



Staying Connected

First UMC Marion, VA

January 2021



Tuesday, January 26, 2020

1:00 - 4:00 pm Masks & distancing required.

The Food Pantry is collecting CANNED SOUP.

Please bring your donations to the office.

2020 has been an unusual, amazing and surprising year for the Food Pantry. When the pandemic first hit, surprisingly, the number of participants did not increase. Some months the number of participants actually decreased.

But then December hit. Volunteers handed out more than 300 boxes on December 15. More than 1,000 people were fed with those boxes.

People were lined up from the doors of the Fellowship Hall, through the parking lot and up the sidewalk all the way to the front of the church, in the cold. Cars were lined up from the church parking lot for two or more blocks. Volunteers went back to

the Food Pantry storage building three times to get more food. Our shelves and freezers were emptied.

Normally, empty shelves would have caused a lot of anxiety. But, because of several generous businesses such as:

Royal Building Products, Bank of Marion, Food City and WalMart

AND grants from:

Smyth Strong and the state of Virginia, AND many generous donations from individuals, the Food Pantry is able to fill the shelves again.

Most of the food given out by the Food Pantry is purchased from Feeding America in Abingdon, Virginia. But, because of the pandemic and food shortages, Feeding America has not been able to purchase food from suppliers. The donations the Food Pantry has received has allowed us to purchase food from local grocery stores at retail prices, something we have not had to do before.

The Food Pantry has also received many boxes of non-perishable food from Grace United Methodist Church, Greenwood United Methodist Church, Adwolf Freewill Baptist Church and other area churches.



To everyone who has volunteered, contributed to and prayed for the Food Pantry.....THANK YOU!



FORWARD MOTION into 2021

Santa brought Kaylee a bike this Christmas. She is beyond excited. She is learning the necessary skill of pedaling in order to make the bicycle move and go forward. Without the forward motion of the feet on the pedals, there will be no movement...no forward motion.

As we say good-bye to 2020 and enter 2021, I challenge us all (me included) to consider how we are giving forward motion to our spiritual lives individually and as a family of God.

Together let us consider:

How are we learning? How are we understanding and learning the Bible? How to live out our faith? I think here is the place we discuss study. In the mix for discussion is bible studies, topical studies, book studies, small groups and Sunday school.

How are we servng? How are we taking part in serving our community and others? I think here we think about areas like the Food Pantry, clothing ministry, jail ministry, mission trips, youth ministry, children's ministry, music ministry, ministry teams and committees.

How are we worshipping together? What is the best way for us to gather and worship the living God? I think here we discuss what worship is truly about and what will connect with people so that they connect with God.

How are we growing? Here is where we think about fellowship. Some of the above areas will facilitate this but also things like fellowship meals and get-togethers.

How are we connecting? I think this is about being informed and staying informed. What are some of the best ways we do this? Is it through social media: Facebook, YouTube, website, emails and texts? Also connecting through phone calls, letters and cards.

All of these things we consider in the backdrop of Covid-19 that is still with us and will be for a while. Yet, these questions and things to consider are putting our feet to the pedal to have forward motion.

The great truth of Christmas is "God is with us." We follow Jesus so that in being disciples we are seeking to make disciples. The Holy Spirit guides us the whole way.

Peace and grace to all the FUMC Marion church family as we enter a new year, James

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of Christmas is
"God is with us."
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in being disciples
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to make disciples.
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FUMC Kids Ginger Moore - Children's Director

Every Wednesday Ginger meets with the **JAM (Jesus and Me) Zoom-Class**, grades pre-k through 5. If you have children interested in joining please call the church office for the Zoom invitation.

During December Ginger delivered Christmas activities to give the kids some hands-on fun.





By: Lisa Moore - Business Administrator
and FUMC Finance Committee

We are a church family here at First UMC and we have been diligently planning. Now, we are putting into action ministry plans for the New Year, 2021, so our family can continue to share and grow together.

Planning begins with compiling the church budget, a task taken seriously by the Finance Committee. The committee carefully reviews data from previous periods and gathers information from other committee chairpersons. This is why we have our Stewardship Emphasis each year. Once the committee has a better understanding of how much will potentially be received in tithes and gifts, then better planning can take place for the operations, ministries and other expenses of the church.

Planning The annual budget for First FUMC

- Starts with the Finance Committee
- ADD info from other committee chairpersons
- ADD info from Ministry Directors
- ADD data from previous years
- ADD Commitment Cards total
- EQUALS a budget for the new year.

As you review the numbers you can see that the Finance Committee still needs your help. The number of Commitment Cards received is down significantly compared to 2020. If you have not sent your Commitment Card in for 2021 it isn't too late. Commitment Cards are available at the church office.

Please remember, your Commitment Card is not a contract. It is an expression of your hope and intent to give. The Commitment Card allows the church to plan more accurately and effectively and allows us to be more intentional about our giving.

Listed below are some results of the Stewardship Emphasis for 2021.

- 65 Commitment Cards received.
A decrease of **27** Commitment Cards compared to 2020.
 - 19 Commitment Cards show an increase in their giving for 2021 compared to 2020.
 - 6 Commitment Cards received from families who had not regularly pledged in the past.
- \$252,440** Total amount currently pledged on 2021 Commitment Cards.

It is only through your generosity, your love for God and your love for the First UMC family that all of the wonderful and meaningful ministries of this church are possible. Being a steward of God's blessings is continuous and ongoing. The Bible, the church Discipline and John Wesley teaches that we are called to support God's inspired ministries with our finances!

With all of this being said, on behalf of the First UMC Finance Committee, we would like to extend a huge thank you to all who submitted a Commitment Card for 2021.

"You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God..."
2 Corinthians 9:11 (NRSV)

Our Giving 2020	
General Budget:	
Giving Needed Each Month	\$ 48,912.58
YTD Giving as of 11/30/2020	\$ 477,275.37
YTD Expenses as of 11/30/2020	\$ 463,670.51
★ YTD Surplus as of 11/30/2020	\$ 13,604.86

★ November giving totals reflect a surplus. Please be aware that the conference apportionment tithe payments have not been paid. Once these payments have been made the actual YTD deficit as of 11/30/20 is shown in the table below.

YTD Surplus as of 11/30/2020	\$ 13,604.86
YTD Tithe due as of 11/30/20	\$ 36,613.54
Actual YTD Deficit as of 11/30/2020	\$ (23,008.68)

Thank you to everyone that

came to the church to be in a video,
made and sent videos,
sent photos and were videoed at your home,
helped to plan and participated in
the Christmas Eve online worship service.

It was a joy to produce. The music, photos, videos and message touched the lives of many people and provided the opportunity to worship and celebrate the birth of our savior, Jesus, together.

Also, thank you to Denton Staley for delivering 67 Communion Kits to the front doors of folks who are mostly over 80. If you are over 80 and did not receive a Communion Kit before Christmas Eve, please call the church office so we can be sure we have your date of birth.

The Christmas Eve Online Worship Service and all Sunday Worship services are available to watch on FaceBook, Youtube, and at www.marionfumc.org

January Committee Meetings

Board of Trustees Meeting via Zoom

Monday, January 11 at 5:00 pm

Finance Committee Meeting via Zoom

Tuesday, January 12 at 6:30 pm

SPR Committee Meeting via Zoom

Wednesday, January 20 at 6:30 pm

Each committee member will receive an email with the Zoom meeting link. Please contact your committee Chairperson if you have not received your email by the date of your meeting.

FUMCares

Thank you for the food brought by the FUMC family on the death of our sister, Eleanor Martin. Keep us in your prayers,
Thelma Mathen, Betty Slemp,
Walter Robinson

Our Church Staff

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Newsletter