



Saginaw United Methodist Church

# Focus Newsletter

Faith Opportunity Christ Unity Service

Vol. 10, Issue 12 December 2021

## Lord's Acre 2021 Update

Thank you to all the volunteers and attendees at our Lord's Acre - you truly made this a beautiful day! There was fun, food, and fellowship, as well as fierce bidding during our auctions! Our church family raised over \$23,000 for Saginaw UMC capital improvements - which is fantastic! Thanks again for all your help and mark your calendar for next year's Lord's Acre on November 5, 2022.

Jenny Cardenas, Lord's Acre chair



### Upcoming Events

<b>LNO White Elephant</b>	<b>Thursday, December 9th</b>	<b>7:00 pm - 9:00 pm</b>
<b>Little Blessings Program</b>	<b>Tuesday, December 14th</b>	
<b>Charles Wesley's Birthday</b>	<b>Saturday, December 18th</b>	
<b>Administrative Council</b>	<b>Sunday, December 19th</b>	<b>12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.</b>
<b>Christmas Eve Service</b>	<b>Friday, December 24th</b>	<b>5:00 p.m. &amp; 7:00 p.m.</b>
<b>Office Closed</b>	<b>December 27, 30, January 3</b>	
<b>Methodist Men's Breakfast</b>	<b>Saturday, January 8th</b>	<b>8:00 a.m.</b>
<b>Sisterhood Community Link</b>	<b>Saturday, January 8th</b>	<b>10:00 am - 11:00 am</b>
<b>Office Closed - MLK</b>	<b>Monday, January 17</b>	
<b>Spring Acolyte Training</b>	<b>Sunday, January 23</b>	<b>12:30 pm - 2:30 pm</b>
<b>Leadership Training</b>	<b>Saturday, January 29</b>	

# Prayer List



**These prayers have been shared with your church family. Please help us lift these requests to the Lord.**

Prayers of Joy to Manning Cook who celebrates his 95th birthday November 10th.

Memorial service for Terry Spivey - 10 am Nov 20 at William C Martin UMC in Bedford.

For those who are recovering from surgeries

Prayers of Sympathy to the family of Michael Wimberley brother of Linda Fockler.

Prayer for Tony Teague, he is having a hard time recovering from back surgery.

Prayers for Charles Williams who is having a PET scan this week.

Prayers of healing for Andrew Jenks, nephew to Ada Umsted, after surgery for a broken leg.

Prayers of thanksgiving and for healing after Clay Flaim's successful hip replacement surgery.

Prayers of thanksgiving for the church

Prayers for Amanda Stallcup as she has passed her LPC exam.

Prayers for Rachel Jordan who is in the hospital.

Prayers of traveling mercies for all, especially college students.

Prayers of healing for those in quarantine with Covid.

Prayers for Margie who is having health issues.

Prayers for Jerry who is getting treatment for a new diagnosis of colon Cancer.

Prayers for Vanessa who has health issues and is caring for her brother and sister after their mother passed away.

Prayers for Sue who is searching for a job.

Prayers for Robin who is starting dialysis.

Prayers for Dorothy Loftin and family who lost everything in a house fire.

Prayers of healing for Kevin who has double pneumonia.

Prayers for those involved in the Boat Club fatality November 27th..

Prayers of healing for Cecilina, Phyllis Rainone's mother, who is ill and in the hospital

Prayers for Vince De La Torre, father to Charity Dragna, who is having spinal surgery on Wednesday, December 1st.

**Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.**

# Memorials/Honorariums

## **Given to the Budget**

*In appreciation of Lord's Acre Team*

Given by Jenny Cardenas

## **Given to the Endowment Fund**

*In Appreciation of Methodist Men's lunch  
at Lord's Acre*

Given by Jenny Cardenas

*In Memory of Joyce Byrd*

Given by Tim and Jane Ann Kret

*In Memory of Terry Spivey*

Given by Jay and Millie Beavers

## **Given to the Youth Fund**

*In Appreciation of the Youth at Lord's Acre*

Given by Jenny Cardenas

## **Given to the Music Fund**

*In Appreciation of the SUMC Choir at Lord's  
Acre*

Given by Jenny Cardenas

*In Memory of Terry Spivey*

Given by Jerry and Terry Timms

## **Given to the Saginaw Water Project**

*In Appreciation of the SUMC Quilters at Lord's  
Acre*

Given by Jenny Cardenas

*In Memory of my father, Ashley Meade*

Given by Jeannette Meade

# Finance Committee

We are extremely pleased to report our 2021 Budgeted income and expenses should be on target. Congratulations to you for your financial support during 2021.

Our 2022 stewardship campaign will be slightly above our 2021 commitments. We have several new pledge commitments this year. However, we have about 2 dozen families that have pledged in prior years that have yet to return their 2022 pledge cards. We will be contacting them shortly. We are currently fine tuning the projected expenses for 2022 and anticipate completing the process during December.

For the committee, Dale Pontius, Finance Chairperson.

# Little Blessings

Happy Holidays from Little Blessings! Thanksgiving offered our school a nice break where our staff and students were able to spend some extra time with their families. We are moving quickly into the month of December, with Christmas learning, Christmas parties, and a Christmas program! Our rooms will be filled with Santa crafts, Nativity counting, and gifts for parents! We might have a long break coming, but Little Blessings still has a lot to pack in before the end of the year.

The new year begins our Spring semester at Little Blessings, and I am happy to announce that the Little Blessings board has shown their support in the decision to open the preschool back to full operating capacity beginning in January. We will have openings in our three-year-old classrooms, and I expect the spots to fill in quickly. The Lord has blessed Little Blessings this year by bringing us not only students, but staff as well, and we are so excited to continue the program in the new year.

*Little Blessings is a two day a week program and runs as a ministry of Saginaw United Methodist Church. We serve students from 18 months, to PreK.*

*For more information, you can check out our page on the church website [www.saginawumc.org](http://www.saginawumc.org), or find us on Facebook @littleblessingsSaginaw.*



## THANKSGIVING



## FAMILY LUNCH



# Children's Ministry

## CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

Thank you to EVERYONE who helped make the Christmas Festival a success. I want to especially thank the Children's Ministry Team (Katie Deen, Mindy Hickman, Mary Kilgore, and Rachel Mash), Chrissy Martinez, Dale and Londa Pontius, Tim Mash, Orlando Martinez, the Watchmen, Charles and Shirley Stephens, Michelle Burkholer and all the youth volunteers, Rebecca Altizer, Country Critters Farm, and the Saginaw Santa.

I hope for this to be a recurring, annual event that we make bigger and better each year. Advent is the season when we celebrate the coming of our Savior and I feel we should have an event to celebrate that is as well known as our Easter event.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

**We are in need of volunteers for the winter and spring during Sunday School and Wee Worship.** All volunteers must be Ministry Safe current. It would be wonderful if you are able to dedicate a month at a time, but I completely understand that everyone has their own schedules to be mindful of. Please contact Charity Dragna, [children@saginawumc.org](mailto:children@saginawumc.org), if you are interested. Thank you for your prayerful consideration to serving the children.

## CHILDREN'S CHOIR

**We invite all children Pre-K-6th to join the Children's Choir! They will be meeting on Sunday's during the 11:00 service, after Children's Moment. If your child is interested please contact Sandra Young [2019sy-oung01@gmail.com](mailto:2019sy-oung01@gmail.com) or Charity Dragna [children@saginawumc.org](mailto:children@saginawumc.org).**

**We are not quite ready to hold our regular Christmas pageant, so we will be doing the next best thing. The Children's Choir will be performing at the December 19th service during 11:00 service and the Christmas Eve at the 5:00 pm service. The Children's Choir will be telling the story of the birth of baby Jesus in song through the eyes of the animals in the stable. December 19th tells of the animals finding out there is to be a new Savior born and then on Christmas Eve it is revealed who the Savior is!**

## DECEMBER SERVICE PROJECT

Thank you to everyone who donated towards our November project of *Stockings for Soldiers*. Our next ministry service project will be our 4th Annual Diaper Drive for Community Link this year November 28th - January 2nd. Adult and child diapers in all sizes are welcomed.

Please look for our donation box in Fellowship Hall. For more information, please contact Charity Dragna at [children@saginawumc.org](mailto:children@saginawumc.org).

### Upcoming Events: (stay tuned for more information)

- Children's Performance Part 1- December 19th
- Children's Performance Part 2 - December 24th 5:00 service
- Spring Acolyte Training - January 23rd 12:30 - 2:30 pm
- Easter Eggstravaganza - April 2022

# Youth Ministry

## Friendsgiving Success

Last month, SUMC Youth had a great time hosting their second annual Friendsgiving event! This time around, however, they had the pleasure of welcoming three other youth groups from around the Fort Worth area. Each group contributed something tasty for the big feast! The night was full of delicious food, feasting, fellowship, games, and a special service project. Over 40 youth worked together to pack 73 Christmas Shoeboxes for the Samaritan's Purse-Operation Christmas Child. It was a beautiful reminder of the verse in Acts 2:44, "*All the believers were together and had everything in common.*" A heartfelt thanks to all of the youth and youth directors from Alliance UMC, Coutts UMC and Smithfield UMC for helping to make this an event to remember. Can't wait for next year!

## A Special Christmas Shopping Spree

The youth are so excited to once again have the opportunity to bless the lives of some children this Christmas! On December 12, youth will don their Santa hats and head out to the stores to do some Christmas shopping for a local family in need. This is one of our favorite things to do in December! For more information or if you would like to make a contribution, please contact Michelle Burkholder, Director of Youth Ministries ([michelle@saginawumc.org](mailto:michelle@saginawumc.org)).



# Youth Ministry

## **Youth Advent Study - The Heart That Grew Three Sizes**

This Advent season youth will be diving into the beloved classic *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* during their Sunday school hour. There is so much more to this story and the grouchy, miserable Grinch who lived on Mt. Crumpit. We will take a deeper look at the character of the Grinch and his "hatred" towards all-things Christmas! Some of the topics we will be discussing are: *When Everything Is Wrong, When Christmas Isn't Christmas, When Light Shines & When Joy Is Our Song*. Please make plans to join us and discover why the very thing we think we hate may be the one thing that changes our lives! All youth in grades 7-12 are invited to meet upstairs in the youth room each Sunday beginning at 9:45 a.m.

## **Coming Soon**

Keep your eyes and ears open for our Electronics Fundraiser Kickoff! What better way to start the New Year than cleaning out all of your old electronics and office equipment? AND you will not only be helping raise money for youth and women's ministries but you will also be helping the environment! Stay tuned for dates and times to come your way in the January newsletter!

## **WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUTH - DECEMBER**

**Dec. 5 - Family Advent Festival, 4-6pm** - Youth will be joining with our church family to celebrate the beginning of Advent with games, a petting zoo, cookie decorating, crafts and a visit from Santa!! Youth volunteers (aka, Santa's elves) are needed! Prizes will be given to all youth who dress like an elf!!!!

**Dec. 11 - White Elephant Christmas Party @ Smithfield UMC, 6-9pm** - Youth have been invited to join Smithfield and Alliance UMC youth for their Christmas celebration! We will meet at SUMC at 5:00pm and should return around 9:30pm (\*\*note: this is a Saturday night!). Please bring a gift under \$20 for the gift exchange.

**Dec. 12 - Christmas Shopping, 5-7pm** - Meet up in the Youth Room for a night of Christmas shopping for our adopted family!! All monetary donations will be combined to help purchase stocking stuffers for our family. This is one of my favorite events!! Santa hats are strongly encouraged!!

**Dec. 19 - SUMC Youth Christmas Party, 5-8pm** (\*note extended time!) - Join us for a night of feasting, games, holiday music/movies, and an Escape Room challenge!! Wear your most festive outfit and bring a small gift (under \$10) for a special gift exchange.

**Dec. 26** - We will not meet for SNY. Enjoy some family time!!

# Pastor Ramon Smith

As we look forward to the celebration of the coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, in the world, I want to thank you for your faithfulness to the mission of Jesus Christ in the community and the world. I am truly blessed to serve as your pastor. My family and I love the church and the communities surrounding the church. My friends, we know that the best is yet to come! I would like to take the time to review some of the areas of ministry and where we are headed in the new year.

Like many churches, we are in a rebuilding phase due to the church building being shut down during the pandemic. We reopened the building and started in-person worship in March. Attendance averaged 134.41 in person from March 2021 to June 2021 and 315.41 online during that same period. Our in-person worship average before the pandemic was 238, and we do not have online worship numbers from that same period because we were not streaming our services. From July 2021 to the present, we are averaging 161 for in-person worship and 403 for online.

How do we plan to rebuild? First, we have focused on improving our worship experience. We have an amazing choir under the gifted leadership of Shawn Bell and the accompaniment of Mary Guess. Both our 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 worship experiences are traditional. We envision making 11:00 a.m. an intergenerational traditional worship experience, which means we will incorporate things that will reach people of all ages.

We are pursuing excellence and want to create the best traditional worship experience in a 10-mile radius. We are taking steps in this direction by worship planning weekly. During the ordinary time of our liturgical year, we do sermon series that speak to the specific needs of our community of faith and the residential community.

Secondly, we plan to rebuild by improving our children's ministry. We have scheduled at least one fun event each month for children. Also, we are dedicating at least one worship service per month that highlights church, for example, Blessing of the Backpacks, Third Grade Bible Presentation, and Children's Sabbath.

We are planning discipleship opportunities for young families and seniors that address their specific needs at their stage of life. Small groups will be a major component of our plan of discipleship. I will provide a weekly small group curriculum that follows the sermon series. This curriculum will be made available online in PDF format. Also, we will offer a class or seminar for married couples. Weekly, there will be a brown bag Pastor's bible study at noon on Wednesdays in the Fellowship Hall. Childcare upon request will be available for events, studies, and meetings on the church calendar so that young families can participate.

## Pastor Ramon Smith

The demographics reflect 63% white and 37% people of color on our side of the track. On the other side of the track, demographics reflect 51% white and 49% people of color. Railroad tracks divide Saginaw. We need to make sure we are intentional in reaching a more diverse population. Most churches in the area have only evangelized to the majority group. It is our goal to provide the congregation with training and the tools to reach our family members, neighbors, and co-workers.

Websites are the new front door. Due to generous contributions from two anonymous givers, we have been blessed with a new website. The site is more user-friendly and is more aesthetically pleasing. We can stream our services from the website rather than having to log into Facebook. You can still give online from the website. We are just scratching the surface in terms of its capabilities. Our new Digital Media and Ministry Assistant will start work on January 1, 2022, and he will help us expand our online and social media reach as well as help in other ministry areas.

All of this is possible, because of your extravagant generosity and your commitment to serve Jesus Christ. I know God is moving powerfully in our church. Let us march on toward the vision that God has given us for a brighter future. Most of these things will start in the first couple of months of 2022.

Blessings and Peace,

Ramon F. Smith

## SUMC Group Excursion

COME JOIN YOUR SUMC FRIENDS!

It's time to travel once again! Bonnie Dodyk has reserved a block of cabins on the Celebrity Equinox sailing around trip Fort Lauderdale and visiting Grand Cayman, Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao. Departure is October 15, returning October 24 (will make hotel arrangements for the night of October 14). Prices will include beverages, tips and Wi-Fi; presently there is a promo with second person in cabin paying only 50%! For further details please contact Bonnie at [bonnielwill@yahoo.com](mailto:bonnielwill@yahoo.com), 817-377-3886 (home) or 817-947-1308 (cell).

# Connection Opportunities



## Saginaw United Methodist Samaritans

People of Faith who respond to the needs of our church and community. We have a Sunday School class to learn more about what God wants us to do.

The Samaritans invite you to join us Sunday Mornings in Room C-20

9:45am - 10:45am for adult Bible fellowship (Live)

Or by Zoom

ZOOM MEETING ID: 730 753 4881 PW: 704 664

For information, please contact Bee Thompson @ 817.690.7784 or [be.escobar.thompson@gmail.com](mailto:be.escobar.thompson@gmail.com)

## Women 's Journey Group

The "Slightly Off-Balanced" Journey Group would like to invite any ladies who are looking for a small group to join us on Sunday evenings from 7 to about 8 p.m. The group has single and married women with high school and adult aged children. We meet by Zoom, so if it sounds good to you to stay home while taking part in Bible study and friendship, this might be a great fit for you. For more information or the Zoom link, please contact [phrainone@gmail.com](mailto:phrainone@gmail.com)

## Women of Grace

Sundays at 9:45am room C2. You are invited to join them and bring a friend. We are beginning our study of the Lord's Prayer in The Great House of God by Max Lucado. If you have any questions, please contact Janet Page, 210 846-5306 or Susie Rhoades, 765 748-0272.

## Men's Bible Study

Men's Bible Study is a self directed discussion. We meet in room C-20 and via zoom each Tuesday at 7:00 pm. For more information, please contact the church office.

## Stephen Ministers available

If you would like to speak with a Stephen Minister, please let us know by contacting Donna Anderson, Director of Stephen Ministry, [stephenministry@saginawumc.org](mailto:stephenministry@saginawumc.org) 817-269-5919. Although these calls may be or different from a Stephen Ministry caring relationship, confidentiality aspects still apply, making it easier to share sensitive information or difficult feelings.

## Methodist Men

Methodist Men contribution to the success of Lord's 1/2 Acre. Pulled pork lunch was great and raised almost \$700 for the event. Thanks to Dave Weaver, Jerry McWilliams, Ken Sippl, Tom Jumis, Tom Griffith, Clay Flame, Londa Pontius, Kevin Hickman and Ligia Sanchez for preparing excellent pulled pork and helping out in the kitchen to serve the dozens of lunches.

The Debbie Abel project was completed on Thursday Nov 11. Big thank you to Dale Pontius, Mike Momper, Ken Sippl, Gary Hill, Bob Pressler, Orlando Martinez, his son and nephew for the hard work to complete the project. The rotted deck is gone, the huge bushes and dead trees in the backyard are cut back and she now has a wonderful backyard to enjoy.

Methodist Men are sharing the cost of the new Christmas tree in the prayer garden.

January Methodist Men breakfast and project will be Saturday, January 8. Meet for breakfast at Jr's at 8:00, then off to the church to work on a project to replace lights.

# Connection Opportunities (cont.)

## **Sisterhood Updates on Women's Ministry at SUMC**

### **Community Link Donations**

Our next collection date is Saturday, Dec 4th, 10-11am. We will be at CL's location, 300 S Belmont St, 10-11am. They are collecting items for Holiday Boxes. They could use stuffing, canned baked beans & green beans & yams & corn, gravy/gravy mix, chicken broth, cranberry sauce, large box mashed potatoes, cornbread mixes, can pumpkin, can milk/sweetened condensed, box hot chocolate, bag of candy (for stockings), cake mix, frosting. You can also give \$15.00 towards a turkey or ham with a check or gift card (no cash please). The next donation date is Jan 8th. Thank you for your generous spirit.

### **Presbyterian Night Shelter**

If you have anything you would like to share with PNS (not furniture please I can't haul furniture) just contact Shirley Stephens, 817 683-5289. We can meet at the church or I can come to you to collect your items.

### **White Elephant Christmas Party**

It's almost time for our Christmas Party and a lot of ladies are already talking about coming. They are going through their closets & attic to find the ugliest, worst item they have so they can package it in pretty paper or bags to fool us. Beware and be prepared ladies. Refreshments will be served. We will meet in the fellowship hall Thursday, Dec 9th, 7-9pm. If you need nursery, please call the church office (817 232-0390) by Thursday, Dec 2nd. See you there!

### **Ladies Night Out**

Karen Jumes and Lou Ann Pressler will present some uplifting thoughts and activities as we begin a new year.

We will meet in Fellowship Hall, Thursday, January 13, 2022, 7:00 pm Please bring an appetizer to share and your recipes to share .

### **Ronald McDonald House**

We won't collect pull tabs for the Ronald McDonald House after December so if you have some please bring them by the end of the year. They have changed the process of donations. In the future you can take your pull tabs and empty soda can to any recyclers for money then send the Ronald McDonald House a check if you would like to. It is a worthy mission and I will let you know in January how much we had collected and the amount of money we received.

### **BIRTHDAY CARD MINISTRY**

Ever wonder who sends the birthday cards to you from the church? We have a birthday card ministry that has been functioning for about 3 years now. The committee consists of JoAnn Avery, Linda Strauss, Dee Griffith, Betty Young, Terry Timms, and Paula Wood. Make sure the office has your birthday and updated address so that we can celebrate you each year. Interested in joining the committee? Contact Paula Wood at [pjw627a@gmail.com](mailto:pjw627a@gmail.com) or 214-675-3826

### **Choir**

Greetings SUMC Family!

The SUMC Sanctuary Choir is back in full swing with rehearsals on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary. You are hereby invited to come join us!! Whether you've sung in the past or not, we welcome you!!

### **Saginaw Ringers**

The SUMC handbells rehearse on Wednesdays at 6:00 pm. Join us in the choir room!



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#### Focus Newsletter Schedule

The Focus Newsletter a monthly publication of Saginaw United Methodist Church. The next publication will be January 4th with submissions due to [office@saginawumc.org](mailto:office@saginawumc.org) by December 28th. Visit [saginawumc.org/contact-us/email-sign-up/](http://saginawumc.org/contact-us/email-sign-up/) to sign up to receive the newsletter by email and to receive special e-news blasts.



[Facebook.com/saginawumc](https://www.facebook.com/saginawumc)

Sunday Morning Worship in person and online 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.  
Office Hours Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

[www.saginawumc.org](http://www.saginawumc.org)

**817.232.0390**