



First United Methodist Church Champaign

Where connecting, growing, and serving are a way of life



The Mission of First United Methodist Church is to:

- **CONNECT** people with God and one another
- **GROW** as disciples of Jesus Christ
- **SERVE** others.

Messenger

Volume XXXII, No. 2

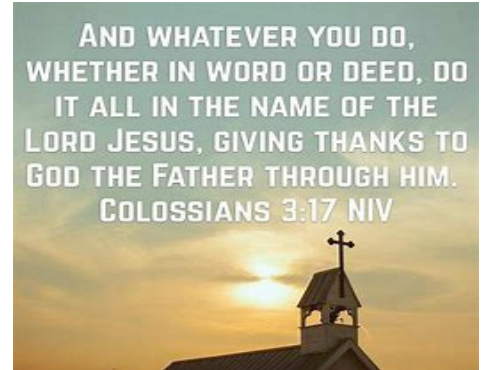
January 23, 2024

Dearly Beloved!

Did you know...that **Champaign First United Methodist Church sends approximately \$600 per month to empty tomb?** There is also a core group of people who regularly volunteer to deliver food and furniture, as well as other services. YOU can also be a volunteer!

What is empty tomb? From the *empty tomb website* (emptytomb.org/about-us): *In the Champaign-Urbana, IL area, the works through empty tomb serve as contact points between richer Christians and people in need, both Christians and non-Christians. Volunteers are active members of historically Christian congregations. If the person in need is a Christian, there is an opportunity to do good to those in the household of faith; we Christians grow a little more in the oneness for which Jesus prayed in John 17. If the person in need does not know Christ, there is the potential for sharing the good news of Jesus as well as meeting a particular need. In either case, the Christian with resources who reaches out grows in his/her understanding of discipleship and in relationship to God. They offer services in the following areas:*

- Christian Health Services
- Clothing Work
- Free Food Work
- Furniture Work
- Helping Work



empty tomb[®], inc.

Our congregation received a letter of thanks from empty tomb. Here is part of their message: "Recently, an agency referred a woman who had been traveling back and forth to see her mother who was ill. She had to choose between the travel to be with her mother and her rent. And **because of your generosity**, empty tomb was able to cover the \$700 rent she was having trouble paying."

We are able to send these gifts because of an invested account designated to help Senior citizens with living expenses, such as rent, food, and utilities. A donation was made many years ago that accrues interest and allows us to support the ministry of empty tomb.

Sylvia and John Ronsvalle, who attend Champaign First faithfully, are the Founders of empty tomb as well as serving as Executive Vice President (Sylvia) and President (John). Their research about how Americans spend their money is both enlightening and heartbreaking. We can do better.

I encourage you to visit their website and study their ministry. Consider your own financial support of their good work. There are some job openings available...could you or someone you know be a good fit for them? Could you be a volunteer? They do all their work "in the name of Jesus" and we are delighted to be part of their story.

Love First!
Pastor Julia

New Members Received on January 21, 2024



Jim Button grew up in this church. He is married to Anne and is a father of three children and has seven grandchildren. Jim works at Champaign Ford City with Wayne Weber.

Ann Russell was born in 1945 in Chicago and went to California for six months while her father was in the Navy. Her family returned to Champaign, and Ann attended Dr. Howard Elementary School, Franklin Middle School, Champaign High School, and U of I. Ann is a Phi Beta Kappa major in German and worked as a computer programmer for the U of I.

Robbi Russell has transferred from Faith United Methodist Church. She was born intersex and has self-identified as a female since the age of three. She graduated from University High School in 1965 and served in the United States Army from 1966 to 1974 in West Germany, Vietnam, and West Berlin. During her military years, she was awarded the purple heart and three Army commendation medals. She earned a BS degree in Vocational Education in 1976 and received a License to Preach that extended from 1971 to 1976. Robbi served as a consulting engineer with Robotics, Computer Design, Database Administration in 2008. Further, Robbi has authored two books, *Transgender Grace* in 2020 and *LGBTQIA+ and the Bible* in 2023. Robbi feels welcome and affirmed at Champaign First United Methodist Church.



Jim Button, Tim Bachman, Rev. Julia Melgreen, Ann Russell, and Robbi Russell



FUMC musical ensembles have resumed regular rehearsals. All interested musicians (and wanna-be musicians!) are welcome to join. Invite your friends to join. Contact Barbara Zachow for more information at 217-356-9078 or bzachow@comcast.net.

SPRING 2023

Chancel Ringers – Tuesdays, 6:00 – 7:00 pm, Bell Tables in Sanctuary

- Youth and Adults of any age
- Intermediate or Advanced handbell experience
- Provide music in a variety of styles for periodic worship services

Chancel Choir – Wednesdays, 7:00 – 8:15 pm, Choir Room

- Youth and Adults of any age
- Provide music in a variety of styles for periodic worship services

Perceptions Praise Team - Thursdays, 6:30 – 8:00 pm, Sanctuary

- Youth and Adults of any age
- Keyboard, guitar, drum set, vocalists, other instruments
- Media and Technology Arts Team provides support for this rehearsal

Angel Choir – Sundays, 4:00 – 5:00 pm, Room J, Fellowship Hall, and Sanctuary

- 3 years old through 5th graders; adults welcome
- Singing, tone chimes, beginning bells, Orff and rhythm instruments, foundational music reading skills
- Lead worship on Family Fun Sundays (January 28, February 25, March 24, April 28)

Youth Music – Sundays, 5:00 – 6:00 pm, Choir Room and Sanctuary

- 6th through 12th graders
- Singing, intermediate bells, instruments, other artistic talents

Media and Technology Arts Team – Sunday mornings and Thursday evenings, Sanctuary

- Youth and Adults
- Enhance worship through wise use of audio, video, and projection technology

Clarinet Choir – Thursdays, 6:30 – 7:30 pm, Choir Room

- Contact Cathy Mitchell for more information (abell80illinois@gmail.com)

Choral Union (community chorus hosted by FUMC) – Mondays, 7:00 – 9:00 pm, Choir Room

- Adults with willingness to sing in and contribute to the community chorus, the ability to match pitch, and the ability to produce a pleasing vocal sound
- Give periodic concerts throughout the community

Youth Events

I am going to guess that many of you may have seen the show *The Office* before. It was one of the biggest comedy shows of all time and came out in 2005; though it was based on a British show that came out earlier. *The Office* showcases the regular (and not-so-regular people) that work in a paper supply office for their boorish, inappropriate, but somehow also randomly endearing boss, Michael Scott.

Michael has many hilarious (and some not-so-appropriate) quotes on the show but one that sticks out is after he has insulted the receptionist, Pam Beesly. Pam leaves in a huff and Michael immediately says to someone else, "I would never say this to her face, but she's a wonderful person and a gifted artist." Oscar Martinez, another coworker, exclaims, "What?! Why wouldn't you say that to her face?!"



This exchange is so funny, but don't we all sort of do this? We think wonderful things about people, but we often don't tell them! We might even tell a third person something lovely about a friend, but then we don't even tell the friend in question. Kind words don't reach people when they just stay inside our heads or if they're only mentioned to a different person. The people around us may be wondering if they measure up in our eyes, without knowing how much we already look up to them. Lifting others up only requires us to verbalize the kind things we were already thinking already.

Meredith
Meredith@champaignfumc.org

Coming Events:

Friday, February 9, 6:00 pm - 9:30 pm - U of I Hockey Game - Meet at the church at 6:00 pm to ride in the van and cheer on the U of I Hockey team at the ice arena! Dress warm!

Sunday, February 11 - No Youth Group due to the Super Bowl

Sundays, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm - Youth Group - Our middle school and high school youth meet every Sunday evening at the church! Come join us for an evening of activities, fellowship, and fun! We meet in the youth room and dinner is provided.



One Winter Night February 2-3

One Winter Night is the annual fundraiser for C-U at Home and their Pathways to Progress program supporting men and women on their journey out of addiction, poor mental health, and/or trauma. They operate two residential homes that are staffed 24/7 and provide intensive case management and resources for clients. C-U at Home also maintains five advanced homes that offer a steppingstone to independence.

How You Can Participate

1. Go to the C-U at Home website (www.cuathome.us) and sign up to be a part of the Outdoor Challenge on Friday, February 2. Participants will stay overnight outdoors at The Venue C-U in downtown Champaign to raise funds to support the Pathways to Progress program at C-U at Home.
2. Go to the C-U at Home website (www.cuathome.us) and donate to support one of our outdoor participants.
3. Drop off your check (payable to C-U at Home) or cash donation at the Drive By Donation Event at First United Methodist Church (210 W. Church in downtown Champaign) on Friday, February 2, between 8 am and 6 pm.
4. Gather friends and family and attend the Education and Advocacy program on Friday, February 2 at 7:00-9:00 pm at The Venue C-U in downtown Champaign. This event will be hosted by Matthew White of WCIA. Chris Jacobsen-Chism, worship leader for Copper Creek Church in Champaign, will provide worship music. Highlights include panel discussion about Pathways to Progress and testimonies of program graduates. This event is free to attend. Donations will be gratefully accepted.

Thank you for your faithful support and prayers!



Sunday, February 18, 11:30 am

Handbell Intermezzo, Chancel Ringers
Friendship Center South

Friday, February 23, 4:00 pm

Clarinet Recital, Rosemary Mascarenhas
Cathy Mitchell, Recital Host

Sunday, April 28, during 10:30 am worship service

FUMC Angel Choir Presents: *Mission: Possible*

Sunday, May 5, 10:30 am

Major Music Sunday, Chancel Choir, Chancel Ringers,
and Orchestra

Monday, May 6, 7:00 pm

Choral Union Spring Concert

Need a Ride to Church on Sunday?

The Wellspring Health and Wellness Committee is grateful to Gwen Uppinghouse for accepting the position of van driver. The van will be available for pick up for the 10:30 service two Sundays per month initially. Other transportation services may be available on Sundays when the van is not scheduled.

To schedule a ride, please call Sharon at the church office no later than 2:00 pm on the Thursday afternoon before the Sunday when a ride is desired. Sharon can be reached at: (217) 356-9078.



Visit our website

(www.champaignfumc.org) and fill out a prayer request form or call the church office at 217-356-9078 and leave a message.



Restock the SHELVES

Food pantry update: FUMC always needs staple food items such as in the list below. This outreach ministry works through a helping coordinator at empty tomb to deliver needed food and healthcare items to folks in our community. There are five church members willingly volunteering to make deliveries to those in need--at least one delivery a week. Our pantry provides the non-perishable items and fresh food is added as they shop at a local store. Monetary donations are always welcome. Bring your bag of groceries to church on Sundays or drop them off in the Resource Room during the week. Thank you so much for thinking of others in this community in need of healthy staple foods.

Love 1st!

Especially needed are: rice (1 lb package), canned chicken breast, canned ham, paper towels, bar soap, and toothpaste.

Attention: There's a critical need for one more food volunteer to make food deliveries to needy folks in the community. Instruction and details about the process will be shared with a willing assistant. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Sue Bachman at 217-359-4390 or susanbachman@hotmail.com.

2024 Offering Envelopes

If you would like a supply of offering envelopes for 2024, they are available in the Church Office and in the Narthex. We have weekly sets (52 envelopes) and monthly sets (12 envelopes). The envelopes are dated but not pre-numbered.

Thank You, Marcia Carlier!



Thank you so much to Marica Carlier for her faithful service as the Connecting Hearts Leader! She has done a wonderful job of keeping our homebound members connected to FUMC.

Here's a message from Marcia: "I started doing what was called Homebound Visiting with Don Walden and Ruth Miller back in the mid 1990s. The name changed from Homebound Members to Connecting Hearts in 2011. Alice Faron came up with the name Connecting Hearts. The new name defined the purpose - connecting the heart of someone who was able to attend church to a member who is now no longer able to attend. This person would check on the care receiver with a visit, card, or phone call throughout the year along with delivering a Christmas stocking at Christmas and an Easter lily at Easter. I have enjoyed doing this for almost 30 years and still enjoy it. I am ready to take a break from organizing it but will continue as a visitor. Special thanks to the Wellspring Ministry Team for their support; and to Rev. Mary Brady and Rev. Tom Corum for their strong support over the years; and I would be remiss not to thank Sharon Johnson for her alertness to members who might need a visitor, and both Sharon and Bonnie for their willingness to help me over the years."

Wellspring Ministry Team is made up of Teryl Pigott, Barb Alsup, Sandy Burgener, Cathy Mitchell, Bernie Chamberlain, Nancy Barenberg, and Rev. Julia.

Current Connecting Hearts Visitors are Barb Alsup, Bernie Chamberlain, Susan Veitch, Linda Hemminger, Teryl Pigott, Shirley Maryan, and Marcia Carlier. Shirley Maryan deserves an asterisk by her name for rounding up so many items for the Christmas Stockings.



January 23 - Esquire - CANCELLED
January 30 - Neil St. Blues

We meet at 11:30 on Tuesday mornings at the church. The program is led by Debbie Chew, a professional with experience in exercise, and includes a group stretching and warm up time, structured walk adapted for varying levels of ability, and a group lunch.

This program is offered free of charge, with the lunch costs being \$10.00. We walk from the church at 12:20 to the restaurant. Please contact the church at 217-356-9078 for information or to register for the walking program.



United
Women
in Faith

UWF Executive Board will meet on Wednesday, February 7, at 9:00 am in the Conference Room.

Dorcus Circle will not meet in February.

Sarah Circle will meet on Monday, February 19, at 6:00 pm at JoAnn Schlueter's home. Terry Benson will lead the program.

iRead • iCount

IMPROVING A CHILD'S WORLD ONE-HOUR AT A TIME®

Help Make a Difference in Our Community by Becoming an iRead • iCount Volunteer!

iRead Program Dates: March 19 - April 26, 2024

This program helps kindergarten and first grade students who are struggling with literacy and math competencies in Champaign and Urbana primary schools. We need hundreds of volunteers in the classrooms this spring to work one-on-one with these students to help with literacy.

Why is This Volunteer Program so Important?

We have an achievement gap in our schools that has widened over the past couple of years. If we do not address it now, we will never close this gap.

Why This Matters:

- Reading and math are our most basic workforce skills.
- Workforce development is an economic development tool and an anti-poverty, anti-violence strategy for our community.

We Can Do Better for Our Community. We Have to Do Better for Our Community.

Quick Facts about Volunteering:

- Volunteers submit applications by **February 9, 2024** for processing.
- Approved volunteers will go online and sign up for school choice, day and time preference, and training session.
- Volunteers will attend one training session and one orientation session at their school.
- Volunteers spend one hour a week in the classrooms working one-on-one with early learners, helping build the students' basic reading skills.
- The reward of helping a child build these skills is immeasurable.

We have the responsibility and ability to help the future workforce generation succeed by strengthening the foundation for literacy and math education for our youngest, most vulnerable students now.

For more information and to sign up to volunteer:
www.champaigncounty.org/iread-icount

Questions?

Cheryl Barringer, iRead • iCount® Coordinator
303 W. Kirby Ave., Champaign, IL 61820
ireadicount@champaigncounty.org • 217.359.1791

2023 State Test Data

Champaign Unit 4 3rd Grade State Test

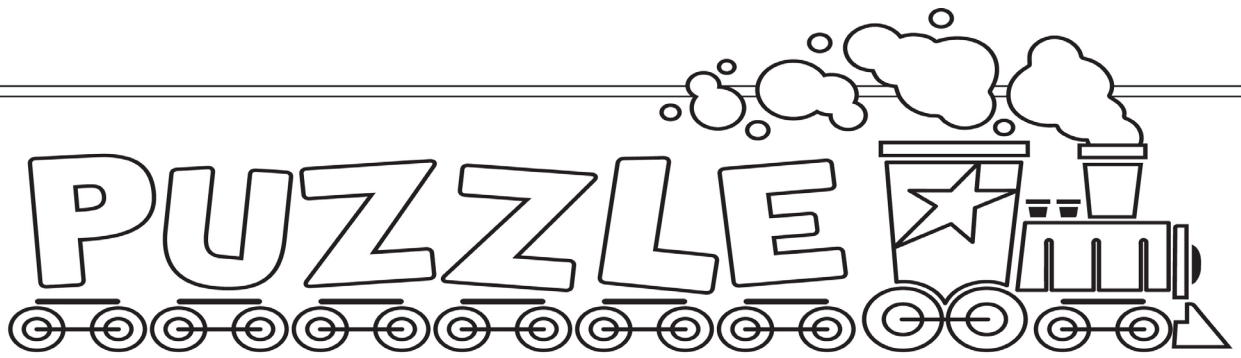
- 22.9 percent of students can meet or exceed in reading
- 27.2 percent of students can meet or exceed in math

Urbana District 116 3rd Grade State Test

- 7.9 percent of students can meet or exceed in reading
- 11.1 percent of students can meet or exceed in math

Partner Organizations





CONNECTED BY LOVE

God's Word is filled with messages about love,
which connects us to God and to one another.

*Directions: Draw a line from the beginning of each Bible verse
(on the left side) through the heart to the rest of the verse
(on the right side). Use the Scripture references for help.*

- a. We
- b. Above all,
- c. My command
is this:
- d. And over all
these virtues
put on
- e. Greater
- f. See what
great
- g. There is
no fear in



- 1. each other as I have
loved you. John 15:12
- 2. has no one than this: to
lay down one's life for
one's friends. John 15:13
- 3. But perfect love drives
out fear. 1 John 4:18
- 4. each other deeply,
because love covers
over a multitude of sins.
1 Peter 4:8
- 5. the Father has lavished
on us, that we should
be called children of
God! 1 John 3:1
- 6. because he first loved
us. 1 John 4:19
- 7. which binds them all
together in perfect
unity. Colossians 3:14

Congregational Life of FUMC

February 1-15, 2024



Celebrating a

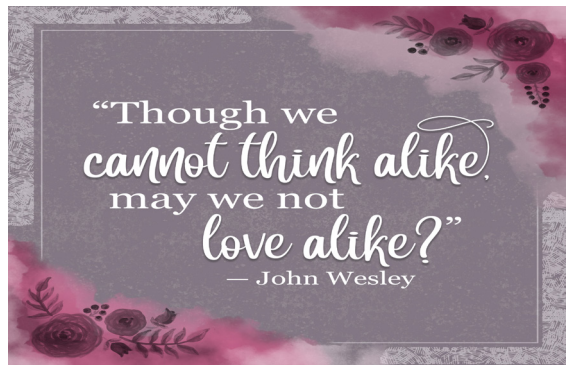
- | | | | |
|---|--------------------|----|----------------|
| 1 | Mary MacRae | 11 | Linda Frerichs |
| 1 | Ruth Moore | 11 | Paul Patterson |
| 1 | Eric Simmons | 12 | Marcia Carlier |
| 3 | David Eades | 13 | Mindy Slack |
| 3 | Robert Moser | 14 | Robbie Black |
| 4 | Chris Uppinghouse | 14 | Robin Burch |
| 5 | Teryl Pigott | 14 | Abigail Moberg |
| 6 | Jo Ann Curtis | 14 | Ann Russell |
| 7 | Sophia Uppinghouse | 14 | Melody Wurl |
| | | 15 | Marge Moluf |



- | | |
|----|--------------------------|
| 2 | Todd & Kathleen Burgener |
| 2 | Scott & Jill Kemper |
| 7 | Chris & Susan Hinesly |
| 15 | Mark & Cindy Rayburn |

Hospital Report

Hospitalized in the last two weeks:



Going into the Hospital?

If you are scheduled by your physician to be hospitalized, please indicate "**Champaign First United Methodist Church**" on your admission form.

Privacy guidelines will not allow hospitals to notify the church without your permission. If you can, call the church office before you are admitted, or have a family member or friend let us know.

I don't want to miss you when I make hospital calls.

NEXT Messenger Deadline:
February 1, 2024

published on February 6
Articles may be submitted by e-mail to:
bberner@champaignfumc.org
or brought to church.

Please check out the signup board in Friendship Center and find a date you can be a GREETER/COFFEE TIME VOLUNTEER.
Lots of dates needed!!!



January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
21 Reception of New Members VAN Reserved for Sunday morning 9:30am ARK Nursery 10:00am Church Service Check Ins 10:30am In-Person Worship Service 10:30am Worship Service On Facebook, YouTube, Website 4:00pm Angel Choir 5:00pm Youth Music 6:00pm Youth Group	22 1:00pm DREAAM Afterschool Program 6:30pm Scouts BSA Troop 1 7:00pm Choral Union 7:00pm Foertsch WCG 7:00pm Young Adults WCG	23 9:00am Tuesday Morning Book Club 10:30am Program Staff Meeting 11:30am Walking Talking Lunch Bunch - Esquire 1:00pm DREAAM Afterschool Program 5:30pm DREAAM Basketball 5:30pm DREAAM STEAM Lab 5:30pm Outreach Ministries 6:00pm Chancel Ringers 6:30pm Cub Scouts Pack 11 Den Meetings	24 1:00pm DREAAM Afterschool Program 1:00pm Larson WCG 1:00pm Wednesday Recovery Group 6:30pm Beyler WCG 6:30pm Pack 11 Kindergarten Den 6:30pm Point-in- Time Count 7:00pm Chancel Choir	25 11:30am Foundation 1:00pm DREAAM Afterschool Program 5:30pm DREAAM Basketball 6:00pm Wrapped in His Love 6:30pm Clarinet Group	26	27 9:00am DREAAM Basketball

February 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 Family Fun Sunday 9:30am ARK Nursery 10:00am Church Service Check Ins 10:30am In-Person Worship Service 10:30am Worship Service On Facebook, YouTube, Website 5:00pm Youth Music 6:00pm Youth Group	29 1:00pm DREAAM Afterschool Program 6:30pm Scouts BSA Troop 1 7:00pm Choral Union 7:00pm Foertsch WCG 7:00pm Young Adults WCG	30 9:00am Tuesday Morning Book Club 10:30am All Staff Meeting 11:30am Walking Talking Lunch Bunch - Neil St. Blues 1:00pm DREAAM Afterschool Program 5:30pm DREAAM Basketball 5:30pm DREAAM STEAM Lab 6:00pm Chancel Ringers 6:30pm Cub Scouts Pack 11 Den Meetings	31 1:00pm DREAAM Afterschool Program 1:00pm Larson WCG 1:00pm Wednesday Recovery Group 6:30pm Beyler WCG 7:00pm Chancel Choir	1 8:30am Messenger Deadline 10:00am Minds in Motion 1:00pm DREAAM Afterschool Program 5:30pm DREAAM Basketball 6:30pm Clarinet Group 6:30pm Perceptions Praise Team	2 8:00am Drive- Thru Donation for One Winter Night	3 Tentative Cub Scouts Pack 11 Lock-in 9:00am DREAAM Basketball
4 9:30am ARK Nursery 10:00am Church Service Check Ins 10:30am In-Person Worship Service 10:30am Worship Service On Facebook, YouTube, Website 4:00pm Angel Choir 5:00pm Youth Music 6:00pm Youth Group	5 1:00pm DREAAM Afterschool Program 6:30pm Scouts BSA Troop 1 7:00pm Choral Union 7:00pm Foertsch WCG 7:00pm Young Adults WCG	6 9:00am Tuesday Morning Book Club 10:30am Program Staff Meeting 11:30am Walking Talking Lunch Bunch 1:00pm DREAAM Afterschool Program	7 9:30am United Women in Faith Executive Board 1:00pm DREAAM Afterschool Program 1:00pm Larson WCG 1:00pm Wednesday Recovery Group 6:30pm Beyler WCG 6:30pm Pack 11 Kindergarten Den 7:00pm Chancel	8 1:00pm DREAAM Afterschool Program 5:30pm DREAAM Basketball 6:00pm Wrapped in His Love 6:30pm Clarinet Group 6:30pm Perceptions Praise Team	9 5:30pm Van Reserved for Youth Group 6:00pm Youth Group Trip to U of I Hockey Game	10 9:00am DREAAM Basketball

Feb. 6 - Continued - 5:30pm DREAAM Basketball
5:30pm DREAAM STEAM Lab 6:00pm Chancel Ringers
6:30pm Cub Scouts Pack 11 Den Meetings
7:15pm Worship Ministry Team

Choir

First United Methodist Church
210 W Church Street
Champaign IL 61820

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“Return Service Requested”

GRACE, *mercy* and
PEACE from *God* the Father
and from
Jesus Christ, the Father's Son,
will be with us in
truth and love.

2 John 1:3, NIV



*The Messenger is a bi-weekly newsletter for members and friends of
First United Methodist Church, Champaign, IL.
For more information, please call the Church Office at (217) 356-
9078. Nonmember subscription rate \$20.00 per year
(or can be found at no cost at www.champaignfumc.org.)*

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