



The First Connection

a publication of

Mason First United Methodist Church

Growing in Faith, Serving Others, Sharing the Love of Christ

*All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful: the Lord God made them all.*

~ Cecil Frances Alexander

If I had to pick a favorite month of the year, October would certainly be a contender. October seems like a giant billboard reminder of how much God loves us. Our God – a creating God – didn’t just create the world for functionality; he also made it stunningly beautiful, and he gave us eyes to see it so that we could be dazzled. And just maybe we would remember to praise God for the wonders and beauty he brought forth for our enjoyment.

October is also a month of rich flavors – apple cider and fall harvest vegetables and sausages and hearty grainy breads. Again, God has outdone himself making the consumption of food for our bodies not just functional, but delicious and interesting and tantalizing and aromatic. This is a God who created so that we might experience joy and pleasure as we move through our day. This is a God who pays attention to detail, and no detail is too small or insignificant when it comes to the gifts God has created for us. What an awesome God!

October reminds me that even as things move from one phase of life to another, there are blessings to appreciate and so many things to be thankful for. And so, this October, I invite you to take some time to appreciate God’s artistry and express your thanksgiving to God. Know that you are loved and that God is at work still creating in your life and in the life of the church, and even as we mature into a new season, there is beauty and flavor and wonder to behold. Let us be thankful and have faith that God’s glory will continue to dazzle us and bless us.



Pastor Suzanne

How is it with your soul?

Fall Sermon Series

- Oct 3 *Soul Survivor*
- Oct 10 *Body & Soul*
- Oct 17 *Soul Smarts*
- Oct 24 *A Trusting Soul*



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“Faithful and Inclusive” Discussion Class Begins October 10th

There have been many times over the history of the church where our understanding of scripture has warred with our understanding of grace and has put us in turmoil over how we are to be church together. As the greater United Methodist Church prepares to make decisions about our future, now is the perfect time for us to have grace-filled conversations about what we might like our Mason First UMC to look like. How may we continue to worship and be church together as we seek to discern God’s word and way?

Please join us for this facilitated discussion class which runs for six weeks beginning Sunday, October 10 at 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. The class includes a video segment and discussion facilitated by Pastor Suzanne and Lay Leader, Deb Fennell.



We’re a year and a half into COVID, still riding the waves and wondering when this is ever going to end. Where have you seen God at work over the past year? As citizens divide over perspectives of personal liberty and civic responsibility, what clues has God provided us for these times? Our country is withdrawing its military presence in Afghanistan, and we’re torn between wanting an end to war and not wanting to see terrorism flourish again. And, of course, we don’t want to see innocent citizens oppressed and abused. How do we think theologically about these things and how do we pray? In times of economic distress, we want our country to provide a safety net for people losing their jobs and their homes, and yet we see “help wanted” signs in every business window. How do we process our desire for social justice through a lens of Christian and civic responsibility? And by the way... how is it with your soul?

Join us for Faith Chat – an online discussion of topics which challenge our faith. This is a drop-in class facilitated by Pastor Suzanne and Deb Fennell which meets on Tuesdays with a session at 10:00 a.m. and an evening session at 7:00 p.m. Please sign up or contact the church office with your email address so that you may receive the Zoom link to join in!

Do You Have Sunshine in Your Soul?

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism in the 1700s, created a unique set of questions for his Holy Club at Oxford. The intent of the questions was to help examine: How is it with your soul? I think we have all been touched by the darkness of the pandemic and political unrest. What we need is a big dose of sunshine in our souls. So let’s take a look at these questions from Wesley and see how we stack up in this self-examination. Here is the full list:



- Am I consciously or unconsciously creating the impression that I am better than I really am? In other words, am I a hypocrite?
- Do I confidentially pass on to others what has been said to me in confidence?
- Can I be trusted?
- Am I a slave to dress, friends, work or habits?
- Am I self-conscious, self-pitying, or self-justifying?
- Did the Bible live in me today?
- Do I give the Bible time to speak to me every day?
- Am I enjoying prayer?
- When did I last speak to someone else of my faith?
- Do I pray about the money I spend?
- Do I get to bed on time and get up on time?
- Do I disobey God in anything?
- Do I insist upon doing something about which my conscience is uneasy?
- Am I defeated in any part of my life?
- Am I jealous, impure, critical, irritable, touchy or distrustful?
- How do I spend my spare time?
- Am I proud?
- Do I thank God that I am not as other people, especially as the Pharisees who despised the publican?
- Is there anyone whom I fear, dislike, disown, criticize, hold a resentment toward or disregard? If so, what am I doing about it?
- Do I grumble or complain constantly?
- Is Christ real to me?

Please join us for

FALL KIDS FEST

FUN, GAMES, FOOD, & FRIENDS

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23rd

1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
UMC East Parking Lot

PUMPKIN PAINTING

FALL PHOTO OPS

FACE PAINTING, STORYTELLING,
PRIZES, DONUTS, CIDER, AND MORE!

Everyone is welcome to come
celebrate the fall season with us!

For more info or to see
where you can help,
please contact
Laurie Reed

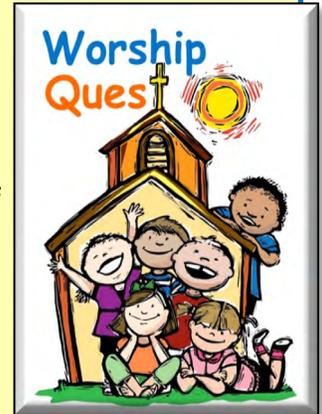
Please invite your friends & neighbors!



Worship Quest is off to a good start!

Appropriately enough, we began with the first book of the Bible, and have learned how we can be good caretakers of God's beautiful creation. Next, we will explore other interesting stories and characters from the book of Genesis. We're also practicing the Doxology, "God's Top Ten," and learning some fun songs.

Worship Quest is intended for kids in Preschool through 5th grade, and meets downstairs during Sunday worship.



If you are a teen or adult and would like to help with this ministry, please see Laurie Reed.

DRUM ROLL PLEASE!!!

THE MYSTERY OF THE
2022 SR. HIGH SUMMER
MISSION TRIP LOCATION
WILL BE REVEALED ON
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 24th DURING
OUR **IGNITE** EVENT!

IGNITE will also host the
SPAGHETTI DINNER FUNDRAISER
for the Youth Mission Trip on
Night of 1000 Blessings — Nov. 13th
and help as Elves in the Workshop for
Breakfast with Santa — Nov. 27th

IGNITE is our exciting new **YOUTH GROUP** for students in 6th-12th grade.

Kids can come alone, or they are welcome to bring a friend — just let Laurie Reed (Director of Family Ministries) know you are coming so she can plan accordingly. Please call the office at 676-9449 or email laurie@masonfirst.org

WHAT'S THE PLAN?

Sunday Nights 6-8pm

10/10 **EPIC NERF BATTLE**

10/24 **CORN MAZE**

11/07 **PIZZA & MOVIE**



Wonders never cease! On September 12, the day after sale, Pastor Suzanne reported the net proceeds from our recent rummage sale as \$3006.41. That was impressive. But... drumroll please... the proceeds now stand at \$4005.64! Jewelry that Elaine Ferris recognized as valuable was set aside and later sold to Liberty Coins for over \$900. If you have jewelry, whether you recognize it as valuable or not - please consider donating it to a future UMW rummage sale!

Proceeds from rummage sales and other events are used each December to support local, state, national and international missions. For example, in past years we have donated to: Greater Lansing Food Bank (supplies the Mason Food Bank), our local office for Capital Area Community Services, the R. J. Scheffel Memorial Toy Project (provides handmade toys for over 9,000 area children at Christmas), and Haven House of East Lansing, a shelter for abused women and children. We have also donated to the MSU Wesley Foundation at East Lansing University Methodist. It supports college students who, in turn, volunteer in the greater Lansing community, as well as the United Methodist Community House in Grand Rapids, Soaring for Children in Haiti, UMCOR, and others.

Our thanks to all those who donated, to all those who worked on this fall's rummage sale, and to those who shopped! Your efforts are appreciated by a wide range of very worthy charitable organizations.

Submitted by UMW Member Lynda Crandall



Fall has arrived and we are able to be busy again! Our first event was the RUMMAGE SALE — another success, with \$4005 income. Terrific!! Many thanks to all those who worked so diligently to make it happen.

We hosted the Mid Michigan District's Annual Meeting in true Mason First style. Again,

THANK YOU to all who helped make it so. The speaker was dynamic, and we would recommend Ellen Harbin if you are in need of an inspiring speaker. "Be the ONE" was her title. We had about 65 ladies attend. Extra special was Tim Crandall and Ruben Droscha who provided our special music. Then Pastor Suzanne spent the day with us as our pianist and provided the communion service for us. I personally felt she too added to Mason First's outstanding presentation. The District Team thanks you and I personally thank you, too.

We are planning to have our Cookie Sale, Craft Luncheon and Holiday Décor sale on November 11, 2021 so be thinking about what cookies you're going to provide.

The Circles will have met by the time you get this, finally able to get together. Next month I'll give you the results of our survey of members regarding cutting number or circles.

"And let us not grow weary with well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart." Galatians 6:9

Submitted by Joyce Plumhoff, UMW President

Clothing Bank Accepting Donations

The clothing bank is in need of clean, in-season clothes for the coming cold weather. Please drop them off during church office hours (9AM-3PM). Please put your bagged/boxed items inside the barrier-free entrance and someone will take them to the clothing bank.

Volunteers meet weekly to sort through donations, and the Clothing Bank is open for those seeking help the first and third Tuesdays of the month, from 1:30-3:30pm and 6-8pm. Thank you for your donations and to those to volunteer to make this mission possible.



Tiny Pantry Being Utilized Daily

Thank you to everyone who helps to keep the pantry stocked. Members of our church and the community at large bring non-perishable food items to fill it often. Others contribute funds so that our super shopper (Tim Crandall) can buy additional items that we keep stored here at the church for when the pantry needs to be filled, which is almost daily. We have many people in Mason who experience food insecurity and rely on the pantry to feed themselves or their families.

"Dinner in the Park" Opportunity

On the second Sunday of each month, Mason First friends team up with folks from other area churches and Cardboard Prophets to help serve the homeless at Reutter Park in Lansing, distributing donated clothing, toiletries, and other items. We could use your help to:

- Load up the truck at 12:30 after church.
- Unload/set up at the park and help those we serve find items they need 1:00-2:30(ish).
- Help pack up leftover items in the truck to return to church and unload about 3:30.

Night of a Thousand Blessings — Nov. 13

We hope you have marked this Saturday on your calendar to be part of this fun evening. IGNITE Youth Group will host a Spaghetti Dinner as a Fundraiser for their 2022 Mission Trip. After dinner, you will have the opportunity to visit different rooms in the church and participate in projects which will bless others. Our Mission Committee is looking for folks who can help to plan and staff these projects. Please contact Mike Buckner or Jill Bell if you can help out that night. More event details will be in next month's newsletter!

PRAYER CHAIN

If you believe in the power of prayer, WE WANT YOU! Mason First has an active Prayer Chain. We are looking for more people who want to be a part of this very important ministry, which requires confidentiality within the group. If you are interested in being a part of this chain gang, contact the church and we will link you up to Ruth Judd.

Have a Winning One?

We need you to help serve as an USHER or CURBSIDE GREETER! Please sign up at the Caring Table when you are in church or call Jean at the office to volunteer your smiling face and welcome others to church on Sundays!



A Message from Pastor Suzanne

Whenever I'm out and about and people ask, "Hey, what have you been up to?" or "How are things going?" I talk about the church... which makes sense, since it's pretty much all-consuming in my life! But I know that it is equally so for many of you! When people ask me those open-ended questions, it's a perfect opportunity for me to – dare I say brag? about all that our church is doing.

Last month, when one gentleman asked that question, I told him all about our Back-to-School Jubilee and he said, "Would it help if I wrote you a check for \$1000?" Why, yes it would! And, by the way, we worship Sunday mornings at 9:30 if you'd like to join us for worship and fellowship.

Sometimes, all you have to do is talk about what you're already doing and how you're already involved, and if you love it, people will be part of it with you (us)! So let's talk about it!

Here are some things you can talk about this month:

- Our women's ministry raised over \$4,000 in our fall rummage sale that will be going to help women and children here locally and around the world!
- Our family ministry is getting ready to hold an outdoor children's Fall Festival on October 23rd – it's going to be a lot of fun for the kids. If you know any families with children, be sure to let them know — it's free!
- Our church is getting ready to have an open discussion forum about what it means to be Faithful and Inclusive as the church and the world around us wrestles with LGBTQ issues. You're welcome to attend!
- Our clothing bank is making a push to bring in winter clothing and get them back out into the hands of local folks and the homeless of the Lansing area. Please feel free to bring your winter stuff or even come and help out! We could always use an extra pair of hands.
- Our pastor is doing a fall sermon series called "How is it with your soul?" It's got me thinking about how I'm taking care of myself spiritually. You're welcome to join us! We'd love to have you.
- Our Director of Family Ministries will be unveiling the youth mission trip destination this month and everyone's all abuzz about where they'll be going and what they'll be doing. If you know any teenagers who might like to get involved, tell them we'd love to include them in this amazing experience!



Have you ever had the opportunity to enter the front of the sanctuary and taken just a moment to examine the beautiful set of four windows that grace the choir loft? When the afternoon sun shines through them and no other lights are on, they are magnificent, as is their message.

*"I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD" John 10:11
My sheep hear my voice... I know them...
They follow me... I give them eternal life.*

Another beautiful thing is the altar — Special Thanks to Laurie Reed for creating this one that coincides with Pastor Suzanne's "How Is It With Your Soul?" fall sermon series.



If you have a small odd job, minor plumbing repair, or need a ride to an appointment, call the church office and we'll put you in touch with Brian Hankey and his crew!



Changes to Mobile Donations
 The phone app that some members of our congregation use to donate to the church is changing. Effective 9/30/2021 the VANCO GivePlus mobile app will no longer function. You will need to go the Play store and download the new Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement app in order to make donations after the end of September.

**METHODIST
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WHO IS THIS CUTE LITTLE LAD?



YOUR HINTS:
 Now an octogenarian (though his energy/activity level belie his age), this fine fellow is a man of many talents. Woodworking, photography (with a special love of barns), and playing with numbers are just a few of them. He has been active at Mason First for decades, and is known for pitching in whenever and wherever help is needed. Back in his childhood days, he might have received a postcard like the vintage one below...

Mason-Dansville Coats for Kids
Sat., Oct. 23 * 8am-2pm * St. James Church
 Donations of good, clean children's (and adult) coats, snow pants, hats/scarves, mittens/gloves, sweaters, fleece/flannel shirts, and boots are being collected now. We have a donation box here at Mason First in the hallway between the office and Fellowship Hall.



CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

Christian Sympathy is expressed to:
 • Doug and Luanne Dancer on the passing of his brother, Dennis, September 12.

Prayers & Healing Wishes to:
 • Jessie Morton who fell recently and was hospitalized but is now home recuperating.
 • Dick Magsig, who was in Sparrow for a couple weeks but returned to Dobie Rd.
 • Bill Campbell, who has several broken vertebrae and is going to Cleveland Clinic.
 • Steve Baker, who had open heart surgery at Cleveland Clinic and is now home.
 • Those who have been battling COVID.

Please note: Hospitals do not notify us when someone from our church family is admitted. Please let us know!

Thinking of members/friends in assisted living, rehab/nursing facilities, and hospice care:

- Green Acres, Mason: Nancy Dunivon, Beth Grosshans, Jeanette Strickland
- Holt Senior Care, Holt: George Dunivon
- Ingham Co. Medical Care Facility, Okemos: Char Bush, Dick Magsig & John Dodge
- The Willows of Okemos: Lew Tibbits
- Vista Springs Edgewood, Lansing: Garrett and Barbara Wheaton



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 10th * 2:00pm start
 Registration begins at 1pm that day —
 Walk begins and ends at All Saints Lutheran Church, located at 740 W. South Street.

ENDING HUNGER ONE STEP AT A TIME

crophungerwalk.org

INFORMATION/DONATION ENVELOPES
 are available at the Mason First office.
 If you want to lead a team, you can!



CANDY CORN RHYME

I'm a candy corn, orange, yellow and white,
 God is with me day and night.
 White is for my sins Jesus washed away,
 Orange is for my faith bursting forth each day.
 Yellow shines for joy and love so true,
 I want to be sweet and a blessing to you!

Being a Christian
 is like being a Pumpkin

God picks you from the patch and
 brings you in. (John 15:16)

Then washes all the dirt off of you.
 (2 Corinthians 5:17)

He opens you up and scoops out all the
 yucky stuff. He removes the seeds
 of doubt, hate, greed, etc.
 (Romans 6:6)

Then He carves you a new smiling
 face. (Psalm 71:23)

And He puts His light inside you to
 shine for all the world to see.
 (Matthew 5:16)

PUMPKIN CARVING IDEAS — CHURCH STYLE!



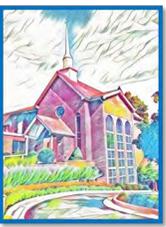
Count your Blessings

And
Name them
Day by day.
You'll be reminded

G Christ Jesus' love
O verflows to you,
R ight now, in
N early every way.

Jesus

Shine in Me



Mason First United Methodist Church

Growing in Faith, Serving Others, Sharing the Love of Christ

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Return Service Requested



JUST A FEW NOTES...

- Classes, meetings, and other activities are back on schedule here at church.
- The “main entrance” is up the big ramp, visible from the office suite.
- The main and barrier-free entrances are both unlocked during office hours.
- Office hours are Mon.-Fri. 9AM-3PM
- For security reasons, the circle drive doors on Ash St. remain locked, except for Clothing Bank days, special events, and Sunday morning service.
- Thank you to everyone for your help in fighting COVID, by wearing masks and using proper social distancing when moving throughout the church. We appreciate you!



SPECIAL EVENTS — MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

FALL KIDS’ FESTIVAL
Saturday, October 23

NIGHT OF 1000 BLESSINGS
Saturday, November 13

* IGNITE Youth will host a Spaghetti Dinner as a Mission Trip Fundraiser

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA
Saturday, November 27

* IGNITE Youth Group will help staff
“Santa’s Workshop”

LIVING NATIVITY
Saturday, December 11

October 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 9:30am Worship 11:00am Wired Word Class	4 6:30pm Toward Healing Group in Chapel 7:00pm Church Council Meeting in Fellowship Hall	5 10:00am Faith Chat ZOOM 1:30pm Clothing Bank 6:00pm Clothing Bank 7:00pm Faith Chat ZOOM 7:00pm Disciple Class	6 10:30am Bible Study 7:00pm Chancel Bell Choir 8:00pm Chancel Choir	7 11:00am Memorial Service for Philip & Sharon Workman 4:00pm Carolier Choir 5:30pm Widowed Companions Group	8 1:00pm CACS Commodities Distribution at Nazarene Church	9 1:00pm Bridal Shower (private) in Fellowship Hall
10 9:30am Worship 11:00am Wired Word Class 1:00pm Dinner in the Park 2:00pm CROP Walk 6:00pm IGNITE Youth Group NERF Battle 6:30pm Faithful & Inclusive Class	11 6:30pm Toward Healing Group in Chapel	12 10:00am Faith Chat ZOOM 7:00pm Disciple Class 7:00pm Faith Chat ZOOM	13 10:30am Bible Study 7:00pm Chancel Bell Choir 8:00pm Chancel Choir	14 4:00pm Carolier Choir 5:30pm Widowed Companions Group	15	16
17 9:30am Worship 11:00am Wired Word Class 6:30pm Faithful & Inclusive Class	18 5:30pm Caregivers Group in Chapel 6:30pm Toward Healing Group in Conf. Room 7:00pm Finance Comm. Meeting	19 10:00am Faith Chat ZOOM 1:30pm Clothing Bank 6:00pm Clothing Bank 7:00pm Disciple Class 7:00pm Faith Chat ZOOM	20 10:30am Bible Study 7:00pm Chancel Bell Choir 8:00pm Chancel Choir	21 4:00pm Carolier Choir 5:30pm Widowed Companions Group 6:30pm Annual Charge Conference via ZOOM	22	23 1:00pm FALL KIDS FEST! Join us for treats, fun and fellowship!
24 9:30am Worship 11:00am Wired Word Class 6:00pm IGNITE Youth Group CORN MAZE 6:30pm Faithful & Inclusive Class	25 6:30pm Toward Healing Group in Chapel 7:00pm Trustee Meeting	26 10:00am Faith Chat ZOOM 7:00pm Faith Chat ZOOM 7:00pm Disciple Class	27 9:00am Stephen Ministry Meeting in Conf. Room 10:30am Bible Study 7:00pm Chancel Bell Choir 8:00pm Chancel Choir	28 4:00pm Carolier Choir 5:30pm Widowed Companions Group	29	30
31 9:30am Worship 11:00am Wired Word Class						