

First United Methodist Church of Heath

DECEMBER 2022

Hello Church,

It's December and we're wrapping up the year. So far, we've received 13 pledges representing \$106,500.00 for our 2023 budget. I recognize that it's been a few years since our church has participated in a stewardship effort, so you may have giving-related questions. You may also wonder how we've been doing financially in 2022. I've tried to anticipate your questions about giving, but please contact me if you have any other questions and I'll be happy to answer them.

How is giving a spiritual practice and how does it help me grow in my faith?

Our Christian faith continually points us to love God and love our neighbor. Our faith journey, while it is life-giving to us, is not about us. Giving as a spiritual discipline helps us learn to rely on and trust God. Similarly, it helps us move away from a self-centeredness focus to prioritizing our thinking and care for others. Giving requires intentionality and self-sacrifice. The regular habit of joyfully giving of finances and talents is as much a spiritual practice as is prayer and worship.

What is percentage giving and why does the church encourage this rather than giving a certain amount?

All that we have is a gift from God. God invites us to give a *portion* of what God gives us back to the church. The Biblical tithe is 10% (Malachi 3:10) and while all of us might not be able to give 10% at the moment, it's a worthy goal. We can't all give a certain amount of money, but we can all take steps to consistently give a percentage.

Percentage giving allows you to be fluid with your giving. If your income goes up, your giving goes up. If your income goes down, your percentage giving can stay the same while the actual dollar amount might go down. For some people, it helps to take a percentage as a step of the faithful practice, but not yet 10%. Then, every six months or year, they increase their giving 1% until they eventually arrive at the tithe.

Ten percent, really?

10%, regardless of your income, feels like a significant portion of your budget and it requires you to be intentional with how you spend the other 90% of your income. It requires you to intentionally make sacrifices for others and this is a good spiritual discipline. It's been said that we shouldn't give until it hurts. I disagree. Instead, give until it feels good. 10% of your income can make a huge difference in the life of this church. Celebrate that you are able to give so much! To whom much is given, much is required (Luke 12:48).

How does the church create a budget and why is pledging so important?

The church creates its budget primarily through the pledges we receive. There are several other factors that help us set the budget for the next year and we recognize that the budget must be flexible if our giving changes. Your pledge for 2023 will help us plan our ministry budgets accordingly.

How does the church use my money?

We strive to be good stewards of these funds and maximize them to help us live into our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Our ministries are spread out in these categories, as well as staff salaries, church expenses, and apportionments (which help support the local, national, and global ministries of The United Methodist Church). Approximately 60% of our budget is from staff salaries, which is typical of most small-medium churches.

Why is automatic giving so important?

Whether you sign up for automatic bank drafts or scheduled giving through the church app, we are so grateful for this intentional step. This allows the church to receive your giving on a regular schedule. We know we can count on your offering being here and that helps us move forward confidently in our ministries. You should know that automatic bank drafts also help us avoid credit card giving site fees. Finally, we hope regular giving helps you in your faith journey. There is something extremely meaningful when you truly commit to giving to support the ministries of the church.

Can I change my pledge during the year?

Absolutely! We know that there is a great deal of uncertainty around individual jobs and the financial market. There are all sorts of curveballs that life can throw at us. If you need to change your pledge, simply contact the church office. Perhaps more importantly, if life is getting a little crazy for one reason or another, let us know so that we can pray for you and walk alongside you through the storm.

My budget already feels stretched; can I really make a pledge?

Budgeting, although it can sound like an unpleasant word to most of us, can make pledging easier. Sit down with a pencil and paper to see how you are spending your money. Oftentimes, a simple budget can help people really discover where your money is going and help you find some breathing room. Tithing or giving is most fruitful when it is given as “first fruits” or right off the top of our budget. Don’t wait until the end of the month to give. Instead, as you receive, give a portion to God with full thanksgiving. Then, pay the necessary expenses and invest in savings. Finally, use the rest of your money for all the other “extras.”

How is our church doing financially right now?

We are debt-free! This is good news and something few churches can brag about. However, because giving has dropped over the past few years, we have been spending from our savings (investment account) to cover our expenses. This is not sustainable over the long-term, just like it wouldn’t be for your personal finances. Transparency is important since this is your church so I’ve included information below to give you a historical and current picture of our giving and budget. We anticipate having the parsonage sold within the next month and those funds will replenish our reserves.

November 6	\$ 5,644	2022 YTD Actual General Fund	\$214,526
November 13	\$ 2,383	2022 Budgeted Total Expenditures	\$433,138
November 20	\$16,280	Estimated Difference	(\$218,612)*
November 27	\$ 3,260		
TOTAL	\$27,568		

*Deficits are funded from our investment account.

Giving Ranges December 2021-November 2022

Annual Giving	Weekly Giving	# of Families/Units Giving in This Range
\$15,000 +	\$289+	2
\$10,000 - \$14,999	\$192 - \$288	3
\$7,500 - \$9,999	\$144 - \$191	4
\$5,000 - \$7,499	\$96 - \$143	5
\$4,000 - \$4,999	\$76 - \$95	4
\$3,000 - \$3,999	\$57 - \$75	6
\$2,000 - \$2,999	\$36 - \$56	6
\$1,000 - \$1,999	\$20 - \$35	9
\$500 - \$999	\$10 - \$19	14
\$250 - \$499	\$5 - \$9	10
\$10 - \$249	\$.20 - \$4	29
Total Known Giving Families/Units		92

General Giving 2018-2022

Year	Pledged	Unpledged	Total
2018	\$221,051	\$123,256	\$344,307
2019	\$209,615	\$138,246	\$347,861
2020	\$128,208	\$173,291	\$301,499
2021	\$56,380	\$163,301	\$219,681
2022*	\$0	\$214,526	\$214,526

NEW APP FOR FUMC HEATH!

We are so excited to offer the new church App! Instructions are below, but if you need help downloading it, please give the office a call and we will help you.

This app features:

- ⊗ Sunday morning worship services
- ⊗ Upcoming events
- ⊗ Attendance registration
- ⊗ Online giving
- ⊗ Social Media
- ⊗ Devotionals
- ⊗ Audio Bible
- ⊗ You can even take notes!

If you have any questions, please contact Kerri at kerri@fumcheath.org or Sandy at pastorsandy@fumcheath.org.



Download the App
TODAY!

Search for
"First UMC
Heath"

Agree to "push
notifications" to
stay updated

The advertisement features three smartphones. The top phone shows the app's home screen with a 'TEXT' button and a 'Worship Services' section. The middle phone shows the app's logo and the text 'SEARCH HERE'. The bottom phone shows a donation screen with the amount '\$150' and a 'DONATE' button. To the right of the phones are the Google Play and App Store logos, and a note about push notifications.

First United Methodist Church of Heath

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kerri@fumcheath.org

This newsletter is intended to inform, connect and help us with transparency within our staff, board and the congregation.

If you have a comment, suggestions for improvement, prayer concerns, or anything you would like to Convey to the staff or board, please feel free to contact us. The board and staff are here to help and welcome your input.

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DECEMBER MISSION

“The Gift”

DELIVER A GIFT, THE GOSPEL, AND LOVE

Angel Tree Christmas™ equips churches and other organizations to restore and strengthen relationships between incarcerated parents and their children and families. Every Christmas, Angel Tree mobilizes local churches and organizations to minister to hundreds of thousands of children by delivering a gift, the Gospel message, and a personal message of love on behalf of their mom or dad behind bars. In addition, many of our partner churches meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of prisoners' families by enfolded them in the day-to-day life of the church, helping children attend summer camp, and facilitating mentorship.

YOUR GIFT MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIFE OF A PRISONER'S CHILD!

Your generosity will bring joy to the world of Angel Tree children throughout the year. Together we can show these kids the love of Jesus and help them know they are valued - unlocking their potential for a brighter future!


Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" Matthew 19:14

Angel Tree gifts need to be returned to the church no later than noon on December 18

Please note that the church office will be closed December 26 & 27, and re-open December 28-30.

We encourage you to bring in your year-end giving on those days.

Thank you.

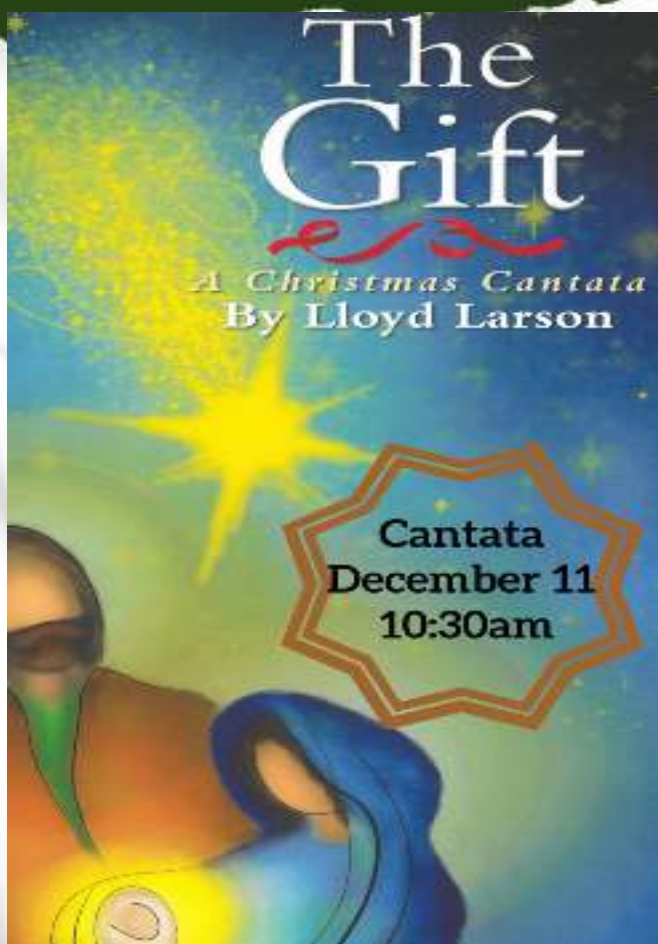


This month's rail offering will be this Sunday, December 11, and will serve as a Christmas Gift to benefit the women and children residing at Genesis Women's Shelter. This is in lieu of purchasing individual gifts for the children.

Genesis Women's Shelter helps women and children affected by domestic violence find a safe way to live without abuse.

MUSIC MINISTRY

Keum Hwang- worship@fumcheath.org




CHURCH OPPORTUNITIES



*Lighting
the
Way*

2022
Advent Devotionals

Pick up your copy at the Welcome Center
The Devotionals are also on our Facebook page each day.



WATS Christmas Program and Lunch
Heath Area Senior Society
December 7, 12pm

Program: Rockwall Heath High School Ensemble




A Breath of Life
A Gathering for Women

December 9 @ 6:00pm
Snuffers in Rockwall

For more information, email
Cathy at cgilley@flash.net.


MORE CHURCH OPPORTUNITIES




SOUL JOURNERS
SUNDAY SCHOOL

Led by: Larry Sarratt
Sundays: 9:15-10:15am
Room: 23 (next to the kitchen)
Cost: NONE

Participate in an in-depth weekly study and discussion of Scripture. Open to all ages and all levels of biblical knowledge. For more information, please email Larry at lsarratt@datar.com.



Light
of the
World



Wednesday's through
Dec. 21 @ 6pm
Church Parlor
Books are \$10.00

COMMUNITY EVENTS

A FREE DRIVE-THROUGH LIVE NATIVITY EVENT! ★

EVENING IN BETHLEHEM



Ridgeview Church
1362 East FM 552

Friday, December 9
Saturday, December 10
6:00 - 8:30 PM

MISSION UPDATES...

November was a busy month for our church. Here are a few details about the missions we are supporting:

- * One Man's Treasure—Our church generously donated over 30 coats, numerous shoes, slacks, dress shirts, hats, gloves and scarves.
- * Carter BloodCare—13 donors registered, 3 donors were deferred, 11 units were collected and a first time donor was registered!
- * Genesis Center Women's Center—Our church prepared dinner for 50 women, children and staff at the Genesis Center the week of Thanksgiving to kick off the Christmas season.



HEATH CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING & COOKIE BAKE





Wishing All of You



*A very Merry Christmas
and
a Blessed New Year!*

Sandy, Keum & Kerri