

The First Connection

a publication of Mason First United Methodist Church

January 2018



Sermon Plan for January

- January 7 Epiphany Sunday**
Glenn Darling preaching.
Focus Passages: Acts 27 and 28
Theme: *In the Footsteps of Paul*
- January 14 Second Sunday after the Epiphany**
Focus Passages: Joshua 24:1-15; John 4:16-26; Micah 6:6-8
Theme: *Choose This Day*
- January 21 Third Sunday after the Epiphany**
Focus Passages: Genesis 21:8-21; Psalm 86:1-10; Jeremiah 20:7-13
Theme: *Outsiders*
- January 28 Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany**
Focus Passages: Samuel 6:1-19; Psalm 25:1-10; Proverbs 3:1-6



M&M Event, Sunday, January 21, 2018

The M&Ms group consists of (mostly) older adults, but anyone is welcome to join us! Our event this month is lunch and a movie. We will have lunch at the Delhi Café

beginning at 1:00 p.m. Please note that the lunch reservation is limited to 20 people. We will then return to church to view the movie "Mountain Top"- *An Appalachian small-town preacher who gave up his law practice years ago follows a calling back into the courtroom to solve a case that*



has roots deeply woven into his own life. The movie is based on the book by Robert Whitlow. Please sign up at the Caring Table. We will plan on meeting at the church parking lot to leave for the restaurant by 12:45 p.m. Please indicate if you can **DRIVE** (and take others with you), if you wish to **RIDE** with someone or if you will **MEET** us there. See Kim Wolfgang for details.

Looking Ahead-- Lenten Study

Pastor Donna will lead a Lenten Study for six weeks--from February 20/21 to March 27/28. To make this available to both those who work and those who prefer daytime studies, there will be two choices of timeslot for the study--Tuesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. or Wednesday mornings at 10:00 a.m. The study will be on Adam Hamilton's book *John: The Gospel of Light and Life*.

Please sign up at the Caring Table so that books may be ordered. Let's join together around the scriptures during the contemplative season of Lent.



Save the Date!

Lifetouch Photography will be taking pictures Friday, May 11 from 2:00-8:30 p.m. and Saturday, May 12 from 9:30-4:30 p.m. here at the church to update our church directory. If you missed out on having your picture taken for the directory in 2016, or if you weren't pleased with your photo, or if you're new to our congregation, please keep those dates free so we can schedule your photography session. Watch the bulletin and the newsletter for more details.



Pastor's Notes

by Rev. Donna Minarik

Have you ever heard the phrase “If you believe it, you can achieve it!” The Biblical equivalent of that phrase comes from Matthew 21:22, which says, “If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.”

In 2017, our congregation achieved many great things!

In terms of ministries, we have received the gift of leadership for our youth from several capable and faithful adults, Trevor, Lynn, and Dylan Goedert, Derick Zanger, Sarena Lundy, and Beth Bousfield. We have hired a Director of Children's Ministries, Brittany Beaune. These leaders are helping to maintain and grow our ministries to the youngest brothers and sisters in Christ here in our church. Our other ministries such as UMW and choirs continue to be strong and vital.

Financially, we have paid our mortgage faithfully, adding extra to our principal as your generous contributions permitted. This mortgage that was originally well over a million dollars was refinanced at \$530,000 with the first payment in September of 2016. In just 16 months, our balance has dropped below \$400,000, and we have saved thousands in interest over that time. Many cost savings have been identified also, and we are working hard to make your offerings do more for the glory of God.

This year, we have one more “great thing” we need to achieve. Those who have been around a while say that the roof on the fellowship hall has never really been right, and that it has leaked...less or more...for all of that time. The congregation has put good money after bad for these years, trying to patch and maintain it, with no real success. The trustees decided to pursue a “once and for all” solution, and had plans drawn up to enclose the wavy roof that has been at the root of the issues, adding new arched windows to replace the single pane cracked ones. The drawing is on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall for your review.

The project will cost around \$100,000, and the creative endowment committee and some of you who have already donated have come up with around \$50,000. Do you believe we can raise the rest? I do! If we believe it, if we pray about it, if we give generously toward it, we will do it!

One final thought...the architectural drawing and our progress in raising funds will be displayed just above the

tables the children use during coffee hour. I noticed that this week, and it touched my heart to think that the future generation...those who will worship and pray and continue to follow Jesus under this roof long after we are all gone on to glory, become part of the display. They are the inspiration for our generosity that will make their faith future a reality.

I believe it! Let's achieve it!

Pastor Donna

Leadership Change

Our District Superintendent, the Reverend Kennetha Bigham-Tsai will be the next Chief Connectional Ministries Officer of the Connectional Table, effective January 22, 2018. The Connectional Table discerns and articulates the vision for the church, stewarding the mission, ministries, and resources as determined by General Conference and in consultation with the Council of Bishops. The Reverend Dr. Jerome DeVine has been appointed to serve as District Superintendent of the Lansing District effective February 1, and will remain as Superintendent of our newly formed and as yet unnamed district after the merger of the Detroit and West Michigan Conferences is completed in July of 2018. Let us thank God for the ministry of Rev. Bigham-Tsai over these years, and pray for Rev. DeVine as he prepares to take his place as our leader.

Cookie Reminder



Thanks to all who provided cookies last month. Just a reminder that if your last name begins with V-Z we would appreciate it if you would provide cookies in January.

News of Our Church Family

Recovering at home following recent hospitalizations are Lou Ann Whiting, Walt Page, and Judy Husband. *(Please note: The hospitals do not notify the church when someone from our church family is admitted. Please ask a family member or a friend to let us know!)*

Christian sympathy is expressed to Bob and Kris Jupp on the loss of their son, Shannon Jupp; and to Gerry and Carole Bosshart on the death of Gerry's sister.

Our members or friends who are in assisted living, nursing homes, or hospice care:

Grand Haven Living Center, Lansing:

Gayle Gunns

Great Lakes Christian Home, Holt:

Doris Olsen

Green Acres, Mason:

Ruth Ann Ashley

Independence Village, East Lansing:

Carol Zanger

Ingham County Medical Care Facility, Okemos:

Char Bush

Jack Kammeraad

Vi Ramey

Medilodge of Clare:

Lula Oakley

Mason Christian Child Care Center

Happy New Year to all! We are excited to have our infant room full again with the addition of a toddler sibling. In fact, we are blessed to start the year with all the rooms filled.

The toddlers spent December hearing about the coming of baby Jesus, hearing several versions of the story. They were excited to paint special gifts for their parents, and even got to color special paper to wrap their present in.

The preschoolers ended 2017 by "visiting" other countries to see how they celebrate Christmas. Some of the places they "traveled" to included: England, Australia, Mexico and Canada. They also had a wonderful adventure "catching" the gingerbread man they made who escaped from the ovens in the kitchen. With the arrival of the new year the children



will again be working on an alphabet letter each week.

Finally, Campbell's has ended their label collections and we have removed the bin from the hall. We are still collecting used ink and toner cartridges to help us offset the cost of office items. Please put any used cartridges in the box in the hall outside the Asbury Fellowship Hall.

Tami Boyic, Director

Book Discussion Group Will Meet in February

The Book Discussion Group is taking a break in January but will resume on Thursday, February 8. We meet from 11:00-12:00 at the church and then many of us go to lunch afterward. Our book in February is "An Invisible Thread" by Laura Schroff. *"He asked for spare change; she kept walking. But something made her turn around and go back. They met nearly every week for years, and built an unexpected, life-changing friendship that has today spanned almost three decades.* The sign up sheet will be available later in the month at the Caring Table. See Kim Wolfgang for details.



Leadership List - 2018

At our church conference in November, we elected the leadership for our church in 2018. These leaders assume their roles on January 1. Please take a moment to thank the leaders who have served but who have moved off of their committees on December 31:

- Russ Whipple - Finance Committee member-at-large
- Cheryl Howe - Nominations Committee
- Deb Fennell - Mason Christan Child Care Center Board

Their leadership on behalf of the church has been valuable to our strength and growth in ministry. Thanks to all who serve!

Church Council

Chair	Mike Buckner
Secretary	Marilyn Lautzenheiser
Pastor	Rev. Donna J. Minarik
Chair of Endowment	Judy Campbell
Chair of Finance	Paul Chapman
Chair of Scholarship Committee	Kim Wolfgang
Chair of SPRC	Dennis Howe
Chair of Trustees	Gerry Bosshart
Lay Leader	Deb Fennell
Treasurer	Glenn Darling
UMW Representative	Lynda Crandall
Children's Leader	Brittany Beaune
Youth Leader	Rotating
Lay Members to Annual Conference	Glenn Darling
	Deb Fennell
	TBD

Trustees

<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Brian Hankey	Larry Ried	Gerry Bosshart
Building Manager*	Connie Doss	Ryan Berridge
Endowment Chair**	Gary Ireland	Sylvia Rogers

*Remains a permanent part of the committee (currently Jeff Lautzenheiser)

**The chair of the endowment committee (currently Judy Campbell) reports to this committee

Staff Parish Relations Committee

<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Lillian Droscha	Judy Whipple	Lynda Crandall
Bart Crider	Norm Austin	Dennis Howe, Chair
Kim Sperry	Peggy Riggs	Colleen Sutberry

The lay leader (currently Deb Fennell) has voice but no vote on this committee, unless to break a tie vote.

Leadership List - 2018 (continued)

Committee on Lay Leadership and Nominations

Rev. Donna Minarik, Co-Chair

Deb Fennell, Lay Leader, Co-Chair

2018

TBD

2019

Marti Abbott

2020

Jon Droscha

Finance and Stewardship Committee

Paul Chapman	Chair
Glenn Darling	Treasurer
Mike Buckner	Church Council Chair
Glenn Darling	Lay Member to Annual Conference
Gerry Bosshart	Trustee Representative
Dennis Howe	SPRC Representative
Deb Fennell	Lay Leader
Judy Campbell	Endowment Chair
Carol Peek, 2018	Member at Large
Garrett Wheaton, 2019	Member at Large

Endowment Committee

Judy Campbell	Chair
Paul Chapman	Finance Representative
Gerry Bosshart	Trustee Representative
Kim Wolfgang	Member at Large
Duane Marlan	Member at Large
Lyle Funkhouser	Member at Large
Wayne Peek	Member at Large

Columbarium Work Group

Mike Buckner, Chair

Norm Austin

Cindy Howe

Scholarship Committee

Kim Wolfgang, Chair

Judy Campbell	Dennis Howe
Judy Forester	Marilyn Lautzenheiser
David Gunns	Sylvia Rogers

MCCCC Board

Tami Boyic, Director

Matt Gardner, Chair

Megan McCully	Lou Ann Whiting
Cheryl Howe	Glenn Darling
Rev. Donna Minarik	Debby Fosburg

United Methodist Women

Save the Date!

February 10, United Methodist Women are holding a Parent/Child Brunch. Remember the zoo animals last year? We expect to have another entertaining program that all generations will enjoy. Please sign up at the Caring Table so we know how many adults and how many smaller people to expect!

UMW Mission Giving

Ever wonder what Mason First UMW does with the proceeds of our fund-raising events? Internationally, in 2013 UMW Mission Giving funds supported 121 program for women, children, and youth carried out by 107 organizations in more than 110 countries. In 2017, Mason pledged and paid \$4,820.00 for these causes.

In addition, Mason First UMW donated \$4,500.00 directly to local organizations that we care about. In December we made gifts to Camp New Day, Capital Area Community Services for heating bills for local residents, the Mason Food Bank, Salvation Army, South Side Kitchen, Community House, Henderson Settlement, our quilting mission, and to Baby Boxes for Haiti.

Thank you for your support of us and, in turn, to these worthy projects.

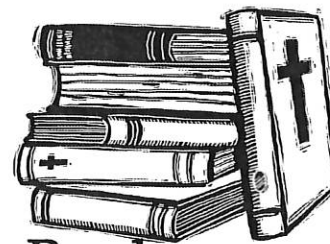


Winter Reading Giveaway

Your Library team has been working hard, pruning the church's library collection to make it more current, easier to use, and to make room for new titles.

The books taken out--weeded--are weeded for various reasons. Sometimes we have too many on the same subject, covers aren't appealing so they don't get checked out, outdated titles, or we have duplicates, etc.

The books that we no longer need ARE THE REAL NEWS TODAY! We are having a massive giveaway of these books this month. They comprise many interesting subjects, with the recurring themes, of course, centering on faith.



Book Giveaway

So, if you would like to read more about the apostles, child-rearing, caring for the elderly, divorce, church and world history, forgiveness, overcoming the problems of us all, and much, much more, please take a look at our giveaway table in the fellowship hall during the month of January.

Because you may keep whatever you take, if you don't have time to read them now, you have the luxury to read them later! (But with the long winter nights approaching, you might pick them up earlier than you thought!!)

Thanks!

Dorothy Stebleton, Librarian

Inclement Weather Policy

If Mason Public Schools are closed for inclement weather, all church activities for that day will be cancelled. (The Mason Christian Child Care Center has a different schedule regarding inclement weather.)

We will conduct Sunday morning activities unless weather conditions are extremely bad. Should conditions force the cancellation of Sunday activities, appropriate announcements will be provided to local television stations.

Happy New Year!

We have a couple of neat things to celebrate in this new year.



With our December mortgage, the balance owed has dropped below \$400,000. This means that in the first 16 months of our loan, we have paid off over \$130,000 (the original loan amount was \$530,000).

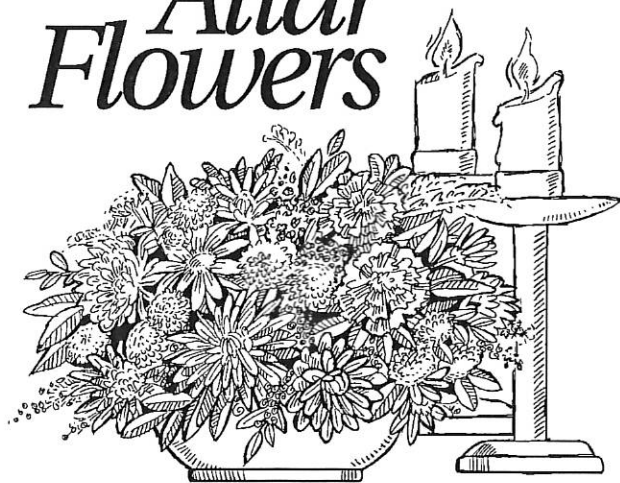
In December the church received another gift from the Halstead Trust. This trust generously makes a donation to several area churches twice a year. This gift exceeds \$1200 a year and goes into the General Fund to help pay ministry shares and other church expenses.

We are on track to pay approximately 70% of our ministry shares in 2017. This is a big improvement over 2015 when we paid 42% and the 24% we paid in 2016.

The Finance Committee is working with church staff to prepare for accepting credit and debit donations through a smartphone app. This should be ready to go early in 2018. Watch for an upcoming newsletter article for details on how to utilize this new donation option.

Glenn Darling,
Mason First UMC Financial Administrator/Treasurer

Altar Flowers



The 2018 Flower Calendar is on the bulletin board in the east hallway. Sign up if you'd like to provide altar flowers in honor of or in memory of someone.

Tuesday Night Potluck

The Tuesday Night Potluck continues Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m. Come and join us in the fellowship hall for food, fellowship, and fun. Let's make this a community outreach by inviting friends and neighbors. The more the merrier! Bring a dish to pass. The Hospitality Team provides tableware and drinks. Please note the article below when the youth will provide the dinner so we can just bring our appetite and not a dish to pass!



Youth Group Will Host the Tuesday Night Potluck on January 23

On Tuesday, January 23, join the youth group for the weekly potluck! Instead of bringing a dish to pass, bring yourself and your competitive spirit! Come and have dinner provided by the youth group and stay to play all sorts of games with the youth of the church. Hope to see you there. Dinner starts at 5:30 p.m.--free will offering greatly appreciated!



January 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Happy New Year!	2 1:30pm Clothing Bank 5:30pm Potluck 6:00pm Clothing Bank	3 9:00am UMW Mission Team Meeting 1:00pm Quilters 2:00pm PATH Group 7:00pm Handbells 8:00pm Chancel Choir	4 10:00am Arthritis Exercise 5:30pm Weight Watchers	5	6
7 9:30am Worship 11:00am Faithlink Class 2:30pm Ingham Festival Chorale 3:00pm Winter Jam Concert	8 10:00am Arthritis Exercise	9 4:00pm Carol Choir 5:30pm Potluck 6:00pm Girl Scouts 6:30pm Finance Committee	10 1:00pm Quilters 2:00pm PATH Group 7:00pm Handbells 8:00pm Chancel Choir	11 10:00am Arthritis Exercise 3:00pm Handchime Choir 4:00pm Carolier Choir 5:30pm Weight Watchers	12 Newsletter Deadline 1:00pm CACS Commodities	13
14 9:30am Worship 11:00am Faithlink Class 2:30pm Ingham Festival Chorale 6:30pm Youth Group	15 Church office closed in observance of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday	16 1:30pm Clothing Bank 4:00pm Carol Choir 5:30pm Potluck 6:00pm Girl Scouts 6:00pm Clothing Bank	17 9:15am Great Start 10:30am Great Start 1:00pm Quilters 2:00pm PATH Group 7:00pm Handbells 8:00pm Chancel Choir	18 10:00am Arthritis Exercise 3:00pm Handchime Choir 4:00pm Carolier Choir 5:30pm Weight Watchers	19	20
21 9:30am Worship 11:00am Faithlink Class 12:45pm M&M Event 2:30pm Ingham Festival Chorale 6:30pm Youth Group	22 10:00am Arthritis Exercise 5:30pm Alzheimer's Support Group 6:00pm Camp Meeting 7:00pm Trustees	23 9:00am Ruth Circle 4:00pm Carol Choir 5:30pm Youth Group Feeding the Potluck Group 6:00pm Girl Scouts 6:30pm Naomi Circle	24 9:15am Great Start 10:30am Great Start 1:00pm Quilters 1:00pm Deborah Circle 2:00pm PATH Group 7:00pm Handbells 8:00pm Chancel Choir	25 9:15am Rachel Circle 10:00am Arthritis Exercise 3:00pm Handchime Choir 4:00pm Carolier Choir 5:30pm Weight Watchers	26	27
28 9:30am Worship 11:00am Faithlink Class 2:30pm Ingham Festival Chorale 6:30pm Youth and Parent Meeting	29 10:00am Arthritis Exercise	30 4:00pm Carol Choir 5:30pm Potluck	31 9:15am Great Start 10:30am Great Start 1:00pm Quilters 2:00pm PATH Group 7:00pm Handbells 8:00pm Chancel Choir			