

# The First United Methodist Church of Lowell

## Tele-Christian July 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...



Have you ever had a discussion with anyone about the United States going 'down the tubes'? Do you feel that we are building up to incur God's wrath? Do you listen to an increase in political fighting and feel we are getting closer to the edge? Are we getting closer to anarchy as crime, drugs, homelessness, and other societal woes seem to increase daily? Where is God in the midst of all that is wrong with our country?

It is so easy to develop a true sense of pessimism for how things are going. It's easy to give up and lose hope. There is a better way to look at things. God is in control. God is not surprised by the latest mass shooting. God is not taken aback by yet another political scandal. I like the way 1 Chronicles puts it, "*Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all.*" (1 Chronicles 29:11-12) If we hold fast to this scripture, it does not mean that all will be heavenly here on earth. We are still living in a world bound by sin. We still live beside people capable of the most heinous evil acts. We live in a fallen world of greed, corruption, sickness, and death.

Despite this, God is in control. There are many arguments you can make here. "But what about this, what about that?" I agree. There is a never-ending supply of bad things to show on the news. Tomorrow will be a fresh batch. Still, God is in control.

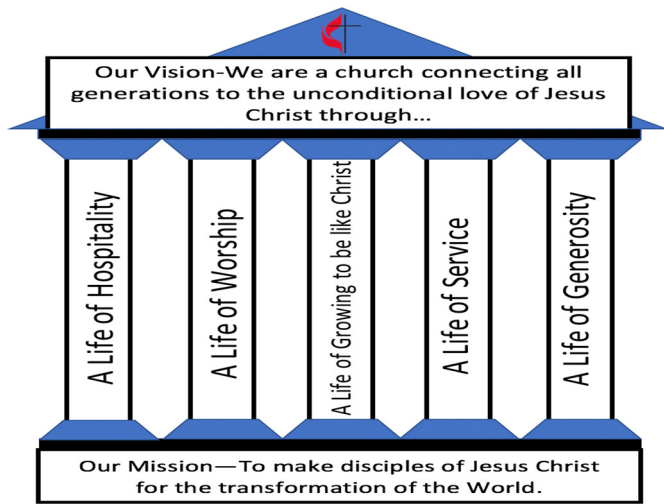
When it comes to the United States, rather than looking at all of the negatives (and there is a seemingly endless supply of them) think instead of the good. The freedoms we enjoy, the beauty of our nation, the hope within her founding documents, the joy in her anthems. If God is in control, nothing can happen within our nation that isn't within His plan. Look at another scripture from the book of Job. "*He makes nations great, and he destroys them; he enlarges nations, and leads them away.*" (Job 12:23) God establishes the nations. He blesses them or oversees their destruction. Our God is not a hands-off God. Whatever fate befalls our nation, whether it be continued blessing or a fall from power or change of government; God is in control.

As I evaluate our nation, I truly believe we are the greatest nation in the world. There is nowhere on earth that I would choose to live other than the United States. One of our great freedoms in the United States is that we can get together and complain about how horrible our leaders are. We can talk about how awful the country is. We can talk about all the problems and evils around us. If you want to participate in that talk, great. Just add, "God is in control."



### July Sermon and Scripture Schedule

<b>July 2 ~</b>	Scripture: Proverbs 14:33-34	Sermon Title: 'A Righteous Nation'
<b>July 9 ~</b>	Scripture: Matthew 11:27-30	Sermon Title: 'Carry the Yoke'
<b>July 16 ~</b>	Scripture: Romans 8:1-4	Sermon Title: 'The Problem of Sin'
<b>July 23 ~</b>	Scripture: Genesis 28:10-19	Sermon Title: 'The City of God'
<b>July 30 ~</b>	Scripture: Matthew 13:44-52	Sermon Title: 'The Treasure of Heaven'



This image represents our church. It is built on the Mission to make disciples for Jesus, sheltered by a Vision of unconditional love for all, and supported by five Pillars of Discipleship: HOSPITALITY, WORSHIP, SPIRITUAL GROWTH, SERVICE, and GENEROSITY.



Look for this small image of a pillar throughout this newsletter. A small pillar image means the article relates to one of our Pillars of Discipleship. It means the article tells you how we are moving toward achieving our Mission and working at keeping our church relevant and alive for future generations.



### Worship News

Trudy Corning and Linda Hayden, Co-chairs

#### **Important!** A Change to the 8:00 Summer Worship Location

As announced in the June Tele Christian, **we are moving the location of our park service for the remainder of the summer:**

**JULY 2 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 3** our 8AM worship service will be moved to **Olde Towne Square** located on the west side of our church. Continue to bring a lawn chair. Park in the church lot and walk through or around the church. The few parking spots available on Library Drive can be used for those needing handicapped parking. In inclement weather, the service will be moved into the sanctuary.

We continue to worship in the sanctuary each Sunday at 10:30 am. Invite a friend to summer worship. We look forward to seeing you and meeting your friend.

**Looking ahead:** Our second annual Homecoming Sunday will take place September 10, 2023. There will be one service at 9:30 AM followed by an all-church cook out. Mark your calendar now!!



### Sermons for July

In July, we will follow the lectionary. The lectionary is Bible readings chosen for each Sunday. There is an Old Testament reading, an Epistle reading and a Gospel lesson, along with a Psalm chosen for each Sunday. This allows congregations to have a broad exposure to the Bible. The readings are divided into three year cycles.



### Live Your Faith Today Dinner/Worship Service

LYFT 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!

LYFT gets transformed into Messy Church on the fourth Thursday of each month. Messy Church is a way to stress intergenerational interaction in the midst of worship. It is a very informal, relaxed service focusing on multiple activities where all ages can interact and do fun things together.

Our next Messy Church will be Thursday, July 27 in the basement. We'll have dinner at 5:30. At 6 pm we'll have activities for all ages to interact together, and Communion time. Invite friends and especially the children and youth in your life.



## Praying Forward: No Turning Back

A Report from our Lay Delegate, Nancy Lain

This year's Annual Conference was held June 8-10 at Ball State University in Muncie. I did not attend in person but was able to Livestream it on inumc.org. I could not vote for the resolutions and plenaries but was able to see all the sessions on Friday and Saturday morning.

Bishop Julius C. Trimble presented the episcopal address entitled "Lord, Teach Us to Pray". "We are praying forward with confidence in the God who calls us and walks with us. There is no turning back for God is doing a new thing among us," he said.

Rev. Rodney Friedan reported that the year's giving was \$11,515,400 and expenses were \$11,515,400. The Budget for 2024 went up only \$500.

Conference Lay Leader David John's concluded his address with, "Rejoice always, pray always, give thanks always, and do the will of God. Be the Church so that others can experience the joy of Jesus as you have."

Rev. Teri Crouse reported that from April 2022 to March 2023, 19 discontinued or abandoned church and Conference properties were sold or disbursed for a total of \$5,014,910. In the Indiana Conference, 174 churches have disaffiliated from The United Methodist Church. The complete list is in the office for your viewing or it can be seen on inumc.org.

In 2022, UMCOR responded to 97 disasters and gave \$29.1 million. Our Indiana Conference gave \$1.2 million of that total.

All Plenaries and Resolutions passed during the Conference.

Next year's Annual Conference will be June 6, 7, 8 at St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Indianapolis.



## From the Finance Committee

God keeps showing each of our church family members lots of places where we can grow into the image of Christ—perhaps more now than when we were younger—which keeps us humble, indeed. For instance, your personal assets may be much larger now than when you were young. That means you have the opportunity to consider the possibilities of what will happen to them. And in doing so, you think more deeply about the people and causes you believe in and support.

That is why we can never quit the stewardship of our life. Our time, our abilities, our resources, and our money are always in need of maturing.

Stewardship never ends. Nor should it. Any place we "arrive" is meant to be a short-term residency, preparing us for the next thing God has in mind for our lives. Our prayer for you is that you, and your church family, are always stewarding stronger now than ever before—and if not, pray for God's guidance on your next steps.



## United Women in Faith News

Rachelle Ruge-Bernard, President



The UWF are asking for donations of school supplies for local schools. We do not have a list of specific supplies to purchase. Here are suggestions: pencils, pens, paper, notebooks, crayons, colored pencils, glue (sticks and bottles), kids' scissors, folders, etc. All donations can be placed in the middle Sunday School classroom in the church basement. I know it seems early for school supplies, but I am letting you know so sales can be caught.

Monday, July 31 at 5 p.m. we will meet for our potluck and we will get the supplies ready for distribution to the Lowell schools. Everyone is welcome to come to the potluck and meeting. Thank you so much for helping with this mission.

## Vacation Bible School was 'Stellar' this year!

Amy Manier, Education Chair

Each evening 20-30 kids, plus 25 volunteers, filled the sanctuary to Shine Jesus' Light! Each day the kids attended interactive story time in Bible Adventure, played outside at the All-Star Games station, ate Galactic Snacks, and conducted space themed experiments in Imagination Station.

The kids were introduced to mission projects and collected money to help provide bibles to kids in African nations, Latin America, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe. They also collected items to donate to our church's Household Pantry.

Thank you so much to the congregation for their prayers, donations, and support before and during VBS. It was a week full of excitement, joy, fun, laughter, learning, singing, and fellowship.



## Youth Group

We had youth group on Sunday, June 11<sup>th</sup>. Although the weather did not cooperate for the Equestrian Day we had planned, we still had a great time together. We had live Christian praise music performed by Sean Riley. Youth from Journey Church joined us. The kids sang karaoke with Sean and played cornhole. Youth group will continue monthly through the summer. All kids going into 6<sup>th</sup> grade through 12<sup>th</sup> grade are welcome to come and bring friends along. See the list of activities we have planned and spread the word to the youth you know.

**Sunday, July 30 at 1:00 pm**

Mini Golf with Prizes to Beat Pastor Mark

**Sunday, August 27 at 1:00 pm** at Lemon Lake

6322 W 133<sup>rd</sup> Ave, Crown Point





# Kidz Karnival

**FRIDAY, JULY 21 5 - 7:30 PM**

**Olde Towne Square on west side of church**

**FREE: Horseback Rides, Games, Food & Fun  
Lowell Fire and Police department interaction  
There will be something for all ages**

After a several year hiatus, we will once again offer the **free KIDZ KARNIVAL** to our community. We need everyone's help to make this event successful! Signup sheets are available in the Narthex. Sign up to donate food and/or to work in the area of your choice. Everyone can help by informing friends and neighbors of this event. If you have questions, talk to Pastor Mark, Kathy Nelson or Kim in the office.



**Household Pantry News**  
Julie Donovan, Chairperson



Just a quick update on how our Household Pantry is serving our community. We continue to provide necessary products thanks to all of the generous donations from our church family and many other wonderful people throughout the town of Lowell. **THANK YOU** to everyone involved with the Pantry!! **THANK YOU** to the congregation for all you do to support the Pantry!!

Please continue to support FAMILY DOLLAR and St. John DOLLAR TREE, because without their partnership, we would not be able to provide the 11 products to the many families we serve.

**PANTRY ATTENDANCE:** January-June we have handed out 307 pre-packaged bags. This is an average of 51 bags a month.

**PANTRY COST:** Our total amount spent so far this year is \$2,769.00.

*THANK YOU*

*THANK YOU*

*THANK YOU*

*THANK YOU*



I would like to thank everyone for their prayers, cards and texts sent to me during my health issues the last several months. Your support keeps me going.

Thank you.  
Ethel Devine

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Thank you so much for the graduation gift and for the recognition! It was greatly appreciated.

Carrye Simmons

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We would like to thank the church for the beautiful bible that was given to Chesney as a graduation gift. She will take it with her as she heads to St. Mary's of the Woods for college to study equine science.

In Christ, Chesney and family.



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.

Wow! Vacation Bible School was such a busy time at our church. There were so many volunteers who worked to make it a great experience for the kids. The directors, Amy Manier and Kathie Stoner, put many hours of organizing work into it. The decorations were amazing. Kathy Taylor and her group made the church look like our galaxy, including a space station and lunar landing. Patrice Martin and her crew taught the Bible lessons. Beth Bales and her crew did the science area. Kim McGinley and her crew did the snacks. Shara Oman and her crew ran the games. We owe our youth a big "thank you". Several of them helped with stations or led crews every day. Even the Trustees helped make VBS successful: They called in the A/C repair to get the third floor air conditioning working!

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



### Young At Heart Senior Activities

Young at Heart Sr. bingo will meet on Tuesday, July 25 at 1 pm in the church basement. We'll have dessert 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.

The Young at Heart Sr. program on the second Wednesday of the month is taking the rest of the summer off. We'll meet again in the fall.



### 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



"If I send my prayer as a text message, will I get a faster reply?"

## WEEKLY EVENTS

**Sunday - Worship** ~ 8 a.m. (Liberty Park) 10:30 a.m. (in Sanctuary), **Monday/Tuesday** - A/A 12 p.m. (303) **Wednesday** - A/A - 8 p.m. (Fellowship Hall), A1/Anon - 8 p.m. (library) **Thursday** - Dulcimers 10 am (303), *LYFT* Dinner 5:30 p.m./Worship 6:00 p.m. (Fellowship Hall), **Saturday** - A/A 11 a.m. (303)

# July 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 8:00 am service starting at Olde Towne Square	3	4 Independence Day/Office Closed	5 Office Closed UWF Exec. Mtg. 4:30 pm (lib.)  Trustees 6pm	6	7	8
9	10 Outreach 6pm	11	12 Education Mtg. 7pm (300)	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21 Kidz Karnival 5-7:30 pm	22
23	24	25 Senior Bingo 1 pm (FH)	26 Worship Mtg. 6 pm (301)	27	28	29
30 Youth Group 1 pm (Mini-Golf)	31 UWF General Membership Meeting 5pm (FH)  Shift 5 pm					