



MISSION
"MAKING DISCIPLES OF
JESUS CHRIST
FOR THE
TRANSFORMATION OF
THE WORLD"

VISION
"A BRIGHT BEACON OF
GOD'S LOVE TO IRVING
AND BEYOND"

First United Methodist Church
211 West Third Street
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Connexion 17 Issue 1



CONNEXION

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"Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in Your Word." — Psalm 119:18

Happy New Year! I pray that this year brings an end to the pandemic and an awakening to the Spirit of God throughout the land. The early Methodist circuit riding preachers were given the purpose "to reform the nation, by spreading scriptural holiness over the land." I pray that First United Methodist Church of Irving is an effective part of this process as we seek to spread scriptural holiness through being "a bright beacon of God's love to Irving and beyond."

To this end, we will continue to provide Bible Challenge readings so that we grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. Bible Challenge 2022 will be a little different. We will be reading smaller passages. There will typically be one passage each from the Old Testament, a Psalm, a New Testament letter, and a Gospel. We will be reading less each week than in previous years. You may find that you can read through the passages a few times during the week. This will allow us to focus more on our relationship with God as we listen for what God says to us through the reading of His Word. Certainly, it is important for us to gain knowledge *about* God as we read the Bible. In addition, however, Scripture is meant to deepen our relationship *with* God. In the end, we are not going to be tested on how much we know about the Bible. We will be asked by God, "How well do you know me?"

As you read the Bible challenge readings this year, I encourage you to listen to what God would say to you through His Holy Word. You may begin your time of Bible reading by praying, "Lord, open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in Your Word." As you read, listen for what God would say to you in the Scripture. Ask, "God, what do you want to say to me today?" What stirs in your heart as you read? How will you respond to God's word for you? To personalize this, as I read through the Bible Challenge readings this year, I want to listen in my heart for what God is saying to me through God's Holy Word and then I want to put this into action.

We must read Scriptures in the context of the entire Bible. We do not want to take a small passage out of context, so we keep the overall message of the Bible in mind. To help, here is a brief summary of the Bible: *God created the world and everything in it, including us. God is love and God is holy, therefore God wants us to be in a loving and holy relationship with Him. Jesus, God's Son, came into the world so that our sins could be forgiven and that we might have a loving and holy relationship with God. The Holy Spirit is given to us to help us to live loving and holy lives. We are to act in loving and holy ways towards others. We are to help others have a loving and holy relationship with God.*

God wants a deep relationship with you. May you use the Bible Challenge readings to grow closer to God and respond to God's word to you. I look forward to hearing about what God does in you and through you this year.

Blessings!

ONLINE GIVING



<http://www.fumcirving.org>

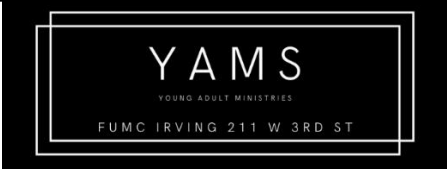
2022 Bible Reading Challenge!

Before reading, pray and ask,
“God, what do you want to say to me today?”

Week	Reading
Jan. 3-9	Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29 Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22
Jan. 10-16	Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10 1 Cor. 12:1-11; John 2:1-11
Jan 17-23	Nehemiah 8:1-10; Psalm 19 1 Cor. 12:12-31; Luke 4:14-21
Jan. 24-30	Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalm 71:1-6 1 Cor 13:1-13; Luke 4:21-30
Jan. 31 – Feb. 6	Isaiah 6:1-13; Psalm 138 1 Cor. 15:1-11; Luke 5:1-11

Masks Strongly Encouraged

As we continue to respond to the COVID pandemic, Bishop Mike McKee has "strongly encouraged mask wearing in our churches." Wearing masks at all inside gatherings is strongly encouraged. In our Sanctuary, our West section is designated for socially distanced seating. Wearing a mask is a tangible way to demonstrate “Love thy neighbor.”



This past month was filled with fun and Joy around the church and within our group of Young adults. We ended the year by starting a Sunday School class for YAMS and by having a Christmas cookie decorating party!

Our Christmas cookie decorating went great! Rest assured that we have a creative bunch of young adults in the church if you ever need them! We had everything from DC themed decorations to a decorated tree with decorated cookie presents to go underneath the tree. We had a blast and are certain that this event will become an annual event!

Our new Sunday school class is room 308 (the first room on the right if you turn left coming off the elevator)! YAMS Sunday School will be meeting in that room *in person* every Sunday! So, if you know a young adult who is looking for a Sunday School class, then send them our way.

We also continued to meet on Sunday evenings at 7pm on ZOOM for our in-depth study of the Bible. We will continue to do this through the spring semester. If you, or someone you know needs the link to join our ZOOM meetings, then please email Colin so he can get it to you.

YAMS would like to thank the church for all of the support and prayers that we have received during our start in 2021! We ask that you continue to pray and support our young adults as they go back to school and work after their holiday break.

Thank you,
Colin Craft
Director of Young Adult Ministries & Spiritual Director of Youth



THIS IS A YEAR OF NEW BEGINNINGS:

After the shepherds had seen baby Jesus in the manger, the RAN in HASTE, telling people to COME and SEE! The Children’s Department – 3rd floor – education wing has the same exciting news for you! COME AND SEE!

The last few months have been spent re-doing the classrooms and adding new programming with Free Friday Fun Nights once a month! The children have been inviting friends to these Fun Nights, resulting in high attendance numbers and excited children. The teachers are excited to be part of this time in the life of God’s gift to all of us- our children of all ages! Adult visitors/ helpers have comet to see what is happening! And they’ve been amazed! We would like to invite our church family to an open house celebration of the new year in our beautiful surroundings, as well as the anticipation of having new children join us to learn about the JOYs of Jesus! Please join us, after the worship service, on Sunday, January 16th, 2022. Details to follow.

Refuge Youth

For our Christmas party, the youth group enjoyed a progressive dinner. If you don’t know what that is, we had 3 courses of a meal at 3 different houses. We had appetizers at the Monty’s house, fajitas at the Alleman’s house, and dessert and our annual gift exchange at Pastor Doug and Jana’s house. It was so fun to be together and to interact with everyone! Thank you so much to our hosts for having us! As of right now, we have 15 youth signed up for camp at Bridgeport this summer. We are so excited to get back there. Please pray for our youth as they begin the second semester of school.

Jessica Jones
Director of Youth Activities





Parent's Day Out



Happiest of New Year wishes for each of you from PDO.

January at PDO means it is time to stay indoors more. However, that does not mean that we don't have new and exciting activities to do. We learn all about hibernation, and why the trees, etc. also "sleep" during this time so that they can come back with beautiful new leaves for us to enjoy when it begins to get warmer in the Spring. We learn about God's plan the season change. It is also a time when we settle in and work hard with our studies.

We have a few new friends at PDO. Prayers to grow our attendance do work!! Please keep them coming as we all start a brand new year with lots of promise for wonderful things for all of us.

Thanks to those who have donated Lysol and paper towels to our program. We appreciate you.

Ms. Sandi & PDO Staff

THANK YOU

Bill Connell would like to thank everyone for all the prayers and calls while he was going through his procedure. He is home and doing physical therapy and will start cardiac rehab soon.

Your prayers were felt and are very appreciated.

Finance Report from 2021

You have done it again in 2021, your Faithful Giving has carried us through another year covering all of our expenses.

It says in 2ND CORINTHIANS 9:7 "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." And you have proven to be Cheerful Givers. There are many needs here at the church and through out God's Kingdom and it fills my heart when I see how you as a group respond to his call.

As we jump into 2022, I pray that God will bless you as you have blessed his church.

In his name

Jimmy Bellew

MEMORIALS AND HONORARIUMS

DECEMBER 2021

In Honor of:

Shepherd's Care Tea

Christine & Jimmy Burkett to General Budget from Glenda May

Cindy & Rod Alleman to General Budget from Glenda May

Bill & Marni Monty to General Budget from Glenda May

Glenda May to Music Ministry from Sandy Minturn

Mike & Kathy Minturn to Sack Lunch Ministry from Sandy Minturn

In Memory of John Tilley:

to Music Ministry from Mary Good

to Wednesday Work Crew from Ron & Maryla Zimmerman

to General Budget from Lena Chapman

to General Budget from the Lyons family

to General Budget from Kumiko McCoy

to General Budget from Michael Curtis family

to General Budget from Richard & Linda Harrison

to General Budget from Carelyn & Curtis Mitchell

to General Budget from Mary & Bill Holcomb

to General Budget from Carole & Jerry Wicker

to General Budget from Jerry Wicks

to General Budget from Sandra Sorrells

to General Budget from Bill & Mary Felini

to \General Budget from Jimmy & Christine Burkett

to General Budget from Connie Baker

to General Budget from Mickey & Linda Wheeler

to General Budget from Glenda May

to General Budget from Mike & Kathy Minturn

In Memory of:

Mary Ledbetter to General Budget from Glenda May

Mary Ledbetter to General Budget from Mike & Kathy Minturn

Annie Jo Sanders to General Budget from Mike & Kathy Minturn

Annie Jo Sanders to General Budget from Glenda May

Barbara Hargrove to General Budget from Mike & Kathy Minturn

Barbara Hargrove to General Budget from Glenda May

Herb Cooper to General Budget from Mike & Kathy Minturn

Herb Cooper to General Budget from Glenda May

Dr. Clay Gilbert to Music Ministry from Dick & Jeanell Bischofhausen

Ed & Marian Blythe to General Budget from Annie McGee

Lecil Moore to General Budget from Mary Tee Moore & family

Tom & Anne Uhr to General Budget from Judy & Danny Elms

Michael Nix to General Budget from Mickey & Linda Wheeler

Michael Nix to General Budget from Jackie Whitley

Nancy Spicer Scott to Myrtle Beard Scholarship Fund from Dick & Jeanell Bischofhausen

Lorita Bryant to Myrtle Beard Scholarship Fund from Dick & Jeanell Bischofhausen