



FIRST WORD

AUGUST

GOD LOVES ALL PEOPLE, SO DO WE

212 S. Park Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49007

(269) 381-6340

www.umc-kzo.org



First Strings, photo taken by Keith Mumma.

At First United Methodist Church of Kalamazoo, we seek to integrate our young people into the full life of the church. It is our hope that young people are given the freedom to be who they are, to be leaders in worship, to share their gifts with the community, and to find space for spiritual formation in ways unique to them at this critical growth point in their lives. Through Youth Group, Confirmation, and Sunday School, we'll ask three important questions: "Who am I?", "Where do I belong?", and "How does my story intersect with God's story?" Throughout the year we prioritize relationships and belonging, we have fun, and we grow together. If you are a young person looking for a place to connect we hope to see you this year. For any questions, contact Pastor Matt Weiler at mweiler@umc-kzo.org.



NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS: CENTERING YOUTH AND INVITING ALL

This Fall, we are re-launching youth Sunday School for all students from 6th grade through high school. Classes will meet each week following worship and focus on learning about the Bible while engaging important current issues as well as spiritual practices. While this class is designed for young people, "grown-ups" are invited as well for a family learning experience that is designed with young people in mind. Join us in the Youth Lounge on Rejoice Sunday, September 8, following worship to learn more. Classes begin September 22.

YOUTH GROUP BEGINS SEPTEMBER 15TH

Youth Group will begin on September 8, in the Youth Lounge from 6-7:30 pm and is open to all youth from 6th through 12th grade. This is a space for young people to be in friendship with God and with one another, and to build lasting relationships through play, reflection, and worship. We will meet every Sunday evening from 6-7:30 pm with occasional variations on the time for special events. A full schedule through Christmas Break will be provided at our September 8 Rejoice Sunday meeting.



CONFIRMATION

Confirmation is a two-year process open to all youth who are currently in 7th grade or older. The purpose of confirmation is to help young people explore their faith through bible study and christian formation. Our first meeting this Fall will be held on September 15 immediately after worship. We'll then meet on the 3rd Sunday of each month throughout the year. Students who have completed the two-year confirmation cycle will be invited to join the church on Confirmation Sunday on May 18, 2025. A full schedule of meetings, retreats, and times will be provided for all participants via email and hard copy on the 9th. Everyone (current and new students) must register on the Google form provided in upcoming Around the Corner Emails and Youth Group Emails.



Appalachian Service project

The Youth of FUMC joined our friends from Portage Chapel Hill Church for a meaningful and memorable week of service with Appalachian Service Project this month in Magoffin County, Kentucky. We installed a tin roof, tore down and rebuilt a porch, dry-walled a new ceiling, installed new flooring and trim work, and darn near melted in the blistering heat all for the love of God and neighbor.

ASP isn't all work! Our evenings were spent feasting, playing music, reflecting, swimming in a local reservoir, and of course playing Euchre.

We were also blessed to meet Melisa Winburn, President and CEO of ASP who announced this was the 21st year of ASP trips for FUMC!

In gratitude to the people of FUMC for your prayers, your support, and love for the young people of our congregation. Be sure to join us in worship in September when the ASP team tells the story of our adventure and for an opportunity to fund future mission trips!



SPLENDID SUPPERS FOR SEVEN

Round three of Splendid Suppers for Seven is now in progress. The dates we have available are Saturday, September 21, September 27, and September 28. All are being held at 6:00 pm. Sign-up sheets will be available at the welcome desk. Feel free to sign up even if you have attended one already.

P.S. Sign-up for November hosts will begin in October.

Thank you,
Mary and Vickee (Lay Leaders)

First Word for September

Articles for the next issue are due no later than September 5, 2024.

Articles submitted to the newsletter should be sent to jcelorio@umc-kzo.org. Articles may be edited for space and content.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

We are looking for volunteers to join our team as bus drivers for Sunday morning worship. This is a wonderful opportunity to contribute to our church community by helping members who lack transportation to attend our services. If you have a valid driver's license, enjoy interacting with people, and want to serve in a meaningful way, please consider this role. Please contact Robin Entenman at: (269) 910-3963

ADULT MISSION TRIP

We invite adults of any age to join us on a mission trip to Detroit, October 3 - 6. We will be staying at and working through Cass Community Social Services, a Detroit-based agency connected with Cass Community United Methodist Church. For questions, or to sign up, please contact Dan Duncan at: (616) 502-5092 or danduncan56@gmail.com





AUGUST MISSION OF THE MONTH

HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS MINISTRY

In early June, we shared how Helping Our Neighbors (HON) had helped 200 families avoid eviction and utility shutoffs. Since then, our workload increased to over 60 calls a week.

The Kalamazoo Gazette reported that many in our city live paycheck to paycheck. An unexpected \$400 expense can cause financial turmoil. ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Restrained, Employed) describes these individuals. Disabled individuals, with monthly incomes under \$1000, face even greater challenges, with rising rents and utility costs.

In response, the Mission of the Month for August was HON. A special offering was taken on August 11, and we encouraged volunteering to answer calls for help. Ann and Ray Sweany, Carolyn Murphy, and JoAnne Lehman were the contacts for volunteers. Janine Kennedy stepped down after 5 years of service. We encourage you to consider volunteering and help answer calls for those in need. Please inform Ann and Ray Sweany, Carolyn Murphy, or JoAnne Lehman of your interest.



Janine Kennedy

Janine Kennedy, after six years of dedicated service, is stepping down. You have the opportunity to continue the mission of supporting our neighbors in their times of urgent need. We have two new members of the team for whom we are grateful they will begin their training in the next couple of weeks. We hope to keep adding to this team that does so much for those in need in our community.

MINISTRY FAIR WRAP-UP

On Rejoice Sunday, we will be celebrating the culmination of our Ministry Fair with a big sign-up day. We hope you have been following the Ministry Fair spotlight throughout the summer, discovering new interests in the church's ministries, and are now ready to sign up to be a part of one of them. This is the perfect opportunity for that.

JOB OPPORTUNITY

First United Methodist Church of Kalamazoo is seeking to hire a part-time building host. This position cares for the safety of the church building and occupants, while serving as a welcoming leader for all who enter. Hours will typically be half days during the week, with some evening shifts. Weekend shifts are highly variable and dependent upon special weekend activities in the building. Please contact Rev. Matt Weiler at: mweiler@umc-kzo.org, or phone the church: (269)-381-6340 to apply. Resumés may be submitted to resumes@umc-kzo.org.

Our Sympathy and Prayers to the family and friends of:

David Lundquist who died on May 2nd

Allan Arvidson who died on May 31st

Jim Treece who died on July 11th

Please keep these friends in your prayers:

- Don Chalker
- Christine
- Lenora Holliday
- Judy McClelland
- Susan Noble
- Anna Rassmussen
- Mary Lou Sanderson
- Barb Skuza
- Tom and Marcia Stobie
- Lori Valkema
- Carol & family
- Sally Stevens
- Hank Rohs
- RuthAnn and Bill Uggen
- Michael Seals
- Willoughby family
- Britnee Warzybok

Prayer Requests

If you would like to share a prayer request with our clergy and prayer ministry team, please visit www.umc-kzo.org/contact-us/prayer-request/. or, please call the church at **(269) 381-6340** and leave a message.



After Worship Coffee Service

Coffee service happens every Sunday at Kalamazoo FUMC. Join us after worship in the Perks Area on the first level of the church. We look forward to sharing coffee and fellowship with you!