



THE TOWERS

201 S. Main St., West Milton, Ohio 45383

February 2023



A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

Difficult Decisions Ahead

Acts 15:36-40 36 Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go back and visit the brothers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing." 37 Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, 38 but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. 39 They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, 40 but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord.

We might be tempted to think of the days of Acts as happy times for Christianity, but that was not the case. There were persecutions, hard times, and many issues about which they disagreed. They wrestled with who was responsible for various ministries, they wrestled with what groups of people should be admitted into this particular spiritual movement, and they wrestled with who was worthy to be workers and leaders in that work. Does this sound similar to challenges we face in 2023? I think so. You may have a different sense of the disagreement in this passage and in our current United Methodist denomination, but I believe there were and are passionate feelings by dedicated workers in Christianity looking from varying points of view. Maybe Paul felt that John leaving them in Pamphylia meant he was not worthy of the work of the Lord. Barnabas may have felt this young person had a good reason for leaving but was deserving of an opportunity to serve. It is hard to know both sides clearly.

Within this newsletter you will find a survey. The special called General Conference session in 2019 passed provisions allowing congregations the opportunity to choose to leave the United Methodist denomination. It was temporary relaxation of "the trust clause." General Conference that year voted to temporarily allow congregations a graceful option of leaving with much of their assets and resources intact, but only for a season. Expiration dates were set at the end of 2023 with the expectation that the 2020 General Conference would likely amend the dates and/or the processes. The 2020 General Conference was delayed until 2021...and then 2022, and now to 2024 due to countries still struggling with severe health challenges in a worldwide denomination. With no General Conference, the 2023 deadline remained, and congregations across the country have been going through various processes to determine whether they want to consider leaving the denomination. If you have wondered why this is being discussed now, I hope this helps clarify.

As far as the question of "why leave the UMC?" There are a number of reasons that have been shared throughout the connection, but the main issues at play have to do with traditional Christian beliefs, especially around ordination and marriage and the LGBTQ+ community, who with the current language of the UMC law are prohibited to be married by UMC clergy or to be ordained. There are clergy, congregations and some regions of Methodism who have disagreed with the law, and have purposely disobeyed it, feeling it unjust to single out such persons. On the other side of it, those who agree with the current law are distressed and angered that our church law is being disregarded by those bound by it with no apparent consequences, which makes the law feel empty. While a little oversimplified, I feel this captures most of it. Legally, no congregation can "disaffiliate" from the UMC without an official in person vote by those who are members, and 66.67% in attendance at that vote would need to be agreed on leaving the denomination. Obviously this is potentially very divisive for our congregation, and I know many of us would prefer not to have a survey such as this going out. However, the leadership of this congregation needs to know how YOU feel about this. Within this Towers is a paper copy of the survey to reflect upon. At the beginning of the survey is a picture code that your smartphone camera, when pointed at it, will offer to take you to the link with a tap of your finger, and you can take the multiple choice survey and have your response recorded right then, confirmed by a message thanking you for taking it. Alternatively, a paper copy can be sent in or dropped off, but for the sake of those tallying, the digital method is faster and protects anonymity. While only full members of Hoffman could participate in an official vote, we want all who call Hoffman home, from teen on up, to please feel free to complete it.

The responses will allow the Church Board to have more clarity in our next steps. If you are able to complete the digital survey, do not send in or drop off the paper one. Each person should only complete the survey once. For those who want to fill out the paper survey and use it to fill out the digital one at the church, hold onto the paper survey and we will make devices available to you. Thank you in advance for taking part in this important work of discernment for our Hoffman Church Family.

In His Service and yours,



Board Meeting Highlights

Devotions

Devotions were offered by Jill. She shared how in Psalm 23 the word “follow” original Hebrew translates to “pursue”. The Good Shepherd pursues us all the days of our lives. “Surely” Jesus is pursuing us. The meeting was opened with a prayer by Jill.

Meeting Attendees

Les Trittschuh, Wendy Black, David Jay, Julia Circle, Jill Circle, John Ankerman, Kim Dohrman, Patti Wion, Janet Benkert, Chris Long, Pastor Robbie Scott

Mission and Ministry

Joseph Knostman presented a draft of a Congregation Survey regarding the UMC disaffiliation options. A lengthy discussion of the survey including the evaluation of each question, intro, conclusion and possible interpretation; edits and comments were made. The final survey will be edited and available for review ahead of the January board meeting to discuss the roll out of the survey.

Pastor's Report

November Average notes: Overall average: 137.75 (+8 Oct). Norman scheduled the organ for maintenance. His input for the carols series was informational and inspirational. Becky delivered the Thanksgiving Eve Council of Churches Service Children's message. Bulldog Bags was awarded \$5100 by Premier Health. JoAnn worked to support Sunday School classroom changes. Robbie will be working with the Board of Ordained Ministry in late January. He also shared about a streaming production hardware update.

Finance

The finance report for November was reviewed and accepted November -Weeks of Operation 10.64 weeks. The congregation's response with Pledge Cards covers 38% of the budget for 2023. The annual audit will be done in February, John needs financial books as soon as December is finalized.

Trustees

Trustees report was given. Financial report was reviewed. Work continues on the North Tower to complete its renovation. Goal is for this work to be completed by Christmas Eve.

Nominations

Tina Mathews was nominated and approved for the position of board secretary.

Staff Parish Relations

No new business.

Non-agenda items

Annual Conference “Special Session” report. Effective December 31, the request of 80 churches (8%) for disaffiliation within the West Ohio Conference was confirmed.

The board approved Isaiah's Place - Child Advocacy Center for the Christmas Eve Offering.

Discussion was held regarding changing the tabulation of attendance and offering for Sunday School. Julia will ask JoAnn about potential changes to make the process more self-sufficient.

Jan 29 - Feb 1 Robbie - Board of Ordained Ministry

Feb 18 Valentines Family Fun Night



It would be very helpful if you are able to complete this survey online at the link below or scan QR code to the right:

<https://tinyurl.com/mtzktjc2>

Point smart device camera at this round image.



This survey should be completed by every individual in your household that is a teen or older, by the end of Sunday, February 12th.

Dear valued brother or sister in Christ. What a joy it is to work alongside of you to make disciples and share God's love to West Milton and its surrounding areas. The Hoffman body of believers has been a shining light in this community and it is vital that we continue to do so, despite the current disagreements and turmoil our UMC denomination is facing. We cannot let this turmoil creep into our own congregation and disrupt the beautiful ministries that we as a unified body carry out, or break down the meaningful relationships we have with each other. We have made decisions to love each other and serve alongside each other despite the fact that even we do not all share the same opinions. God's work being done through Hoffman and our love for each other **MUST** continue to be a priority over our difference of opinions.

We believe this 22 question survey will help guide us along the smoothest path. Though it may bring to the forefront some difficult topics, we believe it is vital to collect this information from our body of believers. Please be honest in your responses and rest assured that you are always a valued part of this congregation. No one is truly happy that we are having to gather this information, but we honestly believe it is a necessary step due to the growing unrest within our UMC denomination.

There are no right or wrong answers on this survey. They are simply your thoughts, opinions, and feelings which we value and want to know so that we can move forward in the best direction. There are not a lot of options for "maybe" feelings...you can choose not to answer difficult questions, but it will be most helpful if you can search deep, spend time in prayer and answer all questions definitively.

PLEASE consider completing the survey at <https://tinyurl.com/mtzktjc2> or use the QR code above. While we will accept paper copies, we highly prefer online completion to allow for better data collection and review. On the following three Sundays, there will be multiple computers set up in Sunday School room #4 if you wish to complete the survey at church: -January 29th -February 5th -February 12th

If you must complete this survey on paper, please turn completed survey into box labeled "Congregation Survey" located on the table next to the church office by Sunday, February 12th or have it postmarked by Friday, February 10th.

We will continue to hold you and this matter in much prayer.

~Your Church Board

Les Trittschuh, Wendy Black, David Jay, Wendy Heisey, Jill Circle, John Ankerman, Kim Dohrman, Patti Wion, Janet Benkert, Chris Long, Tina Mathews, Pastor Robbie Scott

1. Are you concerned about the current unrest in the UMC denomination and worry about where it is headed?		
2. Are you concerned that the direction of the UMC denomination will negatively impact Hoffman in the future?		
3. Does the UMC's current Book of Discipline (the law and doctrine of the UMC) represent your values and interpretations of biblical principles? An online copy of the Book of Discipline can be found at https://tinyurl.com/4a88xpcb		
4. Are you concerned about the current Book of Discipline not being followed by some congregations and lack of consequences?		
5. Are you concerned that the future direction of the UMC may alter the Book of Discipline so that it will not represent your values and interpretations of biblical principles?		
6. If the Book of Discipline is altered so that it does not represent your values and interpretation of biblical principles, would you consider leaving Hoffman UMC?		
7. Are you concerned that traditional churches make up the majority of those that are disaffiliating from the UMC?		
8. Whether for or against disaffiliation, do you believe Hoffman needs to take a disaffiliation vote to determine its future direction?		
9. If it is determined that a disaffiliation vote should take place to determine the future of Hoffman, do you believe the church needs to hold one last meeting to present all options before such vote?		
10. Whether for or against disaffiliation, would you be willing to physically show up for a disaffiliation vote to help determine Hoffman's future direction?		
11. Whether for or against disaffiliation, are you physically unable to attend a disaffiliation vote and would wish to be at such a vote?		
12. Are you a member of Hoffman UMC? The best way to confirm your membership is to contact the church office by email at humchurch@gmail.com or by phone at 937-698-4401.		
13. If an official disaffiliation vote takes place, ONLY members can vote. Whether for or against disaffiliation, would you consider taking up membership so that you can vote at a disaffiliation vote?	Yes	No
14. Do you believe that Hoffman would be better off outside of the UMC denomination?		
15. Would you be concerned about the direction, health, and ministries of Hoffman church if its members decide to disaffiliate from the UMC denomination?		
16. Would you be concerned about the direction, health, and ministries of Hoffman church if its members decide to remain with the UMC denomination?		
17. If a disaffiliation vote fails, and Hoffman remains with the UMC denomination, would you consider leaving Hoffman?		
18. If a disaffiliation vote passes, and Hoffman leaves the UMC denomination, would you consider leaving Hoffman?		
19. If the board reviews these survey results and decides that it is in the best interest and health of Hoffman not to take a disaffiliation vote, would you consider leaving Hoffman?		
20. Whether for or against disaffiliation, if a disaffiliation vote passes and Hoffman leaves the UMC denomination, what direction would you want to see Hoffman go?	Global Meth.	Wesleyan
21. Do you feel comfortable and able to share your thoughts and opinions to others within the church?		
22. Are there any comments you would like the church board to know in regards to the future direction of Hoffman Church? Due to this survey being anonymous, if you have questions that you would like personally answered, please reach out to a board member.		

Serving Schedule

FEB 5

9:00 Liturgist: Wendy H. **Greeters:** Wendy H. and Nancy L.
Ushers: Wayne & Susie S. and Phil & Karen M. **Hospitality Table:** John & Laverne H.
Nursery: **10:15** Patti W. & Kathy K. / **11:15** Julia C. & Wendy H.
11:15 Greeters: Ben G. and Janessa M. **Scripture Reader:** Andrew C.

FEB 12

9:00 Liturgist: Les T. **Greeters:** Elaine P. and Kathy K.
Ushers: **Hospitality Table:** *honoring Wilma Fryman
Nursery: **10:15** Lesli R. / **11:15** Lesli R. & Lauren E.
11:15 Greeters: Dick & Mary Ann M. **Scripture Reader:** Julia C.

FEB 19

9:00 Liturgist: Wendy H. **Greeters:** Elaine I. and Cathy B.
Ushers: **Hospitality Table:** Kathy K. & Nancy S.
Nursery: **10:15** Julia C. & Kathy K. / **11:15** Ben G. & Mallory D.
11:15 Greeters: Kathy W. and Ruth L. **Scripture Reader:** Norman H.

FEB 26

9:00 Liturgist: Les T. **Greeters:** Carol S. and Peggy N.
Ushers: **Hospitality Table:** John A.
Nursery: **10:15** Jennifer K. & Jill C. / **11:15** Jennifer K. & Kim D.
11:15 Greeters: Paul & Sally M. and Marijo S. **Scripture Reader:** Tim B.

Happy Birthday & Happy Anniversary February 2023

1st - Tim & Lisa Wright (40 yrs)
2nd - Bret Beard
5th - Leah Blackburn
8th - Jerry Smith
9th - Danielle Sweitzer
10th - Darin Wion
12th - Lincoln Moran
13th - William & Riko Brock (2 yrs)
14th - Bret & Teesha Beard (30 yrs)
Jerry & Shirley Smith (42 yrs)
15th - Grace Knostman
16th - Steve Kraus
Nancy Studebaker
17th - Janet Balsbaugh
Rose Knostman



19th - Marcia Smith
Lester Trittschuh
20th - Ansel Circle
Terry & Wendy Long (41 yrs)
21st - Silas Raines
22nd - Wayne & Susie Spitler (59 yrs)
23rd - Janet Benkert
24th - Olivia Bryson
25th - Nancy Lightcap
26th - Lydia Garrett
Jenna Moran
28th - Terry Long

Weekly Giving and Attendance Statistics

Date	12-25-22	1-1-23	1-8-23	1-15-22
General Offering	4925.00	5172.00	8235.00	4551.00
Weekly Budget Need	4793.00	4911.00	4911.00	4911.00
Mission Offering	849.00	170.00	165.00	130.00
Maintenance Fund	735.00	230.00	246.00	160.00
Building Fund & Memorials	445.00	125.00	145.00	435.00
Online & Physical Attendance	10:30 am			
9 a.m. Service at church	43	33	47	49
Remote viewing	13	19	21	13
11:15 a.m. Service at church	-	51	46	49
Remote viewing	-	4	8	7
Total Attendance	56	107	122	118



Stained Glass Window Restoration Project

Amount Received: \$ 96,055

Total Project Goal: \$ 109,430 *Thank You!*

Women's Wednesday Morning Bible Study for Spring

Problems can last a long time, but they can't last forever. Promises can, and God's promises do. This is a promise you should learn by heart:

**We know all things work together for good to those who love God,
to those who are called according to His purpose. Romans 8:28 (NKJV)**

We live in a world of catastrophes and calamities, and none of us knows what we'll face next.

What if you knew it would all turn out well, whatever you are facing?

What if Romans 8:28 really were more than a cliché?

What if it was a certainty?

What if it really worked?

What if it always worked?

What if there were no problems beyond its reach?

The Wednesday Morning Women's Bible study will be reading Robert J. Morgan's, God Works All Things Together for Your Good, a study of Romans 8:28 and the other places in the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, where that promise has been repeated, reworded and reiterated. Please join us as we study the source—and the force—of this promise. You do not need to be a member of Hoffman or attend this church to join the class. Please feel free to invite a friend, if you know someone who would like to come.

This 10-week study will begin March 1, 10 to 11:30 a.m. in the Multi-Purpose room. Books will be \$5. Questions? Call Marilyn Mitchell at 937-947-1831.

People to remember in prayer:



Hoffman Sympathies to: the family of Debbie (Shade) Hiester as she passed away on January 9, 2023

At Home: Kim Adams, Phil Blue, Wilma Hoover, Helen Keller, Winston Klepinger, Dick Markley, Mary Maess, Dixie Porter, Shelia Shade, Theda Sliver, Marilyn Stickney, Jim & Kathy Watkins and Nancy Wolf

At Centers: Dorothy Ginn, Cypress Pointe, 600 W. National Rd. Rm 312, Englewood OH 45322
Valaria Harshbarger, Koester Pavilion, 3232 N Co. Rd 25A, Rm 68, Troy OH 45373
Sherynne King, Koester Pavilion, 3232 N Co. Rd 25A, Rm 29A, Troy OH 45373
Freda Koeller, Randall Residence of Tipp City, 6400 S Co. Rd. 25A, Rm 109, Tipp City OH 45371
Wendy Long, Trinity Center, 789 Stonybrook, Rm 208A, Fairborn OH 45324
Jennie McNeal, SpringMeade, 4375 S Co. Rd. 25A, Rm 307, Tipp City OH 45371
Janice Turner, Randall Residence of Troy, 2900 Corporate Dr., Rm 105, Troy OH 45373
Eugenie Markley, Koester Pavilion, 3232 N Co. Rd 25A, Rm 87A, Troy OH 45373
Cheryl Owen, Koester Pavilion, 3232 N Co. Rd 25A, Rm 88A, Troy OH 45373
Monica Winemiller, Koester Pavilion, 3232 N Co Rd 25A, Rm 74, Troy OH 45373

THANK YOU AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dear Hoffman family and friends, thank you for your prayers, telephone calls, cards, food and words of comfort during this trying time. Your support is amazing and greatly appreciated. It re-enforces the meaning of being a part of the family of God.

May God bless each of you,
Shelia Shade

Winter Walking Group - join us on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 10 to 11a.m. in the activity center. Contact Elaine P. at (937)698-5192

NEW 'Piece Makers Craft Club' to make prayer squares starting January 12 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the second Thursday of every month in Room 7, by the kitchen. All are welcome! Contact: Elaine P. (937)698-5192

I want to thank everyone who offered condolences in my recent loss. The response for the memorial service was overwhelming. I appreciate everyone's kind words and encouragement. Norman Hiester

Dear Hoffman Church, Thank you for letting us use your activity center for some of our Miltonian Women's Club meetings. It has been a blessing and we want to give this donation to show our appreciation. Thanks again, Miltonian Women's Club

Thank you everyone for the prayers, cards and support given to our granddaughter, Taylor, we appreciate your love and kindness. Blessings,
John & Laverne Hennemyre

Thank you for donating eight gallons of pop tabs! We use the money from recycling them to provide food and shelter for families receiving medical care.

The staff of Ronald McDonald House of Dayton



1 John 4:7

"For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of the Light." Psalm 27:1



Traditional Service
9AM

...

Sunday School Hour
10:15-11:10AM

...

Open Door Service
11:15AM

Family Fun Night coming up!!
February 18, 2023
5:30-8:00PM

Board Game night and Nerf Gun War
Taco Bar and Ice Cream Bar

Children's Director: Becky Garrett
ragarrett15@gmail.com
937-524-7220

In God's Perfect Timing...
We have a LifeWise Bus to
Transport Students!



Please consider a reoccurring
monetary donation to fund our
program which allows our students to
hear the Gospel each week!



Questions or Looking to volunteer?
Please reach out to Julia Circle at:
juliacircle@lifewiseacademy.org

Ready to sponsor a LifeWise student?
\$20 a month is all it takes!
Start your reoccurring donation here!
(Scan Below)



3rd Quarter Registration
is currently at 80 Students and
WE NEED SPONSORS!

HOFFMAN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 2022 FINANCE REPORT

General Budget and Missions Budget

December 31, 2022

REGULAR OFFERING

		MONTH	YEAR-TO-DATE
1010	First Sunday	5,411.19	70,344.94
1020	Second Sunday	4,489.00	54,835.76
1030	Third Sunday	5,545.00	58,070.00
1040	Fourth Sunday	4,925.00	43,554.00
1050	Fifth Sunday	0.00	16,290.00
	Total Regular Offering	20,370.19	243,094.70
1060	Misc. Income	0.00	1,388.90
	**Total Income	20,370.19	244,483.60

		BUDGET FOR YEAR	PAID OUT THIS MONTH	YEAR-TO-DATE PAID OUT	BALANCE OF BUDGET
APPORTIONMENTS					
1	Conference Apportionments	18,234.00	1,519.50	18,234.00	0.00
2	District Adm. Apportionments	1,986.00	165.50	1,986.00	0.00
	Total Local Apportionments	20,220.00	1,685.00	20,220.00	0.00

MINISTRIES

3	Hospitality	200.00	0.00	0.00	200.00
4	Outreach	250.00	0.00	250.00	0.00
5	Worship	750.00	117.75	258.95	491.05
6	Music	750.00	4.40	417.85	332.15
7	Media Subscriptions	3,030.00	94.44	3,112.08	-82.08
8	Assimilation	50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
9	Children's Ministry	300.00	0.00	268.11	31.89
10	Youth Ministry	500.00	213.94	395.85	104.15
	Total Council of Ministries	5,830.00	430.53	4,702.84	1127.16

OFFICE & FINANCE

11	Finance & Stewardship	900.00	6.00	518.87	381.13
12	Office Supplies & Postage	4,000.00	954.99	3,985.84	14.16
	Total Administrative & Other Ministries	4,900.00	960.99	4,504.71	395.29

STAFF & PARISH RELATIONS

13	Pastor Parish	250.00	0.00	0.00	250.00
14	Staff Salary	120,076.04	8,675.60	115,004.81	5071.23
15	Health Ins. & Pension	39,531.72	3,354.03	39,589.56	-57.84
16	Acct. Reimbursement-Pastor	4,000.00	1,070.64	3,978.25	21.75
17	Hoffman Family Benevolence	300.00	0.00	300.00	0.00
18	Pulpit Supply	500.00	0.00	300.00	200.00
19	Employer Payroll Taxes	5,834.27	410.43	5,267.62	566.65
20	Moving Allowance	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.00
21	Lakeside Conf Deligate	550.00	0.00	0.00	550.00
	Total Staff & Parish Relations	172,042.03	13,510.70	165,440.24	6601.79

TRUSTEES

22	Maintenance	1,500.00	101.25	1,888.87	-388.87
23	Utilities	31,092.00	2,162.11	22,020.37	9071.63
24	Building Insurance	4,868.00	0.00	4,883.00	-15.00
25	Real Estate Taxes Parsonage	2,980.00	0.00	2,952.86	27.14
26	Snow Plowing & Yard Work	4,800.00	180.00	4,307.00	493.00
27	Supplies	1,000.00	214.88	950.94	49.06
	Total Trustees	46,240.00	2,658.24	37,003.04	9236.96

****Total General Budgeted Expenses** 249,232.03 19,245.46 231,870.83 17361.20

MISSIONS BUDGET

28	Conference Apportionments - World Se	5,000.00	416.67	5,000.00	0.00
29	District Mission Apportionments	1,986.00	165.50	1,986.00	0.00
30	MU Council of Churches	250.00	0.00	250.00	0.00
31	Annual Mission Project	600.00	0.00	600.00	0.00
32	Advanced Specials	547.50	547.50	547.50	0.00
	Total Budgeted Missions Expenses	8,383.50	1,129.67	8,383.50	0.00

Return Service Requested

Place Label Here

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HOFFMAN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Worship Time: 9:00 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.
Sunday School: 10:15 a.m.
(937) 698-4401 Website: HoffmanUMC.org
Pastor Robbie Scott

February
2023

T O W E R S
T H E