

*Happy January Anniversary to...*



16	Nick & Sue Andryuk	21	Bill & Sue Miller
16	Chuck & Patti Coppess	24	Mike & Debbie Rousselle
19	Gregory & Shellie DePerio		

*Happy January Birthday to...*

06	Jamieson Colby-Gaskins	14	Avaya Massow	25	Kathy Matthew
06	Michael Lawson	14	Dan McCoy	26	Sarah Nadolski
07	Natalie Cawthra	14	Avaya Massow	30	Clara Harbart
09	Teagan Jordan	22	Victoria Pollacheck	30	Dawn Harbart
09	Randy Wilkening	23	Christopher Messer	31	Randy Wilkening Jr.
11	Nora Brown	24	Bridget Nadolski		

*If you have a change of address, phone number, etc., don't forget to let the office know so that we can update your information in the church directory. Thank you!*



***Here is a convenient way to tithe!  
Try PushPay with your mobile device or online!***

Have you ever come to worship and realized you left your offering envelope at home or learned of a worthwhile mission you want to support only to realize you did not bring your checkbook? Wouldn't it be a blessing to be able to give back to God in a matter of seconds using your smartphone or tablet, laptop or desktop?

We have partnered with a company named Pushpay to help us move into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century with our financial stewardship. Fewer people write checks much less use cash, especially younger adults.

Pushpay will allow us to give one-time gifts, recurring gifts or special gifts using debit or credit cards or ACH transactions from our bank accounts. It is quite easy to get started. Simply text 'pfumc' to 77977 and follow the instructions on your screen. As part of the process you will be able to download the Pushpay app for either iPhone or Android.



# The Witness

ISSUE I

JANUARY 2021

**Portage First United Methodist Church**

*Pastor Michael Lawson*

## JANUARY NEWSLETTER



***Our Mission and Vision***

*The mission of the United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. At Portage First United Methodist Church we live out that mission when we love God, love others, and offer Jesus.*



*Portage First United Methodist Church*

**GOLD CAN  
2021 SCHEDULE**

<b>January</b>	3	Red Birds Missions	<b>July</b>	4	Emergency Fund
	10	Portage Food Pantry		11	Scholarships
	17	Emergency Fund		18	Youth Services
	24	Scholarships		25	Royal Family Kids Camp
	31	Youth Services	<b>August</b>	1	Red Bird Missions
<b>February</b>	7	Royal Family kids Camp		8	Portage Food Pantry
	14	Red Birds Mission		15	Emergency Fund
	21	Portage Food Pantry		22	Scholarships
	28	Emergency Fund		29	Youth Services
<b>March</b>	7	Scholarships	<b>September</b>	5	Royal family Kids Camp
	14	Youth Services		12	Red Bird Missions
	21	Royal Family Kids Camp		19	Portage Food Pantry
	29	Red Birds Mission		26	Emergency Fund
<b>April</b>	4	Portage Food pantry	<b>October</b>	3	Scholarships
	11	Emergency Fund		10	Youth Services
	18	Scholarships	<b>r</b>	17	Royal Family Kid Camp
	25	Youth Services		24	Red Bird Missions
<b>May</b>	2	Royal Family Kids Camp		31	Portage Food Pantry
<b>May</b>	9	Red Bird Missions	<b>November</b>	7	Emergency Fund
	16	Portage Food Pantry		14	Scholarships
	23	Emergency Fund		21	Youth Services
	30	Scholarships		28	Royal Family Kids Camp
<b>June</b>	6	Youth Services	<b>December</b>	6	Red Bird Missions
<b>June</b>	13	Royal Family Kids Camo		13	Portage Food Pantry
	20	Red Bird Missions		20	Emergency Fund
	27	Portage Food Pantry		27	Scholarships



# ❄️ **FIRST FRIDAY FELLOWSHIP NEWS** ❄️

**By Sandy Robinson**

**First Friday Fellowship will NOT meet-  
ing in January due to the first Friday  
being New Year's Day.**

**Porter County's new restriction on  
business operation, in an effort to  
half and reverse the ongoing surge of  
COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations,  
could possibly affect February's First  
Friday Fellowship. Stay tuned to the  
church Facebook page for an update  
as we get closer to February 5th.**



## ❄️ **FIRE SAFETY DURING WINTER STORMS** ❄️

**BY DAN MCCOY**



### **Fire Safety during Winter Storms**

Winter storms can happen almost anywhere. They can cause us problems. Know what to do before, during and after a storm. This will help keep you and your family safe from a winter fire.

- Test all smoke alarms. Do this at least once a month. This way you will know they are working. Install carbon monoxide alarms in your home. Test the alarms.
- Plan two ways out of the home in case of an emergency. Clear driveway and front walk of ice and snow. This will provide easy access to your home.
- Make sure your house number can be seen from the street. If you need help, firefighters will be able to find you.
- Be ready in case the power goes out. Have flashlights on hand. Also have battery-powered lighting and fresh batteries. Never use candles.
- Stay aware of winter weather. Listen to the television or radio for updates. Watch for bulletins online.
- Check on neighbors. Check on others who may need help.
- Generators should be used outdoors. Keep them away from windows and doors. Do not run a generator inside your garage, even if the door is open.
- Stay away from downed wires. Report any downed wires to authorities.
- Be ready if the heat stops working. Use extra layers of clothes and blankets to stay warm. If you use an emergency heat source, keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet away.
- Turn portable heaters off when you leave the room. Turn them off when you go to bed.

### **IMPORTANT REMINDER**

There are more home fires in winter than in any other season. Half of all home heating fires happen in December, January and February.

As you stay cozy and warm this winter season, be fire smart!



### **Fact**

Nearly half of all space heater fires involve electric space heaters.



**NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION**  
The leading information and knowledge resource on fire, electrical and related hazards





## **2021 Endowment Fund Grant Announcement**

The Primary purpose of the Endowment Fund is to provide a means for members and friends of the church to make gifts and bequest to provide a source of financial support and living memorials.

Income from the Fund is used to assist the church in fulfilling its purpose in Christian Ministry and Mission.

Today, I'm pleased to announce that the Endowment Committee has allotted \$14,786 for the 2021 grant request. This amount is slightly higher than the amount in 2020.

A copy of the Endowment Fund Grant Request Process is attached to the application and explains the steps necessary to complete the application. The deadline for consideration of funds available this year is April 30, 2021. The applications are available at the Connection Center.

We ask that you prayerfully consider the ways in which these funds can spread the Word of God. When you complete an application, potential uses to consider include, but are not limited to.

1. Missions
2. Evangelism/Outreach
3. Education
4. Music
5. Worship
6. Arts

Feel free to think outside the box and be creative.

Let's spread the love of our Lord throughout our community and beyond!



## **MISSIONS AND OUTREACH ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Hello Church!!!**

**Happy New Year!!**

**We just want to thank each & everyone of you for all the ways you have blessed other people during the past year. You have been WONDERFUL!!!!**

**As we move into 2021, we encourage you to think of ways we can serve others through missions & outreach, particularly during these times of COVID when we are not meeting in person.**

**Please give us a call and share your ideas!!!**

**Love & Blessings-Your Missions & Outreach Team**

**Wendy Smith, Lisa Hoover, Josh Hoover, James Jordan, Connie King, Steve Massow, & Robin Wilkening**





## United Methodist Men January Church Newsletter - 2021

Greetings United Methodist Men and church family. God has blessed us with an opportunity to love and serve him yet another year here in 2021. Even though 2020 was a very challenging year and extremely rough for many of us, I believe it brought us all closer to one-another and especially to God reminding us of our need for him. Wanting to send words of hope and encouragement and hoping this finds everyone safe and in good health.

Due to the corona virus we were only able meet (4) times in 2020. We will not be able to meet again for our scheduled 01/09/21 meeting. However the vaccine for the virus is beginning to be administered. I believe it will be a slow process, but we are starting to see positive steps for everyone's overall well-being and hopeful return to health. Let us continue to wear our masks, wash our hands, and practice social distancing to protect ourselves and those around us. We know God is in control and continue to pray for the virus to go away all together.

Normally we as a men's group usually meet the first Saturday of the month at 8AM in the fellowship hall. Our meetings have consisted with opening and closing prayer, breakfast, bible study, and short business meeting sharing about our ministries that we support (Scouting program – Cubs, Boys, Girls, Prison Offenders, UMW Rummage Sales, Missions Outreach, Rail Cats Ball Game, etc.).

### Tentative Scheduled Meeting Dates:

Saturday-01/09/21      Saturday-02/06/21      Saturday-03/06/21  
Saturday-04/03/21      Saturday-05/01/21      Saturday-06/05/21  
(Break for Summer)      Saturday-09/11/21 - 1<sup>st</sup> session back

Our planned Methodist church (8+) week evening **men's bible study** entitled “**The Class Meeting**” by Kevin Watson is on hold now too. The study is based off our Methodist founder John Wesley's small group meetings. Along with a brief history of our Methodist faith much more will be shared in this study. The evening meetings should be approximately 1-hour in length. I believe there will be much to be gained for those who invest of their time committed.

Start Date: ??? (Uncertain at present. Hope to start as soon as we can.)

Day & Time: Sunday, probably 6:00pm – 7:30pm

Meeting Place: Church's fellowship hall

Once we the have the scheduled start date – we will announce it – AND - have a sign-up sheet at the connection center in our narthax entryway.

I would like to share with you a “Today” publication devotional entitled:

### “The Beginning”

[The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God. - Mark 1: 1](#)

In today's consumer market, books need a bold title, an eye-catching cover, clever content, and slick graphics. Two thousand years ago books were not published, marketed, and purchased like they are today. They were written on scrolls, and most people didn't have access to them, unless they were read aloud in public.

The book of Mark does not have a flashy cover or title, but it certainly has compelling content. It's the “good news about Jesus... the Son of God” - and it opens with a phrase that reminds people of the very first words in Scripture: “In the beginning...” (Genesis 1: 1). Genesis tells about the beginning of creation, and Mark is about “the beginning of the good news about Jesus.”

What's more, we find that the gospel (“good news”) of Mark is the beginning of a story that goes far beyond the few years of Jesus's work and ministry on earth. In fact, this is the beginning of the world's greatest story that extends all the way into 2021 – and beyond. And in reading this gospel we are challenged to find how and where this story changes everything for us today. It is here that the story begins, and it is here that our lives begin to have meaning.

Today we are beginning a new year, and in Mark we discover the beginning of the groundwork for new life in Christ.

**Prayer:** [Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus Christ and for telling us about him. May we all discover some fresh, new ways in which we can honor and live for you in 2021. Amen.](#)

Hoping you and your family had a safe and blessed Christmas holiday season. When we are able to meet again we would be honored to have you come to our men's fellowship, and hope that God would bless your commitment in joining us.

Because of Him -  
Prayers and blessings,  
Mike Matthew

