



- 4 Carol Livingston
- 5 Ron Annelin
- 23 Gordie & Susan Barry
- 26 Tom Burge
- 29 Dan Kelsey

**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: pastor@manistiquemethodist.org
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
email: office@manistiquemethodist.org
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First United Methodist Church
 190 N. Cedar Street
 Manistique, Michigan 49854

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 Live worship services each Sunday at 11AM.



THE CHRISTIAN CALLER

First United Methodist Church
190 N. Cedar Manistique, MI
www.manistiquemethodist.org
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**PASTOR'S
WORDS**

A huge thank you to everyone who helped out with our VBS program this year! Thank you to all those who showed up in person to help, as well as those who either helped behind the scenes or prayed for us. We had a great turnout of kids and adults and everyone had a great time. Both the kids and adults learned from each other, too. Over the course of the next several weeks in July and leading up to our 150th Anniversary celebration, we're going to be engaging in a congregational study on the Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations. I'm thankful for Gordie's offer to help me with preparing for this study as he has gone through it with another congregation. There are 5 chapters that we will examine over those 5 weeks: Radical Hospitality, Passionate Worship, Intentional Faith Development, Risk-Taking Mission and Service, and Extravagant Generosity.

Each week will have a similar flow with a different topic and a devotion for each day during the week. There is also a time for reflection and a challenge for each of us on each day. This is a time for us to focus on our spiritual growth, both as a congregation and individually.

Pastor B.J.

VBS SUCCESS

After many years without a Vacation Bible School at our church, VBS has been recently resurrected by numerous of our devoted church members. The week of June 19-22 was the second of two annual VBS events that we hope to continue in future summers.

This year's youngest participant was three year old Patrick, still in diapers, who, with his prolific thank-yous, endeared himself to Carol Livingston, his constant caretaker, as she dutifully ran after him the entire time he was with us. The predominant group of five, six and seven years olds were actively involved in every lesson, including our fun filled video dancing at the close of our morning each day. Then there was the oldest member of the group, Brandon, going on thirteen years old, good natured as usual and accustomed to being a pastor's son, who obliged us all to participate with the rest of the VBS crowd most of whom were half his age.

Also Brandon and Alex both contributed their suggestions to the "staff" debriefing at the end of VBS. They expressed that one of the children's favorite activities was Bible centered science time led by their extraordinary science expert, Pastor BJ who taught them, among numerous other experiments, how to stick a pointed pencil through one side of a plastic sandwich bag filled with water and out of the other side yet not leak a drop. Since part of our theme this year was for us to work together for peace and to build each other up (Romans 14:19) the polymers in the plastic that held together to keep the bag from leaking could show the children how important it was for them to each peacefully hold together and build each other up so that they could successfully complete a job just like the bag successfully held the water in spite of outside forces that could damage it. Try this experiment sometime. You'll be amazed!

Overall our controlled, raucous, VBS was a great success and most of us lost at least three pounds over the course of our triumphal four days. We are already preparing for VBS in '24 and expecting victories ahead.



Church Mice

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First United Methodist Church

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

July

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
July Mission Noisy Offering — Society of St. Andrews						1
This organization brings people together to harvest and share healthy food, reduce waste and build caring communities by offering nourishment to hungry neighbors in the U.S. God is working through us. All donations will be accepted, drop it in as you enter or as you exit the sanctuary! Include your church envelope number if you want it tracked in your financial giving. Thank you for your support!						
2 Adult Sunday School 9:30 AM Worship 11 AM	3 Bible Study 11 AM Prayer Group 12 PM	4 Office Closed Independence Day Carol Livingston	5 Worship Committee 10 AM Ruth Annelin	6	7	8
9 Adult Sunday School 9:30 AM Worship 11 AM	10 Bible Study 11 AM Prayer Group 12 PM	11 Ad Council 10AM Vitality 1 PM	12 Pasty Prep 7:30 Sales 10am-1pm	13 Pasty Prep 7:30 Sales 10am-1pm	14	15
16 Adult Sunday School 9:30 AM Worship 11 AM	17 Bible Study 11 AM Prayer Group 12 PM	18	19	20	21	22
23 Adult Sunday School 9:30 AM Worship 11 AM Gordie & Susan Barry	24 Bible Study 11 AM Prayer Group 12 PM	25	26 Tom Burge	27	28	29 Dan Kelsey
30 Adult Sunday School 9:30 AM Worship 11 AM						

Folkfest is just around the corner, July 7th and 8th!
Thank you volunteers who helped to make this a success!

The profits will be donated to three local organizations:
Good Neighbor's Food Pantry • Habitat for Humanity • St. Vincent's Food Pantry

Prayer Chain

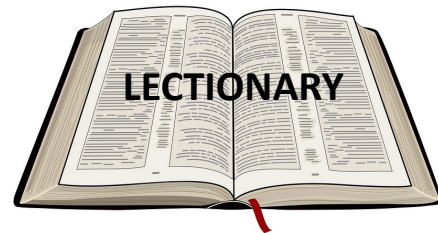
As many of you know we have a group in this church, called the Prayer Chain, that offers daily prayers for individuals, situations, and problems brought to them. Prayer requests can also involve individuals, situations, etc. outside our church community.

These prayer requests may be called in to Pastor B.J. Ash at 906-341-6662 (church) or 906-286-1492 (Pastor B.J. cell). You may also call Carol Weinert at 906-341-4499.



Visit 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.



July 2 — 5th Sunday After Pentecost

Gen 22:1-14; Ps 13 (UMH 746); Rom 6:12-23; Matt 10:40-42

July 9 — 6th Sunday After Pentecost

Gen 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67; Ps 45:10-17; Rom 7:15-25a; Matt 11:16-19, 25-30

July 16 — 7th Sunday After Pentecost

Gen 25:19-34; Ps 119:105-112; Rom 8:1-11; Matt 13:1-9, 18-23

July 23 — 8th Sunday After Pentecost, Parents Day

Gen 28:10-19a; Ps 139:1-12, 23-24 (UMH 854); Rom 8:12-25; Matt 13:24-30, 36-43

July 30 — 9th Sunday After Pentecost

Gen 29:15-28; Ps 105:1-11, 45b (UMH 828); Rom 8:26-39; Matt 13:31-33, 44-52



FOR OUR PRAYERFUL CONSIDERATION

Let us please keep the following people in our prayers: Dan Crosby, Sharon V & Celie N. brother, Lynn LaRose, Ken & Cyndi Burgin family, Ruth Annelin family, Dan Crosby, Karen Klaus, Connie Meade, Mary Prater, Katie Putnam, Kathleen & Michael Haynes, Mary & Bob Whinnen, Phyllis Burge, Jo Nell Rubick, Martha Weeks, Joel Prater, Ted Burson, Penny Tracy family, Connie Whitsitt, Kali Lewis, Kerry Billings family health, and all cancer victims.



Newsletter suggestions are always welcome! If you have anything you wish to have published in the next newsletter submit before **July 21, 2023** deadline.

Pictures and other additions can be emailed to : office@manistiquemethodist.org

June Mission Noisy Offering of \$52 for Helpful Hotspot! Thank you for your support!



A View From the Belfry July, 2023

I'm exhausted! I'm really, really tired! All dragged out, in fact! My wings are droopy, my eyes are droopy, even my ears are droopy! And it's all your fault, you Methodist people! Yep! Your fault! This summer you've been so busy that I'm exhausted just watching you! First, your pasty makers outdid themselves in June, making more batches than they had planned to make, and then selling them out completely! Then you were planning Vacation Bible School, which you had in the middle of June! You had more kids this year than you did last year, and they were really great kids! And energetic, too! After that you had Folkfest pasties to make and bake, along with setting up the booth, transporting the pasties from the church to the booth to sell them, etc. etc. etc.! You had your extemporaneous choir assemble to sing in church. Your bell ringers are hoping to get together to play in church, also! You had the church float to spruce up (thanks so much Vic and Sharon Vanderville!) and some of you are going to ride on it or walk beside it and hand out candy in the July 4th (held on the 1st) parade. Some of you spent time, or will soon spend time, at Camp Michigamme, doing whatever campers do there. (I heard from my second cousin Bazilla Bat that it's a great place to spend time in the summer, with lots going on!). The really big palooza, however, is that you are going to be celebrating a once-in-a-lifetime event, the 150th anniversary of the founding of this church! Wow! There will be a potluck picnic at the Ash residence, July 12 from 11 AM-3 PM, with lots of guests invited, including all the former ministers of this church (well, all the alive ones, anyway). There will also be a special anniversary worship service on the following Sunday, July 13th, and again everybody is invited, including the District Superintendent, the Bishop, maybe the Pope even, although I'm not so sure about that. Apparently when the Pope travels he stays in a basilica, and I don't think you have time to build one of those in this town. As I understand it, the closest basilica to here is in Grand Rapids, which isn't really very close. (What's a basilica, anyway? A big tent or something? Maybe Pastor B.J. can research it on his phone.) Anyway, without a basilica for the Pope to stay in, he probably can't come. Now do you see why I'm so worn out? What I don't understand is, why aren't all of you as tired as I am? You just keep on going, like that pink Energizer bunny that used to hop across your television screens years ago. I wonder what ever became of him? Hmm, I think I'll go take a nap and dream about it! Meanwhile, keep up the good work! (But don't forget to give yourselves a little quiet time, too!)

Lay Leader Lines July, 2023

Early in June I attended the Michigan Annual Conference as the lay representative from this church. One of the responsibilities of the lay representative is to report back to the church congregation on the activities of the Annual Conference. I would like to do so in this newsletter article, with the understanding that if you have any questions or comments I would be happy to address them. Pastor B.J. has already commented on some of the conference proceedings. I agree with him that this year's conference was far less contentious than the past few years have been, possibly because some of the areas of disagreement have been or are being addressed through other venues, but more probably because several (60) churches which have been dissatisfied with the manner in which issues are being handled have already moved to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church, thus reducing the number of those present who are seriously dissatisfied with the current situation. While there were still some questions and comments about what is happening, the tone of the meetings was much less vitriolic. We saw more patience and a desire to be polite and to stick to the issues rather than to become embroiled in negative accusations and unnecessary unkindness than was true last year.

As is true at all of these conferences, we dealt with some mundane, noncontroversial items, such as fulfilling the business necessary to meet government standards for remaining a corporation, and confirming our intention to continue to support ongoing mission efforts such as providing financial support to the Judith Craig Children's Home in Liberia and the Haiti Children's Hospital. We heard some excellent sermons from guest ministers who invited to share their thoughts with the conference participants. We also heard reports on the results of the legislative items which were handled by ZOOM before the conference actually began. Very few of these were controversial, and most were handled completely in the legislative sessions, thus not coming to the conference as a whole.

As in past years, the main issue in the minds of most of the participants was that of dealing with concerns over those sections of the Book of Discipline addressing the handling of sexual identity issues, such as whether or not to allow individuals with alternative sexual identity concerns to be ordained and to allow same-sex individuals to marry. So far the Book of Discipline has not been altered; such actions are currently not allowed by the current standards. The issues have existed for many years, and proposals to address them have been postponed, sometimes because of a lack of consensus at the General Conference, sometimes because of a postponement of the General Conference because of COVID, and sometimes because of an apparent unwillingness to get on with business because of a dread of what might happen to the United Methodist Church as a denomination. There are still many unanswered questions which need to be clarified. Local churches are becoming increasingly ill at ease about the issue, and until it is fully resolved, this is likely to continue. I would like to offer a few thoughts on the matter, with the caveat that I certainly do not know everything about this issue, and feel I cannot do so until further actions are taken to bring about a solution to the problem.

1. At one time local churches were advised that they would have to decide whether or not to continue with the United Methodist Church or to disaffiliate from it by December 31, 2023. While this deadline has not been officially changed, our Bishop has indicated that since the General Conference at which the final decision was to have been made regarding the contents of the Book of Discipline on this issue was cancelled due to COVID, the deadline will very likely be extended, to give the General Conference time to make a firm decision and then to give all of the local churches time to settle the decision for themselves. Until we actually know what the General Conference decides to do, we cannot make a choice as to what we will do because we do not know what the options will be.

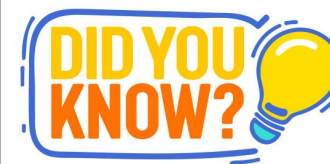
2. In addition to knowing what the local church choices will be, the ramifications for each church are likely to be unique to that church. It appears that there will be some serious financial concerns



United Women in Faith News Submitted by Carol Weinert

The annual United Women in Faith (formerly Manistique UMW) will hold its annual summer picnic on Tuesday, August 1, at noon at the church. The menu is a planned salad luncheon. The program will be presented by the Country Roses, a local Christian vocal group.

The picnic will take the place of the August General Meeting. The next General Meeting of the UWIF will be held Tuesday, September 5 at 1 PM. Those taking part in the Reading Program are encouraged to continue toward their goal during these summer months. The goal is to be completed by December 31.



1. In the parable of the sower, to what did Jesus compare seed which has been sown on rocky ground?

1. A person who isn't careful when planting a garden and so doesn't avoid sowing seed among the rocks.

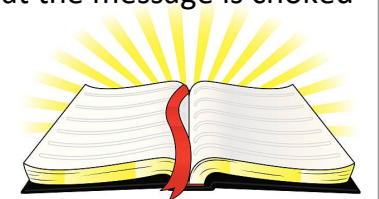
2. A person who hears the message and receives it immediately, but who has no depth of understanding so the message soon withers away.

3. A person who has so many cares and concerns about this world that the message is choked by all the distractions and produces nothing.

4. A person with rocks in his or her head who understands nothing.

5. A person in whom the seed never had a chance to take root at all.

The answers to both questions can be found in Matthew 13: 1-9, 18-23.



Lay Leader Lines (continued)

which will need to be addressed, and these will vary from church to church depending on several factors such as whether or not the church has regularly paid its apportionments in full, whether the minister at that church is full time or part time, an elder or a local pastor, whether the minister has opted to take the Conference insurance package or has opted out of it, etc.

3. At this time a local church which decides to remain a part of the United Methodist denomination may still have input regarding the characteristics the congregation seeks in any minister assigned to it. It appears that if there is a preference for a minister without sexual identity concerns such as a cross-sexual identification, no such individual will be assigned to that church and that this position will be upheld in a court of law should such a decision be questioned.

In general, I see this church remaining a cohesive church family in which each member is respected and loved. We all have been kind and accepting of each other, and I don't see any reason that this should change, regardless of the outcome of the decisions of the General Conference when it eventually meets and deals with the problems it faces. I would be happy to address any questions you may have regarding anything discussed at Annual Conference. I don't have all the answers, and don't feel that anybody does at this point, but I do think we can get through this situation, as the Methodist Churches have done in the past. I also think that at this time our prayers for God's will to be done and to be made clear to His Methodist followers are essential, and trust that the issues under consideration will indeed be kept in prayer by this congregation.

Respectfully Janet Helmbold