



The Ambassador

May 2024

Est. 1805 | Published Since
1951

From the Pastor

Dear Friends,

My friend Bruce called me the other day. We have not spoken in a few months and it was lovely to catch up with him. He had some exciting news to share – he has begun to play the harp. Bruce, a classically trained pianist, is a gifted musician. Although he has only ever played the piano, he is looking forward to this new adventure. With joy and enthusiasm he announced to me, “I turn seventy years old in June and I am turning over a new leaf!”

That phrase, ‘turning over a new leaf,’ has stuck with me ever since our conversation. You are probably familiar with the idiom’s meaning: to start again, to try something new, to change your attitude, to act in a different manner. I always associate that phrase with spring. This may be because there are new leaves on trees and new life everywhere – spring does seem like the perfect time to turn over a new leaf.

The book of Lamentations has the beloved verses: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness (Lamentations 3:22-23). I have always taken comfort in the juxtaposition of the steadiness and faithfulness of God’s love and the creative and new expressions of God’s mercies that are ours each day. Whenever we turn over a new leaf – God’s love remains a constant presence and our desire to do something new is evidence of God’s renewing grace working in our midst.

There are quite a ‘turning over a new leaf’ articles in our newsletter this month. We are excited about receiving six of our

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Worship With Us

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

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 **first
church**
M I D D L E T O W N
a united methodist community

young people into church membership as we celebrate confirmation on Pentecost (see article below). Plans are underway for a new children's ministry this summer called MAD Camp (see article on page 5) And we are preparing to receive people into church membership in June (see article on page 3).

What new leaf is turning over in your life? Call me and let me know – I would love to celebrate what God is doing in your life. May you rejoice in the beauty of new life this spring - God is good!

Peace,

Pastor Kim

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Storytelling Workshop

We had eight people participate in our Biblical storytelling workshop! We enjoyed learning about how to engage with the Bible in creative and engaging ways. A few participants even shared a Bible story they had internalized. We hope to have Biblical storytelling appear in worship from time to time. How exciting!

We plan to offer this workshop again in the fall and are trusting that, as excitement builds, we can form a Biblical storytelling group! If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the office or Pastor Kim.



Pentecost & Confirmation Celebration

On Sunday, May 19th, we will be receiving six of our young people into church membership. Two thirds of our confirmation class is bilingual so it is fitting that confirmation Sunday falls on Pentecost – a day that we celebrate the Holy Spirit's ability to cross boundaries, especially linguistic boundaries. Worship that day will be completely bilingual, no translation will be necessary as everything will be shared in English and Spanish. We have been praying and working diligently on this worship service and are excited for its arrival! Please plan on joining us in worship online or in-person as we receive Robert, Raquel, Liz, Danica, Maya, and Ryan into church membership this day!

Music and Worship Notes *by Mary Ellen Clinard*



CHURCH DIRECTORY PROJECT IS COMING!

Schedule those hair appointments! It's time for a new church directory!

Our church directory is extremely out of date and we have welcomed several new families in the last few years. Beginning this summer, over the course of several Sundays, we will be offering opportunities to have your family's picture taken. The company that was the industry leader in printed church directories no longer offers that service and as times have changed, there are fewer companies that provide on-site photography of individual congregations. We will be doing our own photography and we hope that this will encourage you to be a part of our directory. Having a complete and accurate church directory helps us get to know each other better and be able to call each other by name.

Look for a schedule soon and sign up!



New Members – Coming in June

We will be receiving new friends into church membership on Sunday, June 23rd. If you are interested in joining the church, or learning more about what church membership means, you are invited to attend a new member orientation. We will have this class on either Sunday, June 2nd or Sunday, June 9th. Please call the church and let us know if you would like to come and which date works best for you. Thanks!

A Note from Rev. Daniel Cardenas, Associate Pastor



"Children are a gift from the Lord"

Psalm 127:3

During our lifetime we are going to get many gifts. Some of those gifts are from dear friends, beloved family members, and people who become special to us in many ways. Those gifts could be silly and funny, others will be useful to us, and others will become necessary for our lifestyle. There will be gifts so special that we are going to cherish them and will keep them for years after years.

But even when we get many amazing gifts from our beloved ones there are no gifts that compare with the gifts that the Lord gives us. The Bible tells us that the Lord has given us marvelous presents. God has given us his faithful love that never ends and his mercies each morning (Lamentations 3:23). God gives us our daily bread and food as well, he opens his hand and satisfies the hunger and the thirst (Psalm 145:16). God has also given us his protection and love to us when he rescues us from our enemies, *the victory comes from the Lord. May you bless your people* (Psalm 3:8). And God has given to us the most amazing gift of all times: His Only Son, Jesus Christ but *when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law.* (Galatians 4:4).

God has shown his love by giving us people who surround us and support us, too. We have family, friends, and children whether are they biological or not, who are part of our family because they have become so special to us and they are a gift from the Lord.

In the course of my short ministry as a pastor, God has given me the chance to have precious *spiritual children*. They have been such a beautiful gift from the Lord and I cherish every moment that I spent walking with them, teaching them, and supporting them.

Now, the Lord has been gracious to me and Anahi by giving us the chance to have our first baby girl, and like the blessing to have *spiritual children*, we are blessed by having our *biological child*. Certainly, this is a wonderful gift from the Lord.

Therefore, Anahi and I are getting ready not only with another bedroom and bathroom in our place, having clothing, diapers, and baby wipes ready when Eliette arrives, but also I will be absent for a few weeks because of my paternity leave. This will allow me to know Eliette's routine, and it will help me to assist Anahi after the labor. Through that time, I will be helping just on Sundays to translate the English service for the Hispanic members who attend church and I will not come during the week at all. In case of an emergency, I will be able to assist the Hispanic Ministry members, and I will be active either by email or text message.

(continued on pg 5)

We are so grateful to God for all his blessings, and for the tremendous gift that he has given to us, but also we are immensely thankful to you, our dear big family: our church.

Con cariño y amor.
Daniel, Anahi, and Eliette.



MAD Camp (Music, Art, & Drama Camp) July 29th – August 2nd

Plans are underway for MAD Camp – a week of fun and creative expression around music, art, and drama. Our guiding theme for the week will be “Loving our Neighbors” and we will be expressing that theme with song, through

art, and in drama. We are so excited and hope that you will get all the young people in your life registered!

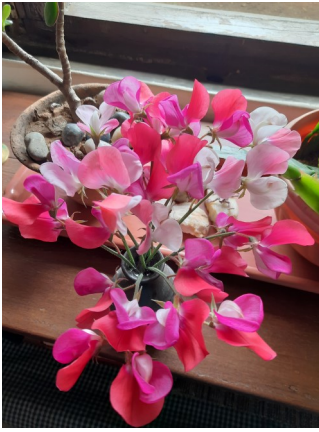
MAD Camp is for young people, grades K-6 and no prior musical or art experience is necessary. There is a cost of \$25 to cover supplies. If you are interested in signing up, please call the church office or visit our website (www.myfumc.net). Space is limited. If you are interested in sponsoring a MAD Camper, please let Pastor Kim know!

May Worship Schedule

Behold! Easter wordship series:

Sunday, May 5 th	Behave – Loving Like God	John 15:9-17 & I John 5:1-6
Sunday, May 12 th	Become – Formed by God	John 17:6-19 & I John 5:9-13
Sunday, May 19 th	Pentecost & Confirmation Sunday	Acts 1:1-4
Sunday, May 26 th	Pastor Daniel preaching	

Mission Moment



An update from Dr. Les and Debbie Dornon, missionaries to Nepal working in the Tansen Hospital

Greetings from Tansen where it is very hot and dry! We arrived back here on April 16 after a rather whirlwind trip to the U.S. - visiting Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Nevada and CA within 3 weeks. It was wonderful to see family, but went by too quickly.

It was especially wonderful to share Easter Sunday with you in Middletown! The church was beautiful, and it was so fun to be part of the music again. Thank you for your warm welcome to us - and we are so very appreciative of your prayers and giving which enable us to continue to be part of God's work here in Nepal. You are such a blessing to us! Thank you!

The day we flew into Kathmandu (after 2 flights - one was 15 1/2 hours, and the other was 5 1/2 hours) we attended the wedding of our good friend's son. The really fun thing was that we had attended the wedding of that friend 30 years ago in Tansen! I guess we have been here awhile - seeing the next generation get married! :)

We do ask for more prayers for rain here - this morning when we got up early for our morning walk up the hill behind us, we were greeted by the sight of smoke and flames. It has been so dry - mostly the dry pine needles were burning, but it is still concerning. We know God will provide all we need - but please pray for rain!

Much love, Les & Debbie




May 2024

May Birthdays

- 1 John Regensburg
- 4 Becky Rogers
- 6 Shirley Fields
- 7 Judy Thorn
- 17 Tom Piper
- 19 Brenda Byrd, Jim Gayhart,
- 20 Mary Nichols
- 22 Vickie Frazer
- 23 Pam Fugett
- 25 Dee Young
- 26 Tammy White
- 28 J.J. Peil
- 29 Marian McGuire
- 30 Tucker Smarzinski

Happy Birthday!

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	Dates to Remember in June: June 1: WOC Annual Conference June 7: First Friday Concert @ Noon June 16: Father's Day June 23 New Member Reception					
5 COMMUNION 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	6 8:00 Breakfast Club	7 1:00 Education Committee 2:00 Pantry	8 3:00 & 7:00 Choir Rhrl 6:00 Hispanic Bible Study	9 DAY OF ASCENSION	10 10:00 UWIF Mtg	11
12.ASCENSION SUNDAY/ MOTHER'S DAY 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Staff Appreciation	13 8:00 Breakfast Club	14 11:00 Memorial Comm. Noon Staff Apprec. Luncheon 1:00 SPRC	15 3:00 & 7:00 Choir Rhrl 6:00 Hispanic Bible Study	16	17 AMBASSADOR ARTICLE DEAD-LINE	18 9:00 Hope Circle @ Bob Evans 10:00 Elizabeth Circle
19 PENTECOST/ CONFIRMATION/ BAPTISM 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Confirmation/Baptism Reception	20 8:00 Breakfast Club	21 2:00 Pantry 4:00 CMC Mtg 5:30 Finance Mtg 6:00 Council Mtg	22 3:00 & 7:00 Choir Rhrl 6:00 Hispanic Bible Study	23	24	25
26 TRINITY/PEACE WITH JUSTICE SUNDAY (special offering) 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	27 MEMORIAL DAY/CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED 8:00 Breakfast Club	28 2:00 Pantry 6:30 Trustees Mtg	29 3:00 & 7:00 Choir Rhrl 6:00 Hispanic Bible Study	30 West Ohio Annual Conf.	31 West Ohio Annual Conf.	



2024 First Friday Concert & Artist Series

May 3, 2024

Appalachian Grass

**The slogan on their website says it all ...
“bluegrass - it’s what we know, it’s what
we like, it’s what we do.”**

First UMC - Middletown

@noon

Free Admission