



First United Methodist Church 212 S. Park Street Kalamazoo, MI 49007 269.381.6340 www.umc-kzo.org

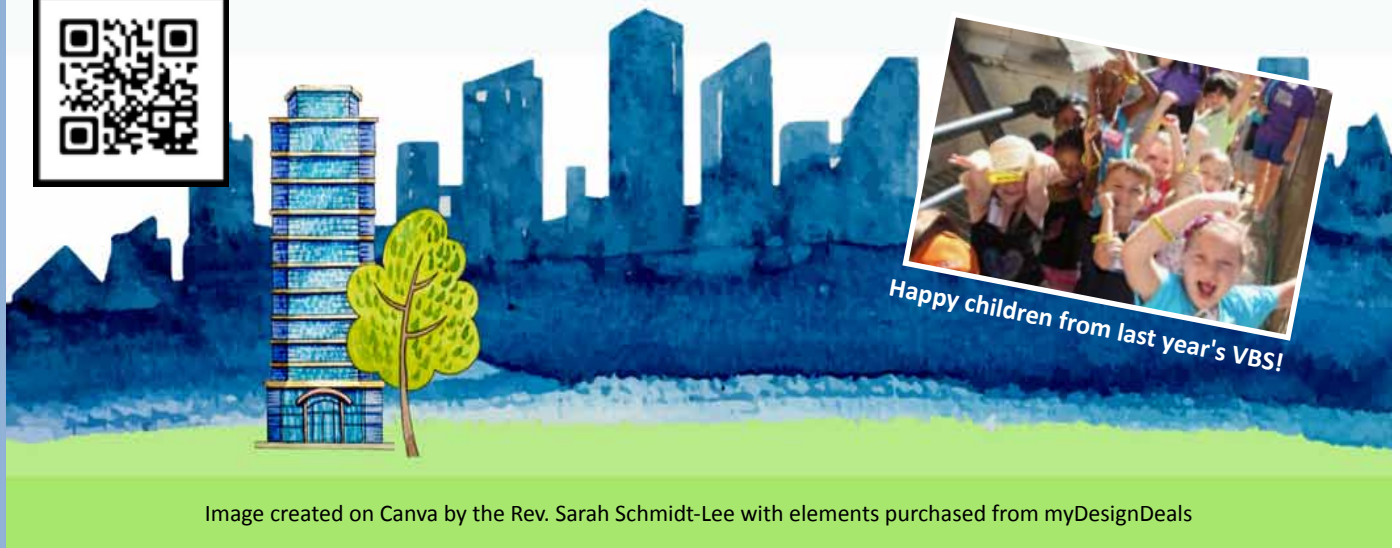
GOD'S GARDEN GOD'S CITY

A CHRISTIAN DAY CAMP FOR CHILDREN HOSTED BY THE BRONSON PARK CHURCHES

JUNE 26 - 30, 2017
9AM - NOON

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
345 W. MICHIGAN AVE. | KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN

Treat your child to the biggest and best trip of all: the grand story of God's creation, call, and redemption of us through the Bible! Our annual summer Vacation Bible School (VBS) is now called a "Christian Day Camp." The name reflects the many hands-on learning activities planned! Four downtown churches—First United Methodist, First Congregational UCC, First Presbyterian, and St. Luke's Episcopal—host a week-long Christian Day Camp that includes Bible stories, art, prayer, song, action, justice, and peacemaking. Children ages 4 through 12 are invited to attend. Friends are welcome! This is a free event, but registration is required. In order for us to have adequate supplies, snacks, and volunteer support, please register children at <http://bit.ly/2syyEF8>.



Happy children from last year's VBS!

WELCOME to *The First Word*. Beginning in June 2017, *The First Word* will be published monthly. Articles for the next issue are due no later than Wednesday, **July 12, 2017**. The next newsletter will be mailed **July 19, 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
*Kelsey Burns	Summer Intern
Aita Diop	JFON Legal Assistant
Pamala Roman	Custodian
Todd Bloomfield	Evening Custodian
Ernesto Escobedo	Custodian/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

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

Garth Baden, husband of the late Eileen Baden, brother-in-law of the late Avis and Richard Keene, and uncle of Debra Keene-Clegg and Suzanne White, who died April 19.

Herbert Ellinger, husband of Lena Ellinger, who died May 25.

Lillis McWethy, wife of the late Gil McWethy, who died June 9.

Gerald Hedrick, husband of the late Mildred Hedrick and father of Linda Fazio, who died June 10.

Please keep these friends in your prayers

John Boekhout, Hannah Boley, Marilyn Boyd, Debra Clegg, Skip Decker, Hyesuk DeRoo, Russ Gabier, Derek Geerlings, Bob Goodwin, Brenda Haan, HoSung Lee, Paula Hall, Marge Hastings, Carl Hausermann, Gerald Hedrick, Dolores Heidanus, Nell Holland, Barbara Hughey, Rueith Lewis, Art Mann, Jim Martin, Dave Martin, Mandy Morrill, Joan & Hank Rohs, Ham Scharf, Mary Helen Thomas, Arlene Triestram, Suzanne White, Anne Wolfe, Grace Wunderlich

New Babies in the Family!

Catherine Marie Uggen was born May 26 to Maren & Chris Uggen. Big sister is Annelie and grandparents are Bill & Ruth Ann Uggen.

Vivian Avery Donyak was born May 28 to Bryan & Maike Donyak in San Francisco. Grandparents are Donna & Steve Donyak.

Hazel May Welter was born June 16 to Jeremy and Deanna Welter. Big sister is Cora.

One State. Two Conferences. One Church.

This decision was approved by the North Central Jurisdictional Conference convening in Peoria, IL in July of 2016 to join the Detroit and West Michigan Conferences. To learn more about the process of creating a new annual conference, visit: <http://design.michiganumc.org/>

MOTHER ROOTS



The Female Ancestors of Jesus

We have two more Sundays left of the worship series based upon the book "Mother Roots: The Female Ancestors of Jesus," written by Helen Bruch Pearson. The series is a study of the women who are named in Jesus' genealogy in the beginning of the Gospel of Matthew. After worship on June 25 and July 2, join us in the parlor for a "give-and-take" Talk Back Session regarding the message that morning. Pastors will answer questions and further explore the text that was referenced in worship.

Sunday, June 25 at 10:00 a.m.

"Ruth: A Woman Who Loved the Enemy"

Led by Rev. Steve Charnley (Ruth 1: 1-18)

The book of Ruth is a classic story that is unlike any other in the Bible. It is not a story of war, betrayal, or death. Rather it is a story about inclusion and the ties that bind people together across the lines of religion and ethnicity. It is certainly a story to be told and re-told at all times to reclaim our understanding of extending loving-kindness to one another.

Sunday, July 2 at 10:00 a.m.

"Bathsheba: A Woman Who Beat the Odds"

Led by Seminary Intern Kelsey Burns (2 Samuel 11-12; 1 Kings 1: 11-21; 28-31, 2: 13-21; 1 Chronicles 3: 5)

Bathsheba's story reveals that the quest for domination is an evil that is not pleasing to the Lord. War, politics, and patriarchy continue to be etched upon the bodies and souls of women. Bathsheba calls from the pages of history for us to take a stand against adversity and have the conviction to say "no" to power and authority that is harmful to others. Through her story, God beckons us to a future of empowerment of love over evil.



EMERGING WORSHIP

"Teach Us to Pray the Lord's Prayer"

**July 9 @ 10:00 a.m.
in Wesley Hall**

Led by Rev. Julie Kline

"Pray then in this way: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name...'"
Matthew 6:9

Jesus begins this prayer with "Abba," an intimate term for Father, referring to God as family. This term defines our relationship with God and models for us how we ought to be in relationship with others. The prayer continues by shaping our hearts around the idea of kin-dom and creating right relationships with others as we are mindful of our own needs and the needs of others. Forgiveness and deliverance are gifts given from the Source of All Gifts, receiving them creates honesty, strength, and God's reign on earth. We will worship with The Lord's Prayer as the center of our experience — discovering its depth, challenge, and assurance. Come and join us for a Spirit-filled soul feast!

Keep up with church news this summer!

- † Join us for worship at 10 a.m.
- † Bulletin announcements
- † Around the Corner E-News
- † The First Word
- † Facebook
- † Website (umc-kzo.org)
- † Church Council meetings

Introducing our New JFON Legal Assistant



Aita Dopp
JFON Legal Assistant

Hello! My name is Aita (pronounced "Ita") Dopp and I am originally from Dakar, Senegal, West Africa. I hold a Bachelor's Degree in Spanish and Marketing from Western Michigan University. I am currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Business Administration. Before JFON I was a stay-at-home mom to my almost two year old son, John-Henry. I was a Graduate Assistant while doing my Master's in Spanish and that position allowed me to teach my own classes in the Spanish Department at WMU.

I have been a resident of Michigan for the past 16 years and currently live in Kalamazoo with my husband Brad and our son—both Kalamazoo natives. I speak French, English, Spanish, and Wolof (West African language). I enjoy reading books, Sci-Fi, cooking shows (especially Chef Ramsay), and cooking my own recipes. I also love to workout, which helps with all the food!

You are welcome to stop by my office on the third floor of the church and say hello anytime. You can also reach me by emailing kzoo_assist@jfonwestmichigan.org or calling (269) 743-2501. I also have an extension if you call the church directly, x212.

Diaper and Formula Drive

by Rev. Julie Kline

Diapers and formula are expensive and can become a burden for families. Our hope is to help some of our own new church families and our neighbors with this need.



Especially in demand are diapers sizes infant to size 3. We'll take all sizes, but the smallest sizes would be most helpful. Also in need are baby formula. All varieties of formula will be helpful, but there is a special need for Similac "For Spit Up." Please place donations in the basket in the church office. If you would like to make a monetary donation, we will provide a designated shopper. Mark your monetary donation with a memo, "diapers and formula" and give to office volunteer. Thank you for your generosity!



Pick Up Basketball

During the summer months, basketball players are invited to join Pastor Steve and others in the church parking lot on Monday evenings at 6 p.m. for a game of pick-up basketball.



House Pub Theology

A summer twist on our first Thursday of the month fellowship event!

Join us for *House Pub Theology*. We still have our theological conversations and tasty brews, but our gathering space is now in someone's home. This change will allow for a quieter, friendlier atmosphere that is welcome to all. So grab your beverage and join us for a simple meal of soup and bread.

We will gather at 6:30 p.m. in July and August. Our location for the July 6 get together will be at the home of Diane and Lori Owen-Rogers, 210 W. Westwood, Kalamazoo. And on August 3, we will meet at the home of Deb and Jim Willoughby, 1410 Turwill Lane, Kalamazoo. Come and join us!



Save these upcoming dates!

July 13-15

Conference Mission "U"
Albion College, Albion

Sunday, August 13

District Mission "U"
Cassopolis UMC

Wednesday, August 23

9:30-2:30, church parlor
Executive Committee Meeting and
General Meeting Program Planning
(bring a sack lunch)

Thursday, August 24

9:30, church parlor
UMW Circle Program Planning



Children & Families Ministries

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

Summer Day Camp. See article on the front page of this issue of *The First Word* for our Christian Day Camp for children! We will need adult leaders and volunteers in a number of roles! There are registration and sign up forms at the Welcome Center, or follow the link on our website, umc-kzo.org (Children & Youth tab, Children & Families Ministries drop down).

Godly Play this summer will meet as one group in Room 200 following the children's message at the 10 a.m. worship service. Stories coming up:

June 25: Joseph & his Brothers	ST: Pastor Dan	Guide: Mary Lee
July 2: David the Shepherd Boy	ST: Shelly	Guide: Mary Lee
July 9: David & Goliath	ST: Pastor Dan	Guide: Donna
July 16: Psalm 23	ST: Matt	Guide: Margie
July 23: The Leaven	ST: Tim	Guide: Shondo

Ministry with Our Children Opportunities

Sunday School. We will 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).

Godly Play. We also will need a few Guides this coming year. Guides welcome children to the Godly Play space, and help them get the most out of the time by gently redirecting their focus as needed.

Summer Acolytes. With all the coming and goings of summer, we ask our acolytes to sign up for the Sunday(s) they can serve as Acolyte on the board next to the Welcome Center.

Baptisms. Our next date for baptisms is July 16. If you are interested in baptism for yourself or a child, please contact Pastor Dan (dduncan@umc-kzo.org) ASAP to make arrangements.

Sunday Nursery News

This summer is a time of transition in our nursery. We say “thank you and farewell” to April Siplon-Siepmann, who has been a beloved care provider for three and a half years. April’s during-the-week employment changed, which now prevents her from working here on Sunday mornings.

We will soon also be saying farewell to Katie Hiscock, who graduated from WMU this spring, and will embark on a two-year mission with Brethren Volunteer Service, as she discerns a possible path in ministry. Her last Sunday in our nursery is July 9.

We are pleased to welcome back Shelby Russcher for the summer, who is home following her freshman year at MSU.

Family Fun Event!

Save the date! Our July family fun event will be to attend a Kalamazoo Growlers baseball game together, on Sunday, July 16, 3:05 p.m. Tickets are \$8/person, which includes a Growler’s cap. Please sign-up and pay Pastor Dan by July 9! (Checks can be made payable to First UMC).

Office Administrator Opening at Wesley Foundation

The Wesley Foundation, located on the campus of Western Michigan University, has a part-time Office Administrator position open. This is a 20-25 hours weekly position. They are seeking a reliable, organized Office Administrator for a progressive, vital campus ministry. The position works closely with the Director/Campus Pastor and several individual volunteer board members to ensure quality of the administrative ministry. The ideal candidate will be competent in prioritizing and working with little supervision. They will be self-motivated, flexible, and trustworthy. The position will also work within a collaborative team setting with the Campus Pastor and part-time student staff. Applicants should have a strong desire to advance the vision and mission of the ministry working within an administrative support role of the programs, events and ministries. Must have excellent communication and interpersonal skills and knowledge of MS Office. Ability to learn Quick Books Online and Network for Good. Please send resume and letter of introduction to Lisa Batten at lisa.m.batten@wmich.edu.



Summer 2017 ASP Trip

Nicholas County, West Virginia
July 29 - August 5, 2017

2017 ASP Team Theme

"Love in Action"

*"Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue,
but with actions and truth." 1 John 3:18 (NIV)*

The 2017 ASP Team is looking forward to making homes warmer, safer, and drier this summer in Nicholas County, West Virginia; located in the heart of southern West Virginia. They appreciate your support through their fundraising efforts this past year, that included homemade apple pies and a chili & soup cook-off. They will have one more fundraising event in July for prayer partners. Choose a picture of one of the team members that you commit to praying for the week of their mission trip. A donation basket will be available if you would like to make a contribution to the Youth Missions Fund. Below is the schedule for upcoming youth and ASP events.

Sunday, June 25 @ 6pm - 8pm – ASP Team building

Sunday, July 16 @ 4pm-8pm – Tool Training/Picnic Table Build

Sunday, July 23 @ 6pm – 8pm – ASP team building

Friday, July 28 @ 6pm – ASP Pre-packing party (Everyone bring your bags down to church and load into vans and trailer. This makes it much easier in the morning.)

Saturday, July 29 – ASP departure; please plan on leaving between 7-8am

Saturday, August 5 – ASP return

Sunday, September 24 – 8:30am and 11am – ASP Sunday (leading worship, sharing our stories and saying thank you to the congregation that supported us financially and prayerfully).

FUNDRAISERS

Sunday, July 9 @ 10am – ASP Prayer Partners

Sunday, July 16 @ 10am – ASP Prayer Partners

Summer job opportunities! Our United Methodist camps need a variety of summer staff, including counselors, nurses, cooks, and lifeguards. There are camps within commuting distance, as well as camps far enough away that you'd live on-site. Camp locations include Crystal Springs in Dowagiac, Kinawind and Lake Louise near Boyne Falls, Wesley Woods north of Battle Creek, and Lake Michigan near Pentwater. Contact Pastor Dan for more info, or Pam Stewart at our West Michigan camping office: psteward@wmcumc.org.

Calling all lifeguards! Certified lifeguards are needed at the beach of Lake Michigan for summer camps. If you are interested, you can find an application at Lake Michigan Camp Retreat website:

<http://www.lakemichigancampandretreat.org/employment>

Highlights of 2017 Annual Conference Grand Traverse Convention Center

by a collaboration of FUMC lay and members of Michigan Annual Conference



This year’s annual gathering of both the West Michigan and Detroit Annual Conferences took place June 1-4 at the Grand Traverse Resort near Traverse City. From our church, attendees were Pastor Steve Charnley and lay members John Clark, Deb Search Willoughby, Fred Douglas, Dave Lundquist, Molly Williams, and Conference Chancellor Andy Vorbrich. Sue Paul, Nancy Douglas, Diane Boley, and Jan Schoenherr also attended as guests.

This was the first Annual Conference led by newly appointed Bishop David A. Bard. He showed us a genuine, friendly, and often humorous spirit that made everyone feel welcome and a part of the conference. We are blessed to have him as our episcopal leader.

As we near the time when a new Michigan Annual Conference will be created (expected on January 1, 2019) much legislative work focused on ensuring that the policies and procedures of the West Michigan and Detroit Annual Conferences were the same. We agreed that the new Michigan Annual Conference will consist of 9 districts—reduced from the current total of 12 among Detroit and West Michigan. A special task force will be constituted to work out finances and property disposition as district boundaries change. And we agreed to an organizational structure and budget to equip our church for ministry in the coming years.

Worship throughout the four days was based on the familiar story of loaves and fishes told in all four of the Gospels. “You feed them!” and “What do we have?” inspired sermons by Rev. Eric Mulanda from Zimbabwe and Rev. Zack Dunlap from Birmingham FUMC. Opening worship included memorial recognition of clergy, their spouses, and conference lay staff who had died over

the past year. Bishop Bard preached, calling us to be “baskets for grace.”

Invited speaker Reverend Susan Beaumont spoke on “Leading in a Liminal Season,” a time when we step from the familiar into the unknown. What’s needed is to “stand still and let the Holy Spirit work through us.” She outlined opportunities to rediscover our core identity and shed what no longer fits, while dealing with anxiety, shifting power dynamics, and fear that nothing will remain.

Several of us attended special lunches and presentations. At the Methodist Federation for Social Action gathering, we disbanded the separate West Michigan and Detroit MFSAs, creating a new Michigan chapter. Information was provided on responses to the Flint water crisis, and a speaker from Planned Parenthood described the devastating effect that federal defunding of Planned Parenthood will have on women’s health services.

At a Reconciling Ministries lunch, Rev. Mark Thompson described the successes of Camp Beloved, a week-long camp at Lake Louise for LGBTQ high school youth and their allies. The program has grown steadily, providing needed social support and affirmation for participants. Lois McCullen Parr from Reconciling Ministries Network spoke of the continuing need to address justice for our LGBTQI friends.

At the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry lunch, our congregation was recognized for its "outstanding support of a Michigan campus ministry" for our continuing relationship with the Wesley Foundation of Kalamazoo. We rank among the top 10% of churches supporting the eight Wesley ministries across the state.

Appointments of pastors for the next year is always an important agenda item. We are delighted that Steve Charnley remains our senior pastor, and Dwayne Bagley remains our District Superintendent.

Much additional information can be gathered from the Michigan Annual Conference website: <http://michiganumc.org/> Videos of speakers and records of legislative actions and reports are available.

Sunday Morning Partners in Ministry

SUMMER SCHEDULE ONE WORSHIP SERVICE AT 10AM						
	June 25 10 a.m.	July 2 10 a.m.	July 9 10 a.m.	July 16 10 a.m.	July 23 10 a.m.	July 30 10 a.m.
10:00 Lay Reader	Kelsey Burns	Edgar Chapel	Jonah Bolton	Mark Stucky	Julia Librizzi	Janice Brown
10:00 Welcome Center	need someone	need someone	Robin Entenman	need someone	need someone	need someone
10:00 Greeters	Ron & Carol Grant	Ruth Evelyn Graham Dotty Hook	April Martin	Nancy Hilliard	Leonard Marcilous	need someone
10:00 Acolytes	volunteer acolytes	volunteer acolytes	volunteer acolytes	volunteer acolytes	volunteer acolytes	volunteer acolytes
10:00 Sound/Lights	Jim Willoughby	Lucas Bolton	N/A	Greg Anderson	Jonah Bolton	Jim Wiloughby



On April 22nd Susan and Ray Eden attended a session for archivists at Central Michigan University sponsored by the Historical Society of the United Methodist Church. At that event, churches that have been in existence for over 175 years were recognized. According to the Historical Society, our church's roots go back to 1830 when the first gatherings were in homes.

(For your information, the two oldest Methodist churches in Michigan are Detroit Central and Dearborn First, both established in 1810. In 1830 Adrian First, Centreville, Kalamazoo First and White Pigeon were established)

Visit The Historical Society of the United Methodist Church's website
www.historicalsocietyunitedmethodistchurch.org/



Robin Cabin spring cleaning
 by Liz Moon

On Saturday, May 20th a group from First UMC went to Wesley Woods Camp and Retreat Center in Dowling for their annual Spring Worker Bee Saturday to help clean the camp before all the campers arrive for summer. First UMC built and adopted Robin Cabin many years ago, and we have continued to maintain the cabin ever since.

Volunteers were Donna & Steve Duniyak, Chuck & Sally Hubbard, Deb & Rich Karnemaat, and Dennis & Liz Moon, who washed windows, cleared debris from around the cabin, wiped down the mattresses and beds, vacuumed, and did general repairs to the cabin.

It was a great team effort. Thank you!

If anyone has information, stories, or photos they would like to share about Robin Cabin, Liz Moon is creating a historical compilation on the cabin. Please email her at lizmoon172@gmail.com.

Visit Wesley Woods website: www.wesleywoods.com/

Justice Team/Michigan United Special Offering Sunday, July 16

FUMC is a participating congregation of Michigan United, an advocacy coalition that seeks to steer our society and its rules toward Justice. Most recently, Michigan United has supported a citizen initiative to guarantee sick leave, joined with others to obtain county support for a millage for housing assistance, and also to get city support for a way of helping former prison inmates to obtain employment.

Our membership in Michigan United is not supported by the regular budget, and thus we appeal to you for your support, especially on Sunday, July 16. The offering also will give the Justice Team a budget to support its involvement in working towards a reduction in gun violence, economic inequality, campaign finance reform, and racial justice.

Some issues of *The First Word* are so packed with info, we do not have room to include our church's calendar of events! That is the case with this issue. You can access our calendar from your computer, tablet or phone at any time at <https://www.mychurchevents.com/calendar/73900900>

2017 Special Sunday Offerings

2017 DATE	OFFERING DESCRIPTION	GIVEN IN 2016	GIVEN IN 2017
<i>January 15</i>	<i>Human Relations Sunday</i>	571.00	322.00
(Feb. 21, 2016)	Wesley Sunday	2,861.35	--
February 26	Camp Sunday	525.47	782.00
<i>March 26</i>	<i>One Great Hour of Sharing</i>	1,446.80	604.00
April 16	Easter Offering	7,233.00	9,498.00
April 16	Easter Outreach Offering	1,328.00	435.00
<i>April 30</i>	<i>Native American Sunday</i>	557.00	186.00
May 21	Pastor's Discretionary Fund	--	2,330.00
<i>June 11</i>	<i>Peace with Justice Sunday</i>	710.00	212.25
July 16	Michigan United/Justice Team	2,080.36	
September 10	Christian Education Sunday	419.25	
September 24	ASP Sunday	1,795.33	
<i>October 1</i>	<i>World Communion Sunday</i>	140.00	
October 22	UMW Sunday	1,799.18	15.00
<i>November 26</i>	<i>United Methodist Student Sunday</i>	150.00	
(Nov. 20, 2016)	You Are Not Alone (YANA)	5,991.00	
December 10	Bishop's Advent Appeal	989.00	
December 24	Christmas Offering	17,047.08	
SPECIAL SUNDAY OFFERINGS TOTAL		<u>\$44,854.82</u>	

May 2017 General Fund financial picture

Note: Building Fund and special offerings are not included.

	Month of May	Year to Date	2017 Annual Budget	% of Annual Budget
Total Income	\$ 67,464	*\$483,048	\$956,638	50.5%
Total Expense	<u>92,548</u>	<u>391,915</u>	956,638	41.0%
Net Income/Loss	(\$ 25,083)	\$ 91,133		

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



Building Fund Getting Close to the Finish Line!

by Molly Williams, Finance Committee Chair

The balance on our building loan continues to decline. Approximately \$65,000 is still needed to retire the debt before the end of this year. The offer to match new (unpledged) contributions at 50% remains in effect with about \$19,000 in matching funds available for the next \$38,000 in new donations.

If you are able to help us finish this obligation, please be sure to designate your contribution as going to the building fund.

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 Mission of the Month

by Donna Dunyak, Outreach Team

The Outreach Team will be collecting new household items for the **Eleanor Street Family Shelter** during the month of July. Look for the Christmas tree with the house

tags in the Perks gathering area beginning Sunday, July 2. Items needed by the shelter are new bath towels, wash cloths, twin fitted sheets, twin top sheets (separates and/or sets), standard size pillows, plastic cereal bowls, plastic drinking cups, pots, frying pans, forks (they seem to disappear more than any other utensil), kitchen dish clothes and drying towels. Please bring your donations to the office. No wrapping necessary!

YOU ARE INVITED!

The Justice Team has invited **Dr. Charlae Davis, the executive director of ISAAC**, to visit with the Justice Team and other interested parties at its meeting on **Monday, June 26 at 7 p.m. in the parlor**. If ISAAC needs any introduction, it is an organization that looks at our community and undertakes to catalyze changes that will address issues of poverty and justice. The following was taken from their website: Current Task Forces confirmed at the 2013 Issues Convocation:

- a) Education & Early Childhood Task Force:** With an eye towards investing in our future, we are working to increase preschool education slots and to end cuts to K-12 education in Michigan!
- b) Youth Violence & Drug Prevention Task Force:** Implementing David M. Kennedy's widely successful approach to ending inner city violence.
- c) Transportation Task Force:** Expanding public transit so it is seamless, accessible and affordable to all who reside in the county.
- d) Affordable Housing Task Force:** Convincing our community to stop just sheltering people and provide housing instead—which actually costs half as much!

Assisting refugees ministry

by Susan Eden

The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God. Leviticus 19:34

How wonderful it is that First UMC has a long history of welcoming and helping refugees become settled in our country!

In 1949, our church, with the inspiration of the Associate Pastor Paul Albery, created an on-going program for displaced refugees from the Baltic countries of Europe. Mr. and Mrs. Howard Bowman led the efforts of bringing 15 families from Latvia, Hungary, Russia, and Poland to Kalamazoo. Each refugee family had to be individually sponsored by a family in our church and be willing to provide temporary housing and employment. Recently one of the daughters of one of the refugee families spoke at the Ruth Circle sharing her memories of the warm welcome of our congregation upon their arrival in the USA. She spoke of her experience of living in a displaced refugee camp before coming to Kalamazoo. Because of the information we have in our archives, we were able to give her information about her family's resettlement here.

In 1979 many families of our congregation, including the Snows, Hooks, Haynes and Grostics as well as others, helped the Trinh family, Vietnamese refugees, start a new life of freedom in Kalamazoo. They helped with lodging, employment, doctor appointments and other necessary tasks to help in their transition to Kalamazoo.

In 1986 Mr. and Mrs. Janbaz Niazi and family from Afghanistan were welcomed to Kalamazoo by FUMC.

The welcoming continues today with the collaboration of our church with The First Presbyterian Church in helping a Syrian family that arrived in December 2016.

May we continue to be faithful to the call of assisting those whose lives are in danger and seek help in foreign countries.





Staff Sharing

Jacqueline Stilger, Minister of Music

With the end of the school year, there is always a big flurry of activity with the musical groups of the church, and this year proved to be no exception. We had some beautiful, uplifting, fun, and sacred moments and I would like to take the time to highlight some of them here.

Many members of our newly minted 5-octave handbell choir had a first time experience in late April. We loaded up our cars and the church van with stands, bells, mallets, pads, and music and attended a two-day Region V Handbell Festival at the Lansing Center in Lansing. We attended workshops ranging from high and low bell techniques, playing '4-in-hand' (meaning 2 bells in each hand), handbell processions, and bell maintenance to tie-dying handbell gloves.

We rehearsed in a mass group of 440(!) handbell ringers and also played in smaller ensembles of about 200 ringers. We ate together, laughed together, built community, and shared wonderful music together. The final concert was presented at the end of the festival that included brass, organ, and percussion. It was a great experience and I am grateful to those who gave of their money, time, and talent to further their knowledge of handbells!

On Sunday, May 21, First Singers closed their year by singing several of their favorite anthems from throughout the year at the 8:30 and the 11 a.m. services. They had an especially moving rendition of John Stainer's "God So Loved the World," and closed the services with the uplifting words of Julien of Norwich, "All is Well, All is Well;" an anthem that actually celebrates the birth of Christ, but is a pertinent reminder for us that Jesus has come into the world and remains with us, even in these turbulent times.

On June 2 and 4, our sanctuary was graced with our wonderful stage and a beautiful backdrop painted

by member Nancy Douglas. Our children's ensemble, First Beats, presented their annual spring musical, "The Rock Slinger and His Greatest Hit," by Allen Pote and Tom Long. The children told the story of David and his courage to face the giant Goliath, trusting that God would see him through this seemingly impossible task.

We began rehearsing for the show in late January, while still also preparing for leading in worship about once a month. Week after week we learned the melodies, worked on choreography, learned lines, were fitted with costumes, practiced entrances and exits, and learned to speak lines with conviction. Parents, grandparents, and other talented individuals were busy sewing and making costumes, gathering or making props, helping out with lines at home and making sure that parts were memorized.

Every year it seems as if it will never, ever come together and this year was no exception. There was a huge final push the week of the show and the hard work by all of the kids was very evident in their performance on Sunday, June 4 during worship. With the loving support of the congregation, David did indeed defeat Goliath and the talented children of First UMC told the story through word, song, music and dance with enthusiasm, pride, love, and joy in their hearts!

Thanks to this congregation for the support of the music ministries here at First and for your love and appreciation for music of all different styles and genres by persons of all ages. It is my prayer that it lifts you to a higher place and draws you closer to our loving God.

In peace,

Jacqueline



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 212 S. Park Street
 Kalamazoo, MI 49007
 (269) 381-6340



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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
July 12	July 19
August 16	August 23
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.

A **BIG** thank you to those committees and teams who will be hosting Summer Perks! Please contact Pastor Dan Duncan at 381-6340 x231 if you have questions about Perks. **Sunday, Sept. 3 is still open!**



June 25	Finance	July 30	Outreach Team
July 2	Stewardship	August 6	Building & Grounds
July 9	Music & The Arts	August 13	Dawn & Sunrise Patrols
July 16	Caring Committee	August 20	Children & Families (CFM)
July 23	Justice Team	August 27	Trustees



KLUMP Softball

Kalamazoo League of United Methodist Players

The 2017 softball season has begun! Players need to be 13 years of age or older. Games are once a week at Pathfinder's Church (Portage UMC at 8740 S. Westnedge Ave., approximately one mile south of Centre Ave.). The one diamond is located behind the church. Come a few minutes early to warm up! Jay Goss is our team's coach. You can contact Jay at jayknlaura5@gmail.com or phone 382-0597 with questions. Below is the remainder of the season's schedule.

- Tuesday, June 27 @ 6:15 p.m. vs. Westwood UMC
- Tuesday, July 11 at 7:45 p.m. vs. Cherry Creek
- Tuesday, July 18 @ 6:15 p.m. vs. Portage Pathfinder
- Thursday, July 27 at 6:15 p.m. vs. Westwood UMC
- Thursday, August 3 at 7:45 p.m. vs. Cherry Creek
- Thursday, August 10 at 6:15 p.m. vs. Portage Pathfinder
- Thursday, August 17 at 6:15 p.m. vs. Westwood UMC

Peace is not the product of terror or fear... Peace is the generous tranquil contribution of all to the good of all. Peace is dynamism and generosity. It is humanity.

oscar romero