them to stay and referred them to social services for a financial assessment. Caron was then admitted to the hospital.

Caron's husband ran off to India over 30 years ago and has made no contact since. No one knows what happened to him. Her two daughters married and also moved to India and do not keep in touch. Her son went to India 8 years ago and also has not been in touch or sent any support. For food and living expenses, this family is dependent on the allowance that Caron gets from the government, and the daily wages the daughter-in-law can earn. They have a small field which can grow enough to provide for 1 – 2 months, but it is a daily struggle. The grandchildren are getting a free education due to the family's poor financial status.



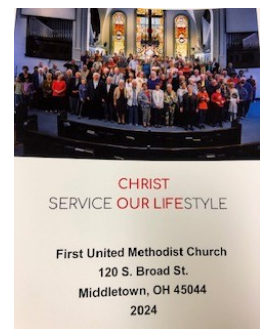
Thanks to the Medical assistance fund here (with gifts sent by friends from overseas) Caron was able to get the needed operation to repair her hip fracture, along with physiotherapy so she could walk again. The fund also provided for her meals while she was in the hospital.

When Caron left, she expressed great thanks that even at age 81, the hospital cared for her and provided for her so that she could resume her daily life. We are thankful for prayers and support from friends like you who enable us to care for women like Caron who have no other options.

Love, Debbie & Les Dornon

2024 Church Directory

The 2024 Church Directory has been distributed and pew copies are in the pews. If you have not received a directory and would like one, please call the church office.



Charge Conference Update

Our annual Charge Conference was held on Tues. Nov. 19th. Pastors compensations were set. Leadership was elected and a membership report was received. Below is the Leadership report.

First United Methodist Church
Leadership 2025
Approved at Charge Conference

Administrative Council

Chair	John Andrews
Secretary	Pam Fugett
Worship	Mary Ellen Clinard
SPRC	Barb Balsmeyer
Trustees	TBD
Finance	John Hoffman
United Women in Faith	Tammy White
Community Ministries	Vickie Frazer
Memorials	Tom Heberling
Congregational Care	Nancy Heberling
Keeping in Touch	Sally Jo Inwood
Treasurer	Betsy Koval
Lay Leader	Mary Mauer
Lay Delegate	Mark Frazer
Alternative Lay Delegate	
At Large Members	Rose Morgan Dave Balsmeyer Dan Hausman Linda Schmitt

Trustees

Chair – TBD

Staff Liaison – Greg Cooper

2025

Sally Jo Inwood
Cecil Jackson
Tom Heberling

2026

Steve Swank
Barb Orth
Nick Murphy
Matt Dixon

2027

Mark Frazer
Phil Yaple
Bill Alderton

Investments

Chair – Tom Hazelbaker

Secretary – Debbie Taylor

Trustees – chair

John Beagle	Ron Spaulding	Lance Weinrich	Bill Thorn
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Chair – Barb Balsmeyer

Vice Chair – Sally Jo Inwood

Staff Liaison – Kim Armentrout

2025

Rick Lyke

Linda Goecke

John Hoffman

2026

Barb Balsmeyer

JC Shew

Melanie Alderton

Sue Faulkner

2027

Dee Young

Sally Jo Inwood

Ken Krummrich

Finance

Chair – John Hoffman

Assistant Financial Secretary – Mary Maurer

Treasurer – Betsy Koval

2025

John Andrews

Carolyn Tucker

Randolph Symon

2026

Tom Buchert

Linda Schmitt

Larry Fillnow

2027

Mike Freeman

Dan Hausman

John Hoffman

Worship

Chair – Mary Ellen Clinard

Sally Jo Inwood

Betsy Koval

Kathy Lambert

Pat Gibson

Sue Moore

Linda Fillnow

Communion Stewards: Karen Cooper, Anahí Hernandez, Petra Morales

Community Ministries Council

Chair: Vickie Frazer

Staff Liaison – Kim Armentrout

Steve Swank - SHALOM rep

Terry Stephens

Linda Schmitt

Brenda Byrd

Vickie Frazer

Pam Fugett

Congregational Care

Chair – Nancy Heberling

Staff Liaison – Kim Armentrout

Barb Wright

Carol Byrd

Anita Shew

Brenda Byrd

Sally Jo Inwood

Mary Nichols

Dee Young

Ken Krummrich

Jim Gayhart

Lynda Goecke

Mark Frazer

Sandy Shiflett

Keeping in Touch – Sally Jo Inwood

Historical Committee

Chair – Linda Snyder

Staff Liaison – Kim Armentrout

Carol Byrd	Dee Markle	Gary Fourman
Don Burley	Donna Burley	Karen Deddens
Tom Atkinson (Archivist)		

Memorial Committee

Chair – Tom Heberling

Staff Liaison – Kim Armentrout

Mary Maurer	Patt Gibson	Carolyn Tucker
Karen Cooper	Mary Nichols	Sally Jo Inwood

Nominations

Chair – Kim Armentrout

Anita Shew	Debbie Taylor	Greg Cooper	Larry Fillnow
Betsy Koval	Daniel Cardenas	Linda Schmitt	Mike Snyder
Sandy Yaple	Dee Young		

Library Coordinator – Anita Shew

Junior Church/Children's Ministry Team:

Chair – Kim Armentrout

Belinda Hausman	Carol Byrd	Pam Fugett	Debbie Ellis
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Nursery Coordinator – Susan Beagle

Acolyte Coordinator – Nick & Angela Murphy

Junior Church Teachers and Helper

Barb Orth	Linda Snyder	Belinda Hausman	Pam Fugett
Dave & Patty McGraw	Carol Byrd	Linda Schmitt	Destiny Back
Tim & Sue Hezlip			

Congregational Life

Chair – Linda Schmitt

Betsy Koval	Mary Nichols	Sue Moore	Vickie Frazer
Debbie Taylor			

Legacy Committee

Chair: John Hoffman


Staff Liaison: Kim Armentrout

Tom Hazelbaker	Don Burley	Mike Snyder
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December 2024


December Birthdays

- 4 Tommy Dixon-Gordon
- 7 Allison Palmer
- 16 Marcia Greenham,
- Cecil Jackson
- 22 Kathy Wright
- 24 Tom Buchert
- 25 Rick Lyke
- 26 Ashley Palmer,
- Cory Smarzinski,
- David Young
- 28 Dee Markle
- 29 Nita Driscoll
- 30 Duane Gordon,
- Belinda Hausman

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 1st Sunday of Advent 9am Sunday School 10:30 Worship	2 8am Breakfast Club	3 10am Staff Meeting 2pm Pantry	4 Choir Christmas Party 6pm 6pm Hispanic Bible Study	5	6 Noon: First Friday Concert—Harps of Grace	7 2pm UMF Christmas Tea
8 2nd Sunday of Advent 9am Sunday School 10:30 Worship 2-8 pm S. Main Historic Homes Tour	9 8am Breakfast Club 6 pm Legal Clinic	10 10am Staff Meeting 1 pm SPRC 2 pm Congr. Care 2pm Pantry 5:30pm Community Christmas Dinner	11 3 & 7pm Choir Rhrls 6pm Hispanic Bible	12	13	14 9:30am Breakfast/ Rehearsal for Children's Christmas Play
15 3rd Sunday of Advent 9am Sunday School 10:30 Worship Children's Christmas Program UWF Cookie Walk	16 8am Breakfast Club	17 10am Staff Meeting 2pm Pantry	18 3 & 7pm Choir Rhrls 6pm Hispanic Bible	19	20	21
22 4th Sunday of Advent 9am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship	23 8am Breakfast Club	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 10:30 am Communion Service 7pm Music 7:30 Candlelight Service NO Pantry	25 CHRISTMAS DAY/ OFFICE CLOSED NO Choir Rhrls	26 OFFICE CLOSED	27 OFFICE CLOSED	28 
29 9am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship	30 8am Breakfast Club	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE NO Pantry				

January 2025



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Dates to Remember in Feb. Feb. 17: Office Closed. President's Day			1 NEW YEARS DAY OFFICE CLOSED	2	3 Noon: First Friday Concert—Jimmie Rogers	4
5 Epiphany Sunday 9am Sunday School 10:30 Worship	6 8am Breakfast Club	7 10am Staff Meeting 2pm Pantry	8 3 & 7pm Choir Rhrls 6pm Hispanic Bible Study	9 2 pm Elizabeth Circle @ Mt. Pleasant	10 10am UWF Board	11
12 9am Sunday School 10:30 Worship	13 8am Breakfast Club 6 pm Legal Clinic	14 10am Staff Meeting 1pm SPRC 2pm Pantry	15 3 & 7pm Choir Rhrls 6pm Hispanic Bible Study	16	17	18 9 am Hope Circle @ Bob Evans
19 9am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship	20 Martin Luther King Day OFFICE CLOSED 8am Breakfast Club	21 10am Staff Meeting 2pm Pantry 5:30pm Finance 6pm Admin Coucil	22 3 & 7pm Choir Rhrls 6pm Hispanic Bible Study	23	24	25
26 9am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship	27 8am Breakfast Club	28 10am Staff Meeting 2pm Pantry 6:30pm Trustees	29 3 & 7pm Choir Rhrls 6pm Hispanic Bible Study	30	31	

- 4 Sue Faulkner
- 6 Betsy Koval
- 9 Glenna Combs
- 10 Chris Urso
- 14 Ken Krummrich
- 13 Kathy Hieber
- 16 John Andrews
- 22 Anthony Hurrigan
- 22 Pat Schaefer
- 28 Wilma Mucha



2024 First Friday Concert & Artist Series

December 6, 2024

Harps of Grace

Capture a moment of peaceful reflection to prepare yourself for all those holiday events by listening to heavenly harps! Make this your official start to the Christmas Season.

First UMC - Middletown

@noon

Free Admission

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