



- 6 Alex Ash
- 7 Celie Norton
- 8 Pixie Livingston
- 22 Bette Jahn
- 29 Rita Salter

**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](mailto:pastor@manistiquemethodist.org)**  
**Office Hours: Pastor B.J. M-F 8 am-12 pm, Off Wed**  
**Connie M-T work from home 10-2, W-TH 10-2 office**  
**email: [office@manistiquemethodist.org](mailto:office@manistiquemethodist.org)**  
**[www.manistiquemethodist.org](http://www.manistiquemethodist.org)**

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

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*THE CHRISTIAN CALLER*

**First United Methodist Church**  
**190 N. Cedar Manistique, MI**  
[www.manistiquemethodist.org](http://www.manistiquemethodist.org)  
[office@manistiquemethodist.org](mailto:office@manistiquemethodist.org)

**PASTOR'S  
 WORDS**

I have been weighing the following words carefully over the past 2 months. My hope is that they will illuminate and educate and not draw lines to separate. In order for us to have the conversation about where we understand our local church is in the conversation about human sexuality, we need to educate ourselves so that we speak with wisdom and not pure emotion. So, here is a basic history lesson, a "State of the UMC" if you will, that will get everyone up to speed on how we got here in the first place.

In 1968, the joining of the Methodist Church with the Evangelical United Brethren formed the UMC. During the next general conference in 1972, issues were raised over proposed language naming homosexuals as people of sacred worth. The issue remains unsettled for the past 51+ years. There have been amendments to the language in our social principles, additions to our *Book of Discipline* (the document that guides the polity, structure, and adds to the clarification of the theology of our churches), and much debate and controversy over all issues related to defining human sexuality.

The 2 main issues that have come from the attempts to define human sexuality have been:

- Marriage of same-sex couples
- Ordination of homosexual clergy defined as "self-avowed practicing homosexual"

With our society and current culture further defining human sexuality far beyond simply "homosexual" to include non-binary, etc., you can see where this can quickly become a "what about \_\_\_\_\_?" debate. The statement of "self-avowed practicing homosexual" was carefully chosen back in 1972 so as not to lead to a witch-hunt style set of accusations that would further cause harm and hatred within the church. No further definition of that statement has come from legislative action of the General Conference of the UMC. This has caused appeals to the UM Judicial Council to be sent back to Annual Conferences with strong warning messages that it can not rule on these types of appeals as the statement is not defined in legislation.

So where is the UMC at with this issue today? In our *Book of Discipline* and the accompanying *Book of Resolutions*, the UMC affirms:

"...that sexuality is God's good gift to all persons. We call everyone to responsible stewardship of this sacred gift."... "Although all persons are sexual beings whether or not they are married, sexual relations are affirmed only with the covenant of monogamous, heterosexual marriage." The church states elsewhere that marriage should only be between a woman and a man. The



**PASTOR'S WORDS**

church deplores all forms of commercialization, abuse and exploitation related to sex and calls for strict global enforcement of laws prohibiting the exploitation of children.

“We affirm that all persons are individuals of sacred worth, created in the image of God,” and that all persons need the ministry of the church.

“The UMC does not condone the practice of homosexuality and considers this practice incompatible with Christian teaching. We affirm that God's grace is available to all. We will seek to live together in Christian community, welcoming, forgiving and loving one another, as Christ has loved and accepted us. We implore families and churches not to reject or condemn lesbian and gay members and friends. We commit ourselves to be in ministry for and with all persons.”

“The United Methodist Church is a part of the church universal, which is one Body in Christ. The United Methodist Church acknowledges that all persons are of sacred worth. All persons without regard to race, color, national origin, status or economic condition shall be eligible to attend its worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments, upon baptism be admitted as baptized members, and upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith, become professing members in any local church in the connection.”

Many churches with strong conservative political views have chosen to disaffiliate from the denomination over fears of the statements above. Some churches with opposing (liberal) political views have also chosen to disaffiliate from the denomination over the hatred directed towards people that are a part of their local churches. Other churches have remained UMC as we have while they wait to see what the next General Conference in 2024 will reveal for the path forward.

During the past several Annual Conferences (Michigan), Bishop David Bard has encouraged local churches to allow space for everyone within the church. There has not been any heavy-handed legislation nor any stubborn leadership style portrayed from our conference's leadership as we have been navigating these issues over the years. There has been patience, so I would encourage us to take our time when discerning our options that may come from the 2024 General Conference.

--

Pastor B.J.

**Church Mice**



The Pie Auction was a Huge Success! \$2,186 was collected and will assist in the purchase of the clavino. We hope everyone is enjoying the music!



**First United Methodist Church**

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

**November**

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
<b>November Mission Noisy Offering — Thanksgiving Boxes</b> Local Thanksgiving boxes are coordinated through Kiwanis International. We participate to ensure that local families are provided a nutritious meal for Thanksgiving!			1 All Saints Day	2	3	4
5 Adult Sunday School 9:30 AM Worship 11 AM	6 Bible Study 11 AM Prayer Group 12 PM Alex Ash	7 Trustees 10 AM UWiF 1 PM Celie Norton	8 Pasty Prep 7:30 Sales 10am-1pm Pixie Livingston	9 Pasty Prep 7:30 Sales 10am-1pm S/PRC meeting Zoom 6:30 PM	10 Ad Council 10AM	11 Charge Conference 10 AM at Escanaba Central
12 UWiF Sunday Adult Sunday School 9:30 AM Worship 11 AM	13 Bible Study 11 AM Prayer Group 12 PM	14	15	16	17	18
19 Adult Sunday School 9:30 AM Worship 11 AM	20 Bible Study 11 AM Prayer Group 12 PM	21 Manistique Ministerial Association Thanksgiving Service 7 PM First Baptist Church	22 Bette Jahn	23 Office Closed - Thanksgiving	24	25
26 Adult Sunday School 9:30 AM Worship 11 AM	27 Bible Study 11 AM Prayer Group 12 PM	28	29 Rita Salter	30 2023 Annual Conference Special Session 7 PM Zoom	<b>150th Commemorative T-Shirts for sale!</b> Limited quantities! Adult sizes: M—L—XL <b>Blue or Gray \$18.45</b>	

# Prayer Chain

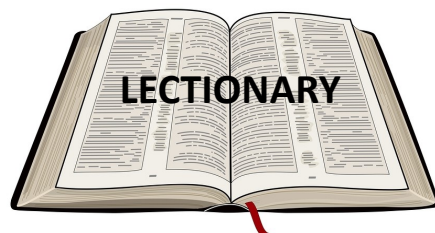
As many of you know we have a group in this church, called the Prayer Chain, that offers daily prayers for individuals, situations, and problems brought to them. Prayer requests can also involve individuals, situations, etc. outside our church community.

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.



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Live worship services each Sunday at 11AM.



Newsletter suggestions are always welcome! If you have anything you wish to have published in the next newsletter submit before **November 22, 2023** deadline.

Pictures and other additions can be emailed to: [office@manistiquemethodist.org](mailto:office@manistiquemethodist.org)

October Mission Noisy Offering collection for Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child will be announced soon. Thank you for your support!

**November 5** — 23rd Sunday After Pentecost, Daylight Savings Time Ends (clock fall back 1 hr)

Josh 3:7-17; Ps 107:1-7, 33-37 (UMH 830); 1 Thess 2:9-13; Matt 23:1-12

**November 12** — 24th Sunday After Pentecost, UWif (UMW) Sunday

Josh 24:1-3a, 14-25; Ps 78:1-7 (UMH 799); 1 Thess 4:13-18; Matt 25:1-13

**November 19** — 25th Sunday After Pentecost

Judg 4:1-7; Ps 123; 1 Thess 5:1-11; Matt 25:14-30

**November 23** — Thanksgiving Day

Deut 8:7-18; Ps 65 (UMH 821); 2 Cor 9:6-15; Luke 17:11-19

**November 26** — 26th Sunday After Pentecost, Reign of Christ, United Methodist Student Day

Ezek 34:11-16, 20-24; Ps 100 (UMH 821); Eph 1:15-23; Matt 25:31-46



## FOR OUR PRAYERFUL CONSIDERATION

Let us please keep the following people in our prayers: Rita Salter, Ruth Annelin, Joel Prater, Jo Nell Rubick, Gayle Tufnell, Sharon V. & Celie's N. brother, Lynn LaRose, Cynthia and Ken Burgin, Mary Prater, Katie Putnam, Michael Haynes, Mary Whinnen, Phyllis Burge, Martha Weeks, Ted Burson, Penny Tracy family, Connie Whitsitt, Kerry Billings family health, Connie Meade, David Stout's family needs, and our unspoken requests.



## A View From the Belfry November, 2023

**A belated "Boo!" from the belfry!** Actually it may not be so belated, depending on when this edition of the newsletter reaches you. Connie Kelsey does a tremendous job of getting everything done on time, but some of those article providers for it...well, not so much, although I'm not naming any names. Anyway, by now the best holiday of the year may be over, although it may still be yet to come. (No, I don't mean St. Swithins Day! It's Halloween, for those of you who have never read this column in the newsletter before!) This church has had a very busy October! In addition to Trunk or Treat, we had the progressive dinner, involving several local churches in providing lots of yummy food for everybody. (Well, except for bats, that is. No mosquito pie, no mosquito salad, or soup, or appetizers, and certainly no mosquito roasts.) The dinner was well attended, and everybody had a great time. You know, if people in other places could work as well together as the local churches in this community do, we wouldn't be hearing about wars in Israel and the Ukraine, or shootings in businesses and schools in this country, or bullying on the school playgrounds, or dozens of other problems which people seem to face constantly. Maybe the Manistique Ministerial Association, which is the instigator and driving force behind the progressive dinner event, could hire themselves out to teach nations and other people how to get along! A special thanks to those from this church who prepared salads and served the people who came to enjoy a great progressive meal!

A first for this church was our introduction to a new clavinova! It sounds like it should be a cross between a clarinet and new star which has suddenly appeared on the scene, but actually, it's a piano-like thing that can sound like a piano, or an organ, or like Old McDonald's farm, complete with all the farm animals! Cyndi Burgin, our expert musician/organist/pianist/clavinovist/pump organist/and probably a kazoo player, seems to really love it. She's gone from practicing an hour at a time once or twice a week to practicing 8 to 10 hours at a time 8 days a week! The thing is, she's so good she probably wouldn't have to practice at all! She even did special music one Sunday to show what this instrument can do. Meanwhile the old piano, after about 80 years of use, is getting the rest it has so valiantly earned. As of this writing, after a short vacation in the hallway to the lift, it has undergone major plastic surgery or something of the sort, and its various parts are headed toward a new life as...well, that's still open to debate. Dan Kelsey, who has lots of creative ideas, has mentioned possibly turning the big metal sound board into a kid's musical instrument, but so far he hasn't firmly committed to anything yet. Thanks, Dan, for getting at least part of it out of the hallway! Thanks also to the high school wrestling team for moving it down those front stairs. That thing weighed about a ton! (Ok, I didn't lift it, but that's what I was told! It was probably more like about 700 to 1000 pounds, not a full ton.)

As busy as October was, November promises to be just as busy! The local church conference is coming up, as well as the United Women in Faith Sunday worship service, the normal pasty baking event to feed all the hungry hunters hoping to get their deer, and Thanksgiving! This church will again help sponsor a community Thanksgiving dinner at the Big Boy restaurant. (You might know that they don't have mosquitoes on the menu, of course!)

Well, thinking of all this church has done, plus having to find my own mosquitoes during this off season for them, has exhausted me, so I think I'll bid you all a fond farewell and a great Thanksgiving! (I expect I'll go hungry again, myself. No mosquitoes, not even a gnat or two...SIGH!!!)

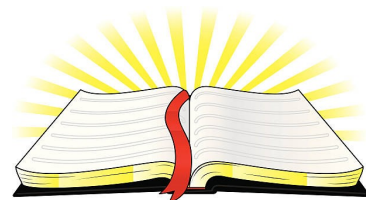
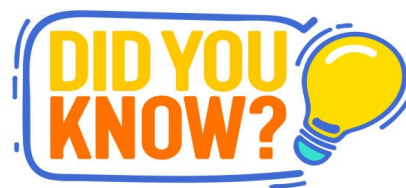


**Lay Leader Lines  
November, 2023**

**Q:** I hear that some people in this church want to remodel the sanctuary and eliminate the altar area. They also want to rebuild the steeple to look like it did years ago, with a point on top. Is this true? I love this church just the way it is! Why would we change it?

**A:** One of the functions of the governing bodies of the church is to engage in long-term planning so that we can continue to meet the needs of the congregation and the community in which the church is located. As society changes, the church needs to remain able to meet these changing needs. This requires planning for the years ahead. As a result there have been discussions about ways in which the sanctuary could be modified to better equip us to meet such needs. One suggestion has been to remodel the sanctuary to reduce the number of different levels in it. At present it has three levels, the main floor and the two levels found in the altar and choir loft area. The current choir loft area is not easily accessible to those with mobility problems, and was designed for a time in which we had a choir which used the choir loft every Sunday. As has happened in many churches over the years, the choir no longer exists, and the choir loft is unused except on rare occasions. In fact, it is used more for storage than for anything else. As for the steeple, for years we have had a very small fund set aside to replace the top of the steeple which was removed years ago, but there was little interest in doing so. At present there is somewhat more interest in exploring this possibility. We have also discussed many other ideas to improve the church, such as trying to find a better solution to our parking space limitations than we currently have, which relies on the generosity of the credit union which allows us to use their empty space for parking during the months when it is not needed for holding the snow plowed from their paved parking lot. At this time, we have no firm plans to undertake any of the modifications under discussion. At some point, however, we may want to address how to make this church facility more usable as times and needs change. This is the goal of long-range planning. We have no interest in changing what works well and is useful. Rather, the goal of long-range planning is to insure that the church will continue to be useful and adequate to meet the needs of the congregation and the community into the future.

1. What blessing did Jesus say would be given to those who are poor in spirit?
  - A. They will inherit the earth.
  - B. They will be called children of God.
  - C. They will be given great wealth.
  - D. They will see God.
  - E. Theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.
  - F. They will win the lottery.
  
2. What blessing did Jesus say would be given to the pure in heart?
  - A. They will inherit the earth.
  - B. They will be called children of God.
  - C. They will be highly praised.
  - D. They will see God.
  - E. Theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.
  - F. They will receive a pure white robe and gold crown.



You can find the answers to these questions in Matthew 5:1-12



**United Women in Faith News  
Submitted by Carol Weinert**

Make sure you attend the Sunday, November 12, worship service at Manistique First United Methodist Church!

That is the date of the United Women in Faith (UMW) annual worship service. There are sure to be surprises, laughter, and, especially, an inspirational message presented entirely by the women of FUMC. Most of the women of the local chapter of UWif will be involved in the program, from ushers to the presentation of the message. Fellowship hour will also be hosted by the women.

At the October meeting of the group, it was decided to have their annual Christmas Tea on Saturday, December 9. The program will be open to our church members and guests only. The event will not be open to the community as in the past, due to the return of the COVID virus.

The Tea will include a cookie exchange for those interested. Those wishing to participate are asked to bring three dozen cookies of their choice to share.

Due to "late" scheduling of the Tea, there will be no Christmas party this year.

The next General Meeting of the UWif will be held Tuesday, November 7, at 1 PM. Included in this meeting will be the annual Thank Offering. Final preparations for UWif Sunday will be made at this meeting.

As I announced my retirement in the October column, my final report will be in the December Newsletter. Beginning in January 2024, Char Crosby will take over the task of informing readers of the happenings of our UWif group. Thank you so much Char for accepting the position.



A grateful thank you to everyone for their generous donations for the layettes, that we provide for Family Health for babies 0-3 months.

The cute socks and hats, several sleepers, blankets, stuffed animals, and monetary donations are much appreciated. With the donation from the UWif (UMW) I purchased enough flannel for a year. I will also purchase sleepers which we need.

I have two quilts left that Norma made. We need blankets for the winter months. We have received several cold weather outer wear also.

I always receive a big smile when I deliver the gift bags. They appreciate what we provide for the newborn babies.

Bless you,  
Lynn LaRose

Packet for the Layette 0-3 months includes:  
1 hat  
1 onesie  
1 heavy or 1 light sleeper  
1 receiving blanket  
1 blanket, quilt, or afghan  
booties, socks, etc., optional