Holy Baptism

1Therefore, as a prisoner for the Lord, I encourage you to live as people worthy of the call you received from God. 2 Conduct yourselves with all humility, gentleness, and patience. Accept each other with love, 3 and make an effort to preserve the unity of the Spirit with the peace that ties you together. 4 You are one body and one spirit, just as God also called you in one hope. 5 There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 and one God and Father of all, who is over all, through all, and in all. Ephesians 4:1-6 Common English Bible (CEB)

The Sacrament of Baptism is a joyous and special time in the worshiping life of a church. In baptism we recognize many things; faith in Christ, desire for unity with other believers, confession of the need for a Savior, salvation, and entering in the life and ministry of the church, just to name a few. In our United Methodist doctrine we believe in the baptism of infants and children because we believe that baptism is a sign of entering into the family of God and the ministry of the church. It is a sign and symbol of salvation that children grow to understand through their parents and families, but also through the ministry of the church.

On Sunday, December 17, we will have the wonderful joy of celebrating the baptism of several of the children who are part of the life and ministry of First UMC. When we baptize children we, the congregation—the family of God, make a promise to the child and to the child’s family. We promise to pray for them, to help them grow in faith and love of Christ, and to provide ministry that will help them and their families grow in faith. When a child reaches adolescence, they have the opportunity to be a part of Confirmation classes. These classes help guide them through making a decision to confess Christ Lord and commit to following him with their lives. Their parents made a promise at baptism to guide them and to teach them, to show them God’s love in Christ. In Confirmation, those youth have the opportunity to make faith their own. I am always excited when we have baptisms and the opportunity to renew promises made in our own baptisms and confessions of faith. I also look forward to the chance for our church family to make promises to newly baptized children. It really is the church at work.

Also on the December 17, we will receive a number of adults into the official membership of First UMC. All of these adults have been active in our church for several years, and now they will make a public profession or renewal of faith and publicly state that First UMC is where they want to grow as disciples and serve in God’s Kingdom. This is very exciting for our church family. We will receive persons who have not made commitments to church before, and we will receive persons who are transferring from other churches.

If you would like to be baptized or have your children baptized, or if you would like to become a member of First UMC, please get in touch with me. We can discuss this and see if December 17 works for you and your family. What an exciting time in the life of our church!!!! Please be in prayer for all of those making these commitments to God in Christ and to the First UMC family!

See you Sunday,
Pastor Amy

*Our mission is To Make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World.*
*At First UMC Decatur, we do that as we Connect in Community, Grow in Faith, Serve in Love as followers of Jesus Christ.*
Advent and Christmas Eve Worship

December 3—First Sunday of Advent; The Star: A Journey of Hope; Holy Communion
Psalm 19:1-4, Isaiah 7:14, Isaiah 9:2

December 10—2nd Sunday of Advent; The Star: A Journey of Love; Mission Moment-The Hope Chest
Ephesians 1:4-6, 1Peter 1:22

December 17—3rd Sunday of Advent; The Star: A Journey of Joy; Children’s Christmas Program; Sacrament of Holy Baptism and Reception of New Members; Cereal Sunday
ONE SERVICE @ 10:00 am
Psalm 96:11-13, James 1:2-4

December 17—Agape Puppets @ 6:00 pm with reception after

December 24—4th Sunday of Advent; The Star: A Journey of Peace; ONE MORNING SERVICE @ 10:00 am
Isaiah 9:6, Luke 2:19

December 24—Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship; The Star: A Journey to Christmas; 9:00 pm
Luke 2:1-20

December 31—New Year’s Eve; ONE MORNING SERVICE @ 10:00 am; Hello, 2018!
Luke 2:22-40
As you are making out your Christmas gift lists, please remember our staff at FUMC. They do an awesome job for us! Staff Parish Committee will be collecting money for gifts through December 17. Contributions can be given to any member of the committee below.

Mike Boyd  Vicky Koning
Ian Gilbert  LeAnna Noble
Elaine Plew  Sarah Wolfe

Happy Holidays!
~from the Staff Parish Committee

December Birthdays
12/01 Rich Collier
12/01 Ashley Elzey
12/01 Robin Everett
12/02 Payton Boyd
12/02 Jon Stevens
12/03 Sawyer Boyd
12/03 Unity Gower
12/04 Kate Brickley
12/04 Barb Minnic
12/04 Brooke Noble
12/04 Gerald Ulman
12/05 Kylin Myers
12/05 Nancy Thompson
12/07 Cathy Bashem
12/07 Scott Bassett
12/10 Scott Porter
12/11 Jessica Jones
12/11 Lowell Martin
12/11 Jon A. Stevens
12/15 Michael Clark
12/15 Nancy Collier
12/19 Geri Sudduth
12/20 Rod Simon
12/22 Ryan Brune
12/22 Bob Gent
12/22 Alex Lee
12/23 Grant Porter
12/23 Luke Snyder
12/24 Mary Jean Meyer
12/26 Kevin Cook
12/27 Adam Eichhorn
12/28 Greg Andrews
12/29 Kathy Howe
12/29 Libby Miller
12/31 Jacob Briege
12/31 Ian Gilbert
12/31 Carol Grimm
12/31 Brandon Pickens

Happy Anniversary

December Anniversaries
12/07 Roger & Jolie Lee
12/11 Greg & Ann Andrews
12/14 James & Nancy Laucks
12/16 Doug & Penny Hinsky
12/18 Joe & Sarah Heller
12/22 Scott & Shelley Porter
12/27 Justin & Jessica Grant
12/28 David & Tammy Smith

Thank You Note...
Dear Friends from First United Methodist,
Thank you so much for collecting cereal and soup for our food pantry! We truly appreciate your support and hope to continue a partnership in sharing the love of Jesus. May you feel God’s presence in your journey to spread God’s word. Looking forward to more opportunities of working together. Again, thank you!

St. Mark’s Food Pantry Team

Many thanks go to Mike & Carol Pettibone, Scott Porter, Rick Minnic, Mary Pilkington, Phylis Ulman, Rod Simon, Jon Stevens, Mike Snyder and Dave Haggard. Because of your countless hours and hard work over the spring and summer seasons, our church home looked beautiful and a couple projects completed! You are truly "garden angels"!

Thank you!
Penny Hinsky

Address: Cameron Collier
ECRC FWD CENT
Unit 61244
APO AE 09309-1244

CEREAL SUNDAY - DECEMBER 17
Present: Pastor Amy Covington, Scott Porter, Frank Montgomery, Mike Boyd, Penny Hinsky, LeAnna Noble, Annette Gower, Aaron Gower

1. Opening: Shared recent God sightings

   Prayer & Communion: Pastor Amy

2. Approved Minutes: October 2017 minutes, LeAnna Noble motioned, Penny Hinsky seconded, approved by all

3. Financial Report: Aaron Gower shared the proposed 2018 Operating Budget with a total of $309,479. Mike Boyd moved to approve the budget and Aaron Gower seconded, approved by all. The Christmas Eve Offering will go to fund Fishes and Loaves Ministry followed by other missions.

4. New Custodian Hired: Pastor Amy shared that Shannon Irwin joined us on paid staff the last week of August.

5. Neighborlink: Scott Porter shared about this new mission opportunity in Adams County. 3 ways to be involved would include 1. Requesting services 2. Volunteering services 3. Donating Funds. The missions are led by a coach that includes praying and sharing God's love during projects.

6. Revisit Single Board Structure: A brief reminder and some discussion was shared of how these work, Pastor Amy has begun collecting info from a similarly sized church in Muncie that is wrapping up their transition to a Single Board Leadership Team. More info will follow.

7. Missions: The next Mission Minute will be Hope Chest shared on Sunday, December 10th and the next Cereal Sunday collection date will be Sunday, December 17th.

8. Celebrating: A brief recap of upcoming events was shared as well as celebrations and prayer requests for the positive impact our body of believers is having on the community immediately outside our building walls.

Closing Prayer: LeAnna Noble

Submitted by: Annette Gower
The Christmas Jar program is in full swing. We will have the Christmas Jars in various businesses in the city until December 12th. Money that is collected will go to families in the community who are less fortunate to help them have a nicer Christmas. Last year we were able to help 16 families.

This year we received another donation of school supplies and back packs from the UUC church in Magley. With this large donation and others throughout the year, we have helped many families who were in need of help. Thanks to all for your continued support with all of our projects.

The Hope Chest Staff wishes everyone a Blessed Christmas and New Year
**SPECIAL MEMO**

**Level #1**  
Paths to Quality

**Dates Closed**  
December 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 2017  
January 1, 2018

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**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

Garrett Kelly  
Evangeline Snider  
Mya Zimmerman  
Maxton Butcher

**December Joke**

Teacher: Johnny, define claustrophobia.  
Johnny: Fear of

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**Tana’s Colorful Words**

**Age Old Question**

What would you like for Christmas? Have you been asked, yet? The children were and shared their Christmas wish.

Lillie, Cooper, Rylee, Corinne, Russ, Eva: Wish for some surprises and presents.

Jaxon, Ryker, Kane, Graham, Garrett, Aria, Harper, Dexter, Trey, Hudson: Want to see Santa and Snow Lydia, Avery & Dylan: Its when Jesus was born.

Shaylie: Happy Birthday for Daddy.

Dylan: Ninjas.

Charlotte: A new doll.

Lydia: Fish in a fish bowl.

Avery: Troll movie items and my little pony home set.

Cooper: A firetruck.

Chloe: Bike

Lillie: A new house,

Rylee: A stuffed fluffy cat.

Ryker: Monster High makeup.

Adalyn: A baby doll.

Corinne: A Barbie and minion toys.

Kane: A motorcycle.

Eva: Truck that looks like my friend Owen’s.

Russ: Tractors.

Trey: Hunting things and a fire truck.

Jaxon: Tractor & tool box.

Isaiah: Zombie.

Garrett: Candy.

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**That’s A Fact**

**Keep Christ in Christmas**

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.  
Matthew 1:21

The staff’s personal “Christmas wish” is:

Jill, Dawn, and Brenda: Wishing their families’ good health and Happiness!

Beth: Love to spend more time with my family.

Shannon: Daughters lived closer and be able to spend more time with them.

Jo Ann: A forever home, not always having to move.

Brittany: Everyone would find and feel the love and faith of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Anita: World peace, and for everyone to work together for the greater good it’s God’s Plan.

Becky: Everyone everywhere to feel safe and secure in the world.

Jeni: Have a good family Christmas, knowing this is the first year with someone missing.

Tana: Have the finances to help my family and friends with the needs they struggle with.

Staff: Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas!

“And so, as Tiny Tim observed, God bless Us, Every One!”  
Charles Dickens,  
“A Christmas Carol”

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Until the come out again!
FUMC Children
Present
Joyful Christmas

AGAPE EXPRESS PUPPETS
PRESENT
"THREE CHRISTMAS LITTLES"

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
502 W. MONROE STREET IN DECATUR

CHILDREN AT 10AM & PUPPETS AT 6PM
COOKIES AFTER BOTH
Poinsettias

Flower Garden Fund

Spring Mulch Project

If you would like to order a beautiful poinsettia, make a donation to the Flower Garden Fund or to the Spring Mulch Project, please fill out the form below. Then return it and payment in the offering plate or to the Church office by **December 4th**. Honorees and donors will be listed in the bulletin on Christmas Eve and flowers can be picked up after candlelight services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poinsettias</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medium 6 1/2&quot; pot</td>
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<tr>
<td>Circle one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red, white, pink, burgundy, fancy</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Large 8 1/2" pot | $30.00 |
| Red, white |

************************

Spring Mulch or Donation

| per Scoop of mulch | $18.00 |
| Garden Fund | $______ |

**TOTAL** $______

In Memory of ________________________________

In Honor of ________________________________

Given by _________________________________
A Disciple’s Path

Deepening your relationship with Christ and the church

Six-Week Study

A dynamic study on Wesleyan beliefs

A Disciple’s Path

Introductory Coffee with Pastor Amy:
Sun., Jan, 7 4:00 pm —Aaron & Annette Gower’s
Study nights: Sun., Jan, 14—Feb, 25
5:30-7:00 pm—Gower’s
1299 W 500 N

Please register by Dec. 17. Children are welcome to attend, youth can meet with Clint at the church from 5-7 pm. The cost of the class is $20, and scholarships are available.

Name_________________________ Phone Number ______
Email address_____________________
Scholarship needed _____ Transporation needed ___
Name and ages of Children________________________

Couples or family members can use one set of books.
Electronic Giving: Fast, easy, & secure

Support the work of our church through Electronic Giving. Have your weekly or monthly contribution debited from your checking or savings account and transferred directly into the church account safely and electronically—you’ll never have to remember your checkbook again!

We would love for you to get started! Pick up an authorization form at the Connection Table today or go to www.firstumcdecatur.org and click Donate Now.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
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<tr>
<td>3 8:15 &amp; 10:00-Worship 5-7 pm-Youth</td>
<td>4 6:30 pm-Boy Scouts &amp; Cub Scouts</td>
<td>5 9 am-MamaTalk 3:30 pm-Bible Study 5:30 pm-Staff Meeting 7 pm-A.A.</td>
<td>6 5-6 pm-Community Meal 6 pm-A Better Life - - Brianna's Hope</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 8:15 &amp; 10:00-Worship 5-7 pm-Youth</td>
<td>11 6:30 pm-Boy Scouts &amp; Cub Scouts</td>
<td>12 7 pm-A.A.</td>
<td>13 5-6 pm-Community Meal 6 pm-A Better Life - - Brianna's Hope</td>
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<td>15 Newsletter Deadline</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>17 10:00-Worship 5-7 pm-Youth 6 pm-Agape Puppets</td>
<td>18 6:30 pm-Boy Scouts &amp; Cub Scouts</td>
<td>19 9 am-MamaTalk 3:30 pm-Bible Study 7 pm-A.A.</td>
<td>20 5-6 pm-Community Meal 6 pm-A Better Life - - Brianna's Hope</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22 8:15 am-Noon-Church office hours</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 Christmas Eve 10:00-Worship 9 pm-Christmas Eve Candlelight Service</td>
<td>25 Christmas Day Church office closed</td>
<td>26 Church office closed 6:30 pm-Trustees 7 pm-A.A.</td>
<td>27 5-6 pm-Community Meal 6 pm-A Better Life - - Brianna's Hope</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29 8:15 am-Noon-Church office hours</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>31 New Year's Eve 10:00-Worship 5-7 pm-Youth</td>
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Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Connect—Grow—Serve.

SPECIAL HOLIDAY EVENTS

DECEMBER 17
10:00 am – One Service
Children’s Christmas Program

Agape Puppets -
6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall

DECEMBER 24
10:00 am – One Service
9:00 pm – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

DECEMBER 31
10:00 am – One Service