

First United Methodist Church

Welcome! We are a Congregation devoted to loving the whole city and loving the city whole!
April 19, 2026 - 10:00am - Easter III

UMC Mission Statement: *The United Methodist Church exists to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.*

UMC Vision Statement: *The United Methodist Church forms disciples of Jesus Christ who, empowered by the Holy Spirit, love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously in local communities and worldwide connections.*

GATHERING AND PRAISE

Bells on High Prelude: *"Beach Spring"*

Traditional American Melody; arr. Lee J. Afdahl

"Blessed Assurance" (with Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring) *arr. Cynthia Dobreski*

Welcome and Announcements – *Please sign in on the Attendance pads, or use your phone and the QR Code to the right to sign in electronically or use this link: <https://form.jotform.com/211785166356159>.*



Please fill out yellow prayer card to share joys/concerns.

** Please stand if you are able.*

***Opening Hymn UMH #593: "Here I Am, Lord"**

1) I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in deepest sin
My hand will save.
I who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?

2) I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love of them.
They turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone,
Give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them,
Whom shall I send? [Chorus]

Chorus: Here I am Lord. Is it I Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

3) I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them.
My hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide
Till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them.
Whom shall I send? [Chorus]

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

*The Call to Worship

(adapted from Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, January 2026.)

One: Family of God, when we feel afraid and pressed in on every side...

All: The Spirit protects and advocates for us.

One: When the world's problems seem too big to solve, and we don't know how to do the next right thing...

All: The Spirit comforts and strengthens us.

One: When we need wisdom to know what is ours to do and the courage to act...

All: The Spirit counsels and empowers us to follow as disciples!

One: Family of God, on this journey of faith, we are not alone—God is with us!

All: Today, we call once again on the Holy Spirit to empower us to live as disciples of Jesus Christ who transform the world. Amen.

Time of Prayer – *During the prayer chorus, ushers will collect your yellow prayer cards to deliver to the pastor.*

***Prayer Chorus FWS #2167: “More Like You, Jesus”**

*More like you, Jesus, more like you;
Fill my heart with your desire to make me more like you.
More like you, Jesus, more like you;
Touch my lips with holy fire and make me more like you!
Lord, you are my mercy; Lord, you are my grace.
All my deepest sins have forever been erased.
Draw me in your presence; lead me in your ways.
I long to bring you glory in righteousness and praise!*

Silent Meditation and Lifting our Celebrations and Concerns In Prayer

The Lord's Prayer – Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Living Our Gratitude

♪ *You can support your church family by giving in person or online.
Enjoy the musical selection giving thanks to God for all our blessings.*

Use the QR code to the right or give online here:

<https://www.firstumcsaginaw.org/give>



The Offertory: *“I Have Decided to Follow Jesus”*

Indian Folk Tune; arr. Raluca Bojor

The Doxology: Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

UMH #94

Praise God all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!

Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

The Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving: Abundant God, you call us beyond survival into life—abundant, rooted, and overflowing. You invite us to walk by faith as a community growing together in Christ’s fullness. Receive now these gifts we offer, not out of scarcity or obligation, but in joyful response to your goodness. Use them—and us—to build your Kingdom, and empower our trust that you are still planting, still building, still transforming us into bold and joyful disciples, in the name of the Risen Christ! Amen.

Bells on High Anthem: *“The Bells Heard Round the World”*

by Valerie W. Stephenson

(Incorporating change ringing from “The Plain Hunt” and the English traditional tune “Oranges and Lemons Say the Bells of St. Clemons”)

Children’s Message – *A special moment just for kids*

Chorus UMH #191: *“Jesus Loves Me”*

Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.

Little ones to Him belong; they are weak, but He is strong.

Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

Scripture Lesson: Acts 11:1-18

Pew Bible N.T. pg. 122

¹ Now the apostles and the brothers and sisters who were in Judea heard that the gentiles had also accepted the word of God. ² So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, ³ saying, “Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?” ⁴ Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, ⁵ “I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners, and it came close to me. ⁶ As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. ⁷ I also heard a voice saying to me, ‘Get up, Peter; kill and eat.’ ⁸ But I replied, ‘By no means, Lord, for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ ⁹ But a second time the voice answered from heaven, ‘What God has made clean, you must not call profane.’ ¹⁰ This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. ¹¹ At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. ¹² The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man’s house. ¹³ He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, ‘Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; ¹⁴ he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.’ ¹⁵ And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. ¹⁶ And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ ¹⁷ If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?” ¹⁸ When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, “Then God has given even to the gentiles the repentance that leads to life.”

Response to the Word

One: This is the Word of God for the people of God.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

Sermon Series, Part I: DISCIPLES OF JESUS, EMPOWERED BY THE SPIRIT

Rev. Amy Terhune

WE GO AS WITNESSES FOR CHRIST IN THE WORLD

***Closing Hymn UMH #465: “Holy Spirit, Truth Divine”**

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| <p>1) Holy Spirit, Truth divine,
Dawn upon this soul of mine;
Word of God and inward light,
Wake my spirit, clear my sight.</p> <p>2) Holy Spirit, Love divine,
Glow within this heart of mine;
Kindle every high desire;
Perish self in thy pure fire.</p> | <p>3) Holy Spirit, Power divine,
Fill and nerve this will of mine;
Grant that I may strongly live,
Bravely bear, and nobly strive.</p> <p>4) Holy Spirit, Right divine,
King within my conscience reign;
Be my Lord, and I shall be
Firmly bound, forever free.</p> |
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***Benediction:**

One: Beloved, go now as disciples of Jesus Christ who, empowered by the Holy Spirit to love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously in this community and throughout worldwide connections.

All: **We go in peace to love and serve the Lord and all God’s creation, making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

*** Postlude:** *Three Variants on “Jesus Calls Us”*

by William H. Jude; arr. Jack W. Jones

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Office Administrator/Treasurer	Dina Draper
Custodian	Tina Castle
Organist.....	Bryan Latimer
Director of Music & Chancel Choir	Rod Bieber
Bell Choir Director.....	Catherine McMichael
Children’s Choir Director	Bethany Tomasino
Nursery Supervisors	Karissa Schultz
Audio Visual Technicians	Brian Hatch, Andy Sharrow, Angie Smith, Izzy Terhune
Lyrics Reproduced in Bulletin by permission: CCLI#1003593.	

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TODAY'S VOLUNTEERS: Thank you for your service!! Liturgist: Jude Mertz / Greeters: Stacy Sharrow / Ushers: Tom Kraynak, Bill Draper, Andy Sharrow, Carla Piazza Wistehuff / Welcome Center: Janeen Schaeding / Coffee Hour: Jacqui Kurtz / Sound Board: Izzy Terhune / Nursery: Karissa Schultz / Counters: Dina Draper and Brian Hatch

PLEASE HOLD IN YOUR PRAYERS: Marilyn Ashmall, Bernie Buggia, Jane Burgess, Myrna Cammin, Sue Cooper, Lisa DeVos, Bonnie Dole, Esther Cavendish Fisher, Wayne & Phyllis Henney (Wayne is now at Wellspring Assisted Living), Marion Hoffman, Bill Johnson, Erlene Kimber, ZoAnn Kraynak, Barb Kropp, Mark Leffler, Jane MacQueen, Bonnie Markley, Kay Mertz, Trinity & Audri Miller, Merlyn Mondol, Bob & Sharon Mueller, Madge Richmond, Eugenia Shek, Noreen Southgate, Rita Taylor, Dave Tolley, and Dorothy Woods. Also, please pray for UMCOR, and for peace in Ukraine/Russia, Israel/Gaza, and Iran.

HOSPITALIZED THIS WEEK: Merlyn Mondol (now at Wellspring Rehab), Sarah Jury (now at Mary Free Bed)

OUR SYMPATHY is extended to the family of Sharon Mueller, who passed away Friday, April 17. A funeral service will be held here on Thursday, April 23 at 11:30am, with visitation for one hour beforehand.

THIRD SUNDAY MISSION OFFERING TODAY goes to Haitian Assets For Peace International, which is transforming lives in rural Haiti by investing in what already exists - people's skills, strength and potential. Your support doesn't just help today - it builds a future where families thrive independently, children grow up healthy and educated, and entire communities become self-sustaining.

2026 SPRING SOCIAL ISSUE BOOK STUDY - "The Cross and the Lynching Tree" by James H. Cone has become a landmark in the conversation about race and religion in America. The Spring Social Issue Book Study is FIVE weeks. Books available at the Welcome Desk or in the office for \$15.

Class meets in person on Tuesdays from 6:00-7:00pm: 4/28, 5/5, 5/12, 5/19, 5/26

Class meets online on Wednesdays from 7:30-8:30pm: 4/29, 5/6, 5/13, 5/20, 5/27

FREE COMMUNITY MEALS on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, continuing Tues. May 12. On the Menu in May: Pork! Sign up to donate food and help clean-up at the Welcome Desk.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY – Since 2010, a group of women have been meeting at the church to make and bless the many shawls, blankets, and throws that have been given away to new brides, children being baptized, graduates, new members, members moving away, or those going through a hard time. Pocket or purse squares are also made and given away to bring comfort. Those who receive them have felt God's love and care, knowing each item has been stitched with love. We meet monthly to share, bless, and pray over the work, much of which is done at home. We have good teachers willing to teach anyone interested in the craft of knitting or crochet. We meet in the church parlor on second Monday of the month at 2:00pm and would welcome others to join our group of devoted sewers.

HELP NEEDED – the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan will deliver our next pallets of food for children's weekend backpacks on Thursday, April 23. Call the office to help out with:

- a) People to meet the truck between 10am-11am, help organize the food, and pack up the food bags.
- b) People to deliver 22 food bags to Westdale Elementary and 31 food bags to Arrowwood Elementary school EVERY Thursday.
- c) Sign up online to help out at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B044DAFAC2BA0FD0-44603782-backpack>.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

Be sure to check in on Facebook! The more of us that do, the more people learn about who we are!

YouTube: **Saginaw First UMC**

Bluesky: **FirstUMCSaginaw.bsky.social**

Facebook: **@firstumcofsaginaw**

Instagram: **saginawfumc**



Our church. Our story.

Judy Gerken

Celebrating 57 years of membership.



When **Judy Gerken** and her husband, John, (deceased) were first married, they began attending different churches to find a church home. Judy was new to Saginaw, a Methodist; and John was a Lutheran. So, they visited some of each. They knew they wanted to have a family later on, so they decided to join First U.M.C. because, at that time, Sunday School was at the same time as the church services (9:30 & 11 am). Their three boys were baptized, confirmed, and attended Sunday School at Saginaw First.

Judy fondly remembers the Lenten Potlucks every Thursday during Lent, with lots and lots of people and fabulous food. She remembers, too, the Sunday School that had 150 kids, Vacation Bible School, Children's Christmas programs and the three Children's Choirs, as well as a large and active Youth Group. During her years of membership, Judy has found that the most meaningful connection for her has been the Women's Group, which was United Methodist Women, and has now evolved into Rebecca Fellowship. She has memories of many women working together on the Harvest Dinner, Fall Bazaar, Rummage Sales, and even the Kiddie Bazaar to earn money for local missions that help women and children. Judy recalls that these women have laughed together, cried together, supported each other and shared their lives and faith. She is most grateful for the feeling of belonging, and acceptance, and a spiritual home and family. She has also appreciated the wonderful guidance and leadership from our pastors. Says Judy, "I have made wonderful friends, and my 57 years of membership at First U.M.C. have enriched my faith and filled my life with joy and love."

Note: Judy served our congregation as office secretary and administrative assistant for more than 26 years.