



The Circuit Rider

The newsletter of First United Methodist Church, Lancaster, Ohio

June 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.

Pastoral Changing of the Guards!

This June and July we will be experiencing the effects of the appointment process where Pastor Brian will be moving on to Grove City United Methodist Church and Pastor Nicole Baker will be coming to us.

To celebrate Pastor Brian's ministry and time with us here, we invite you to shower him with cards on June 11th, 18th, and/or the 25th. A card basket will be placed in the Parlor these days. Additionally, we invite you to come June 25th, which will be his last Sunday with us. We will have cake and celebrate his time with us.



Then to celebrate Pastor Nikki's arrival, come July 2nd to introduce yourself.

I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. (Ephesians 1:16)

Whenever I read this verse, I think about the wonderful congregation here at Lancaster First UMC. Over the past eight years, I have not stopped, whenever I think of this congregation, to give thanks and remember you in my prayers.

In these past years, we have rejoiced in new births in the church and celebrate the homecoming of many of our saints. We have rejoiced at weddings, and prayed together in hospitals. There has been much laughter and few tears. But I have been thankful for all of it.

We've seen each other through a pandemic, through new ministries and worship opportunities started, and stepped out in faithfulness as we began our capital improvements here at the church. And you have been faithful through all of it. Often, I find myself checking to make sure it's been eight years, as it has gone by so quickly.

And now we find ourselves in a new place of change and transition. As of July 1, I will begin my new appointment as Senior Pastor at Grove City United Methodist Church. And while we are excited at the new opportunities God has for us, we grieve leaving the people we have been so thankful for all of these years.

I want to take a moment and lovingly remind all of you that as of July 1st, Pastor Nikki and Pastor Amy are the pastors here at First United Methodist. They will love and care for you and offer wonderful pastoral ministry. Of course, Pastor Amy is already doing this. Please remember, as much as we love you all, they need to be your pastors.

We will think of you often as we hope you do us and as always, as we think and pray for you we will be thankful.

In Christ,
Brian, Kelly and Sean.



Staff Recognition!

The Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee recognizes and honors the unwavering dedication and hard work of our incredible staff. Each day, they selflessly pour their hearts and souls into serving our spiritual community, and embodying the core values of love, compassion, and service. From our devoted clergy who guide us on our spiritual journeys, to our administrative staff who ensure the seamless operation of our church, and the volunteers who give their time and talents. Every member of our staff plays a vital role in creating a nurturing and uplifting environment for us all! We are deeply grateful for their boundless energy, passion, and love they pour into every aspect of their work.

This year we have 4 staff members celebrating a major anniversary that we want to recognize:

Marty Cyrus who has been our church caterer for 20 years.

Mary Grover who has been our Sunday morning Child Care Provider for 20 years.

Brenda Graf who has been our Pianist for 15 years.

Barb Hunt who has been our Administrative Assistant for 5 years.

The next time you see these staff members, we invite you to thank them and celebrate their remarkable contributions and for being the pillars upon which our spiritual home stands.



It's going to be Stellar! The Stellar expedition blasts off from the Crossroads launchpad on **Monday, July 10th** and ends its exciting journey of sharing God's Light on **July 14th**. Countdown begins at 6:00 p.m. nightly. This will be the adventure of the Summer!

Participant Early Registration is open! *Early VBS paid registrations include a Free Stellar VBS T-Shirt!* Registrations received **AFTER June 18, 2023** **will not receive a t-shirt!**

Go to vbspro.events/p/blastoff2023 to register either as a volunteer or as a participant.

Registration is **\$10 per participant with a family maximum of \$25**. We never want cost to be a barrier to learning more about Jesus. If your family needs assistance with the participation fees, please contact Judy Kraft at 740-653-3330 for scholarship information.

This year we are also offering the music of Stellar for purchase! You can choose **either** a Digital Download Card with a unique code that allows you to unlock all 9 Sing & Play Blast Off Music Videos on the all-new Lifetree App. **Or** you can choose a Stellar VBS Sing and Play Blast Off Music Participant CD. **Either option is \$6.99.**

Want to volunteer? No experience necessary, just a heart for Jesus and children!

For any questions, please contact Judy Kraft at 740-653-3330.

To sign up, **go to vbspro.events/p/blastoff2023 to register.**

Check out the donation board in the Parlor to see what you can help with for VBS Supplies! If you would like to sponsor a scholarship for VBS, take a smiling sun or planet donation tag and return it to the church office!

Hooked on Books

June 6
10:00 a.m.
Crossroads Ministry Center

Contact
Linda
Godenschwager
or Denise
Bennett

The book selection for June 6 is "The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek."
Author: Kim Michele Richardson

Light refreshments will be served. There will be no July meeting, with the next scheduled meeting August 1. August book selection will be chosen at the June meeting.

Sign up in the Parlor



Welcome New Members!

Dan Goss
Noretta Goss
Mikaela Hug
Beverly Murch
Judith Norris
Marolyn Ruston

Congratulations to our 2023 Confirmands:

Sophia Williams
Brinkley Conklin
Riley Miller
Emma Kern
Charlee McKisson



Summer Classes at Church:

June 4th, 11th, 18th Will be a 10:30am class in Room 26, upstairs in the church. This class is taught by Tim Binkley for youth going into and currently in Jr. High.

June 4th, 11th, 18th Will be a high school study group meeting in the Parlor at 10:30am. On nice days, we'll go for a walk, as well. The leader is Janie Burdsal, This is for youth going into and currently in High School.

Introducing S.H.I.E.L.D. assemble days!

During the summer S.H.I.E.L.D. will have random days we get together.

June 8th Meet at Crossroads at 10am to go to Burr Oak Lake, get back by 6pm! If bad weather, we will go bowling for a shorter amount of time, at Tiki bowling lanes.

June 11th 5:30pm at Crossroads will be a card playing night with Pizza, we will learn the game of Hearts!

Give Back Days:

June 11th Messy Church 3:30-5:30pm at Crossroads

Mission Trip:

June 17th 6pm-7:30pm at Crossroads youth room: We will have a mission trip meeting for all who are going on the trip. We will make sure we have everything we need and help gear up anyone who does not have tools or paint brushes.

June 25th 10:00am, we will meet at Crossroads to load up the trailer and head out! We should arrive home July 1st at 10:30am and be at Crossroads unloading. Pick up will be from there.

Our Van Drivers are Amazing!!

Help in giving a 'summer shout out' to our van drivers – Aaron McKisson, Bill and Gina Pressler, and David Van Gundy!! Our van transports members and friends of First Church who need a ride to church on Sunday morning as well as to special services like Good Friday or Christmas Eve. Each driver has completed an orientation and supervised driving session along with a background check to assure a safe and comfortable ride.

Additional drivers – having completed the same training process and background check – would allow our usual drivers to go on vacation or attend family or childrens' activities without disrupting the van schedule, or to drive less frequently than once or twice each month.

Contact Judy Hug at 653-3330 ext 1009 or judyhug@love-first.org for more information, or to be included in our Sunday morning pick up schedule.

S H I E L D
Serving Him In Every Little Deed



YOUTH GROUP

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

Creative Ministries News

The **Magic of Believe** is performing at the New Holland UMC on June 16th as part of their "Stellar VBS". We are also looking for people to perform in our October 7th show. Please contact John Coen if you can help! johncoen@love-first.org

Virtuous Reality is currently preparing for the **Fellowship of Christian Puppeteers National Conference**, held in Hagerstown, MD in July. They will be teaching and performing.



The **July 4th parade** is coming soon! Please sign up in the parlor if you can help represent our church in this parade.

Welcome to the Trustees' Corner

Well, we snuck downstairs to get the latest peek at the renovation process. Over a few weeks' span, the General Contractor had the cement floors cut out in different directions to prepare for the plumbing subcontractors to come and start laying new pipes for water and sewage. It is amazing that through each step along the way they keep uncovering more history. While cutting through the cement floors, sandstone blocks were discovered in different areas. The entire cement floor in the kitchen has been removed, exposing even more of the base of the support columns in that area of the building. Majority of the demo part is coming to an end. It will be a matter of time before the subcontractors will be on site working on the new electrical and plumbing. By the time the July/August issue of the *Circuit Rider* comes out, we will have a lot more updates for you. We are grateful for all the gifts given thus far towards the Capital Campaign; any additional giving in your heart would be greatly appreciated to help make up for the difference between the project cost of \$1.9 million and the \$730k available funds from current giving. Be sure to stay tuned each month and read our article.

See you around the corner.

The Trustees





Trinity Circle will meet the second Friday, June 9 at 10 a.m. to 12 noon in Room 22 at the Church.

Elizabeth Circle meets the third Thursday, June 16 at 9:30 a.m. in Room 22 at the Church.

We are still collecting items for our local

Community Action. (See the list of items on the box in the Parlor.). Contribute today and show love in action to our neighbors in need!

One of the more recent books for UWF is **“The BookWoman of Troublesome Creek”**. This book will be discussed at the next book club which is meeting June 6 at 10 a.m. at Crossroads. Check out all the books in the Church Library in the UWF section!



SAVE THESE DATES: Galilean Service at Three Creek Metro Park on Thursday, August 3rd and Fall Meeting TBD on Saturday, October 7th.

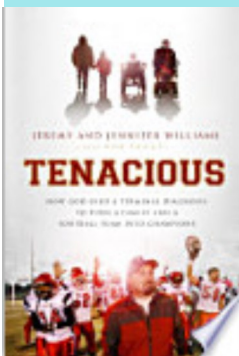
Visit the Library!

Stop by the library and check something out!
Here are a few ideas:



I Still Believe by Jeremy Camp. (book and DVD) - The meaning behind the song. A heart-warming story about the strength of undying love and the power of faith.

Family Fun by Debbie Tafton O'Neal (book)- 105 easy ways to create lasting memories and build family ties.



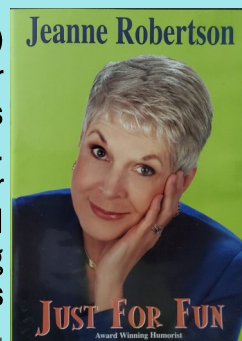
Tenacious (book)

Jeremy Williams captured the nation's imagination by coaching his high school football team to unprecedented heights while combatting ALS and caring for a son with spina bifida. This is his family's inspiring story. America first met Jeremy and Jennifer Williams when Extreme Makeover: Home Edition rebuilt their Depression-era farmhouse into a beautiful, handicapped-accessible haven. Friends, family, and neighbors from their west Georgia community—and all over the state—came together to support the ailing high school coach who had won their respect and their hearts. It made for compelling television but only told a little slice of the story. *Tenacious* gives you the rest—a tender love story, a thrilling sports story, and an unforgettable testimony to the power of faith and grit in the face of almost overwhelming adversity.

Jeanne Robertson (DVDs)

Jeanne Robertson is a national treasure who had a knack for finding the humor in unexpected and everyday situations, while regaling live and online audiences with hilarious stories about a colorful parade of characters.

When Jeanne came home to Graham, North Carolina from her sophomore year at Auburn University the spring of 1963 to enter the town beauty pageant, she had no idea that win of “Miss Graham” and “Miss Congeniality” would lead to being crowned Miss North Carolina later that summer, or that her pageant engagements would develop into a career as a nationally known speaker and humorist.





Wednesday Night Drive-Thru Dinners:
Drive-Thru Dinners will resume in September. Thank you for your support and see you in the Fall!

First Community Kitchen is looking for **volunteers to visit with our guests during lunch and breakfast.** If you are interested or have questions, please contact Judy at 740-653-3330.

Children's Discipleship Summer Programming

Children's Discipleship will offer programming at the 10:30 service beginning on June 4th in Room 11A-B. This class is for those children aged five and older entering grades Pre-Kindergarten through 5th grade in the Fall. Regular programming will resume on September 10, 2023. The Summer Break gives our dedicated Sunday School teachers an opportunity to recharge and refresh during the summer months. Nursery for birth through four years old will continue to be available during the 9:00 and 10:30 a.m. services. Sunday School Registration for the 2023-2024 school year begins on August 13th.

If you have thought about volunteering as a Sunday School teacher, this is the perfect time to give it a try! The commitment is the Sunday of your choice, and you will receive the training you need to be successful! Please contact Judy Kraft at 740-653-3330 for more details!

It's that time of year again and **we are planning for our Sunday morning ministry opportunities.** Our calendar year runs from September 2023 through August 2024. We'd like to invite you to be a part of our ministry teams in the following areas:

Fellowship Hour Hosts – Hosts are needed for the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Sunday of the month.
 Welcome Desk Hosts
 Hospitality Greeters
 Children's Ministry teachers and assistants PreK-1st Grade at 9:00 and 10:30 a.m.
 Nursery Helpers

Help Needed at Crossroads on
JULY 23, 2023

**AMERICAN LEGION
 BASEBALL
 BANQUET**

LANCASTER FIRST
 UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Volunteers are needed to assist with the American Legion Baseball Banquet on Sunday, July 23rd. (This is a Sunday!) The sign-up sheet is in the Parlor. There are many slots open for you to give just a little of your time. This fundraiser supports the missions and ministries of First Church.

June 10 @ 8:30 a.m.
July 8 @ 8:30 a.m.– VBS Set-Up
August 12 @ 8:30 a.m.

Please join us!

Second Saturday Sweet Visits Many, many thanks to all who have donated candy, fruit or home-baked cookies for our Sweet Visits to members residing in nursing or residential facilities, or those unable to physically attend church any longer. Our next invitation is to come help us deliver them! We are grateful to the 2-3 people who have diligently conducted all the visits these past few months, yet more hands would certainly be helpful in remembering our members who are homebound. Can you spare an hour on the Second Saturday of each month to shine God's light on those who have diligently served the church in years past? You are invited to "try it – you'll like it!" Contact Judy Hug at 653-3330 ext 1009 or judyhug@love-first.org for more information.



Cookies and Fruit Needed Monthly for Second Saturday:

2nd Saturday needs cookies & fruit to deliver to our friends who can't get out much. Please bring cookies to the church no later than 1:00 p.m. on Friday, June 9th or to Crossroads the morning of June 10. Since the main building is closed on Fridays, please contact the Church or any staff member at 740-653-3330, and they will make sure you can get into the building. Thank you!



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

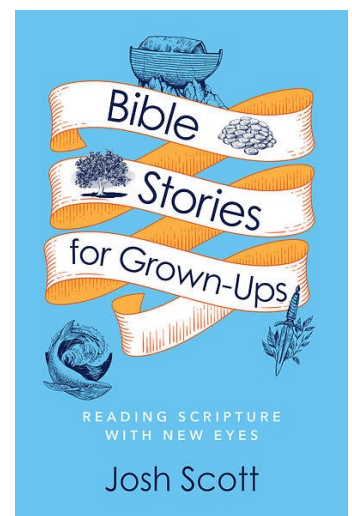
We would love to have you join us!

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!***

Join us on Tuesday evenings this Summer as we take a fresh look at some of the Bible stories that we tell children and see them through grown-up eyes. Whether you've been in the church all your life or are just starting to explore your faith, we welcome you to join us and let's learn together!

May 30- Noah's Ark
June 6- The Binding of Isaac
June 13- Jonah and the Big Fish
June 20- Jesus and Zacchaeus
June 27- Jesus Heals a Blind Man
July 4- Holiday- No Crossroads Community
July 11- VBS Week- Join us in Ministry with our community
July 18- TBD
July 25- TBD





#STILLINMISSION

Join us on Thursday, June 1, 12 p.m. (ET)
for conversations with missionaries:

John Calhoun, Austria
Jim Keech, United States
Bernice Keech, United States
Katie Peterson, United States
Momodu Syl Josiah, Kenya

Global Ministries
The United Methodist Church



Lithuania United Methodist Church

THANK YOU

FOR YOUR FRIENDSHIP, PARTNERSHIP
AND SUPPORT IN PRAYERS,
FELLOWSHIP AND NEEDS.

Rev. Remigijus Matulaitis, District Superintendent

Join us for the next
StillInMission conversations

Families in Mission: A Special #StillInMission Event

Have you ever wondered what life would be like to travel to hundreds or thousands of miles into the mission field with your family? Are you considering serving in mission with your family and have questions?

During this very special #StillInMission Episode, we will have a panel of four missionary families from all over the world. Together we will hear the stories of challenges, joys, and how these families navigate their lives in mission.

Date & Time: Jun 15, 2023 12:00 PM

Register at:

<https://umcmmission.org/sim-2/>

At the bottom under 'Upcoming Dates'



SUPERHERO!

**Sunday, June 11
3:30-5:30 pm**

Messy Church

**A TIME FOR FAMILIES TO RELAX, HAVE FUN, EXPLORE
FAITH AND ENJOY A MEAL.**

DRESS AS YOUR FAVORITE SUPERHERO!

CHALLENGES

SUPER SNACKS

CELEBRATION

DINNER

FAMILY FUN!

Crossroads Ministry Center 2095 W. Fair Ave. Lancaster, OH
Contact: amywood@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!!



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

Tim Hall
Nancy Scott



Interested in Baptism?

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

Help Save Lives! The American Red Cross Bloodmobile will visit Crossroads Ministry Center on Monday, July 17, 1:30 – 6:30pm. Over 200 units were collected in our 2022 blood drives, potentially helping to save over 600 lives throughout the state and country, in such places as

Fort Mill, SC
Muskegon, MI
Columbia, SC

Toledo, OH
Charleston WV
Terr Haute, IN

New York City, NY
Chillicothe, OH
Lansing, MI

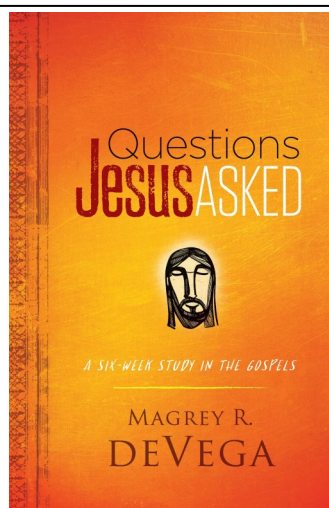
Not able to donate? A few volunteers are needed for each blood drive to register donors as each arrives to donate. Volunteer times are flexible within the 1:15 – 6:30pm time frame. Donors can sign up on line at www.redcrossblood.org or through the Red Cross Blood app. Volunteers can contact Judy Hug for more information or to register to help – 653-3330, ext 1009 or judyhug@love-first.org.

Visitation Ministries

...“Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you? And the King will answer them, “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.”
Matthew 25: 37-40

Visitation may seem scary. Even if you know the person you are visiting, their situation or a change in health may make you uncomfortable. Visiting in pairs or in family groups may alleviate some of the uncertainty. Having additional information or training could also help with visitor anxiety or trepidation.

Yet we are each called to Christian visitation – to care for those who are ill or lonely or apart. Many of our members that are homebound or in the hospital are anxious for a visit to ‘catch up’ on church happenings and people. Training sessions will be offered in the fall, but visitations can begin this summer when children are out of school. Can you give an hour once a month to visit one or two homebound members, or to perhaps call them on the phone or send them a card? For more information, please contact Judy Hug at judyhug@love-first.org or 653-3330 ext 1009.



Ark Builders will begin a 6-week study on June 18 at 9 a.m., “Questions Jesus Asked” by Magrey R. deVega We would love to have new people join our class. Jesus was fond of asking questions, many of which cut right to the heart of what it means to be human. Why are you terrified? What do you live for? Who do you say that I am? In *Questions Jesus Asked*, author Magrey deVega explores six of the most provocative Questions Jesus posed to others and guides us in answering them for ourselves. When we dare to raise these questions, they will

bring us into a fuller appreciation for the wisdom, power, and presence of God in our lives .Are you willing to step out in faith? Are you ready to answer the Questions Jesus asked? Come join us on June 18 at 9 a.m.

July 28,29,30

Young Adult Retreat

FUMC has planned a retreat for Young Adults. Please come join us this summer for a two night stay at Geneva Hills. We need you all to express what you would like to see in the church for your age group. In this time of fellowship and retreat, we would like to brainstorm on ideas going forward in our church to better reach your group. Age 18-25

Get in touch
Janie Burdsal
Youth Director
740-653-3303 ext. 1101
janieburdsal@love-first.org

Geneva Hills Location
1380 Blue Valley Rd. SE,
Lancaster, OH 43130

LANCASTER FIRST
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

A note from The Business Office

2 Corinthians 9:6-8

Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

Recurring Gift Giving

Now that we are starting the summer months, many of us are taking some time to go somewhere for vacation. At the church, we continue with our ministries but know that our attendance and gift giving will typically dip down some. But you know what? That doesn't have to be the case. **Recurring Gift Giving** is an easy way that people can give year round without the worry that you have forgotten to write that check to the church. When people give consistently it supplies the church with a steady, reliable flow of gifts that help us to confidently run our ministries and allow us to be God's hands & feet in our community and world. There are several ways that you can sign up for recurring giving through our ACH program or our on-line giving; either way is safe and convenient and you can pick how often you would like to give. If you have questions about recurring giving please contact Jill in the Finance Office.

The following are ways that you can give your monetary gifts to our church:

- 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 generous gifts to our church.



Thank You's

Thank you for all your prayers, cards and condolences at the passing of our Mother. She loved her church family! Thanks to the Rose Ministry for the red rose; the Family Concerns Committee for the luncheon and the pastors during this difficult time. Much appreciated! Joella and Steve Stapp

Dear Scholarship Committee: I just wanted to tell you guys thank you for sending me the care package! It is really nice knowing I have a community supporting me!
Thank you! Sincerely, Carynn Collier

Dear Lancaster First U.M. Church: Thank you so much for the food items that you provided for Dwight's funeral. It was very much appreciated. We appreciate that you have kept our family in your thoughts and prayers during our family's difficult time.
Theresa Snowden & Family Thank you for letting us share our passion for music.

Thank you to all the volunteers that helped with the Rummage Sale! We made a little over \$3,900, plus \$835 from the Flower Sale to go towards Youth Missions!

A Big THANK YOU to all the volunteers who made possible Wednesday Night Drive-Thru Dinners. They would not have been a success without you.

Bottoms Up Diaper Bank would like to thank the parishioners of Lancaster First United Methodist Church for your generous contribution to World's Largest Diaper Drive. You collected 1,212 diapers, which will serve 48 families.

UPCOMING DATES:

Tuesdays: Crossroads Community, 6:30pm
Wednesdays: Pastor's Bible Study, 4pm, & The Gathering, 6pm
VBS Registration has begun! love-first.org
June 1: Still in Mission Virtual Event
June 3: Men's Breakfast at Crossroads Ministry Center
June 6: Hooked on Books-Crossroads
June 10: Second Saturday
June 11: Messy Church
June 25-July 1: Youth Mission Trip
June 25: Pastor Brian's last Sunday with us at FUMC
July 2: Pastor Nikki's First Sunday at FUMC
July 4: Parade!
July 10-14: VBS Week!
July 17: Red Cross Blood Drive, 1:30-6:30pm

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 July/August issue of the
CIRCUIT RIDER are due by June 15
to Lisa Schenck at lisaschenck@love-first.org

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

Sunday:

9:00 a.m. – Worship Celebration

10:30 a.m. – 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

Place label here