The Circuit Rider

The newsletter of First United Methodist Church, Lancaster, Ohio

February 2023

Loving God and Loving People Making Disciples of Christ for the Transformation of the World. Lancaster First United Methodist Church (FUMC) is a historic United Methodist Church that welcomes everyone of all race, color, religion, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, nationality, ability, and age. We are dedicated to nurturing everyone and helping them grow in their faith journey with Christ.

Sunday, February 12th

3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

at Crossroads Ministry Center

2095 W. Fair Ave., Lancaster

Please join us & bring a friend!

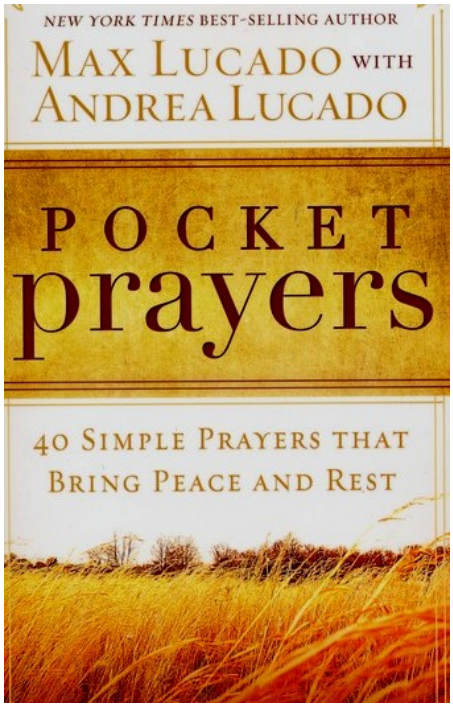
Messy Love

3:30 Activities

- Games
- Snack
- Valentine Crafts
- Cards for Homebound
- THE BIG MESSY!!!

4:30 Celebration

5:00 Dinner (Free)



When the chaos of daily life becomes overwhelming, where do you turn for peace and rest? **Presenting 40 guided prayers and complementary Scripture verses for any situation,** Max and Andrea Lucado point to the source of all hope and strength as they offer simple encouragement for those who struggle to pray. Beginning February 19th, pick up a copy of this devotional in the Parlor or in the back of the sanctuary and enrich your prayer life as we journey through the season of Lent.

"And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." Revelation 21:5 (NRSV)

Things are changing here at Lancaster First. We are moving steadily closer to beginning our Capital Campaign projects in the basement of the church. I am so thankful for the generosity of our congregation to make this happen. You have been incredibly sacrificial in your faithfulness.

Of course, change doesn't happen quickly or overnight. A lot of preparation work has to happen before we begin. As you may be aware, we have moved first community kitchen to Maple Street UMC in preparation for a time when the kitchen will be unavailable. It's a joy to see our connection with another United Methodist Church in our community. Recently, many of our congregation showed up on a Saturday morning to help move everything out of the basement in preparation for the improvements.

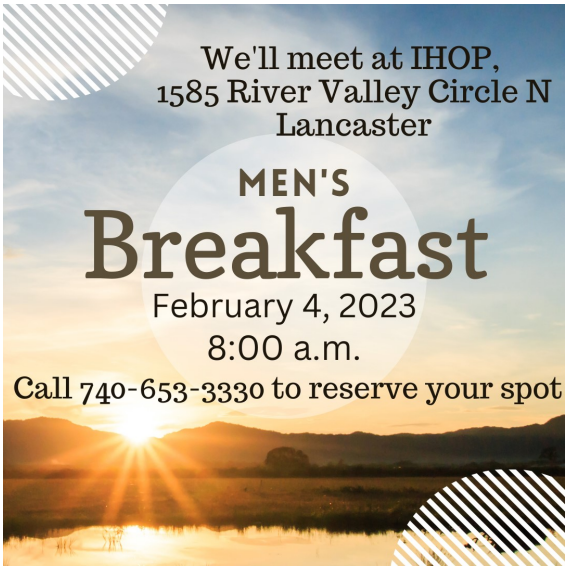
With change comes inconvenience. There are areas of our church we won't be able to access for a while. Children's Sunday School classes have been moved. Ministries have to be altered. There will be, inevitably, something that someone needs, and we won't be able to get it because it's in storage.

With newness comes inconvenience. Change is always inconvenient. And it's hard. It's different. Things aren't where we want them to be. We have to let go of something we had, and sometimes we aren't sure it's worth it. I'm reminded of the Israelites in the desert, going to a new home. The promised land sounded really good until they realized they had to give up the old in order to find the new. And they wondered if it was worth it. They even lied to themselves and thought, "Hey, maybe it wasn't so bad in Egypt."

In our verse at the top of this page, Jesus says *I come to make all things new*. And that's wonderful. I want, we all want, Jesus to make us new. Until He actually begins to do it. And we realize in order to be made new, we have to let go of the old. Our lives change. Relationships might change. As Jesus makes us new, we might even wonder if it's worth it.

It is. If you are in a place in your life where Jesus is making you new, don't give up. When the change is going slow, when you mess up, don't be discouraged. Continue to put your life in the hands of God. Let Jesus make you new. Newness can take time. Allow God to set the pace as he makes you new. Look forward, rejoice that God can take you out of an old life and bring you into a new one. Amen.

In Christ,
Rev. Dr. Brian Jones <><



Ash Wednesday 2023

Our Lenten journey this year begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22. We will offer a traditional time of worship, including imposition of ashes, at 7:00p.m. in the sanctuary at our main building. The Gathering at Crossroads won't happen that night so that we can all worship together.

We will also offer times for imposition of ashes for those who can't make our worship time. That will be available 8-8:30a.m.and 12-12:30pm upstairs in the Chapel at the main building.

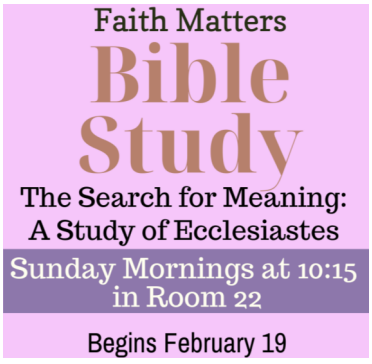
Lenten Study of Familiar Hymns: Sundays beginning Feb. 19, 5-6pm at Crossroads

Have you ever had a song or a favorite phrase from a hymn get stuck in your head? Perhaps it is there for a reason! Join us in a study that includes a daily meditation, a look at familiar hymns, and discussion that may lead to a deeper understanding of our songs of faith. James C. Howell's text *Unrevealed Until It's Season: A Lenten Journey with Hymns* will guide us through seven weeks with topics covering;

Merciful and Mighty: Hymns Praising God
Beautiful Savior: Hymns About Jesus
Prone to Wander: Hymns of Forgiveness
Thy Presence My Light: Hymns of Vision
With Joy Surround You: Hymns of Beauty
Stony the Road: Hymns of Holy Week
Love's Redeeming Work: Hymns of Easter

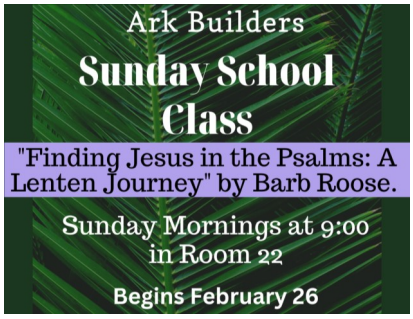
You can register in the parlor or by calling the church office at 740-653-3330, ext. 1009 or contact Judy Hug at judyhug@love-first.org

We are **now collecting handmade Easter cards** to be mailed to our friends who can't get out much. Cards should be flat, no embellishments, and should fit in a standard card or business-size envelope (saves on postage costs). Please let us know if you'll be participating in this ministry, and bring your handmade creations to the Church during business hours, Mon-Thurs, 9am-1pm, or on Sunday mornings. Thank you for brightening someone's day!



The Search for Meaning: A Study of Ecclesiastes.

Join the Faith Matters Bible study during Lent as we contemplate the meaning of life with King Solomon as our guide. No book is necessary other than your Bible. Introduction to King Solomon on February 19th. Ecclesiastes chapters 1 and 2 on February 26, and about 2 chapters of Ecclesiastes each week after that until Easter. All are welcome.



Ark Builders Lenten Study

Ark Builds Sunday School class will begin a 6-week Lenten study on February 26 titled, 'Finding Jesus in the Psalms: A Lenten Journey' by Barb Roose. Combining an interpretation of the psalms with real life stories, the study moves through the familiar words of Psalm 23 toward the painful cries of Psalm 22 uttered by Jesus on the cross. The study includes reflections on the life of King David and the original context of the writings, along with connections between the psalms and the life and death of Jesus the Messiah. The class is at 9AM in Room 22. Study guides will be available in the parlor. If you have questions please contact Tim Binkley at 740.243.1600 or tdbinkley@gmail.com.

Welcome to the Trustees' Corner

Hope you all have been staying warm during these cold snaps and enjoying the outdoors on the days of winter heat waves. It's been quite some time since an article has been published from the Trustees. We feel that with things starting to ramp up with the Capital Campaign renovations, we want to be more communicative. Our official Capital Campaign ended May 31st of last year, but fortunately with your giving hearts, money continues to roll in, helping to add to our total sum. Members pledged $1,024,545.99. We have received over $955,680.36 pledged gifts and over $139,600 non-pledged gifts. With the grace of the non-pledged gifts, we have surpassed our total pledged amount. We have found other ways to add to our Capital Campaign funds raised. Trustees, with the permission of the Finance Committee over the last couple of years, have invested $550,000 of the Capital Campaign monies in CD investments, gaining over an additional $3,328.09 in interest. On the latest end of term for the CD investment, we changed the monies to a Money Market Account (MMA) allowing us to obtain a better interest rate. In one month alone since moving to the MMA, we have gained over $800 additional in interest. With all of this being said, we have been able to raise a total of around $1,113,446.67 as of 12/31/2022. Our architect sent out the invitation to bid to general contractors on 01/17/2023. On 01/21/2023, the Trustees, staff, and a group of volunteers with trucks and trailers moved the contents of the church basement to a storage container at Crossroads to prepare the basement for renovations. The first thing to take place regarding the renovations will be the asbestos abatement. Once that is complete, we are off and running with the renovations to include all new electrical, plumbing, kitchen and ADA compliant bathrooms. This will complete Phase 1 of the capital improvements which still leaves the HVAC updates that are needed. The timing…oh yes, the timing of how long this will all take we are sure is on everyone's mind. The reality of it all is that even though this could start out as a predicted 6-9 month renovation, it could take longer depending on contractor schedules, supply and demand of material, or even contingencies. As time goes on and we forge through this process, we will keep everyone informed. We thank you for your generous gifts for the campaign and your patience. It's not too late to give. Please be sure to note "Capital Campaign" on your gift. First UMC is blessed to have you as part of our church family.

See you around the corner.
The Trustees

The Trustees would like to take the time to thank all of those who were able to donate their time on Saturday, 01/21/2023, to help load and move the basement of the church to the storage container at Crossroads. The volunteer response was overwhelming and such a blessing. We had over 40 people present. Everyone scurried around like church mice jumping in together like an orchestrated dance and such team work. Between the staff, Trustees and volunteers, we were able to accomplish the move in less than three hours. Thank you again to all for helping us get closer to the start of the Capital Campaign renovations.

Blessings,
The Trustees

March Bloodmobile – Monday, March 20, 1:30 – 6:30pm

The Red Cross Bloodmobile will visit Crossroads Ministry Center on Monday, March 20, 1:30 – 6:30pm. The donation process takes about one hour, and each donated unit can help save up to three lives. If you are unable to donate but would be interested in serving as a volunteer registrar/host(ess), or, if you would like help with online donor registration, please contact Judy Hug at judyhug@love-first.org or 740.653.3330, extension 1009.

Donors scheduled before Circuit Rider deadline to receive recognition at our January blood drive included:

Debra Brown – 4 gallons **Brenda George** – 12 gallons **Cynthia Hayman** – 1 gallon

How do you express a loving concern for others?

There are many wonderful ways in which to show God's love and yours to others in our church family and in our community. Hospital Visitations are important in reminding those that are experiencing illness, injury or recovery that God is with them, and so is their church family! Two local facilities have requested monthly worship experiences from our church – a beautiful way in which to involve your family or small group or just yourself in bringing God's word to others unable to attend worship among us.

New Member Classes – April 16, 23, and 30, 11:30am – 2pm

Persons interested in exploring membership at our church are invited to attend the New Member classes, with Reception of Members May 14. When registering for the classes, please indicate if childcare is needed. Meet the pastors and learn about United Methodism history and beliefs, and staff will acquaint attendees with the many ministries of this church. Current members are invited to help in providing a light meal for the classes.
To register for the classes or to assist with meals/hospitality, please contact the church office at 740-653-3330 or Judy Hug at judyhug@love-first.org

Caring Ministries reminders

For more information or to become involved in Caring Ministries, please contact the church office at 740-653-3330 or email Judy Hug at judyhug@love-first.org

- If you need a ride to church Sunday morning, or can be a van driver once a month/every other month
- If you can make a casserole or dessert to be shared during New Member classes
- If you are able to be a registrar/host(ess) for our Red Cross Bloodmobiles (alternate months)
- If you are interested in hospital visitation once/twice each month
- If you can make a monthly commitment to visit/write/call one of our members unable to attend church in person, or if you are a person unable to attend church and you can commit to a pen pal/phone call relationship with another person unable to attend worship and church activities
- If you can participate as a member of a worship team at a local nursing/residential facility 2-3 times each year
- Do you have an idea as to how you can express care for one or more of our members, to share God's love with others?

If you are able to provide childcare for Crossroads Community, we need your help. Crossroads Community meets each Tuesday, 6:30-7:30 pm so it's just 1 hour/week or could be shared so that it's just 1 hour/month. This is an investment in our children as we provide their family with a place to grow in their faith while their children are nurtured. A background check will be needed. If you can help once a week or once a month, please reach out to Pastor Amy at amywood@love-first.org

Youth News:

SHIELD
Serving Him In Every Little Deed

YOUTH GROUP
Come Be Seen, Heard, And Supported In Your Faith!

February 5, 12, 19, 26
Sunday Morning Combined Classes 6th-12th grade: Room 26, 9am & 10:30am:

Sunday Morning Confirmation Class 8th-12th grade: Chapel Room 10:30am

Sunday Youth Group Nights: Crossroads Youth Room 5-7pm*

Give Back Days: February 12: Messy Church at Crossroads 3:30-5:30pm

*After Messy Church Nights, we will start Youth Night at 5:30pm till 7pm.

Drivers License Visor Clips will be handed out during both services on February 19 to any high school students that have a drivers license.
Shield Youth Group is starting this new project this year with a kick-off during service. Just like Blessing of the Backpack Tags, these Visor Clips are to remind our Youth we pray for their safety while driving.

After February 19, any high schooler that gets their drivers license will come see me during church service or Youth Group night, and I will give them the visor clip and put their name in the Bulletin and in The Circuit Rider to let people in the church know who to pray for. Please come to this service on February 19.

Thank You,
Janie Burdsal

Drivers License Visor Clip

Global Ministries
The United Methodist Church

Partner Church News.....

A special Friends Of Lithuania meeting was held January 23. Participants from the November 2022 Holy Land trip shared about their trip in word, pictures, and song. The group included friends from both Lithuania and the US.

You may remember we sponsored our partner church friend Daiva Razguvienne to be a part of this trip. She has provided us with pictures and a special note about her trip. **Please see the church website: https://www.love-first.org/global-missions/**

Another trip to the Holy Land is being discussed for Fall of 2023.

Join us for the next StillInMission conversations!

Please register at: https://umcmission.org/sim-2/

We express our sincere sympathy to the families of those who have lost loved ones:

Charlene Chapman
Elsie Burnside
Sharon Brown
Donald Foulk
(Father of Ben (Cheryl) Foulk)
Marian S. Crook York
Mark Fancourt
Mark Bibler
Barb Nichols

Birth

Lottie Jo Vannoy
Date of Birth: December 25, 2022
Parents are Hannah Kae Tatman & Jon Vannoy
Grandparents are Heather & John Brunjes
Great Grandmother is Sandy Roberts

Interested in Baptism?

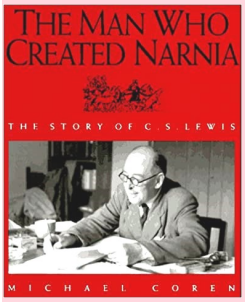
If you are, please contact the church at (740) 653-3330.

Holy Baptism
January 15, 2023
Carol Sandie Rawlins
Daughter of
Jodi and Tyler Rawlins
Grandparents are Dale and Connie Roush

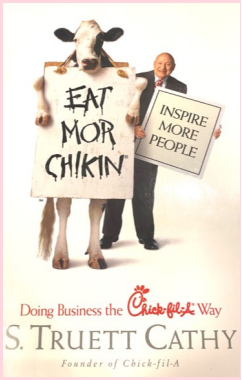
Staying Healthy Blood Pressure Screenings are available the first Sunday morning each month, between services in Room 14 off the Parlor. This valuable information can be useful in helping you stay healthy, and in providing valuable information in working with your health care provider.

Stop by the Church Library!

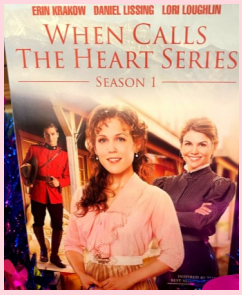
February is a great month to curl up with a good book! Stop in our Church library to borrow a book, CD, or DVD. Here are just a few things we have for now:



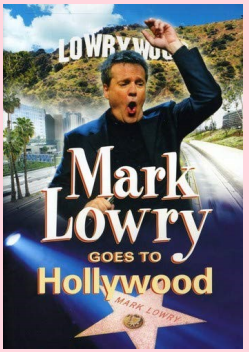
Book: **The Man Who Created Narnia: The Story of C.S. Lewis**
by Michael Coren Explore his life as a scholar, his friendships with writers such as J.R.R. Tolkien, the Christianity that underlies his writing, and the great love story of his final years.



Book: **Doing Business the Chick-fil-A Way**
by S. Truett Cathy As an accomplished leader in his family, community, and business, Truett Cathy knows the power of influence. And his words of experience will be beneficial for anyone who wants to grow and inspire others!



DVD: **When Calls the Heart** - Season 1
When Calls the Heart tells the captivating story of Elizabeth Thatcher, a young teacher accustomed to her high society life, who receives her first assignment in Coal Valley, a small town where life is fraught with challenges.



DVD: **Mark Lowry Goes to Hollywood**
Join Mark and his friends as he delivers a healthy dose of side-splitting comedy and a power-packed lineup of great music in this live event.

The First United Methodist Church Visioning Task Force has met regularly this past year to assess, envision, and strategize how to unite church members with church ministries and to align church ministries with community needs to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of our community and world. We want to thank the congregation for their support, prayers, and feedback throughout this process. During this past year, we reflected upon who we are as a congregation currently and who we want to become, and have identified six specific things that we believe should change for our church to thrive moving forward. Their listing here does not reflect their order of importance; rather, each of these goals are important and inextricably intertwined with each other.

1. We recommend that FUMC immediately adopt a revised and expanded mission statement:
   Loving God and Loving People: Making Disciples of Christ for the Transformation of the World.
   Lancaster First United Methodist Church (FUMC) is a historic United Methodist Church that welcomes everyone of all race, color, religion, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, nationality, ability, and age. We are dedicated to nurturing everyone and helping them grow in their faith journey with Christ.
   We are pleased to announce that this mission statement was unanimously approved and adopted by Church Council at their December meeting.
2. We believe that small groups are integral to the growth of Christian faith and that we need both Bible-studies as well as groups that are more demographic specific (such as UMW and young adult groups). We want to increase the number of small groups at FUMC, the diversity of topics, and the flexibility of meeting times. To make this happen in a sustainable way, we plan to raise up congregation members who might help coordinate this initiative. Pastor Amy has already begun meeting with church staff and congregation members to begin discussions.
3. We want FUMC to be a place that demonstrates genuine hospitality and is welcoming to all people whether they are a first-time member or a life-time member. To that aim, Joe Palmer and Judy Kraft are already working on recruiting more volunteers to serve as greeters on Sunday mornings, and establish full-time coverage of the reception desk in the parlor, among other things.
4. Increase the level of communication and clarity of communication between church leadership, committees, and the congregation at large. To this aim, we would like updates and announcements to be consistently shared across information platforms, rather than being shared in only the bulletin or only on Facebook, for example. Regular updates from the trustees through multiple information-sharing platforms would also be helpful.
5. We dream of having a regularly occurring praise and worship service at Crossroads Ministry Center. We envision an engaging, lively service with modern worship music that would move people to dance, raise hands, or otherwise worship in a way that feels authentic to them. This service would be inclusive to all, but would also be intentionally relevant and appealing to young adults and youth.
6. Our final goal is to create ministries and activities specifically for young adults. The creation of a praise and worship service at Crossroads is connected to this goal because we imagine youth and young adults having an integral role in the creation and continuation of this service, but this would not be the only activity designed for young adults. Janie Burdsal, our new Youth Director, is already planning a retreat for young adults and has been given starter funds for this ministry.

We are grateful to the Task Force members for their time and energy in 2022. Church Council will continue discussing these recommendations in the coming year. If any congregation member wants to help with any of these goals, please contact fumcreception@love-first.org or the appropriate church staff member.

The Elizabeth Circle meets the 3rd Thursday of each month. Upcoming meeting dates are February 16, March 16, April 20, and May 18, at 9:30, in Room 22. Please join us!

Sick Child Policy: With cold and flu season in full swing we would like to take this opportunity to remind parents of our sick child policy. If your child has experienced: runny nose, cough, fever, diarrhea, scratchy throat, or anything else that may be contagious, please do not bring your child to class until they have been SYMPTOM FREE for 24 hours. Thank you for helping to keep our children and volunteers healthy this winter. If you have any questions, please see Judy Kraft.

Children's Ministry Weather Emergency Programming: This Winter Weather Emergency Plan is what to expect when Fairfield County is under a Winter Driving Emergency. Please consider your neighborhood's road conditions when deciding whether to be on the road or not. We want our families safe!

LEVEL 1 **NORMAL Sunday Morning Programming. No children's programming modification.**
LEVEL 2 **Family Worship NO CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING.**

Can you help out? We are once again hosting the **Lion's Club Convention on Saturday and Sunday, March 4th and 5th.** This is a great fundraiser for our congregation and helps us fund the various programs here at First Church. With everyone's help, it only takes a few hours of your time to make the Lions Club feel welcomed at our facility! Look for the sign-up sheet in the Parlor to see which shift best fits with your schedule. We truly appreciate any and all help you can give.

Update Membership Information: Does our church database have your family membership record correct? Here is your chance to update your record for our annual Guide Book & Directory (if you haven't already done so). It is time for us to update our database with any changes, additions, or deletions that may have occurred in your family over the past year.

Have you changed your phone number? Have you moved? Are you preparing to move soon? Are all of your children still at home, and are they all included in your membership record? Do you want your name, address and telephone number published?

We are in the era where a lot of households no longer have land lines and only cell phones. If you do **NOT** want your cell phone number published in the Guidebook please let us know.

If you have not already informed the Church Office about changes to your record, please contact the Business Office, (740) 653-3330, **NO LATER THAN FEBRUARY 17** so that the information in the Guide Book & Directory is correct. Thank you for your help!

Thank You!

Dear First United Methodist Church: Thank you to the Rose Ministry and First United Methodist Church for the family meals and the flowers for our mother's funeral. Thank you, Todd & Doug Burnside

Dear FUMC: *Everyone here at 3219 Wheeling Road want to thank the First United Methodist Church for all of the Christmas presents and supplies! We are grateful for your help!*

Dear First Church: Thank you so much for the use of the van. The Girl Scouts had a blast being able to ride together to events. We went to a hockey game and got to skate on the ice. Thanks again!
Annette Knuutila, Girl Scout Leader

Creative Ministries News

Thank you to the volunteers who helped take down the nativity display at Crossroads. We had a lot of "first time" visitors this year, which is always exciting to see.

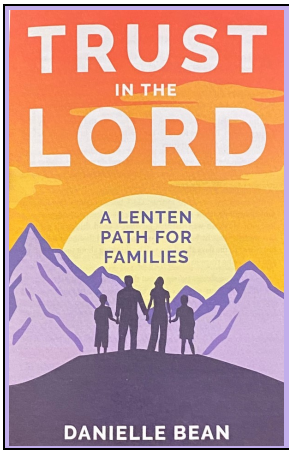
Virtuous Reality is preparing their 2023 show and will be performing at Eggstravaganza this year.

The Magic of Believe is also preparing for their 2023 season.

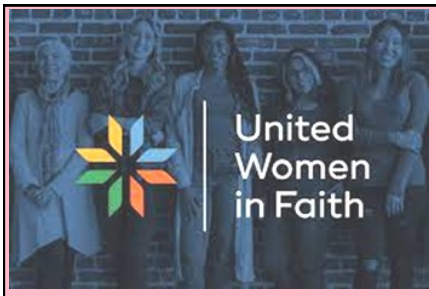
If you'd like to be involved with Creative Ministries we are always looking for new participants.
Our illusion team rehearses on Monday nights and our blacklight team on Tuesday nights. Contact John Coen for more details. johncoen@love-first.org

Eggstravaganza will be on April Fools Day this year. We need donations of plastic eggs and candy (not chocolate) to place inside the eggs. Collection boxes are in the parlor and Crossroads main hall.
This event requires a lot of volunteers to help run games, inflatables and assemble and hide eggs. A sign-up sheet is in the church parlor.

Last year's **egg stuffing** event was a big success, so we will do that again **on March 25th at Crossroads** beginning at 9 a.m. Come, join the fun!



Beginning February 19th, pick up a copy of this Family Lenten devotional in the Parlor or in the back of the sanctuary and enrich your prayer life as we journey through the season of Lent.



CIRCLE MEETINGS:

ELIZABETH CIRCLE is meeting the third Thursday of every month at First UMC in Room 22 at 9:30 a.m.

TRINITY CIRCLE will **not be** meeting during the months of January and February. Meetings will resume on March 10 at First UMC in Room 22 at 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. We will be working on Easter cards.

Call to Prayer and Self Denial is observed during the months of January and February. This year, gifts to A Call to prayer and Self-Denial 2023 will directly support United Women in Faith's racial justice work, which is helping to create a more equitable society. Your gift supports both our campaign to interrupt the school-to-prison pipeline and our long-standing work building members' capacity to implement the Charter for Racial Justice at all levels of the organization. In giving, you are showing your support for United Women in Faith's long-standing commitment to advance racial justice in the church and in the world. Our foremothers authored the Charter for Racial Justice because they believed. In 2023, United Women in Faith continues to believe. Please send your gift to the Church, marked as "Call to Prayer and Self Denial—United Women in Faith".

Drive-Thru Dinners are on hiatus until March 1st. Make plans to pick up a delicious meal and be on your way lickity-split! Reservations are required by 1 PM on Monday, Feb 27th. Suggested donation is $5.00 per meal!

Second Saturday 2023! One Saturday a month you can make a difference in the life of others! There are projects for every age and ability! Projects we are working on are:

Wood Ministry No experience necessary! We will train! If you enjoy the great outdoors, this project is for you! We cut, split, and stack wood. We also deliver split wood to community members who burn wood to heat their homes. Wear work clothes for the weather and bring work gloves.

Pillowcase Ministry Santa Rich needs our help making pillowcases to handout at Christmas! Will you be on the "Nice List" this year? This project is for those who can sew and non-sewers alike! We need folks to iron, fold, and place completed pillowcases in a bag with a printed prayer. If you can sew or would like to learn how to sew pillowcases, we need you too!

New for 2023 We're bringing back a favorite—**Shut-in Visitation**! This project is slated to kick-off in March. We will need folks who can donate home-baked cookies, donate fruit or fruit cups, make greeting cards, pack our treat bags, and most importantly of all, visit our shut-ins with a smile and a treat. **Please contact Judy Kraft at 740-653-3330 or at judykraft@love-first.org if you are interested in this project.** We will need many volunteers to make this project a success!

If you would like to be a part of any of the Second Saturday projects, make plans to join us for our next meeting on Saturday, February 11th at 8:30 AM at Crossroads. No experience is necessary, just a heart to help others in our community. If you have any questions concerning Second Saturday, please contact Judy Kraft at 740-653-3330 or at judykraft@love-first.org.

Former minister, Rev. Robert McDowell's final sermon as an active minister in the West Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church will be June 11, 2023. at 10:30 A.M. at Athens First United Methodist Church at 2 South College St., Athens, Ohio. All are welcome to attend and/or send a note of celebration.

This is a surprise to Pastor Robert!!

2022 Angel Tree update:

Total Applications: 10; total Children: 26
Each family was given $100 in gift cards to assist with food. In addition, we assisted a group home to establish the basic needs for apartment living.

Thrivent Choice Program: If you are a Thrivent Benefit member you have the opportunity to give to our church through their Thrivent Choice program. The Thrivent Choice program encourages their members to recommend where Thrivent Financial distributes an amount of it's charitable grant funds. Members make this recommendation by directing Choice dollars to enrolled nonprofit organizations such as First United Methodist Church. To find out if you are able to give to the church in this way, talk to your Thrivent Financial Advisor.

Our rewards account # with Krogers is NX126!

Support our church mission projects by shopping at Kroger! Just **register your Kroger card** at:
https://www.kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow/
-link your card to our church, our organization number is **NX126 First United Methodist Church-Lancaster.** Kroger will send us a check for a portion of all that is spent with Kroger cards associated with our church. Check the bottom of your receipt to confirm you are supporting our church. Thank You!
This generates some nice income for the church, which goes to support global missions!

First UMC's Scholarship Application period is from February 19 thru March 31, 2023. Applications are posted on our website, www.love-first.org, and are also available in the Parlor.
Applications must be turned into the Business Office or postmarked by March 31, 2023.

Scholarship Cover Letter link:
https://www.love-first.org/hp_wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Scholarship-Application-Cover-Letter-2023.pdf

Scholarship Application link:
https://www.love-first.org/hp_wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Scholarship-Application-Form.pdf

The Higher Education Outreach Committee will be collecting items for **care packages to send to our college students** as they pursue their studies. We will collect items in the parlor **thru March 5**. Please consider donating some of the following items to remind our college students that their church family is thinking of them even as they are away. All items must fit in a small box for mailing.

Snacks: Individual-sized packages only
Snack-size crackers, cookies, chips, pretzels, etc.
Granola & other snack bars
Packaged fruit snacks
Jolly Ranchers, Starburst, packs of gum/mints, etc.
No Chocolate, please (it could melt)
Microwave popcorn
Microwave mac & cheese or other single serving meals
Ramen Noodles
Flavoring packets for bottled water
Gum
Yo-yo's or other fidget items, gift cards

School Supplies
Highlighters
Pencils
Post-it Notes

Bath and Beauty:
Travel-sized toiletries ONLY
Shampoo & Conditioner
Body Wash/Soap/ & Hand/Body Lotion
Hand Sanitizer
Tissues, Q-Tips
Chapsticks & Lip Balms
Head bands

Note cards or personal notes of inspiration are encouraged to be included with the packages. The due date for these items is March 5. The packages will be made up on Sat., March 11th.

Please let us know if your college student has a new address or is studying from home so we can be sure to have the right address for college care packages:

College Caring Ministry

Student's name: _____ College/University: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Student's Email: _____Cell _____

A note from The Business Office

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not parish but have eternal life. John 3:16

For God so Loved…That He Gave

As we have entered into the season of Lent, the death and resurrection of Jesus represents **the most generous gift ever given** – when the King of Glory gave up everything in order to reconcile us to God.
Giving cheerfully, sacrificially, and consistently is a part of our worship to our gracious God. When we are generous with others, we remind one another of the great generosity of our God. Your generosity for the church impacts many in our ministries here and the generosity we can share with others in need.

The following are ways that you can help support our church through your monetary gifts:
· On-line giving on our website, www.love-first.org
· E-Offering (ACH) is a safe way to have your giving directly deducted from your checking or savings account – contact the Business Office for an authorization form.
· Direct bill payment through your own bank
· Mail in gifts to 163 E. Wheeling St., Lancaster, OH 43130
We are here to help! If you have any questions on any of the ways to give to our church please call Sarah or Jill in the Business Office at 740-653-3330. Thank you for your generosity.

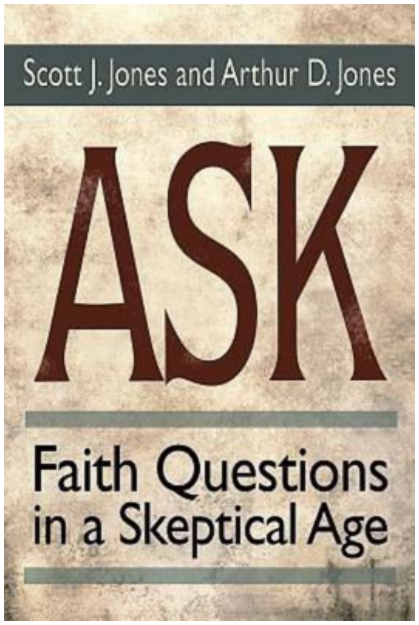
CROSSROADS Community

REAL people looking for a way to have
REAL conversations and live a
REAL faith in Jesus Christ in the REAL world

We would love to have you join us!

Tuesdays, 6:30-7:30 p.m. at Crossroads Ministry Center

We'd love to have you join us for a time of fellowship and worshipful, interactive, and relevant Bible study (with small group discussions and sharing) to help us live out our faith in our world today. Children are welcome to stay with their parents or play in the nursery. ***We invite you to join us any or every week—and bring a friend!***



Ever wonder why there is suffering, or how do the different religions relate, or how do we make sense of science and religion? Then this series is for you. Whether you've been in church for years or are just exploring, we hope you will bring your questions and join the conversation on Tuesday evenings!

January 31: Can I Trust the Old Testament?
February 7: Was Jesus' Resurrection Real?
February14: Are Marriage, Sex, and Family Life Religious Issues?
February 21: Why Do Christians Disagree About So Many Things?

If you have any questions or want to learn more, please contact the Church, 740-653-3330.

UPCOMING DATES:

Tuesdays:	Crossroads Community, 6:30pm
Wednesdays:	Pastor's Bible Study, 4pm, & The Gathering, 6:00 pm
Feb. 4:	Men's Breakfast
Feb. 11:	Second Saturday
Feb. 12	Messy Church
Feb. 16:	Elizabeth Circle Meeting
Feb. 19:	FUMC Scholarship Application Begins
Feb. 19:	Lenten Study of Familiar Hymns-Crossroads
Feb. 22:	Ash Wednesday
March 1:	Drive-Thru Dinners Return
March 4 & 5:	Lions Club Convention-Crossroads
March 5:	College Care Packages Due
March 20:	Red Cross Blood Drive, 1:30-6:30pm
Apr. 16/23/30:	New Member Classes

It's easier than ever before to find out, and see, all the **great things happening at Lancaster First**. In addition to our Facebook page, we have a Twitter account as well as an Instagram account. Not only will you be kept up-to-date with our ministries, but we'll include devotions, thoughts for the day, pictures, music, and a few surprises along the way. Follow us at: Facebook: Lancaster First United Methodist Church; Twitter: LoveFirstUMC; Instagram: Lancasterfirstumchurch

Articles for the March issue of the CIRCUIT RIDER are due by February 15 to Lisa Schenck at lisaschenck@love-first.org

The Circuit Rider

is the monthly newsletter of
First United Methodist Church
163 E. Wheeling St.
Lancaster, OH 43130

Sunday:
9:00 am – Worship Celebration
10:30 am – Praise Worship
Tuesday:
6:30 p.m. Crossroads Community
Wednesday:
6:00 p.m. – The Gathering (at Crossroads)
Crossroads Family Ministry Center
2095 W. Fair Ave.

We welcome you to worship with us and to experience the joy of having fellowship with other people who believe in the love of God and the teachings of Christ.

Senior Pastor – Rev. Dr. Brian Jones
Associate Pastor – Rev. Amy Wood
Telephone – 740-653-3330
Email – receptionist@love-first.org
Website – www.love-first.org

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Lancaster, OH 43130

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