

JANUARY 2023

The First Connection

a publication of
Mason First United Methodist Church

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



NEW EVERY MORNING ~ FAITH IN A NEW YEAR

WHAT'S NEW...

New Every Morning
A Sermon Series for a New Year!

Leading with Vision 2023

Chili Cook-off & Game Night

Euchre Party

Church Council and a Vision
for 2023

Superbowl Sub Sale

Celebrating Us
A Romantic Evening for Couples

Get Involved!
Volunteer Opportunities

Bright Future
New paint, a new look

LOOKING BACK...

What a great December!

UWF Good Works!

A year of generous mission!

One of my very favorite prayers is taken from the Morning Order of Worship found in our hymnal, and the prayer begins, "New every morning is your love, great God of light, and all day long you are working for good in the world." It's so uplifting to think, as we enter this new year, that God's love just keeps renewing every single day—new opportunities, new challenges, new experiences, new blessings. Whatever did or didn't happen in 2022, it's behind us now. We can reap the wisdom and rewards of our experiences—good and bad—but we cannot turn back the hands of time and undo them. We can only move forward toward a future where God's love is a constant, and God's calling on our lives is a given.

As we lean into the new year, what are you hoping for? What plans are you making to grow in your relationship with Christ? How are you planning to use your gifts and graces to serve others and to share the love of Christ? These things don't happen by accident; they happen because we intentionally open ourselves to God's renewing love, and accept God's invitation to discipleship. Then, we, too are made new!

So, too, does our church look forward to a new year; planning to thrive—not merely survive. New every morning is our call to be the presence of Christ in our community. New every morning is God's love for us... and all year long, we'll be working together for God's good in the world!

Have a happy and blessed New Year!



Pastor Suzanne

NEW EVERY MORNING ~ FAITH IN A NEW YEAR

January 8	<i>New Every Morning</i>
January 15	<i>All Stirred Up</i>
January 22	<i>Devoted Each Day</i>
January 29	<i>The Best Direction for a New Day</i>

NEW EVERY MORNING ~ THE SERIES CONTINUES!

February 5	<i>A New Faith</i>
February 12	<i>A New You</i>
February 19	<i>A New Church</i>



**Year Three of Living Nativity
Touching Hearts in our Community**

Hats off to everyone for their participation in the Living Nativity last month — we had a great set up crew who enjoyed much better weather than previously... here's a few shots of them in action, getting all the lights, signs, luminaries, and staging out during daylight hours. We had 300 cars come through during the course of the 3-hour event! THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU to everyone who played any role in this ministry to the greater Mason community, sharing the timeless story of God's greatest gift to us all.



Thanks to Kim Sperry for sharing photos of set up with us!



“Joyful Bell” Ringers on Christmas morning — a fun activity for all!



**Clothing Bank is Moving to
Mason Community Services Building**

After more than 50 years being located here in our church, the Clothing Bank is moving at the end of January to the new location for Mason Community Services at 118 W. Oak St. This is the brick building across from Jefferson Square Apts. that many folks may recall as the Mason School administration building. VITA Tax Service and the Diaper Bank will also be there, along with the already existing Food Bank.

This move will allow for one-stop shopping for folks utilizing services. Plus with a permanent set up, volunteers don't have to put clothing away after every open session. This leads to another change in hours — instead of twice a month, **the Clothing Bank will be open every Thursday from 11:00am-6:00pm beginning February 9th**. These hours are for folks seeking clothing, and also the only hours for people to donate clean, in-season clothing.

Note — we will no longer accept donations here at the church, as we have enough to move. If you have clothing you need to donate now, please take it to Volunteers of America. Otherwise, please bring it to the new location on February 9th.

**“Noisy Bucket” Offerings in 2023
a.k.a. “Change for Change”**

Last year, we ramped up our loose change offerings so that each month, we supported a different missional project, through a variety of organizations at the local, regional, national, and international levels. With just spare change, loose bills, and checks dropped in our buckets, you donated a total of \$4188 in 2022 — this helped designate us as an “Engaged” church in the Michigan conference.

We are continuing to put our buckets out each month, and will designate a recipient each month. For January, we will use it for local missions.

Offering Envelopes Available

If you turned in a pledge card indicating that you need a supply of either weekly or monthly envelopes, they are at the Connection Point for you to pick up. Simply find the box labeled with your name. If you didn't turn in a pledge card but would like envelopes, please visit Jean in the office for a supply that will last all year.

EVENTS COMING SOON...

EUCHRE NIGHT!!!

FRIDAY, JANUARY 27th

6:30pm in Fellowship Hall

B.Y.O.B. and a snack to share with your fellow friends victims of Pastor Suzanne as she shows us who is the best cut-throat euchre player here at Mason First! You don't have to bring a partner (single players welcome) — we just ask that you to sign up at the Connection Point so we set up enough tables and chairs for all!



SUPER BOWL SUB SALE

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12th

Pre-Orders taken Jan. 29 & Feb. 5

IGNITE Youth will once again be selling great subs as a fundraiser for their upcoming Mission Trip! Whether you watch the game or not, you can make it a WIN-WIN day by not having to cook and supporting a worthy cause! Like last year, you will have the option of ordering just a sandwich or a bonus bag with chips and a cookie.



FIRST ANNUAL CHILI COOK-OFF & GAME NIGHT

Sunday, January 22

5:00pm - 6:30pm

\$7 per person

or

\$20 per family

(Chili, dessert, and beverage included.)

~BOARD GAMES~

&

~CARD GAMES~

FUN FOR EVERYONE!



IGNITE puts the FUN in fundraiser!!

Celebrating Us

A Romantic Evening of Dinner & Conversation

Enjoy gourmet appetizers, dinner, and dessert accompanied by a fine sparkling cider, served at an intimate table for two in a romantic setting. As you dine, Rev. Suzanne will guide you through a fun evening of conversation-starters celebrating the best of your relationship, and helping you to anticipate all the good yet to come!

Friday, February 10 6:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Reservations Required
\$25/Couple

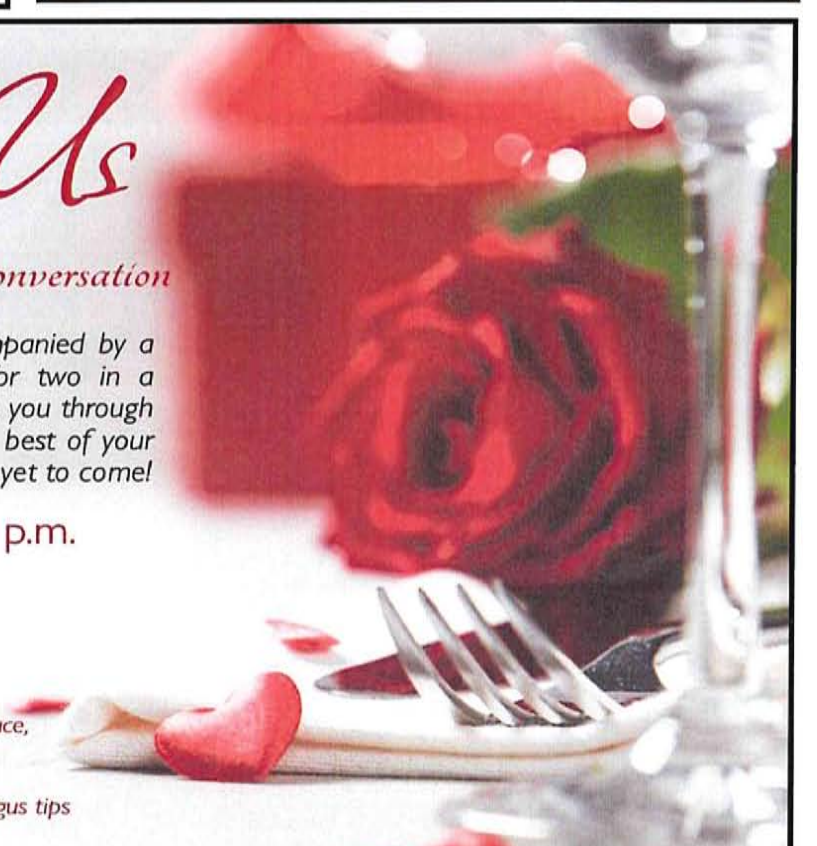
Menu Features:

Appetizers: Brie with honey & bruschetta, shrimp with cocktail sauce, saucy meatballs

Salad: Carmelized pear & pomegranate salad

Main Course: Chicken Wellington, Mushroom risotto with asparagus tips

Dessert: Berry Trifle or Chocolate Lava Cake



SHARING THE LOVE OF CHRIST...



You may have noticed a few changes here in the building since the first of the year...

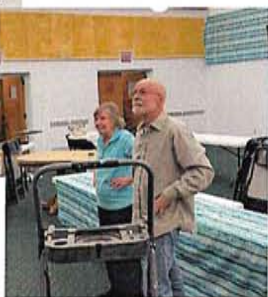
Painters were here for a couple of weeks, brightening up the atrium, hallways by the office suite and the chapel, and fellowship hall. We have

new lighting in a couple of hallways, courtesy of Ryan Berridge and the Bruton Electric crew. Volunteers have been sprucing up fellowship hall — Mark Wolfgang installed new TV's and cabling and Jeff Lautzenheiser, Kim Sperry, and Claudia Ireland have been recovering the acoustic panels.



The man with a nail gun and his supervisors.

We are so excited to see the first part of Phase 1 updates nearing completion, and appreciate everyone's patience as we work and meet around the ladders and other tools of the trade. We anticipate Phase 1 completion (new carpet), as soon as finances allow. A



sample of what will go in can be found at the Connection Point. Our painter said, "New carpet will really make this paint and fabric panels pop."

Thank you to everyone for contributing to *Bright Future!*



United Women in Faith

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid, do not be discouraged for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. Joshua 1:9"

What a great 2022 we had! Cheryl Howe brought us many interesting programs of the different missions we could help with, including Soaring Unlimited Women's Health and Birthing Center and the homeless here and the greater Lansing area. The needs are so great and every little bit we can do is a bigger help than we know.

Our fundraising went well — the rummage sales, craft sale lunch, and holiday cookie/decor sales were a lot of work but we did well enough to give several thousand dollars to five different programs: Capital Area Community Services, our own Tiny Pantry, R.J Scheffel Memorial toy project, Lansing City Rescue Mission Women Shelter, and UMCOR.

We also helped fund our Quilters, who donated 30 quilts to the Women's Shelter, 29 baby quilts and 15 burp cloths to Children's Closet at Plymouth Congregational Church, 20 quilts to Camp New Day, and 5 quilts to families at Christmas.

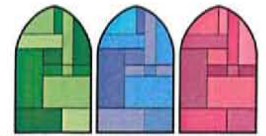
We are looking forward to the new year and new mission!

Claudia Ireland, UWF President

SUNDAY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

GREETERS & USHERS

Five friendly faces each week here at 9:00AM — three folks to staff our multiple entrances, and two ushers to give out bulletins and help visitors find their way around the church. If you can help, please sign up at the Connection Point or contact the church office.



Welcome to Worship



Tim Crandall and Elaine Ferris do a great job of running the slide show each week, but they would love to have another person (or two) to help share the schedule. Tim says it's "easy peasy" and he will train you. Call the church office if you are interested in this task!

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

Sympathies are extended to:

- Mike Buckner and family on the December 15th passing of his father, Douglas.
- The family of member Margaret Deeds (age 93), who passed on December 31st. Margaret's daughter, Deborah Spears, passed from cancer December 27th.
- The family of Rev. Robert "Bob" Wessman (age 92), who served Mason First as Associate Pastor 1978-1984. Many will remember his wife, Leslie and son, Dai.
- Marjorie Pulver and family on the passing of her brother, Bill Every on January 10th.

Our Prayers and Get Well Wishes are with:

- Wayne Rice, who has been hospitalized at McLaren for over a month, battling a serious respiratory illness.
- Martha Hosek, recovering at home after surgery.
- Chris Bement, recovering from recent cancer surgeries and soon to start radiation and chemotherapy.
- Phyllis Baisch, who was recently hospitalized.
- Our shut-ins and friends in assisted living/rehab.
- 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:

- Dansville Country Care Assisted Living: Dick Magsig
- Divine Nest Assisted Living (Leslie): Joyce Darling
- Green Acres Assisted Living (Mason):
Beth Grosshans and Jeanette Strickland
- Ingham Co. Medical Care Facility (Okemos):
Char Bush and John Dodge
- The Willows (Okemos): Lew Tibbits & Don Dickinson

January

BIRTHDAYS



Lena Berridge	6
Gary Howe	6
Erin Hogarth	7
Cindy Howe	7
Dorothy Stebleton	7
Ava Langschwager	8
Max Langschwager	8
Gerry Tibbits	8
Laurie Reed	9
Lyle Funkhouser	13
Amy Etzel	14
Brian Spyke	14
Cole Schanz.....	14
Michael Ireland.....	15
Gary VanderVeen.....	18

Tom Plumhoff.....	18
Ben Hedglen	19
Ruth Judd	19
Lillian Richard	20
Debby Fosburg.....	22
Alexandra Leonard.....	22
Gail VanderVeen.....	24
Roger Whiting	24
Jeanie Simpson.....	25
Lyndsay Aldrich.....	26
Colleen Molnar	27
Bud Arehart	28
Ruth Waltz	30
Andy Reed.....	31
Char Hankey	31

If your birthday or anniversary is not listed here and you would like it to be, please contact the church office so we can add it to our records and publish it.

January

ANNIVERSARIES



Michael & Chris Waltz.....	14
James & Suzanne Goodwin.....	18
Gary & Gail VanderVeen	22
Tim & Lynda Crandall	25
Ronald & Martha Allen	28

January 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:30am WORSHIP	2 HAPPY NEW YEAR -- Office closed for Holiday	3	4 7:00pm Chancel Bells 8:00pm Chancel Choir Practice in LL Choir Room	5	6 9:30am MOPS meets in LL Youth Room	7
8 9:30am WORSHIP 11:00am Wired Word Class in Chapel	9	10 4:00pm "Finding Peace in an Anxious World" Class in the Chapel 5:30pm Potluck in Fellowship Hall	11 10:30am Bible Study Group meets in Library 7:00pm Chancel Bells 8:00pm Chancel Choir Practice in LL Choir Room	12 3:00pm Clothing Bank open until 7pm	13	14 9:30am Leading with Vision Event
15 9:30am WORSHIP 10:30am TOWN HALL meeting following worship 11:00am Wired Word Class in Chapel	16 Church/Office closed for MLK Day 7:00pm Finance Committee Meeting in Chapel	17 4:00pm "Finding Peace in an Anxious World" Class in the Chapel 5:30pm Potluck in Fellowship Hall	18 10:30am Bible Study Group meets in Library 7:00pm Chancel Bells 8:00pm Chancel Choir Practice in LL Choir Room	19	20 9:30am MOPS meets in LL Youth Room	21
22 9:30am WORSHIP 11:00am Wired Word Class in Chapel 5:00pm Chili Cook-Off and Game Night	23 7:00pm Trustees Meeting in Chapel	24 UWF Circles in Chapel Mary-Martha 10:00am Rebekah 1:00pm Miriam 6:30pm 4:00pm "Finding Peace" Class in the Chapel 5:30pm Potluck in Fellowship Hall	25 10:30am Bible Study Group meets in Library 7:00pm Chancel Bells 8:00pm Chancel Choir Practice in LL Choir Room	26 3:00pm Clothing Bank open until 7pm	27 6:30pm Euchre Night	28
29 9:30am WORSHIP 11:00am Wired Word Class in Chapel	30 7:00pm Church Council Meeting in Fellowship Hall	31 4:00pm "Finding Peace in an Anxious World" Class in the Chapel 5:30pm Potluck in Fellowship Hall				