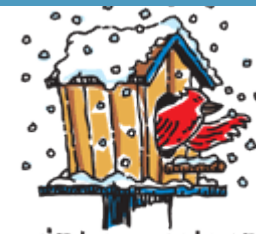




First United Methodist Church
 127 N 4th St
 Vandalia, IL 62471



A winter welcome

Office Hours:

M-W-TR: 8:00a — 4:00p

T-F: 8:00a—12:00p

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vandaliafumc@outlook.com

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Inside this issue:

Pastor's Perspective	2
Coats & Shoes N.O.W. Committee	3
Operation Christmas Child	4
Worship Notes Year end financials	5
Prayer Concerns Shut-Ins	6
Thank You's Prayer Shawl Ministry	7

January Pews News

*First United Methodist Church of Vandalia:
 "Planting and nurturing seeds of faith, cultivating devoted disciples of Christ,
 and feeding souls for the glory of God"*



Thanks to our Children's Ministry Department for a fabulous Christmas program on Sunday, December 12. Special thanks to our seamstresses Sandy Leidner, Deb Durbin and Linda Dugan; accompanist Blanche Dugan; vocal coach Sharon Mueller; to our teachers and Kingdom Kids leaders; and most of all to our wonderful children.



Church Staff

Pastor: Tom Goodell: vandaliaumcpastor@gmail.com
 Administrative Assistant: Casey Kistler: vandaliafumc@outlook.com
 Secretary: Sue Miller (Tues. & Fri.)
 Director of Music: Louise Weiss: gctheorygal@hotmail.com
 Director of Young Children's Ministries: Amanda Milam
 Preschool Director: Cindy Laramée
 Custodians: Mike & Sharon Hagy
 Assistant Custodian: Andy Sidwell

Pastor's Perspective

What does it mean to be a Methodist Church? I was asked this not long ago, sincerely, by someone who is openly skeptical of organized religion. He simply asked, "what good is it to be part of your tribe?" His question demanded a good answer, a simple answer and an honest one.

John Wesley, who began Methodism, longed not for an institution but rather a movement. In fact, he tried to persuade Americans not to create the Methodist institution. His movement focused on two things. First, he wanted to spread an evangelical fire across a complacent church. People need to endorse Christ in their lives, turn away from their sinful living and towards the sacred calling of the Christian life. People need to know Jesus personally.

Second, the Christian calling is out in the world, not inside the church. We are called to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the imprisoned and sick, and advocate for the disenfranchised. In other words, we are called to do what Jesus told us to do (read Matthew 26).

The Wesleyan movement founded hospitals for the poor, helped end slavery in the British Empire, advocated for the rights and health of women and children, and began schools especially in marginalized communities. Wesley believed that people would find faith only if their stomachs were fed first.

There are many places where Methodism is practiced more like a social club than a spiritual movement. Some Methodist churches are more interested in their buildings than their people. Many Methodist churches are no longer evangelizing in their communities and are divorced from the struggles of the people living around them. I once listened at a group church conference as church leaders talked about their primary accomplishments of the past year. One church leader boasted that his congregation had purchased a new, riding lawn mower the past year.

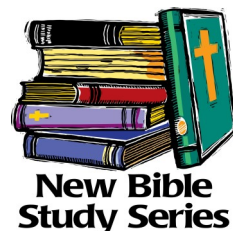
There is nothing wrong with buying a lawn mower, but that is not our purpose. God did not plant us here to have a posh lawn! God planted us here to save lives from the doubt and despair of a world without Christ. God planted us here to be the embodiment of the Gospel. This ought to be the hallmark of Methodist Churches, and our Methodist Church today. We should be a place that encourages full faith in Jesus Christ, and a commitment to living out the Gospel. I believe we are well on our way towards the vision but we must not become complacent.

I am honored and excited to be about this work with you at Vandalia First Methodist Church in 2022!

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Tom

Pastor's Bible Study Returns!

Beginning Tuesday, January 18th (6:30-7:30pm) and Wednesday, January 19th (2:00-3:00pm) join me for a Bible study of the Kings of Israel. We will study Saul, David, Solomon, Rehoboam and Jeroboam, Ahab, and Josiah. We will focus on what these kings did right in the eyes of God, in the eyes of their kingdom and their legacy for leadership today. Bring your Bibles!



On behalf of all of the staff at FUMC, we want to thank all of you that thought of us during the Christmas season. We appreciate the thoughtful gifts, goodies, and cards, and we look forward to a great 2021!



"Okaw Area Vocational Center staff would like to say "thank you" for the wonderful, delightful, and very tasty tray of goodies. Your thoughtfulness is very much appreciated. A blessed day can be made great with kindness from others. Thank you very much for going out of your way to make Okaw's day special." - Okaw Staff

"Thank you so very much for the beautiful prayer shawl! I know it will bring me comfort during this next year while undergoing treatment!" - God Bless, Amy Holaday

"We would like to thank the Nurture Committee for thinking of us this Christmas season. Your thoughtfulness has provided a bright spot in our lives. Each time we use these items you will fondly be thought of" - Gail & Bob DePaolo

"Dear N.O.W. Committee—I am enjoying the Christmas basket of goodies. Thank you" — Jean Stombaugh

"We would like to thank you for the college care packages. We appreciate all the good snacks, gift cards, and other items. Thanks again" - Richie Well & Kelly Jones

"I want to personally thank you for the cookie platter that you brought to my school for the staff to enjoy and also for all of the coats and shoes that were given to so many of my students. I personally am involved in helping these students get their new coats and shoes and it's a blessing to me and them each year. Thank you for your generosity!" - Stacy Mesnard, VES Principal

"Thank you for the beautiful, heartwarming gift of Love Basket. God's Blessings to our church, Pastor Tom, and many giving people who are working on all these needed outreach programs which are touching hearts." —Donna Crotser



The Prayer Shawl Ministry has blessed so many people this past year with prayer shawls. 77 shawls were presented to those in need of prayer during 2021. Besides prayer shawls, baby blankets, and many items for the Operation Christmas Child boxes were stitched in prayer and given in love to others. Thank you for your support and prayers this past year. As our partners in prayer, you have made such a difference in the lives of those blessed by the Prayer Shawl Ministry. —Prayer Shawl Ministry

Happy 2022! We're back from a restful break and ready to jump into January! During this month we will study letters Q, R, St, T, and U and the numbers 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21! Themes for this month are quilts, rabbits and raccoons, snowmen, teddy bears, and underwater! Wow we will be busy! We will also have show and tell during January to share things that are special to us! School will be closed Monday, January 17th for MLK Day. Stay warm everyone!
Miss Cindy



Nursing Home Residents & Shut-ins:
Brookstone (1607 W. Fillmore)
 Diane Adams (Apt.15); Carlos Biellier (Apt. 2);
 Margaret Carroll (Apt. 10);
 Arlene Hoffman (Apt.4); Larry Peyton
 Iris Rademacher (Apt. 36), Mary Ann Rhoades
 (Apt. 41), Frank Roeder (Apt. 25)

FCH/Long Term Care (650 West Taylor)
 Audrey Fink (Rm. 408)
 Marian Miller (Rm. 404)
 Sandy Peyton

Lakewood Nursing Home
 (800 W Temple Ave., Effingham, IL 62401)
 Mary Crawford

Dolan Memory Care Homes
 (Dublin—11330 Dolan Way, St. Louis, MO
 63146)
 Phyllis Rames

Willowbrook
 (1124 Sunset Dr., Vandalia)
 Deb Endres
 Norman Rhoades
 Ed Taylor

Shut-Ins:
 Mike Beckett, 2625 W. Jefferson St., Vandalia

Prayer Concerns

Eloise Black (upcoming surgeries)
Patti Bohner (Diane Adams' daughter,
 mobility issues)
Roger Clark (surgery)
Mary Crawford (congestive heart failure;
 Lakeland Nursing Home; Effingham)
Gary Doolen (cancer)
Margie Dowell (Amanda Milam's
 grandmother; health concerns)
Mona Durbin (friend of Sue Miller and Jaime
 Warren; breast cancer; chemo completed;
 recuperating from surgery)
Shona Edwards (Bill Warner's niece; cancer)

Mason Feltner (Kelly Clark's nephew;
 chemotherapy for A.L.L. leukemia)
Amy Holaday (friend of Gathe's; breast
 cancer)
Carson LaDage (Sharon and Bill's grandson;
 brain stem tumor remains stable, as he
 remains in a clinical trial at St. Jude)
Marian Miller (comfort care)
Heather Overlin (Larry Osborne's daughter;
 health concerns)
Udo Sines (issues with transplant rejection)



The Church office will be closed Monday, January 17, in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.



New member class

We will receive new members into Vandalia Methodist Church on January 9. Please contact Pastor Tom if you are ready to join or want more information about church membership.



Coats & Shoes Success!

Another successful year for the United Methodist Men Coats and Shoes program. Approximately 300 coats and shoes were delivered on December 13 to the schools in Vandalia, FOCUS and New Approach, Ramsey, Brownstown, St. Elmo, and Mulberry Grove. Due to Covid-19, the United Methodist Men could not *distribute* the coats and shoes to the kids. Each school was responsible for distribution to the kids this year. Thank you to all the members and volunteers that donate throughout the year and help with wrapping and distribution. Without you, this program wouldn't be possible. A special thank you to Jeff Endres for leading this program for many years!! A lot of time and effort is given throughout the year to plan and prepare.

Nurture.Outreach.Witness

The month of December was busy. The Nurture Outreach and Witness team sent 18 care packages off to college students connected to our church, delivered 13 cookie platters to nursing home staffs, area schools and first responders, delivered 23 blessing baskets to those grieving and home bound, and assisted the 6:35 food pantry in serving 100 Fayette County residents!



The month of December was busy for musicians at FUMC! We ended November caroling at Charters Patio with at least 25 singers. It was a warm night, with rousing singing for a good sized audience. Your participation was appreciated; you represented our church well! We started December with great Christmas music from Blanche, Kathy and our song leaders Sue, Jody and Charlene. (I think I could listen to Christmas music all year long!). Bell choir used our hand chimes since the handbells are in South Carolina for their maintenance. By the time you read this, our music Sunday Dec. 19 will be in the books. The bells and choir have worked hard preparing for this special service. Many thanks to all members, Blanche Dugan, Alexa Campbell, Dawn Rosborough, Ann Schwarm, and Gene Schwarm for your hard work. If anyone is interested in joining either bells or choir when we begin in mid-January, please let me know. Even if you want to sing only once in a while, we would love to have you!
 In Christ's service, Louise



Leaving Trees to Embrace The Cross

Deep in a forest lives an unreached people group that worships trees and spirits. They offer sacrifices to the forest goddess in hopes that she will protect them. In the past, they even sacrificed their children and animals to appease these spirits. This people group remains closed to outsiders and kicks out any among them who dare believe in any other religion. Pastors from nearby areas have attempted to share Jesus with the adults of this group in the past, but with no success. When they discovered they could reach out to the children through Operation Christmas Child, they went to great lengths to bring them the Gospel. They traveled three hours by car or motorcycle, crossed a river in a small boat, and then went another mile on foot—all while carrying cartons of shoebox gifts! One of the volunteers named Pastor David shared the Gospel with children at an outreach event. He explained that Christ died on a tree to take away their sins by the power of His blood. When the boys and girls received their shoebox gifts, they were ecstatic because they had never seen toys before! “The toys will get spoiled,” said Pastor David, “but the love of Jesus will always remain fresh and you can experience it forever!” Of the 50 boys and girls who received shoebox gifts, 18 committed to attending The Greatest Journey classes. Some of these children accepted Christ at the outreach event, and still more did so during the 12 follow-up discipleship lessons. “God is really working in reaching the children of this group,” said Pastor David. “He is also working in the hearts of the parents. This opportunity is an answer to many prayers over this unreached people group. Operation Christmas Child is empowering the ministry partners, the local pastors, to move forward in ministry.” Operation Christmas Child will continue to help local churches nearby reach out to this unreached people group until a sustainable Christian presence is established in the forest. Written By: Samaritans Purse

**** Some of our shoeboxes went to hard to reach countries. The shoeboxes have been tools to give local believers access to these people and their families. Please continue to pray for these unreached people groups! Thank you for caring enough to pack a box and to send it to the ends of the earth, so the children can hear the Gospel and be given HOPE!**



Malawi is a country in southeastern Africa with a 350-mile-long lake that contains more species of fish than any other lake in the world. Its people are from many different ethnic groups and are known for their friendliness to strangers, giving the country the nickname, “The Warm Heart of Africa.” Samaritan’s Purse began distributing gift-filled shoeboxes there in 2000 and launched The Greatest Journey, our follow-up discipleship program, in this nation in 2010.

Pray for Your Shoebox Recipient

“Whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.”— Matthew 21:22

Please don’t stop praying for the boy or girl that you first lifted up when you packed your shoebox. Continue to ask God to soften his or her heart to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, so that he or she will follow Him all the days of their life. Pray also for families and entire communities to be transformed as God’s love is shared through your simple gift.

Hard-to-Reach Areas

Your shoebox gift is a critical link to sharing God’s love in a difficult place! It is headed to bring Good News and great joy to a boy or girl in a hard-to-reach area. Such regions are difficult to access due to customs, cultural, or religious reasons, but these gift-filled shoeboxes give local believers a sensitive way to initiate ongoing relationships with those who may not know Christ. The box you provided helps equip Christian brothers and sisters to take great risks to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and **they are deeply grateful for your partnership. Through your generosity, you are calling out “His praise from the ends of the earth” (Isaiah 42:10)!** Since 1993, Samaritan’s Purse has delivered shoebox gifts to more than 70 hard-to-reach countries!

PRAY FOR THE SHOEBOX RECIPIENTS AND COMMUNITIES IN THESE AREAS: Pray that communities in these hard-to-reach areas will be transformed by light of the Gospel they experience through shoebox gifts. Ask God to guide, guard, and protect the local believers who distribute them and make them effective ambassadors for Him. *Information given upon shipment of our boxes.

**** Isn’t it awesome that our church provided 584 boxes of the 3,754 Boxes collected at the Drop Off for these children? To God Be The Glory!**

The Year in Numbers!

It is always good to look back at what God has been doing through our church.

	2021	2020	2019
Attendance	170	140	127
Baptisms	5	4	4
Youth Ministry	120	80	67
Adult Discipleship	65	50	62

Total income:	\$449,616.48
Total expenses:	<u>\$397,921.96</u>
Net income:	<u>\$51,694.52</u>



January 2

Text: Romans 8: 28-39

Sermon theme: Paul speaks about separation from God due to sin and how Jesus became the means by which we are restored to God.

January 9

Text: Romans 12: 1-8

Sermon theme: What is our response to Jesus’ sacrifice? By living sacrificially, ourselves. Let’s get sanctified!

January 16

Text: Romans 12: 9-21

Sermon theme: Sanctification is difficult especially when we are asked to love unconditionally, not seek revenge and pray for those who are our enemies!

January 23

Text: Ephesians 5: 21-33

Sermon theme: Love and marriage! Paul, who was never married himself, writes beautifully about Christian marriage as a sacred calling. How is this different from the culture’s understanding of married life?

January 30

Text: Ephesians 5: 21-33

Sermon theme: What do husbands want from their wives? How can wives love their husbands as a ministry?

February 6

Text: Ephesians 5: 21-33

Sermon theme: What do wives want from their husbands? How can husbands love their wives as a ministry?

