



Volume 50/51  
Issue 12/1

# December/January 2019-20 MUSTARD SEED

*Our church family offers us many ways to learn and grow together in ministry. Thank you to everyone who has given of their time and talents!*



*Lighting Advent Candles*



*Family Game Night*



*Christmas Breakfast*



*Turkey Supper*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, December 14th, UMW Cookie Walk @ 8:30 am  
Saturday, December 14th, All-Church Christmas Drama @ 5 pm service  
December 15th - Children's Christmas Pageant @ 9 am service  
Sunday, December 15th @ 2 pm - Christmas Caroling for Shut-Ins  
Tuesday, December 24th - Worship Services @ 4 pm, 7 pm & 10 pm  
(Special music & Communion will be served at all services.)  
January 11th, Men's Prayer Breakfast @ 7 am  
January 25th, Lord's Ladies Prayer Breakfast @ 8 am  
January 26th, All-Church Retreat @ 10:30 am



## Pastor's Page - Dec./Jan. 2019-20



*"Frustration is better than laughter, because a sad face is good for the heart. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of pleasure." (Ecclesiastes 7:3-4)*



"Enthusiastically frustrated" – this is how my mentor described my ministry at the end of 2019. Around the 5th year of a pastoral appointment, if you feel that you are not there where you hoped to be, then you feel "enthusiastically frustrated." As I look at worship attendance, giving reports, Sunday School adjustments, youth group attendance, and volunteer numbers, I am disappointed with where we are. When I started my ministry with MUMC in May 2015, I hoped to fill every pew with young families. I hoped Sunday School classes would be overflowing with children. While we have not reached my ministry goals, there have been other celebrations. While I question what I've not done right or could have done differently over the years, I know that I am right where God has called me to be. I also know that in this increasingly secularized society, clergy and churches (in all denominations) are feeling the same feelings of frustration.

I hope all of you had a Happy Thanksgiving. It's hard to believe that Christmas is only a few weeks away. As we wrap up 2019, I invite us to refocus on the life-giving gospel of Jesus Christ. Let's hear again the good news that God sent His only son for me, for our congregation, for the world. In the midst of our division and questions over the future of our denomination, let's remember the hearts of Methodist circuit riders, who rode from town to town with nothing but a passionate desire to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. They led vibrant revival meetings. They led people to healing, recovery, reconciliation, and conversion. They inspired social justice movements for civil rights, women's rights, children's rights, and workers' rights. They opened churches, schools, universities, hospitals, and orphanages. When we remember our roots of faith, we celebrate a rich and proud legacy that's endured both good times and bad. We have a legacy that inspires us onward and upwards – pressing on toward the goal for which Christ Jesus has taken hold of us.

In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul prays that the eyes of our heart may be opened so that we may know the hope to which God has called us. With eyes of faith, may we remember the movement of the Holy Spirit in the past. May we hear the whispers of the Holy Spirit in the present. May we follow the leadings of the Holy Spirit into the future – not with fear but faith – not with frustration but hope.

There is so much that God is doing in MUMC. In the past year alone, there have been so many answered prayers. There are so many blessings in our midst. Therefore, I am grateful for my 'enthusiastic frustration.' I am grateful for the reminder that I/we are not the owners of MUMC ministry. Christ is the head of the Church. We are not called to be successful (by the world's standards.) We are called to be faithful in any/ every circumstance. We are called to bear witness to the greatest news in the world – that God loves us, God is with us, and Salvation was born among us in Bethlehem two thousand years ago.

I hope that you will join us for Christmas Eve services at 4 pm, 7 pm and 10 pm. We will serve holy communion in each service. We will sing carols and light candles. Let's gather for worship and give thanks to our good and gracious God!

Pastor Sarah

## Minooka United Methodist Church

205 West Church Street  
Minooka, IL 60447  
815-467-2322  
minookaumc.com

### Saturday Worship

5:00 p.m.  
Blended Worship Service

### Sunday Worship Schedule

9:00 a.m.  
Traditional Worship Service

10:00 a.m.  
Fellowship Time

10:30 a.m.  
Young Adult Fellowship

### Sunday School

10:15 Sunday School for Grades Pre-K-12  
September - May

### **Church Office Hours:**

Monday - Friday  
8:30a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

### **Administrative Assistant**

**Katie Wojcieszak**  
Church Phone: 815-467-2322  
Church e-mail:  
[admin@minookaumc.com](mailto:admin@minookaumc.com)

### **Pastor Sarah Hong**

815-212-5166  
[pastor@minookaumc.com](mailto:pastor@minookaumc.com)

### **Music Director**

**Jill Kohler**  
[music@minookaumc.com](mailto:music@minookaumc.com)



Please keep us informed of members who are critically ill or in the hospital:  
Office 815-467-2322  
Pastor Sarah 815-212-5166  
To be on our Prayer Chain, please call the Church Office.

**Saturday 5:00 p.m.**  
**Blended Service**

**Sunday 9:00 a.m.**  
**Traditional Service**



The Holiday season is upon us! November was a busy month planning with the Scouts, Aux Sable PTO, St. Andrews of Romeoville, and other community groups and individuals for the holiday food drives. With Thanksgiving in our hearts, we planned special food baskets for the families. We are doing our best to give our families a wonderful holiday season!

It is that time of year when we repeat the cliché that it is a time for families and friends.

Our efforts may not rise to the Hallmark levels, but during the holiday season, we try to remember to be thankful for big and LITTLE blessings. When we are grateful for what we have, we can help others enjoy their holidays. There are many ways to brighten the holidays, but our pantry accomplishes this with a smile, a listening ear, and a Christmas basket for holiday cheer.

The pantry team wants to extend our prayers and warm wishes to YOU and your loved ones during the holidays and the coming year. Thank you for all the support you have given. We can't do what we do without your support. It is the season of hope, for ourselves and others. May your Christmas and New Year be filled with the gifts of peace, love, great joy and blessings.



The Pantry Team

“Immanuel”

In this Christmas Season we celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus, God Incarnate, a daily companion, a mentor in every situation, teacher, guide, comforter, encourager----Jesus is all this and more. He is unique in all creation, the Son of God. Creator, and Savior. He loves and forgives. He is God Incarnate, the Chosen, and Anointed One.

He is Immanuel, God with us. Which of Jesus' many names and roles are most significant for you today? “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14) How amazing that God Incarnate, would make His home with us and be our companion.

Christmas Blessings,

Pearl Lindley, Certified Lay Servant



# ASP Appalachia SERVICE PROJECT®

ASP 2020 - "You get what you give"

Heading to Tennessee June 6th through the 13th next summer. The MUMC Theme song in 2001 was by the New Radicals - You Get What You Give. Today is no different, if you are in your teen years, or your son, daughter, niece, etc. are teens that can give a little, we need them this June. This trip to Tennessee is one of the best memories you will have in 2020, I can't guarantee it, but the majority of the time it will be. It is time to sign-up for ASP 2020. Contact Marlin Hartman by email at hartmarlin@aol.com, by text or call 815-405-2978 or talk to him Sunday mornings at Fellowship after 9 o'clock service. By giving of yourself in a Christian fashion you will get more. "More what" you ask, go with us to Tennessee and find out.



Thank you to all who helped with the Children's Christmas Pageant especially Ashley Grygiene, Ruth Satorius, and Jean Terdic.

### Important Dates

~Mark Your Calendar for the Sunday School Christmas Pageant on Sunday, December 15th at the 9:00 am SERVICE.

~Children's Choir dates are: 12/15 (Pageant day), 1/19, 2/16, 3/15, and 4/5 (PALM SUNDAY) at 9:45 am.

**\*\*Christian Ed will break for Christmas on December 22nd, 29th, and January 5th.**

**Have a safe, healthy, fun, and good winter break.**



## Confirmation

### December Class Schedule

- ~December 15th, Christmas Pageant @ 9 am service
- ~December 19th, Village Christian Church 7 pm service
- ~No class December 22nd, 29th or January 5th

### January Class Schedule

- ~January 12th, Class
- ~January 19th, St. Athanasios Church visit @ 10 am service
- ~January 26th, All-Church retreat @ 10:30 am

Please pray for our Confirmands and their sponsors:

Ross Gunderson	Marlin Hartman	Ella Randich	Val Gunderson
Hannah Loverude	Dee Dee Casagrande	Paige Vause	Kim Nave
Neva Morris	Cindy White	Kimberly Wences	Gail Girard

**\*Classes meet at 11:30 a.m. unless otherwise specified**



## Community News!

### UMW Cookie Sale

You don't want to miss this event! Purchase a bucket or two of your favorite cookies. Great for those who don't like to bake or don't have the time.

Sales will begin Saturday, Dec. 14th at 8:30 am and end at 10:30 am or when we sell out. Located in the MUMC Annex.



Established 1869

The Village of  
**Minooka**  
www.minooka.com

Bring your family to  
**A VILLAGE CHRISTMAS**  
Saturday, December 14th  
4:30 - 7:00 pm  
Village of Minooka Community Room  
121 E. McEvilly Road, Minooka

Meet Santa and Mrs. Claus, decorate cookies, make crafts, listen to stories and enjoy free cocoa, cookies and candy.

### *MUMC All-Church Christmas Drama*

### *Hey God*

*Saturday, December 14th  
at 5 pm.*

*Invite friends and neighbors!*

### *MUMC Children's Christmas Pageant*

*Sunday,  
December  
15th @ 9  
am service*



## Miscellaneous Info

### Chancel Choir



All are welcome to join in this ministry. Please see Jill Kohler with your interest. Hope to see you there!

### Celebration Sunday



We have a great opportunity available to give glory to our God in the way of an offering to celebrate the many joys in our lives! This opportunity is available on the **first Sunday of each month**. Please call church office for more information.

### Praise Band

All experienced musicians are encouraged to join the Praise Band! If you have questions, please call the church office or see Jill Kohler after Sunday services.



### Senior Exercise

Classes are at:

8:15-9:15 & 9:30-10:30

Tuesdays & Thursdays

Come and see what's happening and get healthy at the same time!



### Come Join the Teen Choir

We are inviting anyone who is 12-20 years old to join the teen choir. Practices will be in the Teen Choir room on Sundays @ 8 am.

Contact Trinity Staley if you have questions.



### Sunday School Information

Sunday School is here and we would like to ask all interested families to go to our website ([www.minookaumc.com](http://www.minookaumc.com)) to register their children online. Go to the Sunday School or Family Ministry tab on the front page. If you would prefer to do a paper version you can find one in the Narthex.

## 2019 Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service Testimony- Pastor Sarah

<sup>56</sup> *The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.* <sup>57</sup> *But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15: 56-57)*

2019 has been a hard year for our denomination, The United Methodist Church, and our local church. Decisions made by our larger denomination has led to frustration and people walking away from the local church, including our church. In the midst of unexpected changes, our church found new hope. We experienced hurt and disappointment. However, we found new strength in God, who invites us to get up and keep moving. I am grateful for the witness and power of the resurrection and empty grave – which reminds us that Death Does Not Have the Last Word. Christ is victorious over Death.

I'm thankful for the faithful people of Minooka United Methodist Church. They have been flexible and adaptable, patient and persistent. They have stepped out of their comfort zones and gone the extra mile. Even amid all the changes, we encouraged each other and turned to Christ, who carried us through.

I'm grateful for exciting ministry opportunities in 2019. We had a Biker Blessing in May. We had wonderful outreach ministries such as our Pet Blessing, Easter Egg Hunt, Soccer Sundays, Trunk or Treat, ASP trip, Turkey Supper and Fish Fry. We received new members. We heard many testimonies of God's faithfulness throughout the year. In the fall, we studied John Ortberg's "If you want to walk on the water, you've got to get out of the boat." We have been pushing each other to take new steps of faith – to get out of the boat.

I'm grateful for our Sunday School students and teachers, Confirmants and Youth. I am thankful for music ministry folks, who offered their talents in worship. I am thrilled for all who are eager to study the Bible and respond to God's invitation every day.

Change is never easy. However, the power of the resurrection gives us hope for tomorrow. So, let us give thanks to God in this wonderful season of joy and peace. Why? Because Death Does Not have the Last Word, but God Does.

Praise be to God! Amen.

## Nov. 16<sup>th</sup> NICUMC Special Session Summary Report

*By Pastor Sarah & Shari Millard*

Pastor Sarah & Shari Millard attended Special Session on Nov. 16<sup>th</sup> at Kishwaukee College. Clergy and Lay members of the annual conference gathered to hear the latest financial report and to approve the 2020 budget for the Northern Illinois Conference. 2019 was a very hard financial year for our Conference.

The Northern Illinois Conference used to operate at a 7.5 to 8-million-dollar level for its annual budget. It has decreased gradually and 2019 was the worst apportionment paid year in the last 20 years. We now have a budget for 2019 and 2020 under 5 million dollars. In order to reduce expenses, the Cabinet will eliminate one District Administrative Assistant position. This means we will have two district offices shared by all 6 Districts. District Superintendents will rely more on their personal devices to communicate and connect with local churches. In 2021, our Conference will decrease from 6 Districts to 5 Districts.

The Conference Finance Committee apologized for two things. First, last year, they recommended that the Northern Illinois Conference not pay the General Church Administrative portion of the apportionments following the results of the Special Session of General Conference. This change caused confusion among local churches. As a result, the Northern Illinois Conference paid only 8% of their General Church apportionment. Starting in January 2020, the General Church Apportionment portion will be added back to the apportionment statement. The second apology was for changing the method of billing. In 2019, they only emailed statements and some churches with old or bad email addresses never received their statements. Starting Jan. of 2020, apportionment statements will once again be mailed.

We also heard a report from the Conference Exploration Team. This team was formed in 2019 to consider the future of our Annual Conference in relation to the larger denomination. They reported that they will prepare multiple strategies to respond to the decisions made at the 2020 General Conference.

During the Opening Worship, Bishop Sally Dyck asked all of us to not press charges against one another. While we will have the ability to press charges against anyone in our Annual Conference around issues of human sexuality, she reminded us that each trial costs between \$50,000 to \$100,000. This is money we do not have. She highlighted that we should keep in mind the 3 Simple Rules of Methodists: Do No Harm, Do Good, and Stay in love with God. While we are anxious and can only guess what might happen at the 2020 General Conference, let's be in prayer. Let's pray for the unity of Christ's love in the Church. Let's continue to serve. Let's continue to love and listen to one another. Finally, let's continue to carry out the mission of Jesus Christ to which we are ALL called.



## FINANCE COMMITTEE

### Report from the Financial Resourcing Committee:

Financial Information not available at the time of printing.


Average attendance in  
October : 90  
November: 85



## December 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
15 8:00 am Teen Choir 9:00 am Worship & Children's Christmas Pageant 2:00 pm Christmas Caroling	16 5:00 pm AA Meeting 7:00 pm AA Meeting	17 8:15 am Sr Exercise 9:30 am Sr. Exercise 12pm Faithtalk 7:00 pm Finance Mtg.	18	19 8:15 am Sr Exercise 9:30 am Sr. Exercise 7:00 pm Confirmation Class Village Christian Church Visit	20	21 4:00 pm Advent Study 5:00 pm Worship
22 8:00 am Teen Choir 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Advent Study	23 5:00 pm AA Meeting 7:00 pm AA Meeting	24 <b>Christmas Eve</b> 4:00 pm Worship 7:00 pm Worship 10:00 pm Worship	25 <b>Christmas Day</b> 	26 8:15 am Sr Exercise 9:30 am Sr. Exercise	27	28 5:00 pm Worship
29 8:00 am Teen Choir 9:00 am Worship	30 5:00 pm AA Meeting 7:00 pm AA Meeting	31 <b>New Year's Eve</b>				

## January 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 <b>New Year's Day</b> 	2 8:15 am Sr Exercise 9:30 am Sr. Exercise	3	4 Communion 9:00 am Food Pantry 5:00 pm Worship
5 Communion 8:00 am Teen Choir 9:00 am Worship	6 5:00 pm AA Meeting 7:00 pm AA Meeting 7:00 pm Evening Circle	7 8:15 am Sr Exercise 9:30 am Sr. Exercise 12pm Faithtalk 6:00 pm Worship Mtg.	8 9:45 am Food Pantry 5:00 pm Food Pantry 6:00 pm Outreach Committee	9 8:15 am Sr Exercise 9:30 am Sr. Exercise	10	11 7:00 am Men's Prayer Breakfast 5:00 pm Worship
12 8:00 am Teen Choir 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Young Adult Fellowship 11:30 am Confirmation	13 5:00 pm AA Meeting 7:00 pm AA Meeting 7:00 pm UMW	14 8:15 am Sr Exercise 9:30 am Sr. Exercise 10:00 am Food Pantry 12pm Faithtalk 7:00 pm SPRC	15	16 8:15 am Sr Exercise 9:30 am Sr. Exercise	17	18 5:00 pm Worship
19 8:00 am Teen Choir 8:45 am Confirmation St. Athanasios Church visit 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Young Adult Fellowship	20 5:00 pm AA Meeting 7:00 pm AA Meeting	21 8:15 am Sr Exercise 9:30 am Sr. Exercise 12pm Faithtalk 7:00 pm Finance Mtg.	22	23 8:15 am Sr Exercise 9:30 am Sr. Exercise	24	25 8:00 am Lord's Ladies Prayer Breakfast 5:00 pm Worship
26 8:00 am Teen Choir 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Young Adult Fellowship 10:30 am All-Church Retreat	27 5:00 pm AA Meeting 7:00 pm AA Meeting 7:00 pm Book Study	28 8:15 am Sr Exercise 9:30 am Sr. Exercise 12pm Faithtalk 7:00 pm Church Council Mtg.	29	30 8:15 am Sr Exercise 9:30 am Sr. Exercise	31	



## SMALL GROUPS/BOOK STUDY

### January 9:00 am SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

#### January 5th Communion Sunday

LAY READER Shari Millard  
USHER Volunteers Needed

#### January 12th

LAY READER Kim Nave  
USHER Claude & Karen Crawshaw

#### January 19th

LAY READER Kim Nave  
USHER Matt McComas  
GREETER Dee Dee Casagrande

#### January 26th

LAY READER Youth  
USHER Youth



### RESOURCE CENTER!

New Year's Suggestions from the Resource Center:  
Visit the Resource Center to check out some materials to broaden your knowledge in the new year that is coming. Make a New Year's Resolution to join the Bible Reading Challenge and challenge yourself to read the entire Bible before the end of 2020.

Don't forget that you can drop in on the Resource Center anytime that you are in the church. We would love to have you make a habit of visiting.

### CHURCH LIBRARY

"Love the Lord your God with all your mind."



Dick & Liz Figge  
have moved!



Their new address is available in the office if you would like to add it to your directory.

### Offering Envelopes



#### 2020 Offering Envelopes

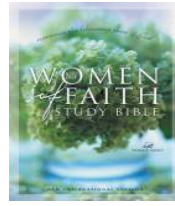
2020 offering envelopes are located on the table in the back of the sanctuary. If you don't have offering envelopes but would like them, please see Mary Ray.

Don't forget to use myEoffering to donate on-line or set up recurring giving! Go to [www.minookaumc.com](http://www.minookaumc.com) and click on the green "donate now" button.

 myEoffering  
Electronic Giving Made Simple & Cost Effective  
A CHURCH-BUDGET COMPANY



### Faith TALK



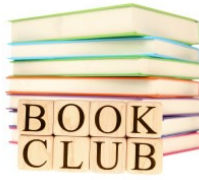
### FAITH TALK: BIBLE

EACH TUESDAY  
at 12:00 p.m.  
Fellowship Hall

Come and join us as we continue our study on "Women of Faith Study Bible".

All are welcome!

*Faithtalk will break for Christmas on December 24th & 31st. We will resume January 7th.*



### Book Club

Book Club will meet on **January 27th at 7:00 pm.** Stay tuned to the Happenings for our next book selection. See Cindy White for more information.

*All are encouraged to join us!*

**Book Club will not meet in December.**



### Attention

Men's Breakfast  
**January 11th at 7:00 a.m.**

All men are invited! No reservations needed!



### Lord's Ladies Prayer Breakfast

The next breakfast will be **Saturday, January 25th at 8:00 a.m.**

Come and join other ladies for breakfast, prayer and fellowship. If you have any questions please see Kim Nave or Gail Flatness.

### Evening Circle

*Evening Circle will be meeting on Monday, January 6th at 7 p.m.*

You can visit this link to read and print the monthly calendar [http://www.minookaumc.com/mustard\\_seed.htm](http://www.minookaumc.com/mustard_seed.htm)

February 2020 news is due into the office on **Monday, January 20h.**

If you have any questions or articles you would like in our next issue, please contact the office at 815.467.2322 or [mumc2322@gmail.com](mailto:mumc2322@gmail.com)

Thank you,  
Katie Wojcieszak



**Minooka United Methodist  
Church**

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Or Current Resident

