



ST. LUKE'S UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH
DENTON, MD

THE VOICE

FEBRUARY 2022 (EPIPHANY SEASON)

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR HEART AND MIND FOR LENT

IN THIS ISSUE:

HOW TO PREPARE FOR LENT	1-2
UPDATE ON PASTOR DAN!	3
OUR SHARED LIFE	4
PRAYER CONCERNS	5
FAITH FORMATION & UMW NEWS	6
FEBRUARY CALENDAR	7
COMMUNITY BIBLE STUDY INFORMATION	8
FINANCIAL UPDATES	9-10
PICTURES!	11



For many of us, the extent of our knowledge about Lent is:

1. It leads to Easter.
2. People “give something up.”

But Lent has a rich history and profound meaning for Christians. Digging into that history and meaning can make this spiritually significant season mean so much more to modern disciples.

WHERE DID IT COME FROM?

In its earliest form, Lent was a period of prayer and fasting for converts who were preparing for baptism. By the 4th century, Lent was set as a 40-day fast. By the 5th century, it was established as a time of preparation for Easter. It was meant to be a time of penitence and self-denial. The English word “Lent” comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *lencten*, which means “lengthen” and refers to the lengthening days of spring.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TODAY?

Lent is the season of the Christian Year that begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday (lasting 40 days, not including Sundays). Many use this season to focus on prayer, simple living, and spiritual disciplines. Churches will recognize the season with a more contemplative tone in worship.

Purple is the traditional color associated with Lent. The deep purple focuses our attention on fasting and repentance. It is also the color of royalty and anticipates Christ’s resurrection and sovereignty.

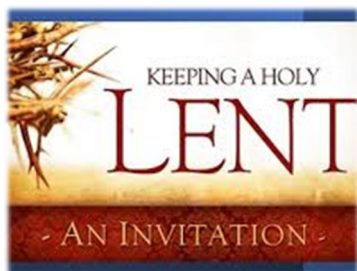
Prayer and fasting are the recommended spiritual disciplines because both keep us constantly attentive to our need of God’s mercy and the call of Jesus to repent. The discipline also keeps us open to listening for God’s will for us as individuals and as a church.

WHEN DOES IT BEGIN?

The beginning of Lent is marked by **Ash Wednesday** (this year, March 4th).

Ash Wednesday emphasizes both our need for forgiveness and our human mortality. During our Ash Wednesday services, a minister will invite you to come forward and will lightly rub the sign of the cross with ashes onto your forehead. In biblical times, the imposition of ashes on one's head was a way of publicly expressing awareness of one's sin and repentance. Ashes were also a sign of mortality and purification. Oftentimes, the minister will say, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

Ash Wednesday is an important way to begin the season of Lent because it points us to the climax of the Christian story. Lent ends in Jesus' death on the cross and his resurrection that demonstrates his triumph over death. We begin Lent by acknowledging our need and end it recognizing how God has met that need in Christ on the cross and the empty tomb.



SO HOW SHOULD I PREPARE?

1. Make plans to **attend all Lenten worship services** so you have experienced the season in its fullness:

- ◆ Ash Wednesday (March 4th)
- ◆ Palm Sunday (April 10th)
- ◆ Maundy or Holy Thursday (April 14th)
- ◆ Good Friday (April 15th)
- ◆ Easter Sunday (April 17th)

2. **Practice the “Wesleyan Means of Grace.”** John Wesley taught that God's grace is unearned and that we were not to be idle waiting to experience grace but we are to engage in the means of grace.

WORKS OF PIETY

Individual Practices – reading, meditating and studying the scriptures, prayer, fasting, regularly attending worship, healthy living, and sharing our faith with others

Communal Practices – regularly share in the sacraments, Christian fellowship, and Bible study

WORKS OF MERCY

Individual Practices - doing good works, visiting the sick, visiting those in prison, feeding the hungry, and giving generously to the needs of others

Communal Practices – seeking justice, ending oppression and discrimination (for instance Wesley challenged Methodists to end slavery), and addressing the needs of the poor

3. **Create space for God in your daily life:** time, place, heart, and mindset. You can do this by:

- ◆ “Giving something up” or fasting from something you habitually do
- ◆ “Taking something on” as a new, meaningful practice or discipline

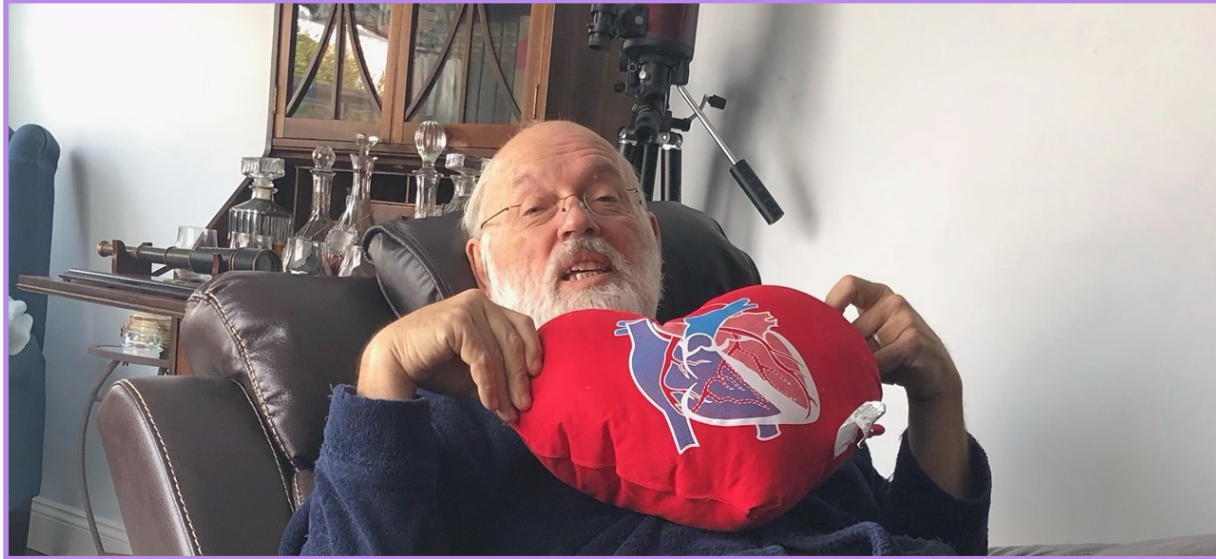
4. **Become aware of God’s presence and teaching** in conversations, experiences, people, and challenges

May this season be a blessing to you as you listen for God's grace in your life. Remember Jesus' words: *“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”* (John 16:33).

Excerpted and adapted from The First United Methodist Church of Texas: <https://fumcfw.org/fumcnews/prepareforlent/>

And the United Methodist Church: <https://fumcfw.org/fumcnews/prepareforlent/>

Update on Pastor Dan



Pastor Dan returned home Sunday afternoon and is doing extremely well. His surgeon is very pleased with how he is progressing. While fragile, everyday he is improving with what he is able to do and thankfully has little or no pain. He tires easily and naps intermittently throughout the day. This morning we set up his new laptop so he can begin reading and responding to emails soon and read the cards that were sent. He is feeling your love and support and for that we are grateful.

Above is a picture of Dan in his recliner with his new heart pillow!

Much Love,
Missy and Pastor Dan.

You can write or email to send well wishes (no visitors or calls/texts for now please)

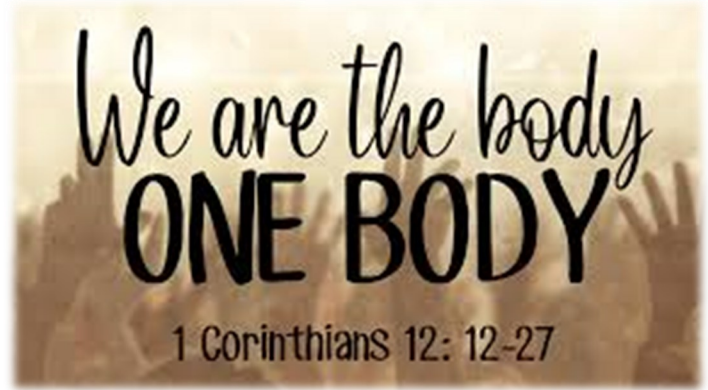
Address: 24610 Williston Rd., Denton, MD 21629

Email: dtgedman@gmail.com

Our Shared Life As the Body of Christ

One of primary things we do to “be” the Body of Jesus Christ is we worship together weekly, and we partake in Holy Communion together monthly. But there are other things we can do together to both “be” and also build up the Body of Christ and to serve others in His Name—

We can serve, study, pray, and fellowship together. Here are some upcoming opportunities for you to gather with and support your brothers and sisters in Christ.



Cookies and Cards (1PM Monday, Feb 7th and Wednesday, March 2nd)

- Write and address cards to local residents in senior care facilities (many of whom are not getting visitors at this time and are longing for human contact!)

Share Shop and Breaking Bread (Feb. 19th 9am-12pm)

- Drop off donations of gently-used clothing, household items, and non-perishable food to the church between now and Feb 18th
- Volunteers needed to help set-up on Friday afternoon or clean-up Saturday around 12pm
- Contact Paula Penn 410-490-4495 or the office 410-479-2171 to volunteer



Donate food for the Blessing Box and Office Food Pantry

- Need granola bars and other healthy snacks, single serve juices, “pop top” canned items, single serve cereal, and canned fruit
- Please do not donate expired food (we cannot use it)

Men’s Breakfast (Sat, March 5th)

- Speaker will be our very own and adored Dr. Jim Orr
- Scrambled eggs, sausage & bacon, biscuits & gravy, home fries, juice & coffee (YUM!)

Weekly Prayer (Wednesdays at 10am)

Weekly Exercise Class (Mondays & Wednesday at 5:30pm)

Weekly Community Bible Study (Thursdays at 10am, see info page 8)

Prayer Concerns for February 2022

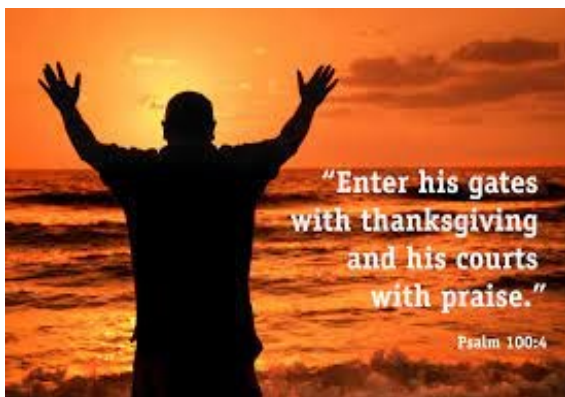


Grea Curtis, Sheila Orr, Caroline Cousey, Martin Retzolk, Jennie Russell, Pastor Dan and Missy Gedman, Julie Anderson, Roselyn Parker, Clarence Smith, Alan Flynn, Beth Homesley, Bishop Viola Fisher, Alice Tribbett, Aiden Dvorak, Pastor Larry and Brenda Pritchett, Owen Wevodau, Dale Nygren, Donna Fuss, Ann Shuler, Elaine Orme, Lisa Williams, Hayden Plutchak, Sonny Callahan, Bruce Hastings, Pastor Greg Barrier, Annistan Roten, Potsy Kemp, David Nagel, Judy Allen, Cricket and Glenn Williams, Ryan Alexander, Helen Vogt, Hollis Cantwell, Sylvia Holland, Alan and Gloria Vandam, Lisa Barge, Carol Stockley, Hayden Semans, Conrad Rosemere, Elaine Friel, Sarah Price, Kay Koenig, and our country.

Sympathy to the family and friends of those who have passed away since the last issue of the Voice (November, December): Bobby Dean, Rosemary Soldano, Phyllis Garey, Dorothy (Brendlinger) Muchesko, Leroy Lake, Lynn Keckler, and Gayle Jensen.



Prayers for those serving in the U.S. Military: John Biddle, Jake Brown, Chelsea Bunker, Seth Gill, Brockman Harris, Ethan Lister, JR Mann, Mitchell Mann, Justin Moore, Matthew Parker, Andrew Robbins, Dale Tuel, and James Wright,.



To add names to these lists, we ask that you either call (410-479-2171), e-mail (stlukes@goeaston.com), or drop-off/mail to 100 South 5th Avenue, Denton. Please be sure to include your name and telephone number so that we can contact you regarding the status of the person needing prayer; otherwise, the name will be removed after a couple of months.

Thank you to all who remember those named on our prayer lists. Only God knows how many are blessed because you care enough to pray.



Faith Formation

Growing in Faith from Birth through Adulthood

In the Methodist tradition and in the tradition of the historic Christian church, faith formation starts at home with the family. The church “family” supports the home family in teaching children and young people about God and faith in Christ. What happens at home shows children what the Christian Faith “looks like” in real life, day by day. Children first hear about God as creator and redeemer from their parents at home; the first prayers children hear are at meals and at their bedside; children first witness acts of compassion, grace, and kindness in their parents.

Here are some resources to help parents be more intentional about their children’s faith formation at home:

- Focus on the Family Parent Website www.focusonthefamily.com/topic/parenting/
- Family Resources at Dwell Website www.dwell.faithaliveresources.org/



UMW News 

We will not be offering Easter eggs this year, but will be planning another fundraiser. Our fundraisers help the UMW to support the Denton community, including: DCDC, Board of Child Care, Compass Regional Hospice, Samaritan House, Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence, and Camp Pecometh Scholarships, in addition to helping with church and kitchen needs.

If you would like to be involved with the United Methodist Women, or help at any of our church events, please contact the church office. Our next meeting will be held on April 12 and we invite all St. Luke’s women to join us!



We are seeking one or two more volunteers to help organize and oversee our 2022 Vacation Bible School this summer!

We will have “worker bees” and boots-on-the-ground for the week of VBS and are in need of leadership March-April to order materials, oversee registration, and organize volunteers.

Please contact the office to volunteer as leadership or to help out with VBS the last week of July. **THANK YOU!**



February 2022



Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

		1	2 10am Prayer Team 5:30pm Exercise 7pm Praise Band	3 6:30 Boy Scouts		
6 10am Worship Service (no communion)	7 12pm AA 1pm Cookies & Cards 5:30pm Exercise 7:30pm NA	8 7pm AA	9 10am Prayer Team 5:30pm Exercise 6pm Bells 7pm Praise Band 7:30pm Choir	10 6:30pm Boy Scouts	11	12 Boy Scouts Pinewood Derby
13 8:30 Trad'l Worship 9:30 Sunday School 9:40 Ignite Worship 11:00 Trad'l Worship	14 12pm AA 5:30pm Exercise 7:30pm NA	15 7pm AA	16 10am Prayer Team 5:30pm Exercise 6pm Bells 7pm Praise Band 7:30pm Choir	17 6:30pm Boy Scouts 7:30 Church Council	18	19 9-11am Share Shop 11-12pm Break-ing Bread
20 8:30 Trad'l Worship 9:30 Sunday School 9:40 Ignite Worship 11:00 Trad'l Worship	21 12pm AA 5:30pm Exercise 7:30pm NA	22 11am Blood Bank 7pm AA	23 10am Prayer Team 5:30pm Exercise 6pm Bells 7pm Praise Band 7:30pm Choir	24 6:30pm Boy Scouts	25	26
27 8:30 Trad'l Worship 9:30 Sunday School 9:40 Ignite Worship 11:00 Trad'l Worship	28 12pm AA 5:30pm Exercise 7:30pm NA	March 1 7pm AA	March 2 7pm Ash Wednesday Service			March 5 7:30am Men's Breakfast



Community Bible Study

An Impact Group to start a Community Bible Study on the Eastern Shore

In November of last year we had an open meeting for our church family to get input for the areas of ministry we should pursue moving forward in 2022. Opportunity for various group Bible studies was an important goal.

What does this mean for St. Luke's UMC? God has opened the door to have an onsite location to hold a Community Bible Study (CBS) class in Easton. Class members can attend in person or via Zoom. The tentative plan for St. Luke's is to hold a satellite in-person class at our church beginning in September. The day and time to be determined.

What is Community Bible Study? The vision of CBS is to transform lives through the Word of God. Their mission is to make disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ through caring, in-depth Bible study available to all. CBS is interdenominational, began in Maryland 45 years ago, and is now worldwide. For more information about CBS go to www.communitybiblestudy.org.

What can you do now? Make your time count and join our Zoom Impact Group to help grow our class. We are meeting for 6 weeks on Thursdays beginning 2/3 at 10 AM. Each week is a different topic and we have an agenda of prayer, a devotion, and a short lesson. We want to grow class participation. Louise Webb is our church contact and will send you the Zoom link each week. She is also willing to meet in person at the church to run the meetings if you cannot link in to Zoom. If you need more information or if you cannot join us but are interested in the class, call Louise!



Louise Webb 302-632-0707

louisewebb44@gmail.com

St. Luke's Vision: *To summon the world to faith and to proclaim the gospel in both word and deed as we seek to make disciples for Jesus Christ.*

Financial Update and Report

St. Luke's United Methodist Church Treasurer's Report

For Period January through December 2021 as of December 31, 2021

Description	Actual				Budget through December 2021	Actual			
	Annual Budget 2021	Income or Expense To Date	Variance	S/B 100%		Income or Expense To Date	Variance	S/B 100%	
Income									
Offerings	242,307.00	238,907.23	3,399.77	98.60%	242,307.00	238,907.23	3,399.77	98.60%	
Offerings - Sunday School	100.00	39.00	61.00	39.00%	100.00	39.00	61.00	39.00%	
Interest Income	25.00	33.92	(8.92)	135.68%	25.00	33.92	(8.92)	135.68%	
Building Use	3,000.00	5,886.00	(2,886.00)	196.20%	3,000.00	5,886.00	(2,886.00)	196.20%	
Administrative Building Use	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00		
Total Income	245,432.00	244,866.15	565.85	99.77%	245,432.00	244,866.15	565.85	99.77%	
Expenses									
Pastor Expenses									
Salary	58,000.00	57,999.96	0.04	100.00%	58,000.00	57,999.96	0.04	100.00%	
Travel Reimbursement	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	
Cable TV at parsonage	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	
Hospitalization/Dental	18,180.00	20,400.00	(2,220.00)	112.21%	18,180.00	20,400.00	(2,220.00)	112.21%	
Bishop's Retreat	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	
Continuing Education	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	
Pension Plan	9,512.00	9,512.04	(0.04)	100.00%	9,512.00	9,512.04	(0.04)	100.00%	
Pastor Expenses - other			0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00		
Total Pastor Expenses	85,692.00	87,912.00	(2,220.00)	102.59%	85,692.00	87,912.00	(2,220.00)	102.59%	
Staff Expenses									
Staff Salaries	71,400.00	64,795.99	6,604.01	90.75%	71,400.00	64,795.99	6,604.01	90.75%	
Wage and Tax Expenses	7,140.00	5,328.31	1,811.69	74.63%	7,140.00	5,328.31	1,811.69	74.63%	
Worker's Compensation	1,428.00	549.00	879.00	38.45%	1,428.00	549.00	879.00	38.45%	
Expenses - other		0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00		
Total Staff Expenses	79,968.00	70,673.30	9,294.70	88.38%	79,968.00	70,673.30	9,294.70	203.82%	
Other Operational Expenses									
Accounting & Legal	400.00	570.38	(170.38)	142.60%	400.00	570.38	(170.38)		
Annual Conference expense	500.00	150.00	350.00	30.00%	500.00	150.00	350.00	30.00%	
Christian Education/Sunday School	1,200.00	313.18	886.82	26.10%	1,200.00	313.18	886.82	26.10%	
Conference Apportionments	22,379.00	22,379.00	0.00	100.00%	22,379.00	22,379.00	0.00	100.00%	
Easton District Office	1,343.00	50.00	1,293.00	3.72%	1,343.00	50.00	1,293.00	3.72%	
Janitorial Supplies	1,000.00	668.07	331.93	66.81%	1,000.00	668.07	331.93	66.81%	
Electricity/Oil	12,000.00	13,183.99	(1,183.99)	109.87%	12,000.00	13,183.99	(1,183.99)	109.87%	
Equipment Rental & Maintenance	6,500.00	4,779.71	1,720.29	73.53%	6,500.00	4,779.71	1,720.29	73.53%	
Kitchen/ParsonageFuel	4,000.00	3,274.00	726.00	81.85%	4,000.00	3,274.00	726.00	81.85%	
Grass and Shrubbery Maintenance	1,800.00	4,210.00	(2,410.00)	233.89%	1,800.00	4,210.00	(2,410.00)	233.89%	
Insurance	10,300.00	9,255.00	1,045.00	89.85%	10,300.00	9,255.00	1,045.00	89.85%	
Maintenance and Repairs	5,000.00	4,524.28	475.72	90.49%	5,000.00	4,524.28	475.72	90.49%	
Miscellaneous	100.00	412.29	(312.29)	412.29%	100.00	412.29	(312.29)	412.29%	
Music Committee	1,200.00	933.00	267.00	77.75%	1,200.00	933.00	267.00	77.75%	
MYF Program	200.00	0.00	200.00	0.00%	200.00	0.00	200.00	0.00%	
Office Supplies	3,000.00	1,994.02	1,005.98	66.47%	3,000.00	1,994.02	1,005.98	66.47%	
Postage	1,300.00	846.55	453.45	65.12%	1,300.00	846.55	453.45	65.12%	
Pastor/Organist, Substitutes	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	
Pastor's Moving Exp Escrow Acct	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	
Stewardship	1,300.00	1,641.73	(341.73)	126.29%	1,300.00	1,641.73	(341.73)	126.29%	
Telephone	2,000.00	3,250.84	(1,250.84)	162.54%	2,000.00	3,250.84	(1,250.84)	162.54%	
Water and Sewer	1,500.00	1,071.76	428.24	71.45%	1,500.00	1,071.76	428.24	71.45%	
Spiritual Life	1,750.00	2,232.27	(482.27)	127.56%	1,750.00	2,232.27	(482.27)	127.56%	
Worship Materials	1,000.00	215.01	784.99	21.50%	1,000.00	215.01	784.99	21.50%	
Total Operational Expenses	79,772.00	75,955.08	3,816.92	95.22%	79,772.00	75,955.08	3,816.92	95.22%	
Total Expenses	245,432.00	234,540.38	10,891.62	95.56%	245,432.00	234,540.38	10,891.62	95.56%	
Net Income over Expenses	0.00	10,325.77	(10,325.77)		0.00	10,325.77	(10,325.77)		

St. Luke's UMC Fiscal Year 2021 Treasurer's Report

St. Luke's and our community in many ways have continued to be impacted by the pandemic as well as the economy. I want to share how your continued faithful financial support has allowed us to maintain our viability as a functioning church. I believe our church family honors 2 Corinthians 8:11-12, "Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means. For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have."

There are many opportunities for giving at St. Luke's. Following is a summary of activity in all our financial accounts:

General Fund Income and Expense Report is published monthly in the Voice. The year-end data show that versus budget offerings were at 98.6% and expenses at 95.6%. All contracts and vendor expenses were evaluated and savings identified and we continue to be conservative with our spending. We ended the year with \$10,325 gain.

The 2022 budget for General Fund is 4% higher than 2021. We continue to evaluate every line item for opportunities to save without hindering our mission. The increase is mainly for cost of fuel and electricity. Sale of the parsonage is in process and proceeds from the sale will be set aside in a protected investment account for future use if needed for a parsonage.

Special Accounts are designated funds for items such as MYF, Backpack Fund, Neighbors United To Serve (NUTS), Woven Women Ministry, Operation Christmas Child, REACH, UMCOR, and VBS. These funds are disbursed as programs need them and are an opportunity to give in addition to general funds. The December balance in the account was \$23,993.

Memorial Funds are both designated and undesignated bequests honoring the loss of loved ones. There are 15 accounts including Camp Pecometh Scholarships, Organ, Sunday School, Nursery, Music, Choir Robes, Handbells, Technology, and Landscaping. We used Sunday School designated funds to complete upgrades to Sunday School technology. In addition, there are funds to complete the second floor bathroom. In 2021 the account had income of \$3,324 and disbursed \$12,057 leaving an ending balance of \$25,504.

United Methodist Women (UMW) income is derived from sales of nuts, Easter eggs, Easter and Christmas flowers, and annual Prayer & Self Denial campaign. Given the unknown impact of Covid the decision was made not to proceed this year with the Easter Egg project, our biggest source of funds. The congregation generously donated \$1,760 to help offset that loss. Donations were made to several outreach programs including Samaritan House, Compass Regional Hospital, Board of Child Care, Denton Child Development Center, and Pastor's Discretionary Fund. December balance in the checking account was \$12,057 and CD investment \$7,015.

Pastor's Discretionary Fund income is derived from designated church offerings and UMW donations. The fund is a benevolence set aside for the pastor to use his discretion to meet requests from the community or church members. All the funds are managed with confidentiality and are used for items such as rent, utility bills, transportation, and medical. The winter months create the biggest demand for help.

Again, thank you church family for your faithfulness.

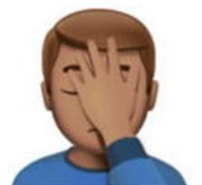
Louise Webb, Treasurer
louisewebb44@gmail.com



Worship



...The page where Carrie added random fun pictures because she ran out of stuff for the newsletter (but has to have an even number of pages to make the format work...)



St. Luke's United Methodist Church
100 South Fifth Avenue
Denton, Maryland 21629

410-479-2171
email: stlukes@goeaston.net

Return Service Requested

To:

The Voice

of St. Luke's UMC

February 2022

St. Luke's UMC Staff

Rev. Dan T. Gedman– Pastor

Administrative Assistant: Carrie Soldano

Director of Music: Becky Zinser

Director of Ignite Band: Alicia Weippert

Nursery Coordinator: Alex Penn

Sexton: Denny Weaver

Visit St. Luke's Online at
www.stlukesdenton.org
or on Facebook

