

First United Methodist Church  
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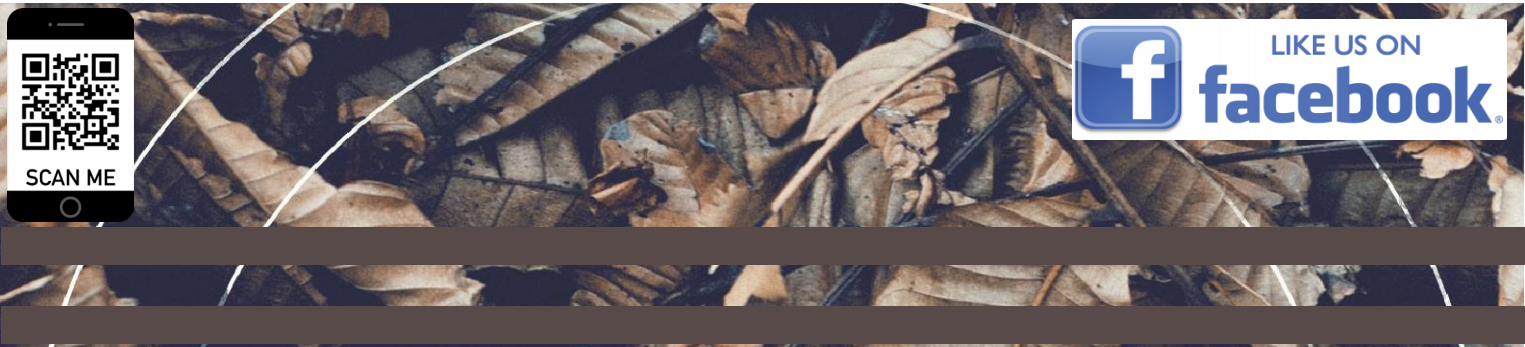
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## Whats Up at FUMC?

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### Pastor Appreciation Month: 4 Critical Rules & 6 Killer Ideas

by Paul Maxwell

#### October is Pastor Appreciation Month.

Your pastor is probably underpaid, overextended, suffering from shift work syndrome, and hasn't had regular working hours their entire career. What do pastors get for their hard work? According to Payscale.com, the average pastor's salary is \$48,828 per year. And yet, the average pastor goes into \$60,000 of debt to get a seminary education. Most pastors don't go to seminary to become rich. Travis Collins writes in his book For Ministers about to Start...or about to Give Up that 75% of pastors experience "severe stress causing anguish, worry, bewilderment, anger, depression, fear and alienation" during their ministry. But it doesn't have to be this way.

Sometimes, all it takes to keep pastoral burnout at bay is for a church to crush Pastor Appreciation Month. Here are guidelines for how you and your church can excel this October in showing your pastor that he/she is appreciated, loved, and respected in your church.

#### 4 Critical Rules for Pastor Appreciation Month

Pastor appreciation gift guidelines: First, don't be sheepish about giving pastors gifts. In fact, you should be pushy about it. Pastors usually are wary of receiving gifts, but pastors appreciation month is the perfect opportunity to bulldoze their misplaced sense of guilt and say: "No, we insist!"

Second, It's important that when you give an individual gift, the gift isn't about you. For example, a bad example of a pastor appreciation gift would be a two-hour coffee meeting with me. That is a burden, not a gift. Don't give the gift of work. Third, give a gift from as many people as possible. The more people you include in the gift, the higher quality gift you can give a pastor. For example, instead of buying a pastor 20 \$20 gift cards to Starbucks, one person could take it upon themselves to coordinate the purchase of a \$400 espresso machine for the pastor. You might wonder: "Wouldn't he want \$400 in Starbucks gift cards?" Trust me — he/she wants the espresso machine. Fourth, let your inner capitalist run wild. Just because the pastor might make a mediocre salary, that doesn't mean you should buy him a mediocre gift. Bless the pastor buy asking yourself: "How could we make him feel extraordinarily appreciated? How could we make him feel truly blessed?" It's not that you can't give him a \$5 gift card if that's all you can contribute. But with the possibility of pooling resources and intentional forethought, you could easily make a list of things your pastor would prefer over a gift card.

While we're on the topic, let me preface our idealist with a list of gifts you absolutely shouldn't buy. Anything with a Bible verse written on it (he's/she's the pastor; it would be like buying your boss a stapler for Christmas) Coupons to your services at a discount (that's a reverse gift where you get something) A thank-you email over 200 words.

*Continued on insert...*

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# Youth Update

On September 11th, 2019, thirteen youth and their leader Chelsea Kramp and Pastor Natalie met for the first youth group meeting held at the church in years! We had pizza, chatted to get to know Chelsea better and discussed what we would be doing in the future. We also added our handprints to one of the pillars in our new space.

Later that week on Sunday, the 15th, the youth and their parents hosted a Pulled Pork Fundraiser Dinner for the youth group fund that was attended by many. We brought in over \$700. Thank you for all the support and prayers as we get this awesome new ministry up and running! We thank the Tietjen family for the generous donation of pork for dinner and also again extend our gratitude to the Prairie Rivers District and the Great Plains Youth Service Fund for their generous grants to allow us to renovate our youth space.



## Continued from front page...

Most people think about Pastor Appreciation Month as an opportunity for individuals to express appreciation. Here's the deal: The more organized you are as a church, the more meaningful you can make Pastor Appreciation Month for your pastor. In fact, you should do both. This is why we'll break our 6 killer ideas for pastor appreciation month into individual and corporate gifts.

### Individual:

Here are the 6 most meaningful gifts you can give for Pastor Appreciation Month.

**1. Handwritten letter.** This is very low-budget. This option exists so that you have no excuse not to give anything. A handwritten letter or note also provides an opportunity for kids to participate. Take time at home to make this a craft for your kids. It will teach kids the value of expressing gratitude to those who serve in the church, and it will teach them about the sacrifice pastors make in dedicating their lives to ministry.

**2. A favorite meal.** Pastors love to eat (maybe a little too much—but hey, you can bring that up on New Year's Eve, not Pastor Appreciation Month). Buy a pastor a gift card to his favorite restaurant. Cook him his favorite meal. Order takeout on their behalf. Again, a free meal shouldn't turn into: "I bought you dinner out with me and my wife — and by the way, we need counseling!" No. The gift of a meal is: "What's your favorite pizza place in the area? Mario's? What's the best night for me to buy your family three pizzas from Mario's so that you'll have leftovers?"

**3. Tickets.** Pastors rarely get the chance to go anywhere. Get them tickets to an event they would enjoy. A local professional sporting event. A concert by their favorite band. A Broadway production down in the city. Just make sure to check with his secretary that the dates work with his schedule.

**4. Services.** This is an opportunity to do something for your pastor that they would never do for themselves. A house cleaner, a landscaper, a tailor, a consultant, a financial advisement, a special medical appointment. If you are a professional, it is appropriate to offer your services for free. Just make sure you don't offer a 20% discount to your services so that you end up profiting from Pastor Appreciation Month. Make it a genuine gift. If you're going to give your pastor a gift or service that you offer, make it pro bono.

**5. A gift card.** I know we criticized gift cards earlier, but they are actually a great individual gift. If a pastor receives cash, he/she may feel obligated to spend it on somebody else. The point of pastor appreciation month is to help the pastor get the care he needs to feel valued and refreshed to continue doing good work. The beauty of the gift card

as a pastor appreciation gift is that the pastor is forced to practice self-care. And pastors are notoriously bad at this. Pastor appreciation month is your opportunity to prompt pastors to do something good for themselves without the gift of feeling like they should spend it on someone else. But if you do get a gift card, aim for something more than Starbucks. Certain gift cards can go a very long way. A few examples of gift cards that will bless your pastor 10x as much as a Starbucks gift card are: Massage, movie theater, their favorite local restaurant, better than coffee out is a coffee gift card to their favorite local espresso spot. This way, they can actually use the gift card to enjoy a date with their husband/wife or a relaxing Monday morning. Group gifts: Even better than individual gifts are group gifts. Remember: 40 \$10 Starbucks cards vs an Espresso machine. Mobilize a group of people, come up with a good gift that everyone is willing to give, and pitch in as much as possible. Include a card with the gift that includes everyone's name.

**6. A weekend getaway.** Someone in the church has a cabin or time share somewhere. If that person is you, consider offering a week in your vacation spot to your pastor. Chances are that they may feel like they informally don't have permission to go away on vacation because of the needs of the church. Let them know that they need rest and time to decompress from church as much as anyone needs time away from work. Get your pastor a weekend getaway, either with his whole family, or with just his or her spouse. Pro tip: If you get a couple's getaway, make sure you offer a trusted family to babysit kids for the weekend so that a gift doesn't become an expense.

Over to you. Remember, this October: Don't skimp on Pastor Appreciation Month. Make it a month they will always remember. Make it her/his Christmas season (since most Christmas seasons overwork pastors with double sermon duty). Focus on giving to your pastor, not getting from her/him. Ask his secretary or family what gifts he would enjoy most. Mobilize a large group of people to give a high-quality gift.

*Author: Paul Maxwell, Ph.D., is the Content Strategist at Tithe.ly. He lives in Fishers, IN with his beautiful wife and rowdy wheaten terrier.*

# Memorial Report In memory of Gail Breen

Debra Woerner  
Family & Friends  
Neil & Marilou Becker  
Milan & Cathy Ray  
Daniel Saulnier  
Phyllis Schmitt  
Kent & Marsha Carlson

# In memory of Ethel Westphal Avis Shaw

## Administrative Council

The Administrative Council met on August 27, 2019. Members present were Pastor Natalie, Judy Corman, Shannon McCord, Patty Studer, Beverly Beavers and Marsha Ray. Beverly called the meeting to order at 7:00 and Natalie opened with prayer.

**UMW:** The UMW met on August 21st. Their nominations committee has met and presented a slate of officers for the upcoming year.

**Finance:** Our year is going well and our Tithes and Offerings were up the first six months of 2019 compared to last year.

**Trustees:** Shannon reported on several projects. At the parsonage, awnings have been removed, the water leak in the garage is an old one and has been fixed, and they are still working on the wall in the basement. The trustees are looking into a lift to replace the elevator. The lift would use the same shaft as the elevator and be a fraction of the cost. Nate Saathoff has been contacted about the concrete in front of the church and about pouring a pad for the Merwyn Wyatt Memorial bench. Dave Webber will tin the underside of the two overhangs on the Educational Wing. The old wood will be removed. His bid was \$1350 for material and \$1350 for labor. The bats are still an issue and are getting worse. Jeff Hutchinson will look at the steeple area and, hopefully, will have some ideas on how to fix the problem. Shannon had an additional bill for \$1000 from Scott's for parts and installation of a fresh air intake box on the new unit recently installed. Those present voted to pay the bill but, since we did not have a quorum, Shannon will present the bill again at September's meeting.

**Memorial:** New bell choir materials have been received and paid for with memorial money. Beverly brought up that the sanctuary altar, pulpit, cross, candles and chairs are showing their age. After some discussion it was decided to see what the memorial committee thought about replacing some or all of the items.

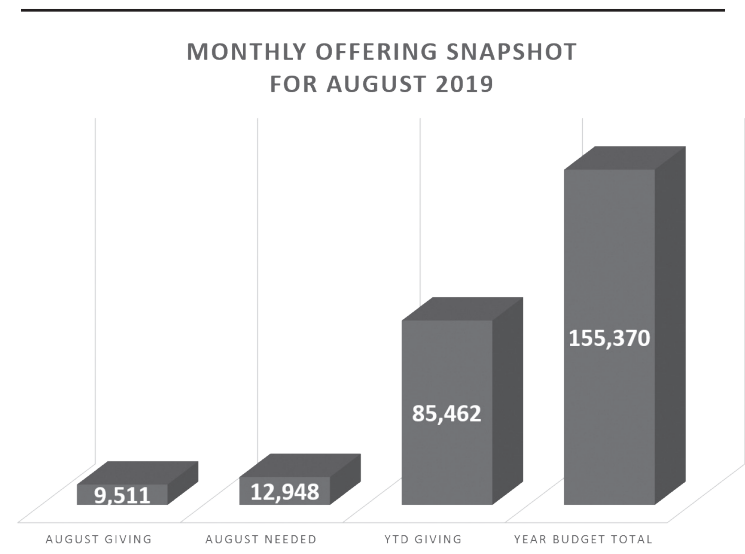
**Sunday Funday:** Haley Coffey is the new director. It will be a one room class again this year and will be starting on September 8th with some fun activities planned, including the bounce house.

**SPPRC:** Patty reported their committee will be meeting in September to review salaries.

**Pastor's Report:** Gail Breen's funeral will be held on August 30th. We recently had a baptism and have had new members joining and will have more in a couple of weeks. Ten ladies attended the first Women's Bible Study at the Winery. Over 30 students had back to school pictures taken by Emily Tietjen. The youth room is progressing, but waiting now on the funds from the Conference to do more work. Youth group and confirmation classes will begin on September 11 and meet every Wednesday night. A scholarship committee has been formed and will be meeting soon to set up guidelines. In December we will be having a soup supper and "Hanging of the Greens." Ideas for a fundraiser for that night were discussed. More information on this later. "Trunk or Treat" was successful last year and will be held again this year on October 26th. The Ministerial Alliance has started meetings again and is working on some different activities involving the area youth. Beverly closed the meeting with prayer and we adjourned at 8:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Marsha Ray



## United Methodist Women

On August 21, 2019, ten members of Superior UMW met at the church. President Carole Thompson opened the meeting with prayer and the UMW Purpose. Minutes of previous meeting were read and approved by Jo Wilbern. Sylvia Imhoff read the balance in the treasury of \$1,793.68 as of August 21, 2019.

**Reports of Committees:** Avis Shaw reported Gifts of Love will soon be delivered to shut-ins. Correspondence: We received Thank you from previous year and information from UMCOR and Epworth Village. Publicity-Handouts and advertising in local newspaper and Facebook will begin soon prior to Harvest Festival. Linda Cox asked members to read The Upper Room and Response Magazine which are available on table outside Pastor Natalie's office.

**Unfinished Business:** Next meeting will be at 6pm Sept 19 with a pot luck served by Program Committee. October 16 is the World Thank Offering and also discussion of budget for the next year.

**New Business:** Upcoming Events are Great Plains UMC September 20-21. and Prairie Rivers District Retreat in Grand Island Trinity UMC. Election of Officers. Slate of officers was presented by Linda Cox to the president, who read nominees. Avis Shaw moved to accept nominations as proposed. By show of hands, motion was carried. Business meeting was adjourned. Marcia Stauss shared a Prayer Quilt project her previous church members gave to new babies and ill or hospitalized persons. She will discuss this with Pastor Natalie. Linda Cox had Devotions and Program, Reading John 1:1, Legacy of Mission. This reminded us that God gave us the tools to carry out his will in helping others. At the end of the evening Sylvia served a delicious cake and coffee.

Jo Wilbern,

UMW Secretary

## Worship Assistants

**Greeters:**  
Oct. 6 Bonnie Langer  
Oct. 13 UMW Sunday  
Oct. 20 Jo Wilbern  
Oct. 27 Drake Family

**Ushers:**  
Oct. 6 Fank Langer, Phil Dean, Steve Fox  
Oct. 13 UMW Sunday  
Oct. 20 Bill Hamilton, Joe Wilson, Arnold Ross  
Oct. 27 Danny, Becky & Zak Corman

**Counter All Month:** Jeff Guilkey

**Sound Technicians:**  
Oct. 6 Marsha Ray  
Oct. 13 Sandy Borden  
Oct. 20 Jeff Guilkey  
Oct. 27 Beverly Beavers

**Communion Steward:** Judy Corman

**Acolytes:**  
Oct. 6 Jordan Duncan  
Oct. 13 Dylan Edwards  
Oct. 20 Emmett Gentry  
Oct. 27 Chloe Drake

**Sunday Funday Teachers**  
October Theme: Noah's Ark  
6th: Shannon McCord/Claudia Hanson  
13th: Haley Coffey/Chrissy Ehlers  
20th: Angela Garver/Julie Worman  
27th: Haley Coffee/Shawnee Schoenrock



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