

During my sermon last Sunday, I shared with you that the West Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church has launched a new initiative called Lighthouse Congregations. First United Methodist Church has been asked by our Conference Leadership to consider being a part of this initiative to become a Lighthouse Congregation. At our Leadership Team meeting (Administrative Council) in July the decision was made to explore this initiative more and possibly taking the necessary steps in becoming a Lighthouse Congregation.

Below you will find a brief explanation of a Lighthouse Congregation, the expectations associated with a Lighthouse Congregation, and how you can be a part of this initiative if we choose to become a Lighthouse Congregation.

### **What are Lighthouse Congregations**

Lighthouse Congregations are local United Methodist Churches in the West Virginia Conference that are **particularly equipped** to welcome anyone whose church has closed or separated, and those who are not currently connected to a local faith community, to connect with their congregation. These congregations will act as a resting place for those seeking a United Methodist faith community, with people who will care for and provide a safe haven of peace and grace.

### **How are Lighthouse Congregations equipped to welcome people**

Lighthouse Congregations focus their efforts in being a welcoming place through radical hospitality. This initiative is expressed throughout their facilities, the congregation, the pastor, and the leadership's attitude and behavior. Training and assessments conducted will intentionally improve a congregation's welcoming and hospitality with people who have no religious affiliation or are disenfranchised with organized religion for one reason or another. In addition, Lighthouse Congregations learn how to improve their welcoming and hospitality with people with disabilities or all types and ages and their families. *This initiative is not a way to bolster membership.*

### **What are the expectations of a Lighthouse Congregation**

Provide a welcoming place for people to engage for a season or a lifetime. This includes a safe space with caring relationships, listening hearts, and unconditional love within the congregation. Offer ministry opportunities in which to engage – or not.

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Worship- provide passionate worship opportunities (in-person and online) that are intentionally designed with a first-time guest in mind. Discipleship- have in place or be in the process of creating an intentional faith development process.

Mission/Service- inviting current members and others connected to engage in risk-taking mission and service opportunities.

Organize groups by proactively finding and connecting with individuals and families who are not currently connected to any local faith community.

Connect individuals and families with District, Conference, and UM denominational resources to help them discern their next steps as a consider a new church home.

Assess the church and congregation's current level of hospitality and welcoming of first-time guests, people with no religious affiliation or background, those who may have been hurt by the church, and people with disabilities – and create a plan of action to improve wherever the church is today with the goal of becoming a true congregation of radical hospitality.

Complete all required steps and training and take the initiative to keep up-to-date with any changes or additions to the Lighthouse Congregation process.

I am excited to explore this initiative with you and invite you to consider how you can be a part of this initiative through our hospitality ministry and/or by serving as a part of the Lighthouse Team if we choose to become a part of this initiative. I will share more with you after our initial exploration of this initiative in August. Until then, join me by praying that God will use this initiative to draw people to a place of peace and safe haven.

Grace and Peace,

*Pastor Mike*

### **Local Food Pantries**

Mustard Seed: M, Tu, Th, Fr, 11a-3pm, 444 E Pike St. Clarksburg.

Our Daily Bread: Mon.- Sat. Must Call 304-476-1434, Kelly Miller Bldg. Clarksburg

Salvation Army: Tu.-Fr. Must Call 304-622-2360, 1010 S. Chestnut St. Clarksburg

Stealey-Duff St. UMC: Tuesdays 9:30am—1pm, 400 Duff St. Clarksburg

North View UMC: Thursdays 2-4 pm, 1320 N. 19th St. Clarksburg

Progressive Women's Assoc.: Thursday 1-4 pm, 304 Washington Ave. Clarksburg

Shepherd's Corner: Tu-Th 10 am-2pm, 19 Pennsylvania Ave. Bridgeport

### **Job Hunting?**

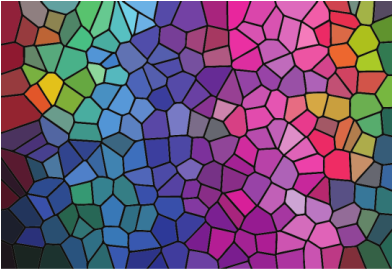
Consider WorkForce West Virginia  
152 West Main Street, Ste B.  
Clarksburg, WV  
Email: [workforceclarksburg@wv.gov](mailto:workforceclarksburg@wv.gov)

Duff Street UMC is hosting a

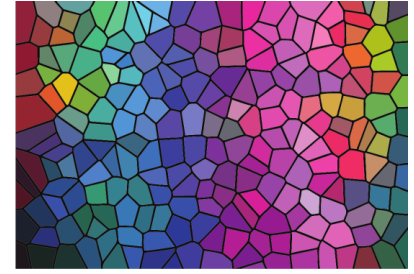
### **BACK TO SCHOOL BASH**

**Sun. August 18th, 6-7:30 PM**

School Supplies, Backpacks,  
Live music and Ice Cream



What is happening at our  
..... **CHURCH** .....  
this month



MONTHLY FELLOWSHIP

**Monastic Meal**

A simple weekly meal, eaten in silence as inspirational literature is read aloud. Join us at 12:15 p.m. each Tuesday in the parlor. Meal donation is \$4.00. To learn more, contact Don Gardner.

**Prayer Shawl Ministry**

Every Thursday from 5 to 6 p.m., a group gathers in the groom's room to knit or crochet shawls for those who may need the loving embrace of the church. Contact Nancy Ferber or Cheryl Moorhead for information.

**Feed My Sheep**

3rd Mondays of each month (August 19) at 12:00 (noon)  
This ministry welcomes to the table those who might be overlooked or rejected. Food donations are appreciated! Contact Anita Burns for more details.

**First United Methodist Church  
Women's Luncheon**

3rd Thursday of each month  
12:00 (noon) in the parlor.  
Please contact Shirley Murphy for more information 513-600-8469

MEETINGS

**SPRC** will meet **August 6** at 6 p.m.

**Trustees** will meet **not meet in August**

**Finance** will meet **August 20** at 5 p.m.

**Outreach** will meet **August 20** at 5 p.m.

**Council** will meet **August 20** at 6 p.m.

If you know of an upcoming meeting or event that you would like to have featured in next month's newsletters please email Leah at CFUMC@citynet.net or call the church office.

**Look for Youth Group information on the calendar page**

First UMC  
**Rummage Sale**  
Save The Date | October 4-5  
*Rummage item collection begins now!*  
contact Anita Burns for questions

connect with us



WWW.CFUMC.ORG



cfumc@citynet.net



Like us on Facebook:  
First United Methodist Church – Clarksburg



scan the QR Code with your mobile phone for easy access to our Facebook and YouTube accounts



YouTube: First United Methodist Church – Clarksburg





# F.U.M.C NEWS

& Announcements

## Camp Firelight VBS 2024

After months of planning, First Church kicked off a 3 day VBS event on July 10-12th called Camp Firelight. Campers attended 6 different activity stations throughout the building. Stations included Recreation, lead by Renea Payne and Mathew Wray; Crafts, lead by Tammy Matheny and Teresa Gouer; Science, lead by Madison & Alex Stout and Bob Skidmore; Music, lead by Don Gardner; Snack, lead by Sherri Shank and Mary Seti; Missions, lead by Deacon Anna Troy and a time for reflection lead by Pastor Michael Atkinson, Shelley Spellman and Candy Atkinson. Over the course of 3 days, 43 children attended VBS. Campers were split into 3 age groups; 3-4 year olds (17 of them) lead by Erin Collins, Sami Mikolon and Candy Atkinson, with help from many volunteers! 5-7 year olds lead by Suzie Faris, Korey Mikolon and Shelley Spellman; 8-12 year olds lead by Pastor Michael and Catherine Preston. Campers and Volunteers began the evening enjoying camping style food in the parking lot before heading to the Sanctuary for the opening assembly. The



building was full of energy, laughter, excitement and a little bit of messy fun! Highlights from VBS included the worms used for the mission project, making oobleck in science, kayak races in recreation, the keepsakes created in crafts and all the many wonderful treats at snack. Campers heard 3 timeless bible stories that reminded us that even when we are afraid, we should put our trust in God. (Psalm 56:3) Special thanks to all of the volunteers listed above, as well as Dinah Hannah, Meredith Seibert, Dottie Lowe, Lisa Thrush, David Conway, Jeff Spellman, Kelley Burd-Huss, First Church members who prayed, donated and helped in even the littlest of ways... and last but certainly not least THE YOUTH GROUP! Jackson, Launa, Audra, Kate, Leah, Sophia, Riley, Julian, Mischa, Gianna.

Whenever I'm Afraid, Lord; I Put My Trust In You—Psalm 56:3

# A Note from the Lay Leader

-----Don Gardner

*Grace and peace to you and yours...*

*It is great to see so many new folks joining us in worship these days! Nearly all of them are here because one of you invited them, though a few have come out of a desire to be a part of a church that does ministry and worship the way we do. If you haven't been here on Sunday morning for a while, come back!*

*Some of you may be attending other churches these days. If so, please call or email us (see below for contact info) to let us know. Though I would hope to see you here at First UMC, I do understand that you may be praising God elsewhere. But, wherever you worship, may God's love bless and keep you!*

[304-623-3397](tel:304-623-3397) or [cfumc@citynet.net](mailto:cfumc@citynet.net)

## MUSIC AT FIRST CHURCH



Chancel Choir (youth and adults)

Handbell Choir

Men's Ensemble

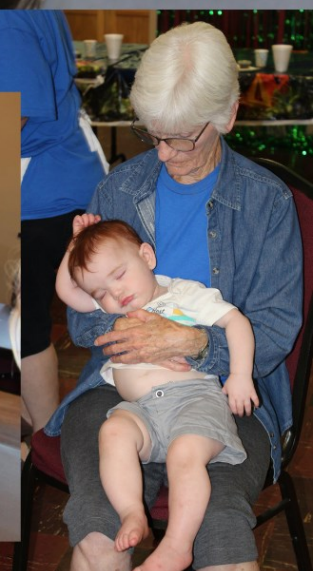
Children's Choir (in process!)

HeartSong



Guest Musicians --- Special Worship --- Community Events

If you would like more information, contact Don Gardner at 304-669-3417.



## We are excited to announce the assignment of our new bishop,

**Rev. Dr. Debra Wallace-Padgett**, who will lead the West Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church.

The West Virginia Conference will share Bishop Wallace-Padgett with the Holston Conference from the Southeastern Jurisdiction. We are optimistic about the potential for enhanced collaboration and the sharing of resources and ideas across jurisdictions, which will undoubtedly enrich our ministry and mission efforts. We extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to Bishop Wallace-Padgett as she steps into this important role, bringing her unique gifts, vision, and dedication to our Conference. We eagerly anticipate the new season of growth and ministry under her leadership.



At this significant juncture, we also express our deepest gratitude to Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball for her exemplary leadership and unwavering commitment over the past 12 years. As we transition to this new chapter, we look forward to the continued advancement of our shared mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Please join us in offering your prayers, support, and encouragement to Bishop Wallace-Padgett as she begins her ministry with us. Let us also continue to hold Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball in our hearts, celebrating her remarkable legacy and the profound impact she has had on our Conference.

*Read the full story at [www.wvumc.org](http://www.wvumc.org)*

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## Time to start preparing for the 2025 school year

**August 11th** we will begin collecting food items for Nutterfort Elementary's Food Backpack Program.

We will prepare bags on the *2nd Sunday* of each month.



### Food Items Needed:

**easy to open**

- \*snacks
- \*ravioli/spaghetti o's
- \*mac and cheese cups
- \*chips/crackers
- \*fruit cups

*other kid friendly lunchbox items*

**Distribution will begin in September! Let's start now!**



**We are pleased to announce that Sammi Mikolon and Catherine Preston** have taken on leadership roles with the Children's Church program at First Church. Sammi and Catherine have been working with children during the 10:45 a.m. Worship service. Children are invited to go upstairs (2nd floor) after Children's moments where they will do a lesson, crafts and enjoy a snack during the worship service. Sammi and Catherine are creating lessons that go along with Sunday's sermon and scripture lesson. **Join us in congratulating and thanking them for all of their creativity and effort put in to children's church!**

# Church Office Hours

Tuesday 9-1, Wednesday 9-1, Thursday 9-1

SCAN  
HERE!



Paper forms available  
upon request

## First United Methodist Church Directory Update

Please help us update our church directory. For new attendees AND for those who have been with us for years, we ask that everyone fill out a contact form.

**HOW TO:** Using your mobile phone camera scan the QR code to the left of this text. A link to the form will appear in your mobile search browser. A separate form will need to be filled out for each adult member of your family. *One* family member will be responsible for adding your children's information if applicable.

If you need help, please ask  
Leah or Pastor Michael



## Community Rewards



Scan the QR Code or go to  
[www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards](http://www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards)  
for step by step instructions. If you need assistance setting this up  
contact Leah Wray during office hours.



Children's Church *every* Sunday  
after children's moments during the 10:45 worship service

Infant Care Available



To include your news in next month's newsletter, contact Leah Wray