



The Ambassador

Dec. 2025/Jan.2026

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Dear Friends,

Praying you experience

HOPE
PEACE
LOVE
JOY

this Advent & Christmas,
and all throughout the new year!



Staff

Senior Pastor Kim Armentrout
Assoc. Pastor Daniel Cardenas
Worship Mary Ellen Clinard
Building Supt. Greg Cooper
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Contact Us

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Worship With Us

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

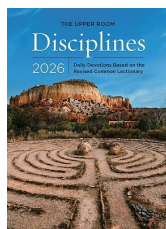
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 **first
church**
M I D D L E T O W N
a united methodist community

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS 2025

<u>Date</u>	<u>Sermon Title</u>	<u>Scripture</u>
11.30.2025	The Hope of Advent	Matthew 24:36-44
12.7.2025	The Peace of Advent	Matthew 3:1-12
12.14.2025	The Joy of Advent	Isaiah 35:1-10
12.21.2025	The Love of Advent	Matthew 1:18-25
12.28.2025	Celebrating Christmas	Luke 2:21-39



2026 DISCIPLINES DEVOTIONAL

For those who have requested a 2026 devotional, we will be placing the order no later than December 2nd. We will reach out to each of you when our books arrive and make sure you get your copy. This resource is a great way to join other church members in daily scripture reading, prayer, and reflection.

COMMITMENT TO FUMC MINISTRIES

Thank you so much to everyone who turned in a commitment card. We have been working on organizing all the ministry commitments and making sure your name is passed on to the right ministry leader. If you have any questions, please contact the church office and let us know. Thank you!

My 2026 Commitment to First UMC Ministry
Below you will find possible ways to support First United Methodist Church with your prayers, presence, gifts, talent and abilities.
These commitments will be presented as an act of worship on Sunday, October 26th during worship.

Offer prayerful reflections, consent to the following ministries:

Christ Our Life	Service Our Lifestyle
<input type="checkbox"/> attend worship	<input type="checkbox"/> be a part of United Women in Faith
<input type="checkbox"/> daily devotionals	<input type="checkbox"/> serve with Monday Morning Breakfast Club
<input type="checkbox"/> study the Bible	<input type="checkbox"/> serve with the Food Pantry
<input type="checkbox"/> attend a small group	<input type="checkbox"/> shop for the Food Pantry
<input type="checkbox"/> lead a small group	<input type="checkbox"/> help with the building grounds
<input type="checkbox"/> teach Children's Sunday School/leader to teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> serve on a committee
<input type="checkbox"/> attend Sunday School	<input type="checkbox"/> serve with the Legal Clinic
<input type="checkbox"/> teach adult Sunday School	<input type="checkbox"/> serve with the English as a Second Language Team
<input type="checkbox"/> sing in the choir	<input type="checkbox"/> provide a meal for the Legal Clinic
<input type="checkbox"/> offer spiritual gifts	<input type="checkbox"/> serve with the English as a Second Language Team
<input type="checkbox"/> serve as a cantor	<input type="checkbox"/> serve with the English as a Second Language Team
<input type="checkbox"/> serve as a greeter	<input type="checkbox"/> provide a meal for the Legal Clinic
<input type="checkbox"/> serve on the endowment	<input type="checkbox"/> serve with the English as a Second Language Team
<input type="checkbox"/> prepare reading for worship	<input type="checkbox"/> provide a meal for the Legal Clinic
<input type="checkbox"/> for a communion service	<input type="checkbox"/> serve with the English as a Second Language Team
<input type="checkbox"/> serve as a worship leader	<input type="checkbox"/> serve with the English as a Second Language Team
<input type="checkbox"/> serve as a scripture reader	<input type="checkbox"/> volunteer in the church office
<input type="checkbox"/> serve as an usher	<input type="checkbox"/> other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> serve on the worship center creative team	
<input type="checkbox"/> other _____	



HARVEST OF THE HEART

Our Harvest of the Heart mission was a big success! Thank you for your generosity. The items collected will help to keep our Pantry stocked and to make Emergency Food available for those in need. As always, you are living into our motto - "Christ our Life, Service Our Lifestyle"!

CONGREGATIONAL CARE WITH CHRISTMAS CARDS

Our last Sunday to bring in signed Christmas cards is **Sunday, Dec. 7th**. The Congregational Care team will be hand delivering these cards to our beloved friends. The list of recipients is on a table in the Commons, along with a basket to put your signed cards into.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

On Wednesday, Dec. 24, you will have 2 options to worship with us. We will have a worship service at 10:30am in the Sanctuary that will include Holy Communion. Our traditional Candlelight Christmas Eve Service will start at 7pm with music and worship will begin at 7:30 pm. There will be no communion at the 7:30 Candlelight Service. The choir will sing at the 7:30 service only. Other than the communion and the choir singing, both services are identical.



TEMPLE CHOIR TO SING AT OTTERBEIN CONCERT DEC. 16

Our choir has been invited to be a featured choir at the Otterbein Senior Living Community in Lebanon on Tuesday, Dec. 16 at 7pm. We will sing 2 pieces on our own and then also join the Otterbein choir on 2 additional songs. This concert is always exciting. The concert is open to the public and free. It will be held in the Otterbein Chapel located in the main building. If you have any questions call Mary Ellen at the church office. Hope to see you there!

HARPS COMING TO FIRST FRIDAY DEC. 5th

Harps of Grace will be bringing Holiday music to our sanctuary at one of the biggest concerts of the year. Come early to get a seat! We are so excited to be able to host this wonderful group of harpists from Dayton every December. What a blessing! Concert is from 12 noon to 1pm. Bring your friends!



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PLAY "THE FIRST NOELF" SUNDAY, DEC. 14



We are excited to announce we're having a play! Pastor Kim wrote this play several years ago and we will celebrate her return to our sanctuary by presenting the play during the church service. There will be an organizational meeting on Nov. 30 after church for all who would like to be involved—kids and adults alike! We'll need set creators, "kid wranglers", and actors! It's a short play and lots of fun! Larry Kreps has agreed to be the "Elf" and we are looking forward to seeing Larry using his acting skills! If you would like to participate and would like a script ahead of time, call Mary Ellen at the church office. 513-423-4629.

BAPTISM CELEBRATION OF PABLO CARDENAS HERNANDEZ

It was a beautiful combination of both our church members and of Pastor Daniel's Pleasant Ridge congregation as we met for a light lunch and the baptism of Pablo. Pastor Kim presided and it was so nice to see Pastor Daniel and Anahi's newest family member be brought into the community of Christ.



CALLING ALL BAKERS



The United Women in Faith is having a **Cookie Walk on Dec. 14th** in the Commons. You may purchase your baked goods before and after worship. We greatly need and appreciate all those willing to bake cookies and donate them to our annual fund raiser. If you are willing to contribute please mark your cookies as Nuts/Peanut Butter or Nut Free and have them to the church by Sun. morning Dec. 14th. Please call the church office if you any questions.

Thank you in advance!

A Note from Rev. Daniel Cardenas, Associate Pastor

"We are united"

Acts 2:42,44



As the Christmas season approaches, we start to feel the warmth of kindness, love, and goodwill toward our neighbors. Ever since I arrived in the United States, I've truly enjoyed seeing the lights, the decorations, and even experiencing a white Christmas a couple of times—something I had only seen in movies back home. However, there's something else I've noticed that has brought me even greater joy: this season presents us with a beautiful opportunity to reach out and extend a helping hand to those who need it most, drawing us closer together both inside and outside the church.

One of the ways I've witnessed this congregation's generosity and unity is through the Community Christmas Dinner. This year, we once again have the chance to bless our brothers and sisters in need through this meaningful event. **The Community Christmas Dinner will take place on December 9th at 5:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall.** If you're able to help in any way, you won't want to miss it. It will be a blessing for everyone involved!

Along with the Christmas Dinner, our **Immigration Legal Clinic** continues to serve our community throughout this season. This ministry keeps offering guidance and support to those who are seeking answers about their immigration cases.

In the end, the Christmas season reminds us of the importance of family and fellowship, but it also opens our eyes to the needs around us. It softens our hearts so we can bring hope, love, and care to our community—just as the church in the book of Acts once did.

This Christmas, enjoy your loved ones deeply, but also take the opportunity to share love, peace, and hope with those who are facing need.

Let us be one in Jesus!

Con cariño y aprecio.
Pastor Daniel Cardenas
¡Feliz Navidad!

INCLEMENT WEATHER CLOSING



With winter knocking at the door, it's a good time to review the steps we will take in the event of a weather emergency. When directed by the Senior Pastor or the leadership of FUMC, someone from the staff will:

- . Contact WKRC-Channel 12 - to reflect the change of status.
- . Send out email through Constant Contact to FUMC members.
- . Record special phone messages as needed

If Sunday service or a planned event has not been cancelled, please do what is best for your safety. Neither the Lord nor your FUMC family wants you to be harmed by attending.

EVERYDAY EPIPHANY WORSHIP SERIES

Epiphany through Transfiguration

Epiphany as a date is the day we celebrate the wise men giving their gifts to the Holy Family. Epiphany in our everyday language is a sudden realization, an insight, a discovery. Our observance of Epiphany in 2026 will launch this new series geared to encouraging us see God in the everyday. Just like the wise men got to experience the extraordinary presence of God, we, too, get to see God in the unexpected place of our daily living. Our God blesses us with these moments of wonder and uses them to transform, assure, teach, or guide us. When Jacob experienced in Genesis after waking up from his dream of a ladder with angels ascending and descending, he proclaimed: Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it. The Lord is in our place, too. May we experience Everyday Epiphanies!



<u>Date</u>	<u>Sermon Title</u>	<u>Scripture</u>
1.4.2026	Looking Up	Matthew 2:1-12
1.11.2026	Looking Back and Looking Forward	Matthew 3:1-17
1.18.2026	Looking for More	Matthew 4:12-23
1.25.2026	Waking up to the Holy	Genesis 28:10-17
2.1.2026	Waking Up to Possibility	John 2:1-12
2.8.2026	Waking Up to Perseverance	Genesis 26:17-22
2.15.2026	Waking Up to Glory	Matthew 17:1-9

EVERYDAY EPIPHANIES EVENTS

To expand our Everyday Epiphanies worship series outside of Sunday mornings, we are offering two special gatherings. The first is on **Tuesday, January 6th** where we will be doing some stargazing. Meet at the church at 7:30 p.m. and we will drive out and watch the stars. What a perfect way to celebrate the journey and arrival of the wise men to see the Christ Child. We will be outside so make sure you dress for the weather!

On **Thursday, January 29th** we are going to gather in the sanctuary for morning prayers followed by breakfast together. Please plan on joining us for one or both of these events. More information will be coming as the date approaches!

SHALOM SHELTER MINISTRY BEGINS SUNDAY JAN 4TH

First UMC will again be the gathering place for Shalom guests. Steve Swank is our church coordinator and will be seeking volunteers to help. There are currently 9 area churches who have agreed to help house our homeless neighbors from Jan. 4th thru March 7th. Our week to host is March 1st thru the 7th. This program provides food and overnight shelter during the worst weather months. Please pray for the many volunteers and our guests.

December 2025



4 Tommy Dixon-

Gordon

16 Cecil Jackson

22 Kathy Wright

24 Tom Buchert

25 Rick Lyke

26 Cory Smarzinski

26 David Young



28 Dee Markle

29 Juanita Driscoll

30 Duane Gordon

30 Belinda Hausman

Happy Birthday!


Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5 12:00 First Friday Concert 10:00 UWF Board	6
7 COMMUNION 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	8 8:00 Breakfast Club 6:00 Legal Clinic	9 10:00 Staff Mtg 2:00 Pantry 2:00 Congregational Care 5:30 Community Christmas Dinner	10 3 & 7:00 Choir 6:00 Hispanic Bible Study	11 12:00 Elizabeth Circle @ Mt. Pleasant	12	13 Christmas Play Practice 10:00
14 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Christmas Play UWF Cookie Walk	15 8:00 Breakfast Club	16 10:00 Staff Mtg 2:00 Pantry Choir Concert at Otterbein 7 pm	17 3 & 7:00 Choir 6:00 Hispanic Bible Study	18	19	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 NO Pantry	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 10:30 Communion Service 7:30 Candlelight Service	25 CHRISTMAS DAY ***** OFFICE CLOSED *****	26 ***** OFFICE CLOSED *****	27
28 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	29 8:00 Breakfast Club	30 10:00 Staff Mtg 2:00 Pantry	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE NO Hispanic Bible Study NO Choir Rhrl			

January 2026

Birthdays

4 Sue Faulkner
9 Glenna Combs
14 Ken Krummrich
16 John Andrews
22 Anthony Hurrigan
28 Wilma Mucha
29 Judy Andrews
30 Carolyn Tucker

Happy Birthday!

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Dates to remember in February: 1 Matthew Dixon birthday 3 Kathy Lambert birthday 5 Mark Frazer birthday 6 First Friday Concert @noon 14 Valentines Day				1 NEW YEAR'S DAY ***** OFFICE CLOSED *****	2 12:00 First Friday Concert 10:00 UWV Board	3
4 COMMUNION 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Shalom starts	5 8:00 Breakfast Club	6 10:00 Staff Mtg 2:00 Pantry 7:30 Epiphany Stargazing	7 6:00 Hispanic Bible Study 3 & 7:00 Choir	8 2:00 Elizabeth Circle @ Mt. Pleasant	9	10
11 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Christmas Play	12 8:00 Breakfast Club 6:00 Legal Clinic	13 10:00 Staff Mtg 1:00 SPRC 2:00 Pantry	14 6:00 Hispanic Bible Study 3 & 7:00 Choir	15	16	17 9:00 Hope Circle @ Bob Evans
18 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	19 8:00 Breakfast Club	20 10:00 Staff Mtg 2:00 Pantry 6:30 Trustees	21 6:00 Hispanic Bible Study 3 & 7:00 Choir	22	23 AMBASSADOR ARTICLES DUE	24
25 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	26 8:00 Breakfast Club	27 10:00 Staff Mtg 2:00 Pantry 5:30 Finance Mtg 6:00 Admin. Council	28 6:00 Hispanic Bible Study 3 & 7:00 Choir	29 Morning Vespers & Breakfast Time TBD	30	31



2025 First Friday Concert & Artist Series

Dec. 5 - Harps of Grace

Our sanctuary will once again be filled with the glorious sounds of Harps. Based on past reviews, this is one you don't want to miss!

Jan. 2, 2026 - Jimmy Rogers

Come and enjoy the sounds of Honky-Tonk/Blues Piano

First UMC - Middletown

@ noon

Free Admission

masks encouraged, not required