



# The SPIRE

**First United Methodist Church**

[www.albionfirst.com](http://www.albionfirst.com)

find us on Facebook

600 East Michigan Avenue

Albion, MI 49224

## On Hospitality...

August is an important month in the life of our church. We expect to welcome another huge crowd for Vacation Bible School on August 8-11. Throughout the month, we welcome back our friends who have spent their summer traveling. All the school programs start to ramp up, with sports and band camps. First-year college students move in on the 19th, followed the next two days by everyone else, and classes start on Monday, the 22nd. So we might see a student or two on the 21st for worship, and a few more on the 28th (except those who make a trip home for all the things they forgot).

All of these August happenings are hospitality opportunities for the church, which probably explains why I'm preaching specifically about hospitality on July 31, and August 7 and 14. I want to make sure we're ready.

Preaching is all good and well, but sooner or later we have to do a few things! We're going to start by practicing on college students, and then hopefully grow this to include anyone who comes to the church for the first time. So, here are the things for which I need volunteers between now and then:

- 1) Make a strong commitment to befriend one college student. This means:
  - a. providing them a Sunday lunch, perhaps at your home, at least once a month while they're here at school.
  - b. knowing their name, and using it, and inviting (not obliging) them to sit with you.
  - c. knowing their birthday, and what's important to them.
  - d. contacting them if they're not at church, saying you missed them (but not guiltting them!)

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*Follow Jesus; Love Everyone*

## On Hospitality (continued)

- e. For everyone's wellbeing, make sure you're not alone with a student at home or in your car. Invite someone else as well!
- 2) Keep those monthly potlucks coming! Encourage students and all our guests to invite friends on days with potlucks!
- 3) As we did last year, I hope that the college will share with us a list of students to whom we can send a welcome card. So we'll need writers!

God bless you!

Pastor Jeremy

## Leadership

Lay Leader	Lois Fennimore glfennimore@yahoo.com
Church Council Chair	Mark Robison majerobi@gmail.com
Treasurer	Sally Ammerman sallya@wowway.com
Trustees Chair (Building & Property)	Gary Harrison
Staff-Parish Co-Chairs (Personnel)	Evelyn Gedman Barbara Lange
Finance Committee	Rick Lange Langehome.1@gmail.com
Pastor	Jeremy Williams jeremy@albionfumc.org
Choir Director	Drew Dunham
Pianist	Jan Fourn
Administrative Secretary	Cindi Klingel office@albionfumc.org
Housekeeper	Lynn Markovich
Custodian	Larry Maynard

## Prayers

Torrey Wyma, Beverly Bentley and Ken Bentley @ home

Nancy Held @ Maplewood in Marshall

Betty Beese @ Glazier Assisted Living, Chelsea

Florence Reed @ Spring Arbor Assisted Living, Spring Arbor

Dan Seelye @ Arbor Manor, S1-10, Spring Arbor

## Every Member A Greeter (EMAG)

The concept of every member a greeter (EMAG) was implemented by a church in the Detroit area, but First United Methodist Church of Albion could sure use the same concept. The concept involves all people of the church greeting everyone who shows up for worship. No one has signed up to be a greeter since July 3. That leaves a real hole in the "friendly church" concept. People can walk in and never have to talk to anyone.

Yes, I realize that you are greeting people in the Wesley Lounge area, but are these people just your friends or are you including strangers too? Can you look around and see people that you haven't greeted? If so, how about going ahead and walking up to them to say "Hi, my name is .... We've met before, right?" Getting acquainted with more people who love Jesus can be really exciting.

Lois Fennimore, Lay Leader

## Certified Lay Minister Training

A Certified Lay Minister is a qualified UM layperson called to congregational leadership as part of a ministry team under the supervision of a clergy person. The course includes training, support, supervision, and accountability while serving in a local church assigned by the DS. This course is facilitated by Rev. Ron Hansen and Dr. Peggy Bird, CLM. The classes will be held at Pathfinder UMC in Portage on Wednesdays from 6-8pm. Meetings will occur every other week from September 7 until November 30. A \$35 fee will cover the cost of materials. For more info or registration, contact Tracy Farnsworth at (269)327-6761 or office@pathfinderchurch.com. Pastor Ron would be happy to answer questions as well at (269)327-6761 or revronhansen@gmail.com.

## Worshipping into the Fall (August and September)

### Hospitality

**Beginning July 31**, we start preparing ourselves to welcome back college students and others, with a three-week series on **Hospitality**. College move-in weekend is August 21.

#### July 31: Prepare (Mark 6:30-44)

Jesus put his followers on the spot when he told them to get dinner for a crowd of thousands.

They had the usual complaints: we're not prepared; we can't afford it; can't they just go home? Churches use the same sorts of complaints when people arrive looking for either spiritual or physical sustenance. But if we're not prepared, maybe we should change that, and change the whole conversation with Jesus.



#### August 7: Welcome (Matthew 25:31-40)

Jesus paints a picture of a final judgment, and in the middle of the story is perhaps the most difficult demand: welcome the stranger. This is harder than we think precisely because we have a hard time putting ourselves in the head and heart of a person who's not just like us. The demand to welcome is a requirement to stretch our imagination. Ready?



#### August 14: Walking Together (Luke 14:12-24)

OK, so you're pretty good and walking up to a stranger and making conversation--maybe. Well, how are you at inviting that person into a longer faith relationship? Where are people going to find the invitation to walk in a shared path of discipleship, if not from you? Are you ready to change a life, and be changed in the process?

### Arguments in the Bible

The Bible is not simply a group of texts that share the same truths and points of view. The Bible is intentionally a collection of disagreements and arguments about the very foundations of faith, life, and community. **Beginning August 21**, Jeremy begins a six-week series on some of the most profound **arguments** that the Bible has handed on to us. We're invited to join the conversation--and maybe take sides!

#### August 21: North and South

From Jacob (Genesis 35:1-10) to Jesus and the Samaritans (John 4:9-11, 21-24), the history of people in Palestine was divided between two group of people, who were usually two nations, and sometimes despised each other. The roots of the story (2 Kings 17:4-6; 17-24) shape a thousand sensitivities and perceptions over the years, including our own.



#### August 28: Prophet and Priest

This one never goes away: it's the struggle between maintaining order and purity (a priest's job) and crying for justice (a prophet's job). Readings from Amos 4 and 5, Isaiah 56:10-12, Jeremiah 7 and 26. Is there a way to keep these two things in tension?



#### September 4: Purity and Power

Purity is not a word that gets much play these days, but the idea is still around. We have an intuition that the pursuit of power is always at odds with trying to stay pure. The same goes for religious power-seekers as for political candidates for national office. On the other hand, when the powerful try to get purity on their side, terrible things can happen, like ethnic "cleansing" and mass deportation. The Bible is full of stories that pit purity against power. We'll consider a couple of them, from Ezra 10:28-39, Nehemiah 10:2-5, and from Jesus' powerful statement about the difference between inner and outer purity, in Matthew 23:23-28.

### September 11: Jew and Greek

Well, if by Greek, you mean people who aren't Jewish, who share the common language (Greek), and generally don't get Judaism, then you understand the conflict. The first generation of Christians fought hard about the question of whether someone who wasn't Jewish should be allowed to be a Christian. This is our first big argument among Christians, and it has been the foundation for anti-semitism for millennia. Acts 7:51-53, 13:44-52.

### September 18: Law and Grace

This is as simple and as difficult as two questions:

1) How do I get to heaven? and

2) How am I supposed to

live? The New

Testament spends a

lot of time on this

argument. One one

side we have

Matthew, James, and a

few other books. On the

other side we have John and Paul. The great thing

is that the people who decided what we should

have in our Bible thought we deserved to hear both

sides of the argument, and make up our own minds.

We'll look at James 1:22-27, Mark 10:17-27, and

John 3:14-18.



### September 25: Knowledge and Wisdom

In 1 Corinthians, Paul suggests that the whole Christian message is "wisdom to the foolish," which seems to mean that if you think you can explain the Christian faith to smart people, then you're wrong. This hasn't kept people from using a lot of ink and paper trying to do just that. And the Bible spends plenty of time talking about wisdom, and about studying the Bible. We'll look at a couple of other passages from Paul (Ephesians 5:6-15 and Philippians 3:9-16) and one from a gospel: (Luke 11:52; 12:22-34).

## UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER

**September 5** Labor Day -  
Office Closed

**September 17** Albion District UMW  
Gathering in Concord

**September 22** Red Cross Blood Drive

**September 24** Healthy Babies Day



## Church Directory

Due to traveling a lot, I've been noticing lately that fewer people are wearing their name tags. I also am remembering names for people less too. Looking at old church directories in the church office has helped some, but there are quite a few people who are not in the old directories.

Several people have suggested that a new directory be created. This would contain pictures and some information (like name, address and contact information) about people associated with the church. Tentative plans call for pictures being taken before and after church during the month of October. Anyone who is interested in copies of their pictures could get them for a minimal charge.

Sometime in November or December copies of the created directory will be made available to those whose pictures are within. There is an understanding that information about individuals in the directory will not be given out to those not associated with the church.

Please plan on attending sometime during October and having your picture taken at that time.



## Women United Yard Sale

In conjunction with the Michigan Avenue Sale, the Women United will have their yard sale on August 6. They would like to thank all who have donated items. Also, they welcome you to come and find new treasures.



**Sunday Schedule:**

9:00 Band  
9:30 Refreshments  
10:00 Worship  
11:00 Refreshments

**Office Hours:**

Monday-Thursday 8:00 am - 12:30 pm  
Friday 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

# August 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 ELECTION DAY 8 am Biggby Bible Study	3 1:15 Sheldon Place Bible Study	4 5:30 Women United Leadership Meeting	5 8 am Women United Garage Sale Setup	6 8 am Women United Garage Sale 3 pm VBS Prep and Setup
7 Sunday Schedule Communion 11:30 Sermon Discussion 11:30 Finance Meeting 4 pm VBS Decorating	8 5:30 pm VBS	9 8 am Biggby Bible Study 9 am SAP Coalition Mtg 5:30 pm VBS	10 9:30 am Albion District Clergy Forum 1:15 Sheldon Place Bible Study 5:30 pm VBS	11 5:30 pm VBS 7 pm Trustees Meeting	12	13
14 Sunday Schedule 11:30 Sermon Discussion	15 12 pm First Church Seniors 1:30 pm **Entre Nous 5:30 pm **Women United Mtg.	16 8 am Biggby Bible Study	17 9 am Albion College Admissions Office Training 1:15 Sheldon Place Bible Study	18 9 am Albion College Admissions Office Training 2 pm Healthy Babies Day Meeting	19	20
21 Sunday Schedule 11:30 Sermon Discussion 5 pm Church Council	22	23 8 am Biggby Bible Study 10 am Piecemakers Quilt Work Bee	24 1:15 Sheldon Place Bible Study 4 pm SPRC Meeting	25	26	27
28 Sunday Schedule 11:30 Sermon Discussion	29 5:30 pm Women United Nutrition Class	30 8 am Biggby Bible Study	31 1:15 Sheldon Place Bible Study			