



# Messenger

## Uniondale United Methodist Church November - December 2022

5867 N. Main St.  
P. O. Box 115

Uniondale, IN 46791

Pastor Karen Ottjes  
260-228-3634

Website: [www.uniondaleumc.com](http://www.uniondaleumc.com)

E-mail: [kottjes@gmail.com](mailto:kottjes@gmail.com)

 UniondaleUnitedMethodistChurch

Sunday Worship Service – 9:00 a.m.

Sunday School – 10:15 a.m.

### Upcoming Events



November and December  
Birthdays and Anniversaries  
November

8 – Jeff Espich  
17 – Alison Herstad  
23 – Karen Ottjes

December

8 – Jim Ottjes  
17 – Bob & Sandra Imel  
19 – Jeff & Sharon Espich  
25 – Jesus Christ our Savior



- Sunday, November 6 – Daylight Savings ends – fall back 1 hour  
Communion Sunday and All Saints Sunday
- Tuesday, November 8 – Election Day-Get out and VOTE!
- Friday, November 11 – Veterans Day
- Sunday, November 13 – Blessing Tree Angels available  
Food Bank Sunday-bring your food items
- Monday, November 14 – Cluster meeting 6:30 PM at Ossian UMC
- Thursday, November 24 – Thanksgiving Day**
- Friday, November 25 – Decorate Church for Christmas–6 PM**
- Sunday, November 27 – First Sunday of Advent, UM Student Offering  
Kids Changing the World-bring your change-  
last collection this year!  
Pastor Karen on vacation, Blake Myers, Lay  
Servant speaking
- Saturday, December 3 – Faith Circle at 9 AM
- Sunday, December 4 – Communion Sunday  
Last day to bring Blessing Tree gifts
- Sunday, December 11 – Food Bank Sunday-bring your food items
- Sunday, December 18 – Cards for Christmas Card exchange due
- Saturday, December 24 – Christmas Eve Candlelight service–7 PM
- Sunday, December 25 – Christmas Day!**  
No Sunday School
- Sunday, January 1 – Happy New Year!**  
Communion Sunday  
No Sunday School

**\*\*Don't forget\*\***

- \* Save your pop tabs and can tabs for Riley's Children's Hospital. Collection can at the back of the church.
- \* Save your change for Children Changing the World on the last Sunday of each month.
- \* To sign up for CHURCH DUTIES on sheets at back table.

## A Word from Our Pastor

*“May all the peoples praise you, O God. may all the peoples praise you.” Ps 67:3*

We’ve been having some quite cool, cloudy weather with some rain and also some warm and sunshiny days recently. So far it seems that the farmers are making good progress in harvesting their crops. The biggest adjustment always comes when we turn our clocks back 1 hour to resume standard time – this year on November 6th. Then it gets dark so early in the evening.

On Tuesday, November 8th, we will be voting for quite a few national, state and local government leaders. Be sure to read about those people and choose wisely who will be a good leader for us. Then fulfill your civic responsibility to go to the polls and vote.

Throughout the next few months, please be in prayer for wisdom and guidance about our congregation’s consideration about whether or not to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church. We will have several sessions to talk about what each of the options will mean for us. If you have questions about a particular perspective and want to learn more, please write down your questions and turn them in to me. I’ll see that our planners get them and work the answers into our discernment process. The sessions will likely be on Sunday mornings after worship.

An important holiday in our culture is the celebration of Thanksgiving. This is a time to look back over the previous year to remember what God was doing in your life. What were some of the high points or blessings? Were there some unexpected experiences this year which caused you to pray more intensely for wisdom, guidance, or assistance? How has God called you to be in ministry to your neighbors, co-workers, or family? What specialized service have you been involved in providing through organizations to which you belong? Give God thanks for all the ways he used you to help someone grow in their faith in Jesus Christ. Thank him for guiding you in serving others in your community. These times of service help your own faith to grow stronger.

Take some time in the coming week or two to meditate on the words of this hymn.

1. From the first bright light of morning, to the last warm glow of dusk; every breath we take is sacred. For it is God’s gift to us.
2. In the season of our plenty, in the season of our need; We will find his grace sufficient, We will find his love complete.
3. Safe within his hand that guides us, Hidden in his healing wings;  
Day by day his love provides us Every good and perfect thing.

Refrain: In thanksgiving, let us praise him; In thanksgiving, let us sing songs of praise and adoration To our gracious Lord, and King.

*“In Thanksgiving Let Us Praise Him,” Words, by Claire Cloninger, © 1986 by Word Music.*

***Shalom, Pastor Karen <><***



## Committee News

### Faith Circle

Faith Circle and the Men's Group last met on October 1. The Faith Circle Christmas Breakfast will be hosted by Sharon Espich and Pastor Karen on December 3 at 9 AM. The Men's Group will have their own fellowship breakfast at the same time. As always, all are welcome!

### SPRC (Staff Parish Relations Committee)

SPRC met October 5 and made recommendations to Finance and Ad Council for clergy and staff salaries in preparation for Charge Conference. Acknowledged October Pastor Appreciation month. Committee is working on Clergy Assessment for 2022 which is due December 1, 2022.

### Trustees

A big **Thank You** to the volunteers who mowed the church lawn this year: Steve Hix, Bill, Connie Hix and Jeff Espich! We have completed the annual parsonage inspection and found a couple little things to fix, but nothing major. The parsonage porch has been painted so it is all one color now. We will be trimming the big trees on the south side of the parsonage soon. The church boiler (our heating system) has fired up a couple of times recently and seems to be working well - no leaks, so last year's patch seems to be holding up well.

### Wells County Cluster

The Wells County Cluster distributed popsicles during the Bluffton Street Fair on Saturday, September 24. The next Cluster meeting will be November 14 at the Ossian UMC. The Cluster is checking out a couple of options for fundraising for the Henderson Settlement work camp trip that will take place during spring break in March, 2023.



\*\*Please remember\*\*

Barb Cook  
100 Caylor Blvd. Apt. #100  
Bluffton, IN 46714

Gary Cook  
Markle Health & Rehabilitation  
170 N. Tracy Street  
Markle, IN 46770

Jeanette Gilbert  
Golden Apple Unit  
Christian Care  
720 East Dustman Rd.  
Bluffton, IN 46714  
Or Mail to: c/o Jill Martin  
2172 E US 224  
Ossian, IN 46777

Margaret Hasler  
37446 Carson  
Farmington Hills, MI 48331



### Treasurer's Report

September 2022 Budget Summary	September Actual	September Budget	September Variance	Year to date Actual	Year to date Budget	Year to date Variance
TOTAL INCOME	2,738.40	4,667.58	(1,929.18)	35,498.94	42,008.22	(6,509.28)
TOTAL BUDGET EXPENSES	2,097.45	3,834.21	1,736.76	32,706.76	35,341.22	1,254.26
<b>INCOME LESS EXPENSES</b>	<b>640.95</b>	<b>833.37</b>		<b>2,792.18</b>	<b>6,667.00</b>	



By Mindy Dennison

I was about 5 years old, sitting next to my mother in church when we came to the place in the service where we say the Lord's Prayer. My mother looked down at me, a little taken aback, when I joined in the liturgy. I heard those familiar words recited so many times that they were ingrained in me already, even at such a young age.

It was still the beginning of my bringing up among "the people called Methodists."

My memories of our little United Methodist church are many and golden. At Christmas, we hung the greens, placed "Chrismons" on the big tree, and lit the advent candles. I waved the branches on Palm Sunday, and sang "He Lives" on Easter.

I went to Sunday school. I attended VBS. I had the lead role in the Christmas musical when I was 8. In 5<sup>th</sup> grade, I attended "Sonshine" camp. In 6<sup>th</sup> grade, I was confirmed and baptized. In 7<sup>th</sup> grade, I joined the youth group and went on mission trips.

I wasn't just told what to believe, but why we believed, and how to apply tradition, reason, and experience to the study of God's Holy Word. As an analytical child with a need to understand the "how" and "why," this intellectual approach to scriptural study and interpretation was important. In Methodism, science and faith were reconciled – not separate – celebrating and even validating each other.

The church nurtured my gift for music, which eventually became my vocation. I sang in the choir, I played handbells, my piano teacher was a member of our church and our recitals were held there. I first learned to read music from the hymnal. I was in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, when I sang my first Christmas Eve solo to a packed sanctuary – something I would do for the next 10 years.

As I grew up, The United Methodist Church continued to play a central role in my life.

I worked in church music programs, directing choirs and handbells to groups of all ages, from 3 to 93. I met and married my husband in a United Methodist campus ministry. I have been a United Methodist clergy spouse for 16 years. Our children have been welcomed into the nurseries, Sunday schools, VBSes, and church pews of over a dozen United Methodist congregations.

I say this to make the point: You'd be hard-pressed to find somebody more Methodist than I am. Of all the cradle Methodists in the world, I'm among the most Methodist. Just ask my Baptist friends!

But my lifelong history, my golden memories, my deep personal connections, my admiration for the Wesleyan quadrilateral, my commitment to thorough Scripture study, my fierce, long-rooted loyalty to the United Methodist denomination – all these could not withstand a truth that first crept and then crashed into my heart in recent years: the United Methodist denomination that raised me is gone. What remains of it has abandoned me and much of my traditional theology.

The decision for me and other orthodox United Methodists is not just about staying or going – it’s about accepting that we have already been cast aside by this institution and determining what we’re willing to compromise moving forward. Will it be our membership in this institution, or our traditional beliefs rooted in Scripture?

Four years ago, I not only denied this truth, I fought it. Vehemently. I considered myself a centrist, deeply loyal to the institution of The United Methodist Church. I saw the division. I heard the arguments. But I could not imagine my faith outside of the institution I championed for so long. In hindsight, I might have even made the denomination itself an idol in my life. My devotion was entirely misdirected.

The turning point for me happened with the special session of the General Conference in 2019. What I witnessed during the streaming of the proceedings, as well as on social media, from self-proclaimed progressive and centrist Methodists, was nothing short of alarming. It made me question what was really happening, and what was actually at stake for “the people called Methodist.” A strong conviction took root in my heart. This was about so much more than the presenting issue of human sexuality. Ultimately, this was a battle to determine at what altar we will serve: that of the institution, or The Kingdom of God.

There has been no shortage of complete disregard and open contempt for clearly stated teachings in our *Book of Discipline*. No doubt, you’ve heard accounts of this. But the ruling minority, those who serve in high positions of leadership within our denomination, do not align with the congregational majority. This is why open defiance to our social and theological doctrine has been allowed to persist, while threat and punishment take place against traditional Methodists who raise concerns. Denominational leadership is cherry-picking which parts of our doctrine and discipline it will uphold and enforce, giving preference to that which preserves the institution, not historic Christian beliefs. “Rules for thee and not for me.”

And woe to those who stand in the way. I could expound on this by sharing several disturbing stories of open hostility toward my family by progressive leaders in the United Methodist institution. I’ll just say that as a traditional clergy household, I’ve been holding my breath for the better part of three years.

But there is Good News: In the midst of great denominational turmoil, Jesus is still Lord. That has not changed, nor will it.

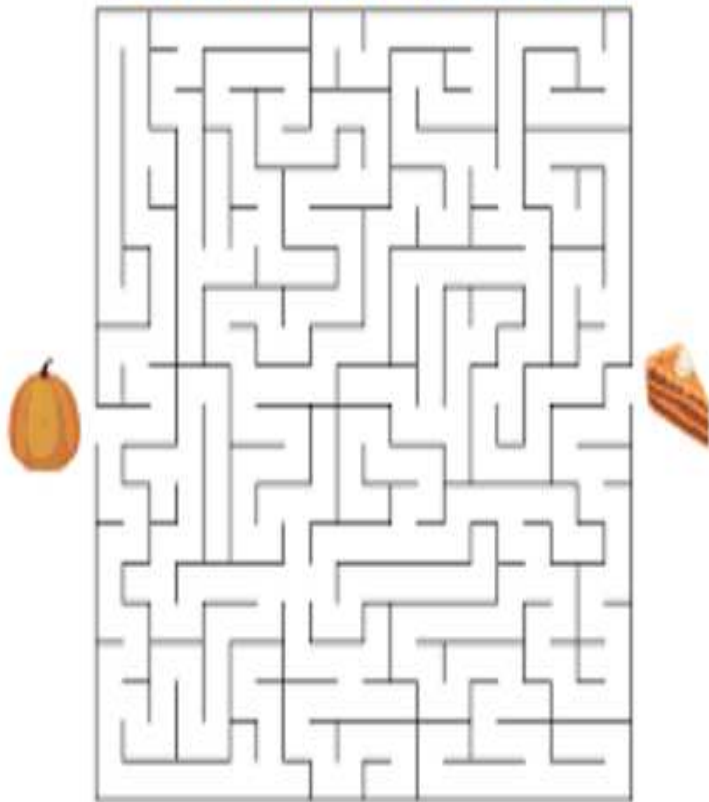
And for my fellow cradle Methodists, and for United Methodists everywhere who find themselves struggling with the idea of what comes next, I have *this* good news: meaningful and relevant ministry exists outside of the institution of The United Methodist Church. My prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness won’t mean less outside of this denomination. We are members first and foremost of Christ’s Holy Church. The ministry that happens therein **MUST** be for the glory and in the name of Jesus Christ. Not in the name of Methodism, not in the name of John Wesley, not in the name of intellectualism, or politics, or even social justice. It must begin and end with fierce loyalty to the one and only Truth, the one and only Light, the one and only Life. This is the way.

Our mission is the same today as it was yesterday and will be tomorrow, and our ability to carry out that mission is not determined by membership in anything but the body of Christ.

I don’t know what the future holds for me outside of The United Methodist Church. I may commit to another form of Methodist expression, perhaps through the Global Methodist Church or some other Wesleyan denomination. As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord. And even if we aren’t a people called United Methodist anymore, it is more important to me that we be a people called “faithful.”

**Mindy Dennison is a lifelong United Methodist and, along with her husband and three kids, is active at Asbury Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Mindy is a former public school teacher turned entrepreneur and small business owner.5 Photo: Shutterstock.**

# PUMPKIN PIE MAZE



## CHRISTMAS

### WORD SCRAMBLE

- SLHGEI \_\_\_\_\_
- REITNW \_\_\_\_\_
- EISTOLTEM \_\_\_\_\_
- LLYJO \_\_\_\_\_
- NEGLJI LSLEB \_\_\_\_\_
- ANTAS \_\_\_\_\_
- EVSLE \_\_\_\_\_
- YDCAN ECNA \_\_\_\_\_
- LONSEFKWA \_\_\_\_\_
- GANEL \_\_\_\_\_
- ONEL \_\_\_\_\_
- DNEREIER \_\_\_\_\_
- HLOYL \_\_\_\_\_

