

...for building up the body of Christ
—Ephesians 12:4b

August 1, 2024

Greetings Church!

July marked one year since Pastor Ivy, Pastor Tammy, and I were appointed to Mentor United Methodist Church. It has truly been an incredible year of mission and ministry! God has worked in and through us making a difference in people's lives. There is much to celebrate. In fact, Kenna, our Communications Specialist, has put together a video that highlights our ministry together. If you haven't seen it yet, I encourage you to scan the QR code to enjoy this three-minute video now.

We began our ministry together in worship. Shifting to two services for our first summer brought worshippers together, highlighting the spirit of love and community while getting to know Pastor Ivy and me as your new pastoral team.



Celebrating One Year Together Highlights Video



We got creative with our "I am / We are" prayer paint sticks reflecting on who God is calling us to be!

We had our first ever staff retreat and staff Epiphany dinner that included our preschool staff recognizing, affirming, and investing in our staff as a strong team serving the mission of the church. We had our first Shepherding Summit with nearly a hundred people in attendance sharing best practices for being the Body of Christ.



We enjoyed five weeks of Wednesday night meals and "camp-style worship" at our Lenten Family, Feast, and Fellowship gatherings providing an opportunity for the whole church to grow in faith and fellowship.

We welcomed seventeen new members, baptized six people, and confirmed four students leading all onto a path of Christ-centered discipleship.





We engaged in Bible studies, Journey groups, fellowship, and luncheons moving us on the path of discipleship.



We shared in Mentor UM Preschool's excitement for classes, story time, fun events, and graduation.



We came together for funerals, weddings, and special services proclaiming God's faithfulness in all seasons.

We reached out to the community with monthly More-Than-a-Meal and several other mission/outreach events like Change the World Day Bed Build, Rummage Sale, UMCOR Disaster Relief, The Big Event, Alzheimer's Walk, and Treat Street. We are the hands and feet of Christ.



We served people far beyond our community through the YSP trip to Obion, Tennessee, an UMVIM trip to Puerto Rico, and a conference trip to Africa University in Zimbabwe for the dedication of the newly constructed women's dormitory.



We launched a new weekly "Pastor Capture" video that reached its 46th episode this week! Similarly, we started a weekly Facebook Live video between worship services each Sunday in the Gallery—sharing the spirit of welcome and inviting people to come.



Less than two weeks ago, we hired a new Youth Director, Mackalyn Figgins, who loves youth ministry, loves building relationships, loves the church, and most importantly, loves Jesus. MUMC believes in cultivating the faith of our youth.



These reflections are just scratching the surface. How have you seen God at work in and through MUMC in this past year?



In addition to all these celebrations, we witnessed together a historic General Conference that officially changed the United Methodist Church's position on LGBTQI+. While many at MUMC celebrate this change, there are others who do not agree. The good news is that we don't need to all agree. In fact, MUMC has always been a church with a wide range of perspectives on social and theological issues. It has also always been a church where all are welcome—conservative and liberal, traditional and progressive, Republican and Democrat, rich and poor, weak and strong. As far as I can tell, MUMC has always been a church that above all believes that God's love is bigger than our different perspectives and every Sunday is an opportunity to receive and practice that love. We believe that all of us are seeking to be on a path of Christ-Centered discipleship and what helps us on that path is when we walk it together.

Church, I don't need to tell you that our nation and our world are facing incredible challenges. News and social media too often reinforce our stereotypes and prejudices that feed our fears, anxieties, and divisions. Yet, in the midst of these challenges, God is at work. I am excited about our second year at MUMC because I believe God is calling us and has uniquely equipped us as a church to be a witness of hope, love, and unity with diversity. It's who we are. It's what we do. And, it's a witness that the world is desperate to see.

So, tell your neighbors and friends, this is a perfect time to connect or re-connect with Mentor UMC.

Sincerely,



Pastor Steve
Sr. Pastor, Mentor UMC

PS - look for the completion of our Fellowship Hall renovations in August and our new pictorial directory to be available in the fall.

