

# The First United Methodist Church of Lowell

## Tele-Christian January 2023 Edition

**The mission of the United Methodist Church is to  
make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.**



### *Mark's Remarks...*

It is time for a new year. It seems hard to believe that the old year is done. Where did 2022 go? What will 2023 bring? It is no wonder that New Years has been a big deal for a millennium. It is a time to look back and evaluate what has occurred in the past. It is also a time to make plans and goals for the year ahead.

This message is contained in the very name of the month that kicks things off. "January" was given that name in honor of the Roman god, Janus. Janus was a two-faced god, seeing ahead and behind. He was the god of doorways and gates as well as new beginnings.

I like to use my January newsletter article to reflect on my appreciation of you as my congregation. It is so easy to take things for granted and expect them. I want to begin by saying thank you for allowing me to serve you as your pastor. It is truly an honor. This is such a great group of people. So different in so many ways and yet so loving to each other. I look forward to many more years of working together.

Thank you all for the salary and other compensations you provide. You allow for Lori and I to have a comfortable life with our grandson, Lucien. We have all that we need and a lot of what we wish for.

Thank you for the home that you provide. It is beautiful and comfortable. The Trustees are always there to help if there is an issue. It is a great load off my mind to not have to worry about housing.

Finally, thank you for the many ways you make us feel loved and welcome throughout the year. You provide many gifts, you go out of your way to say things to us that are kind, you even will offer constructive criticism (but do so in a loving Christian way).

I truly look forward to serving you all in 2023. Remember, I am always available when you have a need. I am your pastor and friend 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call, text, email or visit whenever you want. God bless you in the New Year.

*Pastor Mark*

# A LIFE OF WORSHIP

## January Sermon and Scripture Schedule

- January 1** ~ Scott Spry will preach  
Scripture: Psalm 90:12, Luke 5:12-16      Sermon Title: 'A Fresh Start'
- January 8** ~ Scripture: I Corinthians 6:19-20      Sermon Title: 'Resolution 1: My Health'
- January 15** ~ Scripture: II Corinthians 9:6-8      Sermon Title: 'Resolution 2: My Wealth'
- January 22** ~ Scripture: I Corinthians 9:24-27      Sermon Title: 'Resolution 3: Get In Shape'
- January 29** ~ Scripture: I Corinthians 14:33      Sermon Title: 'Resolution 4: Declutter'



### Worship News

**January 1** ~ Ring in the New Year as we worship together during **ONE** church service at 9:30 am. January 8 we will resume our two church services at 8 am and 10:30 am.

**January 6** ~ Taking down the Greens!

All are welcome to join us as we take down the greens, Friday January 6 at 9:00 am. We will gather in the Narthex. Many hands make light work. Hope to see you Friday January 6!

**January 8** ~ During the month of January join us in worship as we study "Resolutions". Pastor Mark will be preaching a new sermon series starting January 8 entitled "New Year's Resolutions." He will take the standard resolutions and look at what the Bible has to say about them. Come to church, it's a great way to start 2023.

Thank you to all who purchased poinsettias this Christmas season. Our church was beautifully decorated with 24 flowers adding to our worship services this Advent season! If you would like to take your poinsettia home, please pick it up before January 6.



LYFT (Live Your Faith Today) is our Thursday evening worship service. We start at 5:30 pm with dinner and go right into worship at 6 pm. Worship includes music, a lay speaker or Pastor Mark speaking, prayer and ends with communion. LYFT is a casual worship service where we look forward each week to food, fellowship and fun! Everyone is welcome! Bring a friend!

\*\*\*A special thank you to all who took time out of their busy schedules to help cook for our Thursday night dinner/worship service in 2022. We already have two people who have volunteered to take a Thursday in January to cook! (One of the January cooks already prepared a dinner and put it in the freezer for us....that is only one of the many ways someone can help!) If you can help in any way with Thursday night dinner, please contact Kim in the church office.



### Welcome, Bobbie Sue Whaley



It is my pleasure to welcome Bobbie Sue Whaley as our new Chancel Choir Director. Bobbie and her husband, Devan, are new to the Lowell community. Bobbie teaches junior high choir in Kouts and Devan is the LHS band director. Bobbie and her husband have already shared their beautiful voices in our Christmas cantata.

We look forward to working with Bobbie, who will be starting with the choir on January 5, 2023! Please make her feel welcome!

Staff Parish Chairperson  
Nancy Lain

## Committee Training

The North District is planning training for all about various committee work and other ministries. It will be done by ZOOM. Details are below. To register, simply contact Pastor Mark. The ZOOM link will be sent to you.

Saturday, January 28, 9 a.m. to Noon CENTRAL TIME, via ZOOM

Workshops include (you may only register for ONE per session, however you may register for both weekend sessions to attend two different workshops):

- Staff Parish Relations Committee; led by Rev. Dr. Marti Lundy
- Finance and Trustees; led by Rev. Paul Arnold
- Church Council/Single Board Governance; led by Rev. David Schrader
- Children Ministries; led by Rev. Lori Grasty
- Youth Ministries; led by Emily Krach with a panel of youth leaders
- Lay Leadership; led by North District Lay Leader, Denise Parker and others
- Making Stress Work For You; led by Rev. Dr. Kent A. Lundy
- Messy Church; led by Trish Johnsen
- Outreach: Food Pantries and Beyond; led by Pastor Carl Hetler

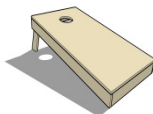


## 1924 Cookbook Competition

As a way to continue to celebrate our history, we are going to have a cooking competition in January. The key to the competition is participants must use a recipe from the church's 1924 cookbook. There are a few copies of the 1924 Cookbook in the church library. Look through it and choose a recipe. Kim will be able to copy it for you in the church office. We ask that you don't change the recipe. Judging will occur for three categories 1) main courses 2) sides 3) deserts.

On Saturday, January 21 we will have a carry-in at 5 pm. There will be forms for judging the dishes of those participating. Everyone not in the contest is welcome to bring a dish to share. We want there to be plenty of food for all.

To be a contestant simply call Kim in the church office. Bring your historic entry to the carry-in on January 21 with a card that gives the name of the dish and the original submitter of it. We'll see who the best chefs are in the church with these



## Cornhole Tournament

We're continuing our Cornhole Tournament. Our next event is Saturday, January 14. We'll meet from 10-12 in Fellowship Hall. We'll have men and women compete however they wish. It's a brand-new year. Who will be the best?



## Sharing the Thoughts of Your Finance Committee

We would like to acknowledge the gifts of generosity all of you have made towards financing the 2023 missions and ministries. Your generosity, supported prayerfully, will have a significant impact on the lives of God's children inside and outside the 1<sup>st</sup> United Methodist Church.

In the letter sent by Donna Bauman, financial secretary, Donna mentioned the introduction of new events that brought us together: inspiring worship services, Music in the Park, Homecoming Sunday, Senior Bingo, and Cornhole tournaments. All these were those "moments" to witness God's presence and the building of relationships with God's family.

Your giving is an outward sign of your inner love for Christ. We accept and embrace the words "What Would Jesus Do."

Thank you for all you do to make possible the ministry of our church. The words of the Advent season, Hope, Joy, Peace, and Love are embedded in the hearts of our church family.



## NEWS FROM THE HOUSEHOLD PANTRY.....

Julie Donovan, Chairperson

2022....What a year!!!

Even in the midst of the continuous pandemic, our amazing congregation at Lowell FUMC remained committed and dedicated to the Household Pantry with their monetary donations, product donations, and prayers. The pantry remained open CURBSIDE every month. We served an average of 40 families each month, with June being our lowest month serving 30 and December being our highest month serving 60. We distributed a total of 473 packed bags in 2022. **THANK YOU FOR HELPING US BE ABLE TO SERVE NEEDY FAMILIES IN THE TRI-CREEK AREA.**

We were able to supply our families with laundry detergent, dish soap, household cleaner, paper towel, facial tissue, toilet tissue, bar soap, deodorant, toothpaste/toothbrush, and shampoo/conditioner in a PREPACKAGED bag each month. Feminine hygiene products and diapers were available upon request. Our total costs for the Household Pantry for 2022 were \$5,064.60. It costs about \$422 a month to keep our pantry going!!

We continued to work in partnership with the Lowell Family Dollar in 2022. Rachel, the store manager, made sure our monthly orders got filled correctly. PLEASE thank Rachel for everything she continues to do for us. We also added Dollar Tree in St. John to our partnership last year because Family Dollar can't always get everything we need. So also a big thank you to Gail, the store manager of the Dollar Tree!

The pantry was blessed with donations from Tri-Kappa, Indian Trail Grange, Rotary Club, Stracks (paper bags), Avery Dennison, Athletico, a special couple who donated 6 Aldi gift cards to 6 families in need, along with many monetary donations within and outside the church. **How fortunate the Household Pantry is to be remembered by so many thoughtful people!!**

We head into 2023 with a dedicated staff of compassionate servants whose hearts lie in serving those in our community who need assistance. We are humbled to be able to serve these families. We could not keep this pantry going without ALL OF YOU!!!

**THANK YOU!!! THANK YOU!!! THANK YOU!!! THANK YOU!!! THANK YOU!!!**



Thank you to everyone who participated in our “Christmas Clothesline”!! Your prayers and generosity, particularly during these challenging times, was immeasurable.

As I prepared the tags and read the requests for items I noticed that this year, more than in years past, the requests were for basic items such as socks and coats. This made me realize what a true impact this mission project and all of you have on our community. As Kathy Taylor and I delivered the gifts to each school, the appreciation was so genuine and heartfelt.

Happy New Year from your Missions committee!!  
Susan Wells, chairperson



**Education Opportunity**

The FRIENDS adult Sunday School class will begin a new study on Sunday, January 8<sup>th</sup> entitled “Romans, In the Grip of Grace.” It is a six-week video study by Max Lucado. In this study, Max will guide you through this letter from Paul to the Romans, revealing what the apostle’s words meant to his original readers and how they apply to you today. You will be encouraged as you listen to Max’s teachings and challenged to study the book of Romans during this study. Find the comfort, wisdom, healing and wholeness that comes from discovering that even in your failings, you are always in the grip of God’s grace. The FRIENDS class meets upstairs in Room 304. All are welcome. Please join us whenever you can!



A special thank you to whoever sent a box of cheese and sausage to us for the holidays.

Lewis and Anita Childress

~~~~~  
Thank you for all the care and good thoughts given to the whole family during the hospital stay and funeral of Sam.

The Wilson Family

~~~~~  
Thank you for your kindness and generosity this holiday season keeping our Three Creeks students and families in your hearts. Your community support is appreciated.

With Gratitude,  
Three Creeks Elementary Staff

~~~~~  
To All Our Family at Lowell First,

Thank you for your generous gift for us. We are planning a summer trip for Lucien, but not sure where we are going yet. I’m sure your gift will come in handy. We feel very loved here and we are so glad God brought us here. Thank you for being the wonderful congregation that you are.

Thank You!,  
Mark, Lori, and Lucien Berg





## Martha's Coffee House Resumes

Martha's Coffee House was closed for the 2 recent holiday Sundays having one worship service at 9:30. As we return to our regular worship schedule of 8:00 and 10:30 services each Sunday, Martha's will also resume.

In order to keep this time of fellowship functioning Congregational Care is requesting assistance. We do not expect anyone to remain in the church library the entire 1 ½ hour Martha's is available (from 9-10:30). Nor do we expect one person to cover all aspects of Martha's alone.

"Many hands make light work", the saying goes, so we are hoping to make that our Martha's goal. Won't you please consider assisting with this time of fellowship for our church family and guests?

How can you be involved? Choose one or more of these ways:

**Be the 'early bird'.** If you attend the 8:00 service, this could simply mean arriving earlier than usual to set up the coffee makers and hot water pot and mix up a quart of lemonade. Everything needed is stored on the metal cart which is kept in the library closet. Expendable items are stored in the cabinet beneath the microwave. The coffee can be started at 8:00 when the service starts, or you can pop into the library during a hymn to push the "on" buttons by 8:30.

**Provide the treats.** We like to offer a simple treat or two that is homemade or purchased to our church family & guests. To keep costs down, we rely on donations. Covid and the variety of viruses currently circulating makes it necessary for us to continue to take simple health precautions. Hand sanitizer is readily available during Martha's and treats are either individually wrapped, or can be plated or set out individually on napkins to help prevent sharing our germs. Treat donations can be brought to the church on Friday or brought in Sunday morning by 8:45. Leftovers can be taken home.

**Be the clean-up crew.** The countertop and the serving table can be cleaned up any time after the 10:30 service begins. The set-up is kept simple so cleaning up is not terribly time-consuming. (We don't want anyone to be late to lunch at George's.) Labels on the metal cart and in the cabinet let you know where items belong.

We'd love to see a little 'team work' to keep Martha's available and not a burden to anyone. Two people working as partners is ideal. (One comes early, one stays late.) Please give it some consideration. What friend could you ask to partner with you?

Watch for a sign-up sheet in the library.

If you have questions contact Bev Kussy at 219-789-7715.





## Lowell Church Mouse

I'm the church mouse. I see all that goes on in the church and I love to gossip about it. Of course being a Christian mouse, I only say positive things.

I hope you were able to see the children's Christmas Pageant. They did a wonderful job. Pastor Mark wrote the script. It's amazing to see what the children can do without any rehearsal. Amy Manier and Shara Oman deserve a big thanks for getting the kids in costume and even switching their costumes within seconds to get it done.

Did you hear the choir's Christmas Cantata? Goodness, they sounded amazing. I don't know how they can make a group of twenty or so sound like fifty. I really enjoyed them. Michelle Mishlove finished her tenure as the choir director on a high note. (Please, pardon the pun). I look forward to gossiping about Bobbie Sue Whaley real soon.

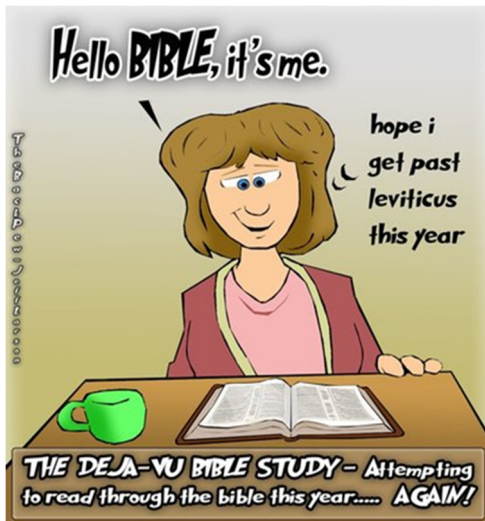
I want to say a special thank you to all of those who don't get noticed, who don't get thanked, those who work behind the scenes. The church would get very little done without you. Many of you don't want others to know what you are doing. You can't hide much from a gossip church mouse though.

Be careful when you do good work for the church. I'm watching and just waiting to share that gossip.



### Pastor's Comic Corner

In case you haven't noticed, I love humor.  
Below are comics that I've come across. Enjoy and smile! Pastor Mark



Young at Heart Sr. Bingo will meet on Tuesday, January 24 at 1 pm in the church basement. We'll have desert together and then play BINGO (without charge). Prizes will be provided. All who are available at this time are welcome. Bring a friend and be ready to have some fun and fellowship together

## WEEKLY EVENTS

**Sunday - Worship** ~ 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. (in Sanctuary), *Sunday School 9:15*: WINGS (300), F.O.M. (301), Youth (303), FRIENDS (304) Children (basement) **Monday/Tuesday** - A/A 12 p.m. (303) **Wednesday** - A/A - 8 p.m. (Fellowship Hall), Al/Anon - 8 p.m. (library) **Thursday** - Dulcimers 10 am (303), Godsbells 4:30 pm, *LYFT* Dinner 5:30 p.m./Worship 6:00 p.m. (Fellowship Hall) Chancel Choir 7pm (sanct.) **Saturday** - A/A 11 a.m. (303)

# January 2023

| Sun                                                  | Mon                                     | Tue                             | Wed                              | Thu | Fri                                             | Sat                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 1<br>Happy New Year!<br>One service today at 9:30 am | 2<br>Office Closed                      | 3                               | 4<br>Carpets Cleaned<br>12:30 pm | 5   | 6<br>Undecorate the Church<br>9:00 am           | 7                                                  |
| 8                                                    | 9<br>Tri-Kappa 6pm<br>(Fellowship Hall) | 10                              | 11                               | 12  | 13<br>Congregational Care Meeting<br>1 pm (301) | 14                                                 |
| 15                                                   | 16<br>Shift Meeting<br>5pm (304)        | 17                              | 18                               | 19  | 20                                              | 21<br>1924 Cookbook Competition<br>Carry-In Dinner |
| 22                                                   | 23                                      | 24<br>Senior Bingo<br>1 pm (FH) | 25                               | 26  | 27                                              | 28<br>Baby Shower<br>(FH)                          |
| 29                                                   | 30                                      | 31                              |                                  |     |                                                 |                                                    |