



*The Messenger*  
*First United Methodist Church of Mexico*  
*December 2020 – February 2021*

*From the Pastor*

Dear Family and Friends of Mexico First UMC,

Grace and peace to you in the name of our beloved Savior, Jesus who is the Christ.

The last few months have been hard, haven't they? And not just "ordinary" hard, but really, really hard. Routine parts of life have become complicated and anxiety-producing. A trip to the store entails remembering not just our phone, wallet, and grocery list; but also a mask and hand sanitizer. We have missed many special events, or only been able to watch them on the internet. Maintaining social distancing and not being able to hug our friends and family members brings about a deep sense of loneliness. There is much in our lives that has been disrupted and much we have lost and our souls hurt in profound ways as a result.

Sometimes in the midst of all this, we find ourselves saying "This stinks!"

And then we start to feel a little bit guilty or uneasy or find ourselves worrying about our faith because we think we are supposed to take everything in stride because we know Jesus. We think that being a disciple of Christ means we never feel anxious about the unknown or disappointed in the midst of loss. Then we forget that if we had everything under control all on our own, we wouldn't need a Savior.

In John 16:33 Jesus says, "In the world you have trouble and suffering, but take courage—I have conquered the world."

Sometimes when everything stinks and the world feels overwhelming, it's a blessed relief to remember that we don't need to take care of everything. Jesus knows that we struggle in this world, and he is here with us. No matter what the struggle is - whether it is the reality of daily life in the midst of a pandemic, or questions about faith, or that overwhelmed feeling in the midst of a busy day – nothing takes Jesus by surprise. And he continues to love us through it all by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Take Courage!

The Lord Bless You and Keep You,

*Pastor Grace*

## *Ways to Contact our Church*

Phone #: 315-963-3066. Email address: [fumcmexico@gmail.com](mailto:fumcmexico@gmail.com)

Mailing address: First United Methodist Church, PO Box 255, Mexico, NY 13114

### *Find us on the Internet!*

Looking for our weekly online service? Check out these links.

Our Church webpage: <https://mex1umc.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/fumcmexico>

Youtube: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWYf\\_nXkCdvKmjtXJxj7uZQ/](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWYf_nXkCdvKmjtXJxj7uZQ/)

## **100 for 100 Campaign**

By: Jim Sokolowski

The 100 for 100 fundraising campaign sponsored by the Finance Committee is still going strong. This is a way for 100 people to donate an extra \$100 to help our church function properly. The campaign has been running since September and will continue to run through December. This sounds like a lot of money to be asking for, especially during these trying times. Your donation can be divided into increments over a few weeks or months. However, if \$100 is not possible, anything you give from your heart will be appreciated. Every little bit helps.

So far the 100 for 100 has brought in \$5100. Thank you to all of you that have been able to give. If you have any questions, please contact Jim Sokolowski at 315-532-2864, Elaine DeLong at 315-289-6039 or Connie Day at 315-456-9772.

Thank you!

### ***Newsletter Schedule***

We are temporarily moving to a quarterly newsletter during the pandemic.

Our next newsletter will come out by March 1st. Please submit articles to the church office by February 12<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you.

### **Sermons**

Printed copies of the weekly worship service and sermon are available for people who do not have internet access. If you would like to receive them each week, please contact Pastor Grace at 716-490-3708 with your mailing address.



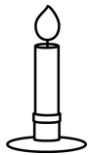
## 2020 ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Especially this year, we need to let our spirit shine in our church's windows this Advent Season so we invite you to sponsor a candle in one of our church's windows in honor of or in memory of a loved one. We may not be in the building as in other years, but that does not stop us from celebrating the birth of Jesus and showing to the people of our community that our church is still active and wants to spread the Love and Light of Jesus in this dark world.

The cost for sponsoring a candle is \$15.00 per candle. The candles will be "lit" for the first time on Sunday, November 29, the First Sunday in Advent.

Please mail your requests to the church. All proceeds from this year's candle lighting project will be going to the Trustees to the building fund for maintenance and upkeep of the church.

We will be accepting candle orders through December 15<sup>th</sup>. Please make checks payable to the Mexico First United Methodist Church, and note "Candle Project" on the memo line. Your check and this coupon may be mailed to the church office in care of PO Box 255, Mexico, NY 13114. Thank you for your support in this fundraiser.



### ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING -2020

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Or

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsored by \_\_\_\_\_

Total Number of Candles @ \$15 each \_\_\_\_\_

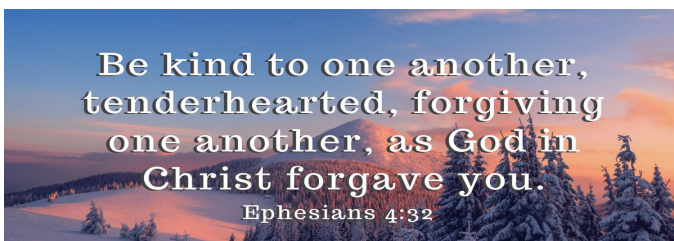
## Christmas Eve Service

We are **tentatively** planning to hold a brief Christmas Eve service at 5:00 pm on December 24<sup>th</sup>. If you are planning to attend, please bring your own battery operated candle. As with all our services and activities, the logistics and details are dependent on the rate of virus infections at that time. Further details of the service will be available in mid-December.

## Lap Robes made by the Mexico Methodist Quilters

Since August of this year 4 lap robes have been sewn for members of our congregation. Recipients of these cozy small blankets were Had and Linda Fravor, Diane Barbur, and Judy and Bill Butman.

In all-since 2007 over 69 lap robes have been made by the quilter's group to comfort members and remind them of our love for each other.



**Happy Birthday to...**



**December**

4<sup>th</sup> Dotty Parker  
4<sup>th</sup> Alexis Jackson  
11<sup>th</sup> Judy Butman  
13<sup>th</sup> Sue Loysen  
16<sup>th</sup> Christy Hall  
18<sup>th</sup> Matthew Lenhart  
22<sup>nd</sup> Gary Weber  
24<sup>th</sup> Mary Loysen  
26<sup>th</sup> Jeffrey Sherman  
30<sup>th</sup> Connie Main

**January**

2<sup>nd</sup> Jean Wallace  
2<sup>nd</sup> Cliff VanGorder  
3<sup>rd</sup> Deb McCoy  
8<sup>th</sup> Chuck Parker  
14<sup>th</sup> Jewell Foutz  
16<sup>th</sup> Richard Barnes  
24<sup>th</sup> Georgia Halstead  
26<sup>th</sup> Connie Ellison

**February**

1<sup>st</sup> Orion Behling  
4<sup>th</sup> Faith Hubbard  
4<sup>th</sup> Harold Hurlbut  
6<sup>th</sup> Jeremy Spencer  
10<sup>th</sup> Andy Ross  
11<sup>th</sup> Elaine DeLong  
18<sup>th</sup> Chuck Parker  
24<sup>th</sup> Stephanie Martin  
25<sup>th</sup> David Anderson



**Happy Anniversary to...**

**December**

1<sup>st</sup> John & Carol Aldrich  
10<sup>th</sup> Phil & Flora Kugler  
23<sup>rd</sup> Robert & Georgia Halstead  
23<sup>rd</sup> Bill & Judy Butman

**January**

10<sup>th</sup> Terry & Karen Grimshaw  
25<sup>th</sup> Wayne & Rose Ann Myers  
31<sup>st</sup> Richard & Kathy Rose

**February**

14<sup>th</sup> Eric & Jennifer Spaulding  
18<sup>th</sup> David & Faith Hubbard  
18<sup>th</sup> Jim & Diane Sokolowski

**Thank You Note**

Hello Church Family,

Thank you for all the get well cards, prayers, money and gift cards. Pastor Grace, thank you for sending the Sunday sermons. I really appreciate them. We both appreciate everything you have done for us.

God bless you all.

Bill and Judy Butman

**Shoebboxes** – We are unable to do shoebboxes this year. If you would like to participate and fill a shoebox online for a child, go to the following link:  
<https://www.samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/buildonline/>

**Outreach Committee Blessing Box Report**

Thank you to all church members who have been helping the Outreach Committee members stock the Blessing Box in our parking lot with wholesome, nutritious food, school supplies and personal hygiene products. The week prior to Thanksgiving, traditional Thanksgiving foods were highlighted and it is our hope that some families were able to enjoy a better Thanksgiving because of the Blessing Box. Just prior to Christmas we will stock the shelves with special Christmas foods to brighten Christmas for those less fortunate.

