

# The Open Door

Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.  
We believe in God and in each other.  
The People of The United Methodist Church

August 2023 Volume 21 Issue 6



## DECISIONS, DECISIONS

“Two roads diverged in a wood-and I, I took the one less traveled by...” In this poem, Robert Frost is speaking about the choices we make in life and the results that come from those choices. Like all of you, I have made many choices in my life. Some yielded positive results, and others...well those others yielded the lessons I have learned. Do I go to college, or trade school, or join the military? Should I take the risk and date that person? Do I listen to that still small voice inside of me telling me which path I should traverse, or do I let the louder voices of doubt and fear drown out the voice of truth?

Making a decision is rarely an easy thing to do. And that is what makes Frost’s poem so relatable, even over a century after its first publication. It took many decisions for me to be here in Portland with you all. Though there were many that were challenging or arguably the wrong choice, those decisions still led me to you, to this moment, to who I am here with all of you being who you are and where you are in your lives. So even though a choice may seem wrong, it can still lead you to where you are meant to be. It can still shape you into who you are meant to be. It can still guide you to the people who are meant to be in your lives. And for that, I am exceedingly grateful.

I am grateful to all of you for your warm welcome. I am grateful to my fiancé, Jason, for his support and love through this transition and into the days to come. I am grateful for those who have come before me, laying a strong foundation upon which we will continue to build. And I am grateful to God-the author, the redeemer, the sustainer of our lives; the one who has led me here to this moment in time; the one who has brought me to the place where two rivers converge. So let us continue down this path together, friends. Let us travel down this road and see where it takes us. Amen.

Pastor  
Rev. Lenora Whitecotton  
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All Who Serve Christ

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## OUR USHERS:

1st	The Feldpauschs
2nd	Susan & Richard Wilson
3rd	Bruce & Linda Croel
4th	Mary Bresnahan & Michael Mitchell



Portland United Methodist Church  
310 E. Bridge Street, Portland, MI 48875  
www.portlandumc.org

## July Attendance

Week Of:	Online Facebook Live & In Person Views/Shares/Sign-in
July 2	49 In Person, 6 Online 215 Views/3 Shares
July 9	62 In Person, 13 Online 390 Views/7 Shares
July 16	54 In Person, 12 Online 596 Views/8 Shares
July 23	71 In Person, 7 Online 333 Views/5 Shares
July 30	46 In Person, 11 Online 153 Views/3 Shares

### **AUGUST SERMON SCHEDULE:**

**August 6:** Connections: The Scriptures

**August 13:** Connections: Family

**August 20:** Connections: Your Community and the World

**August 27:** Connections: The Spirit at Work



## **WILLING WORKERS**

As PUMC prepared for Pastor Lenora Whitecotton's arrival, the Leadership Board thought it would be a good time to upgrade and repair the parsonage. The maintenance team met with Connie Almy, Jen Thomas and Arlene Randall to decide what the top priorities would be. It was decided that cleaning, painting, new carpet, and landscape care would be the focus for this project. The work went as follows:

- June 6, deck renovations began..
- June 13, the deck repairs were completed.
- June 17, we chose paint and carpet.
- June 19, the interior painting began in the living room, hallway, and primary bedroom.
- June 20, the carpet was ordered, a new bathroom mirror and cabinet w/lights was purchased and a second coat of paint was added to the deck.
- June 21, landscaping was done around the parsonage property. The garage floor received its first coat of paint while the interior painting continued.
- June 23, Pastor Lenora arrived for her initial move in.
- June 27, drapes were rehung and the new bathroom cabinet was installed.
- June 28, New carpet was laid in the living room, hallway and basement stairs.
- June 29, the project was near completion with just a few minor clean ups.

This task was made possible by a small group of willing workers who volunteered their time and skills to help where needed. They donated not only their time, but materials and specialized equipment to help this project flow smoothly and stay within budget.

Work team volunteers:

Paint team volunteers, Jen Thomas, Susan Wilson, Kacy and Dan Goeckel.

Cleaning team volunteers, Connie Almy, Kim Duffield, Connie Mitchell.

Landscape team, Arlene Randall, Allen Randall, Diane Willard.

Construction team, Randy McClung, Keegan Lampman (Randy's grandson), Bruce Croel, Richard Wilson, Harvey Hoskins and Bill Almy.

And thank you to Eric Conner for repairing the mortar joints on both the front and back steps.

I apologize if I have overlooked a volunteer's name. The Maintenance Team.

# The Neighborhood!

Hello All,

Here it is August already. School will be starting soon and so will Sunday School. Hope you all are having a memorable Summer. We are still looking for 2 volunteers, for the 1st Sunday of the month and the 3rd Sunday of the month for both Sunday School and Nursery.

We are in the planning stage for our Fall Kick Off. We will be having a small carnival on the lawn, we will have games, prizes, popcorn, and the foam machine may show up. The theme will be "We win with Jesus." We will be reaching out for volunteers to help set up, run the booths and to help tear down. If this is something you will be able to help with, please contact me at 517-526-7571. The carnival date is September 10, 2023, after the 9 am service. Our first Sunday School Class will be September 17, 2023.

I have been recently promoted to the Children's Director position. Please feel free to contact me at any time to talk about the Sunday School or Nursery. I would love to hear your feedback and any ideas you or the children may have. I am committed to making the Nursery and Sunday School a place where they cannot wait to come back to.

In Christ's Love,

Mary Bresnahan  
Children's Director

## AUGUST PUMC BOOK CLUB

No August meeting for the PUMC book club. The PUMC book club will meet again in September to plan out the year.



Contact Vickee Balsler at [Vgbalsler@aol.com](mailto:Vgbalsler@aol.com) if interested or call/text **239-671-9879**.



### Year-To-Date as of July 31, 2023

#### Income

Offering	\$ 117,294.56
Misc. Income	\$ <u>2,274.61</u>
Total	\$ 119,569.17

#### Expenses

Pastoral Support	\$ 55,155.44
Lay Support	\$ 11,376.75
Ministry Shares	\$ 13,649.26
Administration & Building	\$ 35,579.81
Ministry & Mission	\$ <u>3,003.60</u>
Total Expenses	\$ 119,309.92

#### Difference

\$ 259.25

**To set up electronic giving go to:**

<https://www.portlandumc.org/giving.html>



September 21st 2023 • 4 pm - 6 pm  
(or until gone)

**Portland United Methodist Church**  
310 E. Bridge St. Portland, MI 48875

Free diapers for children  
0 - 36 months

Must provide proof of residency  
of Ionia or Montcalm County.



**United Way of  
Montcalm-Ionia Counties**



# Prayer Requests



If you have a concern to be addressed by our prayer chain, please contact the church.

Bruce Daman	Amy Kahn
Carol Eldridge	Kelly Mosser
Barb Gillis	Susan Smith
Bruce Jackson	Diana Spangler
Sharon (Hill) Longstreth	Ella Tyler
Thea Kaetzel	Gerald Peabody

Please contact the office if you would like a name added next month.

Please pray for our Service Men & Women:



Jared Thomas

Please pray for our Homebound

**Jean Almy**  
6876 Reeder Road  
Lyons, MI 48851

**Bruce Daman**  
4000 North Michigan Road  
Dimondale, MI 48821

**Doris Long**  
200 Blossom Drive  
Portland, MI 48875

**Bud Moyer**  
4775 Village Drive, Apt. 147  
Grand Ledge, MI 48837

## Worship Planning and Tech Meeting

August 13th, Following Worship



Join the tech team and help make worship happen

## LEADERSHIP BOARD

### This month we highlight the Thursday Dinner Ministry...another awesome PUMC ministry!

Before Covid the “First” Thursday Dinner was created to feed families who came to the Food Bank. Families were able to enjoy a meal at the church and shop at the Food Bank on the same evening. After Covid, we brainstormed how this ministry could be revamped to start again. After some prayer and discussion, Linda Sandborn and I felt that God was leading us to deliver meals once a month to people in our church. It had been on our hearts even before Covid. Penny Johnson joined us at that time.

We went through the church directory to start of list of persons who lived alone, were not able to get out or who were ill and needed extra help. Pastor Tish also offered names of those just home from the hospital, those who had welcomed a new baby, or who were suffering in some way. As time went on, others began offering names of family or friends outside of the church family who we added to our list. Many were on the first list and many have come and gone. Our average number of deliveries each month has been 28 meals.

After a few months we decided to offer others in the church a chance to help by either donating time or food to the ministry. We moved the date to the “Second” Thursday Dinner, and it’s been a delight to get to know those who help run the ministry and those who receive the food that is prepared and donated.

This is definitely not a one-person ministry. So many have helped from the beginning and we thank you from the bottom of our heart. If you have a desire to help in any way, please contact me. It is a ministry that has brought bountiful blessings and we hope it will continue as long as there are those who need to be served.

Sherry Miller 517-285-0640



-- Jan Mosser

Have you ever heard the old Girl Scout song that goes: "Make new friends but keep the old; One is silver and the other gold"? This pretty much sums up the United Women in Faith. We have both old and new friends and are always excited to welcome more friends to our group.

We met in July at the home of Jan Mosser; we were hoping for an "out on the back porch" meeting but Mother Nature forced us inside. Didn't matter, twelve of us had a great time enjoying coffee and conversation.

Our August meeting will be used as the final meet and greet session with our new pastor. UWInF will host this meeting, which will be held on Thursday, August 3, at 10 a.m. in the Esther Room. This meet and greet session takes the place of our usual meeting and is open to all. Just show up if you are interested. Hope to see you there.

### RED MILL COMMUNITY DAY

Red Mill Community Day will be held on August 26th with our booth running from 9 am to 3 pm. Last year, we had a wonderful group of volunteers and an amazing turn out at the booth. We are very excited to return with our foam machines and see the joy on the kid's faces. If you are interested in volunteering for this event or donating supplies, such as water bottles of funds for the foam machine, please contact Beth Feldpausch.



## AUGUST CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### August Sunday Services:

Worship 9:00 am  
Live Worship streamed to Facebook 9:00 am

### United Women In Faith

August 3, w/ Meet and Greet for Pastor 10:00 am

### Foam Fun Party

August 3, Church Yard 6:00 pm

### 1st Sunday-of-the-Month Food Drive

August 6, donations may be left at the church

### 2nd Thursday Meals – Monthly

August 10, Contact Sherry Miller  
517-285-0640, sherrymillersings@gmail.com

### PUMC Book Club Meeting

No August meeting

### Worship Planning and Tech Meeting

August 13, Lounge 10:00 am

### Love Your Neighbor Team Meeting

August 20, Esther Room 10:00 am

### Red Mill Community Day

August 26, Red Mill 9:00 am –3:00 pm

### Community Food Bank & Clothes Closet

Mondays 9:00 am - Noon  
Thursdays 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Contact Steve @ 616-902-0645 for Food Bank

Contact Linda @ 517-899-9848 for Clothes Closet

### Backpacks for Bellies

Delivered Thursdays 9:00 am  
Contact Michelle VanSlambrouck @ 517-285-6518

### The Soup Project

Tuesdays, Kitchen 9:30 am