

## December Anniversaries & Birthdays

25 Jesus Christ  
28 Ruth & Ron Annelin, 1972  
30 Jodi Louwsma



First United Methodist Church  
190 N. Cedar Street  
Manistique, Michigan 49854



## First United Methodist Church Worship Service 11:00am



**First United Methodist Church**  
Church Phone: (906) 341-6662  
Pastor: Rev. B.J. Ash Cell: 906-286-1492  
email: [pastorbjash@gmail.com](mailto:pastorbjash@gmail.com)  
Office Hours: Pastor B.J. M-F 10 am-2pm, Off Wed  
Connie M-T work from home 10-2, W-TH 10-2 office  
[www.manistiquemethodist.org](http://www.manistiquemethodist.org)  
email: [office@manistiquemethodist.org](mailto:office@manistiquemethodist.org)



Visit [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and search  
Manistique First UMC where you see the  
magnifying glass at the top of the page.  
Live worship services each Sunday at 11AM.

PASTOR'S  
WORDS



## THE CHRISTIAN CALLER

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[www.manistiquemethodist.org](http://www.manistiquemethodist.org)  
[office@manistiquemethodist.org](mailto:office@manistiquemethodist.org)

“Stick and stay to make it pay.” That’s the idiom that people say when things get tough, and it seems that the reward you are trying to earn isn’t coming to fruition. I know it’s certainly something that is similarly said at deer camp every year but more along the lines of “you have to put in your time.” It’s sometimes a hard lesson to learn: things don’t just happen without effort. Yes, there are times that miracles do happen (like the 8-point buck on opening day at 6:30 AM), but these are not without effort. They are convenient perhaps at just the right time, but you may not know the countless hours that someone spent praying for God’s love, grace, and mercy to intervene in a situation.

I want to emphasize wisdom here in the first statement to “stay the course.” Using our reasoning and wisdom, we sometimes need to change our traditions to make them more effective. One traditional practice in the early Christian church was to not allow women to be able to teach and certainly not hold any type of leadership role within the church. The traditional mindset at that time was to treat women as “contemptuous beings.” Now certainly our tradition from the 4<sup>th</sup> century has changed to be more inclusive in today’s Protestant churches, but we’re still working on it to make it equal for everyone. There is still a pay gap between male and female clergy in some conferences and churches, but there has been significant progress made over 16 centuries of change.

How do we know when we need to change our traditional practices? Going back to the original idiom the answer could be “when it no longer pays.” I’m not talking about financial pay, but when the results of our actions don’t produce any fruit, we should re-evaluate if we need to change our actions. To be clear, this is a whole church dialogue.

So how do you make your voice heard? Talk to members of the Vitality Committee to let them know your thoughts and ideas. Think about things that we have done in the past that have worked as well as those that haven’t worked as well.

PASTOR'S  
WORDS

Think about the traditions that we do within this church each year, then think about what they mean and symbolize. If you can't come up with an answer or reason for why we do something each year or if you can't see the fruit of the spirit at work, then we need to hear about it. It's okay to not know the reason why we say certain things during communion or to not know the purpose of the eternal flame in the sanctuary, but let's not let the conversation end there. Let's talk, let's teach, let's grow the community of believers, and our fellowship with each other through these opportunities.

When was the last time we had an actual membership class? Do our current members recall everything that members within our church are responsible for doing? Let's not use it as a trivia game to see who knows more but instead as a dialogue for planning how we want to encourage Christian Education within our church.

Before we can start doing effective ministry together in our community, we need to be equipped disciples of Christ: we truly do need to put on that "full armor of God" thing before we go out into the world. Jesus didn't just take some random people and immediately send them out to see what would happen, instead he gathered them up, met with them, told them stories, and educated them, then allowed them to feel the communal love that the church would bring to the world. Then, much later, they were sent out to the world because they had been equipped.

As we head into our Advent season of the worship series on "Come Home for Christmas," let's think about what makes this church our home. Think about everything that we do that makes it feel like home. I encourage you to pick up a devotional during our Advent season to help guide you through your discerning and I look forward to hearing all about what we have all learned in 2022.

Stay safe over Christmas and keep the love of God within your hearts to share it with others.



First United Methodist Church

We exist to joyfully share God's love,  
preach the Good News, and make disciples.

# December

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4 1 PM UMW Christmas Star of Hope Tea
5 Adult Sunday School 9:30 am * Worship 11 am	6 11:30 Bible Study 12:30 Prayer Group	7 11 Vitality 5:30 Trustee	8	9	10	11
12 Adult Sunday School 9:30 am * Worship 11 am	13 11:30 Bible Study 12:30 Prayer Group	14	15	16	17	18
19 Adult Sunday School 9:30 am * Worship 11 am	20 10 Ad Council 11:30 Bible Study 12:30 Prayer Group	21	22	23	24	25 
26 Adult Sunday School 9:30 am * Worship 11 am	27 11:30 Bible Study 12:30 Prayer Group	28 Ruth & Ron Annelin 	29	30 Jodi Louwsma 	31	





## Prayer Chain

As many of you know, we have a group in this church called the Prayer Chain, that offers daily prayers for individuals, situations, and problems brought to them. Prayer requests can also involve individuals, situations, etc. outside our church community.

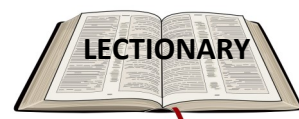
These prayer requests may be called in to Pastor B.J. Ash at 341-6662 (church) or 286-1492 (cell). You may also call Carol Weinert at 341-4499.



Visit [www.facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com) and search 1st United Methodist Church where you see the magnifying glass at the top of the page. Live worship services each Sunday at 11AM.



Newsletter suggestions are always welcome! If you have anything you wish to have published in the January newsletter submit before **December 20th, 2022** deadline. Pictures and other additions can be emailed to : [office@manistiquemethodist.org](mailto:office@manistiquemethodist.org)



### December 5th — 2nd Sunday of Advent

Mal 3:1-4, Lk 1:68-79 (UMH 208), Phil 1:3-11, Lk 3:1-6

### December 12th — 3rd Sunday of Advent

Zeph 3:14-20, Isa 12:2-6, Phil 4:4-7, Lk 3:7-18

### December 19th — 4th Sunday of Advent

Mic 5:2-5a, Lk 1:47-55 (UMH 199), Heb 10:5-10, Lk 1:39-45

### December 24th — Christmas Eve

Isa 9:2-7, Ps 96 (UMH 815), Titus 2:11-14, Lk 2:1-20

### December 25th — Christmas Day

Isa 52:7-10, Ps 98 (UMH 818), Heb 1:1-4 (5-12), Jn 1:1-14

### December 26th — 1st Sunday after Christmas

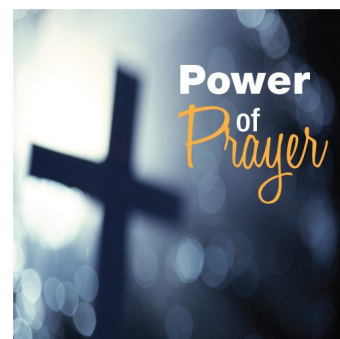
1 Sam 2:18-20, 26, Ps 148 (UMH 861), Col 3:12-17, Lk 2:41-52



## FOR OUR PRAYERFUL CONSIDERATION



Let us please keep the following people in our prayers: Hank Weinert, Martha Weeks, Joel Prater, Ted Burson, Penny Tracy, Connie Whitsitt, Jason Coryell, Kali Lewis, and the Janice Chittle family.



## A View From the Belfry

December 2021

Ah, December! It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas, isn't it? In some places we see chestnuts roasting on an open fire. Do you hear what I hear? I think it's jingle bells playing their happy holiday music! We deck the halls with boughs of holly, and we wish you a merry Christmas as we wait impatiently for jolly old St. Nicholas and Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer to come with that big sleigh to fill all the stockings which are hung by the fireplace with care. It's that Christmas time of year, all right! Hark! The herald angels sing! Do you hear them too, or are they sometimes drowned out by all the noise up on the house top from the reindeer pausing and Santa jumping out of his sleigh? While I'm dreaming of a white Christmas, (and yes, it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas around here with the bits of snow we're getting), it's still hard for me to believe that Santa Claus is coming to town! I wonder as I wander over the river and through the woods and through a marshmallow world created by all the snow we're starting to get, whether or not I'll be home for Christmas this year. I also wonder if Mary's little boy child, that sweet little Jesus boy, will have a silent night through which he can sleep, or whether the rat-a-tat of the little drummer boy's drumming and the jing-a-ling jing-a-ling of the bells on the horse's harness pulling people on a sleigh will wake the poor baby away in a manger.

I also think of the little boy that Santa Clause forgot, and of the little one who exclaimed, "All I want for Christmas is my two front teeth." Could that really be all a child would want for Christmas? Or how about the boy who knows he's gettin' nottin' for Christmas? Sometimes it seems that as much as we need a little Christmas, our focus on the silver and gold, the holly and the ivy, the nutcracker sweets, and all the trappings of Christmas, detract from the real meaning of this season. Perhaps this year I'll try to focus on the events that happened once in royal David's city, when angels from the realms of glory sang the first noel while shepherds watched their flocks by night. I'll ponder, what child is this, to attract the attention of three great kings who came out of the east to Bethlehem 'neath starlit skies, to worship a tiny baby? After all, Christmas is about a baby in a manger laid, isn't it? Perhaps this year I'll hum the peace carol instead of being amazed and amused that Grandma got run over by a reindeer. O holy night, help us all to keep your holiness in mind as we celebrate the reason for the season this year! Best wishes from the belfry, and have yourself a merry little Christmas!

(Bats don't have much money to spend on Christmas gifts, so this year I decided to give you a bat-made gift! See how many titles of Christmas songs you can find in this edition of A View from the Belfry! The person or people who come closest will receive a free copy of next month's newsletter!)



## Lay Leader Lines

December 2021

**Q: I know that The Festival of Lessons and Carols sponsored by the Manistique Ministerial Association will be done on-line this year instead of live, and that there may not be many Christmas parties or other live events either because of the continuing concerns about the COVID virus and the various new strains of it which continue to plague us. Will we have Christmas caroling this year? It seems to me that since it happens outside and people don't have to get too close to each other when they do it that we might be able to sing carols without too much danger.**

A: I have checked with both the Health Department and the Sheriff's Office (the personnel at the Health Department suggested that I do so), and both indicate that they have received no directives regarding Christmas caroling at all. Both felt that caroling will be permitted. It is like that we will not be allowed to enter medical care facilities or group homes because of their restrictions on visitors, but we should be able to carol outside private homes if we wish. If anyone is interested in going caroling, please call either Janet Helmbold or Mary Prater and let us know.



## United Methodist Women News

Submitted by Carol Weinert

While the cloud of the covid virus pandemic continues to hang over us, the Manistique United Methodist Women decided to make some changes regarding its annual Christmas programs. Instead of hosting a Christmas Tea open to the community, the UMW will hold a combined Christmas Tea, party and general meeting for the women of Manistique FUMC only.

The event will be held on Saturday, December 4 at 1 PM. Highlight of the festivities will be a white elephant grab bag exchange. Those attending the event are asked to bring a gift-wrapped useful item from their home that they no longer need. Please do not buy something specifically for the exchange.

Early in November some members of the UMW met at the church to prepare "Operation Christmas Child" shoe boxes. This is the program spearheaded by the Billy Graham Foundation in which boxes were quickly filled with crayons, coloring books, soap, toys, etc. for boys and girls ages toddlers to young teens. Many thanks to the workers and especially to Bette Jahn, who did the shopping and organized the event. A thank you is also extended to members of the church who generously contributed to the program.

Looking ahead, the First UMW meeting of the new year will be January 4, 2022, at 1 PM (weather permitting!) Now is a good time to join the group. The UMW is open to all women interested in the welfare of women and children.

Looking even further ahead, the next District UMW celebration will be May 3, 2022 at St. Ignace. Featured speaker will be Faith Fowler. More information will be given soon.

