

# THE MESSENGER



## ADVENT BEGINS NOVEMBER 28TH

This year we will join with other United Methodists in the “Come Home for Christmas” Worship Series as organized by Discipleship Ministries of The United Methodist Church. We will focus on “Home” in Worship, Small Groups, Youth, and Children and Family Ministries.

### Advent Small Groups

#### *In-Person Option:*

Pastor Amanda will lead a Small Group discussion around our “Come Home for Christmas” Worship Series in-person on Wednesdays at 10 a.m. during Advent (December 1, 8, 15, and 22). An RSVP for this group is appreciated by email to [office@decaturfirstumc.org](mailto:office@decaturfirstumc.org) or by signing up at the Welcome Desk.

#### *Online Option:*

Pastor April will lead a Small Group discussion via Zoom around our “Come Home for Christmas” Worship Series with the same materials as the in-person group. This group will meet on Tuesday evenings at 6 p.m. during Advent (November 30, December 7, 14, and 21). An RSVP with email for the Zoom link to be sent to is appreciated to [office@decaturfirstumc.org](mailto:office@decaturfirstumc.org) or by signing up at the Welcome Desk.

#### *Advent Boxes:*

Jennifer Horton-Motter, Director of Children and Family Ministries, is assembling and delivering boxes to families involved in our ministry filled with resources for engaging this series together, whether worshipping in-person or online. This is a great way for us to equip our families with children to grow together!

## ALL SAINTS' DAY

### November 7, 2021

In this pandemic season, it has been especially hard to properly mourn our losses. For anyone who has had to put off the gathering to remember and celebrate life, we hold space for you and your grief. During this service, you are invited to remember from where you are, to have candles to light, to have a bell to ring or a favorite song to play. After the names of church members have been spoken and candles lit, please feel free to pause at home and remember those who have died since we last celebrated All Saints, or anyone you love and want to remember.

Those members of Decatur First United Methodist Church who have gone before us since the last All Saints Sunday are: Amy Jo Beals, Larry Cunningham, David Diehl, Betty Jo Diller, Louise Kime, Jane Markarian, Bob Miller, Charlotte Phipps, Harry Rand, Jim Stephens, Bob Roberts, and Edward Woare.



#### **#decaturILGivingTuesday**

**GIVING TUESDAY** was created in 2012 as a simple idea: a day that encourages people to do good. Born and incubated in New York City,

it is now an independent nonprofit and a global movement that inspires hundreds of millions of people to give, collaborate, and celebrate generosity.

[#decaturILGivingTuesday](https://www.facebook.com/DecaturILGivingTuesday) was created in 2015 as an easy way for neighbors to help their neighbors.

Donations given at this local event support our non-profits providing services and education in the Decatur area.

On November 30<sup>th</sup>, our local nonprofits will gather in Fellowship Hall to share their missions and volunteer opportunities with our community and accept financial donations.

To make this a successful event, we need your help. Because 100% of the donations go directly to the participating nonprofits, the cost to promote the event is a part of the ministry of 1<sup>st</sup> UMC as the host.

So what can you do to make

[#decaturILGivingTuesday](https://www.facebook.com/DecaturILGivingTuesday) a successful event?

- “Like” our Facebook Page  
(<https://www.facebook.com/DecaturILGivingTuesday>)

- Click that you are “Going To” the event. Facebook algorithms show these types of events to people who may be interested if their friends are going. Note: this is not signing up to volunteer for anything; you are helping us advertise without spending money.
- Comment on the Page’s posts; click the “love” icon instead of the “like” icon. The more engagement the Page has, the more the event will be seen.
- Share the posts so your friends can learn about this local event; invite friends to the event.
- If you live on a well-traveled road, offer to host a yard sign for the last week of November.
- Ask Jennifer for a car window sticker.
- If you have personal connections with someone in the media, connect them with Jennifer.
- Share the event and its importance to our nonprofits with your service groups and social clubs.
- Ask your employer if they have a Giving Tuesday matching donations plan.
- If you are friends with a local small business owner who would like their business to participate in a giving campaign for this local event, connect them with Jennifer.
- Pray



**The Children's Christmas Shoppe**  
**\*for children ages 3 years old through 5<sup>th</sup> grade**  
**Saturday, December 4<sup>th</sup> - 9am - noon**

Calling all “elves” ... Grab your elf hats and jingle bells and sign up now for THE volunteer event of the year! Volunteer registration is now open, and can be easily done online:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0d45abad2ca6fc1-childrens2> We are still in need of several shopping elves to help children select gifts.

The Christmas Shoppe is also collecting donated gifts. Items that children often select include earbuds, sports related gear, craft kits, science kits, action figures, jewelry, labeled home décor (“Dad,” “Grandma,” etc.), Cubs/Cardinals themed items, men’s socks with fun designs, throw blankets, card games and playing cards, stationery sets, flashlights, and small hand tools. Please avoid hygiene items, fragile gifts, clothing that is size-specific, and food. If you happen to drop by at a time Jennifer is not at church, there is a donation basket in the hallway outside her office.

**Hear *the* Bells**

**SAVE THE DATE**  
You are invited to come to  
*First United Methodist Church*  
201 W. North Street  
Decatur, IL

Saturday, December 4, 2021, 7:00 P.M.

Hear “Bells in Motion”  
*The Extraordinary Handbell Group* from Springfield, IL  
This popular and well known group will be performing:  
**“A Ringing Christmas”**

Holiday favorites will be played along with music featured from many composers from Handel to Eartha Kitt. Make this a part of your holiday preparations this year, and join the fun and festive concert.  
A free offering will be taken.

We look forward to seeing you there . . .

## UMW SUPPORTS CENTRAL ILLINOIS CHRISTIANS IN MISSIONS

For our annual Fall Gathering, Keith Taylor shared interesting information about CICIM, a local mission started in 1977, 44 years ago, by a group of members of Mt. Zion UMC who delivered household supplies to the Red Bird Mission in Kentucky.

When the group learned that persons in the Decatur/Mt. Zion area needed these supplies as well, the mission expanded from the parsonage's garage to a 5,000' facility at 1000 E. Locust Street, Decatur. Now representatives from Red Bird come here to pick up needed supplies! (Donations of medical equipment go to Midwest Mission.)

Although service was limited last year due to COVID, CICIM supported 500 clients with about 2,500 items! Referrals come from Macon Co.

Health Department, Northeast Community Fund, Red Cross and many area churches. All this work is carried out by 8-10 volunteers.

When our UMW determined that we could not host the annual Trash and Treasure sale, many were dismayed... what to do with the "treasures" we put aside for the sale??? So thus came the idea! Donate to CICIM.

Members brought household goods, i.e., pots and pans, dishes, serving pieces, towels, etc., enough to cover 6 eight-foot-long tables! The next day Keith came with the large truck, and with the help of several volunteers and our custodian, loaded the donations.... A win-win! We were able to share of our plenty!

To donate call 217-422-4246.



**Bill & Millie Pruett have a new Florida address:  
57 Sabal Palm  
Largo, FL 33770-7435**



### **Blood Drive!**

*Saturday, November 6th*

*7-Noon*

*Contact Carol Drayton  
for more information*



### **CHADDOCK SANTA EXPRESS**



This is the time of year we collect toiletries for Chaddock children's residential school. Items such as shampoo, conditioner, body wash, elastic hair ties, toothbrushes, hairbrushes, combs, Kleenex and hand lotion are all items needed for the students throughout the year.

There will be a collection box in the church office through Sunday December 5th.

Chaddock always appreciates the support and generosity of FUMC. Thanks so much!

--Kathy Leavitt and Tim Lee

## NEXT FILL-THE-CART OPPORTUNITY:



We are collecting tomato food items for the November "Fill the Cart." You have many choices of tomato products, including canned tomatoes, tomato juice, catsup, tomato sauce, tomato paste, and so on. You can put your items in the shopping cart in Wesley Hall. The donated items will be delivered to Northeast Community Fund. Thank you for your contributions and supporting this mission project.

## "Helping Hands at Home"



**A FREE Piano Concert to support the services of The Salvation Army**

**Featuring Julie McClarey-Smith and Friends  
Sunday, November 14th at 2:00 p.m.**

Tabernacle Baptist Church 650 N. Wyckles Road - Decatur

**Also: Silent Auction and Red Kettle Blend Coffee for sale**



## "Boo at MU"



Our church provided candy for "Boo at MU", the annual trunk-or-treat event held by Campus Life at Millikin University. The funds for the candy were provided by your offerings, so "thank you" to everyone who helped Millikin in making the event a success.

--Mission Committee

## Call Carol to Ring...

The RED KETTLE and the sound of the BELL RINGING outside many of our Decatur stores starts our holiday season. The sight and sound remind us that we should give to the Salvation Army. As part of the Mission Committee at Decatur FUMC, I am organizing the volunteers for ringing that bell outside of Sam's Club on Saturday, November 20, 2021 from 10 am-3 pm. Please call Carol Drayton with your choice of an hour to ring the BELL for Decatur First United Methodist Church.



Text or call 217-520-4676 or email me at [cjrdrayton@comcast.net](mailto:cjrdrayton@comcast.net)

Thanks for helping.

## UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

### 152 Years of Women in Mission – November 2021

**UMW Circles** usually collect items and/or gift cards each November for Cunningham Children's Home in Urbana and Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House in East Saint Louis. Please mark the amount on each gift card. Gift cards for Walgreens, Walmart, Target, or McDonald's are very useful. You may give the contributions to your circle or take to the church office.

UMW invites all women to participate in its activities. Women do not have to attend services at this church in order to participate in UMW. Women are encouraged to invite friends to participate in the circles and other activities.

**Miriam Circle**, Monday, November 1, 9:30 a.m., church library. Barb Ohlsen, chair.

**Hope Circle**, Friday, November 5, 9:30 a.m., church library. Hope Circle will collect these items at this meeting: shampoo, conditioner, body wash, elastic hair ties, toothbrushes, hairbrushes, combs, Kleenex, hand lotion, and/or gift cards. Information from Kathy Leavitt.

**Ruth Circle**, Monday, November 15, 1:30 p.m., church library. Patty Barr, chair.

**UMW Leadership Team**, Wednesday, November 10, 1:30 p.m., Susannah Wesley.

**Baby Fold's Festival of Trees**, Interstate Center, Bloomington, Illinois, November 18 – 20, 2021. Patty Barr and Kathy King-Nobles will submit an entry. Car pool may be available.

**Christmas Tea**, Thursday December 9, 1 p.m., Fellowship Hall. Election and installation of officers, music, and fellowship! All women are invited to attend. This is a wonderful time to bring guests.

**UMW Assembly *Turn it Up*: May 20 – 22, 2022**, Orlando Convention Center, Orlando, Florida; early registration by November 1 for lower fees. Virtual registration fee is \$199. Conference has registration scholarships for two persons, who are not conference officers and who have never attended Assembly. Contact Susan Connor, Illinois Great Rivers Conference (IGRC) UMW, to apply. The recipients will have to pay transportation, meal expenses, etc. The website has video; <https://assembly2022.org/>

Susan Hawbecker has attended more than one UMW Assembly and has reported enthusiastically about the experience!

*thank you*

Thank you to everyone who sent cards, gift cards, and dropped off special surprises for me and our whole family for Pastor Appreciation month. We feel appreciated for sure.

😊 Pastor Amanda

*I want to thank all from First Church who prayed for my health, called, or sent cards after my orthopedic surgery August 18<sup>th</sup> at DMH, and I finally got the stitches out! I look forward to walking again without a walker or cane. And of course, to once again be driving!! Home bound was long enough*

– Jeannine Freyling

## INTERNATIONAL FOCUS OF MIDWEST MISSION DISTRIBUTION CENTER (MMDC)

Internationally, MMDC has helped with humanitarian and disaster response for people affected by volcanoes, hurricanes, flooding and social unrest. MMDC strives to ensure that those affected by a disaster receive the supplies they need to recover.

In 2020, MMDC made 25 international shipments, which, along with domestic shipments, totaled \$10 million+ in humanitarian aid encompassing health and education needs, disaster relief, Covid 19 relief, and micro business products. From January to July, 2021, nineteen international shipments have included Honduras, El Salvador, Haiti, Guyana, Jamaica, Belize, Kenya, and Mexico. On April 28<sup>th</sup>, student kits and other relief supplies were sent to the people of St. Vincent, who were affected by a volcano that erupted in April. Student kits are sent to school children to help them emotionally after they are affected by a disaster, giving them a way to express themselves through art and writing. Emotional care after a disaster can be just as crucial as having physical needs met.

In June, student kits and desks were delivered to children in Honduras who had lost everything in

hurricane Eta. MMDC sent a firetruck to Guatemala! This gift greatly improved the capabilities of the volunteer firefighters. In May of 2020, Guatemala had 1,157 active fires.

On August 3rd, Haiti received a huge shipment in partnership with Food for the Poor, (FFTP) a nondenominational nonprofit, and the biggest international partner of MMDC. This relief for Haiti, a full container valued at \$324,849, included layette kits, bicycles, cleaning supplies, hospital beds, hospital supplies, 50,000 face masks, Rice Meals and other food items. When Haiti was struck by a deadly earthquake on August 14<sup>th</sup>, MMDC received an urgent needs request and was able to get supplies to FFTP and to Haiti within 24 hours.

MMDC has sent hundreds of thousands of bottles of hand sanitizer, masks, hygiene and cleaning products to assist vulnerable populations of children, the elderly, and the disabled in developing countries, to help reduce the spread of Covid 19. Midwest Mission Distribution Center reaches vulnerable people in Christ's name in a practical way.



### YOUTH NEWS from Pastor April

#### Life is Messy, But God Has Things Under Control

The youth are studying the book, *Restored: Finding Redemption in our Mess*, by Rev. Tom Berlin.

What comes to your mind when you hear the word “mess”? For students it might be their room, their relationships, their schedule. For you, it might be something else. We live in a broken world that is full of sin and part of being human is we have messes. Some messes are because of our own actions, and some are out of our control.

God is a part of our mess. God may not have created the mess, but God is working with us to restore ourselves. God doesn't promise us a life without mess, but God does bring hope in the middle of our despair and order where there is chaos. God blesses our messes, and in Christ, offers us grace.

So, what mess must you deal with in your life? How can God help you restore your order? Remember the good news is that God is with you in the mess.