



# The Ambassador

October 2023

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## From the Pastor

*You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God. – Colossians 1:5-6*

Dear Friends,

I love stories! The other day I was in the dentist office and noticed a beloved book from Maya's younger years, Llama, Llama, Red Pajama by Anna Dewdney. Even before I thumbed through the pages, I could remember not only the story but some of the couplets that tell the story of a little llama who is reluctant to go to bed. I was filled with memories of being cuddled up and sharing this story as a family. I showed the book to Maya, who was with me, and she smiled. I asked her if she wanted me to read it to her and even though the waiting area was mostly empty, she declined my offer. Sigh.

I like to read and by some standards I would be considered an avid reader. I am always reading something and I am always looking for book recommendations (are you reading anything good right now?) But although my 'To Be Read' list is quite long, I am also a fan of re-reading. I find that stories from my teenage years resonate with me differently as an adult and even books I have read as an adult impact me in new ways when I reread them later. Not only has my perspective changed, but I notice things that I never noticed before, I remember parts of the story that I had forgotten, and re-reading allows me the gift of savoring parts of a story that I love.

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## Worship With Us

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

In Person Spanish Speaking  
Bible Study  
@ 6 pm Wednesdays

In Person/Online Bible Study  
@ 6 pm Thursdays

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Right now in our reading a Bible in a year we are in the midst of the Gospels. I have found that reading these beloved stories of the life of Jesus have been a blessing. Usually we hear the stories of Jesus in stops and starts but one gets a completely different experience if one reads a gospel continuously. And to read all four Gospels back to back offers surprises and insights that one may not find other ways.

Even if you have not been reading with the group of folks who have been reading the Bible in a year, I would like to invite you to consider a different invitation. Beginning October 1<sup>st</sup> there are 92 days left in the year. There are 89 chapters in the four Gospels combined (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John). Consider reading a chapter a day, beginning with Matthew and working your way through. By the end of the year you will be done and who knows what insights and discoveries you may encounter!

Whether the Bible is a book where you can recite parts by heart or whether you are reading it for the first time, there is much to discover. Let the Bible inform and transform you as you engage with these holy words. Don't forget to keep our children in your prayers as they will receive Bibles on October 8<sup>th</sup>. May we show them by example how to love God's word

Peace,  
Pastor Kim <><

### **Blessing of the Bibles**

On Sunday, October 8<sup>th</sup> we will be giving age-specific Bibles to all of our children who are moving from one developmental age to the next. We are so excited! When we baptize children we ask parents and sponsors to promise to nurture their children in the church. We as a church promise to surround the children with Christian community and provide families with the resources they need to help children become disciples of Jesus Christ. That is a lot of responsibility which we gladly accept! We love children! And we are so excited that our kids who have their teen Bibles will be using them for confirmation this year! Plan on joining us on October 8<sup>th</sup> for this special time in worship.



# Music and Worship Notes *by Mary Ellen Clinard*



## History of "spooky" Toccata and Fugue in D Minor

For the last several years, the Postlude for the Sunday closest to Halloween has been JS Bach's "Toccata and Fugue in D Minor". But how did this piece by Bach, a church organist, become associated with all things spooky and macabre?

In the early days of film, movies had no sound and the theaters had organs and organists that provided accompaniment for the films. When a scary movie was shown, a well-trained organist with a knowledge of Bach might have introduced movie-goers to this classic. By the 1930's, soundtracks were included in the filming and the Toccata and Fugue was part of the early soundtrack of the movie "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" that premiered in New York City. The piece was performed by an orchestra, however. Another more widely known appearance of Toccata and Fugue (although also performed by an orchestra) was in the Disney movie "Fantasia" in 1940.



By that time the piece, once known only to church goers or recitalists, was forever linked to Halloween and scary movies. Many movies have historically used the piece, played as it was originally was meant to be played, on the organ, as a creepy inclusion to the soundtrack. I often wonder what Bach would think if he knew that the magnificent organ piece he wrote in the early 1700's would be singularly known as a Halloween piece! What you will hear that Sunday is a shortened version—it's quite a long piece when played in it's entirety, so I hope you enjoy it and I look forward to playing it every year!



## **Try Choir!**

If you've ever thought about being in the choir, how about singing during our Advent season to give it a try? Beginning on October 11<sup>th</sup> we will start rehearsing Advent music. Our rehearsals are at 3pm and 7pm each Wednesday (same rehearsal 2 different times). This short and very musical season is the perfect time to see if singing in the choir is a way you might consider serving God during worship. If you have questions about choir, just give Mary Ellen a call at the church or email the office. Many of our singers don't read music and the fellowship is well worth your time!

It is amazing how differences can be torn down in Christ. The apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians that *Christ has brought peace to us breaking down the wall of "hostility"* (Ephesians 2:14) but in our particular case, all of the differences including language, culture, and race are broken down.



Through this sermon series, we have experienced how to be a family living united among our diversity. It is so good to see all together as *ONE* body and *ONE Spirit in the bond of peace* (Ephesians 4:3). Therefore, let's keep making every effort to maintain unity because we are "*Familia*".

I would like to thank you because you have been very supportive of the Hispanic Heritage Month. Our first activity was amazing. We could enjoy the photo booth together as a big special family. It was such an awesome time with you, my dear family.

We are still in the midst of Hispanic Heritage Month, so I would like to encourage you to keep being supportive of the next activities that we planned for this time of the year. It will be so good to have you in the Lotería Bingo game (October 1<sup>st</sup>) and try some Hispanic food at our Open House on the last Sunday of this series (October 15<sup>th</sup>), which will be a tremendous chance to taste good Hispanic dishes.

And last but not least, we ask you for your prayers about the next confirmation class here in our church. We are very excited to begin this young group class to share in a fun way about God and religion. Keep these guys in your prayers and let's make them feel part of "*Nuestra Familia*".

*"For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, in all, and living through all."*



*Ephesians 4:4*

*Con mucho cariño y afecto.  
Rev. Daniel Cardenas*



You have made it three quarters of the way through the year and over three quarters of the way through the Bible! Great job! I am so proud of us! This month will have us completing Luke, reading all of John, and reading all but eight chapters of Acts.

John's Gospel is full of great reading although you may quickly notice that Jesus 'sounds' a little different in John. Here is what's in store for us: encountering Jesus' I AM statements, reading John 3:16 in the context of Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus, the story of the woman caught in adultery in John 8 (be sure to read the footnotes!), and Jesus' farewell discourse with the disciples. I want to offer you just a little context for John. You will encounter 'the Jews' more frequently in John than the other Gospels. When you encounter that phrase, it is best to hear it as 'the religious leaders'. It is in reference not to the Jewish people as a whole – Jesus himself, the disciples, and Paul were all Jewish – but a reference to the religious establishment at the time. This is one of those times when we have to remind ourselves that the words we are reading are interpreted from a 2,000 year old document and while words are translated, contexts are not. When some take these words out of context it can lead to anti-Semitic belief, which is not biblical.

Last but not least, in the cover letter I extended a special invitation for folks to read through the Gospels. There are 89 chapters in the Gospels and 92 days left in the year from October 1st through December 31<sup>st</sup>. Share your experience reading through the Bible and invite others to join in reading the Gospels!

Peace,  
Pastor Kim <><

October 1	Luke 8:40-9:62	October 16	John 6:22-7:9
October 2	Luke 10:1-11:36	October 17	John 7:10-8:58
October 3	Luke 11:37-12	October 18	John 9-10
October 4	Luke 13-14	October 19	John 11-12
October 5	Luke 15-16	October 20	John 13-14
October 6	Luke 17-18	October 21	John 15-17
October 7	Luke 19	October 22	John 18-19
October 8	Luke 20-21	October 23	John 20-21
October 9	Luke 22	October 24	Acts 1-2
October 10	Luke 23	October 25	Acts 3:1-5:16
October 11	Luke 24	October 26	Acts 5:17-7:60
October 12	John 1:1-2:12	October 27	Acts 8-9
October 13	John 2:13-3:36	October 28	Acts 10-12
October 14	John 4	October 29	Acts 13:1-15:21
October 15	John 5:1-6:21	October 30	Acts 15:22-17:34
		October 31	Acts 18-20

# NEWS FROM THE PEWS

## NUESTRA FAMILIA OPEN HOUSE

On Sunday, Oct. 15, we will conclude our celebration of Nuestra Familia with an open house. Immediately following worship, you're invited to head outside and gather around the outside fountain and experience some tastes from the different Hispanic cultures that are represented in our congregation

### WHOO! NUTS!

#### "UWIF ANNUAL NUT SALE"

**September 24th until October 29th**

*THE TWELVE DAYS OF SELLING*  
(sung to *The Twelve Days of Christmas*)

*In the fall of the season our ladies sold to me:*

*Sweet and Salty Trail Mix  
Fancy Pecan Pieces  
Chocolate Sea Salt Caramels  
Giant Yummy Cashews  
Milk Chocolate Bridge Mix  
Harvest Medley Nut Mix  
Dark Chocolate Almonds*

#### *LIGHT WALNUT HALVES*

*Mix of Nuts and Fruit  
Malted Balls  
Fancy Pecan Halves*

*AND A PORCH POT ASSEMBLED BY BERNS (coming soon!)*



Order forms are available in the North Foyer or from any UWIF member.

**All orders need to be in by October 29<sup>th</sup>.**

**The nuts will be at the church Wednesday, November 19<sup>th</sup> for pick up.**

Remember all proceeds from this fundraiser benefit in house and local missions. The UWIF thank you for your continued support.

## #BeUMC – a worship series beginning October 22nd

What does it mean to be a United Methodist or to be part of a United Methodist Church? This may not be a question that keeps you up at night but it is a question worth asking and worth answering! This five week worship series will help us understand and claim our identity as we explore the following areas:

- We are people in mission to the world
- We are people who commit to living faithfully
- We are people who believe in the power of grace
- We are people who seek God's will
- We are people who live in community

We will not just explore what it means to be the church but we will actually be the church. Throughout this series we will be collecting items for Harvest of the Heart. Look for the list that will be coming soon!

It is a blessing to be the church together!



### Children's Fall Outing

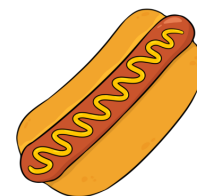
Who: All children, nursery age to 12 years old, their families

What: Games, food, fun

When: Sunday, October 29 from 3-6 pm

Where: Carol Byrd's house

Make plans to join us for a fun filled afternoon!



### Pastor Appreciation

October 29 has been designated as Pastor Appreciation Day at First UMC. This is an annual event, and we'll observe it by holding a reception in the Commons after service, to honor Pastor Kim and Pastor Daniel. If you want to express your thanks to them with a card or note, a basket for drop-off will be provided. We look forward to seeing all of you then.

We are very fortunate to have Pastor Kim and Pastor Daniel in service with us!

## Charles Wesley gets the music spotlight during #BeUMC Sermon Series

We really can't have a sermon series on what it means to be a United Methodist unless we highlight Methodism's most famous musician—Charles Wesley! Even non-Methodists are familiar with his lyrics—"Hark, the Herald Angels Sing", "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" and "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today" among others. Charles Wesley was the brother of John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Movement and they greatly influenced each other in the formation of our denomination. All in all he wrote over 6,000 poems and hundreds were put to music and are still used to this day. His deep theology and his rich texture of word choices can make a Wesley text almost immediately recognizable. Take note of the hymns and the other music in worship during the #BeUMC Series. Every Sunday will be a Charles Wesley "musicfest"!

Mary Ellen

### It is Nominations Time!

Our Nominations team will begin meeting in October to do the prayerful work of selecting church leadership. If you are interested in serving on a committee or being in church leadership, please call the church office and let us know!



### Congregational Photo—Part II

We ran into some technical issues and need to retake our congregational . Please plan on staying after worship on Sunday, Oct. 8th so we can get a picture of our congregation this year. Thank you!





























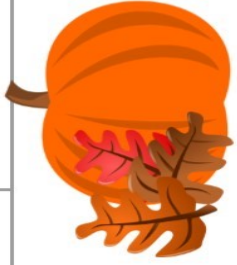


# October 2023

- Glenn Slama 1
- Virginia Jenkins 4
- Bob Rogers 4
- Jen Tucker 4
- Betsy Kovall 6
- Tom Heberling 9
- Bob Wieneke 11
- Gary Fourman 15
- Tammy Brown 16
- Karen Walke 23
- Becky Rutledge 26
- Sue Diefenbach 27
- Deena Langworthy 27
- Charlene Mackall 27
- Donna Galdeen 29
- Kay Fraley 30
- Rick Fugett 30
- Larry Kreps 30

*Happy Birthdays!*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 COMMUNION/WORLD COMMUNION SUN- DAY (UMC special offering) 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Loteria/Mexican Bingo	2 8:00 Breakfast Club	3 2:00 Pantry	4 6:30 Hispanic Bible Study 3:00 & 7:00 Choir Rhrls	5 6:00 Sonshine Bible Study	6 12:00 First Friday Concert	7
8 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Blessing of Bibles 2:00 Confirmation Class	9 COLUMBUS DAY 8:00 Breakfast Club 6:00 Immigration Clinic	10 1:00 SPRC 2:00 Pantry	11 5:00 Nominations 6:30 Hispanic Bible Study 3:00 & 7:00 Choir Rhrls	12 1:00 Congregational Care 6:00 Sonshine Bible Study	13 10:00 UWIF Meeting	14
15 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Nuestra Familia Open House	16 8:00 Breakfast Club	17 2:00 Pantry 5:30 Finance Mtg 6:00 Council Mtg	18 6:30 Hispanic Bible Study 3:00 & 7:00 Choir Rhrls	19 6:00 Sonshine Bible Study	20 AMBASSADOR ARTICLE DEADLINE	21 9:00 Hope Circle @ Bob Evans 10:00 Hope Circle
22 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship 2:00 Confirmation Class	23 8:00 Breakfast Club	24 2:00 Pantry 6:30 Trustees Mtg	25 5:00 Nominations 6:30 Hispanic Bible Study 3:00 & 7:00 Choir Rhrls	26 6:00 Sonshine Bible Study	27	28
29 \$5 ON THE 5TH 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship/ Pastor Appreciation UWIF Nut Orders DUE 3:00 Children's Fall Outing	30 8:00 Breakfast Club	31 HAPPY HALLOWEEN! 2:00 Pantry	<b>Dates to Remember in November:</b> November 3: First Friday Concert @ Noon November 5: All Saints Sunday/Daylight Saving Time Ends November 14: Church Charge Conference November 23: Thanksgiving Day/ Church Closed November 24: Church Office Closed			





# **2023 First Friday Concert & Artist Series**

**October 6, 2023**

**Mike Hemmelgarn & Friends**

**Meet Mike's cast of ever changing characters that magically appear from his bag of tricks**

**First UMC - Middletown  
@noon  
Free Admission**

 **first**  
church  
MIDDLETOWN  
a united methodist community  
120 South Broad Street  
Middletown, OH 45044