

First United Methodist Church
111 East Michigan Avenue
Battle Creek, MI 49014
www.firstumcbc.org



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The Tower News

First United Methodist Church
The City Center Church
111 East Michigan Avenue
Battle Creek, MI 49014



Volume 8 Issue 11 – January 2019

The vision of First United Methodist Church is to be a Vibrant,
Diverse, Christ-Centered People.

Your Church Staff

Ministers All Members
Pastor Pastor Linda Farmer-Lewis
Administrative Assistant Jean Harvey-Clark
Music Director Anita Blueford
Custodian Jeff Stevens
Organist Kay Ensfield
Keyboards Naghielly Agy
Child Care Alexa Stephenson

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 9 am to 5 pm
Closed for Lunch between 12:30 - 1:30 pm
Office is Closed on Fridays
Phone: 269.963.5567/ Fax: 269.963.6899
Pastor Linda: 517.581.5595

The *TOWER News* is published monthly.
Copy deadline is the 20th of the month. **Please electronically submit your information to:**

Editor & Publisher: Jean Harvey-Clark
jharveyclark@firstumcbc.org



Worship Schedule

9:00 am: Praise Worship

**11:00 am: Traditional Worship
with Choir**

Inspire Your Heart *with Art*

Please bring your favorite piece of art
to share with others.



Sunday, January 27, 2019

Join us in a celebration of arts!
We will celebrate the arts through dramatic readings, special music,
artwork from our children, and a group project.
We will have delicious desserts from those who express their art through
baking.

“Every good gift bestowed, every perfect gift received comes to us from above,
courtesy of the Father of Lights.” *James 1:17*

Happy Birthday to You!

01/01 Joan Creekmur
 01/04 Elspeth Ryan
 01/07 Paul Reid
 01/09 Dutch Klooster
 01/09 Olivia Robinson
 01/16 Trevor Clark

Thank you

Many thanks to Pastor Linda and Bill, Ed Henegar and Sharon Gawlak for their visits during my recent surgery recovery. I greatly appreciated it.

Gentry Hammons

New Severe Weather Policy

In the event, that electricity or heat is out in our building, or the Battle Creek Public Schools close due to severe weather, the First United Methodist Church will close and remain closed for the entire day. All church programming for that day, or guest group events will be cancelled. The Red Cross and Sojourner Truth Institute may make their own arrangements for employees to come in, but events requiring our staff will be cancelled and our staff will not come report that day but will be paid none the less.

Approved by the Church Council, November 27, 2018

Happy Anniversary!!

01/19 Paul and Carol Reid
 01/31 John and Mary Logan

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, February 9, 9:30 am – 1:00 pm

at the Ashton Lake Club House for "Building on our Bedrock Beliefs." This retreat is open to everyone and is a process to align resources and gain momentum for the mission of the church.

The Church Council will be laying the ground work on Tuesday, January 22, 7 pm. Be watching for further details.

The Sunday Bell

If you arrive after the 9:00 am or 11:00 am services have begun you may find the doors locked for security purposes. If you don't remember the code to get in the main entrance you can ring the "Sunday Bell" located on the east (main) and north church doors. An usher will be right there to let you in.

Greetings to you all!

I'm giving honor to Almighty God today. I'm mighty thankful for God's love and guidance every day. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name!" Psalm 103:1

I have certainly enjoyed working with the Praise Team and Choir in 2018. What wonderful, talented and committed people! As we continue in 2019, my prayer is that we all honor God in the music and that the music is helpful to you.

I am sharing some links to songs from YouTube that I have enjoyed, and I hope they are helpful to you throughout this new year:

"Every Praise"

<https://youtu.be/UuuZMg6NVeA>

"Thy Word"

<https://youtu.be/FS1LAc5DSCU>

"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

<https://youtu.be/auqX3LYwswk>

A friendly reminder of hand bells team practice on Wednesdays from 4-5 pm starting up again January 2, 2019; Praise Team practice on Thursday afternoons at 2:30 pm and 8 am Sunday mornings; choir practice at 7 pm on Thursday evenings and 10:15 am on Sunday mornings. You are welcome to join us. A big thanks to all the singers, ringers, accompanists, instrumentalists, technicians!

Blessings to you throughout this new year!
 Sincerely,

Anita Blueford

Music Director

First United Methodist Church of Battle Creek, Michigan

Martha Circle Report

At the December meeting, The Martha Circle enjoyed delicious cookie treats “before” putting together cookie and treat trays for our home-bound friends. This is usually a very well organized event by Jeanne Winer. I don’t think that she knew she would be ill and hospitalized when she did all the preparations for this event. So in her absence we were able to pull off the task, thanks to her organization and love of this event. We missed her that day. Hopefully she will back in the thick of things soon. Get well Jeanne.

Martha Schedule:

January 9, 2019: Sojourner Truth Institute, Kimberly Holley speaker
 February 13, 2019: Red Cross, Karen Wosje speaker
 March 13, 2019: Charitable Union Project, Tammy
 April 10, 2019: Hospital Tray Favor Project, Judy Brown
 May 8, 2019: “Out to lunch” ☺

The Martha Circle meets the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 9:30 am and is open to all women of the church.

WELCOME TO NEW AND RETURNING MEMBERS OF THE STAFF-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE! FUMC of Battle Creek is delighted that you have chosen to serve God and our church family in this way. Any time you need to contact Anne Stagner, feel free. Her home phone number is 963-5711 and her cell phone number is 209-7164. E-mail address is at.stags@comcast.net. SPRC meets on the third Tuesday of most months. The schedule for 2019 is as follows:

January 15	August 20
February 19	September 17
March 19	October 15
April 16	November 19
May – no meeting	December - No meeting
June 18	We meet at church at 7:00 pm.
July 16	See you in January!

January Happenings at First Church

Church and Society information can be found on the bulletin boards in the atrium.

WEEKLY EVENTS	SMALL GROUPS
Sunday 9:00 am Praise Worship 11:00 am Traditional Worship Tuesday 10:45 am Staff Meeting Thursday 2:30 pm Praise Team Rehearsal 7:00 pm Choir Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Book Group: n/a GIFT Group: Tuesday Tues., Jan. 15: 6:00 pm Martha Circle: Wednesday, Jan. 9, 9:30 am Sojourner Truth Institute Speaker NorthPointe Woods Ministry: Sun. Jan. 6, 1:00 pm Partners in Prayer: Monday Jan. 7: 7:00 pm: Mary Dolbee’s Jan. 21: 7:00 pm Kathy Rizer’s
COMMITTEE MEETINGS	
Worship Team 01/08 7:00 pm Finance 01/08 7:00 pm Trustees 01/09 6:30 pm Staff Parish 01/15 7:00 pm Service Team 01/16 10:00 am Church Council 01/22 7:00 pm Pancake Breakfast 01/13 10:00 am	

There is a new adult Bible Study/ educational opportunity that will be launching Wednesday, January 16th. It will be taking place at Trinity UMC from 11:00 am to Noon on Wednesdays. It will be led by area United Methodist Clergy and called *The Foundry*, after John Wesley’s Foundry Center in London. Come for enrichment.

The office and building will be closed on
 Monday, December 31,
 Tuesday, January 1, and
 Wednesday, January 2.



Rev. Linda Farmer-Lewis

Howard Thurman, pastor and theologian, wrote, “When the song of the angel is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the princes are home and the shepherds are back with their flocks...the work of Christmas begins.”

Our work, our purpose as human beings, and as Christ’s church is multifaceted: to turn the jewel of God’s love and grace in Jesus Christ to refract the light of Christ onto the world-our world, our homes, our nation and planet. We are here to shine the light of Christ on human need, to shine the light of God’s love on human loneliness and distress, to shine the light of truth on lies and deception, to shine the grace of inclusion onto the fear mongers who demonize others. In short, we are here to resist evil and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves, as our baptismal vows say.

Those vows may be tested in the new year ahead. The undermining of our American institutions and the rule of law have vast implications for us, our nation, our world and our planet. We may be at a tipping point where the principles and norms that have guided us in the past hang in the balance. Thurman continued his essay, the work continues to bind up the broken, feed the hungry, release the prisoner and make music in the heart; the work of justice and joy. This work we do cannot be limited to the sphere of the spiritual as if the social were not the center of God’s concern. The spiritual is social, and has everything to do with how we live our lives, make priorities and vote. This is not about political parties, it is about human rights and defending the planet, the work of Christmas.

Let us, therefore, be a people equipped to respond to pick up the song, search out the star, and bind up the broken that the work of Christmas can bring us all joy!

Looking forward to a new year of ministry with you!
Pastor Linda

Looking ahead

MLK Pulpit Exchange January 20

As part of the larger celebration for Martin Luther King Jr. Day, will have Dr. Andrew Holtz switching pulpits with Pastor Linda Farmer-Lewis for, at least the 11:00, if not both, while Pastor Linda preaches 11:30 at Washington Heights. Several city churches are participating in this exciting cultural exchange. Welcome Dr. Holtz to be among us!

Special Sunday January 27

“Let Art Inspire your Heart”- a celebration of the importance of art in our lives and faith.

February 3

Rev. Sandy Gastian and Rev. David Morton will be with us in worship to celebrate with the Wesleyan Covenant Service. Sandy is a retired local pastor and former member of First. David is a retired elder formerly of Maple UMC. He has also served as an interim Pastor twice at First UMC.

Thank you!!

To our Staff Parish Relations Committee, Martha Circle and to all our congregation, from Bill and I, and our entire staff, thank you for the overwhelmingly generous gift you gave us all for Christmas, in addition to the wonderful sweets and cookies. We all very much appreciated everything and more than that, we appreciate all of you who are such a joy to serve with. We are blessed!

Ministry Shares

We have paid our 2018 Greater Southwest District Ministry Shares, but not our conference. Any who would like to contribute to our Michigan Conference Ministry Shares would be appreciated.