

NEWSLETTER

September 2026



First United Methodist Church

1019 Wesley Drive

Maquoketa, Iowa 52060

Phone: (563)652-4420

Website: www.maquoketa1stumc.com

Facebook: *Maquoketa First United Methodist*

WORSHIP 9:00 AM

Our worship service is also broadcast on

KMAQ (95.1 FM) Radio in Maquoketa

At 10:30 am

Delmar United Methodist Church

305 Delmar Ave

Delmar, IA 52037

(563) 574-4789

Facebook: *Delmar United Methodist*

WORSHIP 10:30 AM

Preston United Methodist Church

PO Box 181

141 S Stephens St

Preston Iowa 52069

Facebook: *Preston United Methodist*

WORSHIP 10:30 AM

Rev. Cephas Davis

contact information:

Office - 563.652.4420 Cell - 903.714.9974

Email cephas.davis@iaum



Cephas's Corner

If There Were No Life After Death, Would There Be Sufficient Reason to Live a Moral Life?

Yes, even if there were no life after death, there would still be sufficient reason to live a moral life.

Merriam-Webster defines “moral” as relating to principles of right and wrong behavior. From a Christian perspective, morality means living according to God’s will as revealed in Scripture. Christians are encouraged by Christ’s promise: “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live” (John 11:25). Nevertheless, belief in eternal life is not the only reason people choose to act morally.

Many people who do not believe in God or an afterlife still practice justice, mercy, honesty, and compassion. They treat others with dignity, obey the law, support their communities, and defend the rights of vulnerable people. Their morality may stem from a properly formed conscience, concern for human welfare, or recognition that every person deserves respect. The moral conduct of atheists and other nonreligious people shows that belief in an eternal reward is not required to distinguish right from wrong and choose what is good. Societal laws and expectations also provide reasons for moral behavior. Governments establish rules to protect people and preserve order. Laws against drunk driving, violence, theft, and other harmful acts discourage immoral conduct through punishment and accountability. Although fear of punishment is not the highest form of morality, it helps restrain destructive behavior and maintain a safe society. When law and order collapse, people may feel free to commit terrible acts without consequences. The biblical period described in Judges 18 and the fourteen-year civil war in my home country, Liberia, demonstrate how violence and injustice can escalate when effective leadership and social accountability are absent. Therefore, good government can encourage moral living even without belief in an afterlife. Personal conscience offers an even stronger reason for morality. A properly formed conscience helps a person recognize the humanity of others and choose what is right simply because it is right. I would seek to live morally even if I did not believe God would reward me after death. I would treat others well because they share the same humanity, dignity, needs, and capacity for suffering that I do. Doing what is right should not depend entirely on receiving a future reward. Moral behavior can flow from a person’s character, compassion, and commitment to the common good.

At the same time, belief in life after death remains a powerful moral motivation for many religious people. Christians seek to love others, practice mercy, and pursue justice because these actions express their faithfulness to God. Jesus calls his followers to proclaim good news to the poor, freedom for prisoners, and liberation for the oppressed (Luke 4:18–19). Some believers explain that they do what is right because Scripture commands it and because they desire eternal life. Their hope of heaven strengthens their commitment to caring for “the least of these” and to living according to Christ’s teachings.

In conclusion, belief in life after death can encourage moral living, but it is not the only reason.

Conscience, human dignity, compassion, social responsibility, and the rule of law can also motivate people to act morally. A truly moral life is not lived merely to obtain a reward or avoid punishment. It is lived because justice, mercy, and respect for others are inherently good and essential to human flourishing.

Church! What is your answer to the question? Think and reflect. Grace and blessings.

In Mission with Vision

Rev. J. Cephas Z. K. Davis

Facebook: Kankoryah Davis

Twitter: zebedee1977

Instagram: kankoryahdavis

Adult Bible Study:

Classes with Steve Schmudde and Jo Johnson will resume **September 13th**.

Classes with Steve Kahler and Colleen Petaros will resume **October 11th**.

Small Group Study with Pastor Cephas will begin **September 16th** in Delmar for 8 weeks (see the information below).

Prayer Group:

Prayer group meets the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Thursdays at 9 a.m. at the home of Fern and Joanne Struve in Miles.

Pastoral Care Need If you have a pastoral care need, please contact Pastor Cephas Davis - 903.714.9974 or Colleen Petaros – 563.321.0450

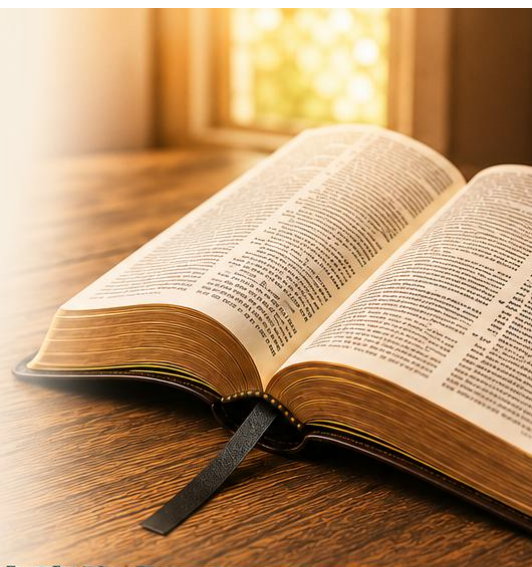
Youth Group:

This summer's VBS was a huge success! Youth Group will be resuming in October. Keeping following for more information!

8-WEEK STUDY

THE NEW TESTAMENT YOU NEVER KNEW

N. T. Wright & Michael F. Bird



WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2026 • 6:00 PM

 Delmar United Methodist Church • Delmar, Iowa

Wondering about God's story in the New Testament?
This study is for you. Gain a deeper understanding of
the New Testament in eight sessions.

STUDY GUIDE



Less than \$13

Christianbook.com



First UMC Maquoketa • Delmar UMC • Preston UMC



TRUSTEE NEWS

Working around vacations, weather, schedules and the usual summer activities cause the Trustees to focus on things like lawn care, identifying leaks caused by heavy rains and cleaning up after the wind storms.

Once again we can not thank the volunteers enough for their efforts to keep the Church's lawn looking so nice. Hot and rainy weather challenged them,

however they rose to the occasion! With heavy rains, comes leaks and the challenge to find the cause of the leaks. We've caulked where it was needed and discussed plans for better water management around the foundation of the Church.

And of course, the wind storm damage was a major project for us. The parsonage lost the 2 trees in the front yard and several other trees lost limbs and branches. Volunteers cut the tree debris into 6' lengths and piled them in the front yard. Kevis Davis borrowed a wood chipper and many limbs were reduced to chips. Before we could finish the job, the city came and hauled away the rest of the piles. We really appreciate the job the city did to help clean up the mess!

In September, the Trustees plan to replace the plexiglass and the patch covering the stained glass as well as improve the water drainage away from the foundation. Hopefully we can also repaint the markings on the parking lot.

We appreciate all your financial support and will continue to make your place of worship enjoyable!

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS

In July our almost 30-year-old Clavinova died. Luckily the Clavinova from the choir room was available and we have been using it since.

However, this second Clavinova is just as old and has less features.

Stewardship Committee is beginning a fundraising campaign to raise the necessary funds to purchase a new Clavinova. The cost will be about \$5,000.00. We will be "selling" keys and other parts of the Clavinova. Please be on the lookout for further details. If you wish to donate without "buying" a part of the Clavinova, that is an option as well.



SCRAP METAL DONATIONS ACCEPTED!



PLACE ITEMS IN THE TRAILER LOCATED AT
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH PARKING LOT
1019 WESLEY DR, MAQUOKETA

**METAL ITEMS ACCEPTED**

**NO TIRES**

**NO ITEMS CONTAINING FREON**

 ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT THE
TRUSTEES BUILDING FUND.

Thank You

FOR YOUR SUPPORT! 



Help Us Bring
Beautiful Music
BACK TO OUR CHURCH!



Our faithful Clavinova has served our church with joy and music for many years, but now it has reached the end of its song. We are raising funds to purchase a **NEW CLAVINOVA** so that beautiful worship can continue for generations to come.

OUR GOAL:
\$5,000
for a new Clavinova

Every gift—big or small—brings us closer to our goal!

**Buy a key or part of the Clavinova!**

We are "selling" keys and other parts of the Clavinova. Your gift helps bring this vital instrument to our church.

**Give any amount!**

You are also welcome to give any amount you wish—every gift makes a difference!



Your generosity will help us continue to worship, praise, and serve through beautiful music for years to come.

Thank you for your support!

**TOGETHER,**
we can make the music live on!



Donations can be placed in the offering plate or given to the church office.
THANK YOU FOR HELPING US KEEP THE MUSIC ALIVE!

NEWS FROM MISSIONS

WIC

The government Women, Infants and Children (WIC) clinic takes place in our church the first Wednesday and Thursday of each month. Our church supplements the assistance WIC provides for families with 12 diapers, a package of wipes, a book, and the clothing we have available. Another important part of our ministry is visiting with the families who come to WIC and making them feel welcome in our church.

The next WIC session is **Wednesday, September 2nd** and **Thursday, September 3rd**.

A HUGE thank you to whomever dropped off the nice box of girls' clothes!!! They will be much appreciated! We could still use boys clothes (sizes 0-5T).

Colder weather is approaching so any jackets and coats (up to 6T) would be welcomed as well.

If you would like to be a part of this ministry, you could also become part of our team!

Team members, Holly Parmer, Rachel Parmer, Becky James, Sarah Hogan, Linda Stewart, Lana Flagel and Ann Otteman.

Circuit Mission Blessing Bag is fast approaching! Please join this meaningful activity! Sign up sheet is in the narthex. This will be held on **Sunday, September 20th** from 1pm-3pm in DeWitt.

Plarn mat weaving will resume on **Monday, September 14th** from 9am-11am. Join us for an enjoyable activity followed by coffee, treats and conversation.

We continue to collect pop tabs for The Ronald McDonald House. There are collection boxes in the narthex and outside the serving window by the kitchen.

UNITED WOMEN in FAITH

Who we are: We're a sisterhood acting in faith to tackle the hard work of the world without hesitation.

Our Mission: We seek to connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship and education so that they can inspire, influence and impact local and global communities.

At our last meeting on August 26th, we discussed and agreed to pay for the 3 Communion Kits that our friendly mice ate. We also shared that our district meeting for 2027 will be held here in our Church! Mark your calendars and save the date, **September 18th, 2027!!**

We meet on the 4th Wednesday of the month, usually at 6:00 in the library. Please join us!! Our

next
meeting
will be on



September 23rd at 6:00pm.



September 2026

Do all the good you can,
by all the means you can,
in all the ways you can,
in all the places you can,
*at all the times you can,
to all the people you can,
as long as ever you can.*

— John Wesley



Open Hearts.
Open Minds.
Open Doors.

The people of The United Methodist Church

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2 WIC 9am	3 WIC 9am	4	5
6	7 Labor Day	8	9 Trustees Meeting 6pm Caregiver Meeting 1:30pm Worship Committee Meeting 4pm	10	11	12
13	14 Plarn Mat Group 9am	15	16 Circuit Meeting 9am Worship Committee Meeting 4pm	17 Care Team Meeting 4pm	18	19
20	21	22 Finance Meeting 5:30pm Church Council Meeting 6:30pm	23 UMF Meeting 6pm Caregiver Community Education 10am Maq. Library	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

*Give thanks to the Lord,
for he is good;
his love endures forever.*

— Psalm 107:1

Celebrating in SEPTEMBER!



This is the day the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it. – Psalm 118:24

Happy BIRTHDAY!



Chris Riordan	9/2
Josh Riordan	9/2
Paula River	9/3
Heidi Lippens	9/4
Dennis Wilcox	9/5
Sherman Burns	9/8
Blaine Bock	9/8
Evan Shearer	9/15
Elizabeth Smithson	9/18
Kailey Hovey	9/21
Sheila Bentley	9/23
Brenda Struve	9/23
Sally Davies	9/27
Reid James	9/28
Jeff Tampir	9/29
Sherrie James	9/29
Christine Miller	9/30

Happy ANNIVERSARY!

Doug & Jean Owen	9/4
Steve & Elaine Kahler	9/5
Francis & Judi Beller	9/17
Chris & Sara Riordan	9/20
Jason & Darcie Effenheim	9/21

*May God bless you
on your special day!*





In Other Church News

HELP PRESTON UMC COMPLETE MISSION KITS!



Preston United Methodist Church is once again collecting supplies for **Midwest Mission**

The completed kits will be taken to an Ingathering site and eventually distributed wherever they are needed around the world.

Thank you to everyone who is able to contribute!



SCHOOL KITS

HELP US COMPLETE
30 KITS!

STILL NEEDED:

- 29 one-subject spiral notebooks
- 14 student scissors
- 15 pencil sharpeners — 1" or larger
- 12 packages of 12 colored pencils
- 36 unsharpened pencils
- 6 12" rulers — standard & metric measurements
- 15 one-handed bags

Directions are available on the
Midwest Mission website.

- \$2 per kit for postage



PERSONAL DIGNITY KITS

HELP US COMPLETE
20 KITS!

STILL NEEDED:

- 14 new hand towels
- 6 washcloths
- 19 bottles of lotion — 8–10 oz.
- 17 bottles of shampoo — 12–19 oz.
- 16 bars of soap — 3–4 oz.
- 20 deodorants — 2–3 oz.
Stick, roll-on, or pump

- \$2 per kit for toothpaste & razors
- \$2 per kit for postage



Every donation
MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

Thank you for helping Preston UMC share
God's love through **Midwest Mission**.



MIDWEST

disaster relief • education



MISSION

health • micro business

HELP PACK Blessing Bags (RICE MEALS)



SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 20, 2026
FROM 1 TO 3 PM



DeWITT
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



222 12th STREET





1 RICE MEAL FEEDS 6 AND COSTS \$2.
Our share will be paid for through
our quarter collections.



Sponsored by the
Foundry Circuit Mission Committee



Thank You!

TO OUR 2026 RADIO SPONSORS!

Your generosity helps share the Good News of God's love and the message of hope each week through our radio broadcast.

♥ *Because of you,* ♥
our worship reaches hearts in our community and beyond. Thank you for making a difference!

We are grateful for your support! ♥



First United Methodist Church
Maquoketa, Iowa

Many Flocks. One Shepherd.
Bound by God's Love. ♥

Radio Sponsors for September

September 6: Steve & Elaine Kahler – In honor of their 45th wedding anniversary!

September 13: Sheila Bentley: In honor of her son Eric on his retirement as the Battalion Chief with the Huntley, IL Fire Department and in celebration of her son Andy's 1 year anniversary with his new heart!

September 20: Chris & Sara Riordan: In honor of their wedding anniversary!

September 27: Sheila Bentley: In honor of her 80th birthday!

If you wish to sponsor a Sunday broadcast (\$28.00), please call the office at (563) 652-4420 to sign up. Thank you for considering this opportunity to help spread the word of our faith!

Listen to our Sunday broadcast every week on KMAQ 95.1 FM @ 10:30 a.m.

Welcome Jamie!

OUR NEW CHURCH SECRETARY

We can't wait
to see all the ways
God will work
through you!



We're so glad you're here!

Thank you for saying "yes" to serving our church family.
Your gifts, kindness, and dedication are a blessing!

Welcome to the team, Jamie!

Welcome, Jamie!

Please join us in welcoming Jamie to the First United Methodist Church staff!

Jamie and her family have called Maquoketa home since October 2021. She and her husband have seven wonderful children of various ages, so family life keeps her busy! In her free time, Jamie enjoys spending time with her family, fishing, hiking, swimming, listening to music, and simply relaxing on the couch. In a few short months, she will be spoiling her first grandbaby!

We are excited to have Jamie as part of our church staff and church family. When you see her in the office, be sure to stop in, say "Hi," introduce yourself, and give her a warm FUMC welcome!

Welcome to the family, Jamie!



CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

2nd Wednesday of each month
1:30 P.M.

First United Methodist Church
1019 Wesley Dr. Maquoketa

USE EAST ENTRANCE

For more information contact
Sally at 563-221-1081 or
Sally918@osterhausrx.com

Join in person
or by Zoom

2026 SUPPORT GROUP DATES
JULY 8 AUGUST 12
SEPTEMBER 9 OCTOBER 14
NOVEMBER 11 DECEMBER 9



SUPPORTING INDEPENDENCE WITH PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY

CAREGIVER EDUCATION
YOU CAN TRUST



WED, SEPT 23, 2026
10 - 11 am

Maquoketa Public
Library
Community Room

Maquoketa Public Library
126 S. 2ND , Maquoketa, IA

Learning Concepts:

- ✓ Changes in independence that happen in people living with Alzheimer's or other dementias.
- ✓ Learn a four steps approach for helping with personal care activities.
- ✓ Tips for meaningful activities. Identify right amount of support.
- ✓ How does dementia affect safety

Questions call Sally at
563-652-5611 Extension 5

Thank You! ♥

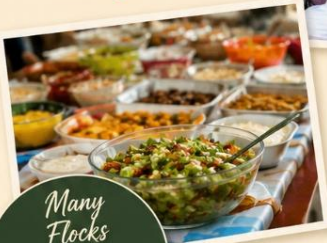
TO ALL PARTICIPANTS
AND ATTENDEES

of the Joint Services in August!

Your presence, your participation, and your spirit of unity made our time together *truly special.*



It was a time of meaningful *worship, fellowship* with our Sister Churches, and the *wonderful food* at the potluck!



Many
Flocks
♥
One Shepherd

*Together in Faith, United in Love.
We are Blessed!*



DELMAR UMC



MAQUOKETA FUMC



PRESTON UMC



Sheila Bentley's 80th BIRTHDAY Celebration!

Join us in honoring Sheila!



9/26



1pm-3pm
in the Social Hall

All church members and friends
are invited to attend.

PLEASE NO GIFTS,
only your presence.

Food and
great conversation

Thank You For Everything

As I leave my position as church secretary, I want to take a moment to thank everyone for making my time here so special. I am grateful for the opportunity to have become acquainted with so many wonderful people!

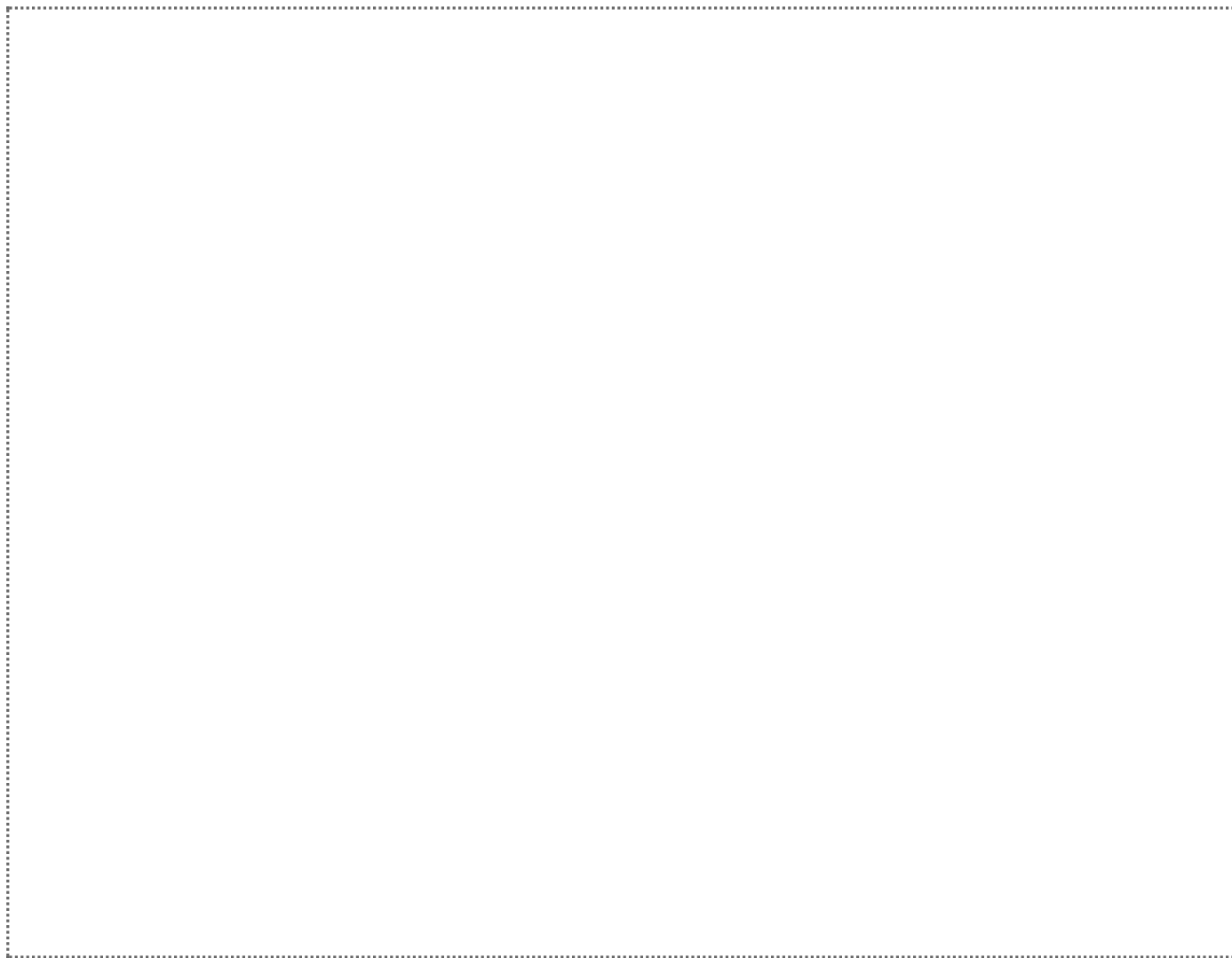
Thank you for all the kind words and well wishes you have shared with me as I begin this next chapter. I will always cherish the memories and friendships I've made and am grateful for the time we have shared.

May God bless each of you and the church in the days ahead.

Sincerely,
Laurie Heister

Draw what you love about your church!

Please draw, color, or paint your favorite parts about your church.
This could be anything you like; it's completely up to you. Have fun!



Parents, instructions for sharing this drawing are on the back. We really appreciate your help gathering the voices and visions of our children, who are such a vital part of our church community.

Children's Artwork & Voice Release Form

Child's First Name: _____

Parent/Legal Guardian Name: _____

Child's Age: _____

Country: _____

Thank you for allowing your child to take part in this activity!

It is part of a research project to help The United Methodist Church better engage young voices in shaping our shared future.

By signing below, I, _____ (parent/legal guardian name), certify that I am the parent or legal guardian of the child named above.

I grant The United Methodist Church permission to use, reproduce, display, publish, and distribute my child's completed coloring sheet, in whole or in part, and to reference or quote my child's artwork gathered as part of this activity, for research, promotional, educational, marketing, fundraising, and other lawful organizational purposes, including publication of research findings about youth engagement in the church.

I understand that my child's artwork may appear in print materials, websites, social media, presentations, exhibits, research reports, advertisements, or other communications created by or on behalf of The United Methodist Church.

Anonymity

My child will be identified only by first name. No last name, photograph of my child, school name, or other identifying details will be attached to the artwork shared.

I understand that:

- My child will not receive financial compensation for the use of the artwork.
- The artwork may be edited, resized, or reproduced as needed, provided its overall character is maintained.
- This permission is granted without time limitation unless otherwise prohibited by law and remains in effect until I request removal as described below.
- Ownership of the original physical coloring sheet remains with The United Methodist Church once submitted.
- I may request that my child's artwork be removed from future use at any time by contacting the email address below.

For questions about this project, or to submit your child's artwork, please send a scanned copy or picture of both the artwork and this form to ChildrensArt@umcom.org.

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature: _____

Parent/Legal Guardian Printed Name: _____

Date: ____/____/____. Email or Phone (optional): _____