

# The First Connection

a publication of

Mason First United Methodist Church

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

## WHAT'S NEW...

*A New Sermon Series*

*New Fall Classes*

*New Staff*

*Jubilee Notes*

*Bright Future Update*

*Parsonage Updates*

*UWF Notes*

*Noisy Bucket Mission*

*Church Family News*

*Ignite Youth Kick-off*

*Children's Page*

*Save the Dates*

## *A Season of God's Love*

*God has made everything beautiful in its time. And he has put eternity into our hearts so that we cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.*

*Ecclesiastes 3:11*

The beauty of summer has not yet loosened its hold, and yet autumn is crowding in behind it ready to reveal a new season of God's glory. This text from Ecclesiastes reminds me that just as God has made everything beautiful in its time, God has also created a magnitude of life that extends beyond our scope of discovery. Just when you think you've figured it all out, behold! There's something new to learn and discover and appreciate.

I always enjoy this time in the life of the church when we begin a new season of classes and programs, the choir begins a new season of music preparation, and your pastor launches a new preaching series. All this "new" reminds us that no matter how old we are, there's so much more to learn and discover about God and about ourselves. I hope that you'll peruse this edition and look for opportunities to expand and deepen your relationship with God as together we continue *Growing in Faith, Serving Others, and Sharing the Love of Christ*. Enjoy the beauty of God's creation... but don't forget there's so much more where that came from!

In Christ,

*Pastor Suzanne*



## *REAL* The Game of



*A New Sermon Series beginning September 10*

## The Real Game of LIFE

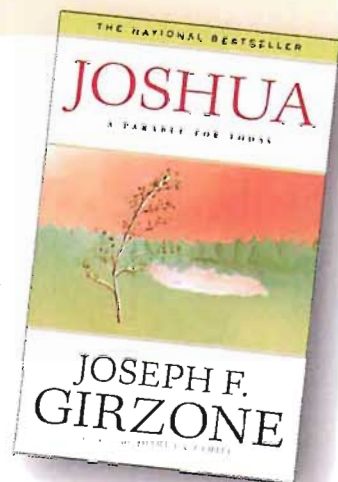
- Sept 10 The Game of Life
- Sept 17 Trivial Pursuit
- Sept 24 Chutes & Ladders
- Oct 1 Scrabble
- Oct 8 Sorry!
- Oct 15 Guess Who?
- Oct 22 Twister

## GROWING in FAITH

What would you do if Jesus was living up the street from you? Would you be suspicious of someone who seems to have powers beyond that of a normal man? What would you think of the one who can heal people?

Meet Joshua, a simple carpenter, who moves to a small cabin, appearing to seek nothing for himself. Despite his benevolence and self-less work, some remain suspicious. *Joshua, a Parable for Today* is a profoundly moving, deeply inspiring work of fiction sure to make you question your understanding of God and Jesus Christ.

Sometimes it happens. After two thousand years, the human race may be given a second chance. Join us for a six-week exploration of *Joshua, a Parable for Today* written by Joseph F. Girzone and facilitated by Dennis Howe. **Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.** (following Putluck). **Class begins September 19.** Sign up at the Connection Point. Books are \$11



It's the greatest book ever written, but it's so hard to understand! Who wrote it and what were they trying to say? How do we read the Bible with integrity and find truth within the cultural context of the times during which it was written?

The Bible still speaks to us today, but we have to be careful to not make it say things it was never meant to say. Join us for a critical look at how the Bible came to be the holy scriptures of today, and find the authority of God's work for you.

Facilitated by Gerry Tibbits, this class meets on the **4th Tuesday of the month at 4:00 p.m.** beginning September 26. Sign up at the Connection point.

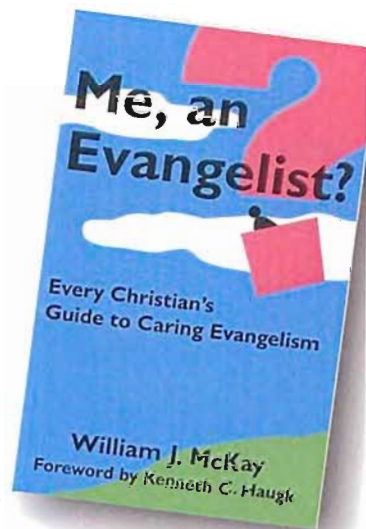
### Coming Later This Fall...

Scared of the word "evangelism"? Well, don't be. We practice evangelism daily. It's simply the faithful act of sharing to our experience of the Good News.

*Me, an Evangelist? Every Christian's Guide to Caring Evangelism* weaves an engaging story about a reluctant evangelist and shows how all Christians can joyously, comfortably, and naturally live and share the love of Jesus with others in ways that work for them and that others welcome.

*Me, an Evangelist?* helps congregations return to the original biblical model of evangelism everyday evangelists sharing Jesus with friends, relatives, coworkers, and fellow students as normal part of daily life.

Join Lay Leader, Mike Buckner for this 6 week book study, beginning **October 31.** Sign up at the Connection Point.



# M

MOPS

The MOPS mamas are eager to begin another year of coming together to encourage and support one another! Friday, September 15th from 9:30 a.m.-11 a.m. will be our first meeting of the season. If you know of any mothers with young children, please invite them

to check out our group! We meet the first and 3rd Friday of the month. Contact Laurie Reed for more information.

## The WiredWORD™

### RETURNS SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1

Wired Word is our adult drop-in Sunday School class that meets at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday morning for stimulating faith-based conversation about current events. Everyone is welcome—no preparation necessary.

Join us Sunday mornings!

# SERVING OTHERS

*Welcome to the Mason First Staff—Amanda and Sarah!*

## Amanda Woledge, Financial

Hello everyone! I am super excited to be a part of this amazing group of people! I have been married for over seventeen years (Zach). We have three children: twin girls that are 13 (Jorga & Riley) and a 3-year-old son (Zander). We have been living in Mason for over ten years and absolutely love it! I have been working in the financial world for over thirteen years and for some reason love making my brain hurt. I enjoy spending time with my family, glamping, and I'm an avid reader. You can't go wrong with lounging on the beach with a good book!



## Sarah Vowels, Office Manager

Thank you for your warm welcome! I have really enjoyed meeting everyone, whether you have stopped by the office or introduced yourself in church. I'm really excited to be here!

I have lived in Mason for twelve years. I just retired from teaching various English and social studies classes after twenty-six years. I have two children, Max (11) and Julia (25). When we're not at work, Ed and I enjoy camping, boating, going to trivia, or watching Star Trek. I look forward to this new chapter of my career!



## BACK-TO-SCHOOL JUBILEE

This year's Back-To-School Jubilee was another success! Over twenty-five local businesses, churches, and individuals came together to donate school supplies, backpacks, clothing, and shoes to local families. The day was filled with laughter as students enjoyed hot dogs, popcorn, cotton candy, face painting, a bounce house, and even a haircut. The Mason police and firefighters were here to support the kids, as each received a new outfit, including a new Mason Bulldog t-shirt. To wrap up their day, families went to Freely Given where over 645 hangers were emptied! Thanks to Lynn Goedert, for organizing the event, Jodi Somerville at Mason Public Schools, and the dozens of Mason First volunteers who helped us to serve over one hundred and forty-one students and give them a good start to a new school year!



## EUCHRE FUN CONTINUES

Laughter and snacks were in abundance when 29 people attended Euchre night on August 18. Mary Lou Keenon took home the first place trophy with 31 points. Four people followed closely with 30 points: Rece Arehart, Brian Hankey, Jeff Lautzenheiser, and Carol Huntington. After a drawing, Rece won the second place prize. Tom Collin garnered the lone-hand prize!



Join us every third Friday at 6:30 p.m. for an evening of Euchre. No partner is required – just be sure to sign up at the Connection Point, and leave your email if you'd like a reminder. Bring a snack to share and your own beverage. *(If you need to cancel, please be sure to let Pastor Suzanne know so that we can arrange to fill your spot.) Our next Euchre night is on September 15th.*



## TRUSTEES CORNER

A little over a year ago, we finalized our Bright Future Project Policy and prioritized how we would be utilizing funds to ensure the church continues to grow and thrive and supports our mission to "Grow in Faith, Serve Others, and Share the Love of Christ".

The Future certainly seems bright one year later, with new fabric boards and viewing screens in the Fellowship Hall, new lighting and ceiling tiles in the hallways, new Connection Point furniture, and a fresh coat of paint for the atrium, hallways, and Fellowship Hall. We have finalized a carpeting quote, and if all goes well, will start updating carpeting in late September.

Next on the horizon is an update to the sound system, for which we have received a generous gift from the United Women of Faith, as well as grants to assist in this project.

We also hope to finalize a plan for new furniture for the Coffee Connection.

None of this would be possible without the wonderful support and generosity of this congregation. Thank you for continuing to support the Bright Future of Mason First!

*Peggy Gunns, Trustees Chair*



# United Women in Faith

*"I lift up my eyes to the hills— from where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of Heaven and earth." Psalm 121: 1-2*

The fall season began with our Board meeting on August 23, at which we made plans for the rest of the year. It was good to get back together again. Our big event in September is the Rummage Sale, on September 1, 2. The Rummage sale is our biggest fundraising event, so we have high hopes to make enough to help fund our community needs.

September 26 starts our circle meeting for the fall. October 15, 2023 will be UWF Sunday and Recognition of Officers and Special Mission Recognition Recipients. The next big event will be on October 19, 2023, when we will have a Social Action Program. Gerry Tibbits will be giving a program on immigration. Everyone is invited! I am sure some of your questions will be answered. There will be more to come later. On November 9, 2023, we have the Mason Area Holiday Craft Show, Cookie Sale, and Luncheon.

We hope to see everyone at all our events!

*Claudia Ireland, UWF President*

*Bright Future Update*



## Meanwhile, at the Parsonage...

The Trustees have been budgeting and saving for some long-needed updates to the kitchen and bathrooms of our Parsonage where Pastor Suzanne and her husband Jim reside. The Parsonage was built in the late 1970's and was showing the wear and tear of decades of pastors' families making good use of this home.

In August, while Pastor Suzanne and Jim were away on vacation, the Trustees (under the leadership of contractor, Aaron Dickinson) began tearing out cabinets, painting, and replacing fixtures and lighting. New cabinets have been installed in the bathrooms and most of the kitchen. We're currently waiting a few more cabinets to come in, and then the countertops and backsplash will be installed making for a lovely new look and functionality for our parsonage.

Pastor Suzanne has already promised to have an open house when all the work is completed so that we can show it off!



# SHARING the LOVE of CHRIST

## We Pray for:

Family and Friends of Larry Howe, who passed away on August 10. His memorial service will be here at Mason First on September 15th, with visitation from 10 a.m. followed by a memorial service at 11 a.m.

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

- Dansville Country Care Assisted Living: Dick Magsig
- Divine Nest, Leslie: Joyce Darling
- Grand Haven Living Center, Lansing: Marilyn Murthum
- Green Acres, Mason: Beth Grosshans and Jeanette Strickland
- Ingham Co. Medical Care Facility, Okemos: Char Bush and John Dodge
- Island City Assisted Living, Eaton Rapids: Don Dickinson
- The Willows of Okemos: Lew Tibbits

## Noisy Bucket Mission Offering

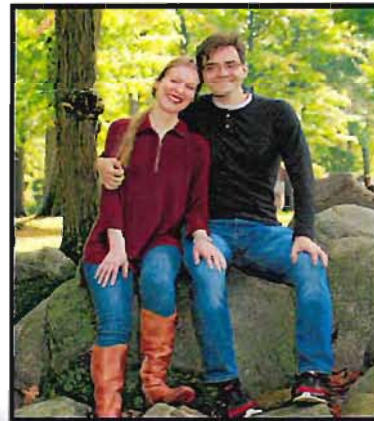
In the wake of devastating weather and fire events, September's Noisy Bucket collection will go to provide humanitarian disaster relief through UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) UMCOR is a first-response agency that comes alongside those who suffer from natural or human-caused disasters – famine, hurricane, war, flood, fire or other events—to alleviate suffering and serve as a source of help and hope for the vulnerable.

One hundred percent of the donations we provide go to relief efforts. Thank you for your generous and noisy offerings which will provide tangible relief to those who need it right now.



### Remembering Phyllis Baisch

Phyllis was a faithful member of Mason First, an active member of the UMW, a gifted teacher, dear friend, and talented actress. She will be missed. We will celebrate Phyllis's life on Thursday September 7 at 11:00 a.m.



### Congratulations Cailyn and Chris!

Chris Savich and Cailyn Ireland are set to be married at Mason First on September 15th. Blessings and best wishes to the happy couple!

### Remembering Larry Howe

Larry was a beloved leader in the Mason Community and a life-long member at Mason First UMC. His kind smile and gentle way will be remembered and missed. We will celebrate Larry's life on Friday September 15 at 11:00 a.m.



## POTLUCK

Tuesdays at 5:30

Good Friends, Great Food

## TOWN HALL MEETING SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24



Sunday in Fellowship Hall  
Immediately following worship

Be a part of the conversation!



Youth catching fire for Christ

# FALL KICK OFF

IGNITE A NEW YEAR OF YOUTH MINISTRY!

All youth grades 6-12 are invited to join us  
for a

## PIZZA & PLANNING PARTY

Sunday, September 10, 5pm-7pm

Be a part of making plans for another great year of youth ministry, including fun activities like corn maze, service activities like Breakfast with Santa, and even a look forward to our annual Mission Trip! **And don't forget to bring a friend!**

PARENTS, PLEASE JOIN US AT 6:45 FOR A BRIEF INFORMATIONAL MEETING



MARK YOUR CALENDAR: SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 6PM-8PM

# FUN & GAMES NIGHT

BRING A FRIEND AND WIN A PRIZE!



## Calling all Church Musicians!

**Do you ring? Do you sing? Do you play an instrument?**

Come and be a part of the music of rejoicing by ringing with our hand-bell choir, singing with our choral ensemble, or by adding something special through instrumental accompaniment. An information meeting will be held after church on Sunday, September 10. Or reach out to Pastor Suzanne at [revsuzanne@masonfirst.org](mailto:revsuzanne@masonfirst.org).

**CHANCE CHORAL ENSEMBLE**—begins rehearsing **Wednesday Sept 13 at 7:00 p.m.**

**CHANCEL RINGERS**—begin rehearsing **Wednesday Sept 20 at 6:00 p.m.**



# FOR THE KIDS



## SEPTEMBER

S K O O B S T N L E R S  
 I L A B O R D A Y U Q T  
 O S O N E R E O M H Y A  
 L C H A B E L E E O L S  
 E W A C O R N H Z M V D  
 A O P U K Z F T W E A N  
 V L P D E R L V K W E E  
 E L L T S O R R R O S I  
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 L R C M B A E H U E D O  
 T S E V R A H S K T A R  
 A F A L L N D A E L U B  
 C O N L E R R I U Q S A

ACORN	BREEZE	HOMEWORK	RED
APPLES	FALL	LABOR DAY	SCHOOL
AUTUMN	FRIENDS	LEAVES	SQUIRREL
BOOKS	HARVEST	RAKE	YELLOW

©SunnyfulIllustrations

During Sunday worship service, kids meet with Miss Laurie and can enjoy stories, games, snacks, and fun in the sun!

Bring a friend and worship in the Summer Fun!

Worship Quest will begin a fun fall series on September 10 using

**“THE REAL GAME OF LIFE”**

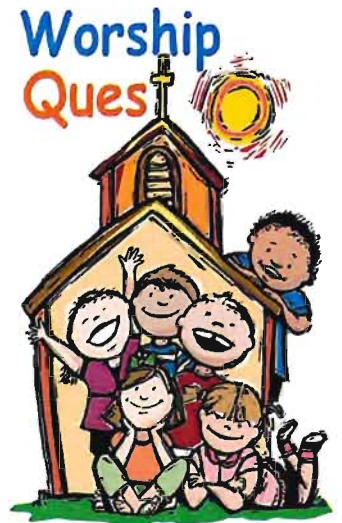
theme to explore important biblical lessons.

Worship Quest is for children preschool through 5th grade

and meets downstairs with

Miss Laurie and Miss Sierra in the Sunday School classroom during worship. The children are always encouraged to bring a friend!

Nursery care is available upon request.



## Riddles

1. I go around the world, but never leave the corner. What am I?
2. What gets bigger the more you take away?
3. Which letter of the alphabet has the most water?
4. I am easy to lift, but hard to throw. What am I?



## Mason First United Methodist Church

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

201 E. Ash Street \* Mason MI 48854  
Phone: (517) 676 9449  
www.masonfirst.org

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MASON MI 48854

## Coming this Fall - SAVE THE DATE!

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Sunday, September 10   | <i>The Real Game of Life</i> Fall Sermon Series begins<br>Worship Quest returns<br>Ignite Youth Ministry returns with a Pizza & Planning Party |
| Tuesday, September 19  | <i>Joshua - A Parable for Today</i> book study begins  |
| Sunday, September 24   | Town Hall Meeting after worship  |
| Tuesday, September 26  | <i>What About the Bible?</i> Begins  |
| Sunday, October 1      | Wired Word Sunday School class returns   |
| Sunday, October 15     | UWF Appreciation Sunday  |
| Thursday, October 19   | UWF Social Action Program  |
| Sunday October 22      | <b>TRIVIA &amp; TREASURES</b> - Game & Silent Auction Fundraiser Event   |
| Tuesday, October 31    | <i>Me? An Evangelist</i> book study begins   |
| *Every Tuesday at 5:30 | Potluck & Fellowship—Everyone welcome!   |
| *Every Wednesday       | Mason First Music Ministry—All musicians welcome!  |
| *Every 3rd Friday      | Euchre Night—All Euchre players welcome!   |
| *Every 4th Tuesday     | UWF Circles Meet—All women welcome!  |



## September 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					<b>1</b> 9:00am Rummage Sale	<b>2</b> 9:00am Rummage Sale
<b>3</b> 9:30am Worship	<b>4</b> Labor Day: Church office closed	<b>5</b> 5:30pm Potluck in Fellowship Hall	<b>6</b> 10:30am Bible Study Class in library 8:00pm Chancel Choir 8:00pm Chancel Bells	<b>7</b> 11:00am Phyllis Baisch Memorial	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 3:00pm Savich- Ireland Wedding
<b>10</b> 9:30am Worship 11:00am Wired Word Class in Chapel 5:00pm Ignite	<b>11</b> 6:00pm MCCC Board Meeting	<b>12</b> 5:30pm Potluck in Fellowship Hall	<b>13</b> 10:30am Bible Study Class in library 6:00pm Grief Group in Chapel 8:00pm Chancel Choir 8:00pm Chancel Bells	<b>14</b> 12:00pm Mason Community Leaders meeting in Chapel	<b>15</b> 9:30am MOPS in youth room 11:00am Larry Howe Memorial 6:30pm Euchre in fellowship hall	<b>16</b> Down Home Days
<b>17</b> 9:30am Worship 11:00am Wired Word Class in Chapel	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 5:30pm Potluck in Fellowship Hall	<b>20</b> 10:30am Bible Study Class in library 6:00pm Grief Group in Chapel 8:00pm Chancel Bells 8:00pm Chancel Choir	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> 9:30am Worship 11:00am Wired Word Class in Chapel 6:00pm Ignite	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> 10:00am Mary Martha Circle 1:00pm Rebekah Circle 5:30pm Potluck in Fellowship Hall 6:30pm Miriam Circle	<b>27</b> 10:30am Bible Study Class in library 6:00pm Grief Group in Chapel 8:00pm Chancel Bells 8:00pm Chancel Choir	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>



## Birthdays

## Anniversaries

Dennis Howe .....	1
Sharon Whipple .....	1
Vicky Hanson .....	2
Joann Waterstradt.....	2
David Leonard.....	2
Michael Page .....	3
Marlene Akers .....	4
Mike Buckner.....	4
Linda Akers .....	5
John Dodge.....	5
Anita Cornish .....	5
David Aldrich .....	5
Erica Waltz.....	6
Megan Goss.....	6
Steve Ireland.....	7
Lynn Smith.....	9
Lauren Waltz.....	9
Ainsley Richard .....	11
Reese Ball .....	15
Janean Belman .....	16
Bart Crider .....	16
Brian Whipple.....	17
Cooper Powless .....	17
Ryan Berridge.....	17
Austin Harnick .....	20
Kim Karlzen.....	21
Sue Flores .....	22
Ellen Lord.....	22
Mark Page.....	23
Roxie Stark.....	28
Sara Stid .....	28
Judy Montague.....	28
Caroll Harper .....	30
Aiden Snoeyink.....	30

Michael and Debra Buckner.....	1
Andrew and Alexis Bayer .....	6
Scott and Amy Etzel.....	7
Ryan and Heidi Berridge.....	8
Robert and Connie Bartlett .....	18
Jack and Jennifer Calhoun.....	18



Thank you notes have been received from Claire Boynton, Chris Bement, Martha and Lori Allen, Linda Carmer, Judy Forrester, and Sarah Vowels.

We have also received letters of thanks from the Mason Food Bank and UMCOR. Your generosity has made a difference to so many!