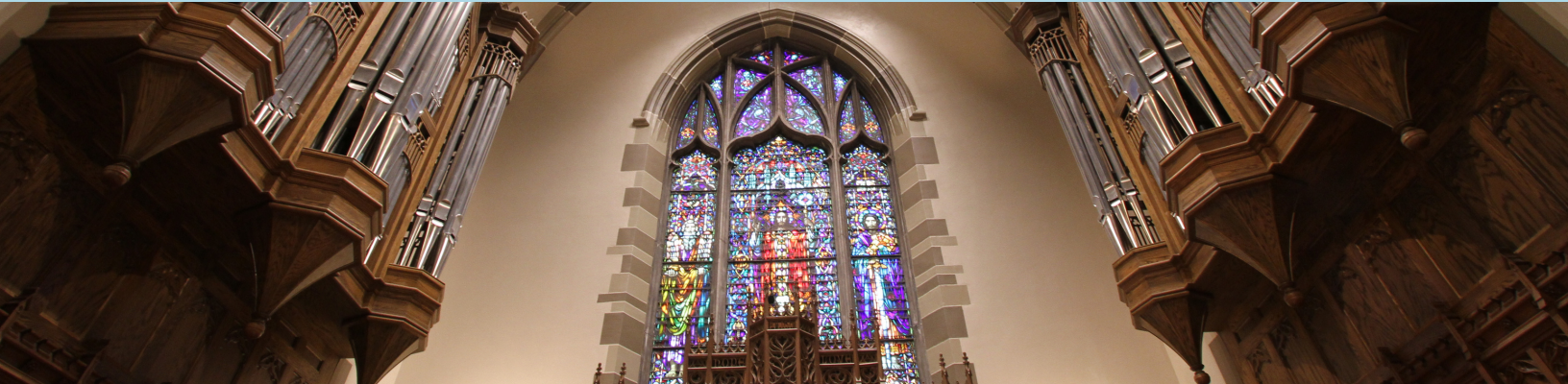


# THE FIRST WORD

212 S. PARK STREET, KALAMAZOO, MI 49007 // (269) 381-6340 // [WWW.UMC-KZO.ORG](http://WWW.UMC-KZO.ORG)



First United  
Methodist  
Church of Kalamazoo



## Summer Concert Series at FUMC Kalamazoo

First United Methodist Church of Kalamazoo is hosting a free summer concert series. The community is welcome to attend these events in the church sanctuary on July 25, August 1 and August 8, all at 4pm.

### CONCERT INFORMATION:

#### **Sunday, July 25 at 4pm**

*Organist Bernie Foulk with Jacqueline Stilger featuring the Letourneau organ of First United Methodist Church*

The concert will feature the three manual, 54 rank Letourneau pipe organ, Opus 52, installed in the church in 2000. The music will span the centuries with pieces from the renaissance period through contemporary.

#### **Sunday, August 1 at 4pm**

*The Great American Songbook and All That Jazz with Terry Lower (piano) and Dr. Barry Ross (violin)*

Pianist Terry Lower has been a fixture on the Michigan jazz scene for over 30 years. He is both a dazzling soloist and a superior accompanist. Find more information at <https://terrylowermusic.com/>.

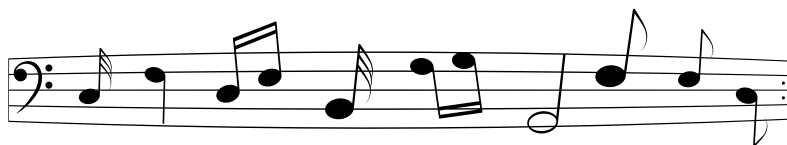
Dr. Barry Ross is the Concertmaster Emeritus of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, Founder of the Kalamazoo Philharmonia and a Professor of Music Emeritus at Kalamazoo College. In his over four decades of residing in Michigan, Dr. Ross has appeared as conductor, concertmaster and a concert violinist throughout the country and maintains an active performance schedule.

#### **Sunday, August 8 at 4pm**

*Hazeltree: Traditional acoustic songs and tunes from Ireland, Scotland, England and America*

Hazeltree is ensemble of close harmonies, guitar, mountain dulcimer, mandolin, flute, and drum. In Irish tree lore, the hazel embodies creativity, wisdom and transformation... Find more information at <https://www.facebook.com/hazeltreemusic>.

Attendees are asked to enter the church through our parking lot entrance, located on Academy St. Please sign in as you enter the church and we ask all attendees to remain masked to ensure hospitality and protection for all vulnerable populations. Freewill offerings will be gratefully accepted, but admission for all summer concert series events is free.



## Join Us for Worship Wherever You Are

**IN PERSON AT FUMC KALAMAZOO**  
*Sundays at 10am in the Sanctuary*

We ask that those who join us wear a mask and sign in at the doors off the parking lot. Please keep space from one another and, as you exit, use the Park Street doors and visit in the yard or parking lot. Ms. Julia, Grandma Joyce or other approved adults will be on the playground for families who would like to bring their children for the fellowship of play. Children are welcome in the sanctuary as well.

### **LIVESTREAM ONLINE WORSHIP**

*Join the livestream on Sundays at 10am*

You can access our online livestream worship at <https://www.umc-kzo.org/live/> or on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/c/KalamazooFirstUnitedMethodistChurch/>. Watching on YouTube allows you to make comments and connect to others who are worshipping online.

### **ON DEMAND ONLINE WORSHIP**

*Access past services 24/7 online*

For your convenience, past services are available on our [website](#) or on [YouTube](#).

### **SUNDAY SATELLITE SERVICES**

*-Heritage Community: 3pm in the Bistro  
-The Fountains at Bronson Place: 4pm in the auditorium  
-Friendship Village: 6:30pm in the KIVA*

We are happy to celebrate with one another again and invite retirement community residents to join us for worship. Residents of Friendship Village and the Fountains should sign up with their respective activity coordinator.

## **Oberammergau Passion Play European Capitals Tour: September 21-30, 2022 with Rev. Keith & Colleen Treman**



Since 1634, the most famous Passion Play in the World has been presented every 10 years in Oberammergau, Germany. The worldwide virus pandemic of 2020 forced the Play organizers to move the production to 2022—only the 4th time in almost 400 years that the Play has been canceled or postponed.

Educational Opportunities Tours invites you to join an estimated 450,000 visitors from around the world, in the small village of Oberammergau for this special Play season. Travelers will experience the world's largest dramatic and musical Passion Play in the beautiful Bavaria and Tyrol regions of Germany and Austria.

For those who thought they missed the Passion Play in 2020, this is a rare second chance to see the event of a lifetime. Many EO travelers moved their 2020 plans to 2022, but tickets and hotel space have been reserved for additional travelers to join in 2022.

Travelers will enjoy ten days in Germany, Austria and Prague. They'll explore Innsbruck, Prague, Dresden, Leipzig, and Berlin. Tickets to the Oberammergau Passion Play are included with time to explore the sites in southern Germany, such as Ettal. Price starts at \$4,698 per person and trip departs out of New York.

This trip will be hosted by Rev. Keith & Colleen Treman and take place from September 21-30, 2022. To access the tour brochure, [click here](#) and you can also visit <http://www.eo.travel/> or call (800) 247-0017 x590 for more information.



## **Wednesday Evening Outdoor Prayer Service**

You are invited to join us for Wednesday evening prayer services on our picnic table yard each week (weather permitting) at 7pm. We ask that you please bring your own lawn chair or blanket. These times of worship will give us the opportunity to raise our joys and concerns, participate in a simple liturgy and sing together! Masks are optional for this outdoor service.

This will be a short prayer service of 30-45 minutes. We will not be using the church building, only the lawn. This will mean that bathrooms will not be available (unless it's an emergency). If services need to be cancelled due to inclement weather, we will update through email and social media. We hope you will join us for this simple time of worship that allows us to experience, celebrate and share God's love.

## **Our Sympathy and Prayers to the Family and Friends of:**

Marguerite Baechtold, who died on June 29.

Jo Anne Nelson, who died on June 7.

Beverly Siemers, who died on July 14.



## **Please keep these friends in your prayers:**

Fred and Lana Allen  
Dana Anderson  
Arnold Family  
Nina Baker  
Doris Ball  
Wanda Boekhout  
Harriet & Don Chalker  
Andreea Frew  
Ruth Evelyn Graham  
Nell Holland  
Hurley Family  
John & Carol Holms  
Deanna & Sara House  
Lenora Holliday  
David Houseman  
Doris Lee  
Ellen McDonald  
Bob McClelland  
Myrta Messikommer  
Jeanne Plott  
Gerry Schaberg  
Jan Search  
Chris Uggen & Family  
Janet Wyndendorf



## **Prayer requests:**

If you would like to share a prayer request with our clergy and prayer ministry team, please visit [bit.ly/FUMCPrayers](http://bit.ly/FUMCPrayers). If you do not have internet access, please call the church at (269) 381-6340 and leave a message. Prayer requests need to be received each **THURSDAY by noon** for inclusion in our weekly list for the prayer ministry team.

## **July Mission of the Month: Spring Valley Elementary**

The children of Spring Valley are anticipating their return to school in late August after all of these months away from their friends and teachers! Let's help to welcome them back by showering them with school supplies!

It is anticipated that Spring Valley will have 375 students and it is our hope to supply each child with the following supplies:

- A box of 24 Crayola crayons
- A glue stick
- An eraser
- #2 pencils



Please donate any of these items in any quantity by placing them in the Mission of the Month box in the church entryway. To make a monetary donation, please [donate online](#) or write Spring Valley Elementary in your check memo line. All school supplies will be delivered to Spring Valley by mid-August.



## First United Methodist Church Staff Spotlight

Throughout this eventful past year and beyond, our staff has risen to the challenges thrown their way and we are grateful to have a strong team to support our mission and congregation. On behalf of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC), we encourage you to share your support of our FUMC staff. Cards and emails are welcome!

**Kathryn Sappington**, *Global Mission Fellow*, ksappington@umc-kzo.org

Kathryn Sappington moved to the Kalamazoo area in 2019 as a Global Mission Fellow. She comes to Kalamazoo from Mississippi. She is a graduate of Delta State University with a degree in Child Development. During her time at DSU, Kathryn fell in love with ministry work through the Wesley Foundation, youth groups, and summer camps where she worked. She became a Global Mission Fellow with the hopes of finding out more about what ministry work looks like.

During her time in Kalamazoo, Kathryn has enjoyed getting to know the members of FUMC, diving into her work as a Global Mission Fellow, finding sunny spots on the beaches of Lake Michigan, and exploring the different neighborhoods of Kalamazoo. She has loved getting to know the rich history of Kalamazoo. Some of her most favorite finds in Kalamazoo have been the Saturday morning farmer's market (specifically First Fruits farm), Rose Gold Coffee Co., Confections with Convictions, Lillian Anderson Arboretum, sunsets in South Haven, the Stamped Robin, and biscuits and gravy at Crow's Nest. Her two-year commitment will be up in August. She will then move to Louisville, Kentucky, to pursue a Master of Arts Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. She will be in this program for the next three years. She hopes to find meaningful work at the intersections of young, LGBTQIA+ individuals, their families, and the church. Until then, she will be spending her time soaking up the Michigan summer while working with Helping Our Neighbors, Youth Tribe, young adults, and other church teams and ministries. Kathryn looks forward to staying in touch with the community at FUMC. Please feel free to reach out to her at ksappington@umc-kzo.org to get her contact information moving forward.



Kathryn Sappington

Thank  
you!



Jacqueline Stilger

**Jacqueline Stilger**, *Director of Music*, jstilger@umc-kzo.org

A native of Southern Indiana, Jacqueline has been involved in church music since high school. She holds a Bachelor of Music degree in organ performance from the University of Louisville, where she studied with Melvin Dickenson, and a double Master's of Music degree in Organ and Church Music from Indiana University, studying with Dr. Marilyn Keiser. She has served congregations in Kentucky, Indiana, New York and Michigan. She has been the Minister of Music at First United Methodist Church since the summer of 2009 and deeply enjoys the variety of ways that faith is expressed through music here at First. In her free time, she enjoys gardening, playing ukulele, finding creative outlets through fabric and fiber arts and spending time with family and friends.

## Growing Hope Globally: Summer Celebration

We at First United Methodist Church have supported Growing Hope Globally (formerly Foods Resource Bank) for many years through the Christmas Offering. The Summer Celebration will be virtual again this year on Thursday, July 22 from 6 to 8 pm EDT.

To register go to: [www.growinghopeglobally.org/event/2021-summer-celebration-online](http://www.growinghopeglobally.org/event/2021-summer-celebration-online)

Our contribution currently supports the Nicaragua Rio Coco Program, where a community leader attends a training center to learn about and experiment with different techniques for growing crops and raising animals. This leader, Miriam, shares the information with her community so that families have food security, can afford to send their children to school and not make the difficult decision to migrate.

**Everyone is encouraged to join the 2021 Summer Celebration!**



## Finance Committee

**By Sandy Gower**

**Finance Committee Chair**

In May our General Fund Income was \$155,013 with expenses of \$741,850 leaving us with a fund balance of \$83,163. This month we received our annual contribution from the Trustees as well as some generous contributions from the congregation. Overall, our income and expenses are in line with what we anticipated in the budget. We are truly a blessed congregation.

I wish you all peace, health and love

## Special Offerings as of June 2021

### FUMC Special Offerings

|                                    |           |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Human Relations Sunday             | \$285.00  |
| UMCOR Sunday                       | \$1155.00 |
| Easter Offering                    | \$8669.25 |
| Native American Sunday             | \$355.55  |
| Peace with Justice Sunday          | \$250.00  |
| Justice Team Michigan United/ISAAC | \$0.00    |
| ASP Sunday Youth Missions          | \$0.00    |
| World Communion Sunday             | \$100.00  |
| Christmas Offering                 | \$900.00  |
| UMW Sunday                         | \$0.00    |
| UM Student Day                     | \$500.00  |
| YANA                               | \$0.00    |

### Michigan Conference Special Offering

|                            |         |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Christian Education Sunday | \$50.00 |
|----------------------------|---------|

## Access to the Church Building

For the time being, we are asking that you make an appointment if you need access to the church building. We are currently limiting the number of people who come into the building to ensure that all who enter are staying safe. We thank you for your help in making the church building as safe as possible for all who enter. **Please call the church at (269) 381-6340, Monday through Thursday from 9:30am to 3:30pm, to schedule an appointment.** (Outside of those hours, you are welcome to leave a message and someone will get back to you as soon as they're able.)

## Celebrating Our Ministries Reconciling Ministry Team

By Lisa Batten



There is a banner hanging in the hall on the way to the sanctuary, just next to the Perks area. Maybe you've seen it, but have forgotten about it since we haven't been in the building for a while. Maybe you haven't seen it because you attend church online or at a satellite service. The image above shows the banner which alerts all who pass that we are a reconciling congregation. So what does being a reconciling congregation mean?

In October 2005 the Church Council adopted a Strategic Plan with several goals, including *Invite, welcome and accept all persons with open hearts, open minds and open doors with Christ-Like Hospitality.* A part of implementing this goal was to *"Explore whether our church should join the UMC Reconciling Ministries Network."*

In August 2006, a Reconciling Ministries Study Group was formed consisting of upwards of twenty First Church members and staff to carry out this assignment. This Study Group met over the next two plus years which ultimately led to a Special Church Conference, in 2008, chaired by Kalamazoo District Superintendent Neil Davis to receive and act on the Report and Recommendations of the Study Group. First Church members present overwhelmingly approved the adoption of the following statement and to join the reconciling ministry network.

*"First United Methodist Church of Kalamazoo invites all persons to join us in 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 relationship with all, affirming those who are marginalized for any reason, including sexual orientation or gender identity. We welcome all with open hearts, open minds and open doors."*

Since that time, First Church has participated in Pride Events (even virtually during Covid), offered Bible studies, Academy Classes, and book studies, and received the annual Faith Award from the Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center for being a Reconciling Congregation. In April 2014, First Church sponsored a two-day opportunity called *"Biblical Obedience: Reconciling Ministries and Marriage Equality"* led by Bishop Melvin G. Talbert. Upwards of 100 people from across Michigan attended a Saturday conversation with Bishop Talbert and others. He was guest preacher the following day and First Church Clergy Steve Charnley, Julie Kline and

Dan Duncan sent a letter to the congregation saying:

*"We, your pastoral servant leaders, with hearts full of love for those we serve, are writing to you about our mutual and prayerful decision to offer our pastoral ministry to all couples in our congregation who earnestly and prayerfully seek to be married. For us, marriage equality is more than a political issue or a judicial decision, it is a matter of heeding our call to be pastors and offer without prejudice our pastoral care and support for those who request it."*

Beginning in 2017, the Reconciling Ministry Team began to expand its work to include anti-bias and anti-racism discussions. Throughout the years following, over fifty congregants have attended anti-racism training, others have participated in various book studies, Academy Classes, and video presentations which led to the affirmation and blessing by Church Council of the following:

*As part of Kalamazoo First United Methodist Church's vow to resist oppression in all its forms, we, the Church Council, commit ourselves to the decisive action that is needed to resist and dismantle racism at every level. This action must go beyond our historically empty rhetoric about repentance and broken promises to be a church that is a credible and active witness for peace, equity and justice in the face of harm visited upon communities of color.*

*We beckon our clergy and lay leadership to unapologetically shine the light of truth on our church community so that we recognize our complicity in systemic racism, recognize and condemn white supremacy as sin, and seek a deep knowing of what God calls us to do. We make these vows so that every person—especially Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)—may live in safety, health, and freedom.*

The Reconciling Team continues to be in ministry with the congregation to live into our baptismal vows *"Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?"* And we answer, *"we will."*



## Dream Team Prayer Corner

**We praise God** for the generosity of our congregation as we complete the second year of the Dream campaign for affordable housing for all! **We thank God** that many individuals have been housed by Kalamazoo Collective and the YWCA with Dream funds. **We are grateful to God** that families have been able to stay in their homes thanks to critical home repairs made by Community Homeworks. **We praise God** that Building Blocks has helped to increase safety and neighborhood engagement in parts of our city through Dream contributions. **We beseech God** to allow the good work of all of our seven partners to continue in the year ahead. **We ask God** to continue to open hearts and minds to contributing of their time and money to the Dream and **we seek God's guidance** in the team's decision making in the year ahead.



## Small Groups at FUMC Kalamazoo

There's still time to join a small group and make some new friends, spend time with old friends and do prayer with a renewed spirit. If you'd like to establish a new small group, contact one of our Pastors, Julie Kline or Matt Weiler: [jkline@umckzo.org](mailto:jkline@umckzo.org) or [mweiler@umc-kzo.org](mailto:mweiler@umc-kzo.org). You can also find more information on small groups at <https://www.umc-kzo.org/about-us/small-groups/>.

## The First Word for August

Articles for the next issue are due no later than **August 9, 2021**. The next newsletter will be mailed the week of **August 16**. Articles submitted to the newsletter should be sent to Bethany Gauthier at [bgauthier@umc-kzo.org](mailto:bgauthier@umc-kzo.org). Articles may be edited for space and content.