

POPLAR LEAVES

Memorial United Methodist Church

February, 2025

2701 Poplar Street
Terre Haute, Indiana 47803
(812) 234-0776
office@umcMemorial.org

Sundays

Worship, 9:30 a.m.
Sunday School, 10:30 a.m.

Office Hours

Tuesday-Thursday
9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Livestreamed Services

MemorialSunday.org

Calendar

MemorialEvents.org

Website

umcMemorial.org

Giving

GiveMemorial.org

Prayer Requests

PrayingMemorial@gmail.com

Memorial Staff

Ron Branson, pastor
Michael Walker, administrative assistant
and children's ministries
Ginger Bedford, administrative assistant
and bookkeeper
Logan Williams, music director
Jinhee Kim, accompanist
Joe Cresgy, media director
Tobie Wrightsman, nursery attendant
Alfred VanGilder, building custodian
Christy Cresgy and **Missy Wilcox**,
preschool co-directors
Paula Metheny, Kids Hope USA
David M. Peter, certified lay minister
and lay leader



Reflections

State of the Church from Pastor Ron

I just want to celebrate a little bit with all of you. In the four and a half years I've been here at Memorial we have survived Covid, a denominational schism, a merger, two presidential elections, and the general trials and tribulations that everyone across the country has faced. While so many faith communities have disappeared in the last few years, all have struggled with shrinking finances and membership—yet we have persisted, and we are prepared to thrive!

In the last six months of 2024, our average weekly in-house attendance was 165 with an additional 38 weekly online views; in an era when so many communities are struggling to rebound from the pandemic, we have more folks engaged on Sunday morning that we did before Covid! Another nuance that may go unnoticed is that now, with only one service, all these folks fill the sanctuary in a way that probably hasn't been experienced regularly in perhaps 30 years. New families are joining and attending and once again there are children in the sanctuary.

We all had conversations a few years ago and hoped that shifting our worship time to 9:30 would help us reach more of our community, and it appears that it has been so. And now, friends, the state of our church is *good!*

While we need to revel in this success, I need to let each of you know that there is a significant difficulty looming. You see, even though we have children in the building again, we have zero programs for any of them. We don't have anyone to provide junior church or any kind of Sunday school classes for any school aged children. This

must change! Those younger families who have found their way to Memorial will slip away if our community doesn't love on their children. To be clear, this isn't about hiring staff, because it isn't possible for us to hire enough staff. This is about all of us coming together and recognizing that one of the most important things we need to do for our future is care for our children.

The state of our church is good, and its future is in your hands; please volunteer to work with our children. If you are interested, call the office and visit with Michael Walker.

Shalom, Shalom,



Pastor Ron

"It is easier to build
strong children than to
repair broken men."
—Frederick Douglass





Love, Lent, and more
Lay of the Land
February 2025
David Peter, follower of Jesus

The month of February in the lectionary cycle focuses on the Sundays after the Epiphany. It will be March before we enter the time of Lent that leads us to Easter. A lot to consider and ponder on, and look for a focus for this month.

While we may find ourselves thinking about Valentines Day and the heart shaped cards and boxes of chocolate (Russell Stover I remember) and the perfect meal to show or reaffirm love to someone special, it is more than that.

The word "Love" appears 423 times in the Old Testament. The book of Psalms has 169 instances of the word "Love." The New Testament has 265 references. The Gospel of John, 40 occasions and 1 John has 25 and together 688 verses in the bible have "love" in them.

A casual glance at local newspapers and even some of the larger market papers are silent on the subject of love. It would lead one to believe that love is not worth the ink or space on a newspaper, or more than a 30 second spot on television or radio.

"I give you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, so you also must love each other." - Jesus to the disciples at the last supper, John 13:34 (CEB)

"There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear expects punishment. The person who is afraid has not been made perfect in love. We love because God first loved us." 1 John 4:18-19 (CEB)

"Now faith, hope, and love remain - these three things - and the greatest of these is love." 1 Corinthians 13:13 (CEB)

As we look forward to Easter and the Resurrection, we should begin now to prepare. Love this month may be a slick advertising piece, but there is more. Loving our neighbor, loving each other, and remembering that God loves us may be the best way for the month.

God loves you, and so do I.
David, a follower of Jesus



Caring Christian men can be revolutionaries. How? Armed with God's love and supported by prayer, these men can literally save a generation of children and redeem our culture by committing to an act that is outrageous in its simplicity: To love one fatherless child for one hour each week by being a Kids Hope mentor. Children who do not have a father figure are more likely to be poor, experience school, health, emotional and psychological problems, become victims of child abuse, and engage in criminal behavior than peers living with their biological mother and father. This situation describes 34% of America's children. The love of a caring Christian man will give these children hope and a future. It will revolutionize their lives and their world.

-Virgil Gulker, founder of Kids Hope USA

We are thankful for the male mentors and substitute mentors in Memorial's Kids Hope ministry. They offer a much-needed perspective to young boys; one they may not see otherwise. And the boys in our program love their male mentors!

Interested in learning more? I'd love to talk to you!
- Paula Metheny

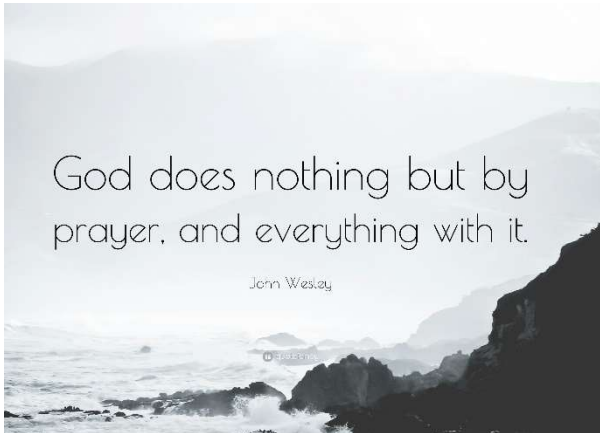


Pam Crane, Prayer Coordinator

Mighty Prayer Warriors,

On this Inauguration and Martin Luther King Jr. Day it seems most appropriate to pray a corporate prayer for our country.

Heavenly Father, We thank You for the many patriots such as Martin Luther King, Jr. who have gone before us. We remember their examples and demonstrations of Christian love and justice. We thank You that we live in a country where a peaceful transfer of power can take place. We ask that You will hold our leaders safely in Your hand, that they will seek godly counsel, God-fearing advisors and Your wisdom in all their decisions. Lastly, we pray for ourselves as citizens, believing that, "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." We lift this prayer in the gracious name of Jesus, Our Savior, Amen.



Mighty Prayer Warriors,

With the wildfires in California being on our minds how can we not have corporate prayer for the people of California and surrounding areas? Some of the reports and pictures of destruction are overwhelming and unfathomable to us, especially as we're sitting here in the snow and ice!

Heavenly Father, Often times such horrific happenings leave us dumbfounded as to the best way to pray but we are thankful that You have given us the Holy Spirit which intercedes for us through wordless groans. We lift up all the people in the path of the wildfires who have lost their homes, possessions, businesses, schools and other parts of their lives, even loved ones. We pray that this terrible event may have good results, perhaps strengthening or beginning their faith journey. We know that You can work all things out for good. We pray for all the firefighters that You will keep them safe and strengthened in their work to control the fires. We thank You for the relief workers. May their faces and actions be the face and acts of love of Jesus that some people may have never experienced. We pray this prayer in the Holy and Powerful name of Jesus, Amen.

Do You need a place to pray?

Do you need a quiet place to pray and reflect or maybe just some time for yourself? The sanctuary at Memorial is open for you anytime the office is open. If you wish to use it at another time, contact Pastor Ron to make arrangements.



HELP NEEDED ON SUNDAY MORNING

Would you like to help during worship on Sunday morning? There are several things you can do:

- Sign up to greet and welcome those entering the sanctuary. Look for a sign-up in the narthex or contact the office
- Become a liturgist
- Read scripture
- Help with audio/video if needed
- Have a great idea for a children's message?

Contact the office, member care or Pastor Ron if you are interested or have questions



Preschool News

Happy New Year! It seems like 2024 just flew by. We have so much planned for our second semester with the Littles. December was a busy month with programs, learning about the true meaning of Christmas and a visit from Santa.

We will return to school on Monday, January 6 after our two-week winter break. On Thursday, January 16 we will have an All-School Pajama Day. There will be no school on Monday, January 20 due to Martin Luther King Day.

We recently received some exciting news. After dreaming of expanding our playground we have received funding from resources previously left to Northside by the Pease family who approved this new use. The project was further assisted by other funds transferred during the combining of the two faith communities. Construction will begin on the playground addition in the Spring. Hopefully it will be completed before the end of the school year so that our Pre-K class will get to enjoy it. We are wanting to add a new climbing cave to the new playground as well and are in the process of fundraising for this.

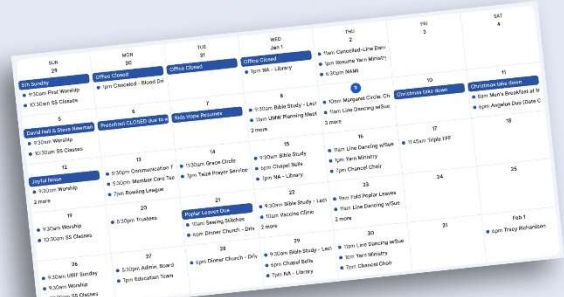
Thank you so much for all your support and prayers.

In Ministry together,
Christy and Missy



Check Presentation to the Memorial Preschool for extending the playground.

View our online calendar at: [MemorialEvents.org](https://www.MemorialEvents.org)
To update or add your MUMC events,
send details to ginger@umcmemorial.org



Offering Envelopes

are available
by request.

Sign up in the
narthex, or contact
the office.





Help Needed:

The church needs janitorial attention and we currently do not have a janitor. Until we are able to get a better read on what we can truly afford for janitorial services, which will likely take a couple more months, we need to work together to clean and tidy our church space. It takes a good deal of persistent, and focused energy to keep a building like this vacuumed, dusted, swept, mopped, sorted, cleaned, arranged, cleared and ready.

These are not terribly hard tasks but they do require energy, attention to detail and willingness to attend to messes made by others. People moving, fellowshiping, eating, working in any space leave traces of their presence. Nature also provides dust, vermin, detritus and dirt. We have a service that vacuums the sanctuary, cleans the bathrooms, mops the kitchen floor once a week and keeps the windows clean.

We need help with cleaning classrooms that are not part of the Preschool and worship spaces, vacuuming, dusting, sorting, arranging and cleaning the kitchen above the floor. The church is not filthy, by and large, but it does need attention.

We are asking that groups, classes, teams, and committees commit some time and energy, at whatever frequency you see fit, to pick an area of the church and tend it well. Ideally, not the space you use most, but one whose tending would be a blessing to another group or class or committee.

You may also, while doing your ministry of cleaning, note and attend to any areas of particular need and disorder, and run a broom, cloth or towel across them to keep them pristine. This is not an invitation to throw all kinds of stuff away or purge the cupboards, it is an invitation to respectfully and carefully tend the space.

Please consider, at the next meeting of your fellowship partners at the church, arranging some time to tend some portion of the church and keep it ready for service. Contact the church office to arrange times and resources. Please use any supplies or appliances only as they are intended and check with the office about any particular questions.

Thank You!

UPDATE: The Open Door Sunday School Class has offered to keep the Chapel and Narthex cleaned as their contribution to this project! Thank you! Who is next?



Please welcome two new members to our Memorial family:

Carolee Hicks graduated from ISU and spent much of her life teaching at University School. When that school closed she continued teaching at the Elementary and Jr. High level. She and her husband owned a farm in Edgar County. He passed several years ago. She moved to Terre Haute to be close to one of her sons. She enjoys reading, gardening and travel. Carolee has visited many Western European countries and plans an Alaskan cruise next. She has 3 sons and several grandchildren. She is a friend of Sally Sudbrink.

Judy Karanovich and her husband moved back to Terre Haute from Florida several years ago. Steve, her husband, was from Clinton and worked at Hercules and AET. He passed in July of 2024. Judy worked in the Clinton Public Library for many years and is anxious to check out our church library where she is interested in helping out. Her hobbies include reading, puzzles and crafts. She has a daughter who lives in Terre Haute.



Missions would like to send a big THANK YOU, THANK YOU to everyone that generously gave to the 14th & Chestnut Community Center through our November Second Mile gift and through our December Advent Offering "The Angel Tree", a gift that specifically benefits the children's Grumbling Tummies food project. We were able to raise \$11,972. Yay!!!

Also, a big thank you to those of our congregation that helped at the 14th & Chestnut Community Center on Saturday, November 16, by participating in the Memorial United Methodist Church's Service Day. The group packed food baskets and sorted various backpack and clothing donations into bins for distribution. Thank You!

On February 9, Rick Germain, Director of Meals On Wheels, will be our February Second Mile speaker. Please join us in welcoming Rick as he updates us on this charitable organization that is a great service to our community.



Blood Drive

Tuesday, February 25
9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

POPLAR LEAVES

DEADLINE for submissions:

Tuesday, February 18



Men's Breakfast
Saturday, February 8
8:00 a.m.
Meadows Cafe



- February- Education Team
- March- United Women in Faith
- April- Trustee Committee
- May- Konania and Multi Media Class
- June- Kid's Hope

Getting the coffee bar ready on Sunday morning is a lot of work. Would you be able to help? If so, please contact the office.



Dinner Church will resume
January 21, 2025

Drive Thru History

ACTS TO REVELATION
THE WORLD OF THE FIRST CHRISTIANS

Dinner Church is on the road starting at 6:00pm with dinner and then at 6:30 we start our drive through history stopping at landmarks of the beginning of Christianity .ALL are welcome!



United
Women
in Faith

Many Members, One Body

The annual Auction is being planned for Sunday, February 16, 3-5pm in the Fellowship Hall. If you have never attended you have been missing a good time. Our Auctioneer, Scott Johnson and Chef, Steve Friday help make the event a fun time as well as a way to help support some of UWF's fundraising efforts for mission projects which we support. However, to make this happen we need your help with donations of high quality items to be auctioned. (Save those garage sale items for the Garage Sale in April.) Some high items from previous years have included airline tickets, timeshare vacation days, quilts, artwork, custom made bags/purses, baked goods, soups, food items and days of service work. Watch for signup opportunities starting February 2 in the Narthex. Contact Joanie Kendall at 812-298-4276, joaniekendall@yahoo.com or Pam Crane, 812-243-0264, pamcra52@gmail.com

Triple F

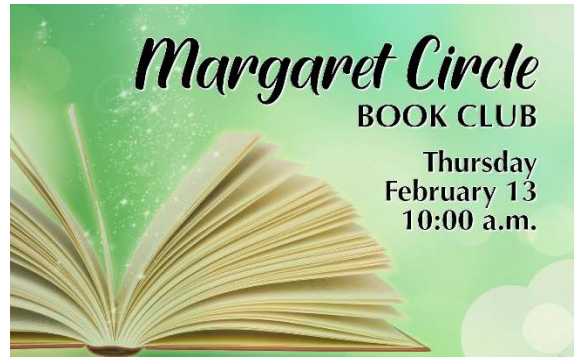
**Friday, February 21
11:45 a.m.**

FFF will be Feb 21, 2025 at 11:45.

Menu: Chicken & Noodles.

Speaker: Scott & Paula Johnson; Trip to China.

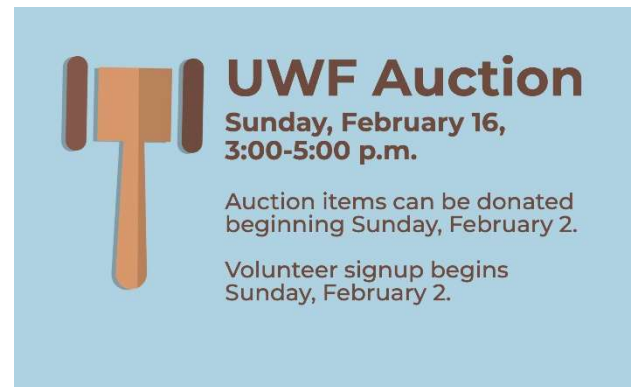
Sign up in Narthex.



**Margaret Circle will meet in the Chapel on
Thursday, February 13th.**

We will be discussing *SOMEBODY'S DAUGHTER*
a memoir by Ashley C. Ford.

Please contact Joanie Kendall
joaniekendall@yahoo.com or 812-298-4276 if you
have any questions.



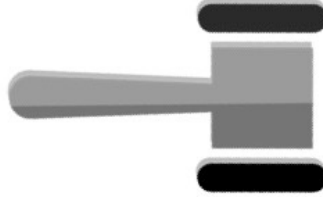
LET ALL
THAT
YOU DO
BE DONE
WITH
LOVE.



1 CORINTHIANS 16:14 NKJV

Everyone is invited!
UWF Auction

Sunday, February 16 • 3:00-5:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall



**Our auctioneer is the Rev. Scott Johnson.
A light supper will be served by Chef Steve Friday and crew.**

Proceeds benefit UWF mission projects.

For more information contact Joanie Kendall at joaniekendall@yahoo.com or 812-298-4276.

