



ADVENT/CHRISTMAS

Jesus Christ, the Hope of the World

Jesus Christ, the Hope of the World

Reveal
Watch
Word
Turn
Dream
See
Peace

Join us for worship this Advent and Christmas Season as we study the key theme identified in the Gospel reading each Sunday!

NOV 27 - Advent 1: WATCH. The series begins where Advent begins, with the call of Jesus to his disciples to stay on watch for the fulfillment of all things.

DEC 4 - Advent 2: TURN. Becoming aware of the end of the universe as we know it that Christ will bring about, we are invited to repent, to turn from our attachments to the powers of death and destruction in this age, and live out of the Spirit-led mission of the coming reign of God.

DEC 11 - Advent 3: SEE. Once we have turned toward the fulfillment God intends, we begin to be able to see the world and treat others in it in a new way.

DEC 18 - Advent 4: DREAM. Even as we begin to see God's way of compassion and mercy, we also – like Joseph – come to acknowledge our reliance on God communicating with us and transforming us. Not just in our waking, conscious lives, but in our sleeping, unconscious lives as well.

DEC 24 - Christmas Eve: PEACE. Whether in dreams or visions of angels, we see and hear and join the chorus of the heavenly host announcing the birth of Jesus as a sign of peace to all people of good will.

DEC 25 - Christmas Day: WORD. In a Service of the Word, we contemplate the mystery of the Word made flesh and dwelling among us.

JAN 1 - Epiphany Sunday: REVEAL. The constellations reveal the birth of the Messiah, and the powers of this world are revealed for their self-preservation and violent resistance to the saving work of God.

WELCOME to *The First Word*, a bi-monthly publication, except during the months of June, July, August and December when *The First Word* is published monthly. Articles for the next issue are due no later than Wednesday, **November 23, 2016**. The next newsletter will be mailed **November 30, 2016**. 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
Linda Winkelman	JFON Legal Assistant (kzoo_assist@jfonwestmichigan.org)
*Curt Flowers	Bookkeeper
*Denise Wilcox	Contributions Assistant
*Sara Miller	Office Assistant
*Robin Entenman	Office Assistant/Security
Pamala Roman	Custodian
Todd Bloomfield	Evening Custodian
Ernesto Escobedo	Custodian/Security
Michael DeYoung	Evening Security
Julie Meyers	First Care Director (msjulie55@yahoo.com)
Bishop David A. Bard	Bishop of the Michigan Area
Rev. Dwayne Bagley	Kalamazoo District Superintendent
Rev. Cora Glass	Dir. of Discipleship and Resident Director of Wesley Intentional Living Community

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

Richard Gross, father of Kay Gross (Gary Mittelbach), who died October 11.

David B. Miller, brother of Gordon (Barbara) Miller, who died October 26.

Lois Miles, who died November 7.

Please keep these friends in your prayers

Connor Bigelow, John Boekhout, Hannah Boley, Helen Bray, Sandy Brink, Skip Decker, Hyesuk DeRoo, Bob Goodwin, Brenda Haan, Paula Hall, Marge Hastings, Carl Hausermann, Mildred Hedrick, Nell Holland, Barbara Hughey, Nancy Jacobs, Ann Kneas, Rueith Lewis, Jim Martin, Dave Martin, Marsha McKenzie, Terry Mishler, Mandy Morrill, Mariel Neu, Ham Scharf, Mary Helen Thomas, Arlene Triestram, Lori Volkema, Linda Winkleman, Anne Wolfe

Food Pantry Needs

Our food pantry is in need of assorted soups and peanut butter. Please drop items off at the food pantry window. Thank you!

Snowbirds

If you would like your First Word mailed to an alternate address this winter, please let Christi know the address and dates you will be away.

December Charge Conference

Kalamazoo District Superintendent Rev. Dwayne Bagley will preside over the church's regular business charge conference on **Thursday, December 8 at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary**. Members and friends of the church are invited. Meeting will include nominations for next year's administration, setting clergy and directors' salaries, and reports of past and ongoing work of the church.

Dr. Lallene Rector, President, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in the pulpit November 13



Dr. Lallene Rector

On Sunday, November 13, Dr. Lallene Rector will be in our pulpit at the 8:30 and 11 a.m. services. We hope you will join us that morning and hear this extraordinary scholar and practitioner as she gives her message titled, "Called to Persevere...Anyway!" referencing Luke 21:5-19 and 2 Thessalonians 3:13.

Dr. Rector's educational background includes a bachelor of arts in psychology and religion from Texas Christian University, a master of theological studies from Boston University's School of Theology, and a doctor of philosophy in psychology of religion from Boston University's Graduate School for the Arts and Sciences.



EMERGING WORSHIP

November 13 @ 9:30 a.m.
Wesley Hall

"Climate Justice: Be Just. Be Green" by Rev. Julie Kline

"Brothers and sisters, do not be weary in doing what is right." 2 Thessalonians 3:13

"So it was: the earth produced growing things; plants bearing their own kind of seed and trees bearing fruit, each with its own kind of seed; and God saw that it was good."
Genesis 1:13

The changes in temperatures—from the unusual cold in the American Northeast to the blazing temperatures in the Southwest, to the droughts, fires, and floods across the country and around the world—affect some more than others. We have been inviting people to support the work of UMCOR in Haiti that was devastated by Hurricane Matthew. It is good and right that we help to aid those who have been impacted by devastating weather but it is also a matter of justice when we ask "Why is this happening and what can be done?" All too often, those who are least responsible for climate change suffer its gravest consequences. In worship, we will celebrate the gift of creation and consider our own lifestyles and the impact that we have upon our earth. Our hope is to commit to being good caretakers of the earth and of one another by taking practical steps to change our lifestyles. Come and join us, for the good of creation!

Altarscapes: telling the story of our faith visually

by Carol Hodges, Worship Coordination Committee

As we reported in the last issue of *The First Word*, the Worship Arts Task Force, headed by Deb Search Willoughby and Carol Grant, has worked for the past two years in providing an extra measure of creativity to our worship experience by designing altarscapes for our chancel area as a way to support the spoken Word and worship music. Altar flowers have also been a part of our altar decorations.

On December 31, Kristy Lepley, our altar flower coordinator, is retiring from this position. So beginning in January, there will no longer be a flower calendar. Most weeks, there will be items in the chancel area that the pastors have requested as part of the worship theme for the day. However, if you feel strongly about donating altar flowers, Deb and Carol are happy to work with that. In some cases, the flowers will follow the traditional pattern of being on the altar or they may be placed at the entrance to the sanctuary. One big change is that those donating flowers will need to make the arrangements themselves for flowers with a florist. **The church office will no longer either arrange the orders or the payment for altar flowers.**

We will be trying this new arrangement for one year. In the meantime, if you feel strongly about donating altar flowers during 2017, please phone Carol Hodges at 269-342-6647 and she will make sure your request is honored.



An Open Letter to the People of Kalamazoo County, Michigan,
from Your Religious Leaders
November 3, 2016

Dear People of Kalamazoo County,

As religious leaders in the Kalamazoo area, we call all people to mutual respect, support, and communal peace during the election and afterwards. In our diversity of beliefs and faiths we want to remind everyone that we share many common values. Some of those values are compassion, empathy, graciousness, humility, inner peace, justice, and concern for all people.

To build on our strengths and shared values, we are issuing this call. We ask you to make this election, regardless of its results, a time of peace and an occasion to renew your own commitment to our shared values. And we invite you to attend the interfaith worship, **Communal Peace: A Service of Readings & Music**, to be held at St. Luke's Episcopal Church (247 W. Lovell St., Kalamazoo, MI 49007) on November 9, 2016 at 6:30 PM. There is free parking and a staffed nursery.

Our nation is deeply divided and therefore we find that this call to mutual respect, support, and communal peace is very timely. Sadly, among a few people nationally there has been talk of potential civil unrest following our forthcoming election. Because of this unhelpful talk, several clergy met recently with Kalamazoo Public Safety's Chief Jeffrey Hadley and Deputy Chief Donald Webster. We found that meeting to be both helpful and encouraging. We have much in our county about which to be grateful and proud. Together we make our area a place of meaning and value.

Faithfully,
Your Religious Leaders

Do you sew, knit, crochet, stuff pillows or tie knots in fleece blankets? Did you know FUMC has a ministry for your creative side? In fact, for many years there have been two ministries to provide warm, comforting items to those in need: Warmed By God's Love and First Stitchers. These ministries are merging to ensure the good work they've done for years continues for many more. **Join us for a light lunch on Thursday, Nov. 17 at 11:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Room.** Come learn what these ministries have done in the past and help determine their combined direction for the future and how you can be involved. Please RSVP to Linda Lueth at 324-3522, so we know how much food to prepare. Questions and comments can also be directed to her.

ADDRESS UNKNOWN

Please contact Christi Landreville in the office if you know the current address for any of these members. Thank you!

Joanne Andrews
Justin Brophy
Mark Campbell
Heather Dunlop
Lindsey Sherd
Joel VanDeWege
Emma Walker
Margery Warnock



Children & Families Ministries

by Rev. Dan Duncan
dduncan@umc-kzo.org



Welcome to our new nursery worker! Katie Hiscock will be one of our regular Sunday morning nursery caregivers. She began on November 6. Some of you may remember Katie when she was our Wesley Children & Families Ministries Intern, and then in the winter of 2014, as our interim Director of Children and Families Ministries. Katie is wrapping up her studies for a degree in Special Education at WMU, and is living in the Intentional Christian Community at the Wesley Foundation at WMU.

Sunday School is “Deep” this year (our curriculum is from Cokesbury, and is called “Deep Blue”)! Upcoming Bible lessons will be:

- Nov. 13: The Ten Commandments
- Nov. 20: A House for God
- Nov. 27: The Peaceable Kingdom

5th and 6th graders “submerge” themselves in issues of Christian faith and life with the “Submerge” curriculum from Cokesbury:

- Nov. 13: Encountering God (Solomon)
- Nov. 20: God’s Faithfulness (fall of Jerusalem)
- Nov. 27: God’s Triumph (Zephaniah’s Prophecy)

Godly Play stories coming up (11:15 to noon)

4 -5 year olds—Room 203

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Nov. 13: Ten Best Ways to Live | Storyteller: Jocelyn Newman | Guide: Ashley McKenzie |
| Nov. 20: The Ark & a Tent for God | Storyteller: Pastor Dan | Guide: RuthAnn Uggen |
| Nov. 27: The Prophets Show the Way | Storyteller: Pastor Dan | Guide: Pat Elzerman |

6-8 year olds—Room 200

- | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Nov. 13: The Exodus | Storyteller: Pastor Dan | Guide: Brian Moon |
| Nov. 20: Ten Best Ways to Live | Storyteller: Julia Librizzi | Guide: Sara Miller |
| Nov. 27: (Same as above: both groups combined) | | |

First Bell. Our youngest bell ringers will play at the 11 a.m. worship service on November 20. Parents, please have your child sit up front with Mrs. Wolfe at the very beginning of the service.

Baptisms. Our next date for baptisms is January 22, 2017. Please contact Pastor Dan if you are interested in a baptism for your child!

Snack Heroes coming up

- Nov. 13: Brian & Jessica Grant
- Nov. 20: Nate & Shelly Hawthorne
- Nov. 27: Lisa Whittaker



Blessing Bags

Be sure you get your Blessing Bag on Sunday, Nov. 13 from one of the children. You are asked to fill your bag with any of the items on the list to help supply our food pantry. Bags will be collected at the beginning of the worship services and blessed on Sunday, November 20. (Monetary donations are also a blessing.)



YOUTH TRIBE

SUNDAY MORNING AND EVENING YOUTH EVENTS



by Rev. Julie Kline, jkline@umc-kzo.org

SUNDAY, November 13

Cocoa & Class: Emerging Worship @ 9:30am - Climate Justice: Be Just. Be Green.

(See page 3 for a complete description of Emerging Worship)

Youth Tribe @ 6-8pm – Sharing our gratitude ~ shopping for Thanksgiving baskets

It is time for one of our favorite local missions! We have gathered names for our Thanksgiving baskets from families that have visited us through our ministry of "Helping Our Neighbors." We will divide into small groups with designated families and go shopping for the best Thanksgiving deals in town! Parents, are you willing to take some Tribe members shopping? I will need some extra drivers and adult supervisors.

SUNDAY, November 20

Cocoa & Class @ 9:30am

Youth Tribe @ 6-8pm ~ Sharing our gratitude. We will deliver Thanks-giving baskets to our neighbors. The evening will begin with packaging the baskets all together and then we will set out on the town to deliver them. Parents, once again I will need some extra drivers, anyone willing?

SUNDAY, November 27

Cocoa & Class @ 9:30am

Youth Tribe @ 6-8pm ~ "Movie Madness"

•••••
• A **BIG** *thank you* to all those
• who supported youth missions with
• their purchase of a youth-made
• homemade apple pie or crisp!!
•••••

Special Offering for YANA: November 20

by Mark Oudersluys, Outreach Committee Chair

In a short two weeks, we as individuals and a congregation will celebrate Thanksgiving. We truly have many things that we can and should be thankful for. However we have many individuals in our community that are dealing with a variety of issues and are struggling to survive.

That is one of the reasons that the church has supported YANA (You Are Not Alone) for the past several years. **YANA provides an excellent, free meal each Sunday evening in Wesley Hall to all individuals who come through our doors.** In the last

two years over 5,000 meals per year have been provided.

There are many reasons why people come to the dinner: 1) they are homeless and this is one of the only options for them to obtain an evening meal, 2) they are on the edge of poverty and they are having a difficult time living on their existing income, so a free meal is truly a blessing, and 3) they just may be lonely and need some quality time with other individuals.

YANA, however, is not a part of the formal church budget and is able

to continue only through voluntary donations from individuals within the congregation. Due to the stewardship of Ray and Ann Sweany, the individual cost of a meal has been consistently under \$2. At this time, the remaining available funds for YANA will allow us to continue to provide meals only through the end of this year.

We would appreciate it if you would consider a gift to YANA to allow this unique ministry to continue next year. **On Sunday, November 20, just in time for Thanksgiving, we ask you for your support.**

Thanksgiving Sunday

November 20, 8:30 & 11am

"Who is Invited to the Table?"

The traditional final Sunday of the Church Year will be a morning of giving thanks to the Lord God for his many blessings. We will offer gratitude to all God's gifts, including our Blessing Bags of non-perishable food for the food pantry. Twenty-four new members will be welcomed into our community of faith at the 11 a.m. service! Also that morning, our new First Strings ensemble will debut at the 8:30 a.m. service. We hope you will join us!



Sunday Morning Partners in Ministry

	Nov. 13 8:30 and 11 a.m	Nov. 20 8:30 and 11 a.m	Nov. 27 8:30 and 11 a.m	Dec. 4 8:30 and 11 a.m	Dec. 11 8:30 and 11 a.m	Dec. 18 8:30 and 11 a.m
8:30 Lay Reader	Andy Vorbrich	Carol Hodges	Laurie Nelson	Jan Schoenherr	Andy Vorbrich	Molly Williams
8:30 Office/ Welcome Center	Kim Taylor	need someone	need someone	need someone	need someone	need someone
8:30 Greeters	Ron Moore	need someone	need someone	need someone	need someone	need someone
8:30 Sound/Lights	Greg Anderson	Jim Willoughby	Greg Anderson	Jim Willoughby	Greg Anderson	Jim Willoughby
11:00 Lay Reader	Nancy Hyde	Chris Stamper	Michael Seals	Derek Wheaton	Lynne Corbus	Vickie Winfield
11:00 Office/ Welcome Center	Harriet Chalker	need someone	need someone	need someone	Harriet Chalker	need someone
11:00 Greeters	Tom & Jan Kayser	Don & Harriet Chalker	need someone	Kay Gross Mark Mittlebach	need someone	need someone
11:00 Acolytes	Andrew Wright Layla Eaton	Collin Bland Emma Hampton	Ryan Ernst Alex Moon	Ella Adams Sean Willoughby	Andrew Hampton Emma Hampton	Children's Pageant
11:00 Sound/Lights	Robyn Lane	Jonah Bolton	Bob Lane	Robyn Lane	Jonah Bolton	Bob Lane
Van Driver	Scott Willoughby	Fred Corbus	Jay Gross	Jake Lisak	Dave Russel	Mike Cooper

GREETER COORDINATOR: Would you like to help us schedule greeters so we have a welcoming smile and handshake at our doors on Sunday morning? Please contact Jennifer Stupica if interested, jstupica@umc-kzo.org.

Stephen Ministry training

Stephen Ministers serve a vital caring ministry for the church

Every day you see people who are hurting: those who have lost a job, lost a loved one, gone through a divorce, facing transition, or battling illness. Stephen Ministers bring God's love to those who are hurting. We

invite you to join us in the ministry of reaching out and making a difference. Training begins in January 2017. For more information, please call

Wendy Arnold at 323-3244 or Jan Baker at 342-4092.

To learn more about how Stephen Ministry equips congregations to provide one-on-one Christian care to people who are hurting, visit their website: www.stephenministries.org/.



December Mission of the Month:

Salvation Army Angel Tree

This year we will once again support the Salvation Army's Angel Tree program. The tree will be up **Thursday, Nov. 17** and the gifts should be returned, unwrapped, by Dec. 11.

The Salvation Army collects toys through several channels through the holiday season. The most popular is the Angel Tree. An Angel Tree can be found at many area businesses, schools and churches.

Each tree holds tags that represent community children. The tags will have an age and gender as well as several suggestions for gift ideas. Unlike other programs, the tag does not correlate to a specific child or family. All gift items are collected and placed in Salvation Army's Christmas Toy Shop.

The Toy Shop is made possible through the donations of toys, and the hundreds of volunteers. Anyone interested in volunteering for this year's Toy Shop may contact Andrea Meinema, Salvation Army Volunteer and Events Coordinator, at (269) 344-6119, ext. 209 or email andrea_meinema@usc.salvationarmy.org.



“Necesito a Alguien- I Need Someone”

by Katrina Pradelski, Esq., JFON Staff Attorney



Katrina Pradelski, JFON Staff Attorney

I walk in, take a deep breath, and say, “me llamo Katrina, y trabajo para la Justicia para Nuestros Vecinos como abogada. No trabajo para el gobierno. Necesito a alguien para traducir.”

I’ve just introduced myself, assured them I don’t work for the government, and stated I need someone to translate.

This is what two Tuesdays of the month look like for me as I present “Know Your Rights” programs to the detained immigrants in the Calhoun County Correctional Facility in Battle Creek. The immigrants here are in

various stages of the deportation process, and many are not from Michigan. They were bussed in from the border, and have no idea that they’re only three hours from Canada.

The presentations I offer consist of information about how to navigate the court system, what their rights are in the court process, and what remedies they may be eligible for. The information I provide helps guide them in the right direction, without taking the immigrant on for full representation.

Currently, Justice For Our Neighbors (JFON) is the only agency that does the presentations at Battle Creek. Without us, the only sources of information detained immigrants have are the government, a small law library (all in English, mind you), other

inmates, or, if they are lucky, family on the outside who can hire an attorney.

They need someone on their side. Someone to explain this biased system and our laws, just like I need someone to explain their language for me. Someone to commiserate with them about being treated like a criminal, even though they only wanted safety and fled for their life. Someone to tell them how long they can be detained after they are ordered to be deported. Someone to assure them that being there doesn’t make them a bad person, a bad spouse, or a bad parent. Right now, that someone is JFON.



Syrian refugees will need mentors, housing

by Ray and Ann Sweany, Justice Team co-chairs

Ready or not, Syrian refugees are arriving in Kalamazoo. This is happening all over the world. This sequence of events was started when people realized that their towns and villages were not safe and their support structure was collapsing. People were dying; where is their refuge? Millions have fled. The countries closest to Syria suddenly had to deal with huge numbers of people who needed care and the worldwide response would need to be massive.

Those who are arriving in Kalamazoo have been displaced for some time (including the time it takes to undergo a thorough screening by the U.S.) and we represent their new home, a chance for stability and a

good life. Some will return to Syria when things become safe. For some, Kalamazoo will be a permanent home. People are stepping forward to help. If you are moved by compassion and wanting to help, please communicate your willingness to Ann or Ray Sweany, rasweany@charter.net, 269-350-5977 or Mark Oudersluys, mark_oudersluys@gmail.com, 269-345-0759.

There will be a meeting at the First Presbyterian Church (321 South St.) for all interested persons to learn more on how they can help on Tuesday, November 15, at 7 p.m. in room 304. Entrance and parking are off Lovell St.

Unaccompanied minors are needing mentors and friends. Families need friends, English lessons, and help

with navigating Kalamazoo. Samaritas (Formerly Lutheran Social Services) and Bethany Christian Services are under contract with the government to assist with housing support and job placement. After 90 days, they will turn their attention to a new set of refugees.

A group has formed that calls itself Kalamazoo Refugee Coalition that meets every two weeks at Solid Grounds Student Ministries (near WMU at 1720 W. Mich. Ave.). It is an amazing group that is trying to put together a network of charitable groups, individuals, and houses of faith that can help be the welcome. We collectively and individually need to be part of this effort.



Advent Concerts

Terry Lower

Dec. 1, Thursday at Noon

Jazz Solo Piano

Holcomb-Alder Duo

Dec. 8, Thursday at Noon


Viola and Marimba

Blarney Castle

Dec. 15, Thursday at Noon

Celtic Fusion

The Music and Arts Committee are proud to present three free, lunch-hour performances by area musicians. This season's concerts feature jazz pianist **Terry Lower**, the West Michigan Jazz Society's 2016 Musician of the Year; Celtic fusion band **Blarney Castle**, six versatile musicians studying performance at WMU; and the viola-marimba duo of **Joshua Holcomb and Dede Alder**. All concerts take place in the Sanctuary on Thursdays from noon to about 12:50, with a reception to follow. Free-will offerings support music and arts in our community and are gratefully accepted.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>13 NOVEMBER 8:30 AM Worship 9:30 AM Emerging Worship 9:30 AM Sunday School for All Ages 11:00 AM Worship 12:00 PM Costa Rica Spanish Class 5:30 PM You Are Not Alone 6:00 PM First Singers 6:00 PM Youth Tribe</p>	<p>14 7:00 AM Sunrise Patrol 9:00 AM JFON 10:00 AM Helping Our Neighbors 2:00 PM Memorial Committee 6:30 PM Basketball</p>	<p>15 10:00 AM The Soul of a Pilgrim 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 1:00 PM Emmaus Group 3:30 PM JFON Intake Clinic 4:15 PM First Beats 5:00 PM Center for Transformation 6:45 PM Early Music Michigan 7:00 PM NA 7:00 PM Ruth Circle 7:00 PM WTVT</p>	<p>16 7:30 AM Dawn Patrol 9:30 AM Anna Circle 10:30 AM Community Healing Centers Group 1:00 PM Lydia Circle 1:00 PM Miriam Circle 6:00 PM Wild Ones Membership Meeting 7:00 PM CONALD</p>	<p>17 9:30 AM First Stitches 9:30 AM Trustees 10:00 AM Helping Our Neighbors 1:30 PM Clergy Cluster 1:30 PM Prayer Group 5:30 PM Outreach Team 6:00 PM Handbell Ensemble 6:30 PM NA 7:15 PM Chancel Choir</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19 9:30 AM First Strings 11:00 AM Memorial Service</p>
<p>20 Blood Pressure Clinic 8:30 AM Worship 9:30 AM Sunday School for All Ages 11:00 AM Worship 12:00 PM Costa Rica Spanish Class 5:30 PM You Are Not Alone 6:00 PM First Singers 6:00 PM Youth Tribe</p>	<p>21 7:00 AM Sunrise Patrol 9:00 AM JFON 10:00 AM Helping Our Neighbors 6:30 PM Basketball</p>	<p>22 10:00 AM The Soul of a Pilgrim 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 1:00 PM Emmaus Group 4:15 PM First Beats 6:45 PM Early Music Michigan 7:00 PM Church Council 7:00 PM NA</p>	<p>23 7:30 AM Dawn Patrol 10:30 AM Community Healing Centers Group 6:30 PM Stephen Ministry 7:00 PM MOM's Demand Action 7:00 PM Perinatal Mood Disorder Support</p>	<p>24 HAPPY THANKSGIVING </p>	<p>25 The Office is Closed</p>	<p>26</p>
<p>27 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</p>	<p>28 7:00 AM Sunrise Patrol 9:00 AM JFON 10:00 AM Helping Our Neighbors 6:00 PM KCC Rehearsal 6:30 PM Basketball 7:00 PM Justice Team</p>	<p>29 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 1:00 PM Emmaus Group 4:15 PM First Beats 6:45 PM Early Music Michigan 7:00 PM NA</p>	<p>30 7:30 AM Dawn Patrol 8:30 AM First Word Collating 9:30 AM UMW Executive Committee 10:30 AM Community Healing Centers Group 7:00 PM CONALD</p>	<p>DECEMBER</p>		
<p>4 Blood Pressure Clinic Holy Communion 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</p>	<p>5 7:00 AM Sunrise Patrol 9:00 AM JFON 10:00 AM Helping Our Neighbors 6:30 PM Basketball</p>	<p>6 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 1:00 PM Emmaus Group 4:15 PM First Beats 5:30 PM ALS Support Group 6:45 PM Early Music Michigan 7:00 PM Advent Candlelight Prayer Service 7:00 PM NA</p>	<p>7 7:30 AM Dawn Patrol 9:00 AM Caring Summit Meeting 9:30 AM OLLI Curriculum Committee 9:30 AM UMW General Meeting & Luncheon 10:30 AM Community Healing Centers Group 1:30 PM Heritage Community Communion 6:00 PM Emerging Worship Band Rehearsal 7:00 PM Kalamazoo Christian High School Choir Concert</p>	<p>8 9:30 AM First Stitches 10:00 AM Helping Our Neighbors 10:30 AM Building & Grounds 11:30 AM Downtown Clergy 12:00 PM Advent Concert 1:30 PM Prayer Group 6:00 PM Handbell Ensemble 6:30 PM NA 7:00 PM Church Conference 7:00 PM Pub Theology 7:15 PM Chancel Choir</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>
			<p>1 9:30 AM First Stitches 10:00 AM Helping Our Neighbors 12:00 PM Advent Concert 1:30 PM Prayer Group 6:00 PM Handbell Ensemble 6:30 PM NA 7:15 PM Chancel Choir</p>	<p>2 6:00 PM KCC Rehearsal</p>	<p>3 7:30 PM Kalamazoo Community Chorale Concert</p>	

Staff Sharing

Rev. Julie Kline
Associate Pastor



By the time this newsletter has been printed, we will have elected our 45th President of the United States along with the many other political leaders for our community and our country. The election will be over but our work will have just begun.

On Thursday, November 3 many local religious leaders of differing faiths and backgrounds gathered in Bronson Park to issue a call to show solidarity and concern for our Kalamazoo community. The call began, ***“As religious leaders in the Kalamazoo area, we call all people to mutual respect, support, and communal peace during the election and afterwards. In our diversity of beliefs and faiths, we want to remind everyone that we share many common values. Some of those values are compassion, empathy, graciousness, humility, inner peace, justice, and concern for all people.”***

The call was issued because there is concern for our deeply divided nation and that this division may erupt into civil unrest following the election. Faith leaders met with Kalamazoo Public Safety and together the call was issued for communal peace and an invitation to an interfaith time of worship at St. Luke’s on November 9th at 6:30 p.m. Hopefully, our community has heeded the call and remembered that “We have much in our county about which to be grateful and proud. Together we make our area a place of meaning and value.” (An Open Letter to the People of Kalamazoo County, Michigan; see p. 3)

Gathering with this group of faith leaders and signing the call to our community reminded me of our worship series this summer and the proactive work that we hoped to do within our spiritual lives before this election season unfolded. Our worship series was entitled “Jesus is My Candidate.” With each week of the series we proclaimed that he was our candidate because: he teaches humility, he unites us, he builds bridges, and he brings healing. As the results of this election become our reality and we

heed the call to be a community of peace that embraces our diversity while finding our common values, I believe it is important for us to return to the spiritual work that we began in the restful days of summer.

A candidate is someone who is seeking a position, one who is to be honored. We name and claim Jesus as our candidate because if we give him that position of honor within our lives we become one with Christ, one with the Creating God, one with the Holy Spirit which dances with grace in our lives and we begin to “move rhythmically and easily with each other, efficient and graceful in response to God’s Son, fully mature adults, fully developed within and without, fully alive in Christ.” (Ephesians 4: 16)

As a body of believers we are committed to being part of One Body which offers us the opportunity to build up the whole, strengthening and creating foundations of love and justice, faith, and hope for the long term. Jesus is our candidate because he did not draw lines that excluded people, he drew circles that included and expanded our understanding of who is God’s beloved. Let us be generous and draw our circle of faith wide, let our hearts know no borders and be robust in God’s love.

Jesus is not only our candidate, but is our saving grace. And when we choose to give him the position of honor in our lives, we will find ways to answer the communal call for peace and collective work. As a faith community centered in the heart of downtown, let us live into our vision to be a **Faith Community: Alive in Christ, Open to All, Growing in Faith, Serving our Neighbors.**

Shalom,

Pastor Julie



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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.



2016 First Word Schedule

Article Deadline	Mailing Date
November 23	November 30
December 7	December 14

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.



November's Mission of the Month: Ministry with Community's Underwear Open House

We will continue to collect warm items of clothing through the month of November that will be given on Christmas morning to

Ministry with Community clients, such as **gloves, hats, scarves, long underwear (all sizes), sweatshirts (all sizes), undershirts (all sizes), underwear (men and women's in all sizes), warm socks, blankets and chapstick**—all are precious gifts to receive if you are going to experience a Michigan winter. Thank you for helping to keep a neighbor warm! A basket in the office is available for your donations. Thank you for your support!

Annual Reports Due

Committee and team leaders are asked to submit their 2016 annual reports for the "2017 Officiary/2016 Annual Reports" that the church submits to the District Superintendent and the West Michigan Conference at our December 8 Church Conference. **Please email your report to Jennifer Stupica, jstupica@umc-kzo.org by Monday, November 21.**

Ministries of the church are also welcome to write an update on their progress in the past year.

Extra copies of the Officiary will be available in the office after Dec. 8.



TUES., November 15

- ▶ Ruth Circle, Church Parlor at 7 p.m.

Program: "Literacy Council of Kalamazoo," by Michael Evans

WED., November 16

- ▶ 9:30 a.m. Anna Circle, Church Parlor

Program: "An Experience of Godly Play," by Pastor Dan Duncan

- ▶ 1:00 p.m. Lydia Circle, Friendship Village A-1 Lounge

Program: "Urban Alliance"

- ▶ 1:00 p.m. Miriam Circle, Church Parlor

Program: "Books About Babies," by Dr. Larue

WED., November 30

Executive Meeting, Church Parlor at 9:30 a.m.