

News from the First United Methodist Church of Mexico July, August and September 2023

Greetings and Blessings Family,

July 1st marks the end of my first year as your pastor at Mexico First UMC. This anniversary reminds me that we are still yet beginning our relationship as "Pastor" and "Church". If we could continue on to 10 years of ministry (the minimum of what is considered to be a long term pastor), then we have only completed a mere 10% of our time together. This is speculation and only the Lord knows how long we are to be together.

Thom Rainer, a church researcher, has come up with what he calls, "The Life Cycle of a Pastor". In it he lists the different categories that a church and it's pastor will go through from 0 months to 10 years. I thought I would share it with you and seek your feedback in how you think we are doing. Yes, that is right, I want your critical (but grace filled) feedback. I want to invite you to either email me at bmgsped@yahoo.com or leave me a note in the offertory plate on Sunday.

Without further ado, here is "The Life Cycle of A Pastor":

Honeymoon: 0 to 6 months. This era is becoming shorter and shorter. When we first started reporting the life cycle of pastors, the period lasted up to three years. It is now down to 6 months. Church members are often fearful about their church's future. They frequently call pastors with unrealistic expectations. It does not take long before many members realize that the expectations will not be met.

Challenges and conflict: 6 months to 4 years. The honeymoon period is shorter, and the era of challenges and conflict is longer. For two decades, this difficult period of a pastor's tenure only lasted two years. Now the pastor can expect it to last over three years. Obviously, this period is the most common era for pastors to resign or get fired.

Acceptance and stability: Year 4 to year 7. For many years, we referred to this stage as the growth era of a pastor's life cycle. Until the pandemic, it was common for the pastor to lead the church to growth during this time more than any other point. Today, we simply say it's a time of acceptance and stability after a period of conflict. Growth is not as common for churches during this era as it was in years past.

Pastor's letter continued:

Inflection point: Year 7 to year 10. This stage becomes the defining point for a long-term pastor. It is possible for the church to have a growth stage at this point, but it is also possible for the pastor to cease leading the church toward Great Commission growth. This reality can become pronounced if the pastor is moving toward retirement. Such is the reason we call it an inflection point: the growth and health of the church moves clearly positive or clearly negative.

Mystery: After year 10. We still don't have sufficient data to name this stage and any attempt to define it seems futile because we just don't see any consistent patterns. The efficacy of a pastor's ministry after the 10th year of tenure remains a mystery.

My hope is that we are going to beat the trend of an extended period of challenges and conflict and move to acceptance and stability. I pray that we see growth, spiritually and numerically, in a prolonged period of acceptance and stability, like the yesteryears of the church.

As I look back on our first year together, I already see us defying the norms of what is seen as a pastor/church relationship and I see God moving in so many ways. New people are walking through the doors, new children are joining the youth group, new ministries are being created and shared in our community, and there is new excitement and energy in our worship. Family, I am so excited to see what God has in store for us next. As I close this letter to you, I ask you to remember several things. The only limits that we have are the ones we place on ourselves, the answer will always be no if you never try or ask, and there isn't anything we cannot achieve together with God. The Greco/Gilmores are blessed to be your pastor family and we look forward to being that far beyond the "10 years".

May we join together as God's people and seek to love one another as Christ has loved each one of us!

Your Pastor with love,

Pastor Brandin M Greco

IMPORTANT DATES

July 4 – Independence Day
July 17 – 21 – Vacation Bible School 5:30 – 8:00
July 25 – Youth group trip to The Wild
August 9 – Youth group trip to Enchanted Forest
August 12 – Men’s breakfast at Lycoming UMC
September 4 – Labor Day
September 14 – Open mic night resumes
September 17 – Coat and chili giveaway
September 23 – Fall begins
September (date TBD) – Youth group trip to Moose River Farm

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, TO...

~ Pastor Brandin, Kaylee and Ben for providing beautiful music for us during worship.
~ All who serve on committees and provide leadership to our church.
~ Everyone who continues to support our Blessing Box ministry to help feed our neighbors.
~ Our Worship Committee for decorating the sanctuary beautifully during our different seasons of worship.
~ All of those people that work behind the scenes to keep our church running. There is much that is done that we often don’t think about. Thank you to those that “make things happen”.

A note from Sue Morton

“A big thank you to my church family for all of the cards, phone calls, texts and visits while I was in the Manor at Seneca Hill. Pray for the nurses and staff. They are so short handed.

If you know of anyone in a hospital or nursing home, please send them a card, call them or even visit. It will brighten up their day and you both will be happier for it.”



A note from Connie Day

“My daughter Jacquie Rhinehart Taylor, and I would like to thank everyone for all their thoughts and prayers for her. God is good!”



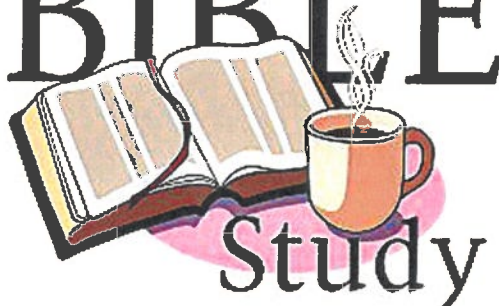
Mission Outreach Committee News by Carol Watros

Blessing Box: Continued thanks for your contributions to the Blessing Box pantry. The box is utilized on a regular basis; popular items are the typical staples of peanut butter, shelf-stable milk, cereal, Ramen noodle soup and personal hygiene items. The Food Wall theme for July, in addition to these items, will be anything related to National Deli Month: think condiments, tuna, canned chicken salad, sandwich wraps, packaged pepperoni and other dried meats. As a friendly reminder, please bring in unexpired food items only.

Attic Treasure Sale, Mystery Dinner Theater: We appreciate everyone understanding our decision to cancel this year's sale and have decided to try something new! So ... **Save the date** as on **Saturday, October 21** we are hosting a **Mystery Dinner Theater** at our church. Plan on a night to remember with mystery, fun, and laughter ... and oh, yes ... a theme-related meal of which you will find yourself 'immersed' in the evening's entertainment from your very first bite!

Finally, our gratitude for all who assisted in donating and assembling the **60 Hygiene Kits** for the Upper NY Conference Mission Central HUB. As shared in the spring newsletter, these kits help our conference address those navigating the impact of both immediate and long-term socio-economic and natural disasters.

We will keep everyone posted on upcoming activities. If you have any ideas, please share them and as always, we welcome new members. Feel free to contact Carol Bradlinski-Watros at cbwatros@gmail.com or 315-529-0930 if you have any questions. Again, on behalf of the committee, we thank you for everything.

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| <p>COME JOIN OUR</p> <h1>BIBLE</h1>  <p>Study</p> | <p>Coming soon in August</p> <p>Coffee with the Pastor at the parsonage studying</p> <p>"A Letter to the Hebrews"</p> <p>More details to follow.</p> |
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Cardboard Village

On Saturday, June 10, five of our youth and several adults gathered together to create a cardboard village. The youth and those adults that stayed overnight made shelters out of cardboard and slept in them all night. Plenty of cardboard and duct tape was used and the houses that made up the village were very creative. There was one that had a mailbox, one with a secret door, a two-room house, skylights and a potted plant was even brought in to make the village a bit homier.

The reason behind this was to give the youth (and adults) a sense of what it might be like to be homeless and only have cardboard as shelter. The youth took pledges from family, friends and church members. In total, eight youth from Lycoming and Mexico raised **\$1,320**. This money will be split between the Mexico Food Pantry and Victory Transformation Center in Oswego.

The Friendship Unit also donated **\$680** from their baby bottle fundraiser to this cause for a grand total of **\$2,000** raised to support our local neighbors in need.

Thank you to everyone who supported this mission project in any way. Well done!



Vacation Bible School is back!

We are excited to host Vacation Bible School on July 17 – July 21 from 5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Join us for games, snacks, crafts and music!

Kids ages 5 up through 5th grade are welcome to join us for an awesome adventure!



If you need to contact the church:

Phone – (315) 963-3066

E-mail – fumcmexico@gmail.com

Website – www.mex1umc.com

Mailing address: P.O. Box 255, Mexico, NY 13114

Facebook: Mexico First United Methodist Church



Coat and Chili Giveaway

Over the last several months, the Men's Clubs from Mexico and Lycoming have been collecting coats to be distributed to those in need.

The distribution will be held on Sunday, September 17 to coincide with the village's Cider Run. We hope to be able to use the pavilion at the center of the village for distribution.

Stay tuned for ways you can help support this mission project. We will be asking for donations of chili and will need people to help distribute lunch and the coats.

Thank you to all who have donated coats so far.

Church mission: To make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

July birthdays

1 – Jean Irwin
2 – Joanne Barnes, Millie Murray
3 – Chase Parker
4 – Paul Vautrin
5 – Patricia Smith
7 – Doug Irwin
10 – Linda Robinson
13 – Terry Grimshaw, Wayne Weber
14 – Doanne Hurlbut
19 – Jonita Greenhouse, Karen Grimshaw, Jeanette Spicer
20 – Barb Lighthall, David Coonrod, Shirley Tourot
21 – Alyssa and Andrea Ross
23 – Jim Smith
25 – David Hurlbut
29 – Katie Linerode

August birthdays

1 – Niles Greenhouse, Mary Mack
4 – George Monson
5 – Pastor Brandin Greco
6 – Jessica Parker
7 – Noah Spencer
11 – Gary Hurlbut
14 – Elyse Skiles, Al Smithers
17 – David Munger
20 – Gail Hurlbut
23 – Nick Spaulding
24 – Missy Gorton
26 – Cathy Stock
27 – Duane Griffin

September birthdays

1 – David DeLong
6 – Rose Ann Myers, Maggie Palmer
8 – Brenda Hotchkiss
12 – Cindy Monson
16 – Gary Day

July anniversaries

7 – Earl and Muriel DeLong
11 – Mike and Kelly Freihofer
20 – Chuck and Jessica Parker
22 – Jeremy and Lisa Spencer
28 – James and Carol Watros
30 – Jeff and Carol DeLong



August anniversaries

3 – Everett and Linda Robinson
6 – Chuck and Dotty Parker
7 – Jim and Diane Barbur
11 – Jeff and Marcia Albrecht
12 – Eric and Lori Behling
21 – Duane and Sue Morton
24 – Ed and Barb Lighthall

September anniversaries

5 – Bill and Maggie Palmer
6 – Duane and Norma Griffin
25 – Benjamin and Kaylee Gilmore

18 – Cindy Ross
19 – Benjamin Gilmore
24 – Lisa Spencer
27 – Victoria Ross
29 – Jenn Jackson
30 – Zianna Gorton