

# The First Connection

a publication of  
Mason First United Methodist Church

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

## *A Season for Hospitality*

There is no *season* of hospitality. You know that, right? We don't pack it up and put it away with the Christmas ornaments and get it back out again when we go looking for the turkey roaster in November. Hospitality should never be confined by calendar or clock. That being said, the extended season of Thanksgiving which flows seamlessly into Advent and then Christmas, gives us an opportunity to up our hospitality game and be intentional about extending invitation to those who could use a good dose of friendly and welcoming. And we're just the people to provide it!



This time of year provides a wealth of opportunities to offer invitation to a whole host of activities that could be the start of a beautiful friendship and a lifelong connection to God through participation in a vibrant faith community. Consider inviting friends, neighbors, and casual acquaintances to the Living Nativity, or the Christmas Cookie sale. Encourage families to attend our Breakfast with Santa event. Invite folks who want to serve to take part in the Thanksgiving meal or to help out with White Christmas. Invite the women you know to come to our Advent by Candlelight women's tea. Encourage someone who is grieving to come to our Blue Christmas service. This time of year especially evokes a longing for meaningful connection, and you may not always know who is yearning for it. So let us be generous with our invitations and extravagant with our expressions of hospitality. It is, after all, why Christ came.

This extended holiday season, share the blessings of God's goodness and grace by extending warm hospitality and a friendly invitation. You could make a meaningful difference in someone's life!

*Pastor Suzanne*

## Simple Gifts

A New Series  
Beginning  
October 29



## Thanksgiving Dinner

We're pleased to announce the return of the community Thanksgiving Dinner! This year the dinner will be held at the Nazarene Church on Maple. Our contribution will be to provide the salads. Please sign up at the Connection Point to donate. Dinner will be held from noon—1:00p.m. on Thanksgiving Day.



**COMMUNITY WORKING TOGETHER**

# UWF: SERVING & SHARING

## Loving our Neighbors—A Crisis on the Border

The United Women in Faith have a long history of involvement in issues of social justice, reminding us of Jesus's words, "Truly I tell you, just as you cared for the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, so you have cared for me." In October, the UWF hosted a Social Justice event called *Our Borders* featuring guest speakers Todd Tibbits, Chair of the YMCA National Coalition on U.S. Borders and Oscar Velasco, CCO of Mexican YMCA giving us first-hand information about the humanitarian crisis at our border with Mexico.

The politics of this issue are relevant and significant and need to be addressed. But in the meantime, there is tremendous human suffering, and the most vulnerable are taking the brunt of it. Families are fleeing the places they call home because of economic insecurity, political volatility, threats of violence, and a lack of ability to provide safety, health, and well-being for their children. They are so desperate for relief and hope that they are literally walking thousands of miles through extremely dangerous conditions in order to seek refuge. And when they arrive, they are finding no good options for legal entry and no safe place to be while they wait. Families are so desperate to find safety for their children that they are sending their children across the border unaccompanied in hopes that someone will take them in. The children may find refuge, but when they are caught or discovered they are often times sent back over the border with no concern for how they will reunite with their families.

It is easy to think that there is little that we can do to make a difference. And it's true that no single one of us can make a dramatic impact, but there *are* specific and tangible things we can do. First, we need to care. Care enough to learn the facts about this crisis. Care enough to speak up and speak out. Care enough to advocate for a change to the system by reaching out to your elected officials.

Politicizing this issue into a state of paralysis is not an acceptable humanitarian answer! Care enough to pray. And if you can, care enough to give.



Oscar Velasco told us that one U.S. dollar was enough to provide a plate of healthy food and a tall glass of milk for a child who hasn't had one in far too long. Money won't solve the problem, but money *will* help provide immediate relief in the form of food, clothing, shelter, and medicine. It is important for us to remember that Jesus, himself, was a refugee, and Jesus implored us to have love and concern for our neighbors – all of them.

Thank you to the UWF for hosting this important education event that helped us to remember our neighbors.



United  
Women  
in Faith

*"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." - Isaiah 41:10*

October was an exciting month as we hosted our annual Social Justice event, made plans for the upcoming Advent season, and celebrated some of the special people who serve in our congregation on UWF Sunday. It was an honor to recognize **Ruben Droscha, David Gunns, Diane McDonald, and Kim Sperry** who have all served our church in so many ways! We also recognized **Pat Mentzer** for her years of service to our Clothing Bank ministry, and **Joyce Plumhoff** for her years of service as our kitchen manager. We are blessed to have such dedicated disciples in our fellowship!

We're now looking ahead to our big event in November—the annual Mason Area Holiday Craft Show on November 9th. Here at Mason First, we'll be selling cookies and holiday décor, and serving up our traditional hot chicken salad lunch! This event has become a favored tradition in the community, so don't miss it, and don't forget to spread the word!

Our next circle meetings will be November 28. And due to a busy December, the UWF Board meeting will be on November 29.

Your UWF President,

*Claudia Ireland*



# FELLOWSHIP WITH FRIENDS

## Euchre Night

There were seven tables of players competing for the prestigious month-long title of "Euchre Champ" or "Most Loners Champ" at October's get together. There were many high scores, but no one could beat Gerry Tibbit's score of 35! Char Hankey and Sherry Barnes shared the "Most Loners" title with two lone hands each.

Sign up at the Connection Point for our next Euchre Night **Friday, November 17, 6:30 p.m.** Bring a treat to share, your own beverage, and your best Euchre game!

September Most Loners Winner, Rece Arehart

September Most Points Winners, Doris Garrison and Bud Arehart



## Trivia & Treasures

A big thank you to everyone who donated items to the Trivia & Treasures silent auction. With the help of some very generous bidding, we were able to raise just over \$1000 for our mission trip next summer! Stay tuned next month for an official announcement of our Mission Trip destination.



Our music ministry ensembles are getting ready to begin rehearsing for the Christmas season. Now is a great time for you to join us in making music! Whether you like to ring or sing, or shake or strum, we'll find a spot for you! Come and experience the joy of making music in fellowship with others!



Our Music Ministry rehearses on Wednesday evenings. There's room for you!



## CHRISTMAS IS COMING...



Coming  
**December 9**  
to a manger near you!

## Preparing for the *Living Nativity*

The camels have been confirmed, new angel wings have been ordered, a new shelter is being prepared for the shepherds, and the casting process is well underway! Don't miss your chance to be a part of this year's Living Nativity—our gift to the community of Mason. We still have openings for shepherds, angels, traffic directors and much more. No auditions are necessary. No lines need to be memorized. Just contact Peggy Gunns and get signed up to be a part of this beautiful event which makes the Christmas story come alive for children and adults alike. Contact Peggy at (517) 242-6423 to secure your spot in this year's Living Nativity!

## *Advent by Candlelight*

Thursday, December 14 at 6:00 p.m.



6:00 Wassail gathering in the Atrium  
6:30 Advent Service for Women  
7:15 Dessert Tea in Fellowship Hall

We cordially invite all women to a new event this year! Advent by Candlelight is an occasion for women of all ages to gather and experience a moment of Advent holiness in a peaceful and lovely candlelit setting. The evening will begin with a wassail gathering in our atrium. Then we will proceed to the Sanctuary for a short service of worship featuring music and thoughtful messages of hope. Afterwards, we will make our way to Fellowship Hall for a dessert tea in a beautifully decorated setting. Women may host a table using their own creativity and personal Christmas decorations. It is our hope that you will invite friends and acquaintances from outside the church so that we may be a full gathering of women experiencing the joy and peace of the season together.

If you would like to host a table, or simply attend, just sign up and we will find a table for you! Don't forget to invite a friend! Reservations are necessary so that we may make sure that everyone has a seat at a table.

*Blue Christmas*  
*A Service of Healing and Hope*  
Tuesday, December 19 7:00 p.m.

## *White Christmas Gifts*

The Mission Team is once again making plans to bring Christmas to families in need through White Christmas gift giving. Look for tags to be made available later this month.



## MAKING A LIST...

# BREAKFAST With Santa



Mason First  
United Methodist Church  
201 E. Ash St.

**Saturday, Nov. 25 9:00am-11:00am**

**\$5.00**

(Suggested donation per person for breakfast)

### Santa's Work Shop

Let our Elves assist your children with their gift giving needs.  
-Proceeds support Missions-

**Photos with Santa!**



We need gifts to fill Santa's Workshop on November 25<sup>th</sup>. These would be items that the children pick out for mom and dad, or grandpa and grandma. We especially appreciate items appropriate for men.

Items can be dropped off to Laurie in the church office by November 20. Thank you for your generosity!

**Don't forget the Electric Light Parade and Warming Station - Friday, November 24**



UWF Presents the Cookie and Craft Sale & Luncheon  
Thursday, November 9  
Sale: 9:30-3:00  
Hot Chicken Salad Luncheon: 11-1  
**Baking Spirits Bright**

### Donations Needed for this event:

- \* Cookies
- \* Any baked good or candy
- \* Holiday Décor in good condition

### Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign

It's a holiday staple: people standing out in the cold, ringing a bell next to a Salvation Army sign. But who are they? Where did it all start?



The story dates back to 1891, San Francisco. Salvation Army Captain Joseph McKee was distraught at all the hungry people he saw living on the streets. He resolved to feed them. He remembered his days in the English navy when there was a large, iron kettle called "Simpson's Pot" into which passers-by tossed a coin or two to help the poor. The next day, Captain McKee placed a similar pot at the Oakland Ferry Landing at the foot of Market Street. Beside the pot, he placed a sign that read, "Keep the Pot Boiling." He soon had the money to see that the needy people were properly fed at Christmas.

His idea to feed the hungry has since grown to not only feed people, but to support homeless shelters, provide disaster relief, and more! This year, join in on making Christmas brighter for 25 million people. **FUMC will be "ringing" at the Meridian Mall on December 2 from 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.**

**give**

together, we can help feed our hungry neighbors

Join us in the fight against hunger by purchasing a \$10 donation card.

Purchase \$10 donation cards at your local Meijer to provide food to families in your community at the Mason Food Bank from now until December 30

**Double Match Day\* Sat., Dec. 16— For every \$10 donation made, Meijer will contribute \$20, resulting in a total \$30 donation**

# In the Life of the Church

## Our Prayers and Healing Wishes to:

- Jon Droscha following surgery
- Jim Goodwin following surgery

## 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 the United Methodist Rural and Agriculture Development Program in Liberia.

The Liberian Nation, and the United Methodist Church there, desperately needs our help. They lack food security and a large proportion of its people are poverty stricken; most of its pastors and members are underprivileged. Although the Church has access to huge quantities of land, their infrastructures are in ruins. Moreover, the Church's Agricultural Program needs to be restrengthened.

Some of the things this project will fund:

- ◆ poultry buildings
- ◆ pig pens
- ◆ cattle ranches,
- ◆ bee hives
- ◆ job creation
- ◆ financial sustainability



# Ingathering Sunday November 19

Bring food to donate to the Mason Food Bank and our Tiny Pantry, and bring your 2024 pledge card to help make sure that important missions and ministries continue in the new year!  
God bless you for your generosity!



## Happy Birthday Bob Booher!

It was a joy to celebrate Bob's birthday with him on October 22. His family joined us for worship and brought a delicious cake to share with everyone.



## Adopt a Carpet Square!

What? It's true! We have many carpet tile samples left over from our search for just the right carpet. You are welcome to adopt some for any number of uses in your storage and work spaces! See a staff member to give a carpet square a good home!



# YOUTH AND CHILDREN



November 5 4-6p.m.: Random Acts of Kindness in the neighborhood followed by a bonfire on the hill

November 19 4-6 p.m.: Breakfast with Santa Prep- we'll set up Santa's workshop and prepare for Saturday's event.

November 25 9-11 a.m.: Breakfast with Santa- Ignite youth will act as "elves" to assist children as they shop Santa's workshop for their family members.

December 3 3-5 p.m.: Christmas Cookie Decorating at Green Acres

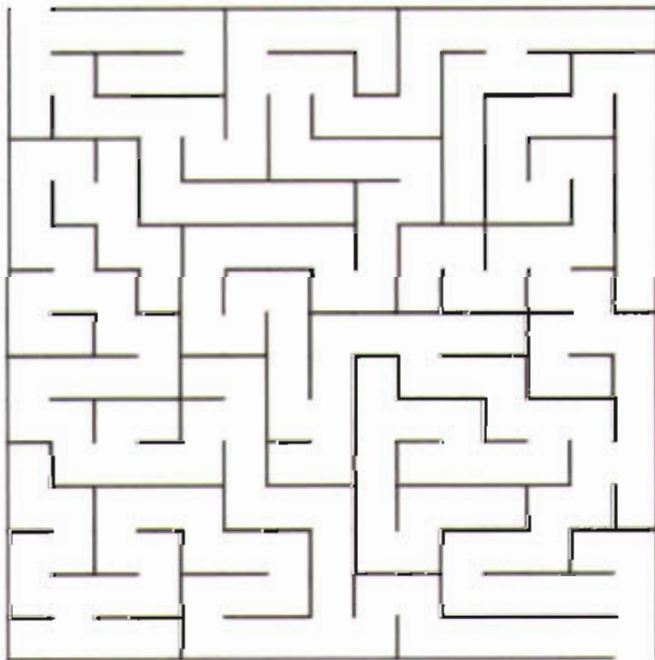


For information on children and teen events, contact [laurie@masonfirst.org](mailto:laurie@masonfirst.org)

## Pumpkin Pie Maze



START



FINISH



## Worship Ques



Cole, Teddy, Nikki, Charlotte, and Owen working on their edible "Twister" boards.



## 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

NON PROFIT  
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U.S. POSTAGE  
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PERMIT #47  
MASON MI 48854 1775

Return Service Requested

Wednesday, November 1  
Sunday, November 5  
Thursday, November 9  
Sunday, November 19  
Sunday, November 19  
Sunday, November 19  
Monday, November 20  
November 23, 24  
Friday, November 24  
Saturday, November 25

\*Every Sunday  
\*Every Tuesday  
\*Every Tuesday  
\*Every Wednesday  
\*Every Wednesday  
\*Every 3rd Friday  
\*Every 4th Tuesday  
\*Every 1st & 3rd

United Women in Faith Meeting  
Ignite Random Acts of Kindness & Bonfire  
UWF Cookie & Craft Sale, Luncheon 9:30-3:00  
Ingathering & Pledge Sunday  
What About the Bible? Discussion  
Ignite  
Deck the Halls (for Christmas)!  
Church Office Closed: Happy Thanksgiving!  
Electric Light Parade  
Breakfast with Santa

Wired Word Sunday School  
Potluck & Fellowship—Everyone welcome!  
*Me, An Evangelist?* Book Club, through Dec. 5  
Mason First Music Ministry—All musicians welcome!  
Bible Study  
Euchre Night—All Euchre players welcome!  
UWF Circles Meet—All women welcome!  
Friday MOPS



# CELEBRATE NOVEMBER *Birthdays!*

Aaron Fog .....	1	Cherry Zanger .....	14
Ryan Beebe .....	2	Brett Beaune .....	14
Jean Karlake .....	2	Daniel Rosas .....	14
Heather Giguere .....	3	Heidi Berridge .....	14
Cade Schanz .....	3	Jean Bement .....	15
Ashtyn Newland .....	4	Joyce Plumhoff .....	16
Benjamin Tuthill .....	4	Anne Hudgins .....	17
Charles Stark .....	5	Diane David .....	17
Kyle Strickland .....	5	Heather VerHage .....	20
Emilie Hudgins .....	5	Lukas Harnick .....	20
Debra Buckner .....	6	Brian Howe .....	22
Ashley Gardner .....	6	Judith Whipple .....	22
Eliza Boynton .....	9	Ilene Ream .....	23
Amy Smith .....	9	Jane Hepfer .....	26
Paul Lange .....	11	Emily Bartlett .....	28
Lara Adolphson .....	11	Brenda Schmidt .....	28
William Campbell .....	12	Jack Merchant .....	28
Hannah Sanders .....	12	Jennifer Richard .....	28
Gabriella Howe .....	12	Jon Droscha .....	28
Hope Treiber .....	13	Jakob Adolphson .....	29
Bailey Akers .....	13	Susan Gardner .....	30
Ted Stroud .....	13		

*Thank you*



Thank you notes were received this month from Karen Merindorf, for supporting Relay for Life, and from the Niagara Heritage of Hope and Service, the home of the Historic Holy Trinity, thanking everyone for our donation last month.

*Happy*  
**ANNIVERSARY**

Craig and Sherry Barnes .....	2
Sue and Mike Flores .....	19

## November 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			<b>1</b> 9:00am UWF Meeting, in Chapel 10:30am Bible Study Class, in library 5:30pm Music Ensemble 6:00pm Grief Group, in Chapel 6:30pm Chancel Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Choir	<b>2</b> 6:00pm Missions Meeting, in Fellowship Hall	<b>3</b> 9:30am MOPS, in Youth Room	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b> 9:30am Worship 11:00am Wired Word Class, in Chapel 4:00pm Ignite Bonfire	<b>6</b> 7:00pm Church Council Meeting, in Chapel	<b>7</b> 1:00pm Area Youth Leaders Meeting, in Chapel 5:30pm Potluck, in Fellowship Hall 6:30pm Me, an Evangelist? Book Club, in "Fishbowl"	<b>8</b> 10:30am Bible Study Class, in library 5:30pm Music Ensemble 6:00pm Grief Group, in Chapel 6:30pm Chancel Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Choir	<b>9</b> 9:30am UWF Craft & Cookie Sale, in Fellowship Hall	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b> 9:30am Worship 11:00am Wired Word Class, in Chapel	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 2:00am UWF meeting, in Chapel 5:30pm Potluck, in Fellowship Hall 6:30pm Me, an Evangelist? Book Club, in "Fishbowl"	<b>15</b> 10:30am Bible Study Class, in library 5:30pm Music Ensemble 6:00pm Grief Group, in Chapel 6:30pm Chancel Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Choir	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 9:30am MOPS, in Youth Room 6:30pm Euchre	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> Pledges Due 9:30am Worship 11:00am Wired Word Class, in Chapel 6:30pm What About the Bible? Group, in Fellowship Hall	<b>20</b> 9:00am Decorate the Church for the holidays!! 5:30pm Alzheimer's Care Group, in "Fishbowl"	<b>21</b> 5:30pm Potluck, in Fellowship Hall 6:30pm Me, an Evangelist? Book Club, in "Fishbowl"	<b>22</b> 10:30am Bible Study Class, in library 5:30pm Music Ensemble 6:30pm Chancel Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Choir	<b>23</b> Thanksgiving, Church Office Closed 	<b>24</b> Church Office Closed 6:00pm Electric Light Parade, downtown Mason 	<b>25</b> 9:00am Breakfast with Santa, in Fellowship Hall
<b>26</b> 9:30am Worship 11:00am Wired Word Class, in Chapel	<b>27</b> 7:00pm Trustees Meeting, in Chapel	<b>28</b> 10:00am Mary Martha Circle, in Chapel 1:00pm Rebekah Circle, in Chapel 5:30pm Potluck, in Fellowship Hall 6:30pm Me, an Evangelist? Book Club, in "Fishbowl" 6:30pm Miriam Circle, in Chapel	<b>29</b> 9:00am UWF Board Meeting, in Chapel 10:30am Bible Study Class, in library 5:30pm Music Ensemble 6:30pm Chancel Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Choir	<b>30</b>		