

# The First United Methodist Church of Lowell

## Tele-Christian ~ December 2017 Edition

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

### **Words for the Journey.....**

Thanksgiving has shown her glory and graciously stepped aside. The warm temperatures have plummeted. The decorations are being dusted off. The Christmas season has begun.

Our Christmas season has an interesting twist this year. Christmas Eve shares the space with a Sunday this year. This is not the preacher's favorite scenario. I would much rather have a few more hours between the close of one service and the opening of another. Our schedule will not hand us that luxury this time.

To celebrate this excellent day, we will have 4, yes, four services on December 24. The two in the morning will be our regular Sunday morning worship services at our regular Sunday morning worship times. We will worship the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent.

We will also host 2 Sunday evening worship services. One will be at 7:00 and the other at 11:00. We will enjoy candlelight and carols as we celebrate The Birth Event. These services have grown into a family tradition for many.

If we add all of this up we will have 2 distinct messages, given at 2 distinct time sets. Depending on how many family members you have in your house and how much of a break you need from this group, you are invited to attend as many of these services as you would like. Unfortunately, there will not be a prize given for the most services attended that day. You are invited to share as many of these services as you are able.

The week before all of this unfolds will be a huge day as well. On Sunday, December 17 at our 9:15 service, our chancel choir will host their Christmas cantata entitled, "Sing Joy to All The World". Our choir director, Michelle M. always does an excellent job of pulling excellent musical masterpieces from our humble choir. This year will be no exception. This is a seasonal musical highlight for many.

On that same day, Sunday, December 17 at 6:00 in the evening our children will present their Christmas musical event entitled, "The 12 Symbols of Christmas". Paige V., our new children's director, has been working to match the script with the children to make the greatest event possible. There will be a few other musical selections and other surprises along the way. Grandparents and Grandparents-at-heart will be blessed by this children's evening.

The evening offering of our Christmas Eve services will be dedicated to our Good Samaritan Fund, which assists those in need within our community. I encourage you to make this offering a part of your Christmas giving plans. You may give to this offering at any time by marking your check or electronic payment "Christmas Eve".

These are a few of the highlights of the Christmas celebrations at our church. I hope you make plans to bring a car filled with friends as you celebrate with us.

*Pastor Rick*

## December Sunday Sermon and Scripture Schedule

**December 3 ~ Communion Sunday**

Scripture ~ Luke 1:5-25

Sermon Title ~ *'The Foreteller Foretold'*

**December 10**

Scripture ~ Luke 1:26-38

Sermon Title ~ *'Jesus Foretold'*

**December 17**

Scripture ~ Luke 1:39-56

Sermon Title ~ *'Family Together'*

**December 24**

Scripture ~ Luke 1:57-66

Sermon Title ~ *'Excitement Builds'*

**December 24 ~ Christmas Eve**

Scripture ~ Luke 2:1-20

Sermon Title ~ *'Excitement Fulfilled'*

**December 31 ~**

Scripture ~ 2 Corinthians 4:7-18

Sermon Title ~ *'New Year, New Hope'*



### **Worship News**

Co-chairs, Michelle Mishlove & Charlene Grant

#### Time to Decorate

Trees, wreaths, candles and more! All are welcome to help us prepare for the Advent/Christmas seasons. Please meet us on Wednesday, November 29, at 9 AM to help decorate the sanctuary and other areas of our building.

#### Deadline for Poinsettia Order Forms is Sunday, December 10

If you would like to order a poinsettia, please look for the order envelopes in our bulletins on November 26 and December 3. Cost is \$10 per plant. The poinsettias will decorate our sanctuary beginning Dec. 17 and may be taken home after the Christmas Eve services are completed. Envelopes and payment must be returned by Sunday, December 10.

#### Christmas Eve Services at 7:00 PM and 11:00 PM

Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year! We will hold our Sunday morning services as usual. In addition, there will be two beautiful evening candlelight services starting at 7 pm and 11 pm. As announced by Pastor Rick, the offerings at these services will go directly to our Good Samaritan Fund. If you are not going to be present at one of those services you may donate using your Christmas Offering envelope (or write "Christmas Offering" on any envelope), and take it to the office or put it in the offering plate any Sunday in December.

Below is a list of the members of the congregation who will be participating in various aspects of worship during the month of December:

9:15 a.m. Service

December 3:

**Greeters:** Bev Johnson, Barb Potter, Carol Olson, Marie Woolfolk, Martha Farney  
**Ushers:** Lynn Bochart, Bob Savich, Elaine DeVine, Dennis Olson, Rick Bachman  
**Liturgist:** Tom Stoner      **Children's Time:** Paige Van Wolde

December 10:

**Greeters:** Virginia Kasparian, Maryrose Lynch, Amy Nichols, Linda Snell  
**Ushers:** Don Bales, Jack Foss, Sharon Sanders, Tom Stoner, Kathy Nelson  
**Liturgist:** Lynne Haberlin      **Children's Time:** Carol Bachinski

December 17:

**Greeters:** Gisela Peterson, Phyllis Moser, Jenny Nichols, Carolyn Savich  
**Ushers:** Charlie Haberlin, Wayne Wietbrock, Dave Perry, Darion Kidwell, Tom Brown  
**Liturgist:** Denise Smith      **Children's Time:** Denise Smith

December 24:

**Greeters:** Anita Childress, Nina Wilson, Sandy Villa, Dennis Olson  
**Ushers:** Luan Brown, Gladys Weaver, Scott Spry, Ken Bisacchi, Bill Bubness  
**Liturgist:** Cheryl Jones      **Children's Time:** Kathie Stoner

December 31:

**Ushers/Greeters:** UMW  
**Liturgist:** Kathie Stoner      **Children's Time:** Beth Bales

10:45 Worship Leaders:

**December 3:** Cheryl Jones      **December 10:** Susan Wells  
**December 17:** Al Martin      **December 24:** Al Martin      **December 31:** Rachele Bernard

If you would like to join this group of volunteers,  
please contact the church office at 696-9219.



**Thursday BRD4Life (Bread for Life)**

Our mid-week service, Bread for Life, offers an informal experience that will nourish both your body and your spirit. Dinner begins at 5:30 in the Fellowship Hall, and worship starts at 6:15. Everyone is welcome! Bring a friend!

Below are the speakers, themes, and cooks for the month of **December**:

**December 7** ~ Speaker: Susan Wells      Cook: Kim McGinley  
Theme: *Pearl Harbor Day*

**December 14** ~ Speaker: Peggy Hendricks      Cook: Everyone! Pot-Luck  
Theme: *Dec. 15 is Cat Herder's Day*

**December 21** ~ No Bread for Life/Christmas Break

**December 28** ~ No Bread for Life/Christmas Break

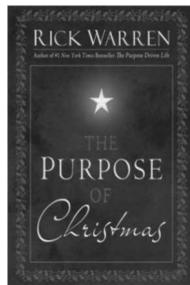


The message of Christmas is one of deep and abiding joy! Join us at the 9:15 service on Sunday, December 17, when the Chancel Choir will present a Christmas cantata by Lloyd Larson called "Sing Joy to all the World: A Christmas Celebration".

Our musical celebration will continue at 6:00 PM that same Sunday when the children will present a Christmas program, the SonShine Singers children's choir will sing, and other musical presentations will fill you with joy and the Christmas spirit! The wonderful evening of music will end in our traditional Methodist way ... with cookies, lemonade and coffee served by the Ladies United in Mission Circle of our United Methodist Women.

We hope that you will come and that you will invite your friends and relatives to both of these joyful Christmas programs!

Betty Kelley  
Music Chairperson



### A Bible Study for Advent

Advent is a time to prepare our hearts to receive God's greatest gift, but too often the busy-ness of holiday preparations takes over our lives. To help us 'slow down' and take time to focus on the true meaning of Christmas, the FRIENDS class invites everyone to join them in a Bible study the first 3 Sundays of Advent. Teaching through the gospel of Luke in three DVD sessions, pastor and best-selling author Rick Warren will explain not one, but three purposes of Christmas. "The Purpose of Christmas" study will meet on Dec. 3, 10 and 17 at 10:30 AM in room 304.

There is no cost for this study, no book to purchase. Come, join the FRIENDS class, take a break from holiday "busy-ness", and prepare your heart for Christmas.



### **Gift Cards for Christmas**

From the Finance Committee

Due to the popularity of giving gift cards at Christmas time, we are bringing back the Scrip Gift Card program just for the holiday.

Order forms will be in the Sunday worship bulletins on December 3 and 10, and will also be available in the church office.

#### **Payment is due with the order form.**

Orders will be placed on two Mondays: December 4 and December 11.

Cards are usually available to be picked up on the Thursday following the order date. Happy shopping!



### **Prince of Peace**

Our new Advent paraments have the theme, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6 refers to Jesus as the Prince of Peace. We strive for peace during the holiday season, but too often stress disturbs our peace.

As you come to the sanctuary to worship during December, we hope that the peace of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, will soak into your spirit.

Our appreciation to the Bales family, who donated the paraments in memory of Don's parents. We also thank Tom Sufana for designing the accompanying decorations and for all those who helped decorate the church.

The angels that previously adorned the sanctuary have moved in with some of our members.

Wishing you a blessed Christmas  
The Worship Committee  
Co-Chairs, Michelle Mishlove and Charlene Grant



Everyone is invited! Christmas Dessert Bar & Installation of UMW Officers  
Sunday, Dec. 3, at noon in the Fellowship Hall.



From the Missions Committee  
Susan Wells, Chairperson

THANK YOU to our church family for filling shoe boxes for the Samaritan's Purse International **Operation Christmas Child** Ministry. Thank you for giving monetary donations toward the postage cost. My daughter Kathy and I delivered **29 shoe boxes** to Village Church in Dyer.

God Bless you for your dedication!

*Ethel Devine*

THE CHRISTMAS CLOTHESLINE status:

Your response to the **61 tags** that were hung on the Christmas Clothesline was amazing! All the tags were gone in the first week! We are so grateful for your enthusiasm for this local project for families here in the Tri Creek area.

Reminders: \*Spend no more than \$50 per child. \*Include a gift receipt, if possible. \*Place **unwrapped** gifts in a paper or plastic bag. \*Attach the child's tag **securely** to the top of the bag. \* Return the bag to the church on or before **Friday, December 8**.

We hope you will be blessed as you help local parents provide gifts for their children!



**Confirmation 2018**

I would like to announce a new Confirmation Class that will begin January 7, 2018. Currently we have nine teens who are ready to start their journey to become church members. We will have a parent information meeting after 9:15 service on December 10. Anyone who is interested in joining our group, please contact Kim in the church office. I look forward to this adventure and am excited to have so many youth joining our church!

Lynn Skafish



**Save the Date!! Our Mystery Dinner Theatre will be January 27, 2018.  
Watch and listen for information about when tickets will go on sale.**

**Mark you calendar now for this annual fund-raiser for the Household Pantry. 6**

## Stewardship & Thankfulness

By the time this newsletter has landed at the doorstep of your e-mail the church leadership will have made the decisions for 2018 on what we will be able to support in ministries, who we will be able to assist in God's ministries, and how we see our church's love for doing God's work.

While thankfulness is at the center of stewardship, it's not an element of stewardship the way praying, serving, and giving are. Instead, real stewardship is the result of thankfulness. The key to thankfulness is seeing what God is doing in your life. In other words, counting your blessings, and then praying, serving and giving in response as a way of saying "thank you." As you thank God for what He is doing in your life, you will notice more ways He is at work and your relationship with Him will be strengthened further. Stewardship is about more than money. We need to understand giving is a spiritual discipline. Giving is a way to grow your faith. As Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." The greatest investments we make are those we make toward advancing God's Kingdom in the world.

We are grateful to all of you who were able to extend a pledge commitment so that we could discern what this church and its people could do to strengthen our relationship with God.

### Your Finance Committee



Dear Friends,

It is incredible to see the work of the Holy Spirit in restoring the broken lives of women whose loved ones are in prison. These ladies live with their own "sentence". They live lonely and secret lives because they would become outcasts if anyone at their work or even their church knew about their imprisoned loved one. We are so grateful for your support of this great work. You have enabled a difference to be made in the lives of people who have been lost and are in need of Christ's love. Thanks again for your support and may you be blessed in your service to Him.

Kairos Outside of Northern Indiana West

Dear Church Family,

Thank you for your prayers, hugs, texts or emails and cards during my brother Cliff's cancer journey and after his passing. Once again I have experienced God's love through the people of this church.

Gratefully,  
Bev Kussy

The family and friends of Sheldon Miller would like to thank you all for opening the church to our family in its time of need. You all helped make a rough time easier to handle.

Again thank you,  
Sheldon Miller Family



**WEEKLY EVENTS**

**Sunday** - *Worship* ~ 9:15 and 10:45 (Sanct.) *Adult Sun. School* ~ WINGS, 8 a.m. (rm. 300), F.O.M., 10:30 a.m. (rm. 301), FRIENDS, 10:30 a.m. (rm.304) *Children's Sunday School* (during 9:15 service)  
**Monday** - A/A 12 p.m. (rm. 300)  
**Tuesday** - Household Pantry 9-12 and 5-6 (1st and 3rd Tuesday), Guitar 6 p.m. (rm. 300)  
**Wednesday** - Weight Watchers 6 p.m. (rm. 300), Praise Practice 7 p.m. (Sanctuary), A/A - 8 p.m. (basement), Al/Anon - 8 p.m. (library)  
**Thursday** - *BRD4life* dinner 5:30 p.m., *Worship* 6:15 p.m. (Fellowship Hall), Godsbells 4:30 p.m. (balcony), Chancel Choir 7 p.m. (Sanctuary)

# December 2017

<b>Sun</b>	<b>Mon</b>	<b>Tue</b>	<b>Wed</b>	<b>Thu</b>	<b>Fri</b>	<b>Sat</b>
					1 Alpha/Barbara Circle 1pm (library)	2 Hot Chocolate Sale/Game Night 5-7 p.m. (basement)
3 UMW Christmas Dessert Bar/ Installation of officers 12pm (basement)	4 Tri-Kappa 6pm (basement)  Chancel Choir practice 7pm	5 Children's Council 7pm (library)	6	7 Tiger Scouts 6pm (303) Cub Scouts 6:30pm (300)	8 **Clothesline items due**  Movie Night 'The Encounter 2' 6pm	9 Family Christmas party 1-4pm (basement)
10	11 Susanna Wesley 7pm (library)	12	13 Chancel Choir Practice 7pm (sanctuary)	14 Preschool program 10:15(sanct. and basement) Chancel Choir @Cedar Creek 6:30pm	15	16 Chancel Choir practice 10am
17 Cantata Sunday 9:15 a.m.  Christmas Program 6 p.m.	18	19	20	21 NO Bread for Life	22	23
24 Christmas Eve Services 7 & 11p	25 Christmas Day/ Office Closed	26 Alzheimer Support Group 6 p.m. (library)	27	28 NO Bread for life	29	30
31  New Year's Eve						