



CONGREGATIONAL CONNECTIONS

FIRST UMC OF WARREN
JANUARY 2025

PASTOR'S PEN

Hello Church,

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. John 3:17

By the time you receive this, I will be on a plane headed to Guatemala to serve God by serving others. I thank you everyone who helped make this possible for me. Your generosity not only covered the expense of the trip, it has allowed us to bring much needed supplies to the school we will be working alongside. In fact, my large suitcase is filled to the brim with supplies. It's a good thing I can pack light.

As I've been doing my final preparations, I've been thinking about John 3:17. One of the most famous scriptures passages is the one that comes directly before it, and it is often used to remind people that the only way to God is to believe in Jesus. Yet, here we are told that Jesus didn't come to condemn the world. He came to offer salvation. He came to point us to a relationship with the Living God. And as I read the gospels, what I have discovered time and time again is that the salvation that leads us closer to God is grounded in caring for others, whether they are next door or across the globe. I'm excited for this opportunity to meet new neighbors and share the love of God with them through service.

This year, we are continuing to seek opportunities where we can put our love into action through service. This Sunday, while I am preparing to service the children of Salud y Paz, you will have an opportunity to share God's love with those at Martha T. Berry by making lap blankets. Trust me when I say that this is something everyone can do. It's as easy as tying your shoe. Another opportunity you will have is to take a Valentine to one of our shut-ins and enjoy a visit.

As we move through the year, we will continue to offer up opportunities to serve God by serving others. Some of these will be in the building; others will be out in the community. All of them offer a great opportunity to invite a neighbor, friend, or family member to come along and help. The more the merrier.

Blessings,

Rev. Melissa J. Claxton

Worship

February 2

Praise Hymns: All Who Hunger

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 5:8-12

Message: Finding Hope in Community (Judy May)

Closing Hymn: Behold a Broken World

February 9

Praise Hymns: Lord, I want to be a Christian

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 5:1-7

Message: Don't Be a Fool

Closing Hymn: The Summons

February 16

Praise Hymns:

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 7:1-12

Message: Embrace Life's Limitations

Closing Hymn:

February 23

Praise Hymns:

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 9:7-10

Message: The Joy of Life

Closing Hymn:

CHECK IT OUT!

- CURRENT WORSHIP, ZOOM INSTRUCTIONS, EPIPHANY, ENGAGE, HUMAN RELATIONS SUNDAY
- EMAIL SCAM, FINANCIAL UPDATE, ARTIFICIAL TREES NEEDED, CAPUCHIN SERVICES CENTER, FOOD PANTRY NEEDS
- BLOOD DRIVE UPDATE, BOOK STUDY, PLAY IT FORWARDING TREE
- CONNECT WITH OUR HOMEBOUND MEMBERS, MLK CELEBRATION
- ONLINE GIVING, HELPING MNISTRIES
- DON'T FORGET TO LOOK AT THE 6 WEEKS AT A GLANCE ON LAST PAGE AND PICTURES THROUGHOUT.

CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION:
PHONE: (586) 264-4701
EMAIL:
CONTACT@WARRENFIRSTUMC.ORG

LAY READER'S SCHEDULE:

1/5 PAUL SADOWSKI

1/12 MARY ELLEN RENAUD

1/19 DEB CUSMANO

1/26 CAROLE WESNER

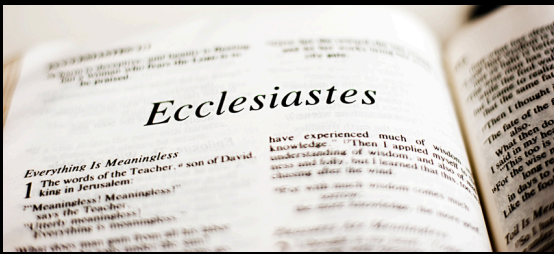
WORSHIP AV SCHEDULE:

1/5 OPEN

1/12 OPEN

1/19 OPEN

1/26 JACKIE MOORE / OPEN



Living Life Backward: How Ecclesiastes Teaches us to Live in Light of the End.

January 19th ~ Everything is Meaningless (Eccles. 1:1-11)

January 26th ~ A Time for Everything (Eccles. 3:1-15)

February 2nd ~ Finding Hope in Community (Eccles. 5:8-12)

February 9th ~ Don't Be a Fool (Eccles. 5:1-7)

February 16th ~ Embrace Life's Limitations (Eccles 5:8-12, 7:24)

February 23rd ~ The Joy of Life (Eccles. 9:7-10)

March 2nd ~ A Christian Life: Vain and Meaningful (Eccles. 12:9-14)



It's always interesting to find what prompted a composer to write the lyrics and/or music for a particular song. In our current sermon series, "Living Life Backwards", we are learning Brandon Lake's song "Praise You Anywhere". Lake, a 35-year-old popular singer/songwriter, is currently a worship pastor in Charleston, South Carolina. He shares the following: "This song is about turning to PRAISE in and out of every season. There are times when we're surrounded by storms, and times when we're living in immense blessing.... We light God's heart up when we simply PRAISE no matter what we're facing. Your situation might not change, but choosing to praise, will change your perspective! This will get your eyes off a storm, and onto God. I hope as you listen to this song and choose to praise, you're encouraged, and your faith is lifted!"



Coming Up!

Good Enough!

During the season of Lent, we will be looking at what it means to be "Good Enough" More to come next month.

Can't join us in person?

Join us on YouTube or Facebook!!

Each Sunday, we stream the service to both YouTube and Facebook. It can also be found on our website. Look for **First United Methodist Church of Warren** or click on our YouTube Link

[YouTube](#)

WORSHIP BY ZOOM:

FOR THOSE WHO CAN'T JOIN ON YOUTUBE OR FACEBOOK, WE HAVE ZOOM.

IF CONNECTING BY PHONE:

CALL (929) 205-6099

MEETING ID: 820 6135 4083

PRESS: 0# PASSWORD : 123

[Zoom Link
forWorship](#)

Christmas Giving Update

Thanks to your generous giving over the Christmas season:

- \$10,441.45 was collected and will be divided equally between UMCOR and MCREST
- Our Hat & Mitten tree was decorated with 108 hats, 66 pairs of gloves, 7 scarves, 13 sets of children's underwear. The hats, mittens, gloves and scarves were donated to Green Acres Elementary School and the First Church Day Center at First Presbyterian Church of Warren. The underwear and socks were given to the Macomb Foster Closet .

"In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"
Acts 20:35



Scam Alerts!!!

Each month, we will highlight a scam that is going around. This month, we are highlighting a scam involving your utility bill.

This week, the church office received a phone call from someone saying they were from DTE and someone was coming to pull our meter because we hadn't paid the bill. They gave us a phone number as well as the employee id number and an "incident" number. As we looked at caller id, we noticed the number came up "unavailable".

These scammers draw on urgency and fear. They try to create an urgent situation that requires your immediate attention, giving you a number to call. In a situation like this, always find your bill or look the number up for the company yourself. NEVER call the number they give you.

Stay safe!

Financial Update



The estimated budget for 2024 was set at \$231,000. We ended the year with total contributions to the general fund of \$206,931, leading to a deficit of **\$29,625**.

A generous gift came in at the end of the year in the amount of \$20,000, bringing the deficit down to **\$9,625**. We thank that generous donor for their continued commitment to the ministry of the church. **Due to the timing, we weren't able to include it in our year end report.**

Going into 2025, our projected budget is \$246,227. The increase is due to the increase in the cost of insurance, utilities, and other contracts. Your Leadership Team will continue to seek ways to cut expenses and be fiscally responsible with the gifts you give. **We thank all who have turned in their commitment cards.**

Engage

Sunday Evening Worship

On break while pastor is on her mission trip.
Will resume February 16th.

Invite a friend and join us
Sunday evenings at 6 p.m.



Capuchin Services
Center

February 10
1-3:30 p.m.

We will be leaving the parking lot at 12:15.
If you're able, join us for this meaningful
and fun volunteer activity!

Food Pantry

Our little food pantry continues to be used frequently by members of the community. We currently need:

- ~ Peanut butter & jelly
- ~ Pasta & pasta sauce
- ~ Canned fruits & veggies (no green beans)
- ~ Canned tuna or chicken
- ~ Cereal
- ~ Pancake mix & syrup
- ~ Canned soup
- ~ Instant potatoes
- ~ Macaroni & cheese and ramen noodles

If you see a good deal on these or any other items that you think would be useful, please consider picking them up for our pantry.



Get ready for an epic day of games and goodwill! Sponsored by the First United Methodist Church of Warren, Play it Forward is a tabletop gaming fundraiser designed for all gamers, from newbies to seasoned adventurers. We'll have an exciting lineup of role-playing games, strategy board games, and more. Stay all day or pop in when you can.

Whether you're rolling dice, strategizing, or just looking to have a good time with great people, Play It Forward offers a fun, relaxed environment where all are welcome. The best part? Your participation supports critical missions to address homelessness and food insecurity right here in our community. So come out, make friends, and play a part in making a difference!

We need a few "floater" volunteers for the following shifts: 8-11 am, 11 am-2pm, 2-5 pm and 5-8 pm. Floaters help out where needed. It might be staffing the information booth, manning the concession stand, giving directions to the restrooms, cleaning up a spill, etc. If you're available and interested, there is a sign-up at church or you can contact Alison Hass.

"February, the month of love, is a time to cherish the bonds that warm our hearts."

— D.A. Blankinship



Mission Focus ~ January - March

Homeless/Poverty

On-going:

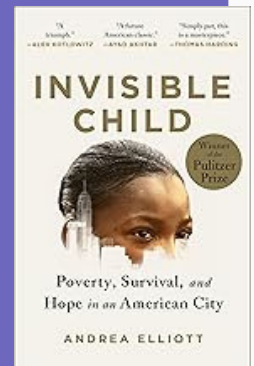
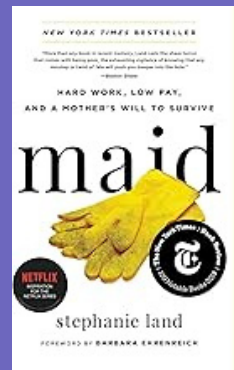
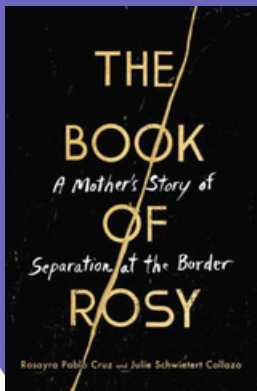
Baking cookies for the homeless: If you're a baker, make an extra batch of cookies and bring them to church. We will make sure they get to the group that distributes meals to our homeless brothers and sisters in the Cass Corridor in Detroit

Coming Up:

- We will be assembling Lap Blankets for the residents at Martha T Berry Medical Care Facility on February 2nd after church
- Lunches for MCREST will be March 2nd after church.
- Samples of soups and dips from Motown Soup will be available in the Program Center for tasting after March 16 worship. There will a variety of items for sale as well with a portion of the proceeds going to the MCREST fund.

Additional Resources:

If you are interested in reading more about the issues of poverty, homelessness and immigration, we have 2 copies each of 4 books the you can borrow that delve into these themes. You can also find them at most local libraries in book and ebook formats.



Youth Ministry

Before the world shut down during the Covid pandemic, we had a wonderful youth ministry. We would like to start that up again. We will be joining together with First Presbyterian Church of Warren, but are in need of the right person to help co-lead this ministry.

Our ask from you today: **Prayer**. Yes, prayer. We are asking the members of the congregation to spend time in prayer, asking God to lead the right person to us. Who knows? That person might already be a part of our church family. So, please pray.

United Methodists see loss, offer relief as wildfires rage

Click on the link below to read about the losses Methodists faced during the historic wildfires, how Methodists are helping each other cope and how you can help during the long recovery process..

[Link](#)

Advocacy Day is March 12!

This year's topic is the crisis in care resulting from the 2019 no-fault insurance changes in Michigan.

If you are interested in attending or would like more information about Advocacy Day, click on the link below.

If you would like to carpool to Lansing, there will be a meet up in the church parking lot. More information to follow.

[Link](#)



Obituary for Hayden Giles Cutright

January 21, 2025. Age 89. Beloved husband of Brigitte for 66 years. Loving father of Angela Abraham (Mark) and Ronald Cutright (Stacey). Proud and loving grandfather of Andrew Abraham (Karli), Andrea Abraham, Austin Cutright (Emily Crossman), and Chip Vernier (Kelsey). Dear brother of the late Marvin Cutright (Mary) and the late Lavonne Bargerstock (the late Clare). Also survived by several loving nieces and nephews. Visitation Tuesday 9:30am until time of 11am funeral at Wujek-Calcaterra & Sons, Inc., 36900 Schoenherr at Metro Parkway (16 Mile), Sterling Heights. Interment with military honor rendered by the United States Army will be at 1:30pm at Great Lakes National Cemetery, Holly. Memorial contributions to First United Methodist Church in Warren are appreciated.

Funday School

Along with Children's Church on Sunday morning, we are offering Funday School for kids ages 4-10.

This past month, we learned about the greatest commandment ~ Love God, Love your neighbor. We also made cookies for the homeless.

**Next Funday School:
Thursday, February 20
6 to 7:30 p.m.
Program Center**

Invite a friend, bring a neighbor!



Welcoming Statement:

Following the example of Christ, the people of Warren First believe every person is a child of God. We welcome all into our family of faith. We embrace the diversity of all people and strive to learn from each other's experiences.

NEW

Wednesday Study

Started January 15
From Noon to 1:30

We will be studying the book of Ecclesiastes and what it tells us about the benefits of living life with the end in mind. To accompany the study, we will be using the book "*Living Life Backward*" by David Gibson. The cost of the book is \$10.50

This study goes along with the sermon series for that season. ***All are welcome to join us in the Parlor.***

Sewing for Missions

At the height of Covid, we took a step to use our skills to help our community as we gathered to make masks. We continue to use those same skills to help people in our community and around the globe by making baby blankets for our layette ministry as well as diapers, children's clothing, and school bags for refugees around the world. You can be a part of this ministry even if you don't know how to sew.

We meet every Thursday morning from 10 to noon, and the 2nd and 4th Saturdays from 10 to noon. All experience levels are welcome!



Interfaith Day of Unity Service
Sunday, March 2, 2025
4-6 pm

Hartford Memorial Baptist Church
18700 James Couzens Fwy. in Detroit

The Interfaith Day of Unity showcases that our similarities are far more profound than our differences. With this shared vision, we can transcend barriers of culture, language, economic status, political traditions, and religious expressions.



Church Contact Information:

Phone:
(586) 264-4701

Email:
contact@warrenfirstumc.org

Website:
warrenfirstumc.org

Facebook:
[Facebook.com/WarrenFirstUMC](https://www.facebook.com/WarrenFirstUMC)

Youtube:
[Youtube link](#)



Supporting the church has never been easier than it is now. With on-line giving, you can offer your support in an easy and secure way. You can find this information by going to our website or clicking on this link.

[ON -LINE GIVING](#)

Helping Ministries:

AA meets:
Tuesdays at 7 p.m.
Saturday at 7 p.m.

N.A. meets
Friday at 7 p.m.
Saturday at 4 p.m.
Sunday at 7 p.m.

S-Anon meets:
Monday at 7 p.m.

PLEASE HELP US STAY CONNECTED!

Please take time this week to reach out to those in our faith community who are homebound or in an assisted living or care facility. These people include:

Jody Adams

Virginia Potts

William Russell

Janet Waud

Ruth Ann Anderson

Merle & Jan Loch

Arlene Johnson

Lucy Latham

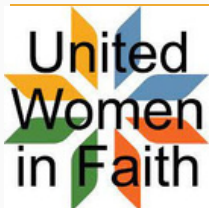
Brigitte Cutright

Betty Jo Kowolsky

McFarland/Ethridge Family

Patrick Sims & Phyllis Gramza

Contact information is in the church directory. If you need one, they can be picked up in the church office.



Women's Coffee & Conversation

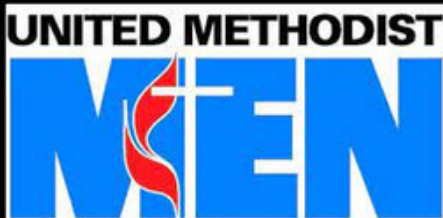
The next Coffee & Conversation is a Christmas Lunch on Friday, February 7 at 10 am in the Program Center. Margaret Kauppila and Karen Kindig will be hosting.

**Leadership Team Meets
February 11 at 7 p.m. All are
welcome to attend.
We meet...on Zoom**

Our U.M. Men's Breakfast

At Kerby's Koney Island on 12 Mile and Mound on
Tuesday, February 11 at 9 a.m.

All of our men (and women) are welcome to come and enjoy food and fellowship.



Six Weeks at a Glance

January 26-February 1

- 26 - 9:30 Prayer meeting
 - 10:30 am Worship
 - 6 pm Engage
- 27 - 6:45 pm Zumba
- 29 - 12 PM Book Study
- 30 - 10 am Sewing for Missions
 - 6 pm Bell Choir practice
 - 7 pm Choir practice

February 2-8

- 2 - 9:30 Prayer meeting
 - 10:30 am Worship
 - 6 pm Engage
- 3 - 6:45 pm Zumba
- 5 - 12 pm Book Study
- 6 - 10 am Sewing for Missions
 - 6 pm Bell Choir practice
 - 7 pm Choir practice
- 7 - Coffee and Conversation
- 8 - 10 am Sewing for Missions

February 9-15

- 9 - 9:30 Prayer meeting
 - 10:30 am Worship
 - 6 pm Engage
- 10 - 1 pm Capuchin Services Center
 - 6:45 pm Zumba
- 11 - 9 am Men's Fellowship @ Kerby's
 - 7 pm Leadership
- 12 - 12 pm Book Study
- 13 - 9 am Tri-County Quilters
 - 10 am Sewing for Missions
 - 6 pm Bell Choir practice
 - 7 pm Choir practice

February 16-22

- 16 - 9:30 Prayer meeting
 - 10:30 am Worship
 - 6 pm Engage
- 17 - 6:45 pm Zumba
- 19 - 12 pm Book Study
- 20 - 10 am Sewing for Missions
 - 6 pm Bell Choir practice
 - 7 pm Choir practice
- 22 - 8 am Play It Forward
 - 10 am Sewing for Missions

February 23-March 1

- 23 - 9:30 Prayer meeting
 - 10:30 am Worship
 - 6 pm Engage
- 24 - 6:45 pm Zumba
- 26 - 12 PM Book Study
- 27 - 10 am Sewing for Missions
 - 6 pm Bell Choir practice
 - 7 pm Choir practice

March 2-8

- 2 - 9:30 Prayer meeting
 - 10:30 am Worship
 - 6 pm Engage
- 3 - 6:45 pm Zumba
- 5 - 12 pm Book Study
 - 7 pm Ash Wednesday Service
- 6 - 10 am Sewing for Missions
 - 6 pm Bell Choir practice
 - 7 pm Choir practice
- 7 - Coffee and Conversation
- 8 - 10 am Sewing for Missions

