

*News from the  
First United Methodist Church of Mexico  
January, February and March 2025*

Greetings My Church Family,

April and I, along with the entire “Grec-more” clan, pray that you, our church family, had the most blessed Advent and Christmas season. As we are heading into a new year with new possibilities and opportunities, we **Hope** that it brings us closer together, closer to our communities and closer to God. I typically write a separate letter to be given to Miss Cindy from Lycoming and Miss Lisa from Mexico for their respective newsletters, while asking for an immense amount of grace for always being late. One of my goals since the accepting of two church families has always been to do my best to bring both families into one sense of **Home**. So, this letter I will be writing to both churches together.

As we finish a worship series that centers on the idea of **Home**, and a year that was so focused on pointing outward, rather than inward, I’d like to share a few things that my church families did as individual churches and as **One** church beginning with the amazing youth that we both share. One of the unique things that we share as opposed to other multiple charge church relationships is that our churches share the same community and school district. Our children go to school together, our families work together. We see each other in the store and at the post office. This year, Lycoming’s Sunday School continued to grow under the new leadership of Miss Marissa, who brings a new energy and excitement to an already awesome team. Mexico welcomed back an exciting new vision for VBS and shared the excitement of having fun while learning about God with over 30 children. One of the greatest blessings was seeing these two groups come together to raise money through the cardboard village for the homeless shelter in Oswego, Victory Transformation. Both men’s groups continue to give to their churches and communities, but one of the greatest blessings was seeing them come together to have a very successful coat and chili giveaway that was free to our shared community. Our trailer park ministry at Lycoming continues to grow and be transformed under its new leadership of Miss Pat and her team, while the joint ministries of Mexico’s Growth and Outreach Committees continue to give and share much needed material needs along with spiritual growth. Another one of the greatest blessings is to see both churches come together to help at Operation Reindeer where we helped close to 200 families and 600 children this year. Seeing this great need, we also begin to see the planting of seeds through a new lunch ministry in Mexico.

Family, as we leave a season focused on creating a sense of **Home**, not found in buildings, but in Jesus and us, His family, I would like to head into a season of **Hope and Light**, that will shine brightly from Jesus to us and through us. We as “**One Church**”, need to point that **Hope and Light** outward and through that, God will grow this family. Your pastor family and I have dedicated ourselves to this very mission and we look forward to what God and the coming year has in store for us, not focusing on what makes this world “ugly” but the “beauty” that still can be found all around us. God still has so much more for us to do family; we love each and every one of you and are blessed to be a part of “our” family.

*With Much Love, Your Pastor Family,  
The Greco/Gilmores*

## IMPORTANT DATES

**January 1** – Happy New Year!  
**January 8** – Administrative Council - 6:00 p.m.  
**January 9** – Open Mic Night – 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.  
**January 18** – Men’s breakfast at Mapleview Restaurant - 8:30 a.m.  
**January 23** – Outreach meeting - 6:30 p.m.  
**February 13** – Open Mic Night –6:00 – 8:00 p.m.  
**February 14** –Valentine’s Day  
**February 15** – Halfway night – 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.  
**March 5** – Ash Wednesday  
**March 9** – Daylight Savings Time begins  
**March 13** – Open Mic Night – 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.  
**March 15** – Men’s breakfast – 8:30 a.m. at church  
**March 20** - First Day of Spring

## THANK YOU, THANK YOU, TO...

Thank you to everyone who helps keep our church running and shares the love of God with others. This includes things that people see and things that happen behind the scenes that people don’t see. In one way or another, we are all part of God’s perfect plan for our church and beyond.

Included with the newsletter is the nominations report for 2025 which lists all members of all church committees. Thank you to all who serve on committees and lead our church.

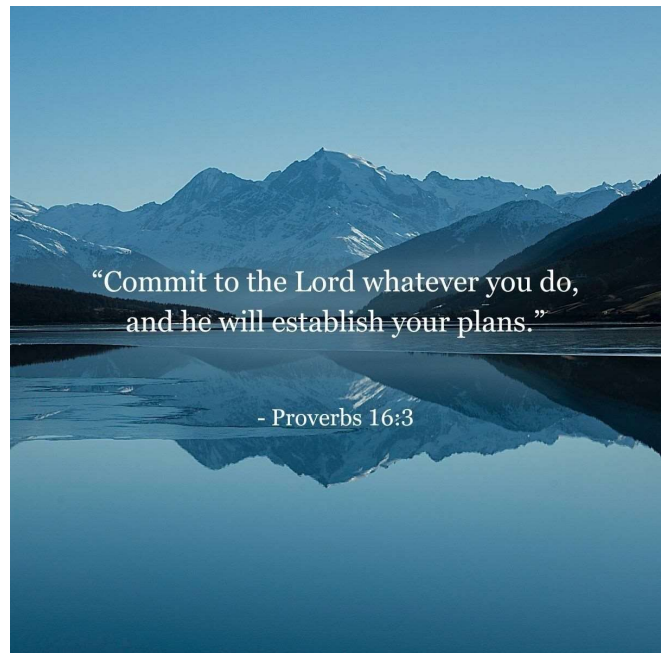
***Romans 12:10 - "Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves."***



### **Brown Bag Blessings**

Thank you to everyone who donated or helped assemble brown bag lunches for our first lunch giveaways held on December 28 and December 31. This was a success and another way we’re reaching out to our community. We hope to be able to do this on a regular basis in the new year.

**Stay tuned for more opportunities to share the love of God with others.**



“Commit to the Lord whatever you do,  
and he will establish your plans.”

- Proverbs 16:3

Psalm 100:4 (NIV)

“Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.” As we start the new year, this Bible verse about new beginnings reminds us of the importance of giving thanks to God and praising Christ in all circumstances.

## Friendship Unit's Giving Tree

Many thanks to all who donated hats, gloves, mittens or scarves for the Friendship Unit's giving tree. These warm items were given to the Mexico Food Pantry and placed in our Blessing Box.



## Halfway Night

### Sponsored by the Men's Club

Our annual halfway night will be held in the Fellowship Hall on **Saturday, February 15 from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.**

Join us for chili, hotdogs and other snacks and drinks. There will also be a variety of games. This is a free event.

Come and celebrate that winter is halfway over (we hope!) See you there!

## Have a Heart Tree



On February 2, paper hearts will adorn a "decorative tree branch" in our sanctuary. On each heart will be the name of a person associated with our congregation or the Mexico community who is recuperating from a hospital stay, in a

nursing home, away from home for the winter, in college or living alone and may appreciate some communication from our caring congregation. Contact information for that person will be on the back of the red heart.

Members are encouraged to take a paper heart or two and make a phone call, write a letter, send a card or go visit that person and spread God's love.

It is the hope that all hearts will be taken from the tree by February 14 and some connection has been made by that time.

If you wish to participate in this ministry but cannot make it to church to choose a heart, please contact Sue Morton at 315-447-6056.

## In Sympathy

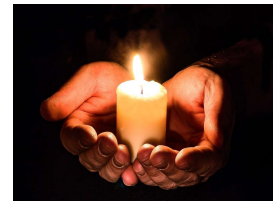
**Please continue to pray for the families and friends of:**

**Arlea Ackley O'Neil Farley**

**Shirl Field**

**Stephanie "Susie" Martin**

**Jeff Sherman**



## *Mission Outreach Committee News*

**Operation Christmas Child** – Shoeboxes from our church and Lycoming UMC (145 in total) were taken to a local distribution center to be sent to children all over the world by Samaritan’s Purse. Our church has participated in this mission since 2007.

**Blessing Box** – The blessing box in the church parking lot continues to provide for our neighbors who need help with food and personal items on a daily basis. Most often, the box is emptied from day to day.

Some ideas to add to the blessing box include cereal, instant oatmeal, pasta, pasta sauce, peanut butter, shelf stable milk and toilet paper. With the cold temperatures this time of year, we need to be aware of the potential for things to freeze. This also means that we can be a bit more creative in what we add to the box if the temperatures are going to remain cold.

## *Church Growth Group by Sue Morton*

The mission statement for this committee is: “With the teachings of the Gospel as a foundation, the Mexico First United Methodist Church Discipleship and Growth Group provides the tools and resources necessary to inspire people to build and/or strengthen their relationship with God.” This dedicated church group meets on the last Sunday of the month right after the Sunday morning worship service.

We sponsor Open Mic Night, Family Fun Night, and have donated financially for the church AED, the Easter Egg Hunt, Vacation Bible School and the Halloween candy give away. The committee assisted with Operation Christmas Child, the Have a Heart program, and sponsored a paint class. The group also purchases The Upper Room bimonthly faith-filled publication distributed to church members. Welcome bags given to guests visiting our church are filled with church information and a mug, pen, and pocket cross in the hopes that these will encourage guests to join us in worship.

If you would like to become a member of this group, please contact Pastor Brandin or Sue Morton.

## Youth group update

Our youth group, combined with Lycoming UMC's youth, continues to meet for special events and activities. Please enjoy the photos below from our Halloween trip to Granger's and our youth group Christmas gathering, where even the adults joined in the fun!

Coming up in the new year, we hope to do a lock-in at the church, cardboard village, perhaps some hiking and more fun to be announced. If you know any kids in grades 5<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>, please encourage them to join us. Contact Jeremy or Lisa Spencer for more information.



## **YOUTH GROUP IN ACTION**

### **If you need to contact the church:**

Phone – (315) 963-3066

E-mail – [fumcmexico@gmail.com](mailto:fumcmexico@gmail.com)

Website – [www.mex1umc.com](http://www.mex1umc.com)

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

Facebook: Mexico First United Methodist Church



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

## Birthdays and Anniversaries

### January birthdays

2 – Cliff VanGorder  
3 – Deb McCoy  
8 – Chuck Parker, Jr.  
14 – Jewell Foulz  
16 – Richard Barnes

### February birthdays

1 – Orion Behling  
4 – Faith Hubbard  
6 – Jeremy Spencer  
11 – Elaine DeLong  
18 – Chuck Parker, Sr.  
25 – David Anderson

### March birthdays

1 – Jeff Beardslee  
2 – Bob Linerode  
9 – Jenna Behling  
18 – Diane Barbur  
20 – Marcia Albrecht, Benjamin Parker, Scott Jackson  
26 – Diane Tupper  
29 – Bill DeLong  
30 – Mike Freihofer  
31 – April Greco

### January anniversaries

10 – Terry and Karen Grimshaw  
25 – Wayne and Rose Ann Myers  
31 – Richard and Kathy Rose



### February anniversaries

14 – Eric and Jennifer Spaulding  
18 – David and Faith Hubbard

### March anniversary

25 – Pastor Brandin and April Greco

***\*\*If you don't see your birthday or anniversary on this list, it's because we don't know about it. Please let the church office know so that we can include it next time.\*\****

