



Questions they asked Jesus

worship series

Our Worship Planning Team has chosen for the beginning of the fall season a challenging series based on the questions asked of Jesus in the Gospels. Among the many questions, the planning team has chosen four which are particularly relevant and thought provoking. Each Sunday our worship leader will seek to discover in the text our Lord's reply, and then, through the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit, apply Jesus' answer to our day and age. Music and liturgy will complement our quest. Invite your friends and neighbors to join you as we "Reconnect and Rejoice" on September 10 and find the spiritual food and fellowship we need for our journey.

Sunday, Sept. 10 - 8:30, 9:30 & 11 a.m.

Reconnect & Rejoice Sunday

Rev. Steve Charnley

What Is the Greatest Commandment?

Matthew 22:34-40

Rev. Julie Kline - Emerging Worship, 9:30 a.m.

Sunday, Sept. 17 - 8:30 & 11 a.m.

Rev. Steve Charnley

Who Is My Neighbor?

Luke 10:25-37

Stewardship Campaign Kick-Off

Sunday School classes begin, 9:30 a.m.

Presentation of 3rd Grade Bibles, 11 a.m.

JFON Ice Cream Celebration, 12:15 p.m.

[Sunday, Sept. 24 - 8:30 & 11 a.m.

Appalachia Service Project

Rev. Julie Kline]

Sunday, Oct. 1 - 8:30 and 11 a.m.

World Communion Sunday

Rev. Steve Charnley

Shall We Strike with the Sword?

Luke 22:47-53

Sunday, Oct. 8 - 8:30, 9:30 & 11 a.m.

Rev. Dan Duncan

What Is Truth?

John 18:31-38

Rev. Julie Kline - Emerging Worship, 9:30 a.m.

WELCOME to *The First Word*. Articles for the next issue are due no later than Wednesday, **September 13, 2017**. The next newsletter will be mailed **September 20, 2017**. Articles submitted to the newsletter should be sent electronically by email to Jennifer Stupica at jstupica@umc-kzo.org.

FIRST CHURCH STAFF

The staff is here to empower and equip the congregation for ministry and mission. Email *staff by entering the first letter of their first name and the entire last name, and then: @umc-kzo.org. (i.e., scharnley@umc-kzo.org).

*Rev. Steve Charnley	Senior Pastor
*Rev. Julie Kline	Associate Pastor
*Rev. Dan Duncan	Pastor of Children & Families Ministries
*Rev. Keith Treman	Pastor of Congregational Care
*Jacqueline Stilger	Minister of Music
*Ruth LaMachia	Church Business Administrator
*Christi Landreville	Administrative Partner in Ministry
*Jennifer Stupica	Communications Coordinator
*Bernie Foulk	Organist
Rich Peavler	First Singers Director
*Curt Flowers	Bookkeeper
*Thom Victor	Office Assistant
*Denise Wilcox	Contributions Assistant
*Robin Entenman	Office Assistant/Security
Aita Diop	JFON Legal Assistant
Pamala Roman	Custodian
Todd Bloomfield	Evening Custodian
Ernesto Escobedo	Custodian/Security
Austen Rial	Building Maintenance
Julie Meyers	First Care Director (msjulie55@yahoo.com)
Bishop David A. Bard	Bishop of the Michigan Area
Rev. Dwayne Bagley	Kalamazoo District Superintendent

GLOBAL STAFF

Will & Ella Faircloth	Children's Home, Costa Rica
Donna Chaat Pewo	Clinton/El Reno Church & Community Ministry of the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference
Desiree Sergua-April	Children at Risk Ministries, Nicaragua

PRAYER CHAIN. Did you know that it is as easy as picking up the phone or e-mailing the office to have your prayers multiplied by many caring members of your church family? Please contact the church office, 381-6340, if you would like to be included in our weekly email prayer chain. If you would like to be added to our phone prayer chain, please contact Mary Beth Garman at (269) 321-9332.



STEPHEN MINISTRY is a confidential care giving ministry of our church. If you would like a Stephen Minister to walk with you during a difficult time in your life, you are welcome to contact Wendy Arnold at 323-3244.

Our sympathy and prayers to the family and friends of

Walter Walker, who died July 30. Walter was our friendly face at the security desk from 2007 to 2013, when he retired because of declining health.

Marilyn Boyd, who died August 17.

Please keep these friends in your prayers

Dee Barkley, John Boekhout, Hannah Boley, Mollie Clements, Skip Decker, Jennifer Franklin, Russ Gabier, Derek Geerlings, Bob Goodwin, Brenda Haan, Marge Hastings, Carl Hausermann, Dolores Heidanus, Nell Holland, Donna Hollingsworth, Barbara Hughey, Earl Hyde, Eleanor Lane, Art Mann, Jim Martin, Dave Martin, Mandy Morrill, Anna Rasmussen, Joan & Hank Rohs, Mary Helen Thomas, Arlene Triestram, Paul VanWestrienen, Rebecca Hatley Watkins, Suzanne White, Anne Wolfe, Grace Wunderlich

Baptisms

Our next date for baptisms is Oct. 15. If you are interested in baptism for yourself or a child, please contact Pastor Dan Duncan at dduncan@umc-kzo.org or calling the church at 381-6340 x231 to make arrangements.

New Grandchild!

Dennis and Liz Moon are the proud grandparents of grandson Cohen Craig Moon, born on July 25th.

Card Ministry

Have you sent a greeting card today? FREE cards available in the Jesus Lounge! Lift up someone's heart by sending good wishes. If you've ever received an unexpected card, you know the warm, fuzzy feeling they bring!



**stephen
MINISTRY
TRAINING**

**You're invited to an informational meeting on
Wednesday September 27 at 6:30 p.m. in the chapel.**

For more information, please contact Wendy Arnold, 323-3244 or Jan Baker, 342-4092

Helping Our Neighbors ministry has many volunteer opportunities

Helping Our Neighbors seeks people willing to help people. There are many ways to contribute, including hospitality, secretarial, interviewing, and administrative. Hours are flexible in some roles. Please contact Ruth LaMachia in the church office at 381-6340, or Kim Taylor at 353-2893, if you feel a calling to help in this ministry.

Sunday nursery worker



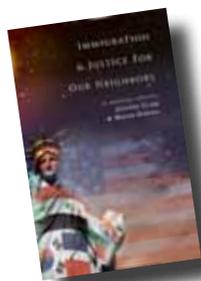
We have an immediate opening for a paid position in our nursery on Sunday mornings. Beginning Sept.

10, hours will be from 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Responsibilities include providing safe, secure, nurturing, clean, and efficient care for our children. Candidates should provide a résumé along with professional and personal references to Ruth LaMachia, Church Business Administrator, by emailing rlamachia@umc-kzo.

"Immigration and Justice For Our Neighbors"

An anthology of poems and writings about the life of immigrants

Edited by Jennifer Clark & Miriam Downey



An intimate glimpse into the lives of our immigrant neighbors—their struggles, their anguish, as well as their joys. Help support our JFON ministry! Books are available at the Welcome Center, by contacting Ann Sweany at a.sweany@jfonwestmichigan.org, or completing the online order form located on our website ("Ministries" tab/"Justice for Our Neighbors Ministry" dropdown). Books are \$10 each. 100% of your purchase goes to our JFON ministry's expenses: salaries of our attorney and legal assistant, and clinic expenses.

Wesley Interns by Rev. Steve Charnley

This year we will be blessed with two students from the Wesley Foundation at WMU who will be working ten hours a week in ministry at our church. They are **Dominique Bunker** and **Laura Roth**. Dominique will work with social justice ministries, particularly Helping Our Neighbors (HON) and You Are Not Alone (YANA). Laura will work with our young adults and youth. The majority of their stipend is provided by a grant from the UMC through the Wesley Foundation. We will be contributing \$1,000 for each of them. If you would like to share in making their presence possible, please mark your gift, "Intern Ministry."

Dominique and Laura will both be introduced in worship on September 10th at all three services! Watch for their biographies in the September *First Word*. Be sure to greet them and help them discover the warmth and hospitality here at First Church.





Keith and Colleen Treman are excited to announce two travel opportunities that they are hosting.

"Journey through the Bible" - an 11 Day Tour in Israel

October 22 - November 1, 2018. The Journey will include 3 nights in Bethlehem, optional dinner in a Palestinian Christian family home, visit to Jericho and Qumran, Caesarea, The Galilee and Boat ride on the Sea, Cana and Nazareth, Jerusalem and Emmaus. From New York, our trip starts at \$3,348. Optional extensions available.

"Oberammergau/Passion Play and European Capitals" - a 10 Day Tour in Germany and Europe

September 23 - October 2, 2020. The Oberammergau/Passion Play only happens every ten years since 1630. Plan to travel to Munich, Innsbruck, Etta, Prague, Dresden, Leipzig, and Berlin. From New York, our trip starts at \$4,398. Optional extensions available.

Keith and Colleen hope you will join us for one or both of these inspirational and educational tours. Please consider this our invitation to be part of an adventure in faith and join us as we see the Bible come to life! Brochures are available at the Welcome Center or contact Pastor Keith at ktreman@umc-kzo.org. For more info, visit Educational Opportunities Tours website, www.eo.travel or call EO directly at 863-648-0383 and use Keith and Colleen's Host ID#17636.

For our members and their spouses/partners ages 80+

In Your Honor
First United Methodist Church invites you

Four Score and More Luncheon

SAVE THE DATE!
Thursday, October 12, 2017
Noon

First United Methodist Church
Wesley Hall

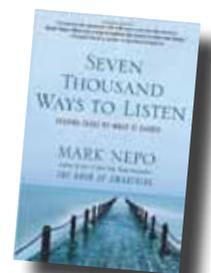
Every fall we invite our members and their spouses ages 80+ to a home-cooked luncheon in Wesley Hall. We share this time together with fellowship, prayer, and good music. Please put OCTOBER 12 on your calendar to join us! We will be taking RSVPs in mid-September.

Borgess Health
Flu Vaccine Clinic

Save the date of Sunday, October 1 to get your annual flu shot! Borgess Health will be in the Fellowship Room administering flu and pneumonia vaccines for a small fee.

Fall Spiritual Growth Group begins Sept. 12
by Nancy Hyde

"Listening is the doorway to everything that matters," claims Mark Nepo, the author of Seven Thousand Ways to Listen. On Tuesday mornings from 10 a.m. until noon, a spiritual growth group will explore the lessons of the book in a ten-week study beginning on Tuesday, September 12. Books can be purchased from Kazoo Books on Parkview Avenue or ordered on Amazon. Kazoo Books will give purchasers a 15% discount on the book. We hope to see you on Tuesday, September 12. If you have questions, call Jan Baker at (269) 342-4092.





Children & Families Ministries

Rev. Dan Duncan
dduncan@umc-kzo.org

Godly Play

During the summer months, Godly Play meets as one group in room 200 following the "Time for the Child in All of Us" at the 10 a.m. worship service. Stories coming up:

Aug. 27: The Rich Young Ruler	Storyteller: Pastor Dan	Guide: Mary Lee
Sept. 3: The Pearl of Great Price	Storyteller: N/A	Guide: Ruth Ann

We resume our program year schedule on September 10 (three worship services, 8:30, 9:30 and 11 a.m.)

Sept. 10: How the Church Tells Time (both groups)
Sept. 17: The Light (both groups)

Sunday School begins Sept. 17!!

We begin at 9:30 a.m. in the "Arches" gathering area on the second floor, with singing, (twice a month) bell ringing, snacks, and prayer, before going to our respective rooms.

Pre-K through 4th Grade. We will be using our United Methodist "Deep Blue" curriculum again this year for grades Pre-K through 4, which has many different ways of engaging children with the meaning and message of the Bible. ("Toddlers and Twos" (nursery) have an age-appropriate curriculum.)

- ▶ Pre-K and Kindergarten meet in room 203
- ▶ 1st and 2nd Graders meet in room 210
- ▶ 3rd and 4th Graders meet in room 209

5th and 6th Grades

Our 5th and 6th graders "submerge" themselves in issues of Christian faith and life with the "Submerge" curriculum from Cokesbury. They meet in room 305.

Third graders receive Bibles on September 17

We begin the program year as usual with the presentation of Bibles to our third graders. This will occur at the 11 a.m. worship service on September 17. If you have a third grader, please let Pastor Dan know if he or she will be present that day and how they would like their name printed in their Bible.

Ministry with our children opportunities

We have a few openings for Sunday School teachers this fall. If you feel called to serve our church and children in this way, Pastor Dan would love to talk with you! Teachers serve in a one month on, one month off rotation.

Family Foundations

This is the name for our adult fellowship group for parents of young children. They meet in Room 304 beginning on Sept. 17, from 9:30-10:30 a.m. They'll begin by exploring "Love and Logic: Simple Parenting Strategies for Raising Great Kids in Complicated Times." This 5-week series will focus on avoiding power struggles, getting kids to listen the first time, and keeping parenting simple and fun. We hope you join us to share ideas and laugh your way into being a better parent.

Family Fun Night on September 15

Our next Family Fun night is Sept. 15 from 6-8 p.m. It will be a cookout and picnic at Oshtemo Township Park (off M-43, about a mile west of Meijer's). Bring a dish to pass; we'll provide hot dogs, drinks, and paperware.



JFON Green Card Clinic a wonderful success

by Ann Sweany

On Tuesday, August 8, Wesley Hall was filled with 21 refugees and as many volunteers, as they completed applications for "green cards" or permanent residency. This is an important step for which refugees are eligible after one year in this country. It allows them more security as they work to establish roots here, and also offers such things as the ability to travel more freely.

This time, we worked with a revised form. Frustratingly, it contained 66 questions about past and possible future subversive activities carried out by each person (even the toddlers!) or their spouse or parents. This was met with an irrepressible sense of humor—one mother, on the question of whether she had ever been a stowaway, asked "Am I going to put all 8 children in a suitcase?"

It is good to welcome these people into our community. Thank you for your support of this ministry which lays a foundation of security and stability.



September 17 @ 12:15 p.m. Time for ice cream!

By the end of the summer, through large clinics and a number of office appointments, JFON will have approached 200 refugees having successfully applied for permanent residency. It is also JFON's 2nd birthday! Ray "Ice Cream" Sweany thinks ice cream is always the best way to celebrate, so with the help of some very cold liquid nitrogen, we will share ice cream after the 11 a.m. worship service on Sunday, September 17 on the lawn next to the parking lot. Please join us to learn more about JFON and to help celebrate!



Ray Sweany makes homemade ice cream using liquid nitrogen

Gifts to JFON a blessing

by Mollie Clements

There was an anonymous gift of \$10,000 given in January to JFON. It has been a life saving donation, keeping the ministry in the black and allowing it to continue without interruption. Thank you to who gave this gift. All of us associated with JFON are very grateful!

Our fund raising has dropped

to almost a standstill in recent months. We have been sustained financially by the sale of Jennifer Clark's and Miriam Downey's poetry anthology, Immigration and Justice for Our Neighbors. Sales continue, making an impact not only for the JFON ministry, but in allowing the reading community to have an intimate glimpse into the lives of our immigrant neighbors.

New fund raising plans are in the works. There are foundations and churches we will be asking for help. This is a miraculous journey, helping a forlorn people to move from fear to safety. A recent client said, "I have hope, where I had no hope." Thank you to all who are able to help make a donation so that we can continue our work in blessing the stranger in our land.



First Bells Director Needed

by Liza Wolfe

We are looking for a new director to lead our littlest bell ringers! First Bells meet in the Arches the first and third Sunday of the month, September through May, at 9:30 a.m. The children offer their music during the 11 a.m. worship service on the third Sunday of each month.

The director needs to be there for each practice and offering. This person needs to go with the flow and remember that IT WILL HAPPEN regardless. Each hymn is on a CD and the director turns the cards according to the number printed on the back of each card. The front of the card (which the children see) shows which color bell to ring. A stool is provided for the director to use when the children ring for a service. The stool, bells, and shoebox of hymns is in the closet just outside the Arches.

Liza Wolfe will be available to train the new director until she/he is comfortable to go alone! Please stop and talk to Liza on any Sunday or email her at yammy74evr@gmail.com if interested!

Wedding Hostess Chair Needed

by Liza Wolfe

Wedding hostesses serve as the representative for the church to assist the bride and groom. We have a regular group of ladies that serve as hostesses. We are looking for a chair to organize the hostess schedule. The church office will email a list of the weddings for the year. The chair will ask for hostesses quarterly and let the office know who will be doing each wedding. Most weddings require two hostesses.

The chair will be knowledgeable and familiar with the church's wedding policies and all the facilities available to the bride and groom.

Please contact Liza Wolfe if you are interested in chairing this group of cheerful and personable group of ladies! Training is available until ready to work alone. Call Liza at 373-0381 if interested. We plan to have a luncheon for the hostesses this fall; time/place TBA!

Tutors Needed

by Joyce Treece

Spring Valley Elementary School needs mentors again this year. We are part of the "Community in Schools" organization. Martha Serio is the Coordinator of Volunteers at Spring Valley. She is a dedicated leader of several groups who try to help the school in various ways. "Our small but mighty group" of tutors from First Church read and write with two students for a 1/2 hour, one day a week. Consider volunteering in this way. Your vacation times can be worked into the schedule. If interested, please call Joyce Treece at 375-8814.

September Mission of the Month

The Outreach Team has chosen **Community In Schools** as the September "Mission of the Month." This is an outreach new to our monthly efforts. Community In Schools of Kalamazoo (CIS) removes barriers that can derail students from success; giving them the hope and belief that they can succeed in school, graduate, and be prepared for life. The CIS Kids' Closet provides clothing and other items to ensure all students can attend school every day with comfort and dignity. CIS also accepts donations of items that meet other needs of students and help support the work that staff, volunteers, and partners do with their students. Below is a suggested list of items needed. Please leave your donations in the basket in the church office. Thank you!

- ▶ CIS Kids' Closet - children's underwear and sweatpants (or any pants with a stretchy elastic waist) in size 6 (small) and larger
Items for staff
- ▶ Treasure chests - stickers, bouncy balls, fancy pencils and erasers
- ▶ Non-perishable, kid-friendly, healthy single-serve snacks; e.g., applesauce cups, cereal bars, individual bags of pretzels, goldfish crackers, raisins (plain or yogurt coated)



Sunday Morning Partners in Ministry

	August 27 10 a.m.	September 3 10 a.m.
10:00 Lay Reader	Deb Willoughby	Tim Mullikin
10:00 Welcome	need someone	need someone
10:00 Greeters	Ron Moore	need someone
10:00 Acolytes	volunteer	volunteer
10:00 Sound/Lights	Jim Willoughby	Greg Anderson

	September 10 8:30 and 11 a.m	September 17 8:30 and 11 a.m	September 24 8:30 and 11 a.m
8:30 Lay Reader	Carol Hodges	Jan Schoenherr	APS Sunday
8:30 Greeters	need someone	need someone	need someone
8:30 Sound/Lights	Jim Willoughby	Greg Anderson	Jim Willoughby
11:00 Lay Reader	Carol Holms	Elaine Martin	ASP Sunday
11:00 Welcome	need someone	need someone	need someone
11:00 Greeters	Jim & Joyce Treece	need someone	need someone
11:00 Acolytes	Collin Bland Andrew Wrright	Sean Willoughby Ella Adams	Andrew Hampton Ryan Ernest
11:00 Sound/Lights	Lucas Bolton	Greg/Drrew Eaton	Lucas Bolton



Save this upcoming meeting date!

Wednesday, September 6 General Meeting/Program/Lunch Church Parlor

- 9:30 a.m. - Business Meeting
- 10:30 a.m. - Break
- 10:45 am. - Memorial Service and Program
"Returning Citizens," by Luke Kriyazznski,
Urban Alliance
- 12 Noon - Lunch

Reservations for lunch should be made by calling Ruth Evelyn Graham at 327-8799 by noon on Friday, September 1. Cost of lunch is \$7.

Our **Bronson Park Food Pantry** continues to be a valuable asset for the Kalamazoo community. In the past year, it has provided food for 3,616 households (6,251 adults and 3,355 children), providing 127,878 lbs. of food. The food is provided by Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes and cost \$32,906,



or 26¢ per lb. Volunteers are always needed in the food pantry that is open Monday through Friday from 1-3 p.m. Please contact Carol Holms or Carol Hamet for more information!

How will you pay forward the blessings from God that you have received?

Consecration Sunday

October 15



Dawn Patrol is our Wednesday morning book study group for men. They will begin meeting again after the summer break on Wednesday, September 6 at 7:30 a.m. with their study of "Brothers in Christ: Telling Our Stories." Invited friends and neighbors from the African American community in Kalamazoo will join them. Pastor Steve Charnley leads this group and welcomes all men to join them for great fellowship.

Ramp Up leader and volunteers needed

by Tom Schaberg

In mid-August an announcement was made during Sunday worship asking for volunteers to work on the outreach program called Ramp Up. Since this appeal, two people have expressed interest in helping. Thank you!

The church has provided this outreach ministry since 2004, and has built 60 ramps for people in Kalamazoo County. WE NEED TO KEEP THIS OUTREACH ALIVE! IT IS DESPERATELY NEEDED IN KALAMAZOO COUNTY. The program is a collaboration between Disability Network SW Michigan, and First Church. Disability Network provides the funding and the customers. Our church provides the leadership and the builders. It takes ten people to build a 50-foot ramp (average length), in 1-1/2 days. First Church also has contributed financially to the program for all these past years.

A leader and volunteer builders are needed to keep this important outreach going. The goal is to build two ramps each summer. One of them would be built with the assistance of our youth group. All tools are provided.

Won't you please consider joining a group of volunteers to build a ramp? The experience is fun, the fellowship is enriching, and you get to work outdoors in the sunshine. The result upon completion of the ramp and seeing the customers' excitement at their new freedom will fill your heart with gladness.

For more information, please call Tom Schaberg at 269-352-5234, or e-mail tgschaberg@sbcglobal.net.

2017 Special Sunday Offerings

2017 DATE	OFFERING DESCRIPTION	GIVEN IN 2017
<i>January 15</i>	<i>Human Relations Sunday</i>	595.12
February 26	Camp Sunday	782.00
<i>March 26</i>	<i>One Great Hour of Sharing</i>	1,620.00
April 16	Easter Offering	9,498.00
April 16	Easter Outreach Offering	435.00
<i>April 30</i>	<i>Native American Sunday</i>	186.00
May 21	Pastor's Discretionary Fund	4,810.00
<i>June 11</i>	<i>Peace with Justice Sunday</i>	433.89
July 16	Michigan United/Justice Team	1,931.76
September 10	Christian Education Sunday	
September 24	ASP Sunday	
<i>October 1</i>	<i>World Communion Sunday</i>	
October 22	UMW Sunday	
November 19	You Are Not Alone (YANA)	895.00
<i>November 26</i>	<i>United Methodist Student Sunday</i>	15.00
December 10	Bishop's Advent Appeal	
December 24	Christmas Offering	

Those Sundays in bold italics are the six Special Sundays of the United Methodist Church.

Building Fund Update

by Molly Williams, Finance Chair

The balance on our building loan continues to decline, and we are very close to having sufficient funds to pay it in full. Approximately \$33,000 in donations is still needed. The offer to match new (unpledged) contributions at 50% remains in effect, with about \$7,000 in matching funds still to be earned from the next \$14,000 in new donations. Once those funds are received and the matching opportunity completed, there will be a remaining balance of \$19,000. Thank you to all of our members and friends who have contributed to this 9-year, \$4.2 million project. We are very near the end of this journey.

July 2017 General Fund financial picture

Note: Building Fund and special offerings are not included.

	Month of July	Year to Date	2017 Annual Budget	% of Annual Budget
Total Income	\$ 58,059	*\$597,449	\$956,638	62.5%
Total Expense	<u>68,159</u>	<u>530,646</u>	\$956,638	55.5%
Net Income/Loss	(\$ 10,101)	\$ 66,803		

*YTD income includes \$120,310 in 2017 prepaid pledges

SEPTEMBER 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27 10:00 AM Worship 5:30 PM You Are Not Alone	28 5:30 PM Golf League 6:30 PM Basketball 7:00 PM Justice Team	29 10:00 AM Worship Planning 6:30 PM Emerging Worship Planning 7:00 PM Academy Class Planners 7:00 PM NA	30 ALL STAFF RETREAT	31 10:00 AM Helping Our Neighbors 6:30 PM NA	1	2
3 Blood Pressure Clinic Holy Communion 10:00 AM Worship 5:30 PM You Are Not Alone	4 	5 9:00 AM JFON 10:00 AM Northside Ministerial Alliance 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 1:00 PM Emmaus Group 7:00 PM NA 7:00 PM SPRC	6 7:30 AM Dawn Patrol 9:30 AM OLLI Curriculum Committee 9:30 AM UMW General Meeting & Luncheon 12:00 PM Staff Yoga 6:00 PM Emerging Worship Band Rehearsal	7 9:30 AM First Stitchers 10:00 AM Helping Our Neighbors 6:00 PM Handbell Ensemble 6:30 PM House Pub Theology 6:30 PM NA 7:15 PM Chancel Choir & First Singers	8	9
10 8:30 AM Worship 9:30 AM Emerging Worship 11:00 AM Worship 5:30 PM You Are Not Alone 6:00 PM First Singers 6:00 PM Youth Tribe	11 7:00 AM Sunrise Patrol 1:00 PM OLLI Class 6:30 PM Basketball	12 10:00 AM Tuesday Book Club 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 1:00 PM Emmaus Group 4:15 PM First Beats 7:00 PM NA 7:00 PM Stewardship	13 Staff Yoga 7:30 AM Dawn Patrol 9:30 AM Moms Demand Action 12:00 PM Staff Yoga 3:30 PM Stephen Ministry 5:30 PM First Care Board Meeting 6:30 PM Perinatal Mood Disorders Support Group	14 9:30 AM First Stitchers 10:00 AM Helping Our Neighbors 10:30 AM Building & Grounds 6:00 PM Handbell Ensemble 6:30 PM NA 7:15 PM Chancel Choir	15	16
17 Blood Pressure Clinic 8:30 AM Worship 9:30 AM Sunday School for all ages 11:00 AM Worship 12:00 PM JFON Ice Cream Social 5:30 PM You Are Not Alone 6:00 PM First Singers 6:00 PM Youth Tribe	18 7:00 AM Sunrise Patrol 1:00 PM OLLI Class 6:30 PM Basketball	19 10:00 AM Northside Ministerial Alliance 10:00 AM Tuesday Book Club 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 1:00 PM Emmaus Group 4:15 PM First Beats 5:00 PM Center for Transformation 5:15 PM Finance 6:00 PM Ruth Circle 7:00 PM NA	20 7:30 AM Dawn Patrol 9:30 AM Anna Circle 10:00 AM Endowment Committee 12:00 PM First Word Collating 1:00 PM Lydia Circle 1:00 PM Miriam Circle 5:30 PM Staff Training 6:00 PM Wild Ones Board Meeting	21 9:30 AM First Stitchers 9:30 AM Trustees 10:00 AM Helping Our Neighbors 6:00 PM Handbell Ensemble 6:30 PM NA 7:15 PM Chancel Choir	22	23
24 8:30 AM Worship 9:30 AM Sunday School for all ages 11:00 AM Worship 5:30 PM You Are Not Alone 6:00 PM First Singers 6:00 PM Youth Tribe	25 OLLI C 7:00 AM Sunrise Patrol 1:00 PM OLLI Class 6:30 PM Basketball 7:00 PM Justice Team	26 10:00 AM Tuesday Book Club 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 1:00 PM Emmaus Group 4:15 PM First Beats 7:00 PM Church Council 7:00 PM NA	27 7:30 AM Dawn Patrol 9:30 AM UMW Executive Committee 6:30 PM Stephen Ministry 7:00 PM Stewardship	28 9:30 AM First Stitchers 10:00 AM Helping Our Neighbors 6:00 PM Handbell Ensemble 6:30 PM NA 7:15 PM Chancel Choir	29	30 8:30 AM Rotary District Meeting





Rev. Dan Duncan
Pastor of Children & Families Ministries

Staff Sharing

On Becoming Almost Almost Amish. About twenty years ago a researcher observed that *“the average Sunday New York Times newspaper had more information that the average person in the 17th century would encounter in their lifetime.”* What a difference twenty years makes! Now, of course, a lot fewer people receive a paper object at their house as their news source. Through our smart phones and other connected devices, we have at our beck and call just about everything ever known or said. If this kind of access led us to ever-deeper levels of wisdom, then it would be a great development. The reality is, that it is like trying to drink from Niagara Falls.

Friends in the church recently shared a book that I highly recommend to our families. It is ***The Tech-Wise Family***, by Andy Crouch. It is a pretty quick read, with a huge payoff. The subtitle is ***“Everyday steps for putting technology in its proper place.”*** Crouch’s point about their family being “almost almost” (an intentional repeat!) Amish, reflects that community’s intentional commitment to a particular lifestyle, and then choosing the technology that would support it.

I have heard of a bus tour in Amish country in which the tour guide, in response to some tourists’ amazement that the Amish do not have televisions (let alone computers), asked everyone on the bus to raise their hand if they had at least one TV in their house. All the hands went up. He then asked who thought that the TV was helpful to their family life. No hands went up. He then asked who, based on this knowledge, was going to get rid of the TV’s in their house. No hands went up. “That,” he observed, “is the Amish’s approach to technology. Positive family life comes before technology.”

Current surveys indicated that most parents today believe that raising children is more complicated than it was when they were growing up. And the number one reason given by a sizable margin is “technology/social media” at 65% of those surveyed. The number

two reason at 52% is, “the world is a more dangerous place.” “Lack of common morality” at 40% was the number three reason.

I encourage our families with children and teens to get the book, and consider how it is that you will lead your family to the greatest possible vitality so that it can flourish in the ways that really count. The following is a handy summary from Crouch that you may want to put on your refrigerator for quick reference.

“Ten Tech-Wise Commitments”

- 1) We develop wisdom and courage together as a family.
- 2) We want to create more than we consume. So we fill the center of our home with things that reward skill and active engagement.
- 3) We are designed for a rhythm of work and rest. So one hour a day, one day a week, and one week a year, we turn off our devices and worship, feast, play, and rest together.
- 4) We wake up before our devices do, and they “go to bed” before we do.
- 5) We aim for “no screens before double digits” at school and at home.
- 6) We use screens for a purpose, and we use them together, rather than using them aimlessly and alone.
- 7) Car time is conversation time.
- 8) Spouses have one another’s passwords, and parents have total access to children’s devices.
- 9) We learn to sing together, rather than letting recorded and amplified music take over our lives and worship.
- 10) We show up in person for the big events of life. We learn how to be human by being fully present at our moments of greatest vulnerability. We hope to die in one another’s arms.

Pastor Dan



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WE ARE A RECONCILING CONGREGATION. First United Methodist Church of Kalamazoo invites all persons to join us on our journey of faith. Jesus Christ calls us to be an inclusive church that exemplifies the kingdom of God. We strive to move toward reconciling relationships with all, affirming those who are marginalized for any reason, including sexual orientation or gender identity. We welcome all with open hearts, open minds, open doors.



2017 First Word Schedule

Beginning in September 2017, *The First Word* will become a ONCE A MONTH publication. Below is the new schedule for deadlines and mailing dates for the balance of the year.

Article Deadline	Mailing Date
September 13	September 20
October 11	October 18
November 8	November 15
December 6	December 13

Articles are due on the deadline! Late submissions will only be published if space permits. Please submit articles typed exactly as you want them to appear in the newsletter. Articles may be edited for space and content.

Peace is not the product of a victory or a command. It has no finishing line, no final deadline, no fixed definition of achievement. Peace is a never-ending process, the work of many decisions. One is not born into the world to do everything but to do something.

OSCAR ARIAS SANCHEZ

We asked, "what is the story behind Ray Sweany's liquid nitrogen-churned ice cream??"

Well, the story goes like this... Ray's father introduced him to the joy of making homemade ice cream after his father received an ice cream freezer for his birthday. At some point, it was a logical combination of work and home when Ray started using liquid nitrogen to freeze ice cream.

Ray was a chemistry professor at the University of New Orleans (UNO), where he did a lot of research of materials at very low temperatures (a couple hundred degrees below zero). At the same time, after discovering he had assembled the ice cream maker his wife Ann had given him with a crucial gear backward, he vowed to always keep his family in ice cream.

He developed a tradition of making a batch of rhubarb ice cream for the end-of-semester review session at UNO. The students had studied oxalates, which are present in rhubarb, something southerners rarely encounter. Spinach has oxalates, too, but is less desirable as dessert...

Then Ray and Ann moved to Michigan, so now WE are blessed with his creativity, scientific knowledge, and delicious ice cream! All are invited to taste his creamy creations after worship on Sept. 17 when we join together to celebrate JFON's 2nd birthday and 200+ green card applications!

Our First UMC **basketball ministry** continues to enjoy the out of doors, playing on Monday nights (except for Labor Day) at 6:30pm throughout the month of September. Watch for news of going inside and the particulars. In the meantime, come on Mondays out by the garage and shoot hoops with Pastor Steve. Bring family, friends, and neighbors. All ages and abilities are welcome.