



# REACH

INVITING PEOPLE ON A JOURNEY WITH JESUS.

JANUARY 2021  
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WELCOME, 2021

## Happy New Year, Everyone!

Even though this holiday season has been filled with many unexpected and uncertain situations, we hope that you and your loved ones have found peace, hope, comfort, and joy in the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

**As we enter a new year, we encourage you to remain connected and involved in the life of the church,** even during seasons of distanced worship and ministry.

Our Bishop, Frank Beard, strongly recommends that all United Methodist Churches in our conference continue to refrain from in-person worship and other in-person ministries until COVID positivity rates decline and hospital ICUs are less overwhelmed. With the rollout of a vaccine coming, he urges us to remain vigilant and do our part to care for the physical wellbeing of one another and our communities.

So, for the time being, **Troy United Methodist Church worship and ministries will remain exclusively online.** Our church council will revisit this decision on a monthly basis and make sure that you are well informed.

As we do our part to maintain worship and ministries at a distance, we expect that you'll do your part, too. Stay connected with your journey groups, bands, and friends. Join the entire congregation for online worship on Sundays at 9 and 10:15 a.m.

As always, you can find more information on our website at [troyumc.org](http://troyumc.org).





**THE LAND**

**BETWEEN**

**Upcoming Message Series: The Land Between**

I recently grabbed a book off my shelf that I read several years ago because it suddenly became much more relevant. It’s called *The Land Between: Finding God in Difficult Transitions*. See if these descriptors of the Land Between ring any bells:

- Life is not what it once was
- The landscape has changed
- The future is in question
- You feel stuck in the middle
- You’re in a period of waiting

I think you would agree that our broader society has been in the Land Between as we live with the continued ramifications of a global pandemic. Well, there is good news and there is bad news when you’re in the Land Between. Here’s how the author, Jeff Manion, puts it:

“I firmly believe that the Land Between – that space where we feel lost or lonely or deeply hurt – is fertile ground for our spiritual transformation and for God’s grace to be revealed in magnificent ways. But in addition to being the bearer of mercy, I also have the privilege of challenging God’s people to holiness, and while the Land Between is prime real estate for faith transformation, it is also the space where we can grow resentful, bitter, and caustic if our responses are unguarded. The wilderness where faith can thrive is the very desert where it can dry up and die if we are not watchful.”

I think it’s important that our church family explores the possibilities and potholes of the Land Between as we transition from 2020 to 2021. So, we’ll be kicking off this brand-new series together on January 10. I hope you’ll join me each week!

- January 10 – Complaint: Sick and Tired
- January 17 – Meltdown: Trapped in Desperation
- January 24 – Provision: You Are Not Alone
- January 31 – Discipline: Purpose behind Pain
- February 7 – Growth: The Desired Fruit in the Land Between

Faithfully,

*Andy*



**General Budget**



**Angel-Tree-Amazing!**

Our church family blessed the lives of over 110 senior citizens and children through our online Angel Tree. THANK YOU for showing up in such a mighty way and showering others with the love of Christ this past Christmas season.



## Happy New Year from the Children's Ministry Team!

Stay connected on Facebook and our weekly newsletter for information about January "take out church." This is a pizza box filled with activities, lessons, Parent Cues, God Times, and some of the supplies you will need for a month of at-home faith building for your family. In the upcoming weeks, we'll let you know if these boxes are for pickup or will be delivered to your home. Either way, please sign up for your box by emailing [christine@troymc.org](mailto:christine@troymc.org).

## Student Ministry

Troy UMC invites all middle school students (6th-8th grade) and high school students (9th-12th grade) to continue the journey with Jesus in this New Year full of opportunities to worship God, engage with the Scriptures, and serve others. Come and see what this vibrant and growing student ministry is all about and discover the ways you will be encouraged to walk in the Christian faith.

### Spring 2021 Student Ministry Overview Session | Wednesday, January 6, 7:45 – 8:30 p.m. via Zoom

This session is for parents of 6th-12th grade students and student ministry adult volunteers. We will preview spring semester youth group, Confirmation class, special events, and summer mission trips!

Zoom Meeting ID: 933 3484 2502

Passcode: Spring2021

### Wednesday Night Youth Group | Weekly at 6:30-7:45 p.m. via Zoom

January Theme: *MOODS & VIBES: A Series about Emotions*

"There is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus." – Romans 8:1

Jan. 6	MS: Mark 7:20-22	Because of Jesus, emotions don't have to be the boss of you.
	HS: Romans 8:1-4	Guilt
Jan. 13	MS: James 3:13-16	Because of Jesus, anger doesn't have to be the boss of you.
	HS: Ecclesiastes 4:4-6	Envy
Jan. 20	MS: Matthew 8:23-27	Because of Jesus, fear doesn't have to be the boss of you.
	HS: James 3:13-16	Anger
Jan. 27	MS: Romans 8:1-4	Because of Jesus, guilt doesn't have to be the boss of you.
	HS: Matthew 8:23-27	Fear

### January Special Event for ALL Students | Monday, January 18 | RSVP + \$15, and bring a lunch

Students will spend MLK Day volunteering at the Midwest Mission Distribution Center (MMDC) in Springfield, IL. Work assignments may include: sorting donated materials for education bags, assembling student education bags, repairing bikes, servicing electric sewing machines, and pre-assembling student desks. We will meet at MMDC at 8:30 a.m. and depart for home at 4 p.m. (students are responsible for their own transportation).

*Parents: please complete, scan, and email the registration form (found at [troymc.org/students](http://troymc.org/students)) to Pastor Kurt. The MMDC will send you an email to complete their online student permission form and liability waiver.*

### 2021 Confirmation Class | Sunday, January 3, 5:30-7 p.m. via Zoom

Confirmation class sessions resume in January. The meeting invitation will be emailed to the parents of Confirmands.

To receive New Life Student Ministry reminders from Pastor Kurt, please text 'NLSM' to 40650.

You can contact Rev. Kurt Stone via email, texts, and phone calls: [kurt@troymc.org](mailto:kurt@troymc.org) or (618) 407-7586.

## Marriage Ministry Update

Watch your inbox for an email regarding a winter date night box. We don't want to spoil the theme, but watch for updates and how to RSVP for a box. Depending on COVID restrictions, we will either offer these for pick up or delivery. Stay tuned, love birds!

## United Methodist Women

### UMW Monthly Meeting | Thursday, January 14, at 1 p.m. via Zoom

In this meeting, we will install new officers and enjoy catching up with everyone. We will also have a business session. Check your email inbox the first week of January for the meeting info. Happy New Year to all!



*Youth group "Let It Glow" virtual Christmas party!*

**Church Information**  
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**Staff**

- \*Senior Pastor  
Andy Adams
- \*Associate Pastor, Student Ministry  
Kurt Stone
- \*Care Pastor  
Dan Perry
- \*Minister of Modern Worship Arts  
Tim Price
- \*Director of Traditional Worship Arts  
Emily Ottwein
- \*Director of Children's Ministry  
Christine Lippert
- \*Director of Communications  
Anna Belmonte
- \*Minister of Discipleship  
Bonnie Abel
- \*St. Jacob Ministry Leader  
Clint Benesh
- \*Director of 1st Step Learning Center  
Lisa Rayle
- \*Office Manager  
Sharie Meyer
- \*Administrative Assistant  
Marie Brown
- \*Fields Manager  
Courtney Bettis
- \*Accompanist  
Mike Rogier
- \*Production Coordinator  
Josh Case
- Worship Tech Coordinator  
Nick Tipton
- Custodians  
David Barr, Loren Fear, Penny Stone,  
Noah Durbin
- \***Staff E-mail** [firstname]@troyumc.org

**Connect with us!**

@troyumc



# JANUARY SCHEDULE HIGHLIGHTS

Date	Event
Jan. 3	Confirmation class
Jan. 6	Spring 2021 Student Ministry overview session
Jan. 14	UMW monthly meeting
Jan. 18	MLK Day volunteer opportunity for students

## A Word on Loneliness from Pastor Dan

Loneliness is a condition that usually lasts a few hours or a couple of days. But, as COVID-19 drags on, the loneliness — for many of us — is definitely telling us something.

For some, your first response to loneliness may be to self-medicate. Others of you may fill your life with activities so there's no time to think about the loneliness. But keeping busy side-steps the issue. Busyness just proves to be a distraction, not the cure.

Another way you may try to deal with loneliness is to buy things, thinking "rewarding" yourself would make things better. Buying things may numb your feelings, but sooner or later the numbness wears off, perhaps leaving a mountain of credit card debt behind.

The real cure for loneliness is acknowledging that it's God's way of telling you that your real problem is a relational problem. There's more to it than just surrounding yourself with people. Doing that is the same as keeping busy, except you're using crowds to numb your pain instead of activities.

How is your relationship with God? Is it close and intimate, like a loving, caring father with his child? Or is your relationship with God cold, distant, and superficial?

You may not have thought about it before, but the first four commands of the Ten Commandments are about our relationship with God. The last six commandments are about our relationships with other people.

Consider using this time during COVID to discover ways to reconnect with God. Use this time to pray more conversationally with God, rather than formally. In doing so, you may actually feel God's presence in a new way.

It's not just your imagination — we worship a God who desires to dwell among His people through the Holy Spirit. Loneliness may very well be God's way of drawing us closer to Himself. As we improve our relationship with God, we'll discover our relationships with others improved, as well.

— Pastor Dan Perry



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