



The SPIRE

First United Methodist Church

www.albionfirst.org

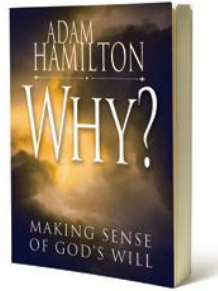
find us on Facebook

600 East Michigan Avenue

Albion, MI 49224

Do you make New Year's Resolutions?

I've never been a fan of that custom. Maybe it's because I know myself well enough to know how long such a commitment is likely to last ...



But no matter how we feel about making resolutions, the start of a new year always seems to be a time of reflection. We change jobs, start and end relationships, join gyms and go on diets - all in our quest to find that elusive sense of contentment.

This year, I encourage you to include your faith in your annual year-end review. How is it with your soul? Do you have the relationship with Jesus Christ that you desire?

Beginning January 14th in worship, we'll tackle some of the most challenging questions of faith ... where is God when tragedy and suffering strike? Does God really hear our prayers? How can I figure out God's will for my life? Some of these challenging questions may be the stumbling blocks that are keeping you from a deeper and more fulfilling relationship with God. We'll be using Adam Hamilton's book, *Why?* as our guide.

I hope you'll join in this important conversation. See you there.

Pastor Leslee

January 2018

Gourmet Nuts and Peanut Brittle	2
Leadership Listing	
Pledge Card Reminder	
Prayers	
Thank You	
MLK Community Dinner	3
UMW News and Views	
Calendar	4

Follow Jesus; Love Everyone

Prayers

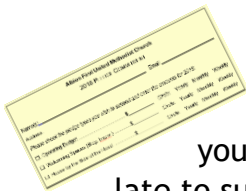
Bev Bentley, Ken Bentley, Sherry Wyma, Hilda Ebbinghaus and Rev. Gary Wyma @ home

Robert Armstrong @ Ann Arbor

Betty Beese @ Glazier Assisted Living, Chelsea

Thank You

So many people contributed to making our Advent season special: the coordinators of the *Hanging of the Greens* supper, Senior Luncheon and Advent Luncheon, and those who brought food; the decorating committee and those who purchased poinsettias; and those who provided special music. Sincere thanks to all who gave of their time and talents to bless our congregation and our community.



Pledge Card Reminder

If you have not yet returned your 2018 pledge card, it is not too late to submit it. They can be put in the offering plate, mailed in, or dropped off at the church office. Your commitment helps us plan the best use of our resources for the year. If you need a card, just let us know.

Gourmet Nuts and Peanut Brittle

Nuts are now available in both Wesley Lounge and the church office. The cost is \$20.00 for a 36 oz. can.



Peanut Brittle is still available through the church office and in Wesley Lounge. Be sure to get some while you can.

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)	to be elected
Staff-Parish Chair (Personnel)	Barbara Lange langehome.2@gmail.com
Finance Committee	Rick Lange langehome.1@gmail.com
Pastor	Leslee Fritz pastorleslee1@gmail.com
Missions Co-Chairs	John Williams Donna Williams
Memorial Chair	Carol Maynard
Choir Director	Drew Dunham
Music Director /Pianist	Jan Fourn
Administrative Assistant	Cindi Klingel albionfumc@gmail.com
Housekeeper	Lynn Markovich
Custodian	Larry Maynard



Our Women in December

Our busy month began with Ingathering on Dec. 7th, the year end meeting where we collect a special offering in thanks for the season and the abundance we enjoy. I think it is important to note that we took in \$3200, which has been distributed in the set amounts and percentages that are published in our yearbook. A.I.M. received \$400, House By the Side of the Road, \$500, S.A.F.E Place, \$300, Women United, \$100, Grand Rapids Community House, \$100, and the Chelsea Retirement Benevolent Care Fund, \$100. The Baby Pantry received \$360 (20%), S.I.S., \$360 (20%), Healthy Babies Day, \$539 (30%) and Vision of Life \$539 (30%). So, our UMW supports local missions.

Other year-end financial notes: we completed our general pledge to mission goal of \$2500, and in addition supported the Women's Division through our giving to Special Mission Recognition, \$80; Gift to Mission and Gift in Memory, \$40; World Thank Offering, \$168; Prayer and Self-Denial, \$31; and contributions to the Legacy Fund (which celebrates 150 years of UMW) \$1650. Through these gifts we support our world missions.

We hosted 35 people on Dec. 13th for an advent luncheon, and enjoyed seeing Gwen and Shelly Bagley on the 21st at our joint Circle Meeting. Gwen gave the program on her recent trip to Nicaragua, and brought us up to date with her career hopes and dreams. It's hard to believe that the last time most of us saw her she was 11 years old! She hopes to continue in the mission field, and was a gratifying witness to the influence that UMW has had on her life.

Starting in November and finishing the second week in December, we once again made peanut brittle. With sales not yet completed, the project has earned \$752, and the making

of it again offered the candy makers plenty of fellowship time in our beautiful kitchen.

There will be an Epiphany meeting at Marshall UMC on Jan. 13, 2018, from 10 am to 2 pm. The cost, which includes lunch, is \$10. Please contact the church office to make a reservation.

In 2018, our Circle options include third Thursday afternoon monthly, led by Sally Ammerman, and evenings, third Tuesday, led by Carolyn Gaswick and Polly Moore. All are welcome, for more information contact a circle chair.

May 2018 bring us all peace, fulfillment, and the renewal of our commitment to each other and our community.

Polly Moore

MLK Community Dinner

Marshall Opportunity School
225 E. Watson Street, Albion

Doors open: 5:00 p.m.
Dinner: 5:30 p.m.
Program: 6:00 p.m.

Keynote Speakers:

Sheryl Mitchell, Albion City Manager
Mayor Garrett Brown

Other Guests:

Albion Public Safety
Albion District Library
Harrington Elementary Essay
Contest Winner
Musical Performances

For more information, contact:
Cressie Vargo (517) 221-9182

**DINNER IS FREE
EVERYONE IS INVITED!**

Non-perishable canned good will be collected for AIM and monetary donations will be accepted for the Harrington Elementary School Field Trip Fund.



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

January 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 New Year's Day OFFICE CLOSED	2 8a Biggby Bible Study	3 1:15p Sheldon Place Bible Study 5:30p WU/SIS mentoring 6:30p Bell Choir	4 2p UMW Executive Leadership Team	5 8a AC Student Affairs Workshop	6
7 Sunday Schedule Communion 11:30 Sermon Discussion	8 12p First Church Seniors 7p Boy Scouts	9 8a Biggby Bible Study 9a SAP Coalition Mtg 7p Trustees Mtg	10 1:15p Sheldon Place Bible Study 6:30p Bell Choir	11	12 6p AC Intercultural Affairs Dinner	13 9a Trustees Workbee
14 Sunday Schedule 11:30 Sermon Discussion	15 MLK DAY 5:30p Women United 7p Boy Scouts 9p AC Chapel Leadership	16 8a Biggby Bible Study	17 1:15p Sheldon Place Bible Study 5:30p WU/SIS mentoring 6:30p Bell Choir	18 1p UMW Combined Circle	19 6p IVCF Worship	20
21 Sunday Schedule 11:30 Sermon Discussion	22 7p Boy Scouts 9p AC Chapel Leadership	23 8a Biggby Bible Study 10a Piecemakers	24 1:15p Sheldon Place Bible Study 5:30p SPRC Mtg 6p Comm. Engagemt. 6:30p Bell Choir	25 12p Red Cross Blood Drive	26 6p IVCF Worship	27 8a CPR Training
28 Sunday Schedule 11:30 Sermon Discussion	29 7p Boy Scouts 9p AC Chapel Leadership	30 8a Biggby Bible Study	31 1:15p Sheldon Place Bible Study 6:30p Bell Choir			