



## From the Pastor's Heart



In the United States, Christmastime and thoughts of home just go together. “I’ll be Home for Christmas” and “There’s No Place Like Home for the Holidays” are two of the most popular holiday songs, year after year. Christmas movies and television shows regularly feature stories of people going to their family home or being with extended family over the holidays.

In the face of a global pandemic, many of us will make very different decisions about gatherings with family and friends this year. Most of our time-honored traditions – Christmas parties and festive open houses, caroling together around the piano, traveling to be with extended family, Christmas Concerts and packed sanctuaries on Christmas Eve – will probably look very different this December. I don’t know about you, but there’s a certain melancholy settling into my bones as I think about what this season will be like. How can I experience the joy and promise of this season, when it will look so very different in 2020?

From our faith perspective, the Advent and Christmas Season are about another kind of homecoming: the homecoming of Christ to redeem and renew us, this earth, and all creation till “heaven and nature sing” with joy eternally. The Scriptures we use during Advent focus on our longing for God to make a home with us, our preparation to receive God, and the fulfillment of God’s promise to be with us in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

This year’s Advent and Christmas sermon series embraces the idea of God’s homecoming – which we call the “Incarnation.” During the Children’s Time in worship each week, we’ll “unwrap” something that leads us toward making our hearts, our lives, our families, our communities, and our world a more hospitable home for Christ to dwell in. I hope you’ll worship with us either in person or by live-stream each week. If you are worshipping at home, you might consider inviting a small group of friends, neighbors or family members to join you. Each week, I’ll prepare a brief set of questions for you to discuss together.

### ADVENT CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

- 11/29/20 Advent #1. Sermon: *O God! We Need You Now!*
- 12/6/20 Advent #2. Sermon: *Home Is Where We Meet*
- 12/13/20 Advent #3. Sermon: *Joy is Our True Home*
- 12/20/20 Advent #4. Sermon: *God Makes This World a Home*
- 12/21/20 Longest Night Worship at 7 pm: *A quiet, contemplative service with readings and music*
- 12/24/20 Christmas Eve Worship at 7 pm. Sermon: *Gift-wrapped in Swaddling Clothes*
- 12/27/20 Christmas Sunday – Deacon Greg Lawton preaching

Be blessed. Be well. You are beloved!

Pastor Tonya Arnesen



## MUSIC for the Holidays



I'm sure that being a church musician might shade my opinion a little, but I don't think that I'm alone when I say that the music of the holidays is a very important way in which I celebrate Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas. Our history, here at the First United Methodist Church, is to celebrate this wonderful season by pulling out all the stops in our Music Ministry. Throughout my 42+ years, our Music Ministry has celebrated these important remembrances with the full sounds of choirs, bells, brass, organ and piano. The pandemic has surely changed the way in which we live and worship. It has also changed the way in which we can interact with one another. "Distancing" seems to be the key word. And yet, I can't think of a season where we're more drawn to each other. There is an intimacy that is felt during the holiday season as we come together to sit around a table to share a prepared feast or when we gather together to sing the carols of the season. Will music still play a key role to our worship during the holidays? I'm happy to say that even during these challenging times, beautiful music will still hold a place in our hearts and our worship during the holidays. Our **Thanksgiving Sunday** celebration on November 22 will include the combined sounds of women from Belle Canto, the men from Journeymen and the youth of Genesis. Those voices combined with the sounds of our Carillon Ringers and piano and organ will match the festivity of the day. I am thankful for the music presented by these four groups. The music of **Advent** will include a combination of voices (solos, duets & ensembles) singing beautiful music for the season. **Christmas Eve**, like Thanksgiving Sunday, will include all our four ensembles joining together to present music for the celebration of the birth of Jesus. In addition to the sounds of voices this **7:00 Candlelight Christmas Eve service** will also include several duets for piano and organ.

So, as you can see, the music in our holiday worship will be as it always has been... beautiful and meaningful. We are excited to share it all with you and we hope that you will find it to be a meaningful addition to your worship and your holidays!

Tim Meunier

Director of Music Ministries



UMW will be meeting for an in-person and Zoom meeting:

November 5, 2020, 2:00 pm

Program: UMW Business & Lynn Newhouse on her Ministry in Cambodia

There will be no food from the kitchen or shared. You may bring a drink and/or snack for yourself if coming in person.

We need your reservation for either in-person or Zoom for proper in-person social-distancing preparation and Zoom invitations. All are welcome! If you are not called, please call the Church office (787-6460) for a reservation. If you would like to be added to our UMW calling list, please give that information to the Church as well.

## United Methodist Student Sunday – November 29

Jesus has called us to heal the hurts of this world and transform lives and communities in his name. As United Methodists, we seek to be faithful to this calling. Yet the ever-rising costs of education for those who wish to learn how to use the gifts God has given them often keeps them from answering this call. That is why the United Methodist Church celebrates Student Sunday each November. On that day, we are invited to join in a special offering helping to make it possible for students around the world to answer the call of Jesus Christ to his service.

Our offering on this day will be used for scholarships for those who would otherwise be financially prohibited from receiving the knowledge they need to reach and transform the world for Jesus Christ. By investing in our students, we are investing in our future and the future of Christ's church. If you are worshipping in the sanctuary, there will be a special envelope for your use. You can drop your offering in the plate provided. If you are joining the Sunday worship service from home, you may send a check to the church and mark it for Student Sunday or use one of the other avenues of electronic giving. Please prayerfully consider your generosity for this special offering.

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### Angel Tree for Children's Christmas Gifts

First UMC will be participating with the Jackson County Health and Human Services Department this Christmas with their Angel Tree project. This will be our major, coordinated mission giving for the Christmas Season. The hope is to provide gifts and nurturing support for needy children, many of whom are in the foster care system. A tree decorated with angels will be in the Welcome Center. Each angel will be numbered and will correspond to an envelope with a child's name, age, gender, and gift suggestions. Since not everyone is coming to the church for worship or gatherings, you don't have to physically take an angel from the tree. You may call or email the church office to get the information needed. Whether taken in person or not, someone will record your name and phone number and which envelope number you take so we can track which children have been cared for. Wrapped gifts are to be returned to the church for delivery to the child before Christmas. We hope to bless at least 50 children in Jackson County with our gifts.



#### Important information:

- Please limit your giving to a maximum of three gifts per child with a maximum total value of approximately \$50.00. This will help ensure that children from the same family receive similar numbers and types of gifts.
- Each gift needs to be wrapped and labeled when returned to the church so it is ready for distribution.
- The Angel Tree will be set up in the Welcome Center by Sunday, November 15.
- All wrapped gifts must be returned to the church by Monday, December 7.
- If you would like to contribute to the Angel Tree Project, rather than shopping for a child, please send your gift to the church office.

If you have any questions, you can contact Deacon Greg in the office, Marian Peplinski with the UMW, or Jean Ross with our Wellness Team.

## Wellness Team Update Nov 20



What a crazy year 2020 has been. Who would have ever thought that we would not have in-person worship for 6 months, shopped for our groceries on line, wear masks when out of our homes, or had our meetings on “ZOOM”? These are the types of changes we have adjusted to. But others have also experienced hunger and food insecurity that came along with it.

The pandemic has meant an increase in hunger in our community. It has made FUMC’s Fresh Food Give-a-ways even more important. That is why the Wellness Team is being creative to come up with a fundraiser, which can be done, now, within the limitations COVID presents.

We are having a “virtual” Bake Sale on Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup>. It will be the easiest Bake Sale you ever participated in – no baking, no mess, and no calories. What more could you ask for?

Just make a donation to the Wellness Team, for whatever you would like, to the Fresh Food Give-Away program. The cost of a pie or cake, etc. Drop your donation in the offering basket, or mail it to the church, on or before Nov 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mark the envelope or check, “Wellness Team Bake Sale.”

Thank you for your commitment to reducing hunger and food insecurity in Jackson, as our program is in its 6<sup>th</sup> year.

Blessings,

The Wellness Team

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## Friends Enjoy Dinner at the Hunt Club

The Never Without a Friend ladies friendship group will meet at the Hunt Club for dinner at 6pm on November 19. The Hunt Club is known for Wiley Potatoes, Deer's Ears, their burgers and soups. Their menu also features appetizers, salads, sandwiches, entrees and pizza. This Jackson favorite is located at 1514 Daniel Rd in Jackson. Come, relax, bring a friend, and your face mask. NEW FRIENDS ALWAYS WELCOME! **Reservations required by 11/18, 9pm.** Contact Candy Poleski for reservations or more information.

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## Yout Request

The Youts are in need of a dozen quart-sized Mason jars for a fall mission project. If you are able to help, please let Terri Reynolds or Torri Meunier know.

Thank you, church family, for keeping us in your prayers. We’ve been blessed with good weather on most Sunday nights allowing us to meet outside for Youth Group. Thank you to the Benedetto, Carrigan, and Shaner Families who have invited us to their backyards.



FUMC Friends-

Many, many thanks for the prayer and encouragement, during my recent surgery. My heart was full of peace knowing so many were praying and supporting me. Thanks also for the beautiful flowers. I hope to be back in the video booth ASAP! Much Love, Dorie Shelby

# November

2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
01 10:30AM Worship 4:00PM Youts Sunday School 5:00PM Genesis Rehearsal 6:00PM Yout Group	02	03 9:30AM Tuesday Bible Study	04 9:00AM Faith Walk 5:30PM Carillon Ringers 5:30PM Strategic Planning Team	05 1:00PM United Methodist Women Board Meeting 2:00PM United Methodist Women Meeting	06 10:00AM School Pack Packing 12:00 PM Food for Thought	07
08 10:30AM Worship 4:00PM Youts Sunday School 5:00PM Genesis Rehearsal 6:00PM Yout Group	09 1:30PM Fresh Food Distribution	10 9:30AM Tuesday Bible Study 2:00PM Staff Meeting 5:30pm Finance Meeting	11 9:00AM Faith Walk 5:30PM Carillon Ringers	12 Women Meeting	13 10:00AM School Pack Packing 12:00PM Food for Thought	14
15 10:30AM Worship 4:00PM Youts Sunday School 6:00PM Yout Group	16 5:30PM Leadership Council Meeting	17 9:30AM Tuesday Bible Study 2:00PM Staff Meeting 5:30PM Board of Trustees Meeting	18 9:00AM Faith Walk 5:30PM Carillon Ringers 5:30PM Strategic Planning Team	19 6:00PM Never w/o a Friend—RSVP	20 10:00AM School Pack Packing 12:00PM Food for Thought	21
22 Wellness Virtual Bake Sale 10:30AM Worship 11:45AM Advent Women's Ensemble 6:00PM Yout Group 4:00PM Youts Sunday School 6:00PM Yout Group	23 1:30PM Fresh Food Distribution	24 9:30AM Tuesday Bible Study 2:00PM Staff Meeting 5:30PM SPRC	25 9:00AM Faith Walk	26 Thanksgiving Day Office Closed	27 Church Office Closed	28
29 10:30AM Worship 11:45AM Advent Women's Ensemble	30	29 9:30AM Tuesday Bible Study 2:00PM Staff Meeting	30			

**Color Coding Key:**

Facebook & YouTube

Special Location

Zoom

275 W. Michigan

First UMC Jackson  
275 W. Michigan  
Jackson, MI 49201

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JACKSON, MICHIGAN

**Return Service Requested**

**We are an inclusive, inter-generational faith community that  
loves God with our ♪ hearts....and hands...and voices♪**

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Sunday Service broadcast on cable channel 19, 7:30pm Sunday