

The Clarion

July 2024

First UMC is a welcoming, accepting, caring and diverse Christian community committed to teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to all people through faith-based worship, exciting programs and outreach ministry.

Ponderings from your Pastor

Dear Friends,

Incompatible. A single word that would wreak havoc on the United Methodist Church for generations. Since 1972 that word was part of our doctrinal standards, specifically naming homosexuality as incompatible with Christian teaching. As it turns out, when you tell people that the core of who they are is ungodly, is an affront to Christianity itself, it causes great harm. Incompatibility language was removed at General Conference this spring.

Throughout the Bible, Christ invites, dines with, engages, and empowers people that others thought were incompatible with the religious teachings of the day. They consistently tried to remind Jesus, “do you know who you are talking to?” The people that Jesus often lifts as examples of what it means to have faith were the same people that were considered by their community to be enemies of the faithful. Samaritans, tax collectors, women whom society had judged as unworthy, fisherman and shepherds, Romans, etc. Jesus saw them for who they would become through the gift of God’s love, not the expectations of the religious leaders of the day. We too are called to examine all things through the lens of God’s love.

Rev. Paul Perez, who is a Deacon in our conference, was also the lead clergy delegate for our Michigan Annual Conference’s delegation to General Conference. Rev. Perez shared his experiences and joy from the outcome of General Conference:

“To my queer and transgender kin, I want to say this: You were always and already compatible with Christian teaching. No vote can ever take this away or grant this gracious reality, this divine gift. You are unique and unrepeatable miracles of God. You are God’s beloved. God has called you for such a time as this...

...To my church bureaucrat kin, I want to say this: You are released from the burden of upholding discrimination, of violating your conscience and call to implement church laws you did not believe in.

This historic moment is not an ending but a beginning — or at least a possibility; a possibility for healing, for repentance, for reconciliation, for repair. A possibility that we all have the responsibility to respond to.”

I weigh much of my life by how I teach my daughters. God’s love is for all. Nobody is incompatible with God’s love, and that is the core of Christian teaching. People who I don’t agree with are not incompatible, people who are different than me are not incompatible, people who live in a way that I would not, are not incompatible. I can disagree, choose a different way, and still, God’s abundant love would be available to all. I am thankful that our church has only grown in the way we acknowledge that all people are of sacred worth.

In God’s Love,
Pastor Dan

Children & Youth Ministry Updates

Seeker in Sneakers

There's still room at the table for Seekers in Sneakers! Join us July 23-25 from 4:00-6:15 to Discover Jesus! If we get to 20 participants, Rev. Alicea will be duck taped to the wall on Thursday after Closing Worship. Invite your friends and let's enjoy VBS together. See Rev. Alicea for invitation postcards to give your friends.

Camping in July and August

The camping season at our United Methodist camps has started. Please be in prayer for all United Methodist Camps around the state. We have many campers attending camps this summer in July and August, please pray for them.

Attending Lake Huron Retreat Center God's Treasures Camp July 16-20 - Caralee McKay and Denette Ballard.

If you would like to send them a card while they are at camp: Lake Huron Retreat Center 8794 Lakeshore Rd, Burtchville, MI 48059

Attending Lake Louise Christian Community Camp:

Middle School Camp, July 13-20 - Rev. Alicea Williams

Teddy Bear Camp Session 1, July 28-30 - Rachel and Danielle Reece

Teddy Bear Camp Session 2, August 1-3 - Ethan and Aaron Gimm and Jack and Kelsey Bridson

Black Bear Camp, July 28-31 - Calan Parker and Jim Willneff, Wyatt and Warren Minarik, and Ronan and Jessica Dumas

Polar Bear Camp, July 28 - August 3 - Addison Maertens, Evan Maertens, and Caiden Parker

Clergy Family Camp, August 4-9 - Pastor Dan Hart, Autumn Hart, Elodie Hart, and Ailey Hart

If you would like to send a card/letter or email to any camper while they are at camp: Lake Louise Christian Community 11037 Thumb Lake Road, Boyne Falls, MI 49713 OR Email: lakelouise@lakelouisecommunity.org

Explore Faith Sunday School

It is with great joy that we announce the new Sunday School Class for 3rd - 6th graders: Explore Faith! Beginning September 8 our 3rd -6th graders will explore their faith with a new curriculum from Cokesbury titled BIG Faith. Explore Faith will meet at the same time as our Children's Worship in the Youth Lounge on the 2nd-5th Sundays of the month. If you would like to be a teacher for Explore Faith, please contact Rev. Alicea. 2-3 volunteer teachers and 4 assistants are needed. Hopefully, with enough teachers and assistants, volunteers will only miss worship once a month. There will be a training in August for Explore Faith for teachers and assistants. **Please note you will need to be current with our Protection Policy training and be background checked in order to teach or assist our Explore Faith Sunday School.** Contact Rev. Alicea to help our 3rd-6th graders explore their faith in BIG and exciting ways!

Children's Worship Leaders

Children's Worship is in need of 2 volunteer teachers and a few more assistants. If you have been an assistant and would like to become a teacher or want to join Children's Worship as a teacher or assistant, please contact Rev. Alicea. This program continues to engage our children in wonder and teaches them about worship in a way that is accessible to them. Children's Worship will continue to meet the 2nd-5th Sundays of the month in the Children's Worship Center. There will be a training for all Children's Worship teachers and assistants in August. **Please note you will need to be current with our Protection Policy training and be background checked in order to teach or assist our Children's Worship.**

Pathfinders Kingdom Project

Our Pathfinders Youth Group have been gifted with \$100 to engage in a mission project. The Kingdom Project is a mission project of the Pathfinders choosing and they will grow the \$100 into something bigger for a community organization. You will hear more about this project in worship in July 21 from one of our Pathfinders. Please be praying for our Pathfinders as they learn more about the organization they have chosen and about the ways in which you might help them in their mission.

Pathfinders Youth Group

Our Pathfinders ended the year with a backyard swim party at Jim and Linda Willneff's home on the St. Clair River. Great fun was had by all with fun water games, good food, and playing on the floating mat. Pathfinders Youth Group is for all 3rd-6th graders and will begin again on September 15 at 1:30PM. Can't wait to see you all again soon!

Joys to Share



July Birthdays

Sydney Sieben	07/01
Pastor Dan Hart	07/02
Jaxon Haxer	07/02
Rick Lyon	07/04
Kaitlyn French	07/04
Suzanne Tregembo	07/05
Janna Holderer	07/05
Michael Olszewski Jr	07/06
Emma Lucido	07/06
Asher Gimm	07/07
Steven Paul	07/08
Josh Alger	07/11
Emma Granke	07/11
Ben Wilden	07/12
Rory Flanigan	07/12
Tony Lucido	07/14
Jennifer Haxer	07/20
William Jackson	07/20
Stephanie Alger	07/21
Bonnie Kaster	07/23
Patricia Arketa	07/25
Debra Card	07/28
Linda Mowatt	07/29
Diane McDougall	07/30
Patricia Yousif	07/30
Meribeth Bocker-Querio	07/30
Melissa Machalak	07/31



July Anniversaries

Jason & Melissa Parker	07/13
Jeff West & Kim Rueger-West	07/18
Robert & Miria Chamberlin	07/31
Aaron & Bethany Gimm	07/31



I would like to thank everyone for the thoughts, prayers, and cards I received following my recent surgery. Knowing that my church family was supporting me gave me great comfort during that time. You are wonderful, kind people and I appreciate your thoughtfulness to me.
Bonnie Robbins-McCormick



Heaven has received another angel on Wednesday, July 3, 2024 as Tim Gentz has lost his battle with Cancer. Loretta Ballard and Tim's Family wishes to thank you for all your prayers and concerns.

Steve and I would like to thank everyone for the prayers over the past few months. Steve is on the road to recovery since his hospitalization and three other procedures and was able to forgo one of the major surgeries they thought they would have to do. Thank you for the continued prayers during all of his follow up appointments. We are so blessed to have such a wonderful church community behind us!

*Thank you again,
Steven & Jill Brandon*

Our Thoughts and Prayers are with...

Our Church Family

Paul Tregembo, Darcie West, Steven Kinic, Nancy Hathaway, Darrell Miller, Phil Santo, Steven Brandon, Kathy Oakley, Sallie Miller

Grieving

Jim Brandon, Rev. Dr. Kenneth Kohlmann, Tim Gentz, Elaine Courtney, John Ray

Our Friends and Family

Daniel Holguin, Dawn Hess, Joan Steggell, Louis DeCapite, Dennis & Doris Clemens
Donna Miller's brother, Bruce

Our Homebound

Josephine Beaudette, Herb & JoAnn Brush, Marilyn Jean Borow, Shirley French, Barbara Knuth,
Suzan Littlejohn, Karen Loos, Carolyn Merlo, Marilyn Nielsen, Barbara Pagett, Kay Sommers, Linda Tinkham

Those Serving in the Armed Forces

Scott Bean, Cory Berg, Hannah Dion, Matthew Juras, Tami Morgan, Brendan Price

College Students

Brianna Akers, Madelyn Benson, Aniella Bowman, Deanna Buchanan, Nathan Buchanan,
Nicholas Buchanan, Kobe Champion, Maria Chesnutt, Katie Crossman, Tessa Donohue, Drew Donovan,
Jessica Evans, Alison Haskell, Danny Haskell, Kassandra Kee, Jackson Kelly, Claire Manning,
David Manning, Matthew Manning, Sara Manning, Gabrielle Olszewski, Bailey Price, Sarah Salisbury,
Kyle Sieben, Alex Zdravkovski, Jenna Zdravkovski

Contact Information

2024 First UMC Leadership Team

Chair: Warren Minarik
Vice-Chair: Terri Brown
Finance Chair: Tim Howlett, Co-Chair: Dan McLatcher
Lay Leader: Sydney Sieben
Secretary: Keith Rosso
Staff Parish Relations Chair: Lois Hill
Trustees Chair: Bill Wiza, Co-Chair: Mike Miller
Trustees Secretary: Barb Clay
Member at Large: Sheila Strunk
Member at Large: Kim Rueger-West
Clergy: Rev. Alicea Williams, Rev. Dan Hart



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