

First United Methodist Church  
of Saline

# STEEPLE NEWS



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## Memory Verse

"Thanks be to God for His  
incredible gift!"  
2 Corinthians 9:15

## Worship

9:00 & 11:15 am  
12/24 & 12/31 at 9:00 am ONLY

**Sunday School for all ages 10:10 am**  
Children are always welcome to remain  
in the worship service, but alternative  
options are available if desired:  
**Nursery care** for age 0–3 is offered  
every Sunday in Room J.  
**Godly Play:** 9:00 am service, 4 years–  
Kindergarten meets in Room N  
**Worship Our Way:** Both services; 1<sup>st</sup>–6<sup>th</sup>  
grades meets in Room G  
**Family Worship Sundays**—The first  
Sunday of the month. Nursery will be  
provided for birth to 3 years old, but all  
other children will stay in worship with  
their family. Worship Bags & clipboards  
with developmentally appropriate  
activities are available in the back of the  
sanctuary.

## Live Streaming

The address for live streaming is an easy  
to use link on our website. On the home  
page, click on the FUMC Videos button,  
then on the Live Video Stream button.  
Live streamed services are also now  
archived, click on FUMC Videos, then  
the Video Library button. www.fumc-  
saline.org

"Thanks be to God for His incredible gift!" 2 Corinthians 9:15

## Dear Friends,

A few weeks ago, we got a text in the morning that read: "Coming over  
for a visit later this morning with the baby!"

The next few hours were spent picking up downstairs, running the  
sweeper, making a quick trip to Kroger's for some Cheerios and getting  
something for lunch. The baby came, we had a nice visit, ate together  
with family, and then it was over and all of us went back to our regular routines.

Advent is like that. We clean the house; hang the traditional decorations; enjoy the special  
dishes of the season; and celebrate the coming of the baby—the Christ child. Then,  
Christmas passes and we go back to our regular routines carrying with us additional  
memories.

During the season we prepare to celebrate traditions and memories of Christ's coming as if  
awaiting an eagerly anticipated guest. When Christmas comes, I find it ties me again to the  
roots of my faith—born in a stable, laid in a manger, announced by angelic voices, revered  
by common folk and nobility alike, the Messiah is born. I wonder what memories will be  
added this year.

We have lots of activities to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ this season. Check  
them out in the newsletter and join in the celebration. And may His coming bring each of  
us...peace and blessings this year!  
See you in church!



Pastor Tom

## Church Conference

Our Annual Church Conference is Sunday, December 3. The church will provide an entrée;  
please bring a large side dish or dessert to share. Arrive for potluck dinner at 4:45, we will  
share a meal from 5:00–5:30 pm, the business meeting is from 5:30–6:30 pm. Please join us.

## Advent Season!

- December 5**—UMW Christmas Potluck, 6:00–8:00 pm
- December 8**—A Night in Bethlehem, 6:30–8:30 pm
- December 10**—Christmas Jazz with Paul Keller, 5:00 pm
- December 17 Services**—Christmas Cantata Presentation
- December 20**—Longest Night Service, 7:00 pm—For those struggling with the holidays

**Christmas Eve—Sunday, December 24**  
9:00 am ONE MORNING SERVICE, no Sunday School  
5:00 pm Family Friendly Worship  
7:00 pm Candlelight Communion Service  
11:00 pm Candlelight Service

- December 25, 9:00 am**—Meet here to carpool to Cass UMC to serve lunch
- December 31, Sunday, 9:00 am**—ONE MORNING SERVICE, no Sunday School

## Shawl Ministry

The Shawl Ministry will be displaying shawls in Christler Hall on December 3 and 17 between services. We invite anyone who enjoys knitting or crocheting to join us in Room E every second and fourth Monday at 1:00 pm.

## Honoring Veterans

You can send Christmas cards to Veterans at Walter Reed Medical Center who may not have any support system of family/friends. If you would like to participate send a Christmas Card to the address below and the cards will be distributed to those in need by the staff. A Recovering Soldier, c/o Walter Reed National Military Medical Center 8901 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20889-5600

## Narthex Angel Tree

Ever wonder why there are Angels on the Narthex Tree and where they came from? In 1999 the church purchased the tall Tree, since it was so much taller than the previous tree, it needed additional ornaments. Jean Campbell and Shiela Blough decided that angels would be a nice addition to the Narthex Tree and decided to ask the congregation to donate the angels "in honor of" or "in memory of" loved ones. The congregation donated over 75 angels! So when you look at the angels on the tree, it is the manifested love of our congregation to our loved ones, just as Jesus was the manifested love of God to his children.

## Holiday Grief Workshop

This workshop is created for adults who have experienced the death of a loved one. Learn about coping strategies, new traditions, and ways to include your loved one in the Holiday Seasons. This is presented by Stephen Ministry and open to the public. Meet in Christler Hall Monday, Dec. 4, 6:00–7:30 pm.

## UMW Christmas Potluck

Our annual UMW Christmas Potluck is just around the corner - December 5 at 6:00 pm! All women are welcome to join us for this enjoyable time together. Please bring a dish to pass, and a wrapped ornament to participate in a unique ornament "exchange!" We will also collect the wrapped, labeled gifts for Whitehall Healthcare, and this year will partner with The Quilting Season's "Friends of Whitehall," who will deliver them on Christmas Eve. We look forward to spending this night with you!



## SASS Christmas Gift Cards

Community Care had a very good response for collecting gift cards instead of food baskets for the Thanksgiving holiday, so will be doing the same for the Christmas holiday. We are asking for Walmart gift cards if possible. SASS has requested Walmart due to the fact that families can get more for their money and there is a bus line in Saline that has a drop off/pick up location at the Saline Walmart. Gift cards will be due on Sunday, December 17, or can be dropped off in the church office at any time before then (please note they are for SASS Christmas Gift Cards). **Please also write the amount of the gift card directly on the card somewhere.** Thank you! If there are any questions, please call the church office or speak to any member of Community Care. We appreciate your continued flexibility with this new way of doing the "food baskets!"

## Adult Sunday School Updates

We have some changes coming up in our Adult Sunday School classes:

**Room F—Watchful Waiting**—December 3 Pastor Tom will start a 3 week Advent study in Room F. Advent invites us into a time of waiting and preparation, so that we may more fully appreciate the fullness of the Christmas event and the impact this season has on the lives of Christians year-round. This study will help us "prepare Him room" in our hearts.

In January Sue Hares will be facilitating a discussion on I & II Corinthians in Room F.

**Room C**—The Nehemiah class has wrapped up and will be doing a short study on II Peter. Sometime in January they will be begin a 6–7 week study of Colossians.

**Room H**—Beginning December 3 the Parenting class will be doing *Come Let Us Adore Him* by Paul Tripp. There will be a new study after the first of the year.

**Room E**—Ray Vanderlaan Video Series—Continuing the video tour of the Holy Land.

**Choir Room**—Nat Burns will continue facilitating *Hymns of the Faith*.



## Congregational Care Corner

Jeanette Brenner, Dir. of Congregational Care, [jeanette@fumc-saline.org](mailto:jeanette@fumc-saline.org)

This is what's happening in my corner of the world... • **Holiday Welcoming Starts with YOU in the PEW!** "Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me." Mark 9:37 • Each of us is called to welcome the guest in our midst. It is a calling on all of us. We welcome because we have been welcomed by Christ. We were once strangers and now we are family. Your smile, warmth, and love could change a person's life. Below are a few ways to welcome the honored guest in our midst. • **The Circle of 10**—Practice the *circle of ten*. Mingle and include everyone within ten feet of them in conversation before worship. Be sure to make introductions, offer seats, and create connections. • **Rule of 3**—Practice the rule of three. Spend the first three minutes after the worship service to greet guests get to know them and express getting to know them better. • **Neighborhood Groups Coming**—Every church member and regular visitor will be placed into a neighborhood group. Community is important this is why: In smaller communities we connect and grow as individuals, families and Christians; We make deeper friendships; We can care for each other better; We can check in on people we haven't seen.

## Picture Directory

Thank you to everyone that had their picture taken! We will NOT be doing anymore photo sessions. If you ordered pictures they are available in the church office on the credenza.

## Endowment Fund Annual Report 2016-2017

The Endowment Fund was established in 1995 to offer the opportunity to individuals to make Legacy gifts to the church. It was originally funded with about \$40,000 thanks to two substantial bequests from long time members. These gifts are invested in order to provide lasting long-term growth and income to the church. The income is then available to advance the mission of our church with an emphasis on non-recurring programs and purpose rather than regularly budgeted expenses. The fund has grown since 1995 to a level that now allows for annual disbursements for various projects. The fund has grown from \$128,962 on October 31, 2016 to \$148,054 on October 31, 2017. This comes primarily from investment growth, interest income and individual donations. Recent disbursements included \$5,257 for a telephone system upgrade and \$1,000 for an electronic drum set for the Youth Underground Ministry. Disbursements to date total \$35,738 for various projects including audio & video projects, office renovations, The 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and a computer system upgrade. A special thanks to those who have contributed to the fund and to those who have helped find projects that help to fulfil our congregation's vision for the present and the future. Donations offer the satisfaction of knowing your gifts continue working for years to come, thus the term Legacy Giving. For more information about the fund we have placed brochures in the rack on the west wall of the church lobby or feel free to contact the church office at your convenience. Submitted by Carl Weaver, David Bough, and Gene Bull, Trustees



**Note of appreciation and thanks!** The delicious pumpkin pie treats were a super way to celebrate all God's gift to us this Thanksgiving. Much love and thanks to all who gave "the spirit" of this holiday to us.

In Christ, *Stan & Doris Sekerka*

(Jeanette Brenner and Barb Buchanan made and delivered miniature Thanksgiving pies from the church.)

**Community Care** would like to thank everyone who helped out for this year's Craft & Vendor show. Many thanks to our custodians

and volunteers who helped to set-up and tear-down the booth spaces on Friday and Saturday. Also, thank you to our crafters from the church and community who gave of their time and talents to rent a booth space and sell their wonderful items. We also appreciate those who came out and did some shopping. Each year, there is a lot of work to be done to pull off this event, and CC is very grateful to ALL who helped to make it possible.

**We are GRATEFUL** to everyone that helped with the Christmas decorating at the church. The small but powerful Saturday morning crew that brought down all the decorations from the attic and brought up the angel racks from the basement; the Sunday evening handful that laid out everything for the narthex Christmas tree and unpacked the angels; the awesome Monday teams that setup the narthex tree, worked in the sanctuary and outside; the wonderful Tuesday evening folks that put up the rest of the interior decorations; and the amazing families that call and say, "what can we do?" A special thanks to Shiela Blough who has been organizing, fluffing, and tirelessly working on church decorations for 27 years. Thank you just doesn't say it enough, so God bless you, God bless you all!

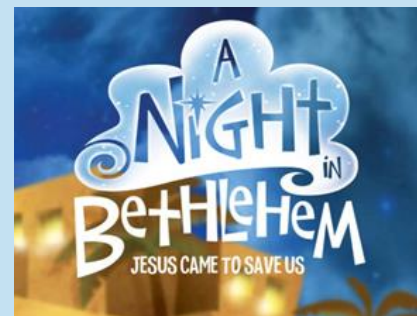
**Heartfelt Thanks**—The Klepaczyk and West families would like to thank everyone for their support and kindness over the past couple of weeks. While it has been a difficult time, we have been surrounded with the love of this congregation. We know that Blair would be pleased and grateful that so many have reached out to comfort both Norma and our family. Words don't seem adequate to express our appreciation. We will endeavor to "pay it forward" as the opportunity arises.



We have received 158 Estimate of Giving cards for 2018. Thank you! If you have not done so yet, please consider turning in a card as soon as possible. The Stewardship & Finance Team use this information to set the 2018 budget.

## JOY Lunch

If you are 55 and up join us for lunch and fellowship. We meet on the third Thursday of every month, our next lunch will be December 21 at noon. This month we are hosting a "Christmas." Everyone bring friend and enjoy some fun, see you there! The cost is \$5 if able, please sign up at the Opportunity Wall.



**Friday, December 8**

**6:30-8:30 pm**

Don't miss this hand-on interactive experience for the whole family! Experience Bethlehem during the census, visit shopkeepers in the market place, and learn about their trades. Kids can make special keepsakes and sample breads and sweets along your journey! Follow the innkeeper to the stable to meet Mary, Joseph, the Baby Jesus and the animals! Families have the opportunity to bring an unwrapped toy that will be donated to Methodist Children's Home.

This will be a great opportunity to invite friends and neighbors! Registration is available on the church website. Admission is FREE but registration is required on church website or called 429-4730.



## Small Groups & Weekday Classes

**A Study in Luke**—with Pastor Tom, Wednesdays 9:30–10:30 am in Room F.

**Christian Believer**—with Dr. Jim Tuttle, Wednesdays, 7:00–8:30 pm.

**WISE AM**—Women’s Group—Tuesdays at 9:30 am, Room F. Starting a new study by Kyle Idleman, “The End of Me,” a study of the Sermon on the Mount.

**WISE PM**— Women’s Study—Wednesdays at 7:00 pm, Rm E.

**Women’s Prayer Class**— Room E, Sundays, 11:15 am.

### Say **YES** to the next generation....

Job: Nursery Volunteer/Substitute

Hours: Sundays, 3 shifts

Age Requirement: Age 16 to adult

*Do you love cuddling babies and playing with our youngest ones? This is the job for you!*

Job Skills Required: A patient, loving spirit and experience with child care. Safe Sanctuaries Training required and available. **Will you say YES?**

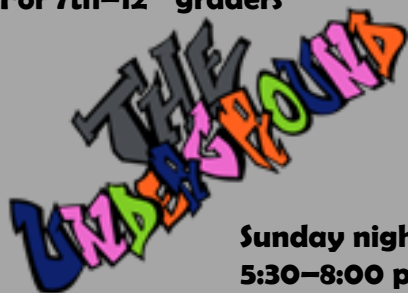
Contact Linda Klepaczyk.

**Safe Sanctuary Training**—There will be a Safe Sanctuary Initial/Basic Training held on December 9 from 10:00–11:30 am. Please sign up at the Op. Wall.

**Lake Louise Mission Trip**—Pastor Tom is interested in taking a group up to the United Methodist Camp, Lake Louise, for a service project next summer. If you are interested in more information, please sign up at the Opportunity Wall.

**Fireproof File Cabinet**—If you have or know of a 4 drawer fireproof file cabinet we can use for our historical files please contact the church office.

For 7<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> graders



**Sunday nights  
5:30–8:00 pm**

## Children’s Ministry

Linda Klepaczyk, Children’s Ministry, lindaK@fumc-saline.org

Please take a moment and go to the church website to view some of our winter offerings for children. All children participating in SFUMC programs are asked to complete an online registration form which can also be found on our website.

**December 3** is our next **Family Worship Sunday!**

Nursery will be provided for children birth to 3 years old, but all other children will stay in worship with their family. **Worship Bags** with developmentally appropriate activities are available for check out in the back of the sanctuary for children age 4 through grade 2. Clipboards with sermon notes and activity pages are also available for children grade 3 through grade 6.

**A Night In Bethlehem, December 8, 6:30–8:30**—Registration is requested. Families have the opportunity to bring an unwrapped toy that will be donated to Methodist Children’s Home.



**Cross Training** is our Sunday School program for children ages Kindergarten through grade 6. Running the race God puts before us takes lots of training. Our time together starts with a multi-age opening at 10:20 am. Grade levels then go to a different workshop each week as we dig together into God’s word. For preschoolers age 3 and 4 we have a Tots in Training class.

**Den 56 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders**—Don’t forget to put our Den56 meeting in your calendar for December. We will meet on Friday evening, December 15<sup>th</sup> from 6:30–8:30 pm for a time of fun and fellowship. Bring a friend!



**Operation Christmas Child** – This year we sent 440 boxes on their way to destinations unknown around the globe! Thank you to everyone who helped in one way or another. A special thanks to Amy Rigg for all of her help in purchasing and facilitating this year. If you missed being part of this special project this year, you can always donate to help defray the cost of our church pack. Checks can be made out to SFUMC and designated by writing OCC Shoeboxes in the memo line. Thank you for your continued and generous support.

## Youth Ministry

Jay Leadley, Youth Dir., 429-4730 x232, jay@fumc-saline.org

Follow us on Instagram: @salinefumc\_youth; Twitter: @SalineFUMCYouth

Come check out **The Underground** which meets on Sunday nights from 5:30–8:00 pm. We have games, dinner, worship, teaching and small groups every week. It’s easy to plug in if you’ve never been.

**Sunday School**—Join us at 10:10 am in the lower level of the CLC.

**Worship Team**—Sundays at 4:30 pm.

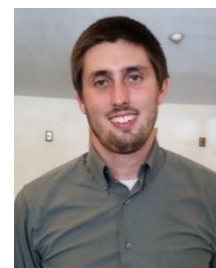
**Worship Workshop**—Monday nights 7:30–9:00 pm.

**CIY Move** is a 5 day event for all 8<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> graders held at Hope College designed to amplify the call of Christ on students’ lives to become kingdom workers. Registration for 15 students is open. Dates are Monday June 25—Saturday June 30; cost \$330; a \$50 deposit is needed to register. If you would like to learn more about CIY Move check out this video: <https://vimeo.com/207867886>. You can register at <http://www.fumc-saline.org/move/registration/>.

**Before School Bible Study**—Mondays, 6:30 am, at Jay’s, breakfast and rides to school.

**High School Christmas Lock-in**—Pizza dinner and breakfast provided! December 1.

**SpringHill**—Registration for the January 12–14 Winter Retreat at SpringHill is now open! We will be meeting at the church at 3:30 pm on Friday and will be returning back late Sunday night. The cost is \$145 through December 3, after that it will increase to \$160 until December 10 when registration closes. There are 20 spots available for the first 20 students to sign up. All students grades 7–12 are invited to attend. You can register online here: <http://www.fumc-saline.org/springhill-winter-retreat/>.



## *Bishop Bard Hosts Listening Dialogs on Human Sexuality and the UMC*

Bishop David Bard is hosting dialogs on the subject of human sexuality and The United Methodist Church. This is an opportunity for individuals to share their hopes, dreams and concerns about the official position of The United Methodist Church as it relates to individuals who identify as LGBTQ. The next meeting will be December 7 at 7:00 pm at the Area Ministry Center, 1011 Northcrest, Lansing MI 48906, 517-347-4030. Those interested in learning more about the official position of The United Methodist Church on human sexuality can visit: <http://www.umc.org/topics/topic-human-sexuality-homosexuality>.

## *Matching Gifts for UMC Camps*

We hear it from campers, moms, dads, grandparents and pastors: "God's love is magnified at camp." "Praise God! Our camper came home more confident and full of energy." "My daughter didn't want to come home." "Camp is one of those 'thin places' where I feel God's presence." Your trust and support allowed us to reach nearly 2,000 campers in 2017 plus thousands more who visited our consecrated sites for retreats, reunions and camping over the year. Now we come to you, humbly, to ask for your help. Campers and families have asked for improvements in facilities for the enjoyment of all who will participate in the years ahead. Our Board of Directors will be investing in these areas, in part, based on the response of supporters, like you. Generous donors will match gifts during Giving Tuesday week (Nov. 28 – Dec. 5) up to \$30,000! Will you donate \$25 or more to help us share the love of Jesus Christ through camp? Will you become a leadership giver, with the gift of \$1,000 or more? Will you ask others to join you?

## *Worship Attendance*

November 5—364    November 12—322    November 19—420    November 26—306

## *Prayers*

**Prayer Concerns**—Dorothy, Bobbe's daughter, Jeanne Hess, Darry Patterson, Jennifer, Courtney Riggs, Doug & Deborah, James Badeen, students in Wesley campus ministries.

**Continue to Pray for**—Mark Thorpe, Caleb Nadig, Marge Stoddard, Mary Jo Cox, Julie O'Keefe, Gayle Rogers, Scott Klapper, Bob Kelley, Nancy Bryan, Don Gall, Wanda Beard, Bill Doren, Chase Yarns, Matthew Aungst, Ina May Doub, Jeanne Cogger.

**Sympathies**—Kay Van Orman on the death of her mother. The West and Klepaczyk families on the death of Blair West. Lance Massie and family on the death of his mom's cousin. Lynn Shaw on the passing of Jack.

**Praises**—Elizabeth Johnson for being the March of Dimes Mission Ambassador and for her successful fundraising. Donations for United Methodist NOMADS materials fund. Birth of Wendy Vredevelde's nephew, Kevin. Birth of Sharon & Ed Rodenhouse's granddaughter, Merrit Jean Rodenhouse. Matt Folta's recovery from surgery. Birth of Dave & Cheryl Drenning's granddaughter, Alia Maryam,

**Military**—Erik Maddock, J.T. St. Dennis, Abby Jenks.

**Special Living**—Florence Belt (Brookhaven Manor); Helen Seitz (Oakmont Rochester); John McKeown (Hillside Terrace); Marge Stoddard, Jim Bowker, Wes Exelby (Linden Square); Roselyn Ford, Elaine Carter (EVH); Ihla Donaldson (Towsley Village CRC)

### **Special Living**

**BROOKHAVEN MANOR:** Florence Belt

**OAKMONT ROCHESTER:** Helen Seitz

**HILLSIDE TERRACE:** John McKeown

**LINDEN SQUARE:** Marge Stoddard, Jim Bowker, Wes Exelby

**EVH:** Roselyn Ford, Elaine Carter

**TOWSLEY VILLAGE-CRC:** Ihla Donaldson

*December 24 and December 31 we will have ONE SERVICE at 9:00 am!*

## *Grieving Together*

Grieving a loss of a loved one is such a hard and lonely journey. Why choose to go it alone when you can sit on the grieving bench with others who understand, support and pray with you. In addition to Special Grief Workshops throughout the year, Stephen Ministry is facilitating a Monthly Grief Support Group. They will meet on the third Monday of the month from 7:00–9:00 pm. All are welcome.

## *Cancer Support*

This is a "small group" of people living life together. People whose lives have been interrupted, shattered, and altered by cancer. This "small group" shares with each other lives filled with tears, laughter and hope. This group is for the patient and the caregiver, and it meets on the second Wednesday of the month 7:00–9:00 pm. Facilitated by the caring team of Stephen Ministry. If you want to join this group please give Jeanette Brenner a call 734-474-1357.

## *LIL' SAINTS Preschool*

*Wendy Vredevelde, Preschool Director*  
Lil' SAINTS is a Christian Preschool for children ages 2½–5, hosted right here in our church! Your child will develop many new skills and gain knowledge in a fun-filled atmosphere. If you would like more information please visit our website [www.lilsaints.school](http://www.lilsaints.school) and contact Wendy Vredevelde at 734-429-4528, [wendy@lilsaints.school](mailto:wendy@lilsaints.school).

## *Prayer Groups*

**Monday evening** from 6:30–7:30 pm

**Thursday morning** at 9:30 am.

**Phone Prayer Chain**—home option for emergency prayer during the week.

**Email Prayer Chain**—receive prayers requests by email.

First United Methodist Church  
1200 North Ann Arbor Street  
Saline, MI 48176

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## *Adult Sunday School and Weekday Studies*

# *Gifts With Meaning*

*We offer many mission / giving opportunities. We DO NOT expect you to participate in every mission. There is a wonderful variety because we all have different gifts and resources to offer. Please prayerfully choose what speaks to you and your family.*

**WHITEHALL NURSING HOME GIFTS (Through December 5)**—The UMW sponsors a gift drive for Whitehall Nursing Home. Please pick up a list of suggested items from the Opportunity Wall in the Narthex. Place your wrapped items with a label in the bin in the narthex by 12/5/17.

**SASS ADOPT-A-FAMILY (Through December 3)**—We are participating with Saline Area Social Services and its Holiday Adopt-a-Family program. Gift tags are available in the Narthex. Gifts are requested by Sunday, December 3 at the Opportunity Wall, unwrapped with original tag.

**METHODIST CHILDREN'S HOME CHRISTMAS GIFT DRIVE (December 10)**—There are approximately 60 boys on the Methodist Children's Home campus ranging from 5–20 years old. The program also supports over 140 more boys and girls in foster care. Please consider donating to these at risk children. Gift suggestions are at the Opportunity Wall. Unwrapped gifts due December 10.

**GIFT OF HOPE (December 3-17)**—The UMW is again offering the Gift of Hope channel of giving this Christmas season. You can make a donation via Gift of Hope to benefit one of our charities and receive a Christmas ornament and a card with a description of the charity to give to someone as a gift. Look for the Gift of Hope Christmas Tree and display in the narthex. This year's gifts go to: Heifer Project, and Alternatives For Girls.

**SASS CHRISTMAS FOOD BASKET (November 26–December 19)**—Saline Area Social Services has asked the church to provide gift cards to Walmart. No actual food baskets this year.

**DISASTER RELIEF**—You CAN help: Continue to pray for those impacted by the recent hurricanes, the Early Response Teams, and disaster coordinators. Give to UMCOR's relief and recovery efforts – an envelope is at the Opportunity Wall or put UMCOR 901670 on the memo line. Year round option.

**CHRISTMAS AT CASS AVENUE**—On December 25 we go to Cass Avenue United Methodist Church and serve Christmas Lunch to about 250 homeless people, as well as meals for shut-ins. We have a great need for both workers and donations of cookies, candy canes, fruit, pies, and sweatshirts. We give each guest a gift of a sweatshirt and a goody bag. Please prayerfully consider donating or joining us on Christmas. Sign up starts December 10.