

## News from the First United Methodist Church of Mexico January, February and March 2026

<sup>18</sup> "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. <sup>19</sup> See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. Isaiah 43:18-19(NIV)

Beloved Family,

I find it very appropriate to begin my letter for the new year with one of my favorite scriptures from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah. Funny enough I used to use this scripture to support change in the church to try new things and today I use it to support our theme for the new year. To forget our ways of prideful defensiveness and to open our ears, eyes, and hearts to a refreshed way of working together across all generations to the glory of God. I believe to do this we all need to as individuals take time to pause and reflect. We need to take some moments to breathe in a world that tries to take that opportunity away. This month I was afforded the opportunity to do just this, so instead of sharing all the things we have done over the past year, and there were many, I am going to take my Admin Chair's lead and share some pictures from that trip and close with a bit of scripture to inspire you, my church family, to take some moments. God has so many opportunities planned for us to be used for His good, both in and outside of our four walls; I pray we take every opportunity to be prepared and fully present.

April, the kids, and I are truly blessed by all of you, and we are so excited to see what God has planned for us this year.

<sup>1</sup> God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. <sup>2</sup> Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, <sup>3</sup> though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.<sup>[c]</sup> <sup>4</sup> There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells.<sup>5</sup> God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day. <sup>6</sup> Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts.<sup>7</sup> The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. <sup>8</sup> Come and see what the Lord has done, the desolations he has brought on the earth. <sup>9</sup> He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth. He breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the shields<sup>[d]</sup> with fire.<sup>10</sup> He says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."<sup>11</sup> The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Psalm 46(NIV)



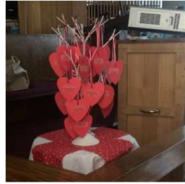
### **Have a Heart Tree**

On February 1, 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 8 and some connection has been made prior to Valentine’s Day on February 14.

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:**

**Ralph Goodwin**

**Edwin Lighthall**

**Mary Loysen**

**Joan Phelps**



Looking forward to next Christmas, after many years of coordinating our annual Christmas in Mexico craft show, Sue Morton has decided to step down. We will be looking for someone to assume the coordination of this event. More to come.

### **Friendship Circle**

Are you a woman ages 20-90+ years old? Are you looking for renewed friendship with other like-minded women? If yes, you may be interested in joining the Friendship Circle! We are looking for new members to join in our fun and charitable endeavors. This past Christmas, the Friendship Unit donated women’s personal hygiene products and warm hats, gloves, mittens and socks to the Mexico Food Pantry. These items were collected during our annual Christmas party and from the giving tree in the church Narthex during Advent.



Please see Lori Behling, Dotty Parker or Sue Morton if you are interested in joining the Friendship Circle.

## IMPORTANT DATES

**January 1** – Happy New Year!

**January 8** – Open Mic Night – 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

**February 12** – Open Mic Night – 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

**February 14** – Valentine's Day

**February 18** – Ash Wednesday

**February 28** – Half-way Night 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.

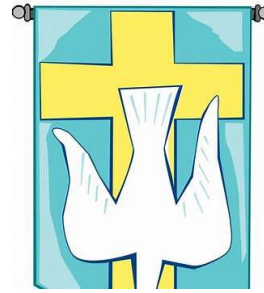
**March 8** – Daylight Savings Time begins

**March 12** – Open Mic Night – 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

**March 20** – First Day of Spring



## Confirmation Class



Pastor Brandin is currently leading a confirmation class with youth participating from both the Lycoming and Mexico churches. This is an exciting time for our youth and our church!

## Advent Candle Sponsorships

We were blessed to have so many sponsorships for candles in honor of and in memory of loved ones. A complete list of those sponsorships is included with this newsletter. These candles lit up our church during the Advent season and provide a reminder of the light of God's love for all of us.

The proceeds of the candle sponsorships were split between the Blessings Box and shipping costs for Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes.



## Halfway Night

### Sponsored by the Men's Club

Our annual halfway night will be held in the Fellowship Hall on **Saturday, February 28 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!



### *Mission Outreach Committee News by Carol Watros*

January greetings.

Moving into the new year, our focus is food ministries, especially keeping the pantry stocked for the Blessing Box. The pantry's stock is in need of replenishment. Outreach is purchasing some of the basics: canned meals, cereal, pasta/pasta sauce, peanut butter, shelf-stable milk, tuna fish, toilet paper and feminine products.

We do need your help, though. January is both national soup and oatmeal month. We encourage you to bring some soup and/or instant oatmeal to church to help fill the pantry.

Looking forward to February and March, consider hearty and healthy foods and snacks such as peanut butter products and noodles.

All donations are appreciated. We have moved the collection box to the Narthex in the church.

### *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 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 and the Have a Heart program. 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.



Sunday School has returned! There are a dedicated group of volunteers that rotate teaching Sunday School each week.

So far, we have learned about creation, the Ten Commandments, Jesus' birth and the real meaning of Christmas.

Next, we're going to learn about heroes and heroines of the Bible and then Lent and the Easter Season.

The kids have enjoyed learning, doing crafts, playing games and having a snack together.

If you would like to volunteer to help, please see Lisa Spencer.

**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.  
16 – Richard Barnes

### **January anniversaries**

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



### **February birthdays**

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

### **February anniversaries**

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

### **March anniversary**

25 – Pastor Brandin and April Greco

### **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

***\*\*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.\*\****

