



# The Ambassador

September 2025

Est. 1805 | Published Since  
1951

## From the Pastor

*"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect."*

Romans 12:2

Dear Friends,

When I was a child, my family would travel to visit my aunt and uncle who lived in Missouri. We grew excited when we could see the St. Louis Arch – it was a sign we were almost there! As soon as my parents spotted it, they would point it out to me. And as the family legend goes, during one trip, my parents spotted it and were trying to point it out to me as we drove, but I couldn't see it. In frustration and defeat, I declared, "My eyes are too little!"

My family will still joke about this. Every year when we travel to see my aunt, as an experienced driver of this route, I know when to start looking and where to look. I am usually the first one to see the Arch. And each trip I declare in victory: "There is the Arch! My eyes are no longer little!"

I have been thinking about little eyes as I have been preparing for our new worship series that begins this month. Take Another Look (see page 2 for more details) is a series that is based on the premise that God desires for us to be continually growing. We will explore stories that we associate with childhood like Jonah and Zacchaeus. This time, though, we will explore them as adults, listening for what new lesson God may be teaching us now. These are great stories that have things to teach us throughout our life, it would be sad to leave them as only childhood memories, to only have learned them with little eyes.

Like a potter at a wheel, God is seeking to form and shape us. As long as we have breath, God calls us to a life of learning and transformation. The Living Word invites us to let God's word live and move through us, changing us each day. The Spirit is always moving and calling us to move too. I hope you will join us, in person or online, as we look back at beloved Bible stories from our childhood and listen for how God is moving us forward.

As always, I am so grateful to be on this journey with you! Let's see where God will lead us.

Peace,  
Pastor Kim  
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## Staff

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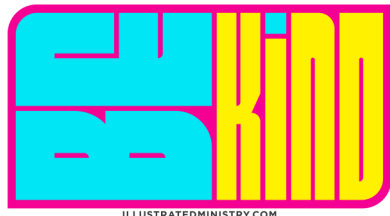
## Worship With Us

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

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 **first  
church**  
MIDDLETOWN  
a united methodist community



We had a great time blessing backpacks on Sunday, August 10<sup>th</sup>. We made Be Kind backpack tags for the kids and also for adults. They were so popular that we gave them all away. But if you want one, we can make more. Just contact the church office and let us know. The tags are a helpful visual reminder to be like

Jesus!

## Take Another Look

The Bible is full of great stories that some of us were taught as children. What child who grew up going to church didn't learn about Noah, Jonah, and Zacchaeus? Some adults can still sing the songs they learned about these stories as children.

Unfortunately, we have left these stories as a part of our childhood while God has plenty to teach us through these stories as adults. During this series we are going to revisit favorite childhood stories and listen for what the Spirit has to say to us now. Let's Take Another Look at these beloved stories.



<u>Date</u>	<u>Sermon Title</u>	<u>Scripture</u>
9.7.2025	Moses and the Burning Bush	Exodus 3:1-6
9.14.2025	The Story of Noah – From Animals to Arks	Genesis 6:11-22
9.21.2025	The Story of Jonah – It's Not About the Fish	Jonah 1:1-3
9.28.2025	The Story of Zacchaeus – The Meaning of Repentance	Luke 19:1-10
10.5.2025	The Healing of the Blind Man – Coming Into Focus	Mark 8:22-26

## Do You Want to Serve on a Church Committee?

We have lots of areas for you to serve – there are committees that help to organize and run the administrative side of the church as well as committees that help to carry out the missional side of the church. We need both to be First United Methodist Church – and we need you, too! If you are interested in serving, please let the church office know. The Nominations Committee works to match people with their interests to serve on the committees and work areas of the church. This committee is meeting throughout September and would love to help get you connected!

## Pantry Item for September

The pantry item for September is a 2lb bag of dry pinto beans. We usually buy them at Aldi. This is another staple for many of our clients. Thanks for your generosity in helping to keep our Pantry stocked!



## IMPROVED TECH COMES TO FELLOWSHIP HALL

If you were in attendance at the Friday night presentation of MAD Camp, you may have noticed the stage was brighter and the sound was better than any other event in Fellowship Hall in recent years.

Earlier this year, about the time we started thinking about upgrading our sound/lights in Fellowship Hall due to the success for last year's MAD Camp and the Community Lenten Lunches, Middletown Lyric Theatre was vacating their former theater location and was moving to the Sorg Opera House where there was already a sound and light system in place. MLT Sound and Lighting Designer Edwin Toy spent some time assessing our existing system and seeing if the theater could provide some used equipment to update our own. We were able to work with Edwin Toy and Charley Shafor, Managing Artistic Director of the theater group, to install some of their unneeded equipment to "test it out" to see what would help our experience in Fellowship Hall. After passing the test, we were happy to purchase that equipment from them. Some of our existing equipment was able to be integrated with the theater equipment. So now we have 2 additional stage lights that will help wash stage with even lighting. Our sound improvement include 3 wireless body mics, and updated power amp and pole speakers on each side of the room. We will purchase a Bluetooth system that will allow presenters to use their phones or laptops wirelessly. We are grateful to the Middletown Lyric Theater for donating the labor to install and design our new system and to the Memorial Committee for purchasing the equipment we needed to make these improvements.



## MAD Camp Coordinator Is Needed For 2026!

Next year, Pastor Kim would love to have someone to take over the administrative duties for MAD Camp and work alongside her, the Office Manager, and other team members. If you love details and organization, this is a perfect opportunity for you! It's a lot of fun and would be a way to share your "organizational gifts" with your church. If you think you might want to consider doing this for 2026 and want to chat about more details, give Pastor Kim a call.







## MAD Camp Art Show and Performance

These pictures are from the Friday evening Art Show and Performance. We love sharing pictures of "our kids".









United  
Women  
in Faith

### **Our Vision**

We are a powerful, fearless force driven by God's love and united in sisterhood. With a focus on women, children and youth, we act for justice and transform communities

### **We are Women with a Purpose**

We connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship, and education so that they can inspire, influence and impact local and global communities. church.

### **Mission Statement**

United Women in Faith seeks to connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship and education so they can inspire and impact local and global communities.

### **Our Action**

Bold action, like faith, takes courage. Our bravery is inspired by God's love and our powerful commitment to improve the lives of women, children and youth. United Women in Faith works for justice through compassionate service and advocacy to change unfair policies and systems that harm women, children and youth— from racial and gender injustice to economic inequality, climate issues and more.

As you can see from the above statements, United Women in Faith is a mission organization. It serves women, children, and youth nationally and internationally. Here at First UMC we have a unit of UWIF that has 2 circles. They meet monthly to learn, discuss, and plan. We learn about the many ways that UWIF helps those in need. We discuss what's being done and how we may help. We raise funds to help both local and global missions. We are a community that supports each other. While we are certainly an organization of women, men are welcome to participate. There is no membership, just a belief in our mission and participation to help meet our goals. You are cordially invited to attend a meeting(s) and decide whether or not you wish to "join". The Elizabeth Circle meets on the second Thursday of the month at 1 pm at Mt. Pleasant in Monroe. Their next meeting is on Thurs. Sept. 11th. The Hope Circle meets on the third Saturday of the month at 9 am at the Bob Evans Restaurant in Middletown. Their next meeting is on Sat. Sept. 20th. If you have questions, please talk with any member (there is a list on the bulletin board in the hallway behind the Sanctuary) or call the church office.

# September 2025



4 Destiny Back  
 Larken Ward  
 Barb Wright  
 5 Silas Chapman  
 7 Anahi Hernandez  
 Sandi Shiflett  
 8 Marti Kreps  
 10 Gary Rutledge  
 Cooper Smarzinski  
 11 Daniel Cardenas  
 Reece Edgren  
 14 Paul Brewer  
 15 Brent Alexander  
 17 John Hoffman  
 19 Megan McLaughlin-  
 Stercula  
 23 Jerry Slama  
 24 Juanita Harsh  
 26 Melanie Alderton  
 Jim White  
 28 Barb Hoffman  
 29 Gloria Garrett

Happy Birthdays!

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 8:00 Breakfast Club <b>LABOR DAY</b> <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	2 10 Staff Mtg 2:00 Pantry 3:00 Nominations	3  6:00 Choir Carry –in 7:00 Choir Rhrl	4	5 12:00 First Friday Concert	6
7 COMMUNION 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	8 8:00 Breakfast Club  6:00 Legal Clinic	9 10 Staff Mtg 2:00 Pantry	10  7:00 Choir Rhrl	11 1:00 Elizabeth Circle Mt. Pleasant	12	13
14 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	15 8:00 Breakfast Club	16 10:00 Staff Mtg 1 pm SPRC Mtg 2:00 Pantry 3:00 Nominations 5:30 Finance 6:00 Admin. Council	17  7:00 Choir Rhrl	18	19 AMBASSADOR ARTICLES DUE	20 9:00 Hope Circle Bob Evans
21 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	22 8:00 Breakfast Club	23 10:00 Staff Mtg 2:00 Pantry 6:30 Trustees	24  7:00 Choir Rhrl	25	26	27
28 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	29 8:00 Breakfast Club	30 10:00 Staff Mtg 1:00 Cong. Care 2:00 Pantry 3:00 Nominations	31  7:00 Choir Rhrl		Dates to Remember in October 3 First Friday Concert 4 Birthdays: Virginia Jenkins, Bob Rogers, Jen Tucker 21 Church/Charge Conference	





# **2025 First Friday Concert & Artist Series**

**September 5, 2025  
En Fuego**

**This Latin Jazz Group brings us  
music with a Latin flair. We've  
got plenty of room for dancing  
the Samba if you dare!**

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