



The Messenger

December 2020

We live to proclaim the love of Jesus Christ!

Memorial United Methodist Church, 1920 Lake Shore Drive, Gladstone, Michigan 49837

Office: (906) 428-9311

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Mon. – Thur., 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.



Pastor Cathy Rafferty

(734) 646-6922

pastor@gladstonechurch.org

Mon., Wed., Thur., 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Worship online is available on Memorial United Methodist Church of Gladstone MI Facebook page and YouTube channel, and on our website www.gladstonechurch.org, at 8:30 a.m. each Sunday.

“The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ ...”

Mark 1:1 (CEB)

This Season of Advent preparation and Christmas celebration will undoubtedly be unlike any other year we may remember. Yet many important practices and traditions are still part of our preparing and celebrating here at Memorial UMC, adapted and improvised for the times in which we live. Here’s a quick checklist to help you plan and prepare:

- △ Participate each Sunday with on-line worship or with printed materials in the mail.
 - Dec. 6, celebrate Holy Communion on-line with us, wherever you are.
- △ Set up an Advent wreath or candle at home (take a photo lighting your candles and send it to the church office to include in our worship together).
- △ Help us decorate! Bring your extra outdoor lights and Christ-themed decorations, or help set up the church’s indoor decorations. Make it a family event. Call the office to set a time. (Mark your calendar to help us “un-decorate” after Jan. 3)
- △ Drop off a Nativity Set by Dec. 10 for our indoor display, Dec. 13-19.
- △ Come each Sunday to our 4:30 p.m. outside Advent Wreath lighting and activities:
 - Nov. 29, pick up an at-home Advent Packet (or request one be delivered).
 - Dec. 6, prayerfully walk an outdoor Labyrinth on Dec. 6.
 - Dec. 13, enjoy the debut of our indoor walk-through Nativity display Dec. 13.
 - Dec. 20, help set up to host Hope at the Inn homeless shelter (Dec. 20-26)
- △ Explore with others the beginning of each gospel via Zoom at 6 p.m. Mondays.
- △ Contact Connie Ness or the church office to play a part in creating our on-line Christmas Eve family and children’s pageant.
- △ Join us outside at 4:30 p.m. Christmas Eve to celebrate the Birth of Jesus Christ.
- △ Enjoy the on-line Christmas Eve pageant, available at 4:30 p.m. or any time after.

Advent Worship

This year we are using materials from the Worship Design Studio of Marcia McFee to help us frame our Advent worship. We'll be hearing from the prophet Isaiah and from the beginnings of all four gospels, the good news stories of Jesus Christ in the Bible. The theme, "I Believe Even When ..." is based on a poem said to have been found scrawled on the wall of a cellar in Cologne, in western Germany, where a group of Jewish people hid to resist the Nazi-led Holocaust during the Second World War.

I believe in the sun, even when it's not shining.

I believe in love, even when I don't feel it.

I believe in God, even when God is silent.

As we light each Advent candle, we will consider the hope, the love, the joy, and the peace, God offers to us through this season of preparation. On-line worship includes our Praise Team, guest musicians and inspiring videos to fuel our anticipation and appreciation for the God who comes to be with us, Emmanuel! Grandma Joy will be teaching us how to sing an old song, "This Little Light of Mine," in a new language.

On Dec. 6, we'll be celebrating the sacrament of Holy Communion in our on-line worship, so remember to have a bit of bread and juice ready at home if you want to fully participate with us.

"Time to Shine" for Christmas Eve

We are putting together a virtual Christmas Eve Pageant with families and children that will be available on-line at 4:30 p.m. Christmas Eve and any time after that. We're hoping to include songs with our multi-colored bells (traditionally rung on Christmas Eve) and a video of "This Little Light of Mine" in sign language, that we plan to record with whomever can be here on Sunday, Dec. 13, after our Advent Wreath lighting. We'll also be incorporating video clips of families and children reading parts of the Nativity story and performing special music. To be part of our program, please contact Connie Ness or the church office.

We also will be gathering outside at 4:30 p.m. Dec. 24 to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, filling the night with music and light. You are encouraged to bring the glow stick from your Advent Package. We'll hear the Christmas story and sing some favorite carols. You can even stay inside your vehicle if it is too cold or icy. Arrive a few minutes early to wave and say "Merry Christmas" to those who watch on Christmas Day.

Advent Bible Study

Plan to join us via Zoom at 6 p.m. Monday, starting Nov. 30, to read the beginnings of each of the gospels of Jesus Christ: Mark 1:1-15; Matthew 1:1-25; Luke 1:1-4, 26-56; and John 1:1-18. Then, explore the focus of each gospel, its background and author, and discuss what God may be saying to us today through these words. We'll also talk about the Prophet Isaiah and some of the hymns and songs we'll be hearing in worship. Please contact the office by Monday at noon to sign up for the Zoom session. If you don't know how to use Zoom or don't have the equipment or internet connection at home, we can set you up in a room in the church building, all ready to go. Just let us know you'll be here.

Links to worship videos

You can find an up-to-date schedule for activities and links to on-line worship resources including worship guides and a current prayer list on the church website: www.gladstonechurch.org. You're welcome to call the office with any questions: (906) 428-9311, or email: mumc@gladstonechurch.org.

Worship information, links, and videos will also be on Facebook and YouTube:

<https://www.facebook.com/Memorial-United-Methodist-Church-of-Gladstone-MI-117593394926699/>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBY-ZTh99gQBtHG3n2kbyuQ>

Advent Opportunities (Nov. 29 – Dec. 24)

Every **Sunday afternoon at 4:30** we will light the outdoor Advent wreath, sing a familiar song or two, and have a special activity:

- Nov. 29 – Pick up your Advent kit.
- Dec. 6 – Walk the outdoor Advent labyrinth
- Dec. 13 – Walk the indoor Nativity Walk
- Dec. 20 – Help set up for Hope at the Inn at 4:30, then go outside for the Advent Wreath.

Enjoy a display of **Nativity Sets** and see the beautifully decorated sanctuary while listening to Christmas music at our indoor **Nativity Walk**.

- Sunday, Dec. 13 after 4:30 Wreath Lighting
- Dec. 14 – 18 evenings 6pm – 8pm
- Saturday, Dec. 19 2pm – 4pm

If you would like to bring in your nativity set to display, please do so by Dec. 10.

Dedicate a Sunday

November 22nd worship was dedicated by Janet Paine in loving memory of her sister Katherine Paine, whose birthday would have been on Nov. 21.

News from the Altar Guild

I want to gratefully give thanks to Jan Johnson and Pat Waeghe for the wonderful Altars and presentations for our worship services since we have gone on-line for our worship services since last March. They have worked very hard to display our altars to go along with the worship service. The altars have been so beautiful and very meaningful. Thank you!!!

I also want to thank all our members of the Altar Guild who have kept the candles filled and helped when needed to keep up with our very unprecedented occurrences of our church life.

Because of the Covid epidemic, we will not be celebrating our Christmas dinner that we have always enjoyed. I will be sending out a letter to all our Altar Guild members concerning our calendar and notes regarding the year of 2021.

I do want to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a healthy New Year.

~ Berta Johnson

Christ Tree

The opportunity to donate to the Christ Tree will once again happen this year only it will be a bit different. Rather than place an ornament on the Christ Tree when you make a donation, a paper ornament will be hung in the windows at the entrance to the church. You may make a donation online at <http://www.gladstonechurch.org/> or mail a check to the church with Christ Tree in the memo. The money raised will be put into the Pastor's discretionary fund and allocated as needs are brought to her. If you are in need of help or know of someone or a family in need, please contact Pastor Cathy. This is available for anyone from birth to Senior citizen whether a church member or not.

Hope at the Inn

Memorial will be hosting the homeless shelter **Hope at the Inn** Dec. 20-27. Volunteers are greatly needed to fill the 3 nightly shifts: 5:30pm-10:30pm, 10:30pm-3am, 3am-8am.

Thank You! I am feeling very appreciated by your outpouring of cards and gifts through October's Pastor Appreciation Month and even on into November. I continue to be grateful to serve Memorial UMC. With your generous commitment and participation, together we are proclaiming the love of Jesus Christ in remarkable ways. Thank you all, and thanks be to God! ~Pastor Cathy



12/2 Regina Stock	12/17 Justin Johnson
12/3 Tom Butch	Nannette Martin
12/4 Abigail Skjolaas	12/20 Caiden Mattonen
12/5 Kole Desotelle	Judy Tochterman
12/6 Bill Buchmiller	12/21 Isabel Campbell
Howie Landenberger	Christina Casey
12/8 Mary Moore	Isaac Lagina
ReAnne Polfus	Sarah Myers
12/9 Jane Peterson	12/22 John Leonoff
12/10 Gail Johnivan	Steve Maulding
12/11 Jan Johnson	12/25 Mary Hagen
Addy St. Aubin	12/26 Lindsey Taylor
12/13 Kiera Donovan	12/28 Melissa Johnson
Ally St. Aubin	12/29 Susan Bratonia
Amy St. Aubin	12/30 Marta LaPlant
Carter Stammer	

Prayer List

Family of Dick, father of Tammi & Stephen Anderson
Rachel Pryor Darrison and family
Lou Martin's daughter, Tammy
Chad Mileski and all his family
Jan and Neil Leonard Tom Butch
Family of Robert Ohlson Howard Abbney
Steve Mrotek Nancy Monroe
Frank and Marilyn Bastian Bud Baltic
Mark and Julie Bishop Sarah Benson
Nancy Campbell DJ Burns
Ginger Clairmont Bud & Pat Clark
Chris and Kim Diamond Debbie Dew
Bernie Erickson Stephen Gruber
Dave and Mary Hagen Caroline Hart
Alice Jensen Jon Lohrbach
Marcy Makosky Rebecca Marchak
Josiah, Sarah, David Pryor Tammy Martin
Bev Regts Debbie Renkin
Todd Al Waeghe
Marianne Watson Milkowski

2020 Charitable Giving and Taxes

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act includes some changes regarding charitable contributions you may want to consider:

New Deduction Available: Up to \$300 per taxpayer (\$600 for a married couple) in annual charitable contributions. This is available only to people who take the standard deduction and who do not itemize their deductions. It is an “above the line” adjustment to income that will reduce a donor’s adjusted gross income, and thereby reduce taxable income. A donation to MUMC qualifies for this deduction.

New Charitable Deduction Limits: Individuals and corporations that itemize can deduct much greater amounts of their contributions. Individuals can elect to deduct donations up to 100% of their 2020 adjusted gross income (up from 60% previously).

This information is not intended as legal or tax advice. For such advice, please consult an attorney or tax advisor.