

The Open Door



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

December 2023 Volume 21 Issue 11



What are You Waiting For?

What are you waiting for? I've been asked that question many times in my life. Sometimes the answer came quickly and simply, and other times, not so much. We are beginning the season of waiting, of anticipation, of Advent. Advent is the four weeks leading up to Christmas; the period of time that we set aside to consider what it means to wait, to consider what the people of Israel were waiting for, to consider what we are waiting for here and now. Each week has a focus: hope, peace, joy, and love. I will be asking you what it means to wait with hope, to find peace and joy in the waiting, to know that love is found throughout the period of waiting. Finally, that all of these things are manifested in the coming of that tiny baby, the coming of our Lord and Savior, the coming of Christ.

And so, for now, we wait. We wait just as the people of Israel waited all those years ago to be freed from the bonds of oppression. We wait just as those shepherds did, watching over their flock with care. We wait just as Elizabeth and Zechariah waited through years of infertility to finally have a son, John. We wait just as Anna and Simeon waited at the temple, praying for a savior to come, and finally seeing it come to pass. We wait just as those Wisemen waited for years, anticipating the moment that the stars would align, and finally making their way to worship the toddler that was Jesus. We wait just as Mary waited-waited for the moment the birth pains would begin, waited for the moment the son of God would be born through her, waited for the moment that Jesus would begin his ministry here on earth, waited for the moment that she would see her son die so that we may be reborn. And now, we wait. We wait with hopeful anticipation. We wait with peace in our hearts and in our minds. We wait with exuberant joy. We wait, overflowing with love-the love that was found within that tiny baby all those years ago. Amen.

Rev. Lenora Whitecotton

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Worship	2
Attendance	2
Financials	3
Prayer Requests	4
Calendar and Events	5

OUR USHERS:

1st	The Bengels
2nd	Allen and Arlene Randall
3rd	Bruce & Linda Croel
4th am	The Feldpauschs
4th pm	Susan & Richard Wilson
5th	Bill and Connie Almy



Portland United Methodist Church
310 E. Bridge Street, Portland, MI 48875
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November Attendance

Week Of:	Online Facebook Live & In Person Views/Shares/Sign-in
November 5	89 In Person, 11 Online 148 Views/3 Shares
November 12	70 In Person, 10 Online 127 Views/ 4 Share
November 19	48 In Person, 5 Online 185 Views/5 Shares
November 26	60 In Person, 9 Online 131 Views/2 Shares

DECEMBER SERMON SCHEDULE:

And Now We Wait

December 3: Hope

December 10: Peace

December 17: Joy

December 24: Love



News and Notes from the Leadership Board

How is it that we are in the last month of 2023! Time continues to move at the speed of sound!

A huge shout out to all who have submitted their pledge card for 2024. The Leadership Board is meeting soon to set the budget for the upcoming year. Your pledge allows us to plan for the ministries and outreach of the church. It is not too late to submit your pledge card if you have not already done so, just mail it to the church office!

Thanks to all who stayed to help with the hanging of the greens! Our church is beautiful in general but there is something extra special about decorating for Christmas and celebrating the birth of our Savior!

We have some new members joining the Leadership Board and in other areas of ministry starting Jan 2024. Please pray for these transitions as we welcome new faces.

Serving in His name,
Jen Thomas
Leadership Board Chair
517-803-8080

New Member Class

Pastor Lenora will be leading a new member class beginning in January. This 6-week class will discuss the history, structure, and beliefs of the United Methodist Church. At the end of the course, those who wish to join the church will be accepted during service on February 18, 2024. The class will meet immediately following service from January 7th through February 11th for an hour to an hour and a half. We will be using "A Disciple's Path" as a guide. Please let Pastor Lenora or the office know of your interest in participating by December 20th so that we have time to receive the books. Suggested donation for the class is \$15.

Prayer Requests



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

Bruce Daman	Susan Smith
Carol Eldridge	Diana Spangler
Barb Gillis	Gerald Peabody
Bruce Jackson	George Becker
Sharon (Hill) Longstreth	
Amy Kahn	
Kelly Mosser	

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

CHRISTMAS OFFERING

PUMC always takes up a special offering during the Advent Season. This year, our offering will be split between the Helping Hands Ministry and the Children's Ministry.

Helping Hands provides assistance to Portland residents who may need help with rent, utilities, gas, medical bills and more. Helping Hands works directly with PAMA to provide relief to Portland residents.

Our Children's Ministry has experienced a season of growth. We are thrilled to see so many young faces in our building every week. But our supplies and facility are looking a little run down. We are excited to spruce up our spaces and supplies for our youngest worshippers.

Thank you for your generous giving.



You're invited to a:

CHRISTMAS MOVIE NIGHT

Thursday,
December
14th

FEATURING: FROSTY THE
SNOWMAN AND HOW THE
GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS

LOCATION: PORTLAND UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH

TIME: DOORS OPEN AT 6 PM.
MOVIES BEGIN AT 6:30 PM

POPCORN AND COCOA
AVAILABLE BY DONATION.
PROCEEDS WILL GO TO
PORTLAND BACKPACKS FOR
BELLIES



And Now We Wait

ADVENT 2023

December 3: Advent Kick off

December 10: Brunch Potluck @ 10:00 am

December 14: Christmas Movie Night @ 6:00 pm

December 17: Ugly Sweater Sunday (Kids welcome to wear pajamas)

December 24: Children's Christmas Pageant @ 9:00 am

December 24: Candlelight Traditional Service @ 6:00 pm

December 31: Sounds of the Season Service @ 9:00 am





-- Jan Mosser

We are going to be selling fudge and other Christmas candy on Friday, Dec. 8, at the VFW Burger night from 5-7 p.m. The burgers are wonderful, and you will be helping out two organizations at once!

Fudge will be sold at \$8 for one or 2/\$15. The other candy will be priced separately. Proceeds go to helping local people in various ways, for example we are adopting a family for Christmas. This year we have a single mother with two young children.

On our regular meeting day, Dec. 7, we will be making fudge and packaging up everything in preparation for the sale at the VFW hall. We will meet again on January 4, at 10 a.m. for a regular meeting.

We decided last year that we would not meet in February and March due to possible weather conditions and the fact that many of our members are "snow birds" and will not be here during those months.



DECEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December Sunday Services:

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

1st Sunday-of-the-Month Food Drive

December 3rd, donations may be left at the church

Advent Begins

December 3rd

Staff Christmas Party

December 6th, Parsonage 6:30 pm

United Women In Faith

December 7th, Fudge Making 9:00 am

Christmas Brunch Potluck

December 10th 10:00 am

2nd Thursday Meals – Monthly

December 14th, Contact Sherry Miller
517-285-0640, sherrymillersings@gmail.com

Christmas Movie Night

December 14th, Sanctuary 6:00 pm

Ugly Sweater Sunday

December 17th 9:00 am

Children's Christmas Pageant

December 24th during 9:00 am

Candlelight Traditional Service

December 24th 6:00 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