



# NEWS from the Corner



First United Methodist Church—600 Wood Street, Clarion, PA 16214

Online at: [fumc-clarion.org](http://fumc-clarion.org)

February 2025 Edition

## Worship Services

Sunday mornings  
8:30 and 11:00am

## Sunday School

9:45am  
Classes for all ages

## Live Stream

Both services streamed  
live on YouTube



## Pastor Jodie's Jottings . . .

*If I give everything I own to the poor and even go to the stake to be burned as a martyr, but I don't love, I've gotten nowhere. So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I'm bankrupt without love. Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, Doesn't have a swelled head, Doesn't force itself on others, Isn't always "me first," Doesn't fly off the handle, Doesn't keep score of the sins of others, Doesn't revel when others grovel, Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth, Puts up with anything, Trusts God always, Always looks for the best, Never looks back, But keeps going to the end.  
I Corinthians 13:3-7 (The Message)*

Love is the heartbeat that pumps life throughout the church. A church that isn't loving isn't alive. I am blessed to say that we, the People of God at First UMC, are alive! Thank you for your faithfulness, for the ways you live in love, for the ways you support the ministries of your church. Thank you for your investment in your church and in following Jesus' command to love one another. Part of that investment involves showing up to worship to praise God and receive what we all need to be effective and maturing disciples. Part of that investment involves us giving what God has first given us—sharing our gifts and abilities in the life of the congregation and supporting the ministries of the church. Part of that investment involves us making it a priority to grow in faith and deepen our spirituality through Sunday School, Bible Study and small groups. Finally, a part of that investment is to learn more about who we are as God's beloved people and how God wants us to share that love with others; Jesus!

Show up to Receive,  
Give what God has Given You,  
and Grow in Faith!

Live in Love,

Pastor Jodie Smith

## News from the Corner - February 2025

### CONSIDER GIVING TO THE MEMORIAL FUND

When a loved one dies, keeping his or her memory alive is a way of honoring his or her life and finding comfort in your own life as a survivor. Consider contributing a gift to your church's Memorial Fund as a tribute to someone you loved or have known.

## Memorials November 18, 2024 - January 16, 2025

### In memory of Steve Santus

Given by Jim Bolinger (Memorial Fund)

### In memory of Richard McMaster

Given by Jim Bolinger (Memorial Fund)

### In memory of Sheila Uber

Given by David and Robin Wagner (Memorial Fund)

Given by Logan and Dylan Kuriger (Memorial Fund)

### In memory of Edward Elliott

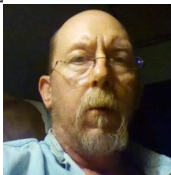
Given by Dorothy Elliott (Memorial Fund)



Our deepest sympathies go out to Dorothy Elliott and the family and friends of **Richard Elliott**. Richard joined our church on May 14, 1967 and passed from this life on November 27, 2024.



Our deepest sympathies go out to Karen McElree and the family and friends of **Thomas McElree**. Thomas joined our church on March 29, 1959 and passed from this life on December 13, 2024.



Our deepest sympathies go out to Lou Ann Steiner and the family and friends of **Rex Myers**. Rex passed from this life on January 3, 2025.



Our deepest sympathies go out to the family and friends of **Stephen Wagner**. Stephen passed from this life on January 5, 2025.

Please call the church office for an address if you wish to send your prayers and cards.

## **News from the Corner - February 2025**



Our deepest sympathies go out to Elaine Moore and the family and friends of **Lorna O'Connor**. Lorna passed from this life on January 16, 2025.



Our deepest sympathies go out to Kathy Steele and the family and friends of **Eileen Heasley**. Eileen joined our church on April 1, 1951 and passed from this life on January 27, 2025.

Please call the church office for an address if you wish to send your prayers and cards.

Thank you! I appreciate the cards, gifts and good wishes that were given to me for Christmas. It is always a blessing to be remembered at this special time of year.  
Pastor Jodie

### **Love One Another as I Have Loved You . . .**

In John 15:12, Jesus says, "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." Loving and caring for one another is not just the pastor's job—it's something Jesus calls us all to do! Stephen Ministry is a ministry in which people with special gifts for caring ministry can put those gifts to use in an organized way, bringing Jesus' love and care to those who most need it.

If you know someone who is going through a difficult time, contact one of our Stephen Leaders: Cindy Beck, Sandra Foster, Kimberly Girts, Suzan Hanhfeldt, or Barb Krupnik. Our Stephen Ministers are ready to provide focused, confidential, one-to-one Christian care—to help that person experience the healing power of Christ's love.

### **C-L Friendship Backpack Program 309 Liberty Street Clarion, PA 16214**

Dear Pastor Jodie and friends from Clarion First Methodist Church:

Thank you for your kindness and generosity. Your Giving Tree donation to the C-L Backpack program is a true blessing. The students we provide weekend meals to will thoroughly enjoy all the food items you provided. Your donation is enabling us to continue to provide weekend meals to 95-110 students each weekend.

Without the generosity of your church and others in the community, we would not be able to reach so many students. Your contribution has enabled us to continue to provide 6 food items weekly to each student with food insecurity. These items include cereal, meal items (such as soup or a microwaveable cup), fruit, applesauce, pudding, a protein/granola bar, and a treat such as cookies or chips.

The students and I appreciate your kindness and generosity. We pray that the kindness of this community continues to enable us to provide weekend food to those students with food insecurities.

If your church would like more information on this program, we would be happy to share information with you. May God continue to bless you and your church family. Please accept the appreciation from all members of the backpack program.

Sincerely,  
Judie Vogus

## **News from the Corner - February 2025**

Dear Clarion First United Methodist Church,

Thank you so much! Clarion Area Agency on Aging gratefully acknowledges and accepts your donation in support of our agency's mission to serve Clarion County's older adults. Your thoughtful gift will greatly benefit your designated program or will address the needs of our most vulnerable consumers. Donations such as yours enable Clarion County residents aged 60+ to utilize an array of integrated services, allowing them to remain supported in their residence. Our services are designed to enhance an individual's quality of life, while respecting individual choices.

Your donation will help Clarion Area Agency on Aging continue to make a significant difference in the lives of older adults right here in Clarion County, both now and in the future.

Please know we are honored you chose Clarion Area Agency on Aging to be the recipient of your generosity. Your thoughtfulness is sincerely appreciated.

With gratitude,  
Candace Parson  
Executive Director

THANK YOU for supporting Pennies from Heaven. Your generosity allows us to continue helping the children of working parents in Clarion County.

139 bags filled with school supplies were distributed to Clarion County children. 130 kids received gifts in 2023.

Dear Pastor Jodie,

I just wanted to take the opportunity during the holiday season to express my appreciation for the wonderful job you do. I am so thankful to be able to view your service on YouTube. Your prayers and sermons are so heartfelt and meaningful and mean so much to me. You are the best!

Sincerely,  
Lois Hilliard

***“ . . . when you have done it for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you have done it for me.” - Jesus (Matthew 25:40 CEB)***

Dear Friends in Mission,

**Thank you!**

The dear people you just helped with your gift to UMCOR may never have the opportunity to meet you, but if they did, I am certain their response would be - *Thank you!*

And through your financial support you are serving within a vital network of interactive relationships in the U.S. and in more than 60 countries in which UMCOR and partnering agencies engage in direct ministry to persons in need.

May we continue to reveal the love of God for men, women, and children of all ethnic, racial, cultural, and national backgrounds and to demonstrate the healing power of the gospel with those who suffer.

Grace and Peace,  
Roland Fernandes  
General Secretary





# DAFFODIL DAYS IS COMING!

Celebrating Daffodil Days is about much more than enjoying beautiful flowers; it's about sharing **HOPE** for a world free from cancer. This colorful first flower of spring represents a campaign that brings hope to cancer patients, their caregivers, and families, while providing much-needed funding that supports the groundbreaking research, programs, and services of the American Cancer Society.



### DAFFODILS

\$15-bunch of 10 stems  
\$20-pot of mini daffodils  
(vase not included)



### TULIPS

\$15- bunch of 10 assorted  
colored stems  
(vase not included)



### GIFT OF HOPE

\$25- Support our Gift of  
Hope program that provides  
flowers to local  
hospitals/cancer  
centers/hospice

Orders can be placed online by February 14 at  
<https://tinyurl.com/dd25clarioncounty> **OR Place your order in the Church office**  
Flowers delivered week of March 17th



For more information  
please contact Nikki Carey at 614.929.0358 or at [nikki.carey@cancer.org](mailto:nikki.carey@cancer.org)



## News from the Corner - February 2025

### **Women's Breakfast**

The United Women in Faith will be having their next meeting at **Perkins** on **Monday, February 24 at 8:30am**. **Come enjoy the fellowship and bring a friend. EVERYONE is welcome!**

### **All Church Chili Cookoff**

**February 22 at 5:30pm in the dining room**

Everyone is invited to prepare their favorite chili recipe, which will be sampled by the rest of the attendants, who will collectively vote for the church's favorite.

Root beer floats, crackers, and cornbread will be provided to round out the meal.

**Please call the church office to register no later than February 18.**

### **Olmsted Manor Spring Retreat**

**Save the Dates**

**May 13-15 (Tuesday-Thursday)**

Join Pastor Jodie for a three-day retreat that offers spiritual growth, fellowship and rejuvenation amid Olmsted's scenic surroundings. Walk the beautifully landscaped grounds and enjoy the restful comfort of the Retreat Center.

**The registration deadline is April 1.**

The total cost for two nights with brunch and dinner:

Single room + tax and meals \$150 per person

Double room + tax and meals \$130 per person

Scholarships are available to help cover the cost—please see Pastor Jodie for more information.

### **Love Cupboard Food Pantry**

The donation item for the month of **February** is **CANNED FRUIT**.

Please place your donations in the wooden box located in the Gathering Area.

**Please Note: Perishable items are now available.** Distribution occurs on the **3rd Wednesday of each month from 4:00pm-5:00pm**.



### **Love Cupboard 2024 Summary**

As we move into a new year, I find it important to review and evaluate what took place in 2024. It is important to first recognize each and every volunteer and activity performed. It takes people in place in many layers to create the success of our Love Cupboard and Senior Food Box programs. These layers include ordering, shopping, truck unloading, stocking display carts, administrative duties, delivery persons, servers, hostess duties, check-in station, etc. Each day that we have a distribution of goods to our neighbors in need, we have from 15 to 18 volunteers performing duties with kindness, courtesy, and caring hearts.

On a typical Love Cupboard distribution day, we handle 1½ to 2 tons of goods leaving the church. Our records show that we had almost 500 shifts of work performed. These shifts totaled up to approximately 1,300 hours of work duties. I use the word "work," but it truly is an act of love and compassion that each hour is served.

During the Covid months several years ago, we were serving 30 to 40 households. We finished the last quarter of 2024 averaging 85 to 95 households. The total household members who are being affected each month amount to 200 to 225. The consistency of what we do and how we do our monthly preparation and serving have been the fundamental reasons for the significant growth we are experiencing. When each guest comes in to our Love Cupboard distribution, they know they are going to get milk, bread, eggs, frozen protein items, and selections of nine more categories. We continue to use a shopping guideline of goods to be received that vary according to household size. This process is referred to as "Shopping by Choice" and continues to be well received. We have approximately 30 different volunteers at this point and are always open to more persons stepping forward. Activities occur at different time through the month and the distribution of our Love Cupboard program happens each third Wednesday of the month from 2:30 to 5:00pm.

## News from the Corner - February 2025

### January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024 Finance at a Glance

General Budget	Receipts	Expenditures
<i>Forecast</i>	<b>\$414,650.00</b>	<b>\$365,619.00</b>
<i>Actual</i>	<b>\$390,547.00</b>	<b>\$342,676.00</b>

The congregation continues to support our church and its missions in a healthy way.  
Thank you and blessings to everyone.



### The GBHEM Scholarship Portal Is Now Open

The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) scholarship application portal is open for United Methodist students seeking scholarships for undergraduate and graduate study at colleges, universities and seminaries in the United States. Potential scholarships awarded range from \$500 to \$1,200, on average.

In 2024, GBHEM awarded more than 2,100 scholarships, valued at nearly \$3.7 million, to undergraduate and graduate students at 509 U.S. schools. This financial aid helped students of all backgrounds pursue their dreams and education to serve as the next generation of leaders.

The Scholarships Office administers more than 70 scholarship programs with one general application. Students may submit one application per year, which will be screened for the appropriate scholarship program.

Scholarship programs are divided into three categories:

- General Scholarships
- HBCU Scholarships
- Ministry as a Career Scholarships

Please visit [gbhem.org/scholarships](https://gbhem.org/scholarships) to apply. The deadline to complete the application is **Monday, March 31, 2025**. Email [umscholar@gbhem.org](mailto:umscholar@gbhem.org) for more information.

### Youth Group Schedule

Date	Event	Place	Starting Time	Ending Time	Snack	Money	What to Bring/ Comments
2 Feb	Valentine's Day Dinner & Regular Meeting	Youth Room at Church	5:30pm	8:00pm			Parents to make dinner
9 Feb	No Youth Group - Super Bowl Sunday						
12 Feb	Breakfast	County Seat	6:45am	7:45am		None	Breakfast on me!
16 Feb	Regular Meeting	Youth Room at Church	6:30pm	8:00pm	Lauren Brinkley		
22 Feb	Snow Tubing & Dinner	Avalanche Express in Meadville, PA	9:15am	5:30pm		\$30	Bring dry clothes; dinner on me!
23 Feb	Regular Meeting	Youth Room at Church	6:30pm	8:00pm	Sheetz		



## **News from the Corner - February 2025**

### **Saturday February 1, 2025**

2:00pm Tom Siegel Gathering Time  
(Gathering Area)

### **Sunday February 2, 2025**

9:45am Grades 6-12 - Cook & Eat Breakfast Pizza  
(Kitchen)  
11:00am Children's Chimes Practice  
11:00am Contemporary Worship Service  
(Sanctuary, YouTube)

### **Monday February 3, 2025**

5:30pm Kiwanis (Room 102)  
6:30pm Membership Care Meeting (Room 102)

### **Tuesday February 4, 2025**

4:00pm Girl Scouts (Dining Room & Kitchen)  
6:30pm Christian Education Meeting (Room 102)

### **Saturday February 8, 2025**

8:00am Men's Breakfast (Perkins Restaurant)  
9:30am Darlene Matson's Painting Class  
(Dining Room)

### **Sunday February 9, 2025**

11:00am Library Time (K - 5th grade)

### **Monday February 10, 2025**

8:30am Second Harvest Delivery  
9:30am Senior Food Box Pickup  
6:30pm Worship Committee Meeting (Room 102)

### **Tuesday February 11, 2025**

1:30pm Memorial Committee Meeting (Room 102)  
6:30pm Trustees Meeting (Room 102)

### **Wednesday February 12, 2025**

6:45am Youth Group Breakfast (County Seat)  
5:00pm Stephen Ministers Meeting  
(Stephen Ministry Room)

### **Thursday February 13, 2025**

12:00pm United Women in Faith - Naomi Circle  
(Room 102)  
2:00pm Clarion Civic Group (Room 102)

### **Friday February 14, 2025**

5:30pm Hoagie and Movie Night (Gathering Area)

### **Sunday February 16, 2025**

11:00am Kids2Kids (K - 5th grade)

### **Monday February 17, 2025**

5:30pm Kiwanis (Room 102)  
6:30pm United Women in Faith - Ruth Circle  
(Conference Room - 2nd Floor)

### **Tuesday February 18, 2025**

#### **Chili Cookoff Signup Deadline**

4:00pm Girl Scouts (Dining Room/Kitchen)  
6:30pm Finance Committee Meeting (Room 102)  
6:30pm Mission Committee Meeting  
(Conference Room - 2nd Floor)

### **Wednesday February 19, 2025**

3:00pm Love Cupboard Food Pantry

### **Saturday February 22, 2025**

4:30pm Chili Cookoff Setup (Dining Room)  
5:30pm Chili Cookoff (Dining Room)

### **Sunday February 23, 2025**

11:00am Arts and Crafts (K - 5th grade)

### **Monday February 24, 2025**

8:30am Women's Fellowship Breakfast  
(Perkins Restaurant)

### **Wednesday February 26, 2025**

5:00pm Stephen Ministers Meeting  
(Stephen Ministry Room)

## **Regular and Weekly Meetings**

### **Sunday**

8:30am Traditional Worship Service  
(Sanctuary, YouTube)  
9:45am Sunday School for All Ages  
11:00am Contemporary Service  
(Sanctuary, YouTube)

### **Monday**

10:00am Bible Study: "Simon Peter" (Room 102)  
5:30pm Adult Bell Choir Practice (Balcony)  
6:30pm Boy Scouts Troop 51 (Various Rooms)

### **Wednesday**

8:00am Journey for Men (Room 102)  
1:15pm Recovery 'n Motion (Room 205)  
6:30pm Bible Study: "Simon Peter" (Room 102)

### **Thursday**

6:00pm The Messengers Rehearsal (Sanctuary)  
6:30pm Cub Scouts Pack 51 (Various Rooms)  
6:15pm NA Setup (Room 102)  
6:30pm NA Group (Room 102)  
6:45pm Chancel Choir Practice (Choir Room)

### **Friday**

9:00am Sit 'n Stitch (Room 102)

*All dates are subject to change. Please check the website for current schedule.*





**February 1**

Lynne Flower  
Bret Sloan

**February 2**

Madison Schill

**February 3**

Paulette Stromyer  
Joe Wolf

**February 4**

Wayne Johnson

**February 5**

Cindy Beck  
Fred Keen  
Nicholas Wetzel

**February 6**

Robert Luderer

**February 7**

Myrna Eshbaugh  
Linda Hauser  
Quinn Hoover  
Ava Kiser  
Brendan Langjahr

**February 9**

Tobin Bell  
Lyra Casserly  
Valerie Stanford  
Jenn Stevenson

**February 10**

Tricia McIlwain  
Soon Duk Park

**February 12**

Stuart Estes  
Randall Reddinger Sr.  
Carol Stanford  
Patty Winger

**February 13**

Makayla Robertson

**February 15**

Brandy Evans  
Susan Zamzow

**February 16**

Kai Kaltenbach  
Noah Thompson

**February 17**

Vallen Cherico  
William Craddock  
Corina Curry  
Suzan Hahnfeldt  
Evelyn Lerch  
Jake Lutz  
Wendy Rex

**February 18**

Randy Cathcart

**February 20**

Kelly Evans  
Nathan Keen

**February 21**

Wanda Grinder

**February 22**

Valerie Brosius  
Timothy Texter

**February 23**

Judi Rae Kesler  
Sandra McCleary  
Kara Shpakoff

**February 25**

Amy Brubaker  
Amelia Jewell

**February 26**

Kim Fagley  
Pamela Johnson  
Candace Shirey  
Valerie Stitt

**February 27**

Eliana Brooks  
Larissa Deitz  
Richard Greenawalt  
Marjorie McAdoo  
Adam Meterko  
Gwen Rhoades

**2025 Plans for the Caring Tree in Wesley Chapel**

Last year our church launched the Caring Tree Program to help people in our community meet a variety of needs. During the past holiday season, we donated gifts of toys and warm clothes to children through Pennies from Heaven to make their Christmas brighter. We collected over 550 food items to help 100 students in the C-L Backpack Program who have too little to eat at home over the weekends. Every month this year we are collecting for a different organization to help their clients. The first half of 2025 is as follows:

**January:** The Shelter Task Force is an organization that assists the homeless and those at risk of becoming homeless in Clarion.

**February:** The Ruth M. Smith Center is a personal care home for adults with special needs in Sheffield, PA.

**March:** The Mission Barn, an UMCOR relief organization in New Castle, needs items for hygiene kits distributed to people in disaster areas.

**April:** SAFE (Stop Abuse For Everyone) provides emergency help and services to victims of domestic abuse in Clarion.

**May:** Next Step Pregnancy Solutions & Services provides crisis counseling, education, and assistance to women facing unexpected pregnancies.

**June:** The Clarion Kindness Project manages a Diaper Bank for moms in the Clarion area who stop by their office for diapers and infant hygiene products.

At the upcoming February 18 Missions Committee meeting, the team will select six organizations for the second half of the year (July-December). An announcement of the new list will be posted in an upcoming newsletter.



## FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

600 Wood Street · Clarion, PA 16214 · 814-226-6660

[www.fumc-clarion.org](http://www.fumc-clarion.org)

Email: [churchoffice@fumc-clarion.org](mailto:churchoffice@fumc-clarion.org)

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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Clarion, PA 16214

Newsletters and Pastor Jodie's sermons are now available online for you to view, listen to, and/or download. If you prefer to receive your newsletter by email instead of print, or if you have any questions, suggestions or information for our website, please email Darren Mackenzie at [churchoffice@fumc-clarion.org](mailto:churchoffice@fumc-clarion.org).

### PLEASE NOTE "MAILER" SCHEDULE

**Upcoming Mailers:** Items for the **March newsletter** need to be submitted by **Saturday, February 15**.  
Thank you!

**To submit information:** If you would like to submit information for the mailer, please contact the church office at 814-226-6660 or by email to [churchoffice@fumc-clarion.org](mailto:churchoffice@fumc-clarion.org).

**Save the Date**  
**Movie and Hoagie Night**  
February 14 in the Gathering Area  
Please register in the church office

Mark your calendars for this year's **Vacation Bible School**.  
June 16 to June 20.  
Watch for the theme to be announced soon!

The **Adult Bell Choir** is looking for a few more ringers to join in on making a joyful noise unto the Lord. If you would like to ring or learn how to ring, please contact the church office or see one of the ringers. We meet **Monday evenings** from 5:30 - 6:30pm in the bell room behind the balcony.



**HOSPITALIZED?** If you or a family member is going to be placed in the hospital, or have upcoming surgery, please notify the church office so that the church and pastor may come and minister to you. You may call the church office at 226-6660.