

FAITH HAPPENINGS

Let's Share the Love!

In his recently published Soul Food article titled “Lent as a Pilgrimage of Holy Renewal”, Bishop Hee-Soo Jung (Resident Bishop of the Ohio Episcopal Area) reminds us of the blessed opportunity Lent provides each of us with. He writes: “Each year, this holy season comes to us with quiet insistence: Pause. Remember. Listen again.” In the midst of our complicated lives and world, we are invited to slow down and hear God’s voice.

As I heed this invitation, I am reminded of God’s persistent work through local congregations like New Philadelphia First UMC. Even though we are surrounded by chaos, tension, and brokenness, God is still showing up and shining bright in our midst. Even now, disciples of Jesus are being formed, and the local church is still the most fertile ground for this work of the Holy Spirit. We are so blessed to be a part of the NP First faith community and to be able to experience and live out the love of Christ together. Where would we be without it?

As I heed this invitation, I am also reminded of all our neighbors that have no such faith community and are missing out on this blessing. Might God’s voice be calling out to them as we draw nearer to Easter? What if God is calling out to them by way of us ... what if we’re to be God’s invitation?

Studies continue to show that a personal invitation is one of the most effective means to get unchurched people to give church a try. In the upcoming weeks, I will be encouraging all NP First congregants to invite at least one person to join them for our Maundy Thursday and/or Easter Sunday services. The person you invite may just come to realize for themselves that God’s love is most revealed through community. Who might God be putting on your heart to invite? God’s love is permeating our church, let’s be sure to share the love with others!

**God Bless,
Pastor Ryan**

FINANCE COMMITTEE

JANUARY 2026 UNIFIED INCOME

Forward in Faith Tithing	\$29,981
Annual withdraw from Endowment fund	<u>\$24,464</u>
	\$54,445
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<u>January 2026 Expenses</u>	
utilities, insurance, maintenance, staff	\$39,232
Monthly mortgage payment	\$9,565
Miscellaneous expense	<u>\$2,488</u>
	\$51,285
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Income for January 2026	\$3,160

HELPFUL INFORMATION

Did you know you can find a lot of helpful information in the weekly calendar printed in your bulletin?

In addition to upcoming events and special activities, the calendar also includes:

OFFICE HOURS, STAFF AVAILABILITY, AND MEETING TIMES.

It's a great way to stay informed and connected throughout the week, so be sure to take a moment to check it out.

CONGREGATION AND COMMUNITY CARE

The Congregational Care Team and Outreach Committee are now one combined committee, working together to bring our members closer through fellowship events and meaningful connection. Our goal is to strengthen relationships within our church family while continuing to be a welcoming presence in our community through established programs — and new ideas still to come.

We meet on the first Tuesday of the month at 6:00 p.m., gathering in person every other month. In the alternate months, we stay connected through email.

This past year, the Congregation and Community Care Committee hosted and supported a variety of fun-filled events and outreach activities, including: the Galentine Event, Fat Tuesday, College Care Boxes (February & October), Mother's Day, Father's Day, and Teacher/Student Back-to-School gifts, Trivia Nights, United Against Hunger, Hanging of the Greens, Children's Events, a Baseball Game, the July 4th Parade popcorn and water station, and Trunk or Treat.

We are already planning our United for Hunger rivalry with Dover, which will kick off with a chili cookoff at Camp Wanake.

We truly want to connect — so please share your ideas! What are some of your favorite events? What would you enjoy doing together as a church family?

FEBRUARY EVENTS IN REVIEW

Fat Tuesday Pancake & Sausage Dinner

Approximately 20 church members attended and helped serve alongside our guests from Supper Table. In total, we served around 70 people. It was a great evening of food and fellowship! Next year, we may revisit the idea of including a "Birthday Party/Cakes" celebration as part of the event.

College Care Boxes

We packed six care boxes for our college students. Janie Havan once again generously offered to ship them from her place of business and donated the postage cost — THANK YOU, Janie! We received a wonderful assortment of donated snacks (which our students truly appreciate), along with \$90 in monetary donations. Because of that generosity, we were able to include a \$15 Starbucks gift card in each box.

PAINTED WITH LOVE: A VALENTINE'S DAY GATHERING

Gal-entine Event

Thirteen members and guests attended this sweet time of fellowship. Everyone had fun creating one-of-a-kind heart keepsakes while enjoying delicious desserts and meaningful conversation.

Thank you to Marissa Lautzenheiser and Krista Maxwell for organizing such a wonderful afternoon!



We are grateful for the many ways our congregation shows up, serves, and supports these ministries.

We look forward to continuing to grow together in care, fellowship, and outreach.

UPCOMING EVENTS

NEW MEMBER SUNDAY - MARCH 22ND

New Member Sunday coming up on March 22nd. During our worship service, we will recognize those who feel led to officially become members at NP First, and this time of worship will also include a service of baptism.

MAUNDY THURSDAY - THURSDAY, APRIL 2ND AT 6:30PM

Maundy Thursday is an alternate name for Holy Thursday, the first of the three days of solemn remembrance of the events leading up to and immediately following the crucifixion of Jesus. The English word "Maundy" comes from the Latin *mandatum*, which means "commandment."

While John's gospel does not record the institution of the Lord's Supper among the events of this night, the other gospels do. This is why Christians have traditionally observed this night at the Lord's Table (Holy Communion).

CHILDREN'S EASTER EVENTS

Krista Maxwell is working with the children's ministry as they prepare the children to sing a special song on Palm Sunday.

On Easter Sunday, the children will enjoy a special party, including a craft, during our Sunday School time.

Following the Easter service, everyone — young and young at heart — is invited to the Life Center for an Easter egg hunt before heading home to their own family celebrations.

VBS 2026 - JULY 19TH -23RD

VBS planning is in full swing. We're excited to prepare for an amazing week of faith, fun, and hands-on learning with our kids. It takes a team of people make this ministry shine. If you love serving, welcoming families, or helping kids discover God's light, we'd love to have you join us. Sign-up sheets are available in the lobby and outside the sanctuary. There's a place for every gift—crafts, snacks, games, science stations, storytelling, registration, and more. Thank you for helping us make this year's VBS unforgettable!

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT:

Susan Elizabeth Arnold

Tell us about yourself: I was born at OSU hospital, but moved to Orville, OH when I was 1 year old. I graduated there and went to Ohio State, majoring in clinical dietetics. I am retired now, but mainly worked in home healthcare, specifically in group homes for individuals with disabilities, both in OH and WY.

I like to tinker around my vegetable garden, prune my shrubs and perennials, and try to keep my houseplants thriving. I also enjoy reading and listening to classical music.

Tell us about your Family: I am married to John Arnold and we have 3 boys, 2 being identical twins. We have 2 grandchildren, also boys! Our black lab completes our family, and she is a girl!

Tell us some fun facts:

1. **Favorite Ice Cream:** Cherry Vanilla
2. **Dream Vacation:** Wind River Range in Wyoming
3. **Favorite Sports Team:** Ohio State Buckeyes
4. **Favorite Game:** A wooden marble board that my dad made.
5. **Favorite book:** I have many, but 3 are JRR Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings", C.S. Lewis's "More Christianity" and any of Agatha Christie's mysteries.
6. **Favorite Bible Verse:** Isaiah 40:28-31

What are some ways you volunteer at NP FUMC? I lead Supper Table Team 6, ring bells, set up for Coffee Fellowship, usher, help administer the elements for communion, I have participated in international mission trips with UMCOR, including trips to Honduras and Guatemala.

What is something you've learned from volunteering? All people have narratives about their lives, past, present, and future. What a blessing it is for me when I can connect with people's journey of faith and learn about their narrative as we grow together.

What has been the biggest surprise about volunteering at church? The camaraderie, the laughter, the tears, the sharing of life stories, has helped me develop a deeper relationship with my church family.

Words to encourage others to volunteer. Helping others can enrich our life, can deepen our purpose in life. Helping others is a directive from Jesus. Come join the fun!



WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH:

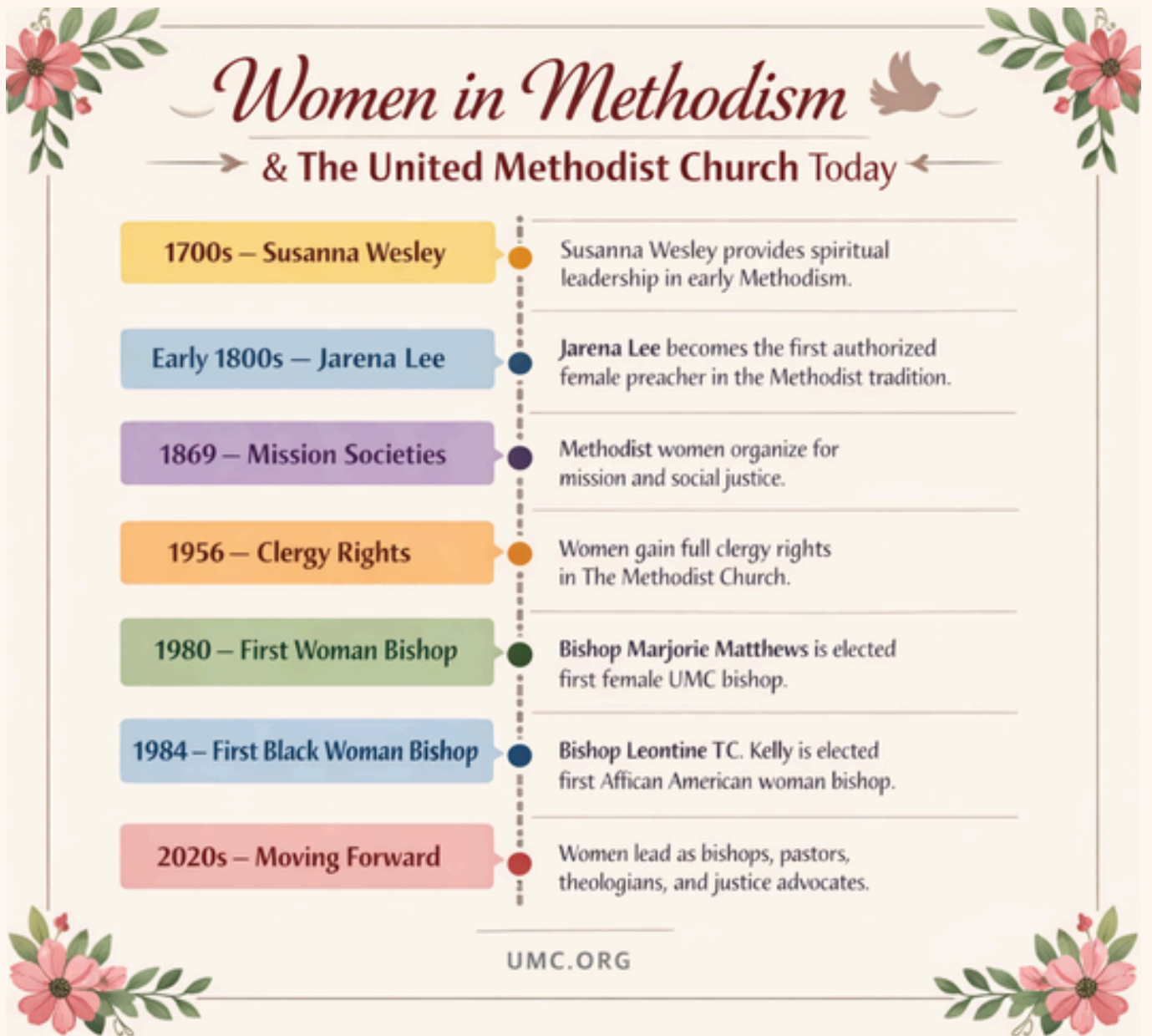
FAITHFUL VOICES, COURAGEOUS JUSTICE, ONGOING WORK!

Women's History Month is more than a time to remember the past — it is a call to continue the faithful work of justice, equality, and leadership in Christ's name. From the earliest days of Methodism, women have spoken boldly and served courageously, even when their voices were challenged or dismissed. Early Methodist evangelist Jarena Lee asked a question that still echoes in the Church today: "If the man may preach, because the Savior died for him, why not the woman, seeing He died for her also?" Her faith reminds us that equality is not simply a social idea — it is rooted in the Gospel truth that Christ calls and values all people.

The United Methodist tradition has long affirmed that faith must be lived out through justice and compassionate action. Bishop Leontine T.C. Kelly reminded the Church that "God calls each of us into ministry — not just a few, but all of us." Through generations of mission work and advocacy, United Methodist women have embodied that call. United Women in Faith continues this legacy with a clear purpose and commitment: "We are committed to justice for women, children and youth." Their witness reminds us that following Christ means working for dignity, fairness, and opportunity for all God's children — especially those whose voices have too often been overlooked.

As we celebrate Women's History Month, we also acknowledge that the journey toward equality is not finished. The Church is called not only to remember history but to shape the future with courage and conviction. Bishop Tracy S. Malone encourages the Church to live as a "sisterhood acting in faith to tackle the hard work of the world without hesitation," reminding us that faithful discipleship includes advocacy, justice, and bold leadership. Together, we give thanks for the women who have led the way, support those who continue the work today, and commit ourselves to building a Church and a world where every woman and girl is valued, empowered, and free to fully live out God's call.

As we look ahead, our celebration must become commitment. As United Methodists, we believe faith calls us beyond words into action. Honoring women's history means continuing the work of dismantling barriers, amplifying voices that have been overlooked, and advocating for dignity and opportunity for every woman and girl. Guided by our Social Principles and our call to love our neighbors, we are challenged not only to celebrate progress but to confront injustice wherever it remains — in our communities, our systems, and even within the Church itself. Through prayer, advocacy, leadership, and compassionate service, we follow Christ's example by standing with those seeking fairness and equality, trusting that the Holy Spirit continues to move us toward a more just and inclusive world.



Ways Women Lead in The United Methodist Church Today

- **Clergy & Bishops:** Women serve as pastors, district superintendents, and bishops — preaching, leading congregations, and shaping the vision of the wider Church.
- **Mission & Justice Leaders:** Through United Women in Faith and other ministries, women organize outreach, disaster response, anti-poverty work, and advocacy for justice and dignity.
- **Worship & Spiritual Formation:** Women lead worship, preach as lay speakers and certified lay ministers, plan liturgy, and guide prayer and discipleship ministries.
- **Christian Education & Theology:** Women serve as seminary professors, theologians, curriculum writers, and children’s and youth ministry leaders.
- **Connectional Leadership:** Women help guide the denomination as conference delegates, lay leaders, committee chairs, and ministry coordinators.
- **Community Outreach:** Many local missions — food pantries, clothing closets, shelters, visitation ministries — are faithfully led and sustained by women.

MARCH

BIRTHDAYS

Chad Cochenour - 1st
Shawna Hinkle - 3rd
John Arnold - 8th
Emma Hinkle - 9th
Harold McMorrow - 9th
Kal Potter - 10th
Patti Strickling - 12th
Grant Daniels - 16th
Bryan Haviland - 16th
Oakley Tipka - 19th
Nathan Anderson - 21st
Devan Marks - 21st
Harry Matter - 21st
Larry McClain - 21st
Penelope Cochenour - 22nd
Ruth Kirkpatrick - 23rd
Richard Hoy - 24th
Denny Gallentine - 26th
Helen Kollar - 26th
Alex Breehl - 27th
Patty Taylor - 29th
Suzanne Komaromy - 31st

ANNIVERSARIES

Larry & Ruth Kirkpatrick
March 6th - 50 years!

Denny and Sandy Gallentine
March 21st- 43 years!

Ron & Connie Weber
March 25th - 26 years!

Tom & Doreen Lightner
March 27th - 33 years!

