



NEWS from the Corner



First United Methodist Church—600 Wood Street, Clarion, PA 16214

Online at: fumc-clarion.org

August 2023 Edition

Worship Services

Sunday mornings
8:30 and 11:00am

Sunday School

9:45am
Classes for all ages

Live Stream

Both services streamed
live on YouTube
11:00am on 94.1FM

Rally Day & Church Picnic Sunday, August 27 Eagle's Pavilion

Full details on page 5



News from the Corner - August 2023

Memorials May 16, 2023 – June 9, 2023

In memory of Robert Murphy

Given by Briana Hawkins (Memorial Fund)

In memory of Pat Houben

Given by Mrs. Henry Aaron (Memorial Fund)

Given by Nancy Curll (Memorial Fund)

Given by Ruth Gochnauer (Memorial Fund)

Given by Cinthia Hays (Memorial Fund)

Given by Carol Leas (Memorial Fund)

Given by Shimmel siblings (Technology Fund)

Given by Janet Wetzel (Memorial Fund)

Given by Wayne Wright (Memorial Fund)

In memory of Rev. LeRoy Jones

Given by Tom and Becky Miller (Memorial Fund)

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.



Our deepest sympathies go out to the Eileen Heasley family on the loss of her son, **James B. "Jim" Heasley**. Jim passed from this life on May 15.



Our deepest sympathies go out to the Houben and Cope families on the loss of their mother, **Pat Houben**. Pat joined our congregation on November 12, 2006 and passed from this life on May 28.



Our deepest sympathies go out to Margie McAdoo on the loss of her sister, **Myra Jean Weaver**. Myra Jean passed from this life on June 5.



Our deepest sympathies go out to Dirk and Karen Vandermeer and their families on the loss of Karen's father, **Rev. W. LeRoy Jones**. Rev. Jones served our congregation from 1979-1987. He passed from this life on June 17, 2023.



Our deepest sympathies go out to the Harding family on the loss of their mother, **Janet Harding Ruslavage**. Jan joined our congregation on February 8, 1987 and passed from this life on June 24, 2023.

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

News from the Corner - August 2023

Thank you all so much for the birthday cards and the cards throughout the year. They mean so much to me.
Raymond McBride

Dear Friends,

We have made it safely to our new home. Whew! Such a rush. Summer mission work camp started June 25 in the parsonage backyard, rebuilding the new garage. The same day was also our closing for our new home. The very next day with work camp in full swing in the backyard, the movers came and moved us out the front yard! Since then we have been in home setup and unpack mode. Lynne and I wish to thank you all. During our four years in Clarion we made so many new friends and memories. Our retirement reception on June 4 was so special, thoughtful . . . lovingly overwhelming. We received a significant financial gift many of you contributed to, which will help offset some of our moving costs. We also received a number of other thoughtful gifts and a great number of cards with personal notes. All of these we cherish. Thank you so much, but thank you especially for being whom you are, each of you special, each of you irreplaceable.

Since the newsletter also is posted on the website, the office tries to be careful not to publish personal addresses and phone numbers, but we have left our information in the church office where you can easily obtain it.

We look forward to future days. We have learned already that there is no telling when and where paths cross again, but each time they do is a delight. We look forward to those times when we see you again, be it in Washington or Clarion, or some chance meeting in some corner of our amazing world. You have blessed us richly. Thank you, thank you. May you continue to be similarly blessed.

John and Lynne Flower

On behalf of my family, I would like to thank everyone for your prayers and support when our father died. Clarion meant so much to him and my mother. You welcomed us back in 1979 and continue to treat us like family to this day.

Thank you,

Karen and Dirk Vandermeer, Leslie and David Helfgott, Denise and Curt Brosius

Dear VBS Volunteers,

Thank you for the amazing week my daughter had!

Your efforts from the lessons, pictures, music and amazing decorations are so appreciated!

God bless,

Heather & Emmie Larson

To my friends at FUMC,

Thank you so much for all the cards, notes and prayers which you sent me when I fractured my femur. I could feel the presence of everyone's prayers. I'm healing up quietly at home.

Blessings,

Kathy Murphy

To the ladies and gentlemen who served the food after Pat Houben's funeral:

Thank you for your generous service in making food for our family and friends of my grandma. It really helped us and was a nice time and remembrance of her.

Gratefully,

Anna (Houben) Johnson

Dear Pastor John & congregation,

I just wanted to thank you for the beautiful Bible you gifted me upon graduation. I will use it to continue to grow in my faith, and spread the Love of Jesus in my new endeavors as an occupational therapist. I cannot thank you all enough for the continued love and support you have given me through these past five years I spent in college. I so looked forward to my care packages from my Church Family.

Pastor John, I wish you the best of luck in retirement, and thank you all so much again. As the Scripture on the inside cover suggests, I will use His Word as a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path Psalm 119:105

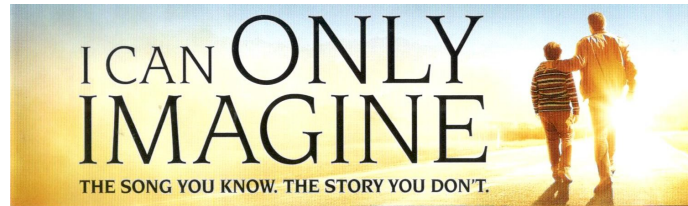
With love,

Sydney Kiser

News from the Corner - August 2023

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH CONGREGATION

A big THANK YOU to the congregation for financial support, help with planning, and volunteer labor provided for three projects that have been completed: a new parsonage garage, a new parsonage patio, and replacement of the Memory Garden wall, shrubs, and flowers. Also, thanks to the Youth Group for their help with the garage project.
Trustee Committee



**Pizza and a Movie: *I Can Only Imagine*
Friday, August 18** in the Gathering Area

Pizza served at 5:30pm

Movie at 6:00pm

This film is the inspiring true story behind the hit song, "I Can Only Imagine." Running from a troubled home and a broken relationship, Bart Millard found escape in music. Hitting the road in a decrepit tour bus, Bart and his band set out on an amazing journey none of them could ever have imagined. This uplifting, music-filled movie beautifully illustrates the power of forgiveness and God's love.

Reservations by August 16, please.

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.

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.



**Bus Trip to Sight and Sound Production of *Miracle of Christmas* and National Christmas Center
Tuesday, November 14**

The trip includes Fullington motor coach transportation, theater ticket, museum ticket, and noon meal at the River House Grill.

Cost: \$205 to \$275

At least 25 people are required for this trip to happen. Costs will go down if larger numbers of people attend; you will receive a refund from the church for the difference.

Final day for reservations and payment: September 8

Please submit a check for the full amount made payable to First United Methodist Church of Clarion, marking the payment for the Miracle of Christmas Trip. Include names and phone numbers for each person in the reservation. If the trip has to be canceled, you will receive a full refund from the church.

Rally Day and Church Picnic Celebration

Sunday, August 27

Eagle's Pavilion

The church picnic will be held together with the annual Rally Day celebration. It will be the kickoff for a new year of worshipping and learning together. We hope that everyone will plan to attend this re-gathering of our church family for a time of worship, fellowship, and good food.

The schedule for the day will be:

8:30am - Worship service in the sanctuary

10:00am - All children, youth, and adults are invited to gather with their Sunday School teachers for an activity, fellowship, and planning time at the Eagle's Pavilion.

11:00am - Worship service at the pavilion

12:15pm - Picnic lunch

Remainder of afternoon - Children are invited to enjoy time together at the playground, while adults enjoy a time of fellowship.

Lunch Menu: Roast chicken, Italian meatballs, macaroni and cheese, baked beans, potato salad, watermelon, rolls, dessert, and beverage

A donation will be requested to offset costs.

Handicap accessible parking and restroom facilities are located at the pavilion.

Reservations will be necessary by Monday, August 21. Please make your reservation online or call the church office at 226-6660. We will need to know the number of adults, the number of children and their ages, and if a ride is requested.

We hope to see everyone at the picnic!

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, August 28 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 will begin again in September.

Thursday, September 14 - Naomi Circle (the second Thursday of each month at noon)

Monday, September 18 - Ruth Circle (the third Monday of each month at 6:30pm)

The annual meetings for the district and conference:

Saturday, September 23 - Franklin District UWFaith Annual Meeting

Saturday, October 21 - Western PA Conference UWFaith Annual Meeting

The Northeastern Jurisdiction quadrennial meeting next spring:

April 19 – 21, 2024 in Providence, Rhode Island

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.



Birthdays of the Month

August 2

Lon Fiscus
Kierstin Krepps
Leslie Latour
Addison Lyle

August 3

Gretchen Porter
David Valimont
Katie Wolbert

August 4

Phillip Kiser
Logan Kuriger
Tom Nale

August 5

David Cyphert, Sr.
Chong Min Park
Bonnie Stehle

August 7

Scott Allen

August 8

Sarah Kuehn

August 9

Robert Gourley
Luke Gulnac
Matthew Luderer
Brenda Schierberl

August 10

Brian Reitz
Alice Saxman

August 11

Kelley Beck
Jason Brinkley
Luke Gulnac
Adam Kiser
Barbara Runyan
Alexander Sciandra
Dirk Vandermeer

August 12

Jayne Daugherty
Kenton Porter

August 13

Zachary Austin
Briana Hawkins
Gabriella Texter
Pastor Nancy Zahn

August 14

Madelyn Danko
Eileen Heasley

August 15

Olivia Swartzfager

August 16

Crystal Anderson
James Mays, Jr.
Gabriella Wagner

August 17

Ameleigha Hilyer
Donna Lewis
Mary Shaffer

August 18

David Boyles
Michele Howard
Mark Pasquarette

August 19

Avery Fenstermaker
Janie Reynolds

August 20

Jeremy Lechner
Karen McElree
Bill Mills

August 21

Mary Brooks
Riley Carrol
Cathy Chuculate
Mimi Vowinckel

August 22

Bill Franklin
Clifford Himes
Libby Stolzenbach

August 23

Jovie Grabigel
Caralyn Stevenson

August 24

Jessica Funk
Brayden Meterko

August 25

Carter Brooks
Connie Hale
Jean Zamzow

August 26

Leianna Krupnik
Janina Jolley
Courtney Lyle
Arrington Pollock

August 27

Lacie Lewis
Howard Rhoades

August 28

Jason Kiser
Merle Wetzel
Christy Wolbert

August 29

William Glasser, Jr.

August 30

Piper Hoover
Brady Texter

August 31

James Fagley
Sam Mahle
Riley Robertson
Darlene Slaughaupt

DISCIPLE BIBLE STUDY WILL BEGIN IN SEPTEMBER

Would you like to understand scripture better, be more committed to reading your Bible, and have the opportunity to discuss and learn from each other? Then Disciple Bible Study is for you! There will be two identical classes, one on Wednesday evenings starting at 6:30pm and another on Thursday mornings beginning at 10:00am. Each session will last from 1 hour to 1 1/2 hours. Feel free to attend either session and to switch back and forth depending on your schedule. We will be studying the Old Testament for this first session which **will begin on September 20 and 21** and finish on November 29 and 30. **Please sign up no later than September 5** by calling the church office, so that we can order enough books. The cost of the book will be determined closer to the date. If you have any questions, check with Pastor Jodie.

News from the Corner - August 2023

New Members Welcomed to First United Methodist Church of Clarion

Ten new members have officially been welcomed into the family of believers at First United Methodist Church of Clarion.

By transfer from United Methodist Churches:



Zachary Covington
transferring from
Sugar Creek UMC



Tammy Richko
transferring from
Reynoldsville UMC



Dawn Williams
transferring from
Zion UMC, Brookville



Tyler D. Beatty
transferring from
Zion UMC, Brookville

Rebecca Hope Emigh
transferring from
DuBois First UMC

Joyce Startzell
transferring from
Brookville Evangelical
UMC



Alice M. Saxman
transferring from
Kingsville UMC

By Charge Conference Relationship:



Rev. Loye Startzell



Rev. John Uhrin

Rev. William P. Saxman

The **College Outreach Program** will be starting up with the 2023 fall semester. Our goal is to connect with our young adults who are:

- ◆ attending school outside of Clarion
- ◆ attending PennWest University and living in a dorm/apartment or at home
- ◆ serving in the military

We send holiday cards, gift cards, devotional materials, and boxes of snacks throughout the school year. If you would like your young adult to be in our program, please send the following information to the church office:

- ◆ name of student
- ◆ school name and address or military address
- ◆ birthdate
- ◆ any food allergies

News from the Corner - August 2023

Hi Kids!

I am looking forward to getting to know you and to be your pastor. I hope to see you in August. We will be blessing your backpacks as you get ready to go back to school. And on Rally Day, we'll have lots of fun and games and get ready for Sunday School.

I can't wait!

Pastor Jodie

2023-2024 Academic Year: Children's Program

All children in grades K-12!

Blessing of the Backpacks, Sunday, August 20 at both worship services.

ATTENTION ALL KIDS GOING BACK TO SCHOOL! - Preschool through High School

Ready or not, school will soon be starting up for a new year and at First United Methodist Church of Clarion we want to send you to school with our prayers and good wishes. On August 20, at the 8:30am and 11:00am Worship services, please bring your backpack that you will be carrying to school so that we can pray for you and bless your backpack and give you some things to get the school year off right. We will also be recognizing and covering in prayer all teachers, bus drivers, and school staff. If you have any questions, please call the church office or speak to Pastor Jodie.

Rally Day is Sunday, August 27: Please join us for Rally Day for fun, fellowship, and an opportunity to meet your classmates and teacher team!

Sunday School will begin on **September 10**, 9:45am – 10:45am

We have a great teacher team eager to meet with you to share God's teachings!

Grades K-5 will meet in room 203.

Grades 6-12 will meet in the tower room.

These classes may be split further as our enrollment grows.

11:00 Worship Hour Children's Time Schedule: (Grades K-5)

We will be exploring the Fruit of the Spirit this year in our 11:00 Children's Time.

- **Week One:** Children will stay in worship, communion
- **Week Two:** Kids2Kids Mission Group
- **Week Three:** Library Time
- **Week Four:** Arts and Crafts

Opportunities for Teens: (Grades 6-12)

We have lots of opportunities for our youth to serve and shine Jesus' light!

Some activities include:

- **Nursery Helper** (Sign up for one Sunday a month)
- **Kids2Kids Helper** (Meets the second week of every month)
- **Library Time Helper** (Meets the third week of every month)
- **Love Cupboard**—Help with setting up, unloading, packing, assisting clients, and/or registration (Meets the third Wednesday of every month)

It is wonderful to help with these mission opportunities . . . and it looks great on your college/work applications!

Please contact the church office (814-226-6660) for more information or to sign up for these mission opportunities.

Spot the Differences in Jesus Fed the People

Compare the picture on the left with the picture on right. Circle the 12 things that are different.



Kids2Kids

Kids2Kids is our mission group for children in grades K-5th grade. Students in grades 6-12 are also welcome and encouraged to assist with these efforts. We meet the second Sunday of each month.

The children learn about global and local missions and how they can shine Jesus' light on those around them. Our focus for the 2023-2024 academic year is The Fruit of the Spirit.

In the month of September, as one of our activities, Kids2Kids will be preparing Love Cupboard Back-to-School care packages. Specifically, these will be distributed to those families with children through age 12 and ages 13-18. We encourage and would be grateful for your donations for this effort.

At the last tally, we are supporting families that total 60+ younger children and 20+ teens.

Please consider donating the following items to the Kids2Kids donations box located in the Gathering Area or making a monetary donation to the church office:

- Crayola 24-count crayons
- 12-count colored pencils
- 12-count markers
- 8x11 spiral notebooks
- Pencils
- Fruit Snacks (individually packaged)
- Crackers (individually packaged)
- Cookies (individually packaged)
- Stickers

We plan to also include items for "Winter Treat" and "Summer Fun" care packages!

Our Kids2Kids Mission Program could not be successful without the support of our congregation. Thank you for your support!

"Three Summer Projects" Update

In late spring – early summer, we asked you to support the “Three Summer Projects” that were planned and coordinated by our Trustees. Sufficient funds were received and designated for these lofty endeavors. Let us give you an overview of the progress and success of each.

1. **Memory Garden**—We contracted out the removal of the old railroad tie wall and large border shrubbery adjacent to the alley behind the church. It was successfully replaced with a Versa Lock masonry wall. Proper drainage was installed to prevent the wall from pushing out and deteriorating. At the conclusion of contractor work, the garden volunteers started their planning and implementing upgrades. This work included proper amounts of topsoil and mulch being brought in as well as weeding and removal of unacceptable foliage. Once completed, new shrubs were planted. There was also a realignment of perennial plants and attractive flora was added. The goal became planting foliage that had heights that were acceptable to the layout and terrain of the garden. After many hours of labor, the first-year garden is pleasingly acceptable to the eye and controllable to the volunteers as we move forward to its enjoyment. Our first reception was held in it on July 12. Go out to see the ambience and comfort of our Memory Garden.

2. **Parsonage Patio**—The existing patio was deteriorated and causing water penetration to the foundation of the parsonage. Downspout rain water drainage was rerouted and proper slope of cement patio was corrected when it was poured. Topsoil was sloped and grass was planted to enhance the usage and attractiveness of the patio. In the process of this upgrade it was identified that the back porch also needed to be upgraded with low maintenance materials. Planning and the work were started and completed on this “add on” part with the labor of church staff and volunteers. It included rebuilding the steps, laying new carpet, wrapping the posts with aluminum, a new vinyl handrail, and trim work. Our pastor and their family and guests will enjoy this addition for many decades to come.

3. **Parsonage Garage**—Volunteers worked to remove reusable materials before the garage was demolished and hauled to disposal grounds. Excavating was completed for footer installation and cement blocks were laid followed by gravel base, plastic vapor barrier, wire mesh and proper finish cement floor with floor drain and sealed to protect long-term quality of cement finish. Building materials were planned, cost was projected, and the materials were preordered for the startup of our summer Youth Work Camp. Approximately 25 different youth and adult volunteers successfully completed the structure—24 x 32 garage and storage utility room. Its design has a maintenance free approach to each possible part of it. It is also designed to enhance and match the presentation of the parsonage. As of this writing we have one major item we are waiting for a contractor to finish—the cement driveway from the alley to the garage. Once completed, it will have a properly installed fence to allow for privacy and pet safety. Solar lighting with motion detector was installed at the rear of the garage. LED lighting invites you into a wired garage assembly inside. Each garage door is assembled with a car controlled door opener. Additionally, we have installed a six foot utility room door to take larger equipment into the backyard area. As many of you know, this new garage is a replacement to an old carriage garage. Our new facility enhances its usage and value to our parsonage.



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Tuesday August 1, 2023

6:30pm Christian Education Meeting (Room 102)

Sunday August 6, 2023

1:00pm Visitation for Jesse McKee

3:00pm Jesse McKee Funeral

Monday August 7, 2023

5:30pm Kiwanis (Room 102)

6:30pm Worship Committee
(Conference Room – 2nd Floor)

Tuesday August 8, 2023

6:30pm Trustees Meeting (Room 102)

6:30pm SPRC (Conference Room – 2nd Floor)

Wednesday August 9, 2023

5:00pm Stephen Ministers Meeting

5:30pm Garden Social (Memory Garden)

Tuesday August 15, 2023

2:00pm Fellowship Committee Meeting
(Gathering Area)

6:30pm Finance Committee Meeting (Room 102)

Wednesday August 16, 2023

4:00pm Love Cupboard Food Pantry

Friday August 18, 2023

5:30pm Pizza & Movie Night
(Gathering Area)

Sunday August 20, 2023

Blessing of the Backpacks at both Worship services

Monday August 21, 2023

6:30pm United Women in Faith - Ruth Circle
(Conference Room - 2nd Floor)

Tuesday August 22, 2023

6:30pm Missions & Outreach Meeting (Room 102)

Wednesday August 23, 2023

5:00pm Stephen Ministers Meeting

Thursday August 24, 2023

10:00am Second Harvest Delivery

Saturday August 26, 2023

Rally Day Preparation (Kitchen)

Sunday August 27, 2023

11:00am Rally Day/Church Picnic (Eagle's Pavilion)

Community Choir Picnic (TBA)

Youth Group Back-to-School Picnic (TBA)

Monday August 28, 2023

8:30am Women's Fellowship Group
(Perkins Restaurant)

Thursday August 31, 2023

6:00pm Music Department Picnic
(Memory Garden)

Regular and Weekly Meetings

Sunday

8:30am Worship Service
(Sanctuary, YouTube)

9:45am Adult Sunday School Classes

11:00am Contemporary Service (Sanctuary,
1300AM, 94.1FM, YouTube)

Wednesday

8:00am Journey for Men (Room 102)

12:30pm Worship Service (Wesley Chapel)

1:15pm Recovery 'n Motion (Dining Room)

6:30pm The Messengers Rehearsal (Sanctuary)

Thursday

6:45pm NA Setup (Room 102)

8:00pm NA Group (Room 102)

Friday

9:00am Sit 'n Stitch (Room 102)

Saturday

7:30pm Alcoholics Anonymous (Room 004)

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

News from the Corner - August 2023

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 most recently held by Marlene Steiner, who retired a year ago. Initially retiring from teaching, Marlene found being director of education to be 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.

As you all may have noticed over the past few years, the Chancel Choir's numbers have reduced for various reasons. We consider ourselves as a Christian Church Family. If you have the joy and ability to sing, we invite you to join our family in the fall. Our church year will begin with a picnic in late August, and then with practices on Thursday nights starting in September. If you are not quite sure about this commitment, come and try us out. We would love to have your voice in our group.

Your servant in Christ,
Randy Bowser, Director of Music

During worship on Sunday, June 4 Pastor John delivered his **one minute retirement speech** that was later heard during the meeting of Annual Conference. In it Pastor John gave thanks and also shared some of the things he had learned in ministry. Following that service, we received several requests asking for a written version. Here it is:



In 1983 I was blessed to be called by the Spirit of God from my home church, Christ Bethel Park, and have since served the Methodist people of the following churches: Edinburg and Hillsville, Titusville First, Speers and Dunlevy, Armagh, New Brighton, Freedom Ligonier Heritage, and Clarion First.

I learned: Pray devoutly, love God, love God's people, there is but ONE God, trust and obey, don't linger in whispers and shadows . . . hold the light of God, God desires relationship with everyone. Not all are open to God.

The Holy Scriptures ARE the Word of God—Christ came to fulfill God's Word.

The Holy Spirit is the living presence in real world, real life, real time.

Miracles happen every day—awake! Count your blessings.

Be born again. Preach Christ until you HAVE Christ. Then preach Christ BECAUSE you have Christ.

Each is appointed to a church AND a community to proclaim and serve God's word. Seminary helps; Spirit filled laity of even small churches nurture and teach as much.

We are one in the Spirit, equal before God, lay, clergy, bishop alike. Each called, each gifted, each serves, each answers before God.

I am so blessed by my companions in ministry, Lynne, Andrew and Heather, each of whom teach me about life in the Spirit and forgiveness.

Soon I lay my preaching robe aside, cherished because of the call, friends made, miracles witnessed.

I entrust you to your Spiritual calling, your spiritual paths.

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Love Cupboard Food Pantry

The donation item for the month of **August** is **All Purpose Cleaner**. Please place your donations in the wooden box located in the Gathering Area.

Please Note: Perishable items are now available. Distribution occurs on the **3rd Wednesday** of each month from **4:00pm-5:30pm**.



	Number of families returning	Number of new families visiting
Children up to age 17	33	4
Adults age 18 - 59	94	14
Seniors age 60+	39	2
Total Family Members	166	20

The Missions Team Hosted Two Speakers at Their May 30th Meeting

A primary objective moving into the second half of 2023 is to increase our outreach and participation in the community. So, the Missions Team was fortunate to have Brenda Smathers present the broad range of activities and programs offered to seniors by the Clarion Area Agency on Aging, an organization that we support with donations.

Since 1979 the agency has assisted seniors in ways that enable them to stay in their own homes. These include personal care supervision, adult day care, caregiver support, help in purchasing medical equipment, and home safety modifications to name but a few of the services described in Brenda's presentation.

The second presenter of the evening was Blair Moses Kamanga, a United Methodist missionary serving as the agriculture coordinator in Mozambique, a coastal country in Southeast Africa. The Missions Team met with Mr. Kamanga for a live conversation in real time despite a difference of seven time zones and over 8,000 miles. He spoke of training local farmers in planning and methods to improve their farms and produce. He described his work with war refugees to teach them farming techniques that put food on their tables and improved their ability in agricultural production. His commitment to helping refugees began in his native Malawi, a country bordering Mozambique. Mr. Kamanga told of how refugees begged for leftover garden vegetables, and how, as a result, he requested a small piece of land to produce and share vegetables. His current refugee program grew from that beginning.

Donations are needed to support Mr. Kamanga's work, which earlier this year was impacted by the devastation of Cyclone Freddy, the longest-lasting and most powerful tropical cyclone ever recorded worldwide. If you would like to donate to Mr. Kamanga's ministry, there are a couple ways to do so. The key is to provide Blair Moses Kamanga's name and his Global Ministries Advance # 3022588.

By phone — call 888-252-6174 to make a gift.

By church giving — make check payable to our church. Include the same memo line as above and drop the gift in the offering plate or give it to our church financial secretary, Dave Hauser.

The Youth Group continues to support our local **Wreaths Across America** in December 2023. It is not too early to sponsor a wreath. Please go directly to our page <https://www.wreathsacrossamerica.org/pages/163866> and sponsor a wreath in honor or memory of someone or make a general donation for those veterans who do not have a direct sponsor. The wreaths are \$17 each. The Youth Group earns \$5 for every wreath sold. Order forms are also available in the Church Office. So far this year we have sponsored seventy-nine wreaths (including matching wreaths) and have earned \$205. You will support two great causes in one transaction. If you have questions, please email Shelly Rhoades at youthdirector@fumc-clarion.org.

June 2023 Finance at a Glance

General Budget	Receipts	Expenditures
Forecast	\$29,996	\$33,541
Actual	\$28,310	\$30,995

A NOTE FROM YOUR FINANCE COMMITTEE

Although this is the 4th straight month that income for current expenses has fallen short of budgeted expectations, we managed to remain on our budget projections for the year. Our expenses have been below budgeted projections, which is good. Bills come in throughout the year, however, some of which are considerable (e.g., taxes, insurance, maintenance contracts). You are to be commended in fully subscribing to the summer capital projects—the Memory Garden wall, the parsonage patio replacement, and the parsonage garage replacement. Through your stewardship of giving both monetary gifts and labor, we have completed these much needed repairs without the need to borrow. As we turn our attention to operational expenses, we can anticipate some of these yearly bills to come due. At that point, expenses will outpace income. Let's not let that happen. Please give prayerful attention to your weekly tithes and offerings. Your faithfulness has made our church strong. Christ's message will continue to be proclaimed and spread, for you are his witnesses.



LIGHTHOUSE
CONGREGATIONS

Lighthouse Congregations are local churches in the Western PA Conference that are particularly equipped to welcome anyone whose church has closed or disaffiliated and who wish to remain in the United Methodist Church. These congregations will act as a resting place for those seeking a new United Methodist faith community, with people who will care for and provide a haven of peace and grace.

Lighthouse Congregations will:

- **Provide** a welcoming place to belong during this time of grief and transition, **which might be for just a season or for a lifetime**. This includes a safe space with caring relationships, listening hearts, and unconditional love within a congregation that is confident it is remaining in the UMC.
- **Offer** ministry opportunities in which to engage—or not. There will be no pressure.
- **Organize** groups by proactively finding and connecting with individuals and groups displaced by disaffiliating churches.
- **Connect** individuals or groups with Conference and District resources to help them discern their next steps as they consider a new church home.

Whether you are an individual or a group of people who have become displaced or churchless because of closing or disaffiliation, Lighthouse Congregations will be there for you during this difficult time. As you consider what is next, specific pathways from which you may choose will continue to emerge as the Conference, Districts, and local churches come together to be the connection at its best.

If you have any questions, please email Pastor Jodie at pastor@fumc-clarion.org

The Lighthouse Congregation ministry in WPA has been adapted with thanks and gratitude from the Western North Carolina Conference and the UM Collective of North Carolina.

We love you. We care about you. We're here for you.

News from the Corner - August 2023

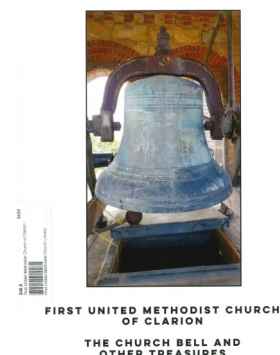
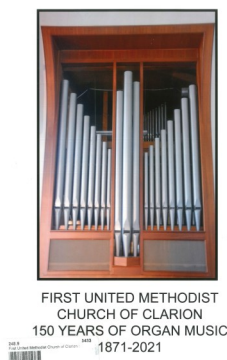
Stephen Ministers

Stephen Leaders are planning a fall class for new Stephen Ministers. If you are interested in learning more about this ministry, contact any Stephen Leader or Stephen Minister at stephenministries@fumc-clarion.org

Have You Ever Wondered?

What stories do the pictures in the stained glass windows tell?
Who made the beautiful custom kneeling cushions at the altar rail?
What is atop the church tower?
When was the Memory Garden first begun?
What do the symbols on the kneeling cushions represent?
How many pipes does the church organ have?
Where in the church can you find original 1889 stained glass windows?
How much does the church bell weigh?

For answers to these questions, and to discover many other interesting historical facts about our church, check out these four books from the church's Amy Davis Library.



Wednesday Evening in the Garden

Second Wednesday of the Month

August 9 (hosted by Trailblazers Sunday School Class)

September 13 (hosted by United Methodist Men)

5:30 – 7:00pm

Plan to attend our popular summer evening gatherings in the Memory Garden.

Greetings!

How can it be August already! July has been an exciting month for me! It has been wonderful worshipping with you and starting to learn what makes First UMC tick! By the time you read this, Jerry and I will have moved into the parsonage and we'll be official residents of Clarion. We want to thank all those who helped to build the new garage and renovate the patio. We were amazed at how quickly the work got done. Also, thank you for all the work at the parsonage, especially the chairlift which will make Jerry's life much easier. We appreciate your care, hard work and generosity.

Throughout the month of July, I have been preaching from different Gospel passages that address what it is to be a disciple of Jesus Christ; understanding this is at the heart of who we are as Christians. I look forward to growing as a disciple along with you as we deepen our spirituality and expand our outreach.

I look forward to getting to know you all better. I have been studying my directory so that I can learn your names. Please keep your church and its ministry in your prayers every day. I am blessed to be your pastor and am thankful for the ways that God orders our paths.

Peace & Joy,
Pastor Jodie



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 communications@fumc-clarion.org.

PLEASE NOTE "MAILER" SCHEDULE

Upcoming Mailers: Items for the **September newsletter** need to be submitted by **Tuesday, August 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 communications@fumc-clarion.org.



Alert! Members and staff of the church have, on an ongoing and random basis, been receiving fraudulent requests by both email and text message. These scam requests are allegedly from our pastor, another staff member, our bishop, or some other known leader asking people to buy gift cards or send money for some seemingly good purpose. Because any one of these church members indicates that he or she is "so busy," these fake emails/text messages instruct you not to call the office or contact the sender of the email/text.

THIS IS A SCAM. Don't **EVER** do what these scammers request of you. Do **NOT** even respond to the criminal. Just delete these messages. If in doubt, telephone the church office.



Any items for the **Samaritan's Purse—Operation Christmas Child "Shoebbox"** ministry will be accepted at any time.

Also, monetary donations to help with shipping costs will be accepted at any time. Please clearly mark a monetary donation for shipping as "shoebboxes postage" and place it in the offering plate or drop it off at the church office.

Thank you for your support.



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.