



The SPIRE

First United Methodist Church

www.albionfirst.org

find us on Facebook

600 East Michigan Avenue

Albion, MI 49224

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Friends,

This Sunday, we begin the season of Advent. As our calendars fill up with the hustle and bustle of the holiday season (just read the rest of this newsletter to see all of the events!), Advent calls us to slow down and prepare; to anticipate with longing and joy the coming of our savior.

My prayer for all of us this holiday season is that amidst the busy, we will make time to remember the longing of the Jews for a Messiah and our own longing for, and need of, forgiveness, salvation and a new beginning. I pray that we will, once again, hear God's message of light and hope in our world of darkness and that we will allow the coming of the Christ child to transform us through the healing power of love.

In the coming weeks, we will look forward to the coming Savior, celebrating with music, study, worship and praise. I hope you'll plan to be a part of all that this season has to offer.

See you on Sunday.

Pastor Leslee

2020 Pledge Cards Still Welcome

Albion First United Methodist Church					
2020 PLEDGE CARD					
NAME:		LAST			
ADDRESS:					
Please attach this pledge card to your check or deposit and submit to the church by 12/31/20.					
Give to the Church	\$	_____	Quarter	Yearly	Monthly
Give to the Church (aka: BDO)	\$	_____	Quarter	Yearly	Monthly
Give to the Social Action Fund	\$	_____	Quarter	Yearly	Monthly

Last Sunday, we received and blessed many financial commitments to the church for the coming year. A special thanks to all of you who brought your pledge cards to that service, or mailed them to us in advance. If you haven't had a chance to send yours in, there's still time! Please consider prayerfully how you will support the ministries and outreach of our church in the coming year and then drop your pledge card in the offering plate or at the office.

December 2019

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Follow Jesus; Love Everyone

Prayers

Ken Bentley, Tom Hartwell,
Hilda Ebbinghaus, Greg Metzler,
Barb Stowell, Barbara Slaughter,
Pastor Loree Grinnell, and Pastor
Tom Hollowood @ home



Missy Wyss @ Maplewood Assisted Living,
Marshall

Dave Seely @ U of M Hospital, Ann Arbor

Walter Hunter @ Mary Free Bed, Lansing

Edward Sobie, Jr. @ Cotton Correctional
Facility

Betty Beese @ Glazier Assisted Living, Chelsea

Donna Gaskell @ Copley, OH

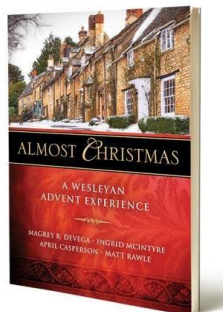
Poinsettias

Poinsettias will again adorn our worship space on Christmas Eve this year. If you would like to provide one or more, forms will be available on the guestbook stand in Wesley Lounge and in the church office. The plants are yours to keep following the service. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the office. Cost is **\$10.00 per plant** and the available colors are red, white, and pink. **The deadline for ordering is Sunday, December 1.**



Advent Small Group Begins Monday, December 2.

Pastor Leslee will lead a four week study this Advent to delve a little deeper into the seasonal themes of Peace, Hope, Love and Joy. Using *Almost Christmas* as our guide, the study will explore ways we can move beyond the “almost” to the “altogether” this Christmas.



The group will meet on Monday evenings at 6:00p.m. beginning December 2. A sign-up sheet will soon be available.

Leadership Listing

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)	Barbara Rafaill plantgirl@rafaill.com
Staff-Parish Chair (Personnel)	Steve Noble steven.noble820@gmail.com
Finance	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



“Community Carols: The Sounds of Christmas”

Sunday, December 15, 2019
7:00 p.m.

St. Paul Lutheran Church

Come sing some carols and hear a few local church choirs.



Hanging of the Greens starts the Holiday Season

Help us prepare the church for the Advent and Christmas season. The fun and fellowship begins at **9:00 a.m. on Saturday, November 30**. There are trees to decorate, garlands to drape, and nativity scenes to arrange so bring your energy and enthusiasm and join in the fun. Special thanks this year to the UMW and Ken and Bonnie Bauman for coordinating this special time together.

Lessons and Carols - Sunday, December 8, 2018



The Albion College Music Department's tradition continues this year with the beloved Lessons and Carols program on Sunday, December 8, at 7:00 p.m. in Goodrich Chapel

The Service of Nine Lessons and Carols was designed by Archbishop E. W. Benson for use in the cathedral at Truro, England. The first formal event was held there on Christmas Eve, 1880. The late David L. Strickler introduced a modified service to Albion College in 1966.

AMA Advent Luncheons

December 4

Speaker: Pastor Paul Koehn
Location: Bread of Life
Ministries
916 N Superior Street



December 11

Speaker: Pastor Leslee Fritz
Location: St. Paul Lutheran Church
100 Luther Boulevard

December 18

Speaker: Pastor Fred Alexander, Jr.
Location: First United Methodist Church
600 E. Michigan Avenue

Ingathering

"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself. Matthew 22: 36-39

Ingathering time is here—that time of year that we gather funds to support our neighbors with special needs. In the interest of meeting the expanding needs of others, we are inviting the entire church to participate in this UMW sponsored project. Therefore, this year we are having Ingathering Sunday on December 8, 2019 during the 10 a.m. service. A Special offering envelope for Ingathering will be in the bulletin of December 8th to support the Ingathering designated organizations as shown below. Please prayerfully consider giving.

Funds Distribution for 2019

Albion Food Hub	\$ 1,000
S.A.F.E. Place	300
United Methodist Retirement Community Benevolent Fund (Chelsea)	200
Methodist Community House (Grand Rapids)	100
S.I.S. (Sisters Influencing Society)	200
Vision of Life Community Outreach Center	<u>300</u>
	\$ 2,100

Remainder to be distributed as follows:

Safe Place	100%
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UMW News

With the weather and the temperature so goofy, I'm not sure what time of year it is, and I can't believe it is already my turn to write the UMW note.

We have been very busy planning and I'm sure you have heard about some of it. We hope to have the 2020 UMW Book printed before the end of the year. The book details our planned events for all of next year. If you do not receive a copy and would like one, please contact the church office. All are welcome to attend.

In an effort to be more inclusive, we will be having our annual

INGATHERING during the worship service on Sunday, December 8. Hope to see you there.

Blessings always,
Barb Stowell

Because No One Should Go To Bed Hungry



Albion FUMC has committed to partner with the Albion Food Hub and the Food Bank of South Central Michigan to expand access to fresh food in our community. Beginning next month, we'll sponsor an additional day of food distribution, providing fresh produce, meat, dairy and other food items to roughly 250 families here in Albion each month.

The logistics are being finalized (including the exact date of distribution), but you'll have the chance to support this mission in two ways: financial support and volunteer time. You can make donations to the church (please note: FOOD BANK in the memo line of your check). We'll also soon have a sign-up sheet available for those wanting to assist on distribution days.

Your support for this opportunity has been loud and strong. Thank you for caring for our community.

Office Holiday Schedule

The holidays are here. The church office will be closed on Thursday, November 28 and Friday, November 29 for Thanksgiving. The church office will also be closed from Tuesday, December 24 through Thursday, December 26 and again from Tuesday, December 31 through Thursday, January 2 in observance of Christmas and New Year's. Pastor Leslee is always reachable by phone, text or email when the office is closed. Please do not hesitate to contact her if needed.

Conversation with College about Church Space Ends Unresolved

It has been eight months since Albion College leadership first approached us about the possibility of using some or all of our church for the expansion of their music department. With your valuable input, Pastor Leslee held several conversations over those months with representatives of the college to explore possibilities, ranging from sharing Tennent Hall and Wesley Chapel to our openness to selling some or all of our church in exchange for new construction adjacent to our existing building.

None of these conversations reached the serious negotiation stage and it is clear that there simply is not enough specificity in the college's current plans, budget and priorities to make continued conversation productive. We have let the college know that we do not see value in additional discussions. We did, however, leave open further conversation should they wish to make a specific proposal related to our available space.

For more than 60 years, Albion College and Albion FUMC have been neighbors and partners to the mutual benefit of our congregation, the staff and student body and the community as a whole. It is a relationship we value and, although this particular discussion did not result in an agreement, it is a relationship which will continue for many years to come.

If you have any questions about this discussion and its current status, just ask Pastor Leslee.



Fun, Fellowship & Faith for the Holidays

Mark your calendars for the many church and community events that help celebrate this blessed holiday season.

Mon. 12/2	Advent Study @ Albion FUMC	6 p.m.
Wed. 12/4	Advent Community lunch @ Bread of Life Ministries (Rev. Paul Koehn preaching)	12 noon
Fri. 12/6	Albion Aglow, downtown	7 p.m.
Sun. 12/8	Lessons & Carols @ Goodrich Chapel	7 p.m.
Mon. 12/9	Advent Study @ Albion FUMC	6 p.m.
Wed. 12/11	Advent Community lunch @ St. Paul's Lutheran (Pastor Leslee preaching)	12 noon
Sun. 12/15	Community Carols @ St. Paul's	7 p.m.
Mon. 12/16	Advent Study @ Albion FUMC	6 p.m.
Wed. 12/18	Advent Community lunch @ Albion FUMC (Rev. Fred Alexander preaching)	12 noon
Sun. 12/22	Albion FUMC Holiday Worship with Brass Quintet	10 a.m.
Mon. 12/23	Advent Study @ Albion FUMC	6 p.m.
Tues. 12/24	Albion FUMC Christmas Candlelight Worship	7 p.m.






Sunday Schedule:

9:30 Refreshments
10:00 Worship
11:00 Refreshments
11:30 Sermon Discussion

Office Hours:

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

December 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Sunday Schedule Communion 11:30 Sermon Discussion 1p Peanut Brittle making	2 5:30p SPRC 5:30p WU Leadership 6p Advent Bible Study 7p Scouts BSA Troop 158	3 8a Biggby Bible Study	4 12p Advent Luncheon @ Bread of Life 5:30p WU/SIS Mentoring 7p Bell Choir Rehearsal 7p AC Education Class	5 9a Zone 1 Clergy	6 1:30p Albion Health Care Alliance	7
8 Sunday Schedule 11:30 Sermon Discussion 1p Peanut Brittle making 7p Lessons and Carols @ Goodrich Chapel	9 1p UMW Circle Meeting 6p Advent Bible Study 7p Scouts BSA Troop 158	10 8a Biggby Bible Study 9a SAP Coalition Meeting 5:30p Albion Area Philanthropic Women	11 12p Advent Luncheon @ St. Paul Lutheran 7p Bell Choir Rehearsal	12 6:30p Trustees	13 2p Community Leadership Meeting	14
15 Sunday Schedule 11:30 Sermon Discussion 7p Sounds of the Season @ St. Paul Lutheran Church	16 5:30p Women United 6p Advent Bible Study 7p Scouts BSA Troop 158	17 8a Biggby Bible Study	18 12p Advent Luncheon @ Albion FUMC 5:30p WU/SIS Mentoring 7p Bell Choir Rehearsal	19 12p  Blood Drive	20	21
22 Sunday Schedule 11:30 Sermon Discussion	23 6p Advent Bible Study 7p Scouts BSA Troop 158	24 CHRISTMAS EVE Church Office Closed 7p Christmas Candlelight Worship 	25 CHRISTMAS DAY 	26 Church Office Closed	27	28
29 Sunday Schedule 11:30 Sermon Discussion	30 7p Scouts BSA Troop 158	31 Church Office Closed				