



The SPIRE

First United Methodist Church
www.albionfumc.org
find us on Facebook
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600 East Michigan Avenue
Albion, MI 49224

Friends:

I have two things to share with you.

First, on May 22nd, we're going to have a very special offering, a time for extra special generosity, to raise funds to pay our ministry shares. Ministry shares are our biggest mission giving, supporting everything from Africa University and seminary scholarships to community ministries in Grand Rapids. This year, our church's share is over \$28,000, and we're hoping to pay it all with the help of this Sunday of generosity. Soon you'll receive a letter giving more information and encouraging you to give with a special generosity on May 22. See you then!

Here's the second thing: In a couple of weeks, I'm going to take a few days out of town to plan my messages for the next year, from July through June. I did this last May for the first time, and it's been enormously helpful to me through the year. Planning ahead means that I can make sure that I cover in a year a wide range of issues and questions. I plan ahead, to make sure I spend a good number of weeks teaching about the Bible, some on personal issues, some on social issues (like our current series on the Social Principles), and a few weeks talking about what it means to be the church. I'm thankful to the Staff-Pastor-Parish committee (the committee that evaluates me and gives me guidance), because they've seen the importance of taking this time for this important purpose.

This November and December, I hope to have a series on your questions. That means, of course, that I need you to send me your questions by email at pastorjeremywilliams@gmail.com. Hearing your questions is also helpful because it gives me a better idea where you are, and that helps shape my messages all year through.

I look forward to hearing from you!
Pastor Jeremy

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Follow Jesus; Love Everyone

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

UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER

- June 8** West Michigan Annual Conference at MSU
- June 21** UMW Summer Refresher
- July 14-16** Mission U (formerly the School of Christian Mission) at Albion College



Prayers

Eva Rottenbiller, Hilda Ebbinghouse, Dan Seelye, Ken Bentley, and Lynne Baldwin @ home

Nancy Held @ Maplewood in Marshall

Betty Beese @ Glazier Assisted Living

Florence Reed @ Spring Arbor Assisted Living; Spring Arbor

Peg Neil @ Arbor Manor Rehabilitation and Nursing Center; Spring Arbor

Helen Myers @ Marshall Nursing and Rehabilitation; Marshall, MI

UMW News

United Methodist Women News

Since the beginning of the year, the United Methodist Women's circles have been meeting regularly. The Brown/Bentley circle meets in the afternoon at Wesley Lounge and has had programs on a variety of topics, including Tom Hunsdorfer's description of his recent trip to Guatemala. The women in this circle love to get together, but find it difficult for driving to Wesley Lounge. The other circle, Cook/Stowell, meets in the evening, with an occasional afternoon meeting.

This circle enjoyed a travel presentation by Darlene Chisolm on Bogotá and northern Columbia. Polly Moore spoke about our contributions for Prayer and Self Denial, which is used to support women's programs around the world. Last month we read and discussed the book, *This Far by Faith*, written by a United Methodist minister, Faith Fowler, who is the director of Cass Street Community House in Detroit. If you haven't read this book, we all recommend reading it. Coming up, the Brown/Bentley circle will have a meeting in May, when Mickey Ogilbee will speak on Medicare and Medicaid assistance. The evening circle meets on May 10, with Dottie Kammer presenting the program

We are planning an all-church potluck on May 1, after the Sunday service. There will be no program, just a time to enjoy food and fellowship. The UMW will provide the meat and beverages, and we ask you to provide either a vegetable, salad, rolls, or a dessert. Bring one of your favorites. We haven't had a potluck for a long time, and I hope you will plan to attend.

Also, put on your calendar the summer refresher. We will be meeting at the home of Evelyn Gedman around 10 a.m. on June 21. Lunch will be provided by the UMW executive team members. This is a nice break in the summer.

Worshipping through May (and more)

For the first two weeks in May, we will continue our series, "What does the United Methodist Church believe about...". On May 8, we will hold a gathering in the Conference Room following worship, to discuss the Social Principles and our own beliefs. Please take part.

May 1: The Political Community

May 8: The World Community

Then the students go home, and we settle in for a quiet summer in Albion. It's a good time to think about our town. So, coming up after that is a series of messages about our hometown:

Bringing It Home to Albion



Albion is going through some changes: -a new hotel arriving, changing the character of downtown; a couple of major renovations on Superior Street, providing a place for the college to be part of our downtown; a new Taco Bell, and rumors of another new restaurant on the east side of town. All of this pales in comparison to the vote May 3rd about annexing the Albion Schools into the Marshall School District. No wonder we feel topsy-turvy these days! Here's an outline of the series:

May 15 (Pentecost):

Strengthening Families in Albion

Families have come in for much of the blame, as Albion schools have weakened. There are lots of reasons why, from mass incarceration that takes men out of the home, to the loss of jobs, to changes in culture generation by generation. What's clear is that we have a duty to do what we can to strengthen and support families, helping them have the spiritual, education, social

and economic resources to provide a safe and steady place for children.

May 22: A Deeper Diversity

We have not overcome the racial divisions that people protested about fifty years ago. The school issue has brought this back to the fore, and that's good, if it causes us to move toward deeper healing and greater wisdom in Albion. And that's not all. We still paper over the divisions between Christians, between rich and poor, and we still haven't succeeded at proving that the church is good at welcoming people of all gender and sexual identities. How can we use the current moment to move forward?

May 29: Beyond Charity to Community

It's one thing to give money to people in serious need. It makes us feel good, and Jesus told us to do it. But \$100 here or there is not really fixing anything. People come to us for help because they are disconnected from the community, because the whole community suffers from that characteristic American problem of keeping separate from one another. How can we address that?

June 5: What a Church Can Do

I believe a church can do a lot. It is really easy to list the things we can't do, but that doesn't help anything. This church has a history of being active in the community. God is asking us to take it to the next level.



Women United Garage Sale

The Women United garage sale will be in early August. During spring cleaning or similar times between now and then, please consider donating your good/salable items by bringing them to the church and leaving them on the big cart in the north stairwell beside Tennant Hall.

You can find our new website by going to www.albionfirst.org. Much of the information is aimed at people looking for a place to worship. However, there are a few features which our current members will find useful.

EVENTS CALENDAR

Albion FUMC						
Today ◀ ▶		April 2016 ▼		Print	Week	Month
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27 10am Worship	28 7pm Boy Scouts	29 8am Bible Study	30 1:15pm Bible St	31	Apr 1	2
3 Communion 10am Worship 11:30am UMC Pr	4 7pm Boy Scouts	5 8am Bible Study	6 1:15pm Bible St	7	8	9
10 10am Worship 11:30am UMC Pr 2pm *AC Baske	11 12pm **First Ch 4:30pm **Wome 5:30pm **Wome 7pm Boy Scouts	12 8am Bible Study 5:30pm Trustees 7pm UMW Even	13 11:30am Adm. S 1:15pm Bible St	14 9am **AALL Ge	15	16 12pm *AC Albyc
17 10am Worship 11:30am UMC Pr 5pm Church Col	18 1:30pm **Entre 5:30pm **Wome 7pm Boy Scouts	19 8am Heating/Cc 8am Bible Study 5:30pm Caring S	20 1pm Albion Ann 1:15pm Bible St 5:30pm AC Phi E 6pm *Diversity	21 12pm Red Cross 1pm **UMW Af 2pm Healthy Ba	22 12:30pm **Bizo	23 10am Junior Coi 6pm *Big Band
24 10am Worship 11:30am UMC Pr	25 5:30pm **Wome 7pm Boy Scouts	26 8am Bible Study 10am **Piecem 5:30pm Caring S	27 1:15pm Bible St 4pm Nearnberg 4pm SPRC Meet	28	29	30

Sunday Schedule:

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

Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday 8:00 am - 1:00 pm
Friday 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

May 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Sunday Schedule Communion 11:30 am Congregation Social	2 5:30 pm Women United Leadership	3 ELECTION DAY 8 am Biggby Bible Study 5:30 pm Caring Skills Training	4 1:15 pm Sheldon Place Bible Study	5		
8 Sunday Schedule 11:30 am Finance Committee Meeting 11:30 am UMC Principles Discussion	9 12 pm First Church Seniors	10 8 am Biggby Bible Study 5:30 pm Trustees Mtg 5:30 pm Forks Sr Ctr Mtg 5:30 pm Caring Skills Trg 7 pm Evening Circle	11 1:15 pm Sheldon Place Bible Study	12 6:30 pm Scout Troop 158 - Silver Beaver Award Selection Committee	13 5 pm Coxson Wedding Rehearsal Dinner	14 1 pm Coxson Wedding Reception
15 Sunday Schedule 5 pm Church Council	16 1:30 pm Entre Nous 5:30 pm Women United	17 8 am Biggby Bible Study 5:30 pm Caring Skills Training	18 1:15 pm Sheldon Place Bible Study	20 1 pm Afternoon Circle	20	21
22 Sunday Schedule	23 4:30 pm Women United Board Meeting 5:30 pm Women United Class	24 8 am Biggby Bible Study 10 am Piecemakers 5:30 pm Caring Skills Training	25 1:15 pm Sheldon Place Bible Study 4 pm SPRC Meeting	26 12 pm American Red Cross Blood Drive	27	28
29 Sunday Schedule	30 MEMORIAL DAY	31				