

Pastor Jodie's Jottings ...

Greetings!

We're already through the first month of the new year! And with February comes the beginning of Lent! We don't celebrate Lent like we do Advent. We don't put up a Lent tree or decorate our homes with Lenten lights. I suppose it's not that sort of season. Lent is a much more somber season as we wait and prepare for the joy of Jesus' resurrection. But I firmly believe that our Easter joy will not be as fulfilling if we haven't walked steadfastly through the days of Lent and the worship of Holy Week.

Our culture also doesn't embrace Lent like it does Thanksgiving or Christmas. We live in a world that celebrates success not sacrifice. As you shop local stores, you'll see an abundance of bunnies, baskets, and candy for sale, and those may be the only signs of Easter you'll find outside of church.

However, just because we're not seeing ad after ad about Easter, not receiving Easter ads doesn't mean we should consider Easter as a minor celebration. Easter is perhaps the most crucial holiday on the Christian calendar—even the word "crucial" has its roots in Christianity, stemming from the term for crucify.

Give some thought and prayer as to how you will observe Lent this year. Maybe you will continue a practice of "giving something up" for Lent or maybe consider adding something like new volunteering experiences, more reading of scripture (during Lent we will be sending out daily scripture readings via email, our website and Facebook as we did during Advent), joining our Disciple Bible Study, donating to the Love Cupboard, or taking an ornament(s) from our "Caring Tree" in Wesley Chapel.

Just to note that we will begin the Lenten season on Ash Wednesday, February 14 with worship at noon. If you are working and can come on your lunch hour, the service will end by 12:45pm.

I look forward to journeying through Lent with you for the first time as your pastor.

Blessings and Prayers, Pastor Jodie

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CONSIDER GIVING TO THE MEMORIAL FUND

When a loved one dies, keeping his or her memory alive is a way of honoring his or her life and finding comfort in your own life as a survivor. Consider contributing a gift to your church's Memorial Fund as a tribute to someone you loved or have known.

Memorials November 18, 2023 - January 15, 2024

In honor of Mary McKissick Brooks

Given by Rev. Bill McCartney "This gift is designed to: Remember my wonderful years in Clarion. Support the ongoing ministry of the church. Honor Mary Brooks, extraordinary organist for 55 years."

In memory of Douglas Rhoads

Given by Donna Woodman (Memorial Fund)

In memory of Johanna Grottenthaler

Given by Sheila Rathfon (Love Cupboard Fund) Given by Susan Rathfon (Love Cupboard Fund) Given by Clarion Oaks Ladies Golf League (Love Cupboard Fund)

In memory of Sheila Uber

Given by David and Robin Wagner (Memorial Fund)

Our deepest sympathies go out to Ray and Janne Ewing on the loss of Janne's brother, **Gib Sloan**. Gib passed from this life on December 23.



Our deepest sympathies go out to Barb and Lynn Smith on the loss of Barb's mother, **Evelyn Towse**. Evelyn passed from this life on December 14.

Please call the church office for an address if you wish to send your prayers and cards.

Thank you so much for donating items for the Love Cupboard Winter Care Bags. Kids2Kids packed 70 Winter Care Bags for the children of our Love Cupboard participants. They were VERY appreciated! Kids 2Kids

My sincere thanks for the many cards and prayers for me while I was ill. After six months in Presbyterian and Shadyside Hospitals and a couple rehab facilities, I am finally in my home again. Thank you, Shirley Markle

First United Methodist Church of Clarion

Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors

Shawn and Jennifer Morgan would like to thank everyone at First United Methodist Church of Clarion for your prayers over the last couple months.

Trailblazers Class, Sending a belated thank you note to the lovely class. It was very thoughtful and appreciated from all of you. I am running late with my thank you note. I am recovering over the Covid. Have a wonderful and healthy 2024. Thanks to all. Carolyn Frampton

Kids2Kids,

What a wonderful surprise. I thank you for the beautiful poinsettia. It is in my front window and doing beautiful. You are a thoughtful group of children. Hope you all had a lovely Christmas. Thank you all. Carolyn Frampton

Dear Church, I can hardly express the love and support I have felt from all of you. Thank you for everything. Love, Mary Jo Ford

Thank you very much for letting us use the church to work on our Smokey Bear posters. Enclosed is a small donation. Rosie Lawrence Garden Club of Clarion County, District VIII

The Trailblazers Sunday School class will be having a **soup sale on February 18**. Homemade soup is always welcome through the winter months and we are giving you two options to purchase. You can preorder or take a chance that we will have a good variety available on February 18 after each worship service. **All preorders must be submitted to the church office no later than February 11**.

Each quart is \$8 or \$4 per pint.

Flavors: pepper, vegetable, chicken noodle, broccoli cheese, potato, and broccoli cheese noodle

Olmsted Manor Retreat in April

Our church will hold a weekend retreat at Olmsted Manor Retreat Center from **April 12 – 14**. Surrounded by Western Pennsylvania's beautiful hills and valleys near Ludlow, Olmsted offers a quiet place

for spiritual reflection, worship, and peace.

The theme of the retreat is *Loving Our Neighbor*. Pastor Jodie will lead the program. Guest speakers will be announced.

The cost for two nights (Friday & Saturday) for a single room is \$119.88 with tax.

Two nights for a double room is \$99.90 with tax.

Three meals will be provided:

- Saturday: brunch (\$12) and dinner (\$17)
- Sunday: brunch (\$12)
- Total cost for three meals is \$41 per person.

To make a reservation, contact our church office and make your payment payable to the church. There is a maximum of twenty-four guests for this weekend retreat, so we recommend that you make reservations early.

Additional information will be shared as plans develop.



Mark your calendars for the next bus trip to Sight and Sound's production of

Daniel

October 9, 2024

Taken from his people, Daniel is exiled far from home in the powerful kingdom of Babylon. Now this faithful servant must navigate his new life inside a palace filled with golden statues and shifting empires. As royal pressures mount, Daniel is faced with a dangerous choice. Will his trust in the one true God remain steadfast through every test of faith? From the fiery furnace to the infamous den of lions, Daniel is a spectacular theatrical experience. Witness one of the Bible's most hope-filled stories as it comes to life in this brand new original stage production.

This trip will also include a stop at Kitchen Kettle Village and dinner (included) at Miller's Smorgasbord.



Pizza and a Movie: *David* Friday, March 8 Gathering Area

Pizza served at 5:30pm Movie at 6:00pm Reservations by Wednesday, March 6, please.

Not every battle is won with a sword. Master Poet. Fearless Warrior. Anointed King. From still waters to shadowed valleys, David's ascent to the throne is filled with towering giants, wild animals, and Philistine soldiers. After unprecedented victories lead to devastating failures, this passionate warrior will face the biggest battle of all: the one within himself. Come alongside this young shepherd on his journey to become a man after God's own heart. With original music inspired by the Psalms, witness one of the most legendary Bible stories.

2024 Fellowship Events at First United Methodist Church of Clarion, PA Mark your calendars and plan time to fellowship with your FUMC family. There will be additional events added throughout the year!		
March 8	Pizza and a Movie: <i>David</i>	
July 10	Wednesday Evening in the Garden	
August 14	Wednesday Evening in the Garden	
August 25	Rally Day/Church Picnic	
September 11	Wednesday Evening in the Garden	
October 9	Trip to Sight and Sound Theater to see Daniel	

First United Methodist Church of Clarion

Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors

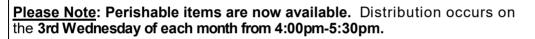
Love Cupboard Food Pantry

A quote from our partners: "Second Harvest Food Bank has partnership with over 131 food wholesalers, manufacturers, retail stores, restaurants, and farmers across our 11 counties. We work together to recover high quality foods that would otherwise go to waste and distribute it to our neighbors facing food insecurity." Without our relationship and partnering with Second Harvest, we would not be able to share the variety of goods with our friends in need. We do have to subsidize items from our local suppliers to maintain the variety and nourishment that we have committed to.

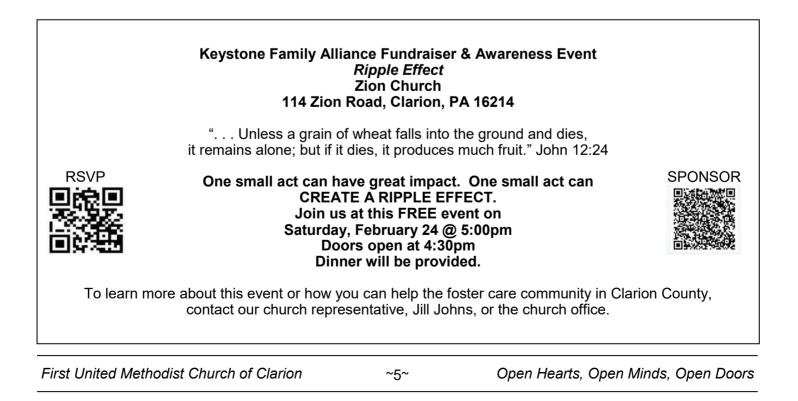
The following is an overview of the purchase we received in January from our partners. We received ³/₄ ton of shelf stable items, frozen perishables, and fresh perishables to share with our friends and neighbors in February. In addition, we received 40+ units to support our newest endeavor of Senior Food Boxes. This delivery amounts to another 1200lb of food for eligible seniors 60 years and older. Yes, we are talking about a lot of grocery goods. We will supplement locally another 500-600lbs. Goods going to the needy of our community will reach 3000 to 4000lbs of food in February. Are you envisioning how much that would cost? Because of our relationship with Second Harvest and their grants and subsidies, we will have a cost of less than \$600.

Again, I want to thank you for your volunteering support, financial support, and administrative support. In December, we had combined distributions of 130 visitors, which meant approximately 260 household members benefited from our program. January has been lighter with about a 25% decrease. Weather and school being closed had a major impact on the results. Want to get involved???? Just call the church office and say, "Count me in."

The donation item for the month of **February** is **CANNED FRUIT**. Please place your donations in the wooden box located in the Gathering Area.







<u>February 1</u> Lynne Flower Bret Sloan

February 2 Madison Schill

February 3 Paulette Stromyer Joe Wolf

February 4 Wayne Johnson

<u>February 5</u> Cindy Beck Fred Keen Nicholas Wetzel

February 6 Robert Luderer

<u>February 7</u> Myrna Eshbaugh Linda Hauser Quinn Hoover Ava Kiser Brendan Langjahr

February 9 Tobin Bell Lyra Casserly Valerie Stanford Jenn Stevenson

February 10 Tricia McIlwain Soon Duk Park



<u>February 11</u> Elizabeth Casserly

February 12 Stuart Estes Randall Reddinger Sr. Carol Stanford Patty Winger

<u>February 13</u> Makayla Robertson

<u>February 15</u> Brandy Evans Susan Zamzow

<u>February 16</u> Kai Kaltenbach Noah Thompson

February 17 Vallen Cherico William Craddock Corina Curry Suzan Hahnfeldt Evelyn Lerch Jake Lutz Wendy Rex February 18 Randy Cathcart

February 20 Kelly Evans Nathan Keen

<u>February 22</u> Valerie Brosius Timothy Texter

February 23 Judi Rae Kesner Sandra McCleary Larry Nicely Randall Shook Kara Shpakoff

February 25 Amy Brubaker Amelia Jewell

February 26 Kim Fagley Pamela Johnson Candace Shirey Valerie Stitt <u>February 27</u> Eliana Brooks Larissa Deitz Richard Greenawalt Marjorie McAdoo Adam Meterko Gwen Rhoades

First United Methodist Church of Clarion

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Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors

Saturday February 3, 2024

9:00am	Church Cleanup Day		
5:00pm	Youth Group Dinner and Movie Night		
	(Room 001)		

Sunday February 4, 2024

9:45amGrades 9-12 - Cook & Eat Avocado Toast11:00amChildren's Chimes Practice6:30pmYouth Group Meeting (Room 001)

Monday February 5, 2024

5:30pm Kiwanis (Room 102) 6:30pm Stephen Ministry Class (Room 004)

Tuesday February 6, 2024

4:00pmGirl Scouts (Dining Room/Kitchen)6:30pmChristian Education Meeting
(Conference Room - 2nd Floor)6:30pmTrustees Meeting (Room 102)

Wednesday February 7, 2024

5:00pm Stephen Ministers Meeting (Stephen Ministry Room)

Thursday February 8, 2024

12:00pm United Women in Faith Naomi Circle (Room 102) 2:00pm Clarion Civic Group (Room 102)

Saturday February 10, 2024

8:00am Men's Breakfast (Perkins Restaurant)

Sunday February 11, 2024

Trailblazers Soup Sale Preorder Deadline

No Community Choir Practice 11:00am Kids2Kids Mission Group (K - 5th Grade)

Monday February 12, 2024

6:30pm Stephen Ministry Class (Room 004)

Wednesday February 14, 2024

Ash Wednesday

6:45am Youth Group Breakfast 12:00pm Ash Wednesday Service (Sanctuary)

Saturday February 17, 2024

9:00am Stephen Ministry Class (Room 004)

Sunday February 18, 2024

Trailblazers Soup Sale (Gathering Area)

Monday February 19, 2024

9:30am	Disciple Fast Track - New Testament
	Bible Study (Room 102)
12:30pm	Boy Scouts Troop 51
•	Merit Badge Award Ceremony (Dining Room)
5:30pm	Kiwanis (Room 102)
6:30pm	United Women in Faith - Ruth Circle
•	(Conference Room - 2nd Floor)

Tuesday February 20, 2024

4:00pm Girl Scouts (Various Rooms) 6:30pm Finance Committee Meeting (Room 102)

Wednesday February 21, 2024

Love Cupboard Food Pantry
Stephen Ministers Meeting
(Stephen Ministry Room)
Disciple Fast Track - New Testament
Bible Study (Room 102)

Thursday February 22, 2024

10:00am	Second Harvest Delivery
10:45am	Senior Food Box Pickup

Sunday February 25, 2024

11:00am	Arts and Crafts (K - 5th Grade)
6:30pm	Youth Group Meeting (Room 001)

Monday February 26, 2024

8:30am	Women's Fellowship Breakfast
	(Perkins Restaurant)
9:30am	Disciple Fast Track - New Testament
	Bible Study (Room 102)

Wednesday February 28, 2024

6:30pm Disciple Fast Track - New Testament Bible Study (Room 102)

Regular and Weekly Meetings

<u>Sunday</u>		<u>Wednesda</u>	Ι <u>Υ</u>
8:30am	Worship Service	8:00am	Journey for Men (Room 102)
	(Sanctuary, YouTube)	1:15pm	Recovery 'n Motion (Dining Room)
9:45am	Sunday School for All Ages	6:30pm	The Messengers Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
11:00am	Contemporary Service (Sanctuary, YouTube)		
6:00pm	Community Choir Rehearsal (Wesley Chapel)	<u>Thursday</u>	
		6:30pm	Chancel Choir Practice (Choir Room)
<u>Monday</u>		6:30pm	Cub Scouts Pack 51 (Various Rooms)
5:30pm	Adult Bell Choir Practice (Balcony)	6:45pm	NA Setup (Room 102)
6:30pm	Boy Scouts Troop 51 (Various Rooms)	8:00pm	NA Group (Room 102)
		Friday	
		9:00am	Sit 'n Stitch (Room 102)

All dates are subject to change. Please check the website for current schedule.

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Disciple Bible Study is Returning!

We will be resuming Disciple Bible Study (this time in the New Testament) in February. Classes will meet on Monday mornings at 9:30am beginning on **February 19** and on Wednesday evenings at 6:30pm beginning on **February 21.** The classes will once again run for 12 weeks. According to their schedule, participants can move between the Monday and Wednesday classes. Everyone is welcome and invited! You do not have to have participated in the fall Bible Study to join us! You can also join us via Zoom. **The deadline to sign up is Sunday, February 11** in the church office. The cost of the study book is \$18.

Mission Bucket Kickoff: A Lenten Project Sponsored by the Mission Team

To commemorate Lent, the Mission Team will be collecting items to fill 75 cleaning buckets for the Mission Barn in New Castle. Beginning Ash Wednesday, February 14, requests for specific items will be made to Sunday School classes and our fellow church groups. A list of needed items will be posted at several locations in the church.

The collection drive will run through Tuesday, March 19, followed by a day trip to volunteer at the Mission Barn on Wednesday, March 20. On that day, from 10:00am - 2:00pm, we will deliver the buckets, assemble kits, and build ramp modules.

All are invited to volunteer. The new facility in New Castle can accommodate up to 20 volunteers at a time. There are tasks for all ages from 5 up.

Come check out **Sit 'n Stitch** on **Friday mornings** from 9:00 to 11:00am in room 102. It's a fun fellowship time to work on your own crafting project or work on a requested project. Anybody is welcome to join.



The **American Cancer Society's Daffodil Days** fundraising campaign is returning for 2024. Help us fight cancer by supporting our Daffodil Days program. Each bunch purchased supports our life-saving work. Give Daffodils. Give Hope. Place your order today!

• Orders due by February 13

Delivery week of March 18

For a \$12 donation, an individual will receive one bunch (10) of beautiful, fresh cut daffodils.

For a \$15 donation, an individual will receive a bunch of mini daffodils in a pot.

For a \$15 donation, someone will receive a bunch (10) of colorful tulips.

For a \$25 donation, instead of receiving flowers, you can support the Gift of Hope program where volunteers deliver daffodils to local hospitals or nursing homes.

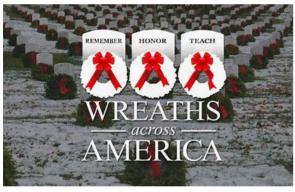
Place your order online at https://tinyurl.com/ddclarioncounty or by calling the church office (814-226-6660).

First United Methodist Church of Clarion



The Youth Group of First United Methodist Church of Clarion is a ministry for all youth ages 12 (7th grade) - 18 (senior year). We welcome church members and their friends to join our ministry. If you are interested in joining our Youth Group, please contact the Youth Director at youthdirector@fumc-clarion.org.

Date	Event	Place	Starting Time	Ending Time
3 February	Dinner/Movie Night	Applebee's/ Youth Room at Church	5:00pm	Approx. 9:00pm
4 February	Regular Meeting	Youth Room at Church	6:30pm	8:00pm
11 February	No Youth Group			
14 February	Breakfast	County Seat	6:45am	7:45am
18 February	No Youth Group			
25 February	Regular Meeting	Youth Room at Church	6:30pm	8:00pm



A big thank you to everyone who purchased a wreath for Wreaths Across America. The Youth Group raised \$365. We had 73 purchased wreaths and 38 matching wreaths. We will be participating again in 2024. Information will be available in the next month. Stay tuned for details.

Calling ALL Youth! Please join us the first Sunday of each month for our **Youth Breakfast** (9:45) and attend the 11:00 worship service afterwards.

Kids' Club

February's Fruit of the Spirit Word of the Month is L♥VE!
Please join us each Sunday during the 11:00 worship hour to learn about putting Love in Action.
February 4: Kids stay in worship or attend Bells/Chimes. Please pick up an Activity Bag from Wesley Chapel and return it after the service.
February 11: Kids2Kids
February 18: Library Time
February 25: Arts & Crafts Time

First United Methodist Church of Clarion

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December 2023 Finance at a Glance			
General Budget	Receipts	Expenditures	
Forecast	\$54,320	\$37,537	
Actual	\$55,431	\$35,745	

Our newsletter in December stated that we had soft offerings in the fall of 2023 and we needed a good finish in December. That did happen and the early weeks of January are showing good promise of receipts exceeding our forecast. We did finish 2023 with a shortfall in receipts. Each of us needs to examine our stewardship commitment to ensure all programs and church expenses are covered. Carry on, faithful and committed congregation.

Donations are Needed for a Mission Project

Choose an ornament from the "Caring Tree" in Wesley Chapel to help a new Mom care for her baby. Items are being collected to donate to Next Step, the pregnancy care center in Clarion that provides support and services for women facing unintended pregnancy, new mothers, and babies. Each ornament lists a needed item, which can be purchased and placed in the box next to the tree. The donation drive, which is co-sponsored by the United Women in Faith and the Mission Team, **runs through February 15**.

<u>Saturday Men's Breakfast</u>

We will be meeting again at Perkins on **Saturday, February 10** at **8:00am**. If you like to eat, talk, laugh or just get out of the house, you are welcome to join us. The more the merrier!

Some Upcoming Dates for Clarion's United Women in Faith

Women's Breakfast

The United Women in Faith will be having our next meeting at **Perkins** on **Monday, February 26** at **8:30am**. We start with some short readings on fellowship, after which we will have a wonderful meal and great conversation. Come and enjoy the fun! **EVERYONE is welcome!**

Our monthly circle meetings are as follows: Naomi Circle - Will meet on Thursday, February 8 at noon. Ruth Circle - Will meet on Monday, February 19 at 6:30pm.

The Northeastern Jurisdiction United Women in Faith **quadrennial meeting** will be held in Providence, RI, **April 19-21, 2024**. Great speakers, music, and fellowship with other United Women in Faith. Come join us. There's still time to register. Visit our website at nejuwfaith.org for more information or talk to Mary Brooks.

All women are invited to attend any and all of these meetings to learn more about the mission work of the United Women in Faith.

For more information, contact Mary Brooks, Karen Vandermeer, or Mary Jo Ford.

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Friends of the Music Ministry and members of the Chancel Choir,

The choir will begin practice for our Easter presentation on **Thursday, February 1** at 7:15pm in the choir room after practice. Everyone is welcome to participate in rehearsals for **John Rutter's** *Requiem*. We will be presenting the piece at both services on Palm Sunday, March 24. I hope to see you there! Sincerely,

Randy Bowser, Director of Music

New Church Office Management and Hours

Beginning in January 2024 the church will begin a new office management process to support the changing needs of the church and to facilitate the transition to new staffing of the office with the consolidated position of Operations and Technical Administrator* to be filled by Darren Mackenzie. In advance, Pastor Jodie, Staff Parish Relations, and the Church Council want to ensure the congregation is aware of the changes that will be taking place.

The goal of the new office management process is to provide the congregation and community improved access to resources and care by increasing the use of communication technologies, which will also enable staff to complete project-based tasks that further our ministry. In order to meet this goal, a significant change will be a modification of church office hours as follows.

Important Change:

 <u>New hours for the church office beginning January 2024</u>: Monday - Thursday, 8:30am - 2:30pm; the office will be closed on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. Persons who have needs that require assistance outside of these hours are asked to contact the church office to make arrangements.

Note: Pastor Jodie and the church leadership are committed to monitoring the effectiveness of these changes during the following weeks and months. If you have questions, please contact the church office, Pastor Jodie, Howard Rhoades, or Bill Bailey.

* The Operations and Technical Administrator position is a consolidation of the previous Administrative Assistant and Director of Communications and Technology positions.

A part-time position open in our church—Director of Christian Education

This part-time and paid position *averages* ten hours a week. This position was formerly held by Marlene Steiner. Initially retiring from teaching, Marlene found being director of education an ideal way to do something meaningful while serving her church. This opportunity is great for a person of faith who would enjoy sharing the gift of our faith with others, while also learning more themselves! Although you are welcome to help teach, teaching is not required. This position is primarily a coordinating and equipping position. You would work with and be assisted by the Education Committee of our church and our Church Council. You would assist and help lead the Education Committee and our teachers in setting up the programs of Sunday School, Adult Education, and Vacation Bible School.

One of the key areas would be helping to identify and select study topics and curriculums, and help our teaching staff understand the curriculum strengths. You do not need to be a member of our church in order to apply. Feel free to share this opportunity and refer quality people our way. If interested, inquire through the office or contact Mr. Bill Bailey, chair of Staff Parish Relations Committee (our committee for paid personnel).

Staff Opening—Lead Nursery Coordinator

Our Staff Parish Relations Committee is now taking applications from those interested in the position. The nursery, for infants and children through the age of 4, is open on Sunday mornings and on some special occasions. Those interested are encouraged to ask for a Job Description. Clearances are required before starting this job. Staff Parish thanks Carrah Campbell for serving so capably as interim coordinator.

First United Methodist Church of Clarion



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

600 Wood Street · Clarion, PA 16214 · 814-226-6660 www.fumc-clarion.org Email: communications@fumc-clarion.org RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED Nonprofit Org Auto U.S. Postage Paid Permit #139 Clarion, PA 16214

Newsletters and Pastor Jodie's sermons are now available online for you to view, listen to, and/or download. If you prefer to receive your newsletter by email instead of print, or if you have any questions, suggestions or information for our website, please email Darren Mackenzie at churchoffice@fumc-clarion.org.

PLEASE NOTE "MAILER" SCHEDULE

Upcoming Mailers: Items for the March newsletter need to be submitted by Thursday, February 15. Thank you!

To submit information: If you would like to submit information for the mailer, please contact the church office at 814-226-6660 or by email to churchoffice@fumc-clarion.org.

The **Adult Bell Choir** is looking for a few more ringers to join in on making a joyful noise unto the Lord. If you would like to ring or learn how to ring, please contact the church office or see one of the ringers. We meet **Monday evenings** from 5:30 - 6:30pm in the bell room behind the balcony.

Acolytes and Liturgists

If you would like to be an acolyte at our 8:30 or 11:00 worship service or a liturgist at our 8:30 service, notify the church office with a date and time.



HOSPITALIZED? If you or a family member is going to be placed in the hospital, or have upcoming surgery, please notify the church office so that the church and pastor may come and minister to you. You may call the church office at 226-6660.

First United Methodist Church of Clarion

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