



# The Ambassador

July 2022

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## From the Pastor

Dear Friends,

Grace and peace to you! My family and I are so excited to be here and to be serving God with you! Boxes are everywhere in my office and I do not know where most things are but this has not disheartened my spirit. I am looking forward to being in ministry with you!

Even though my excitement is bubbling, I paused in writing the greeting 'Dear Friends' because I realize that it may seem a bit presumptuous. You do not know me yet, so how can we identify as friends? Rev. Wagner was with you for 10 years and as I write this letter, I have yet to be here 10 days. You have so many memories with him and we have little to no shared experiences to date.

As adults we may have prerequisites for friendship such as shared experiences, alignment of values, or a number of things. Children do not have such requirements. A child can meet someone new at the playground or library and immediately offer the title of friend. I love to witness such acts of kindness and generosity. How welcoming it is to have someone call you friend.

But I appeal to your friendship not as a request for childlike faith, which is reserved for God, but because of what happens at the communion table. Even though we have yet to be in the same

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## Contact Us

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## Worship With Us

Online & In Person  
Worship @10:30 am  
Sunday School @ 9

In Person & Online  
Bible Studies  
@ 10 am Wednesdays and  
@ 6 pm Thursdays

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physical location during worship on a communion Sunday, we have shared the same communion table. It is not our communion table but Jesus' and whenever we accept his invitation to it, we communion with Christians in all places and throughout all time. In the communion liturgy, we pray to be 'one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world.' (Pastor Daniel has a great article about unity in the newsletter this month!)

I can call you friends because we are united in Christ. Every time we have celebrated communion together, we have had a shared experience. And I am looking forward to increasing our shared experiences and deepening our friendship as we serve side by side.

I am humbled and honored that I have been asked to serve First United Methodist Church. As I begin my time of serving here I realize that transitions take time and they are challenging for both pastor and congregation. Let us extend each other grace and kindness as we learn each other's ways. Let us be curious and open as we learn each other's stories. And let us be receptive to learning and growing in God's grace together.

By the end of the summer, I look forward to having met and had conversation with each of you. Friends, please know that I am lifting you in prayer and holding you in my heart.

Peace,  
Pastor Kim



# Music and Worship Notes *by Mary Ellen Clinard*



Those who are new to Methodism may have been startled by this practice we have of moving ministers after several years of church leadership at one church. But for those of us who have been United Methodists for a long time know that this is the “norm” for us. As an active life long United Methodist, I’ve been through many ministers and have come to see this transitional time as one of joy and discovery.

I have enjoyed getting to know what Pastor Kim finds meaningful for worship. We’ve had a couple of pleasant surprises when we discovered a song that the choir had just learned to sing with the Bartlett UMC Youth Choir was one of her favorites, and that the anthem planned for her first Sunday was something she was familiar with.

Working with our new Associate Pastor, Daniel, has also been enjoyable—searching for songs for him to play on guitar or on drums that will help bring our Anglo congregation and Corazones Ardientes congregation together for meaningful worship for both groups. It’s been interesting to learn that many of our traditional hymn texts are also favorites in Hispanic worship, although they may be sung in a different style or tempo.

Keep our Music Ministry in your prayers as we seek not to replace or lay aside our traditional music, but instead seek to “draw the circle wider” to discover and include new songs to sing for the Kingdom of God.



## **SUMMER CHOIR**

The choir's Summer Schedule starts in July. We will be working on singing as a Women's Ensemble one Sunday and will continue to sing anthems each Sunday although with limited rehearsals during the week. In September, we will start back with our regular rehearsal schedule.

## A Note from Rev. Daniel Cardenas, Associate Pastor

From the very beginning of the church, we can see its main characteristic: *Unity*. Luke, in the Book of Acts, shows us the power of unity within the Body of Christ; let's take a look at the text.

Acts 2:42-47 displays a picture of this new-born church. First of all, they were devoted to the apostle's teaching so they read and reflected on the Scriptures, that is to say, the communion and the fellowship were sprouting from what God said through the prophets, the psalms, Moses and of course, Jesus, the Living Word of God.

Second, the text says to us about this community that they shared bread and ate together, and they offered in love and devotion their possessions to divide the money and split it between all the church members because they wanted to give to anyone who had need. At lastly, they were gathered together to praise God and enjoy His presence along with the prayers, worship, and communion.

This text is very amazing and wonderful to us because it shows us the importance of unity, love, and fellowship. These people rounded up to hear God's will, to share food, clothes, and maybe money to give to the poor, and also, they worshiped in unity to the One and Only Almighty God, and that, my brothers and sisters, is the real miracle. However, above all, the most important thing was that God was adding daily to this community those who were being saved. Is this not beautiful? It is the church that works for unity, giving, and sharing, God blesses with a growing church.

Dear brothers and sisters, facing change is a big challenge, but by working together toward the goal, we can reach more and more people with more love, more compassion, and more grace. When we do this, I am sure that God will provide not only people to this great congregation but also all that we need.

So let's work together; let's be thankful for the adventures from the past, they taught us a lot. But today, we have a new opportunity for change and transformation. Let's ask and pray for strength, wisdom, and courage to keep going and to fulfill our duty as a church: to spread the Gospel of God.

Pray with me:

Heavenly Father, we thank you for all the things that you have given us in the past, all the wonderful adventures that you have let us share and live, but today, we ask you for your blessing over our new pastor, give her your love and grace to lead us, but also, give to us the humility to listen to her, obey her in love and help her whenever she needs it, in Jesus' name we pray. AMEN.

## THANK YOU!

Dear Friends,

We want to thank you for the wonderful going away party! We truly appreciate the efforts of all involved, and know it was a lot of work. We are likewise appreciative of the many gifts we've received. We have a list of all those who contributed to the love offering or in any other way, and are now writing thank you notes. It may take a while, but we'll get it done ... to be honest, it has all been a bit overwhelming! So many memories, so many feelings! Our very best wishes and thoughts go out to all of you - members and friends of FUMC, friends in the community, the staff past and present. We are excited for your future with pastors Armentrout and Cardenas.

God Bless You ALL!

John and JoAnn Wagner

## Volunteers Needed

We, as a church, believe that children are precious. We love to see them in the church. We offer the nursery so that (1)—the little ones get used to coming to church, develop socialization skills, and friendships. And (2)—so that parents can be nurtured and not worry about their little ones for 30-45 mins. We offer Jr Church as a way for PreK thru High School students to become familiar with the Bible and Jesus, and to explore what being/living as a Christian means.

Our Safe Sanctuary policy requires two volunteers in each the nursery, PreK—2nd grade, and 3rd-6th grade. This means that we need 6 volunteers a week/24 in a typical 4 Sunday month. We currently have 12 total. Our volunteer Nursery staff and Jr. Church leaders/assistants are being seriously overworked. Some of them are doing double duty (Nursery/Jr. Church) and are missing almost every service. We need more volunteers. Ideally we would like to have enough volunteers so that you would only be needed for 1 Sunday every 4-6 weeks. Most Sundays, the Nursery is only used until it's time for Jr. Church. Nursery volunteers would, potentially, be able to rejoin the congregation at that time. This summer/fall, most of the PreK—2nd grade class will transition to the 3rd-6th grade class resulting in some Sundays when the younger class would not have any attendees.

For those who would teach, we have materials for each week/lesson. Assistants do just that, assist the teacher and the students. Please give prayerful consideration to becoming a volunteer with our children. You can call the church office (513-423-4629) to volunteer or ask questions.



## **2022 First Friday Concert & Artist Series**

### **ALL AMERICAN SING-ALONG**

Join friends and family for this special First Friday event as we hear patriotic favorites and are led by Emcee Josiah Miller in singing the great songs of our Nation-- including Battle Hymn of the Republic, God Bless America, America the Beautiful, God Bless the USA, and many more!

**Friday, July 1**

**@Noon**

**First UMC-Middletown**

**Free Admission**

**masks encouraged, not required**

**Happy  
4<sup>th</sup>  
of  
July**

A graphic celebrating the 4th of July. The text 'Happy 4th of July' is written in a large, stylized font. 'Happy' is in blue, '4th' is in yellow, 'of' is in red, and 'July' is in a dark red. The text is surrounded by several colorful fireworks in red, yellow, and blue.



 **first**  
church  
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