

October 2023

The First Connection

a publication of

Mason First United Methodist Church

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

WHAT'S NEW...

Simple Gifts Sermon Series coming 10/29

Growing in Faith Opportunities

Trivia & Treasures!

Bright Future Update

Leaving a Legacy

UWF Notes

Could It Be You?

Church Family News

Serving Others Opportunities

Youth & Children's Page

Save the Dates

Let Your Leaves Fall

We haven't reached peak color yet, but I'm noticing small clusters of bright color starting to show here and there. Soon, the stately trees that line our streets will be bursting with vivid reds and oranges—a delight to the eyes. No doubt, fall is one of the times when we realize how much God loves us, for God has certainly blessed us with beauty in the changing of the seasons!

And then, one cold blustery evening, the leaves will fall. There is a tree in my back yard that reaches some moment of seasonal imperative and then drops all of its leaves in a matter of a few hours. All of them. And then winter blows in and the cycle begins again. The old leaves fall away to make room for the new, and God whispers, "See? I am doing a new thing!"

For many, the falling of the leaves seems to bring nostalgia and perhaps a feeling of sadness that the beauty we enjoyed has slipped away. But we forget that each season has beauty to behold and a purpose that is necessary for growth and life. The falling of the leaves is not the end of the story, but a beginning of something else that will also be beautiful. And let's be honest—no one has ever successfully stopped the passage of time to hold on to one single perfect moment. No, it has never been God's plan for us to freeze time and cease our growth. Instead, we are to enjoy and live into each new season of life, learning and growing and bursting with life-affirming color, even as we know that our colorful leaves will fall away in order to make room for the new blossoms of spring. Enjoy the beauty of this autumn season. But remember to let your leaves fall—there is so much more to come!

In Christ, *Pastor Suzanne*



REAL The Game of

LIFE

Oct 8	Sorry!
Oct 15	Guess Who?
Oct 22	Twister

Simple Gifts

A New Series
Beginning
October 29

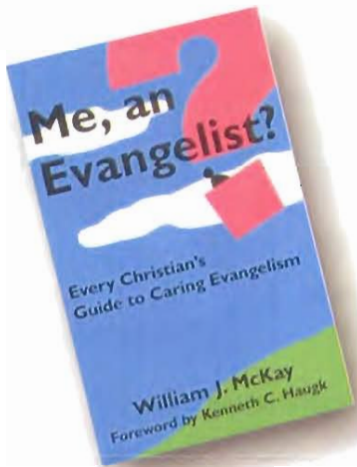
What About the Bible?

The word of God for the people of God... what does that mean? How did the Bible come to be known as the "word of God"? Who wrote it and how does it have authority for our lives today? Join us for this once-a-month study that seeks to discover truth and trust in the book we call the "word of God."

Join Gerry Tibbits and your friends at the church to take a meaningful look at the Bible. This class meets on the **3rd Sunday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall, beginning October 15.** Sign up at the Connection point.



Coming Later This Fall...



"Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone." Mark 16:15

Want to spread the word of God, but don't know how? Want to invite your friends and neighbors to church, but you can't find the words? Then this is the book study for you!

The word "evangelism" has come to mean many things to many people. *Me, an Evangelist? Every Christian's Guide to Caring Evangelism*, by William J. McKay is a story that teaches us how we can show the love of Christians comfortably and naturally.

Come learn how to spread the Good News with Mike Buckner in this 6 week book study, beginning **October 31.** Sign up at the Connection Point.

The Wired WORD™

RETURNS SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1

News is inevitable--whether good or bad. Wired Word is our adult drop-in Sunday School class that focuses on processing the news events of the day through a lens of faith and biblical understanding.

This discussion-based class helps to remind us that Jesus functioned in a "real-world" context, and so do we!

Utilizing fresh and engaging Bible study materials, this adult Sunday class shows that the Bible is alive today. By relating news events happening here and now, it can make a real difference in your life and spiritual growth.

Join us at **11:00 a.m. on Sundays, beginning October 1.** Everyone is welcome— no preparation necessary.

Wednesday Bible Study

Do you feel like you're in a rut when it comes to your reading of the Bible? Our Bible study group meets weekly to read together *The Disciplined Disciple*. Join us as we read a scripture and discuss its meaning. You don't have to be here every week; this is a drop in class. Whether you are just starting out in your faith journey or have been pursuing it for years, we'd love to have you! Anyone, in any stage of growth can experience growth from these spiritual disciplines.



A New Music Ensemble

Joyful Noise was a wonderful summer experiment that has yielded an interest in a regular praise ensemble (yet to be named)! This group meets Wednesday evenings at 5:30 in the Sanctuary to rehearse worship music that has a more contemporary flair. This ensemble will require just a little bit more music experience—music reading and the ability to hold a vocal part on your own are definite assets! If you play an instrument or enjoy singing contemporary style music, please see Rev. Suzanne to be a part of making some new music!



IGNITE Youth invite you to...

TRIVIA & TREASURES

Sunday, October 22 from 5:00pm-6:30pm

We'll tantalize your tastebuds with a terrific dinner followed by a tenacious game of trivia where teams will compete toe-to-toe. To top things off, we will test the depth of your pockets with a silent auction of tasty treats, timeless treasures, and thoughtful tasks.

ALL PROCEEDS HELP SUPPORT THE 2024 MISSION TRIP

TICKETS

\$10 per person
\$5 Children under 12
(Includes dinner plus 2 raffle tickets)

Dinner served at 5:00 p.m.



MENU

Pulled Pork Sandwich
Homemade Mac & Cheese
Baked Beans
Veggies & Dip
Assorted Desserts
Beverages

We need your help!

We would love your delicious baked goods or specialty items for our silent auction on October 22! If baking isn't your thing, how about donating a service or an item to be auctioned off? It could be an antique, or a piece of furniture you no longer need, a dessert a month for 6 months, or 3 lawn mowings. Get creative as you think of what you have to offer! Please sign up at the Connection Point or let Laurie know what you would like to contribute by October 18.

Thank you for your generosity!

EUCHRE FUN CONTINUES

Euchre night continues to be a hit! Every third Friday is Euchre night, starting at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall, so be sure to sign up at the Connection Point, leaving 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 October 20th.



TRUSTEES CORNER

The carpeting is here and being installed even as this article is being written! What a wonderful and fresh new look! Meanwhile, we have begun conversations with a sound system advisor, and the Design Team is meeting to start working out the details of the finishing touches in the areas that have received new carpet.



Mason First United Methodist Church

LEGACY ENDOWMENT FUND

Ensuring Mission and Ministry for Generations to Come

In November of 2022, the Legacy Endowment Fund Charter was established with a memorial gift from the family of a long-time member who wanted to help the church to fund new missions and ministries for years to come. The money was put into an investment account that will help this initial seedling to grow and multiply and bear fruit for future generations.

Future gifts given and dedicated to this fund will be invested, and when the fund reaches a minimum level of \$100,000, we may begin using a percentage of the interest generated each year to fund new ministry initiatives—programs and ideas that are beyond the church’s established programs funded through the annual operating budget. The intention is that all endowed gifts to the Legacy Fund be used to generate interest through investment and not used for basic operational needs, thus ensuring we always have a means to fund new programs and ideas.

Gifts to this fund may be made at any time and in any amount. You may also designate memorial gifts to be placed in this fund for a lasting legacy.

Please note that the Investment/Endowment Committee carefully manages this fund with oversight from the Board of Trustees. If you have questions about this fund, or would like to make a gift, please contact the church office and you will be connected with a member of the Investment Committee. The entire Legacy Endowment Fund Charter and Use Policy documents are available for review upon request.

“Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.”
Proverbs 16:3



United Women in Faith

Welcome to the fall season! We are having two exciting programs coming up: both are for our Church family and others from the community—everyone is welcome!

The first program is our **Social Justice Program**. This month we are focusing on the humanitarian crisis of immigration. Gerry Tibbits has invited her son, Todd Tibbits, Chair of the YMCA National Coalition on U.S. borders and CEO of the San Diego YMCA, to share with us up-to-date information about those coming to America from a community perspective. Following the presentation, there will be a luncheon, where you will have the opportunity to share stories about your family’s immigration to America or ask questions. You will not want to miss it! Please invite your friends.

Our second program is a tea and festive celebration called **Advent by Candlelight**. This event will be held on December 14 at 6:30 p.m. Enjoy some holiday wassail, and a short program presented by Pastor Suzanne and friends, followed by a dessert tea all enjoyed by candlelight. It will be a lovely evening of women in fellowship as we explore the meaning of Advent for women in particular.

The rummage sale went very well. It was a lot of work, but we had fun together! We made \$2,333.45. It was well worth our time, as all the money will go toward our missions at the end of the year.

Invite your friends to our **Holiday Craft luncheon**, the holiday décor sale, and cookie sale. It will be a nice day to get your shopping done in our community. The sale is held annually on November 9, from 9:30 a.m.– 3:30 p.m.

Claudia Ireland, UWF President



POTLUCK

Tuesdays at 5:30

Good Friends

Great Food

Could It Be You?

It's that time of year (And really, when *isn't it that time of year?*) when we start making plans for a new year, a new season, a forward-thinking vision of what we will accomplish in the year to come. What is God calling us to be and do in 2024? *Who* is God calling to lead and serve and make it all happen? Could it be you?

Praying and Planning For all that we might think we have the best ideas for the missions and ministries of the church, we are doomed to failure if we don't begin by asking for God's direction as we consider the future. It's God's house. It's God whom we serve. So as we look ahead to 2024, let us *all* be in prayer for God to continue to bless us, inspire us, and lead us. And let us further pray that God will open our hearts to new ideas and new ways of connecting with new people. In the days to come, *don't forget to pray!*

Be Present Our church can never be complete without you and without the gifts and graces that you bring. As we share ideas and encouragement about the year to come, your voice just might be the one we need to hear! Or perhaps God has something specific to say to you. And never be afraid to invite a friend or neighbor to be with us. We serve the community of Mason, and everyone is welcome!

Consider Generosity We are fast approaching that time of year where we prayerfully and generously make a commitment to pledge our gifts to the mission and ministry of the church for the upcoming year. Fortunately, we're a church that doesn't fear this conversation the way others do, because we understand that God abundantly blesses us where we are willing to step out on faith and bless others. As our Simple Gifts campaign begins in October, I hope that everyone will joyfully pledge with generosity so that we may be a blessing to the community we serve, fulfilling our mission to help people *Grow in Faith, Serve Others, and Share the Love of Christ*.

Find Your Place One of the most exciting signs of a healthy and thriving church is when a high percentage of the family of faith is actively involved in serving in one way or another. It is an uplifting sign of faithfulness and an excellent model of active discipleship.

Now is the time of year when the Nominations Committee meets to begin nominating people to serve on the various committees and teams in the upcoming year. Prayerfully consider if God may be calling you to serve on our Finance Committee, Hospitality, or maybe be a part of a music ensemble, or help with one of our children's ministries. How has God gifted you to serve? Now is the time to give it a try and share your gifts! If you'd like more information about where you could possibly serve, please see Mike Buckner, Marilyn Lautzenheiser, or Laurie Reed to find out more about ways you can be involved in the life of the church.



Share the Good News The place that is home to God and God's people should never be the best-kept secret in town. If you have found something to love—something that connects you to the love of God here at Mason First, then be sure to tell someone. In fact, tell *everyone!* Undoubtedly there are people beyond the walls of our church who could use a little more of the love of God in their lives, and you just might be the one to issue the invitation they need!

Prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. This is what we pledge when we take our vows of membership into the church. We promise to be faithful in all of the above. It may sound like a *lot* to do and give in this busy world we live in. But the truth is, the more you are involved in the life of the church, the more peace you'll find in your life outside its walls. Get involved. Find your place. Commit yourself to *Growing in Faith, Serving Others, and Sharing the Love of Christ!*

We still have 4 high school teachers who need to be "adopted" in our mission to provide a little loving support to ones who educate our children. If you would like to adopt a teacher, see Lynn Goedert.

SHARING the LOVE of CHRIST

Our Prayers and Healing Wishes to:

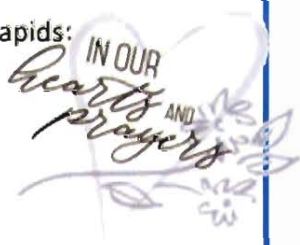
- Jon Droscha, having surgery this month

Our Sympathies are extended to:

- The family of Rev. Jo Reece, who passed away on September 27

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

Drop your change in our noisy buckets each Sunday to help a good cause. This month's offering is being donated to Grace Children's Hospital. Founded in 1967, it is recognized as Haiti's leading medical facility dedicated to the treatment of children with tuberculosis (TB). Each year, the hospital receives thousands of children who are suffering from TB, HIV, and other diseases. With both an inpatient ward and outpatient services, Grace provides a place of healing and solace to children.

Grace's outpatient ward provides affordable health care, including pediatric and adult TB treatment, a nutrition clinic, state-of-the-art eyecare, HIV/Aids counseling and treatment, and even literacy training.

Please continue to give your change to the noisy bucket initiative. Last month, we donated \$326 to UMCOR, providing relief to those affected by the fires in Hawaii.



A COMMUNITY OF FAITH

Coats for Kids

Join Mason area churches, schools, and businesses as we join together to provide children with warm clothing for winter. FUMC is now collecting coats, snow pants, hats, mittens, gloves, sweaters, sweatshirts, fleece and flannel shirts, scarves, and boots. Collection ends on October 13 so that all items can be cleaned before distribution day.

All area kids are welcome to come to St. James, Cornelius, & Cyprian Church Hall on **October 21 from 8-2**, located at 1010 S. Lansing Street. Let's keep our kids warm this winter!!



MUSIC Ministry



Mason First Music Ministry
Every Wednesday

Ringers and singers are welcome to join our ensembles on Wednesday evenings! Chancel Ringers meet at 6:30, and Chancel Choir meets at 7:30.

WALK. GIVE. CHANGE THE WORLD.

Mason
CROP HUNGER WALK

OCTOBER 08, 2023






MASON, MICHIGAN

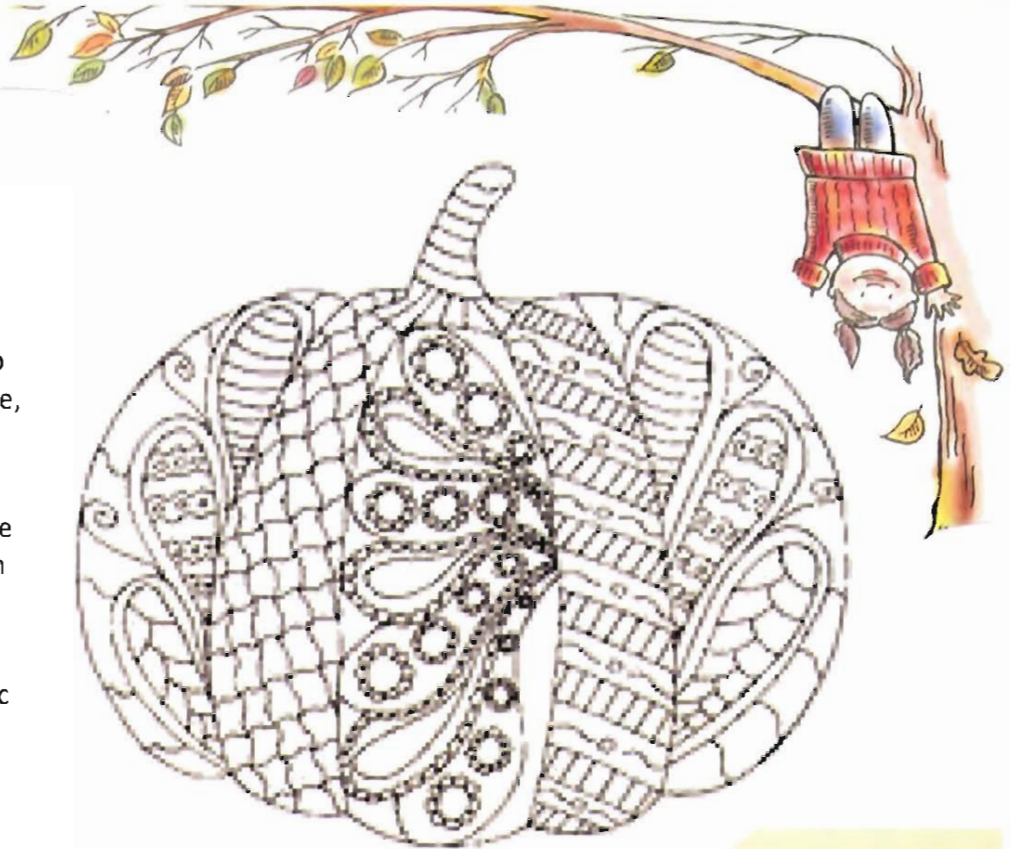
Join area churches this **Sunday at 2:00 p.m.** on the front steps of the Presbyterian Church for this year's annual crop walk, supporting local Meals on Wheels and the Mason Area Food Bank.

CHILDREN AND TEENS

How much do you know about Mandalas?

5 fun facts:

-  The word "mandala" comes from the ancient Indian language of Sanskrit and means "circle"
-  Precise geometric shapes make up mandala art and symbolize balance, harmony, and unity
-  Mandala art is embraced throughout the world, each culture bringing its own unique symbolism and purpose
-  Many people find creating and coloring mandalas to be therapeutic
-  Over 12 million mandala coloring books were sold in 2015 alone



**SUNDAY
FUN
for KIDS**



Kids
Preschool age to 5th grade— Meet downstairs with Miss Laurie during service

Youth Group
Updates

October 8 4-6 p.m.— Shawhaven Corn Maze
Meet at Shawhaven Farm for an afternoon of fun! Navigate the corn maze, play human foosball, and enjoy cider and donuts! \$10 per person

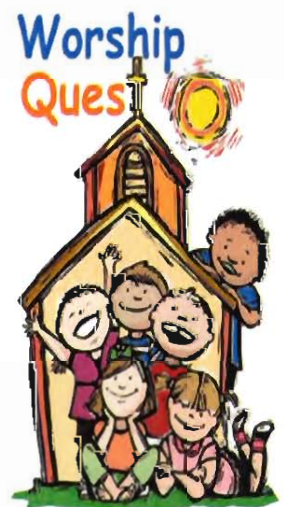
October 22 5-7 p.m.— Trivia and Treasures
Join in on the church-wide event that includes a casual dinner, trivia, and a silent auction.



Worship Quest began a fun fall series 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.



For information on children and teen events, contact laurie@masonfirst.org



Mason First United Methodist Church

Growing in Faith,
Serving Others,
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www.masonfirst.org

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Return Service Requested

Coming this Fall - SAVE THE DATE!

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Sunday, October 8 | Ignite Youth Corn Maze Adventure |
| Sunday, October 15 | UWF Appreciation Sunday |
| Sunday, October 15 | What About the Bible? Class Begins |
| Thursday, October 19 | UWF Social Action Program on Immigration |
| Sunday, October 22 | TRIVIA & TREASURES - Game & Silent Auction Fundraiser Event |
| Sunday, October 29 | Simple Gifts Sermon Series on Generosity begins |
| Monday, October 30 | Trustees Meeting |
| Tuesday, October 31 | Me? An Evangelist book study begins |
| *Every Sunday | Wired Word Sunday School |
| *Every Tuesday | 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! |
| *Every 1st & 3rd Friday | MOPS |

October 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:30am Worship 11:00am Wired Word Class, in Chapel	2 7:00pm Church Council Meeting, in Chapel	3 5:30pm Potluck, in Fellowship Hall 6:30pm Joshua Book Club, in Chapel	4 9:00am UWF Meeting, in Chapel 10:30am Bible Study Class, in library 6:00pm Grief Group, in Chapel 6:30pm Chancel Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Choir	5	6 9:30am MOPS, in Youth Room	7
8 9:30am Worship 11:00am Wired Word Class, in Chapel 11:30am Dinner in the Park 1:00pm Crop Walk, begin at Presbyterian Church 4:00pm Ignite, Shawhaven Farm	9	10 5:30pm Potluck, in Fellowship Hall 6:30pm Joshua Book Club, in Chapel	11 10:30am Bible Study Class, in library 5:30pm Praise Ensemble 6:00pm Grief Group, in Chapel 6:30pm Chancel Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Choir	12 12:00pm Mason Community Leaders Meeting, in Chapel	13	14
15 9:30am Worship 9:30am UWF Sunday: Recognition of Officers 11:00am Wired Word Class, in Chapel 6:30pm What About the Bible? Group, in Fellowship Hall	16	17 5:30pm Potluck, in Fellowship Hall 6:30pm Joshua Book Club, in Chapel	18 10:30am Bible Study Class, in library 6:00pm Grief Group, in Chapel 6:30pm Chancel Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Choir	19 10:00am UWF Social Action Program: Immigration, in Chapel	20 6:30am Euchre, in Fellowship Hall 9:30am MOPS, in Youth Room	21 8:00am Coats for Kids Distribution, St. James, Comelus, & Cyprian Hall
22 9:30am Worship 11:00am Wired Word Class, in Chapel 5:00pm Trivia & Treasures, in Fellowship Hall	23	24 10:00am Mary Martha Circle, in Chapel 1:00pm Rebeckah Circle, in Chapel 5:30pm Potluck, in Fellowship Hall 6:30pm Miriam Circle, in Chapel 6:30pm Joshua Book Club	25 9:00am Stephen Ministry, in Conference Room 10:30am Bible Study Class, in library 6:00pm Grief Group, in Chapel 6:30pm Chancel Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Choir	26	27	28
29 9:30am Worship 11:00am Wired Word Class, in Chapel	30 7:00pm Trustees Meeting, in Chapel	31 5:30pm Potluck, in Fellowship Hall 6:30pm Me, an Evangelist? Book Club, in Chapel				



Birthdays

Peggy Gunns	1	Darla Whitmyer	25
Josephine Darling	1	Derick Zanger	25
George Harnick	2	Jaclyn Merchant.....	25
Paul Chapman.....	2	Marilyn Murthum	26
Pamela Oesterle	3	Thelma Hines	27
Ann Whitmer	3	Marah Kolberg.....	27
Darryl Englander.....	3	Julien Adolphson.....	28
Matthew Gardner.....	4	Martin Colburn	29
Lois Archbold	4	Chris Waltz.....	30
Jade Sutberry.....	4	Brooke Beaune	31
Alek Guettler.....	5	Charlotte McCully	31
Ronald Campbell	5		
Alex Whitmer.....	6		
Justin Smith	6		
Ina Lyon	6		
Nicholas Hudgins	6		
Olivia Bagley	7		
Jeanette Strickland	7		
Mary Ann Davis	8		
Darion Ireland.....	9		
Cameron Howe.....	9		
Sadie Pulver	9		
Lillian Droscha	10		
Gerald VerHage	10		
Linda Pulver	11		
Gabriel Kribs	11		
Avery Pulver	11		
John Whitmyer	12		
Doris Weber.....	14		
Patrick Guthrie.....	14		
Owen Baarck.....	14		
Troy Sutberry.....	20		
Rachel Whipple.....	20		
Deanna McCastle.....	20		

Anniversaries

Lyle and Ellen Funkhouser	2
Jeffrey and Marilyn Lautzenheiser.....	2
Lewis and Gerry Tibbits.....	6
Steven and Diana Baker.....	8
Greg and Diane McDonald.....	15
Michael and Amy Place.....	18
Terry Zanger and Colleen Molnar.....	18



Thank you notes have been received from Julia Droscha, Doug & Dawn Cole, and God's Country Cooperation Parish (GCCP)