



KING OF KINGS & LORD OF LORDS

FIRST UMC  PORTSMOUTH

APRIL BEACON
2025

FROM THE DESK OF PASTOR BOB...



From hymn #504 in the United Methodist hymnal we hear and sing these words...**On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross, the emblem of suffering and shame; and I love that old cross where the dearest and best for a world of lost sinners was slain.** As I write to you this morning we are on day 23 of our 40-day journey toward that Old Rugged Cross. I hope your Lenten journey has been meaningful for you each personally. Each of our journeys should include repentance, prayer, personal reflection and scripture as we seek to strengthen our relationship with Jesus.

On April 13th we enter the final stretch or as I have been talking with the children...the final leg (EGG) of our journey toward that Old Rugged Cross. We enter Holy Week on Sunday, April 13, 2025 with Palm Sunday and Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. We will share the Passion Story on Palm Sunday and hear all the various events that will take place in what we call Holy Week. If you would like to participate with me in telling and sharing the Passion Story on Palm Sunday, please speak to me directly or send me an email that you are interested in participating.

When I reflect on everything that happened in one short week over two-thousand plus years ago, I am so grateful for the sacrifice that Jesus made for me and you. On Maundy Thursday, April 17th we will gather in the sanctuary for a Tenebrae Service which will include a dramatic dialogue between Judas and Simon Peter in the Upper Room during the Passover. The service will include Holy Communion served by the two disciples as it was on this night that Jesus celebrated the Last Supper with his disciples. The service will begin at 6:30pm so please invite your family and friends to experience this part of the Lenten journey.

I have had the opportunity and privilege to gather with 17 other disciples of Jesus Christ as we explored the Final Words From the Cross by Adam Hamilton. It has been a remarkable experience for me and for those that were faithful to this study. We can all experience these Final Words of Jesus together at 2:00pm in the sanctuary on Good Friday, April 18th.

And then we celebrate Easter as He Is Risen...He Is Risen Indeed! I hope you come with your family and friends on Easter Sunday as I offer the message "TA-DA!"

For now my friends...I'll cherish the old rugged cross, till my trophies at last I lay down; I will cling to the old rugged cross and exchange it some day for a crown. That crown is our prize...
RESURRECTION!

Grace and peace...See you in church!



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



SUNDAYS
10am



FIRST UMC LIFE

WORSHIP, FUN, AND FAITH IN ACTION AT FIRST UMC

Our Church website fumcportsmouth.com is a great place to remind ourselves of the amazing work we are doing supporting each other, our community in making a difference by sharing our faith in God. Check out the photo galleries here - <https://fumcportsmouth.com/photo-galleries/>



First United Methodist Church

ABOUT ▾

CONNECT ▾

MINISTRIES ▾

PHOTO GALLERIES

VIDEO SERIES

REMEMBER

GIVE

Photo Galleries



ANOTHER RESURRECTION STORY

MARCH 30, 2025

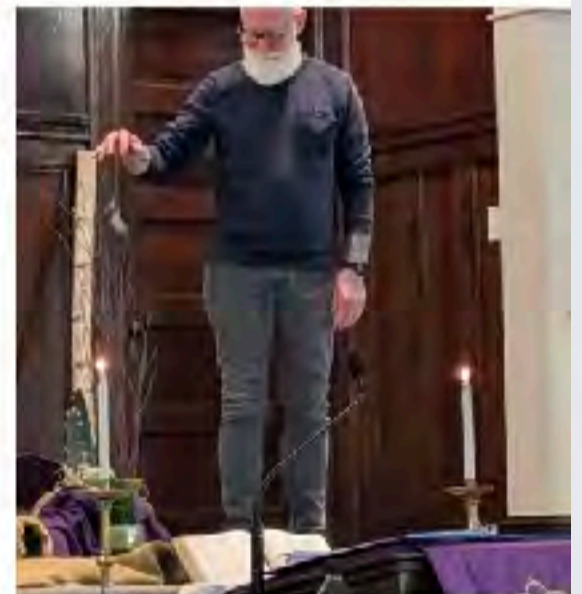
[VIEW PHOTOS »](#)



ANYONE NEED SOME MANURE?

MARCH 23, 2025

[VIEW PHOTOS »](#)



SHELTERING IN PLACE

MARCH 16, 2025

[VIEW PHOTOS »](#)



WANDERING IN OUR WILDERNESS



God speaks to you through His personal love letter, the Bible.



LECTIONARY READINGS FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL:

It is truly remarkable how reading God's word draws people closer to Him as He speaks through the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit reaches out to connect with us even before we fully receive the Spirit in our hearts. Through the conviction of Scripture, we will often discover a need we may not have previously recognized, drawing us closer to God. Enjoy getting closer to Him!

APRIL 6

Isaiah 43:16-21, Psalm 126, Philippians 3:4b-14, John 12:1-8

APRIL 13 Passion/Palm Sunday

Luke 19:28-40, Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29, Isaiah 50:4-9a, Psalm 31:9-16, Philippians 2:5-11, Luke 22:14-23:56, Luke 23:1-49

APRIL 17 Maundy Thursday

Exodus 12:1-4 [5-10] 11-14, Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, John 13:1-17, 31b-35

APRIL 18 Good Friday

Isaiah 52:13-53:12, Psalm 22, Hebrews 10:16-25, Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9, John 18:1-19:42

APRIL 20 Resurrection of the Lord - Easter Day

Acts 10:34-43, Isaiah 65:17-25, Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24, 1 Corinthians 15:19-26, Acts 10:34-43, John 20:1-18, Luke 24:1-12

APRIL 27

Acts 5:27-32, Psalm 118:14-29, Psalm 150, Revelation 1:4-8, John 20:19-31

FINANCE FLASH

Dear Church Family,

As we reflect on the financial activities of February, I wanted to share an update on our church's finances. While our expenses exceeded our revenue by only about \$200, this gap was primarily due to an increase in utilities, which saw a rise of approximately \$1,000 for the month.

However, I am thrilled to report that, thanks to the generosity of two special donors—one who gave anonymously and another in memory of a loved one—we were able to pay off the line of credit secured by the parsonage house. This line of credit was originally opened to cover masonry repairs that, as many of you know, became a larger project than anticipated. These donations have helped us erase that debt, and I want to express my deepest gratitude to those who contributed. It's truly heartwarming to see how our church is filled with everyday angels, always looking out for each other and our shared mission.

"But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." (Matthew 6:3-4, NIV)

Looking ahead, I believe that a key focus for us should be fundraising efforts to help raise revenue for future capital improvements, rather than relying on credit lines or using our invested funds. With careful planning and dedication, we can build a sustainable foundation for the church's future.

I'd also like to invite anyone who is interested in learning more about our church's finances to attend our upcoming finance meeting. These meetings are open to all members of the congregation, and I encourage you to come and get involved. The next meeting will take place on **Friday, April 11th at 6:30 PM**, and a Zoom link can be provided. While members not on the finance committee are welcome to attend and observe, please note that only committee members can actively participate in the discussion or vote on applicable agenda items. This is a great opportunity to learn more about our church's financials, upcoming projects, and how you can get more involved in supporting our mission. Please see Aerial or Pastor Bob if you would like to add items to the finance agenda.

Spring Blessings,
Aerial Sillanpaa



REMINDER:

You can use our on line
"giving" tab tool on
fumcportsmouth.com



FIRST UMC WORSHIP COMMITTEE UPDATE

Hello, my brothers and sisters in Christ!

We kicked off the Lenten season with Girl Scout Sunday on March 9, 2025. Our congregation was honored to host guests from Newfields Girl Scout Troop 58501, which includes our own Daphne Labadie and her mother, Stephanie, who serves as the troop leader and Cora Angelini and her mother Kim.

Hatch Hope for Easter - Supporting Heifer International

Instead of Easter flower donations, we invite everyone to consider donating a share of chicks or a flock of chicks in honor or memory of a loved one. Heifer International provides these chicks, along with education, to families in developing countries—helping them raise the chickens for eggs, food security, and income. Our goal is to fund 25 flocks, and thanks to an anonymous church member, this goal will be matched! Stay tuned for the May Beacon to see our final count!

Lenten Bible Study with Pastor Bob

Pastor Bob is leading a Lenten Bible Study using Adam Hamilton's book, *Final Words from the Cross*. There are two session options: Wednesdays (in person) and Saturday mornings (via Zoom). We're thrilled that 17 people have already joined the study!

A Time with the Children

During "A Time with the Children," Pastor Bob has been introducing the 12 symbols that tell the story of the final week of Jesus through "Resurrection Eggs"—a meaningful and interactive way for our younger members to engage with the Easter story.

Holy Week Services

- Palm Sunday (April 13, 10 AM) - Join us as we wave palms in celebration of Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem.
- Maundy Thursday (April 17, 6:30 PM) - A special Tenebrae drama, *Two Faces in the Shadows* (by Paul Duke & Jeff Allee), featuring Pastor Bob as Judas and Steve Scott as Peter. Holy Communion will be served.
- Good Friday (April 18, 2 PM) - The church will be open for your personal quiet reflection from 12-2. At 2:00pm Pastor Bob and Sharon will lead a service reflecting upon Jesus' Seven Final Words from the Cross which will include prayer, scripture, a short reflection and sacred dance.
- EASTER SUNDAY (April 20, 10 AM) - A joyous celebration of our Risen Christ! Come ready to sing, dance, and rejoice!

Wishing you peace in your journey,

PennySue Orr
Worship Chair



CHURCH FAMILY

CARING FOR EACH OTHER

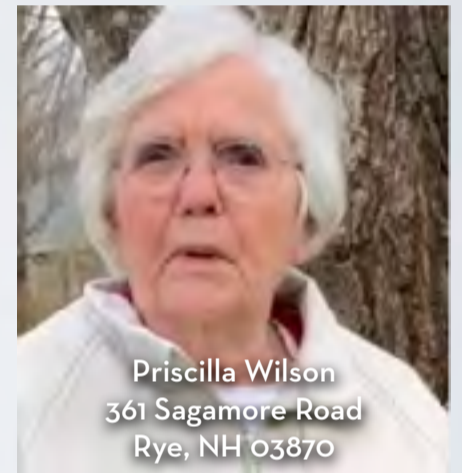
At our core, we are a FAMILY. We recognize that some members may not be able to attend church regularly or participate in activities at First UMC. They are always in our thoughts, and prayers, cards, calls, or visits are always appreciated.



LOVE
IS CARING
FOR EACH
OTHER



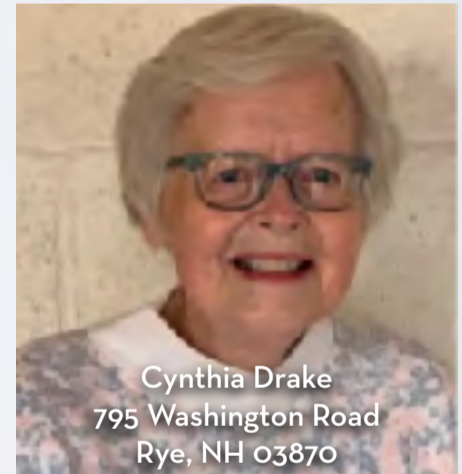
Jim Slater
75 State Street
Portland, ME 04101



Priscilla Wilson
361 Sagamore Road
Rye, NH 03870



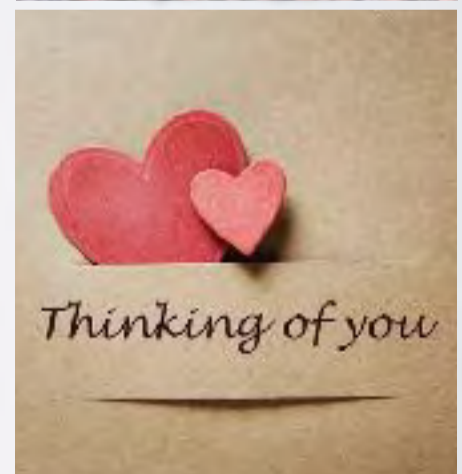
Barbara Glidden
188 Jones Ave #101
Portsmouth, NH 03801




Cynthia Drake
795 Washington Road
Rye, NH 03870



Ken & Jenya Westbrook
20 Islington Street #402
Portsmouth, NH 03801





PRAYER

THE MOST POWERFUL
WEAPON
OF A BELIEVER

THERE IS POWER IN PRAYER!

Through prayer, we can connect with God, seek His guidance, and intercede on behalf of others.

Building on the prayers lifted up through our Sunday **Red Prayer Hearts**, we are launching a new initiative called the **First UMC Prayer Ministry**—providing a structured way for our community to support one another and amplifying the power of prayer.

Marilyn Stebbins will be leading this ministry, and we thank all those who have signed up to be part of the First UMC Prayer Ministry as Prayer Warriors. We will be launching the program post Easter so stay tuned for more info to come.

WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER:

Dave Curtis Family, Eddie Hernandez, all those affected by the Myanmar earthquake, Anna Grace & Hickey Family, Connie, Laura, Michelle, Pastor Sue Ellery, Justina, Mark Giandomenico, Ginger Ellenwood, Steve VanReenen, Cynthia Drake, travel mercies for all those traveling, the marginalized and scared, our country and leaders, and those we silently lift up right now.

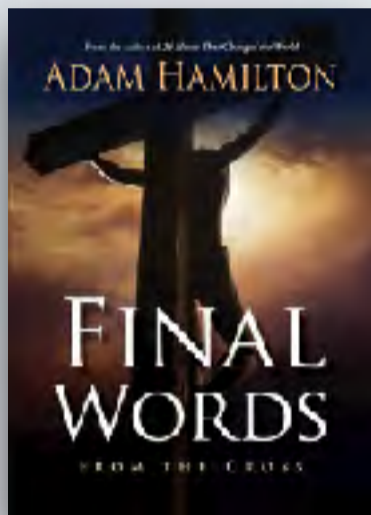





UPCOMING EVENTS


LENT 2025:

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY

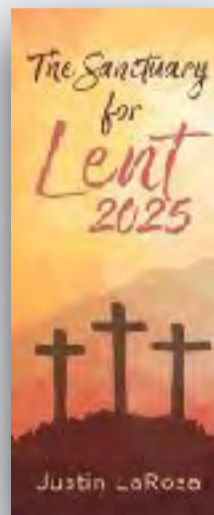


Join Pastor Bob for a meaningful Lenten Bible Study as we explore *Final Words from the Cross* by Adam Hamilton.

 **In-person:** Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. at the church

 **Online:** Saturdays at 8:30 a.m. via Zoom

LENTEN DEVOTIONAL



Devotion for each day of Lent booklets are available at each entrance of church.

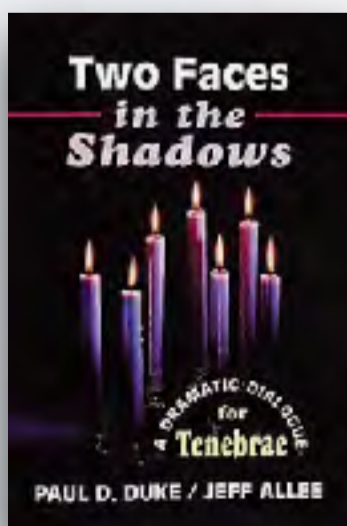
HATCH HOPE PROJECT March 5th - April 20th



PALM SUNDAY April 13th



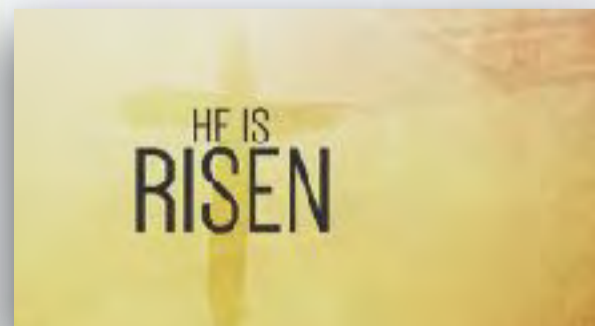
MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE April 17th at 6:30 p.m.



GOOD FRIDAY April 18th time 2pm



EASTER SUNDAY April 20th at 10 a.m.





HATCH HOPE THIS EASTER

A Flock of Chicks Can Change Lives!

This Easter, we are partnering with Heifer International to bring hope and opportunity to families in need. Instead of donating traditional Easter lilies, tulips, hyacinths, or azaleas in memory or honor of a loved one, we invite you to “Hatch Some Hope” by contributing to our Flock of Chicks initiative.



A single flock—10 to 50 chicks—provides a family with food security, sustainable income, and the training they need to build a better future. Your generosity can help transform lives!

How You Can Help:

 **\$10** - Provides a flock share

 **\$20** - Provides an entire flock

Our goal is to donate at least **25 flocks** this Easter, and every contribution—big or small—makes a lasting impact! In the Narthex and Sanctuary, you’ll find colored eggs with donation cards inside. Simply fill out a card, place it back in the egg, and drop it into the glass jar to help us **Thanks for making this Easter a season of renewal and hope—one flock at a time.**

OUR LEG EGG JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

During the Children's time with Pastor Bob each week he has been revealing the Resurrection Eggs that are symbols of Christ's final days...here's what has been revealed so far!

DONKEY



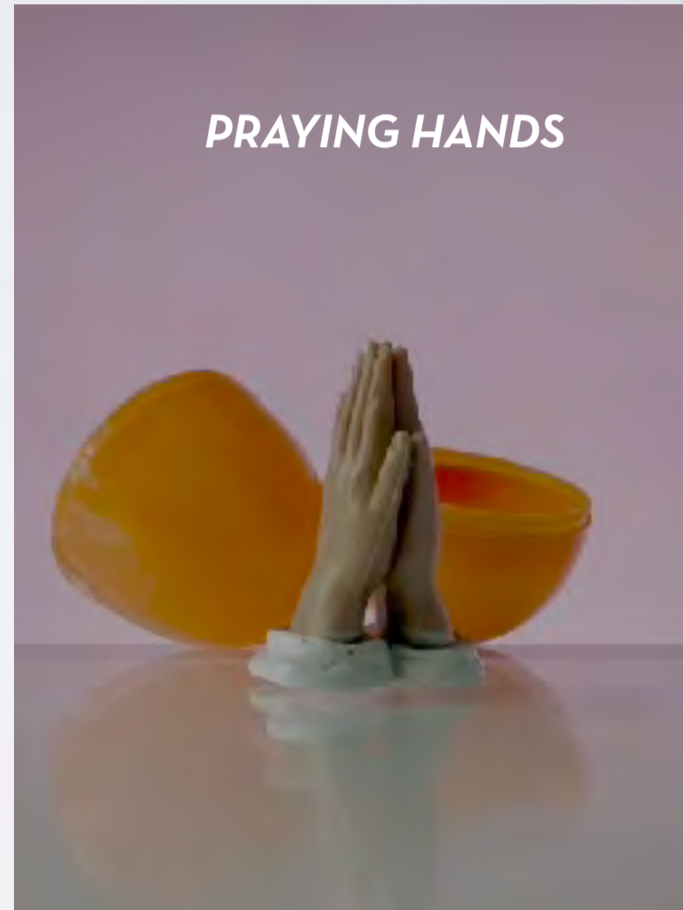
SILVER COINS



CUP



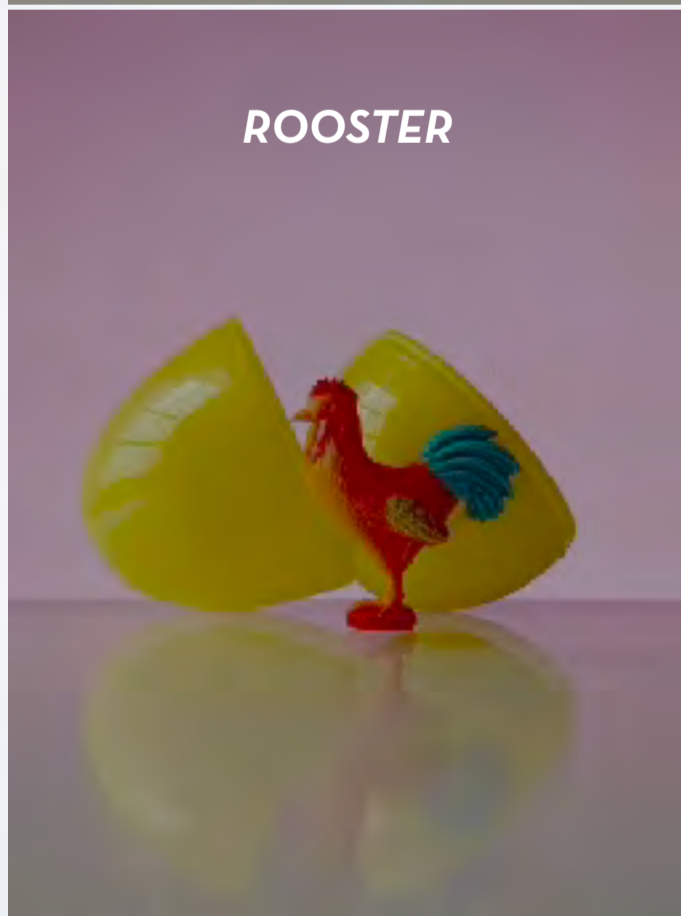
PRAYING HANDS



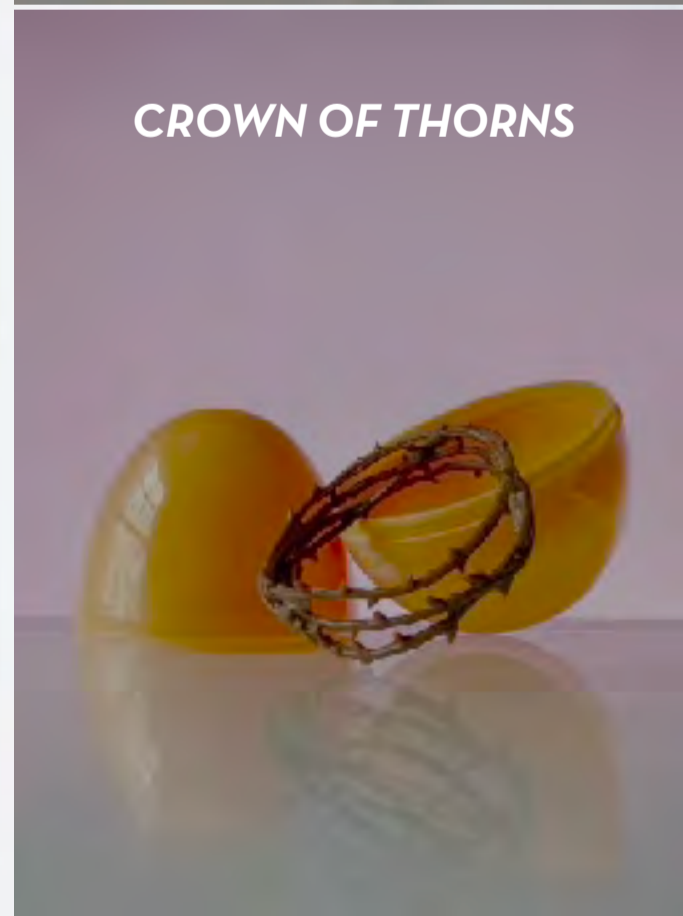
WHIP



ROOSTER



CROWN OF THORNS



APRIL BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Get a card in the mail or send a quick text or instant messenger to wish these church family members a Happy Birthday or Happy Anniversary and a day filled with love, laughter and lots of cake!



HAPPY
BIRTHDAY

BIRTHDAYS

2 Erica Arcadipane

16 Barbara Kirkham

24 Elsie Sillanpaa

27 Marilyn Stebbins

ANNIVERSARIES

26 Tim & Penny Sue Orr

CONGRATULATIONS AND WELL DONE FIRST UMC!

100% Mission Share in 2024 - World Missions, Ministry Support, and New England Missions



You can learn more about us by using your camera on your phone and this QR code

HOMEMADE EASTER PIES

Another opportunity to taste a bit of heaven with the homemade pies from the First UMC Pie Angels! Get your Easter Pie order in by Saturday, April 5th by texting or calling Sue Richards @ 603.749.4169 or email @ mksrichards@comcast.net

Your house will smell wonderful with and of these frozen "Take and Bake" choices of Apple, Blueberry, and Cherry at \$18 and Pecan at \$20. Pie pick up will be at the First UMC office on Sunday April 13th from 11:30-1:30, Wednesday April 16th from 10-2 and Saturday April 19th from 10-12. Cash, check, credit cards and Venmo accepted!



LET'S BE FRIENDS ON FACEBOOK!

Facebook is a fantastic way to stay updated on events, prayers, daily inspiration, and to connect with Church family and friends. We appreciate it when you "like" our posts, but we absolutely LOVE it when you share them too!





April 2025

FIRST UMC WORSHIP SCHEDULE

NOTE - If you are unable to meet the proposed schedule please let the office know immediately and we will reschedule.

DATE	LITURGIST	ACOLYTES	9:55 BELL RINGERS	GREETERS (G) & USHERS (U)	FACEBOOK LIVE	WORSHIP TECH	SOUND TECH	SUNDAY SCHOOL	COFFEE HOUR
4/6/25	S. Rhodes	Liam	Dominic	A. & M. Coffey	S. Labadie	S. Scott	S. Sarosiek	PS. Orr & S. Richards	C. VanReenen Y. Griffin
4/13/25	C. VanReenen	Daphne & Jack	Grayson	S. Russ S. Lange	S. Richards	S. Scott	S. Sarosiek	J. Jerry & H. Groff	R. Buswell, N. Chesser, D. Pierce
4/17/25	Meundy Thursday	--	--	--	--	S. Richards	S. Sarosiek	--	--
4/18/25	Good Friday	--	--	--	--	S. Richards	S. Sarosiek	--	--
4/20/25	S. Stewart	Angelini Family	Norah	A & J Canadale (G) Langs Family (U)	S. Richards	S. Scott	S. Sarosiek		S Labadie - to go
4/27/25	D. Richards Norm Boulay Preaching	Grayson	Rosie & Will	Pastor Sue Ellery	B. Labadie	S. Richards	S. Sarosiek	J. & C. VanReenen	S. Labadie



YOU ARE LOVED
ACCEPTED &
CELEBRATED
JUST AS YOU ARE



First UMC is a Reconciling Congregation dedicated to worshiping, learning, and serving with ALL people embracing Jesus Christ's message of love and acceptance.

We celebrate our diversity and invite ALL persons regardless of age, gender, racial or ethnic background, sexual orientation, marital or socioeconomic status, nationality, physical or mental ability into full membership and participation in the life of this community of faith.