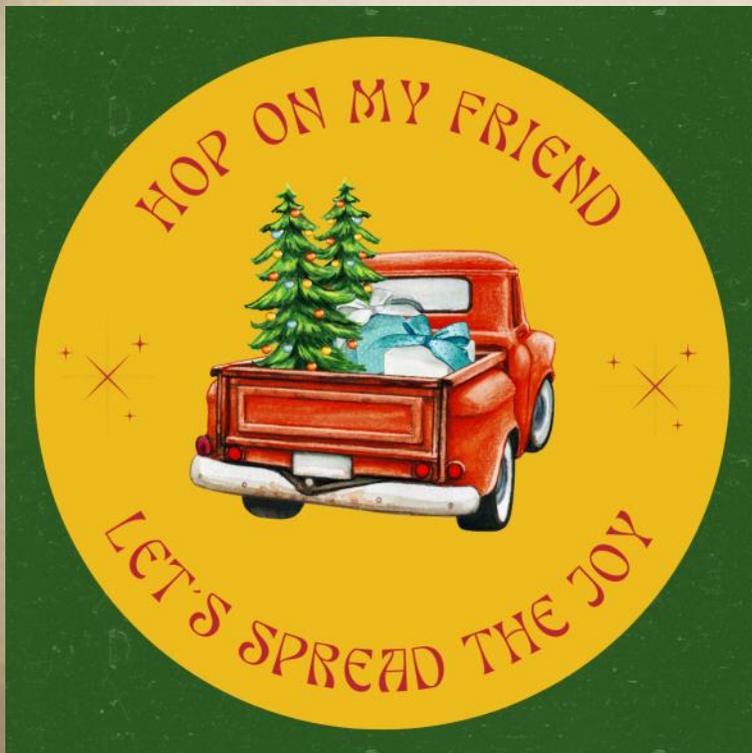


Circuit *Rider*



Winter 2022-23

First United Methodist Church
Office: 242-4850 (option 1 in staff directory)
Email: firstmethodist@fumcgj.org

*Circuit Rider and Circuit Rider
ENews are published quarterly
(November, February, May,
August) by First United*

Are you receiving the
weekly Eblast? If not,
check to see if the
church office has your
current email.

Mark Your Calendar

- 12/1 UWF Christmas Brunch at Redlands UMC
- 12/4 Village of Faith
- 12/14 A Little Noon Music Concert
- 12/16 Christmas Music Celebration
- 12/24 Christmas Eve
- 12/25 Christmas Day
- 12/26 Church Office Closed in observance of Christmas Day

- 1/1 New Years Day
- 1/2 Church Office Closed in observance of New Years Day
- 1/11 A Little Noon Music Concert
- 1/16 Church Office Closed—Martin Luther King Jr. Day

- 2/5 Ministry Fair
- 2/8 A Little Noon Music Concert
- 2/12 Valentine Concert
- 2/20 Church Office Closed—Presidents Day
- 2/22 Ash Wednesday

*For God so loved the world that He
gave His only begotten Son, that
whoever believes in Him should not
perish but have everlasting life.*

John 3:16

From Pastor Steve

*Christ is the visible image of the invisible God.
He existed before anything was created and is
supreme over all creation,
for through him God created everything in the
heavenly realms and on earth.*

-Colossians 1:15-16a, [NLT]

Greetings, Friends, in the Name and Spirit of the Holy One who became flesh and dwells among us!

Not exactly what you think of when you think of Christmas texts, but these couple of verses from the opening of the Epistle to the Colossians are very similar to the opening of the Gospel of John where we read that God became flesh in the person of His Son and dwelt in the midst of a human community located in a real place and time in history. It's what we celebrate at Christmas time, the Incarnation of God in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ.



The Incarnation is the essential first part of the redemption story, which culminates in Jesus' sacrificial death and subsequent glorious resurrection – His victory over death and the grave. As a result, God has done all that we have the capacity to perceive to communicate divine grace toward, forgiveness of, and love for humanity. When we respond in love and trust and commit ourselves to the best of our ability to living in the light of God's grace and love, we experience redemption – the healing of a brokenness with God. And when that happens, our chances for wholeness within and healthy relationships with others are never better. Thanks be to God!

Ebenezer Scrooge experienced that kind of redemption in one of the much-loved stories of the Christmas Season, *A Christmas Carol*. My prayer is that as we explore aspects of the redemption of Scrooge in worship this Advent and Christmas, we find a measure of healing from the boundless love of God, so that we might proclaim with the childlike joy of Tiny Tim, "God bless us, Everyone!"

As we turn the page on 2022, we will be looking into a new year filled with uncertainty and, therefore, possibility. We will be entering into discernment about ways forward with our Church building and committing at some point in the year to a course of action aimed at redeeming the unusable space that we call Gaines Hall. What that redemption looks like remains to be seen, and I look forward to working with the leadership teams of the Church, the committed members and friends of the congregation, and the Spirit of God to determine our next steps.

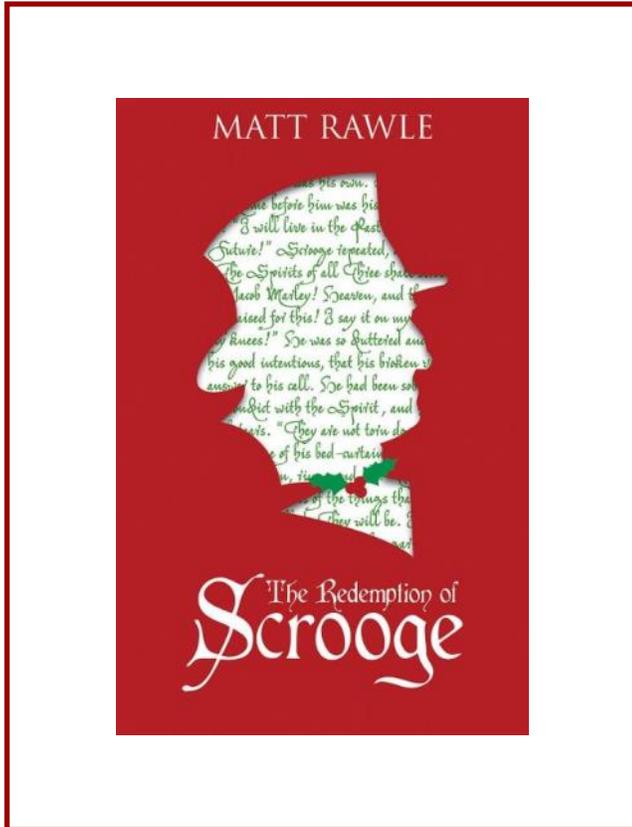
Let's be in grateful prayer this Season for the gift of redemption that is ours in Christ! It means so much more than being saved from something – sin and sinful ways are usually what we think of. It means being saved to something – something far superior to our present way of life. Let us dream big dreams together of what that "far superior" way is – and be thankful that in Christ, whose Advent we anticipate with great longing, "all things hold together" (Col. 1:17b).

Holding you close to my heart this Season –

Pastor Steve

><>

This Season's Worship Themes



Church-wide Advent Study

Our worship series for the Seasons of Advent and Christmas is **The Redemption of Scrooge**. Many of us are familiar with the well-known story from Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol* (first published in 1843!) where the main character, Ebenezer Scrooge, has a dramatic change of heart and soul in response to supernatural encounters with angelic beings in his dreams on Christmas Eve night.

Scrooge is scared to death that it's too late for him to do anything about his miserly ways and miserable treatment of others, especially his employees and their families. But, he awakens on Christmas Day relieved to know that even he is not beyond redemption. And if Scrooge is not beyond redemption, neither are you and me!

In this worship series by Rev. Matt Rawle, a United Methodist pastor in Bossier City, LA, we are invited to connect the story in *A Christmas Carol* to our experiences of faith in our Christian traditions.

Weekly Sunday services will be held at the normal times: 9 AM and 11 AM. In addition, all are invited and welcome to participate in a Church-wide study this season that accompanies this worship series. It will be a HYBRID study (meaning in-person AND Zoom) held right after second service on Sundays: 12:30 – 1:30 PM. Childcare will be provided at Church, if needed. Books are now available for \$10 through Anna Aleksa, our Family Ministry Director (familyministry@fumcgj.org).

This Season's Worship Themes

December & Beyond

Other dates and significant events and services are as listed below.

December 2022

- ◆ Sunday, December 4th, 2 PM, Sanctuary – Matinée showing of Charles Dicken's **A Christmas Carol**, the 1999 film version starring Patrick Stewart.
- ◆ Thursday, December 15th, 12 Noon – **Blue Christmas Service**, Sanctuary.
- ◆ Friday, December 16th, 7 PM – FUMC Christmas Concert



Christmas Eve Worship, Saturday, Dec. 24th All services are held In-person AND Live Streamed.

- 4 PM – Family Christmas celebration with candlelight. Designed for families with young children. Praise Team will lead the music for this service.
- 7 PM – Our traditional, Choir-led candlelight Christmas Eve service.
- 9 PM – A less formal, intimate candlelight-and-communion service.

Christmas Day Worship, Sunday, Dec. 25th – **One service held at 10 AM.** This will be a special service focused on the music of the season – the Choir will be a part of worship, and we'll include a Christmas Carol hymn sing.

We are not planning for a time of fellowship before or after worship on Christmas Day. Enjoy time with family

and friends or in quiet, centered celebration with the LORD on this sacred day.

January-February 2023

January 1st, New Year's Day 2023, is a Sunday. We'll hold regular Sunday morning worship services focused on beginning the new year on the right footing. This will be a communion Sunday, as well.

Our worship series in January and the first half of February will be **God Is Holding Your Life**. It is based on the Psalms and explores the range of emotions we feel in response to life's ups and downs as beings created in the image and likeness of God.

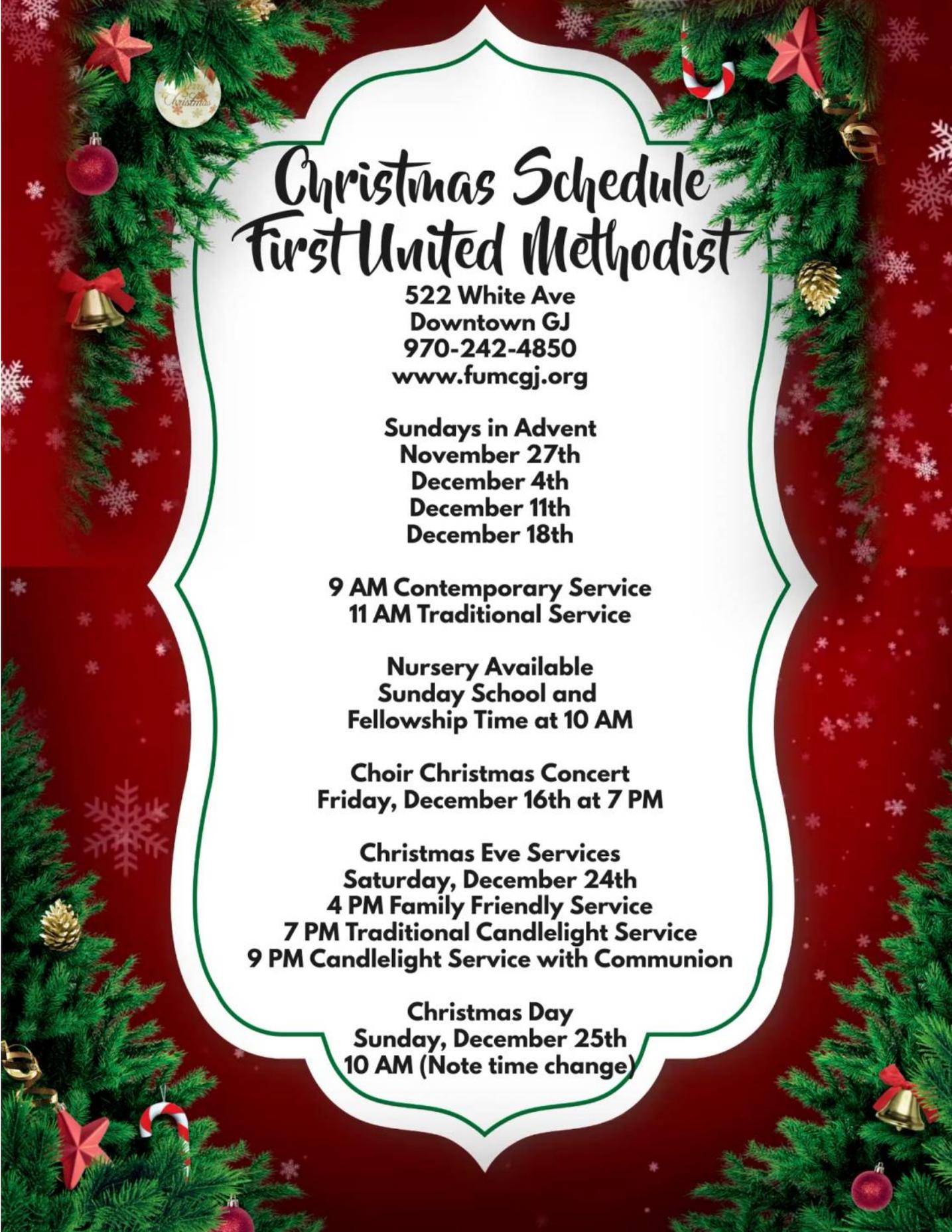
Lent: February-March

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22, 2023. Last year, our Ash Wednesday observation was pre-empted by my (Pastor Steve's) getting called for Jury Duty! This year, we will plan for Ash Weds with the drive-up-distribution of ashes out in front of the Church.

The first Sunday of Lent is February 26th, and our Lenten theme will be **Looking for Love in All the Wrong Places**. Dr. Marcia McFee, of Worship Design Studio, writes, "Don't we often look for wholeness and happiness (love) in places that offer only temporary "good feelings" and satisfaction? Lent is a wonderfully reflective time to reassess where we are searching for meaning, for "redemption." We'll...[look at a variety of Biblical texts] to find out who offers the "real deal."

See you in and around the Church and the Valley!

Pastor Steve
><>



Christmas Schedule First United Methodist

522 White Ave
Downtown GJ
970-242-4850
www.fumcgj.org

Sundays in Advent
November 27th
December 4th
December 11th
December 18th

9 AM Contemporary Service
11 AM Traditional Service

Nursery Available
Sunday School and
Fellowship Time at 10 AM

Choir Christmas Concert
Friday, December 16th at 7 PM

Christmas Eve Services
Saturday, December 24th
4 PM Family Friendly Service
7 PM Traditional Candlelight Service
9 PM Candlelight Service with Communion

Christmas Day
Sunday, December 25th
10 AM (Note time change)

FUMC **SINGLES**



CHRISTIAN SENIOR ADULT SINGLES GROUP
VARIOUS CHURCHES PARTICIPATING

CONTACT JEANNIE LEWIS
HOSPITALITY@FUMCGJ.ORG
FOR MORE INFORMATION

FUMC

Senior Adults

Growth

Join Us!

Our Senior Adult Ministry is ready for you.

Education

Keep Learning!

We offer a variety of educational opportunities.

Service

Give Back!

We are active in our community helping others.

Study

God's Word!

We have a variety of studies that fit your schedule.

Connect

Meet People!

Our social groups offer ways to make friends.

Fun

Live Life!

We believe you are NEVER too old to laugh and play.

Visit us in Downtown Grand Junction
First United Methodist Church
522 White Avenue
970.242.4850

WWW.FUMCGJ.ORG



Annual Christmas Card Shower



The Craft'n Sistas' are again collecting cards for our at home villagers who are unable to attend worship.

- Write personal Christmas cards and sign your name
- Drop cards in basket located in Welcome Center by Dec. 4
- Craft'n Sistas' will bundle up in festive bags to be blessed in Worship on Dec. 11
- Congregation members are asked to take and deliver 1 or more bags



Helen Alexander
 Sherry Blackwell
 Iris Brown
 Wilma & Ray Camren
 Elsie & Tommy Combs
 Dixie Gilbert
 Glenda Harris
 Jim Johns
 Gerri Kendrick

Mary Magos
 Bette Martin
 Jeannie Motz
 Mary Day Musgrave
 Cindy Nail (Bill)
 Phyllis Otto
 Verda Patterson
 Eileen Reinier
 Lucy Reynolds

Betty Rogers
 Nell Rozelle
 Charles Sours (Linda)
 Lily Tunis & Helen Jones
 Marion Turner
 Frank Wagner
 Dick Webb (Margie)
 Richard Zell




Senior Adult Ministries
Light Tour

Sunday
 December 18, 2022
 Time TBD

Save the Date!

Do you want to go on our Light Tour? Please sign up on the welcome center or email Jeannie at hospitality@fumcgj.org.

Family Ministry News



3rd Grade Bible Presentation

A huge CONGRATULATIONS! to 3rd grader David Aleksa. He received his Bible, September 18th as a gift from his FUMC family.





FUMC Village of Faith

Service and Sweaters



Sunday, December 4th

4:00-6:00 pm



**Wear your best ugly sweater
and join us in mission**



- Make Christmas cards for our at home villagers
 - Wrap books for Diaper Depot families
- Make coupon books for a fun gift
- Enjoy hot cocoa and appetizers



**For more information contact
Anna at
familyministry@fumcgj.org**



A big THANK YOU! to all of our partners that came together to hold a successful event and week, to raise awareness of diaper need and helped to connect families to so many amazing resources across the Grand Valley.



1 in 3 families don't have all of the diapers they need to keep their infants clean, dry and healthy.

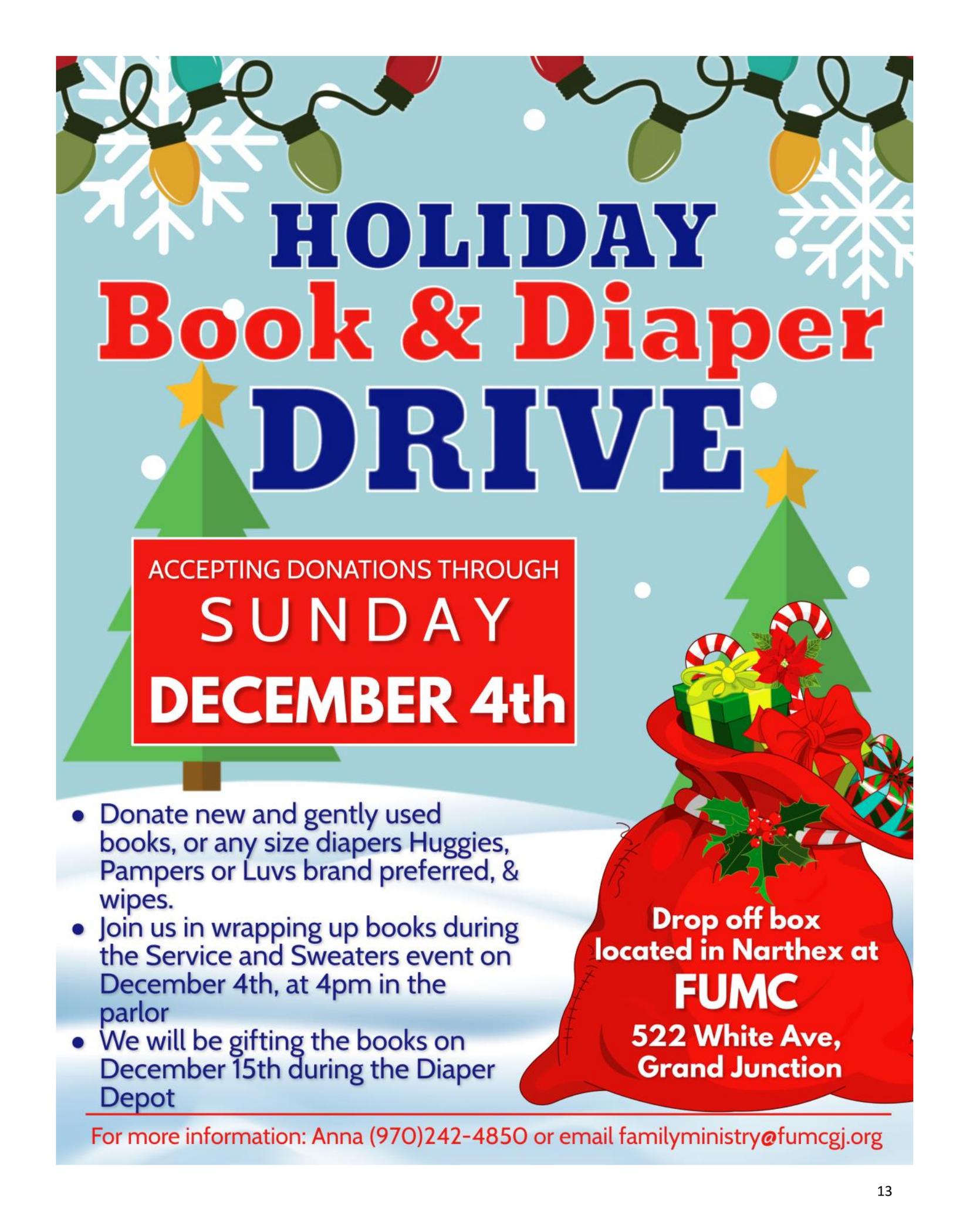


For More Information
diaperdepot@fumcgj.org
519 Grand Ave. Ste C
ph 970-242-4850

National Diaper Need
AWARENESS WEEK

*** 09.24.22-10.02.22





HOLIDAY Book & Diaper DRIVE

ACCEPTING DONATIONS THROUGH

SUNDAY

DECEMBER 4th

- Donate new and gently used books, or any size diapers Huggies, Pampers or Luvs brand preferred, & wipes.
- Join us in wrapping up books during the Service and Sweaters event on December 4th, at 4pm in the parlor
- We will be gifting the books on December 15th during the Diaper Depot



**Drop off box
located in Narthex at
FUMC
522 White Ave,
Grand Junction**

For more information: Anna (970)242-4850 or email familyministry@fumcgj.org



Ministry News

Bell Bits

This past September marked the beginning of the first full program year for the restructured adult handbell choir also known as Flame 'n' Bells. We are currently using all 5 octaves of our Schulmerich handbells with 13 ringers. We are preparing Christmas music and will be playing at various times throughout the holiday season and into the second half of the program year.

This restructure began last spring with a big clean out, assessment, and repair of our handbell space, music and equipment.

At that time ringers were recruited, and the sounds or bells could be heard filling the spaces within our church walls. Though regular rehearsals on Sundays were discontinued for the summer months, 3 small ensembles met all summer long.



Winter rehearsal happens on Sunday from approx. 4:00—5:15 PM. If you are interested in playing handbells as a fulltime ringer or substitute please contact Terri Godby 303.437.5311 or terrilgodby@msn.com

Prayer Shawl Ministry

"What our hands and hearts create allow others to know God."

The Prayer Shawl Ministry will not meet in December due to the Christmas holiday.

We will begin meeting in 2023 on Thursday, January 26th and then again on Thursday, February 23rd. We meet in the Parlor from 9:30 to 11:00 AM. All are invited to join us. If you knit or crochet, we have patterns and yarn available. If you would like to learn to knit or crochet, please come. We would love to teach you. Even if you don't want to knit or crochet, we could use your help in distributing shawls and lap robes.



If you have any questions, please contact Pam Bersch at 970-260-2982 or pambersch@gmail.com.

Holy Week in a Box

A variety of interactive ways to explore the events of Holy Week. There are hands on activities, and interactive prayer activities to help you explore Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter; and help you draw closer to God.

Reserve one for you and your family and pick one up for your neighbor or friend too!

Limited number of boxes available.

Reservations not required, but appreciated!

For more information, contact

Anna Aleksa

email: familyministry@fumcgj.org

phone: (970)242-4850 ext 1004



Open the 1st and 3rd
Thursdays of every month
from 10am - 1pm

519 Grand Ave. Ste. C,
Grand Junction

For more information:

diaperdepot@fumcgj.org



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WE PROVIDE:

DIAPERS:

- sizes newborn - 6
- all sizes of Pull-ups

BABY WIPES

RASH CREAMS

Must provide photo
ID in order to pick up
diapers



Music....



CHRISTMAS CONCERT SET

On Friday night, December 16, 7 PM, our music ministry will present our 18th annual Christmas concert and Sing-Along. All performing groups of FUMC music ministry are invited to perform, along with “friends” - favorite area musicians that want to share their talents with a wide variety of musical offerings.

A favorite feature is the Sing-Along where we all join in singing ten of our favorite Christmas Hymns. Here is this year's list so you can start practicing!

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel; Hark! The Herald Angels Sing; Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming; The First Noel; O Little Town of Bethlehem; Joy to the World; O Come, All Ye Faithful; It Came Upon a Midnight Clear; Go, Tell It on the Mountain; and Angels We Have Heard on High.

This concert, in our beautiful sanctuary, is a community favorite, and a great way for your whole family to enjoy joyously bringing in the Christmas season! And as usual, the concert is FREE!

A LITTLE NOON MUSIC

Free Noon-time Concerts

Every 2nd Wednesday of the month, from 12:15 to 1:00 PM

Upcoming Performers

December 14

Adrian Herrera Escobar—Jazz Piano

January 11

Kelley Latshaw—Flute

February 8

Caitlin Moore—Mezzo Soprano





JOIN UNITED WOMEN IN
FAITH FOR OUR

Christmas BRUNCH

1 DECEMBER
11 AM - 1 PM

Redlands Methodist Church
*Entertainment by Sweet Adelines at
noon*

ALL ARE WELCOME! You need not be a member of UWF
PLEASE RSVP to: Pam Bersch, 970-260-2982 or
mpbersch@gmail.com BY NOV. 26

Unbounded Appreciation



As the calendar year draws to a close and cold weather settles over the Grand Valley, your Generosity Team is grateful for the many ways you have opened up new ministries and spread the warm love of Jesus in our community.

Thank you for your continuing commitment to serve First United Methodist Church with your prayers, your presence, your gifts, your service, your witness, and your study of the Holy Scriptures! Because you share your time, talents, and treasures, our congregation is rooted, grounded, and growing in our mission to worship God and love one another by taking Christ to the community and the community to Christ. You make it all happen!

Generosity comes in so many different expressions of love. We celebrate every one of you and your contributions to our Village of Faith!

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

Pastor Appreciation

Kim and I want to express our deep appreciation to all in the congregation who sent cards and otherwise contributed to a very warm celebration of Pastor Appreciation in October. We, indeed, do feel the love of the congregation, not just at these special times but throughout the year. Thank you for making FUMC GJ such a great place to be in ministry! In the love and joy of Christ – Pastor Steve & Kim

Breakfast in the Park / Make-a-Change

The Breakfast in the Park Team wanted to say how much we appreciated the very generous support of our ministry through the Make-a-Change offering received in late August. The donations will enable us to continue to share the love of Christ with many who are truly struggling just to survive. Thank you SO much for your support!



Ministry Fair

There was a lot of buzz and excitement at the Ministry Fair on September 11th. We had so many groups and ministries connect and share what they are up to and what is going on in the life of the church.

A big THANKS! to everyone who participated and those who came to learn and connect.

Did you miss the Ministry Fair? Don't fret! Mark your calendars for February 5th from 10-12:30 for the next Ministry Fair! Come and find your place!



Visit us on the web—www.fumcgj.org

Circuit Rider is a quarterly publication. Submit all materials for Circuit Rider via email to Carolyn Campbell at firstmethodist@fumcgj.org

First United Methodist Church
522 White Avenue
Grand Junction, CO 81501



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First United Methodist Church
Worshipping God and Loving One Another by
Taking Christ to the Community and the Community to Christ

DOWNTOWN | 522 White Avenue. 81501
Sunday Mornings at FUMC
In-Person & Live Stream via fumcgj.org
9 AM Contemporary Worship
11 AM Traditional Worship
Note: On 5th Sunday's only 1 worship at 11 AM
Our nursery is fully open for both worship services