

The First Connection

a publication of Mason First United Methodist Church

April 2018



Sermon Plan for April

April 1

Easter!

Focus Passages: Luke 24:1-12;
Acts 10:34-43; Colossians 3:1-4
Theme: *New Life!*



April 8

Second Sunday of Easter

Deb Fennell preaching

April 15

Third Sunday of Easter

Focus Passages: John 20:19-22;
Isaiah 58:6-11

Theme: *Signs of Spring: April Showers*

April 22

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Focus Passages: John 21:1-22; Psalm 23
Theme: *Signs of Spring: Picnics*

April 29

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Focus Passages: Acts 1:6-14;
John 17:1-11

Theme: *Signs of Spring: Kites*

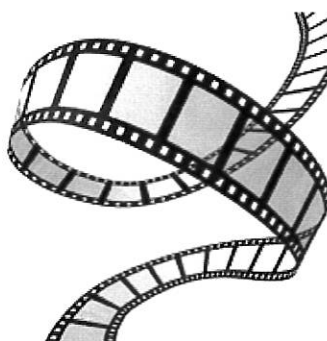
Church Directory on Your Phone

As part of our agreement with Lifetouch, the company that produces our church directory, we now have the ability to access the directory from a phone or PC. Unfortunately, there is no "app for that" that you can install to facilitate this. Instead, you just use your internet browser to go to this web address:

<https://mobiledirectory.lifetouch.com/329982/mason-first-united-methodist>

You will then be asked for a five character access code to open the directory. Our access code is FUM21. You should then be able to see the photos of our church members as they appear in the directory, along with their phone numbers. Note that some members do not have photos, but do have a phone number in the directory. Once you are in the directory, you can save a shortcut to the web address to your phone or PC home screen for easy access. If you have questions or are having trouble getting this to work, please see Glenn Darling in the church office.

M&M Event



M&M Event, Sunday, April 22, 2018 --Lunch and a movie! Join us for lunch at 1:00 p.m. at the Delhi Cafe. Movie ("*Wonder*") to follow in the One Room Sunday School at the church. Sign up at the Caring Table. See Kim Wolfgang for details.

"Giving More Efficiently"

On Monday, April 30, the Rev. Wayne Barrett, Senior Executive of the United Methodist Foundation will offer a presentation on *Giving More Efficiently*. The presentation will introduce ideas for you to use your current investments to avoid taxes in giving, and other strategies to plan your giving. The presentation will be held in the chapel at 6:30 p.m.

Pastor's Notes

by Rev. Donna Minarik

Howard Thurman (1900-1981) was a preacher, philosopher, educator, and civil rights leader. He was rated by *Life* magazine as one of the 12 best preachers in the nation, and *Ebony* magazine listed him as one of the 50 most influential figures in African American history. As I write this note as we move into Holy Week, I want to share with you this excerpt from his book *Meditations of the Heart*, published in 1953.

The Glad Surprise

There is ever something compelling and exhilarating about the glad surprise. The emphasis is upon *glad*. There are surprises that are shocking, startling, frightening, and bewildering. But the glad surprise is something different from all of these. It carries with it the element of elation, of life, of something over and beyond the surprise itself. The manifestation of this glad surprise in the world about us can best be witnessed in the coming of spring. It is ever a new thing, a glad surprise, the stirring of life at the end of winter. One day there seems to be no sign of life and then almost overnight, swelling buds, delicate blooms, blades of grass, bugs, insects – an entire world of newness everywhere. It is the glad surprise at the end of winter. Often the same experience comes at the end of a long tunnel of tragedy and tribulation. It is as if a man stumbling in the darkness, having lost his way, finds that the spot at which he falls is the foot of a stairway that leads from darkness into light. Such is the glad surprise.

This is what Easter means in the experience of the race. This is the resurrection! It is the announcement that life cannot ultimately be conquered by death, that there is no road that is at last swallowed up in an ultimate darkness, that there is strength added when the labors increase, that multiplied peace matches multiplied trials, that life is bottomed by the glad surprise.

May we each find in the blessings of the Easter season the glad surprise of life!

In His Light,

Pastor Donna



As of Sunday, March 25, we have reached our goal of \$100,000.00 to redo the fellowship hall roof. The work will begin around May 1. Thanks for your generosity!

Change Someone's Life With Camp

There are a ton of reasons we're proud to be United Methodists. One is our church's long history of providing camping opportunities for young people. Our Methodist camps, including Wesley Woods, Judson Collins, Lake Michigan, and so many others, are located on some of the most beautiful property in the world. They allow everyone to experience the breadth and depth of God in a loving environment. Our camps are living expressions of Wesley's approach to "nurturing in the faith." We gently plant seeds of God's presence in the hearts of children.



We are currently working to develop a dedicated fund to provide financial assistance for children attending our camps. Join us on April 15 during coffee hour. We'll be on hand and visible to answer any questions you might have about the programs our conference camping program offers. You may also donate to this new fund at any time. Please prayerfully consider what you can contribute to changing lives of the children and young adults in our congregation.

Blessings,

Wyl and Megan McCully

News of Our Church Family

Recovering at home following recent hospitalizations are Loretta Kraus, Garrett Wheaton, Beverly Pierpoint, and Diane McDonald.

Christian sympathy is expressed to Mark and Karen Page and their family on the loss of Mark's dad, Walt Page; to George and Jen Harnick and their family on the loss of Jen's grandfather; to Bob Jupp on the death of his wife, Kris Jupp; to the family of Don Jacot on his passing on March 12; and to the Revs. Donna and Carman Minarik on the death of Carman's dad.

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!)

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

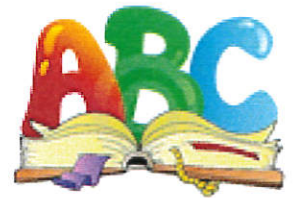
Vi Ramey

Mason Christian Child Care Center

Mason Christian Child Care Center is a mission of the Mason First United Methodist Church. The center is licensed by the State of Michigan to care for: 8 infants, 8 toddlers and 14 preschoolers for a total of 30 children based on its size. We are waiting for a new sibling to join us next month, making our center full.

At the center the toddlers and preschoolers pray before snacks and lunch. The toddlers have a few prayers they choose from and the preschoolers learn a new prayer every two months. Their current prayer is: Thank you God for food to eat. Thank you God for birds that sing. Thank you God for everything. Amen.

The children work their way through the alphabet one letter per week. We do this during the "school year" and review during the summer months when enrollment varies and the opportunities to be outside increase.



We have daily schedules for all the rooms, weekly lesson plans for the toddlers and preschoolers, and monthly lesson plans for the infant room. Included in those plans are Bible stories and a monthly Bible verse for the preschool room. Some of the recent verses included: "I trust in the Lord", "God gives us what we need" and "Do not forget to do good."

There are many wonderful learning opportunities at Mason Christian Child Care Center. It is a mission that enriches the lives of the many children and families it touches.

Tami Boyic, Director

Oops! Wrong Coat!

Wayne Peek discovered that he has a brown leather jacket, size 3X that is not his. Hopefully, the owner of this jacket has Wayne's brown leather jacket, size XL or XXL Tall. We're not sure of the brand but it may have a Holden Reid label in it. You can reach Wayne or Carol Peek at 676-



5097. Thanks for checking your closet.

Cookie Reminder

Thanks to all who provided cookies last month. Just a reminder that if your last name begins with E, F, or G, we would appreciate it if you would provide cookies in April.



“Keep Making Peace” **Seminar**

April 14, 2018 is the annual United Methodist Women-sponsored “*Keep Making Peace*” Seminar at East Lansing University United Methodist Church. This conference is open to all. The program this year is: “*Sharing God’s Grace in Perilous Times.*” Keynoters for the day are internationally renowned Bible teacher, the Rev. Grace Imathiu of Community UMC, Naperville, Illinois and Dr. Miguel A. De La Torre, Professor of Social Ethics and Latinx Studies at Iliff School of Theology. Professor De La Torre will address the question, “*Can Peacemakers Overturn the Temple’s Tables?*”

Workshop leaders are Dr. Charles Ballard, Michigan State University, (“*Overcoming Income and Wealth Inequality*”) and the Rev. Bill Wylie-Kellerman, United Methodist pastor and non-violent community activist (“*The Poor People’s Campaign in Michigan*”).

“Blessed are the Peacemakers” is a high calling. How do Christian peacemakers practice the Good News of Jesus Christ in congregations polarized by partisan politics? How can local leaders and pastors get the gospel heard, believed, and lived?”

Google “*Keep Making Peace 2018*” to see the brochure and registration form for this event. Sign up at the Caring Table to car pool to this event.

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 that there won’t be a potluck on Tuesday, April 3, because of the rummage sale.



Children’s Ministry

Thank you to everyone who donated candy for our Easter Egg Hunt. It was a great success and the children had a great time!

Another important date that is coming up is Vacation Bible School! This year we will be at St. James Catholic Church. The dates are Monday, June 25 through Thursday, June 28 from 6:00 to 8:15 p.m. We will need lots of volunteers for this event! So, please let me know if you would like to participate. Job descriptions and more information will come at a later



date. Below is a link of a video for our theme this year.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kbv95TdeXXo&feature=youtu.be>

Thank you! - Brittany Beaune, Children’s Ministry Director

Spring Fling Bake Sale

The United Methodist Women are holding a bake sale during Spring Fling on Saturday, May 5.

We will appreciate receiving your donations of any kind of baked goods--all proceeds will be used for mission projects.

Breads, cinnamon rolls, cookies, pies, and muffins are the best sellers (cakes or cup cakes are not recommended as frosting melts if it is a warm day). There will be sign-up sheets on the Caring Table if you wish to provide items to sell or to help during the sale.

Donations may be left at the church on Friday, May 4 before 4:00 p.m., or

brought to our tent on Saturday morning on the corner of Ash and Barnes streets.

Call Ina Lyon at 676-1268 if you have any questions.

Thanks for your help.



Scholarship Applications Available

(Due in the church May 4, 2018)

Our church is blest to invest annually in young people by providing educational grants to qualified students. Our scholarship funds assist us in helping our youth with the tuition, books, room and board, and specific fees associated with pursuing a college education.

Applications for scholarship are available in the church office and must be turned in by Friday, May 4, at 4:00 p.m. It is recommended that, if interested, you pick up your application as soon as possible, as late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

Consideration will be given to students who have demonstrated faith and faithfulness within the First United Methodist Church of Mason and the community. We will also consider educational and vocational goals, financial need, and academic history. Graduating high school seniors as well as college students are eligible to apply.

All recipients will be acknowledged at the Graduation Sunday service on June 3. If you have any questions, please contact Marilyn Lautzenheiser in the church office (676-9449).

Change for Change

Our next Change for Change Sunday will be held on April 29 when we bring in our change (and dollars) to help with water projects around the world. The money we donate helps Living Water International in their continuing efforts to drill wells and provide the kind of training and community support which contributes to long term sustainability. Remember to bring in your change on Sunday, April 29.



April Youth Group Schedule

April 1 No Youth Group
April 8 Youth Group 6:30-8:30 p.m.
April 15 Youth Group 6:30-8:30 p.m.
April 22 Youth Group 6:30-8:30 p.m.
April 29 Youth Group 6:30-8:30 p.m.

April Financial Update

We continue to make great progress on paying down our mortgage. As of March 13, the amount remaining is \$381,837.

Our new mobile payment system is up and running and we have gotten several donations made through the Give+ mobile app. Giving through regular Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) and via Mobile is easy and convenient. Note that if you are considering donating a larger sum to the church, cash or a check is recommended. Below are examples of the fees for EFT donations as well as mobile:

	EFT %	EFT Per Transaction	EFT Total Fee	Mobile %	Mobile Per Transaction	Mobile Total Fee
rate	0.50	\$0.25		\$2.95	\$0.45	
\$100 gift	\$0.50	\$0.25	\$0.75	\$2.95	\$0.45	\$3.40
\$1000 gift	\$5.00	\$0.25	\$5.25	\$29.50	\$0.45	\$29.95
\$10,000 gift	\$50.00	\$0.25	\$50.25	\$295.00	\$0.45	\$295.45

Glenn Darling, Mason First United Methodist Church Financial Administrator

United Methodist Women

Fifty Years in Mission to Women, Children, Youth, and Men

It started in the mid-1960s when our Methodist Youth Fellowship members saw a need to provide some clothing



for those less fortunate. That was the humble beginning of an ever-growing mission which is now under the supervision of the United Methodist Women. Fifty years

later our free Clothing Bank is open twice a month on the first and third Tuesdays and on an emergency basis to people in need from throughout the greater Mason area.

The Clothing Bank provides a wide variety of clothing and accessories for women, men, and children. Several dedicated volunteers, both women and men, meet each Tuesday morning at the church to sort the donated items collected that week and to organize them in our clothing closet by size and type. Out-of-season items are stored for use when needed. Some surplus clothing is sent directly to Goodwill while cotton items that are worn are saved for a local furniture refinisher. We have received donations of returned shoes from a local shoe store as well as other items from local stores. The Clothing Bank also provides much needed bedding, which goes very quickly, as well as household items and small toys and books for children. Warm coats, hats and mittens for all ages go quickly in the fall.

Twice a year a rummage sale is held to clear the previous year's inventory of seasonal items and to offer clothing for the coming season. New donations for the rummage sale are welcome the week before and the week of the rummage sale. Proceeds from these sales are used by United Methodist Women to support a variety of local mission projects.

In 2017 the clothing bank was open to the public 21 days plus emergency calls. An approximate total of 182 different clients were served during 401 visits to the Clothing Bank. These people came from 15 different cities. Although Mason residents used it the most, clients came from

Dansville, Dimondale, Holt, Jackson, Lansing, Leslie, Onondaga, Stockbridge, and other are towns. In 2016 the Clothing Bank hours were extended to the evening hours of 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. to accommodate those who were unable to attend at the 1:30 to 3:30 times. The only requirement to receive items from the Bank is that the need be real (we depend on the honesty of the recipients) and the request to pay it forward when or if they get a chance. Each client is limited to two 13-gallon plastic bags of clothing per visit and no more than one visit per month.

Our inventory is always changing. Items that aren't sold at the annual rummage sales are donated to various organizations and churches. One Lansing area church re-sorts our excess clothing and distributes it to agencies for the homeless in the Detroit area.

The Spring Rummage Sale will be held April 6 and 7. We rely on your

many donations to make this mission a success. Gently worn and new clean, smoke-free clothing may be left during church office

hours in the bin at the bottom of the stairs near the circle drive entrance.

Thank you for your support for the last 50 years! If you are interested in being a part of our team of volunteers, contact Pat Mentzer at 676-4232.



Memorial Bricks

If you would like to purchase a Commemorative Brick for the Prayer Garden, there are forms available in the church office. The cost is \$85.00 for a 4" x 8" brick or \$150.00 for an 8" x 8" brick.