

The First United Methodist Church of Lowell Tele-Christian March 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...



Music is such a powerful force in our lives. It can change our mood. It can change our attitude in the midst of a situation. It can enhance our enjoyment of television or movies. It even has the power to change our hearts. Hearing a particular song on the radio can make you cry or make you laugh. It is amazing how much influence music can have on us.

Like anything in our lives, we must be careful what we allow in. Psalm 101:3 says it well: "I will not look with approval on anything that is vile." Many of us spend a lot of time listening to vile lyrics. This type of input in our lives can not have a positive output. Let me give you two instances to contrast:

The music played on February 5 to over twelve million viewers at the Grammy Awards. The number one duet prize at the Grammy Awards was "Unholy." A song by Kim Petras and Sam Smith. The media blitz around their performance at the Grammys was that it was a satanic song. There were satanic imagery in the performance, but the lyrics make no mention of Satan. The lyrics are completely about a couple busy being unfaithful with each other. You could say that this is a satanic act. How will celebrating infidelity have a positive outcome? (The other media blitz is the fact that Kim Petras and Sam Smith are both transsexual.) That shouldn't influence our appreciation of their art.

Contrast to this the music that was played on February 8 at Asbury University in Wilmore, Kentucky. The music started and revival broke out. The praise and worship continued non stop for 14 days. It was closed down by the University and moved to other venues. This town of 5,000 saw 50,000 to 70,000 traveled in from all over to be a part of this uplifting positive force.

Music has such power. So... "O be careful little ears what you hear; O be careful little ears what you hear; for the Father up above, is looking down in love; O be careful little ears what you hear."

Pastor Mark



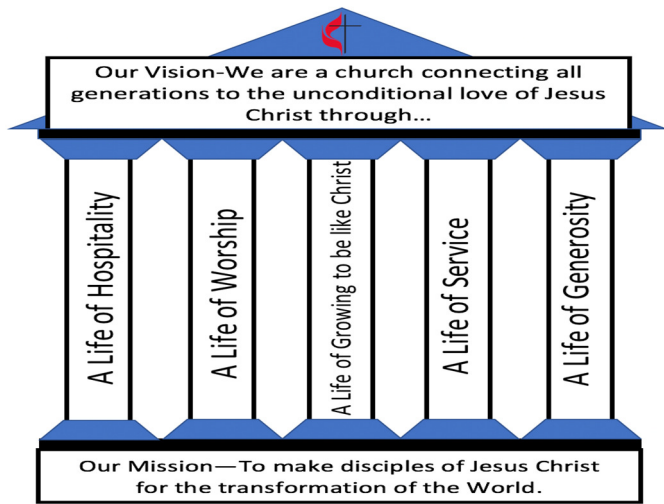
Sermon Series Through March


Pastor Mark will be preaching about Music and Singing through Lent. Topics include the origin of music, God's song to us, our songs to God, spiritual battle in song. We have many wonderful musical experiences planned in addition. Come join us.



March Sermon and Scripture Schedule


| | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| March 5 ~ | Scripture: Job 38:3-7 | Sermon Title: 'The Origins of Music' |
| March 12 ~ | Scripture: II Corinthians 9:6-8 | Sermon Title: 'God's Song to Us' |
| March 19 ~ | Scripture: Colossians 3:15-17 | Sermon Title: 'Our Song to God' |
| March 26 ~ | Scripture: Isaiah 14:10-15 | Sermon Title: 'The Spiritual Battle in Song' |



 This small pillar image that can be found throughout our newsletter designates articles related to our "Five Pillars of Discipleship." The Five Pillars are goals we strive to uphold to accomplish our mission of making disciples. The various articles give insight into the ongoing process of shifting and moving our church forward in an ever-changing world.



Worship News Trudy Corning and Linda Hayden, Co-Chairs

 Our five basic human senses assist us each day as we perceive the world around us. The organs associated with each sense send information to our brains to help us understand our daily experiences. As we travel through the 6 weeks of Lent to Easter Sunday, let your senses deepen the meaning and enrich your experience of the journey.

TASTE: LENTEN SOUP LUNCHEONS

A simple meal of soup and bread is a way to fast. Fasting reminds us to clear away distractions and focus on Christ. Gathering together for a soup luncheon will allow us additional time for reflection and preparation leading to a great Easter celebration. There is no charge for this simple lunch; your presence and fellowship with our church family is all that we ask. We will gather each Sunday of Lent in the Fellowship Hall following the 10:30 Worship service.

SMELL: EASTER FLOWERS

Watch for an opportunity to order Easter flowers – Easter lilies, tulips and hyacinths. The fragrance of these flowers will fill the sanctuary Easter morning. Envelopes to order the flowers will be in the worship bulletin for two Sundays during March. You may purchase the flowers in honor or in memory of someone, or give to the Glory of God. You may also contact the church office for information.

HEARING: MUSIC

This Lenten season, the worship services will be filled with all types of sounds and music as Pastor Mark’s sermon series focuses on music and songs.

TOUCH: LENTEN “Buddy Bag” COLLECTION

Join our community as we fill brown paper bags with food for school children to take home for weekend meals. Our goal is to collect 100 bags this Lenten season. Pick up a bag, fill it with the items listed on the bag, and return it to the store shelves located in the Narthex. There is also an opportunity to give a monetary donation for this mission. Help touch the lives of our community children.

SIGHT: TRANSFORMATION OF THE SANCTUARY

Watch and experience the changes in the sanctuary this season as we move from the simplicity and decluttering of Lent, to the darkness and emptiness of Good Friday, to a joyous and glorious Easter celebration.



LYFT is getting MESSY

Messy Church is a new phenomenon that started in England. It is a way to stress intergenerational interaction in the midst of worship. It is a very informal, relaxed service focusing on keeping the interest of children and including a meal. Through multiple activities all ages interact and do things together.

Our LYFT service is going to be transformed into Messy Church on the fourth Thursday of each month. Our first Messy Church will be Thursday March 23 in the basement. We’ll have dinner at 5:30. At 6 pm all will be challenged to get out of our **Escape Room!!!!** Do you have the detective skills to find the Bible answers that will lead to the exit? Come find out what it’s all about! Invite friends and especially the children and youth in your life.



Let's Fill the Shelves in the Narthex with 100 Buddy Bags!

From the Missions Committee



"Buddy Bags" have come to FUMC as part of our Lenten Mission project. "Buddy Bags" is a program of the Community Help Network, Inc. that helps students living in South Lake County with food insecurity. The "Buddy Bag" program expanded to the Tri-Creek School system during the 2022-23 school year servicing approximately 127 Tri-Creek Students. Did you know that 25% of the Tri-Creek elementary students qualify for the free and reduced lunch program? Each of these students receive a "Buddy Bag" at school at the end of each week that includes kid friendly items that will provide them nourishment over the weekend. Each bag includes:

- | | | |
|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| A can of pasta | Hot Chocolate packets | Oatmeal packets |
| Mac and Cheese | Applesauce cups | Can of Tuna |
| Ramen Noodles | Fruit Cups | Microwave popcorn |
| Granola Bars | Individual cups of cereal | |

What can you do to support the kids in Tri-Creek schools? You can grab a bag or two (or three) to help meet our goal of 100 bags for the "Buddy Bags" mission (it can cost less than \$20 to fill a bag). Or you can make a monetary contribution and we will fill a bag for you. But most importantly you can keep the "Buddy Bag" mission in your prayers as we continue the collection throughout the Lenten season. All bags are due back by Easter Sunday. Let's fill the shelves in the Narthex!



It's time again for college boxes!!

Congregational Care



What is a college finals box or care package? It is a box of goodies including snacks, supplies and inspirational notes from our church family that is mailed to our college students to provide support and encouragement during final exam week.

If you would like the college student in your family to receive a college finals box this spring, submit their name and address to the church office, or text Trudy Corning @ 219-613-1787 by Sunday, March 26.



The Good Samaritan Fund

Kathy Nelson

"Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions."

1 John 3:18 New Living Translation

As many of you know, the Good Samaritan Fund is available to people in financial need for various reasons (gas, rent/mortgage, bills, etc.). It is through your "action" of giving monetarily that we are able to sustain this ministry. Last year through the Generosity Tree we were able to raise almost \$5400.



The Generosity Tree will be displayed once again May 7 through May 14 in the Narthex. The envelopes on the Tree will be labeled \$1 to \$100. Take an envelope, complete the label, and insert the dollar amount on the label (or more) and return to Kathy Nelson, Kim in the office, or in the offering plate. Please prayerfully reflect on the meaning of your "action" through this ministry and look deep into your heart as to what you are able to provide for another less fortunate person. Next month will focus on the people who have been blessings in your life that you would like to commemorate.



The Nurse Is In!

Have your blood pressure checked by the nurse Sunday, March 5. She will be available in the church office conference room after the 8:00am service and before the 10:30 service.

Helping to keep you healthy,
Your church nurses



News from the Trustees

Dennis Olson, Chairman

- The Trustees completed the job of re-covering a second pew seat in the balcony. The seat was badly torn.
- Dave Bauman got the lights working on the outdoor marque.
- New carpet will be installed in the Narthex soon.
- All fire extinguishers have been inspected and are now in working order.



SENIOR



YOUNG AT HEART SENIOR GROUP

Young at Heart Senior Group will meet for bingo on Tuesday, March 28 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



NEW!! The Young at Heart Group is going to add a second meeting each month. This will be a time to eat snacks and desserts together and have a program. The first meeting will be Wednesday, March 15 at 1:00 pm. Peggy Hendricks will put on a musical program. Mark your calendars for the third Wednesday each month for these programs.



Mid-week Bible Study with Pastor Mark



On **Wednesday, March 8**, we will start a new Bible Study at **10 am in the Youth Room, Room 303**. We will be studying *The Chosen*. This is a dramatized depiction of the life of Jesus and those around him. It is the best dramatization that I've seen. We'll have a discussion time following the video. The study will be done by 11:00 am.

The F.O.M. adult Bible study class will resume meeting on **Sunday, March 5** at 9:15 in Room 301. The class is facilitated by David Schoon and will be picking up their study of the Book of Judges. All are welcome.

The FRIENDS Sunday School Class continues their video study called "Don't Give the Enemy a Seat at Your Table," led by Louie Giglio. All are welcome. They meet in room 304.



United Women in Faith News



Our UMF unit is sponsoring a Human Trafficking Forum on Tuesday, March 28 at 5:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall. The speaker will be Barb Lis. There will be time for questions and answers. Light refreshments will be served. RSVP to the office or Rachele Ruge-Bernard at 219-743-2136.

Mark your calendar: The Susanna Wesley Circle will be hosting a guest speaker on Recycling on June 12 in the Fellowship Hall. This event is open to all who are interested.



Children & Youth News

Amy Manier, Education Chair

Valentine's Party

The children's Valentine Party on Saturday, February 11, was great fun. There were 9 kids, 6 youth, and 9 adults present. We played games, made crafts, tied fleece blankets, colored pictures, ate popcorn and cookies, and watched 'A Charlie Brown Valentine.' It was a delight to see everyone visiting with one another and enjoying time together. Thank you to the volunteers and youth for all the help with set up, food, and clean up.



Easter Egg-Stravaganza



The Easter Egg-stravaganza will be coming up in April for all children through grade 5. More details will be coming soon about the date and volunteer opportunities.

Upcoming Youth Group

Calling all Youth....Mark Your Calendar

Our next youth event will be **Sunday, March 12, 2023 from 5:00 – 7:00 pm** in the Youth Room at the church. All youth and their friends are welcome to join us each month for food, fellowship, and fun. Come as you are, whenever you can.



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.

It has been busy around here this last month. There was a fun Valentine's party for the children. It was great to see so many youth present to help. The Education Committee planned it all and the youth made a prayer blanket.

Laura Eller has helped the Missions Committee embrace the Buddy Bags for children living with food insecurity in our local schools. The church is trying to fill 100 bags for the program. I'm promising not to nibble on anything in the bags. We've already got 21 bags and still have over a month to go.

The Hayden family continues to do a lot of behind the scene work around here. They put up the purple cloth on the cross in the sanctuary (Ray Smith has done it for years. Have fun at your granddaughter's baptism, Ray & Denise!). Haydens also put up the cross outside, and planned the soup lunches for Lent. (I believe it was Trudy Corning's idea.)

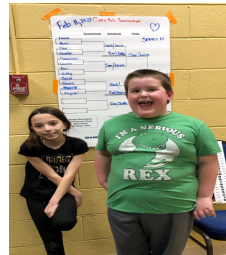
I heard someone say that Kim has been working for the church for 18 years on February 28!
Happy Anniversary Kim!

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

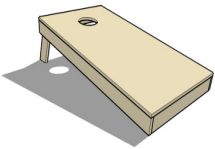


Cornhole Tournament

Our next event is Saturday, March 11.
We'll meet from 10-12 in Fellowship Hall.
All are welcome to join in the fun!!
Who will be the best?



**February Winners:
Savannah Wilson
and Lucien Berg**



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



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), AI/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)

March 2023

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---|---|--|------------------------------|--|---|
| | | | 1 Trustees Meeting 6pm (conf. rm.) | 2 | 3 Working Together Circle 1 pm (library) | 4 |
| 5 Lenten Lunch 12 pm (FH) | 6 Tri-Kappa 6pm (FH) | 7 Outreach Meeting 5 pm (library) | 8 Worship 6 pm Education 7pm | 9 | 10 | 11 Cornhole Tourney 10 am (FH) |
| 12 Lenten Lunch 12 pm (FH) Youth Group 5 pm (303) | 13 Susanna Wesley Circle 1pm (library) | 14 Lay Leader Meeting 10 am | 15 Young at Heart Senior program 1 pm Finance 5 pm | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 Lenten Lunch 12 pm (FH) | 20 | 21 **Tele- Christian Articles are due Shift Mtg. 5 pm | 22 | 23 Messy Church @ LYFT | 24 | 25 |
| 26 Lenten Lunch 12 pm (FH) | 27 Ad-Council 6pm (FH) | 28 Senior Bingo 1pm (FH) Human Trafficking Forum 5:30 pm (FH) | 29 | | 31 | |