

The Open Door

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

January 2024 Volume 22 Issue 1



A Disciples Path

What does it mean to be a disciple? Disciple derives from the Latin term *discere* which means, “learn” or “to learn”. As disciples of Christ, we learn the ways in which he would have us live by reading the scriptures, respecting the traditions of the church, using our ability to reason when things are unclear, and applying our experiences to help us better understand. But true learning isn’t merely head knowledge or understanding of a concept. True learning comes from application. Putting the theories into practice. And, as followers of Christ, that means following his commandments. That means truly loving God through praise and worship and how you live your lives. That means loving your neighbors through your actions not just your words. That means loving yourself by caring for yourself and allowing others to care for you.

When someone is received as a member of the United Methodist Church, they vow to uphold the church, “...by [their] prayers, [their] presence, [their] gifts, [their] service, and [their] witness. Each of these vows offer ways in which one may be a true disciple of Christ. Each offers opportunities to share the love of Christ with a broken world. Each must be learned-both through knowledge and application-by all who follow Christ. At the end of this vow, the congregation responds in kind-they renew their vows and vow to support the new member(s). Their vow closes with these words, “with God’s help we will so order our lives after the example of Christ that, surrounded by steadfast love, you (the new member) may be established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal.” Our path of discipleship isn’t one that we tread alone. Christ is with us, the Holy Spirit is within us, and all of the children of God walk alongside us. Let us walk the disciple’s path together. Amen.

Rev. Lenora Whitecotton

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All Who Serve Christ

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OUR USHERS:

1st	The Feldpauschs
2nd	Dan & Kacy Goeckel
3rd	Bruce & Linda Croel
4th	Penny & Jon Johnson



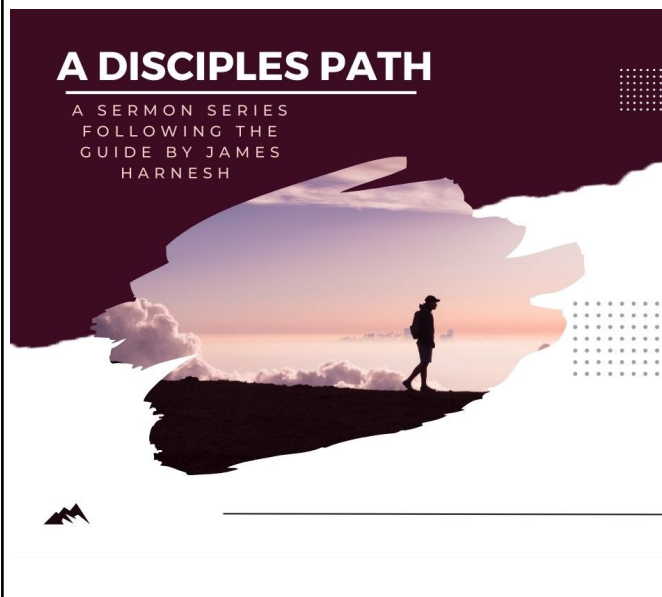
Portland United Methodist Church
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<i>December Attendance</i>	
Week Of:	Online Facebook Live & In Person Views/Shares/Sign-in
December 3	72 In Person, 7 Online 132 Views/3 Shares
December 10	72 In Person, 7 Online 140 Views/ 3 Shares
December 17	76 In Person, 8 Online 180 Views/4 Shares
December 24	86(am) 69 (pm) In Person, 25 Online 501 Views/9 Shares
December 31	87 In Person, 11 Online 141 Views/ 2 Shares

JANUARY SERMON SCHEDULE:

A Disciples Path

- January 7:** Witness
- January 14:** Presence
- January 21:** Service
- January 28:** Prayer
- February 4:** Gifts



News and Notes from the Leadership Board

It’s so hard to believe the new year is here! Just want to take a second to thank those who volunteer their time to help run our ministries, we are so blessed in so many ways. Susan Wilson will roll off the Nominations Committee. Thank you, Susan, for your hard work on the Nomination Committee and your continued work with the children’s ministry. A huge shout out to Betsy Myers for her many years of blood, sweat and tears on our church web page. Communication is paramount to bringing people to Jesus. During her years of service, Betsy took our web site from basic and drab to engaging and interactive!

Thank you to everyone who has turned in their pledge cards for 2024. It is not too late to turn a pledge card in if you haven’t already done so! Every year for the last several years we have been forced to cut the budget and at this point we are really doing bare bones ministry. By the grace of God we are seeing growth, particularly in our Children’s Ministry. We would love to be able to pour more into our ministries and turning your pledge card in, helps us to be able to do just that!

Just a reminder that starting January 7th , our service will shift to 9:30am! We look forward to trying something new for the new year!

We are blessed to be a blessing not only to those within our congregation but to those who use our building for community outreach ministries. That said, I would ask for your patience and thoughtfulness regarding the building usage. Through these ministries we are providing a place where members of our community are being fed both literally and figuratively. This is God at work in a very tangible and awesome fashion!

As always, please continue to pray for our church, for each other, for those who do not know the love and grace of Jesus, and for God’s direction in the new year! Health and peace to you today and throughout the new year!

Jen Thomas
Leadership Board Chair
517-803-8080

The Neighborhood!

Hello Friends,

I cannot believe that it is 2024. I swear the older I get the quicker the days go by. I hope you all had the best Christmas with your family and friends.

I would like to say a huge “Thank you” to everyone that helped make the Children’s Pageant a success. We wouldn’t have been able to pull it off without all of you. It certainly takes a village, that is for sure.

Just a reminder that on December 31, 2023, we will not be offering Sunday School or Nursery. We would like to have everyone enjoy the Sounds of the Seasons. We will start back with our lessons on Jan 7, 2024 at the new service time of 9:30 am!

Again, Thank you to all that help with the Children’s Ministry, My heart is so full. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Mary



Year-To-Date as of December 18, 2023

Income

Offering	\$ 181,710.33
Misc. Income	\$ <u>2,547.78</u>
Total	\$ 184,258.11

Expenses

Pastoral Support	\$ 82,693.54
Lay Support	\$ 22,909.19
Ministry Shares	\$ 19,144.96
Administration & Building	\$ 57,531.86
Ministry & Mission	\$ <u>3,732.03</u>
Total Expenses	\$ 186,011.58

Difference \$ -1,753.47

To set up electronic giving go to:

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

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. Suggested donation for the class is \$15.

Happy New Year

Prayer Requests



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

Bruce Daman
Carol Eldridge
Barb Gillis
Bruce Jackson
Sharon (Hill) Longstreth
Amy Kahn
Kelly Mosser

Susan Smith
Diana Spangler
George Becker

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

Doris Long
200 Blossom Drive
Portland, MI 48875

Bruce Daman
4000 North Michigan Rd
Dimondale, MI 48821

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

PUMC BOOK CLUB

Hello everyone! It's time to start reading again now that the holidays are over. We will meet on January 15th at the Portland District Library from 3 to 4 pm. Come join the fun or just see what we are doing, we meet alternate months throughout the year. Future meetings to be announced. For more information, contact Vickee Balser at Vgbalser@aol.com or call/text **239-671-9879**.



SERVICE TIME CHANGE ANNOUNCEMENT



STARTING JANUARY 7, 2024, OUR WORSHIP WILL BEGIN AT 9:30 AM

Group Source Coming Soon

Our Winter Group Source Catalog will be available soon. We use the Connect, Grow and Serve group format here at PUMC.

Connect groups are all about making connections and having fun and fellowship. These can be one off events or regular meetings.

Grow groups are all about growing together as followers of Jesus Christ. These groups usually meet once a week for a set amount of time and often have a recommended study guide.

Serve groups are designed to serve our community and world. Some of these groups meet regularly throughout the year, like second Thursday dinners, or they can be as simple as getting a group together to clean up after a sporting event.

If you are interested in starting a connect, grow or serve group, please contact Beth Feldpausch and send your information in to the church email as soon as possible.

517-647-4649
portlandmiumc@gmail.com



-- Jan Mosser

Our fudge sale was a huge success! After expenses, our profit was \$733. Many thanks to the Portland VFW for allowing us to sell our fudge and Christmas candy at their Burger Night on Dec. 8th. We also thank those of our church family who supported our sale. We use this money to help those in our community who have various needs and are struggling. Recently we adopted a mother and two young children for Christmas. We were also asked if we could help with clothing and toys for two boys from another family.

The UWF will meet on Thursday, Jan. 4, at 10 a.m. We welcome all interested women to join us. We will not be meeting in Feb. or March, since several of our members leave us for warmer climates.

SILLY LOVE SONGS

As part of her ordination process, Pastor Lenora has to write and lead a Bible study. As such, she is creating a Lenten study called Silly Love Songs which will connect the lyrics of several love songs with the scriptures detailing Jesus's ministry, passion, death, and resurrection.

The five-week study will be held immediately following service beginning on Sunday, February 18th and running through Sunday, March 17th. Please let the office know if you would like to participate.

There are no additional books required for the study; Bibles will be provided if you are in need.

JANUARY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January Sunday Services:

Worship 9:30 am
Live Worship streamed to Facebook 9:30 am

1st Sunday-of-the-Month Food Drive

January 7th, donations may be left at the church

New Member Class

Starts January 7th, Lounge 10:30 am

United Women In Faith

January 4th, Fellowship Hall 10:00 am

2nd Thursday Meals – Monthly

January 11th, Contact Sherry Miller
517-285-0640, sherrymillersings@gmail.com

Leadership board Meeting

January 16, Esther Room 7:00 pm

Staff Meeting

January 25th, Esther Room 6:30 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