Wow! The news that met me as I arrived at church this Monday morning was the preliminary offering total from March to the Manger. $25,417!! This compares very well with last year’s MTM Sunday offering of $18,690. We will continue to collect for March to the Manger over the next several weeks, so let’s keep our foot on the gas pedal and have one of our best totals ever! This is what it looks like when our church is “sharing the Heart of Christ from the Heart of Carbondale.”

In my sermon Sunday, I described a congregation in Ohio with an enormous Christmas offering. I heard their former Senior Pastor talk about how he challenges members to give as much to God at Christmas as they spend on family gifts.

In the process of research for my sermon, I ran across several facts about that congregation I found very interesting. I realized that, as near as I can figure, Carbondale First is giving more - per attendant - for missions and outreach than that congregation famous for its radical generosity. I also discovered something about their giving: only 25% - 30% of all their giving comes in the Sunday morning offering. I’ve seen figures like this from many contemporary non-denominational churches, but was surprised to see these percentages at a Midwestern United Methodist Congregation. Here is the breakdown of how people gave to their church in 2018:

- App and Online - 40%
- Electronic Transfer (ACH) - 6%
- Anonymous Cash - 5%
- Basket Offering (worship services) - 25%
- Mailed Offering - 24%

As we prepare to start the new year, we will be sharing information with you about a new App and giving opportunities at Carbondale First. We are not going to take away the ways you are currently giving, but are adding opportunities. I’m sharing the above numbers with you to illustrate that the way people give to church is changing rapidly. Congregations that rely only on the Sunday morning offering plate are missing opportunities to teach people about giving - especially younger generations who no longer carry cash and almost never write checks. Frankly, I was surprised that the “ACH” percentage for the above church was so low. We find this to be the best way for people to automate their giving - and the most cost-effective. Most of the “Mailed offering” in the above list is probably coming from people who give through the “bill pay” feature on their bank accounts. This is another effective way to automate giving.

Coming Soon:
I’m delighted to welcome two guest preachers in the coming weeks. However, they are no strangers to First UMC. On December 29th, our own Dr. John Sims will share a message titled “What Does It Mean?” And on January 5th, Rev. InSook Hwang will be preaching on Epiphany Sunday. I have appreciated John and Insook as clergy colleagues for many years, and am delighted to have their active involvement at First Church.

On January 12, Pastor Yiwen will kick off our New Year’s Sermon Series called “New Year, Same Promises.” We will celebrate God’s Promises which last forever.

God Bless, Pastor Howard
**In Church This Week**

**Dec. 12 to Jan. 1**

**12 Thursday**
- 2:00 Rhonda Kelley & Volunteers to decorate church with Poinsettias
- 4:00 Chimes
- 5:45 Gentle Toning, Stretch and Yoga
- 7:00 Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

**13 Friday**
- 9:30 Golden Yoga, Room 404 *

**14 Saturday**
- 9:30 Golden Yoga, Room 404 *

**15 Sunday – Third Sunday of Advent**
- 8:15 Service of Lessons & Carols
- 9:30 Sunday School
- 10:45 Worship Service
- 10:45-11:45 Super Church, Youth Room
- 5:00 Advent Music Vespers, Anita Hutton, piano
- 5:30-7 Scouts Girl Troop 66, Room 410

**16 Monday**
- 6-8:00 Scouts Boy Troop 66, Fellowship Hall

**17 Tuesday**
- 8:30 Men’s Group, Heritage Room
- 9:00 Daniel Plan, Room 403
- 10:15 Golden Yoga, Room 404 *
- 11:30 Morning Circle Christmas Lunch-Hunhan’s
- 6:30 Eagle Board, Rm. 308
- 5-6:30 Rotary Club, Conference Room

**18 Wednesday**
- 5:00-3 Healing Touch (by Appointment), Room 403
- 6:00 Grateful Hearts, Room 308-NOT MEETING
- 6-7:00 Youth Group (last one in 2019), Location TBD

**19 Thursday**
- 4:00 Chimes
- 5:45 Gentle Toning, Stretch and Yoga
- 7:00 Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

**20 Friday**
- 9:30 Golden Yoga, Room 404 *

**21 Saturday**
- 9:30 Priscilla Circle, Hanging of the Greens
- 3-6:00 Families In Progress Caroling-Meet at FUMC to Ride the bus to caroling locations

**22 Sunday - Fourth Sunday of Advent**
- 8:15 Worship Service
- 9:30 Sunday School
- 10:45 Worship Service
- 10:45-11:45 Super Church, Youth Room
- 5:00 Advent Music Vespers, Anita Hutton, piano
- 5:30-7 Scouts Girl Troop 66, Room 410

**23 Monday**
- 7-8:30 Scouts Boy Troop 66, Fellowship Hall-NOT MEETING

**24 Tuesday**
- 8:30 Men’s Group, Heritage Room-NOT MEETING
- 9:00 Daniel Plan, Room 403-NOT MEETING
- 10:15 Golden Yoga, Room 404 *-NOT MEETING
- 5:00 Christmas Eve Service
- 7:00 Christmas Eve Service

Poinsettias may be taken home after the 7:00 p.m. service

Childcare Services available during both services

**25 Wednesday**
- Christmas Day Holiday

**26 Thursday**
- Holiday – Church Office Closed

**27 Friday**
- 9:30 Golden Yoga, Room 404 *

**28 Saturday**
- 9:30 Golden Yoga, Room 404 *

**29 Sunday**
- 8:15 Worship Service
- 9:30 Sunday School
- 10:45 Worship Service
- 5:30-7 Scouts Girl Troop 66, Room 410-NOT MEETING

**30 Monday**
- 7-8:30 Scouts Boy Troop 66, Fellowship Hall-NOT MEETING

**31 Tuesday**
- New Year’s Eve - Church Office Closed

**1 Wednesday**
- New Year’s Day - Church Office Closed

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**Urgent**—A volunteer is needed for the Welcome Center on December 15 & December 22. If you are available to volunteer for either date, please e-mail Kathy Swindell at kbury@siu.edu.”

**Calendar Dates for 2020:** PLEASE come in to the Church Office and write in or call in your church-related events held in January 2020 on the Office Calendar as soon as possible and any other remaining event dates in 2019.

**Childcare Services** will be available during both services (5:00 & 7:00 p.m.) on Christmas Eve.

**Saturday Night Live and PrimeTimers—** Will not meet in January 2020.

**Volunteer Opportunity:** A volunteer is needed to coordinate the Coffee Hosts for 10:45 a.m. Please contact the Church Office if you are interested.

**Thank You**—“We would like to thank everyone who participated in this year’s Spirit of Christmas. Because of your amazing generosity, 115 of our community members will have a very Merry Christmas this year! Thank you all so much!” —Amy & Doug Baker

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**ASBURIAN PRINTING NOTICE:**

Due to the Christmas holiday week ahead, the Asburian for December 22, 29 & Jan. 5 will be consolidated into one newsletter and mailed on December 18. Please submit calendar/news items for the calendar dates December 19 to January 9 no later than 8:30 a.m., Tuesday, December 17.

The January 12 Asburian will go out as usual on January 8, however, the deadline date for submitting items for the January 12 Asburian will be 8:30 a.m., January 6th.

Please send your calendar/news items to barbm@fumcdale.org.
Disciples for Sunday, December 22, 2019—4th Sunday of Advent

Acolytes: Madison Voss, Paige Hefferman
Advent Readers: 8:15: Duane Stucky
10:45: Sam Indorante Family
(Sam, Carolyn, Katie & Guy)
Indoor Greeters: Sanctuary: The Hinde Family
(John, Sara, Cayden & Carlisle)
Stairway off Atrium: Ron & Deanna Diel
Liturgists: 8:15: Paul McRoy
10:45: Paul McRoy
Sound System Operators: 8:15: Scott Wright
10:45: Ron Browning
December Nametags: Sheila Crippen

Coffee Hosts: 8:15: Lyn Christy, Jeff Anderer
Charlena & Mike Bitting
10:45: Elaine Crain
Outside Greeters: Kathy Hollister & The Koch Family
Van Driver: Don Bryant, Jr.
Welcome Center: 8:15:
10:45: Terri Glasser
December Ushers: John Washburn, Captain;
8:15: Bill Tally; 10:45: Don Bryant, Jr., Paul Chugh,
Greg Gibson, John Hinde, Angie Voss
Children’s Church: Necia Jannings
Coffee Hosts: 8:15: Sharon & Larry Meyer
10:45: Susan & Mike Burke
Outside Greeters: John & Sally Washburn
Van Driver: John Graig
Welcome Center: 8:15: Judy Dillingar
10:45: JoVonna Noble
December Nametags: Sheila Crippen
Parish Nurses: (9:15) Sharon Meyer
Children’s Church: Necia Jannings
Youth Helpers: Brenden & Rhys McNally

The last 5th Sunday Loose Change Offering in 2019 will occur on December 29, 2019.
Contributions made to this offering will be included in the March to the Manager Program.
Thank you for your support of this mission effort. Your contributions have helped numerous local agencies serve those in need.

The Missions Committee
CALANDER OF UPCOMING EVENTS
Dec. 17 Morning Circle, Christmas Lunch
Time: 11:30 a.m. Location: Hunan’s

Advent Music Vespers Programs
Sundays at 5:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary
December 15 Anita Hutton – piano
December 22 Tammy Kirk – flute; Anita Hutton – piano

YEAR-TO-DATE FINANCIAL REPORT
AS OF NOVEMBER 30, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>BUILDING FUND</th>
<th>GENERAL FUND</th>
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<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>$ 302,884.76</td>
<td>$ 605,333.54</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenses</td>
<td>$ 300,096.09</td>
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SUNDAY CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Children’s Opportunities, Sundays
Sundays at 9:30 a.m. Children’s Sunday School (K-5th grade) uses the Deep Blue from Cokesbury.
Main Topic: “Church Communities Celebrate Jesus” - Dec. 15 Sunday School—“Jesus is Coming” - Dec. 22 Sunday School—“Jesus Is Born”

Sundays at 10:45 a.m. Children’s Church (K-5th grade). All children are invited to Children’s Church following the Children’s Time at the 10:45 a.m. worship service.

Youth Opportunities, Sundays at 9:30 a.m.
9:30 a.m. Junior/Senior High Class meets in the Youth Room and uses a variety of materials connecting the lessons of the Bible with issues relevant to today’s youth.

Adult Opportunities, Sundays at 9:30 a.m.
Almost Christmas - A Wesleyan Advent Experience. This is a new four-week study. Join in for any or all sessions. Class will meet on 12/22. Time and Location are 9:30 a.m. during the Sunday School hour in Room 402. This class will be led by Leah Farrar-White.
Renew Class - Renew is a group of women seeking deeper meaning in their lives through Bible study, reflection and prayer. The group is studying Holy Spirit Here and Now by Trevor Hudson. They meet in the Chapel. Women of all ages are welcome.
The Electives Class - Scripture studies following the lectionary led by Rev. John Sims. They meet in the Heritage Room. All are welcome!

Small Group Opportunities
FUMCNext-Carbondale meets in the Heritage Room. Help us explore ways we can share the love of Christ with all people? Come share your ideas. Looking forward to seeing you!
Gentle Toning, Stretch, and Yoga Techniques meets on Thursdays at 5:45 p.m., Rm 404, the Chapel.
Golden Yoga meets on Tuesdays at 10:15 a.m. and on Fridays at 9:30 a.m., Rm 404, the Chapel. A fee is charged for this class.
Grateful Hearts is a group of women who meet to strengthen their faith through Bible study, fellowship, and prayer. The group is studying How Happiness Happens by Max Lucado on Wednesdays, at 6 p.m. in room 308. All women are welcome.
Men’s Group All men of the church are invited to coffee and refreshments on Tuesday mornings at 8:30 a.m. in the Heritage Room. We discuss anything and everything from the perspective of our relationship with God.
The Daniel Plan Essentials meets in Room 403 at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesdays. They are studying the series The Science of Natural Healing. Everyone welcome.
Saturday Night Live is a group of “mature” or “maturing” adults who meet monthly for dinner and fellowship. The group usually meets the first Saturday of the month at 5:30 p.m. Watch the Asburian calendar for dates and location information. Everyone is welcome.
Youth Group meets on Wednesdays at 6 p.m. in the Youth Room. Time and location to be determined.

SOAR Classes
Friday, Jan 3, 10 a.m.—noon
Sign up for one, 2 hour class as we learn that Jesus understands whatever we are going through.
Cost $10/student.
REGISTRATION & FEE DUE BY DEC. 15

1st-5th Grade Classes
“A La Peanut Butter Sandwich” Magic—a little magic and a little science with Samantha Holcomb
“Pizza, Pizza, Pizza!” Let's make pizza with Crystal Mitchell

Middle School/High School Classes
Legobots—Build working sumo-fighting Lego robots with Rob Lucas
Pour Painting—Abstract art creations with Claudia Broom
Pipeworks—the pipe organ from the backside with Anita Hutton

Registration forms are available in the atrium or contact Necia 457-2416

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Expenses $ 728,087.51
INDEBTEDNESS $ -0-

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