

The First United Methodist Church of Lowell

Tele-Christian February 2025 Edition

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

Mark's Remarks...



This story reminds me of Jesus. He had great adversity, and managed to change situations for the better. Which are you?

The Carrot, the Egg, and the Coffee Bean

A young woman went to her mother and told her about her life and how things were so hard for her. She did not know how she was going to make it and wanted to give up. She was tired of fighting and struggling. It seemed that, as one problem was solved, a new one arose. Her mother took her to the kitchen. She filled three pots with water and placed each on a high fire. Soon the pots came to a boil. In the first, she placed carrots, in the second she placed eggs, and in the last she placed ground coffee beans.

She let them sit and boil, without saying a word. In about twenty minutes, she turned off the burners. She fished the carrots out and placed them in a bowl. She pulled the eggs out and placed them in a bowl. Then she ladled the coffee out and placed it in a bowl. Turning to her daughter, she asked, "Tell me, what do you see?"

"Carrots, eggs, and coffee," the young woman replied. The mother brought her closer and asked her to feel the carrots. She did and noted that they were soft. She then asked her to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hard-boiled egg. Finally, she asked her to sip the coffee. The daughter smiled as she tasted its rich aroma. The daughter then asked, "What does it mean, mother?"

Her mother explained that each of these objects had faced the same adversity - boiling water - but each reacted differently. The carrot went in strong, hard and unrelenting. However, after being subjected to the boiling water, it softened and became weak. The egg had been fragile. Its thin outer shell had protected its liquid interior. But, after sitting through the boiling water, its inside became hardened! The ground coffee beans were unique, however. After they were in the boiling water, they had changed the water.

"Which are you?" the mother asked her daughter. "When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond? Are you a carrot, an egg, or a coffee bean?"

Think of this: Which am I? Am I the carrot that seems strong but, with pain and adversity, do I wilt and become soft and lose my strength? Am I the egg that starts with a malleable heart, but changes with the heat? Did I have a fluid spirit but, after a death, a breakup, or a financial hardship, does my shell look the same, but on the inside am I bitter and tough with a stiff spirit and a hardened heart? Or am I like the coffee bean? The bean actually changes the hot water, the very circumstance that brings the pain. When the water gets hot, it releases the fragrance and flavor.

If you are like the bean, when things are at their worst, you get better and change the situation around you. When the hours are the darkest and trials are their greatest, do you elevate to another level? How do you handle adversity? Are you a carrot, an egg, or a coffee bean?



February Sermon Title and Scripture Schedule

February 2: Scripture: Deuteronomy 15:7-11
February 9: Scripture: Galatians 3:26-29
February 16: Scripture: Luke 6:20-23
February 23: Scripture: Luke 6:27-31

Sermon Title: 'A Biblical View of Healthcare'
Sermon Title: 'Why the Racial Tensions'
Sermon Title: 'Be Blessed!'
Sermon Title: 'Just Love My Enemy?'



Worship News

Trudy Corning & Linda Hayden, Co-chairs

Ash Wednesday, on March 5, will begin our 40 day Lenten journey to a joyous Easter celebration!

More details to come in the March and April Tele Christian issues!

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 person or Pastor Mark speaking, prayer and communion. LYFT is a casual worship service where each week we enjoy food, fellowship and fun! Everyone is welcome! Bring a friend!

Remember...if you can't make dinner, you can still come for worship!



Martha's Coffee House

Warm up on cold wintery Sundays by stopping in the library before the 9:30 service begins. You will find coffee along with hot water for tea, hot chocolate or hot apple cider. A cold beverage is also offered. Thanks to generous members who volunteer to host, you will find some light refreshments to enjoy with your beverage.

This a time to enjoy fellowship with your church family. It's a chance to get to know those you will "greet with a smile & a wave" during the service! It is also a time and place to welcome our guests. If you would like to be a part of this hospitality, sign-up sheets and information sheets are available on the serving table.



Finance Committee – Faith In Action

As we reflect on this past year, we are filled with gratitude for the blessings and challenges that have brought us closer as a faith community. The generous contributions to our "Church Story" have been the cornerstones of our church community achievements, allowing us to spread love, provide support, and make significant impact both within our congregation and in the wider community.

We are sharing some exciting news. As the 2024 budget came to a close, even though we had not finished a balanced budget in the "black", we did close out with a very small deficit of \$840.00. Of course, this meant some very tough decisions had to be made without sacrificing our generosity to all the missions and ministries we support. But to be able to complete a year with close to a balanced budget is a story we want to shout out!

This year as we embark on our annual giving, we invite you to continue walking this path of generosity with us. Your continued support will enable us to reach "difference maker" heights in our mission endeavors, community outreach programs, and spiritual development initiatives.



Mission of the Month

In February we are supporting a United Methodist mission. **Red Bird Mission** is located in Beverly, KY and provide many services for the poor in this part of Appalachia. They reach out through a food bank, feeding center, senior programs, a community store and other outreach programs. They have a school. They provide work camps for churches around the nation to do home repairs for the needy. They also provide health services to the poor.

On February 9 there will be envelopes in the bulletins and we will accept donations all month to help this mission. Giving to missions should be above and beyond your giving to the ministries of the church. It is called second-mile giving. Don't feel bad if you don't feel you can afford to support any of these monthly missions.

News From Our District Superintendent

You Are Invited to Annual Conference!

Each year we approve Equalization Members to serve at Annual Conference. The North District has 48 spots open for laity to attend as voting members at Annual Conference in June 2025. It is vitally important that we fill these voting spots. Plus, based on the experience of last year's Annual Conference, I guarantee that they will leave inspired and equipped to help your church Multiply Love, Cultivate Joy, and Inspire Hope! Please share the following information with your churches and encourage your laity to sign up.

Laity must be members of the local church to attend.

The District Equalization Members' Willingness to Serve form gathers names of those willing to serve as an equalizing member at the 2025 Annual Conference Session. The application deadline is February 2 at 11:59 p.m.

To express your willingness to serve and find more information, let Pastor Mark know.



TRAINING FOR LEADERSHIP

Church Leaders,

I cannot stress the importance of making sure that your church leadership has the training needed to succeed. I have a team of individuals that have put together a great event that you don't want to miss! I am counting on you to make sure that your leadership has the registration information. If you receive this message but are no longer in a leadership position, please forward to your successor. We can only be a vital church if we are trained as leaders.

These workshops are open to all laity, clergy, supply and certified lay ministers in the District. Maximum participation is expected, and it is your responsibility to ensure the proper leaders within your church have gotten the registration information, especially those leaders that will begin Jan. 1, 2025.

Online Registration is required for those wanting to attend. A Zoom link will only be sent to those that register through the registration link below. <https://inumc.swoogo.com/leadership12525>

Here are the details: Saturday, February 1, 2025, 8 am to 11:00 am CENTRAL TIME via ZOOM

Workshops include (you may only register for ONE):

- 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
- Growing Young/Youth Ministries; led by Emily Krach and Rev. Lori Grasty
- Lay Leadership; Led by North District Lay Leader, Denise Parker and others
- Digital Church; let by a team from Clay UMC
- Fresh Expressions; led by Trish Johnsen
- Outreach: Food Pantries and Beyond; led by Pastor Carl Hetler
- Planned Giving and Endowments; let by Manet Shettle, IN United Methodist Foundation
- Chat with the Chancellor: Legal Tips for Every Church; led by Sarah Jenkins
- Beyond Sunday Morning: Innovative Worship and Study; led by Pastor Mike Beezley
- Leading Worship without Musicians; led by Pastor Chris Matthews

If you should have any questions, please contact me!

Blessings!

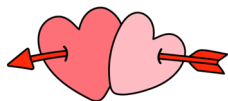
Marti Lundy

North District Superintendent



Adult Study Opportunity

The FRIENDS class has begun a new study by Max Lucado called, "What Happens Next? A Traveler's Guide Through the End of This Age." Pastor Max wants us to be prepared, not scared; informed, not intimidated. He writes, "The future is not frightening if you know the future. And you can know the future when you know who holds it." Max provides a wise and reassuring overview of what God's Word has to say on a topic that often creates confusion and anxiety.



It's Party Time!

The Education Committee is hosting a children's **Valentine's Party** on **Saturday, February 15 from 6:00 to 7:30 pm** in the Fellowship Hall. Our church children of all ages are invited to join the fun! The children who attend Leaps and Bounds Preschool (which meets in our building) are also being invited. Activities for the evening will include board games and a Valentine movie. Snacks of popcorn, cookies, and lemonade will be provided. A parent, or other adult, will be required to stay with their child for all activities. Children are welcome to wear their pajamas and to bring their friends!



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.

Rick Bachman has retired as our Administrative Council Chairman. He has done a great job for seven or eight years. Usually, a person serves in this position for a year or two. Thanks, Rick! Also, Nancy Lain has finished her term as Staff Parish Chairperson. In fact she served for a year beyond what she was suppose to. She did a wonderful job and her committee appreciates her work. All of our chairpersons do a great job: Amy Manier works with Children's Education; Susan Wells with Missions; Trudy Corning and Linda Hayden organize Worship; Bev Kussy and Pam Nelson run Congregational Care; Don Bales leads the Finance Committee; Dennis Olson is in charge of Trustees. So many others work in these and other areas, but I want to give a big shout out to our Committee Chairpersons!



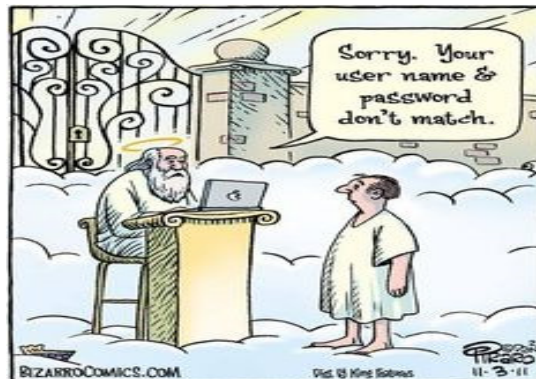
SENIOR BINGO

Young at Heart Sr. Bingo meets on the fourth Tuesday. The next gathering will be February 25 at 1 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Invite someone to come along with you. This is a free Bingo with dessert and snacks and prizes for the winners. It's a fun time!



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 - Adult Sunday School 8:15am ~ WINGS (300), FRIENDS (304) *Worship* ~ 9:30am (in Sanctuary), **Mon.** - A/A 12pm (303) **Wed.** - A/A - 8pm (Fellowship Hall), Al/Anon - 8pm (library) **Thursday** - Dulcimers 10am (303), *LYFT* Dinner 5:30pm/ *Worship* 6:00pm (F.H.), Godsbells practice 4:30pm, Chancel Choir practice 7pm (sanct.) **Sat.** - A/A 11 a.m. (303)

February 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Communion Sunday	3 Missions Meeting 10 am (library) Tri-Kappa 6pm (FH)	4	5 Trustees 6 pm	6	7 Working Together Circle 1:30pm (lib.)	8
9 Mission Sunday	10	11	12 Congregational Care Mtg. 1 pm (library)	13	14 Valentine's Day	15 Children's Valentine Party 6pm
16	17	18 Household Pantry 9-12 & 5-6 (curbside)	19	20	21	22
23	24 Administrative Council 6 pm (FH)	25 Senior Bingo 1 pm (FH)	26	27	28	