

# Meet the Adult Leaders of Youth Ministries

Fall 2017

Our wonderful group of servants with a heart for the spiritual lives of youth range in age from 24 to 65! We are so grateful to all these persons, as well as all the parents and the FUMC congregation for the countless ways they encourage and support youth who seek to *Know God, Love Others, and Serve the World*.

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## Staff



**Melanie Snook**, Youth Director

Melanie has been an active member of FUMC since 2003, soon after moving to Ann Arbor from Boston. She is married to Eric Johns and has three sons: Luke (Class of 2013), Quinn (Class of 2014), and Jazz (Class of 2016), and an 11<sup>th</sup> grade daughter, Moka. She has been a youth counselor since 2008. Before moving to Michigan, Melanie was the assistant director of one of Massachusetts' Regional Prevention Centers, where she trained and counseled youth, adults and community groups in substance abuse prevention. Melanie enjoys being outdoors, running, reading, baking, and traveling.



**Wendy Everett**, Associate Youth Director  
Wendy has been a member of FUMC since 1993 and an employee since December 2000. A lifelong Michigan resident and graduate of Michigan Technological Uni-

versity, she went on her first Zeba mission trip in the summer of 2000. When she isn't catering to her four-legged friends--Shadow, Sweet Pea, and Naomi--she might be found rubber stamping greeting cards, picking up a stack of books at the library, playing board games with friends, or off on a mission trip to Colombia, Kenya, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, or Zeba.

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## Volunteers



**Marcie Austerberry**, Sol Café Shepherd

Marcie has been attending FUMC since her family moved to Ann Arbor in 2006. She is married to Mike Austerberry, one of the youth counselors and they have three children—Adam (11th grade), Robin (9th grade) and a four year old daughter, Emily. She also enjoys participating in several of the adult small groups at FUMC. Outside of church she works part time as a nurse in U of M's maternity unit and loves getting together with friends for a walk.



**Mike Austerberry**, UMYF Counselor

Mike became a counselor in 2014. My family moved to Ann Arbor and joined FUMC in 2006 via CA, OH and the UK (where he grew up). My wife is Marcie who is a very familiar WowMoms, VBC, Connections, Acolytes...). I have three kids: Adam (11th grade Skyline), Robin (9th grade Skyline), and Emily (who is 4½). My volunteering at FUMC has included teaching in the Children's ministries on Sunday mornings and serving on the SPRC (personnel) committee. I earn my living as a business team director for a German chemical company that specializes in silicone chemistry. Back in my history I also trained as a H.S. chemistry teacher in the UK. I love introducing my kids to my favorite outdoor activities (sailing, kayaking, skiing, biking, camping...).



**Wayne Baker**, UMYF Counselor

Wayne grew up in a Methodist family, attending a church in Connecticut that his grandfather helped to build. He, his wife Cheryl, and their son Harrison (Class of 2020 at Huron High School) joined FUMC in 2006. Wayne has served as SPRC member and chair, and led two Adult Education programs on values. He is a chaired professor of management at the U-M Ross School of Business. Wayne and his family are avid sailors on the Great Lakes.



**Kristi Bell**, UMYF Counselor

Kristi has been part of FUMC since she was very young and also was very active in youth ministries (Class of 2011). She is a recent graduate of Eastern Michigan University with her degree in Arts & Entertainment

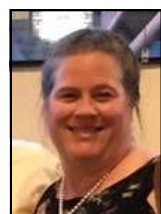
Management. She also performs with the band Abe Maybe and you can listen to her single "92 Days" on SoundCloud.



**Robyn Bishop**, Meal Team Coordinator, Parent Council

Our family has been attending FUMC since 2004. I have been a member of the Parent Council for the past several years, and help coordinate the Youth Group Meal Teams. I

have three daughters in the Youth Group; Abigail (16), Elizabeth (16) and Rebecca (14). I have a son Derek (11), who keeps me connected to the Children's Ministries programs. I also enjoy being involved in our children's schools and serving on several committees at Mott Children's Hospital.



**Christine Brenner**, Meal Team Assistant, Parent Council

Bringing lots of experience preparing meals for swim teams and the UofM marching band tuba section, Christine signed on to help coordinate our meal teams this fall.

Her daughter Brooke is in 11th grade at Huron, and her son Will is a junior at University of Iowa, and her oldest son Ben graduated from UofM in 2016.



**Shonagh Chimbira**, Explorers Class Shepherd

Shonagh joined FUMC in early 2016 and is mother to 4th grader Sapphire (Saffy) and 8th grader Michael (Mikey). The family are

of British and Zimbabwean origin and moved to the US twelve years ago. Shonagh is a 4th year MDiv student and serves as a seminary intern at FUMC. She will be graduating in spring.



**RuthAnn Church**, UMYF Counselor

This is my first year as a counselor after being a parent of UMYFers Noah and Isaac Kaczor over the past 12 years. Now my daughter, Naomi, will grow her faith

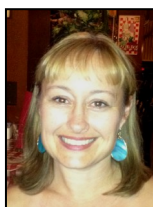
through the youth program and I look forward to 'looking on' and growing my own faith, too! I have participated as a counselor on past UMYF mission trips and the Meru, Kenya trip. I have led adult mission trips to Haiti and Kentucky and I enjoy the families in mission programs locally, too. Some may remember I helped initiate the "World Peace Cafe" collaboration with the UMYF from 2007-2013. Professionally I am a coffee importer and consultant for sustainable coffee supply chains.



**Jim Cleland**, Explorers Class Shepherd

Jim is new to the Explorers Class program this year, although he has been a regular workshop leader with the Children's Ministries Program for many years. He enjoys seeing the children and youth take an active

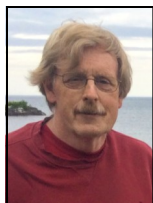
role in building their faith. Jim is the father of Sam (9th grade); Ben (7th grade); and Claire (3rd grade). Jim also enjoys coaching the soccer teams of his three children. In his free time, Jim likes to run, bike, garden, and play and watch sports. A U of M graduate and die-hard Michigan fan, he loves living in Ann Arbor and likes to show his kids his college house at the corner of State and Hoover every Sunday on the drive home from church. Professionally, Jim is an intellectual property attorney for Brinks Gilson & Lione here in Ann Arbor.



**Kelly Cleland**, Explorers Class Shepherd

Kelly began shepherding the Explorers Class occasionally last year and looks forward to participating more regularly. Kelly has two children in the youth program:

Sam, who is a freshman at Pioneer; and Ben, who is in seventh grade at Tappan Middle School. She also enjoys assisting at Vacation Bible Camp in the summer and as a Shepherd in the Children's Ministries Program with her daughter, Claire, a third grader at Pattengill. Kelly and her husband, Jim, joined FUMC in 2005, shortly after Ben was born. Outside of church, Kelly enjoys yoga, biking, swimming, walking, reading, cooking and volunteering at school.



**Peter DeHart, UMYF Counselor**

Peter takes many of the photos for youth events and is the father of Jennifer and Stefanie, both youth group alumni. He started as a counselor back in 1982 and hasn't looked back since, working mainly with the

Sr High group. But for the last 10 years or so, he has taken a liking to the Jr High Zeba trip and been on many of those. In addition to running a (very) part-time portrait photography business, he spends a lot more time working for the State of Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.



**Jon Flott, UMYF Counselors**

I've attend FUMC since 2014. I'm the parent of Noah, who has been active in the youth group for several years, including mission trips to Zeba and Guatemala. I'll join my wife Sarah who has been working

with the youth since last year. I've worked around the world for GM for the last 18 years. Otherwise I can be found on the roads, running or riding, and occasionally in the woods—Noah and I recently started the Michigan portion of the North Country Trail.



**Sarah Flott, UMYF Counselor**

I am a 3rd grade teacher in Ypsilanti and love working with children of all ages. I have been married for more than 20 years to my husband Jonathon. We moved to

Ann Arbor three years ago after a long period of living overseas. We have three children Noah (16), Sophie (17) and Thomas (21). I love to read, travel, ski and canoe.



**Kim Garver, UMYF Counselor**

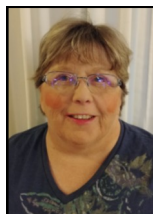
My son, Michael Strouse, is a junior and weekday boarder at Orchard Lake St. Mary's where he plays baseball and hockey. This will be my 5th year as counselor for the youth program and it is one of the most rewarding and enjoyable things I do all year.



**Dave Gee, Sol Café Teacher**

Dave Gee has been active with the children and youth at FUMC since his son (now 32 years old) was in diapers. He's worked and taught at all levels as his three

kids have progressed through the program. Their youngest daughter Laura graduated last spring (2017). Outside of youth group, Dave works on the computers for Gift of Life Michigan, an organ and tissue donation agency.



**Pam Gee, Sol Café Teacher**

Pam is married to Dave Gee and they have been members of FUMC for more than 30 years. In that time, she's worked with children of all ages - from babies to high school. All three of her children attended

the co-op nursery school here at church, grew up in the church, and graduated from Youth Group. She has been on a number of mission trips and enjoys working with the youth. She currently spends her days with small children at her home day care. Pam also teaches an aerobic dance class and loves to travel.



**Jim Higdon, Sol Café Teacher**

Jim leads a high school class (such as Wired Word or Teaching Tolerance) and is also one of FUMC's Walk & Talk church tour guides. He is the father of youth group alums Katy (2007) and Sarah (2012).



**Barbara Hoffman, Scrip Coordinator, Parent Council/Explorers Class Shepherd**  
The time I spend managing the scrip and grocery reward program is very satisfying when I hear about the transforming experiences our youth have each summer. I

learned firsthand the power of youth mission trips when I accompanied my daughter, Ava--now a Junior at Greenhills-- on a trip to Zeba. I am excited that her brother Colin starts 7th grade youth activities this year.





**Christine Kleinheksel**, UMYF Counselor  
Christine will begin her eighth year as a counselor this year. Her daughter Abby is a senior at Michigan, Sophie is a sophomore at Michigan, and Alex is in 10th grade at Huron. Christine is a clinical social worker

for Michigan Medicine (UofM hospitals), specializing in child and family therapy with an office at Mitchell Elementary.



**Eric Johns**, UMYF Counselor

I've enjoyed my three years as a parent counselor, including participation in Zeba and two mission trips to Maine and Appalachia. I'm the husband of the Youth Director, Melanie Snook, and father of four children who have all been very active in the program. I look forward to helping our youth explore the values that strengthen their character and contribute to their communities. Outside of my work as a consultant in the software industry, my time is dominated by children's sports and family events.



**Robert Langdon**, Explorers Class Shepherd  
Robert has been attending FUMC since the early 2000s when he moved back to Ann Arbor from Louisiana. He met his wife (Tori Booker) at Green Wood and helped out with the Children's Program there for a

number of years. His son Nicolas (7th Grade) is joining the Youth Program this year and Robert looks forward to supporting their activities. Robert is a chemical engineer and loves sports, Lego Mini Figures and 80s music.



**Jon Lidgard**, UMYF Counselor

A 2007 graduate of the youth group program/Pioneer High School, Jon earned his degree in civil engineering from University of Toledo and is a bridge engineer for URS Corp. He recently returned to the area after living near Milwaukee and resides in Northville with his wife Maggie.



**Tamara Moore**, Explorers Class Shepherd  
We started attending FUMC in 2013 and I started working with Children's Ministries last year. I am service driven and can be found volunteering for a variety of activities, groups and projects. I enjoy reading, baking and working in the garden. I have two boys, Liam (8th grade) and Ethan (4th grade).



**Dave Nelson**, UMYF Counselor

I am returning as a UMYF Counselor, and I'm looking forward to working with the youth this year as they explore their faith and community. As a member of FUMC since 2002 our family has participated in the Appalachia Mission trip, FISH Fri, and various other activities. I am active in the church as a team lead for the Love Thy Neighbor program, on the finance committee, as a counselor on Zeba mission trips and the Guatemala mission trip, and occasionally, I am a substitute Sunday school shepherd. I have two daughters, Annie, a senior, and Grace in 8th grade in the Saline schools. I am a strategist for a health care software company when I'm not busy trying to be a good dad and husband.



**Mary Page**, Class Representative, Parent Council

Mary grew up attending a Methodist church in Kalamazoo and has great memories from her youth group experience. She is excited about the fellowship and learning opportunities her daughters, Erin (9th grade) and Molly (8th grade), are experiencing in MYF. Mary is an assistant teacher at FUMCN. She has been married to Dan for 16 years and enjoys biking, hiking, golf and reading.

**Adele Roy, Parent Council Chair**

Adele is a long-time member of the church staff. Her background is in graphic design and publishing technology. She's a transplant to the Midwest from many different locations on the east coast. Adele and husband Rob are parents to Griffin (a UofM junior), Lucie (a HS senior), and a Cairn terrier named Mickie. The Roys sell fair trade coffee beans between downtown worship services to benefit local missions. When Adele isn't cheering for Pioneer Rowing at regattas or feeding the clarinet section of the UofM Marching Band, she enjoys painting, knitting, reading, and cooking.

**Amy Slotten, Special Events, Parent Council**

Peter was in the class of 2017 and Julia is in 9th grade. They have both enjoyed youth group events and participating in mission trips. Amy enjoys reading, Bikram yoga, gardening and cooking new things. She is employed at St. Joseph Mercy hospital as a location consultant.

**Pam Stout, Sol Café Teacher**

Pam has been a member of FUMC for a couple of decades, helping with children's ministries and UMYF along the way. Austin and Nathan are in college now and Kaitlyn is a junior at Pioneer. Pam has a passion for understanding different forms of faith, and she looks forward to helping the youth explore their own journeys through Christianity. She currently works in executive communications at the U-M Office of Development.

**Tricia Strassburg, UMYF Counselor**

My children Randy (Class of 2014) and Allison (Class of 2016) have been involved in the youth group. I am a preschool teacher at St. Francis Preschool and look forward to being involved in helping with youth group activities.

**Carol Teener, UMYF Counselor**

I've been a counselor since 2005, and it is so fun to work with the youth in this program! All three of our sons have loved it and made great friends here. I also love working with med students in my job at the UM Med School Admissions Office. Carol is also a producer for the Youth Christmas Theater annual drama fundraiser.

**Carrie Throm, UMYF Counselor**

Carrie has been a member of FUMC-A2 since 2005. As someone who grew up in a Methodist church with a wonderful youth group, I'm thrilled to be serving as youth counselor again this year! I work at the U-M Museum of Art where I lead all fundraising activities. I've been involved in music all of my life, playing piano, French horn, and singing. I live in Ann Arbor with my husband Peter, a music agent/manager and wicked bass player, and our daughter Emma, a Skyline junior. We enjoy music, theatre, art, reading, games, and travel, and we are super passionate about social justice issues.

**Adam Unsworth, Explorers Class Shepherd**

His son Ian is a junior at Skyline, Eleanor is a 9th grader, and Graham is in 7th grade. Adam is an associate professor of horn at UofM.



**Jeff Wason, UMYF Counselor**

My parents, a Burmese doctor and a Methodist missionary, met when he played the piano for a Christmas choir program she directed in Rangoon. Likewise, I met my spouse (Julie Anderson)

singing in the gospel choir at Glide UMC in San Francisco. I grew up in Methodist churches in the Cleveland area, helping organize a week-long youth camp modeled on Habitat for Humanity. Professionally, I've been a journalist, photographer, Peace Corps Volunteer, graphic artist, and elementary school teacher, before being promoted to full time dad to our sons David, 10, and Paul, 14. Attending FUMC for more than 5 years now, I've sung in the choir and participated in mission trips to Kentucky and Zeba, while our family has enjoyed being part of Family Camp. Diversity, service, music, and the church have been ongoing threads woven through my life. I enjoy singing, playing guitar and piano, and look forward to sharing some of my experience with the youth program at FUMC.



**Lisl Weiss, UMYF Counselor**

Lisl was baptized at FUMC and also married her husband Phil here. Her kids are youth alum, and Alex is a senior at UofM and Ani is in a sophomore at Hope College. Lisl works for a team of plastic surgeons at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital. She truly enjoys the time spent with the kids and fellow counselors. In her very limited spare time she likes to run, read and shop.



**Deb Wood, UMYF Counselor**

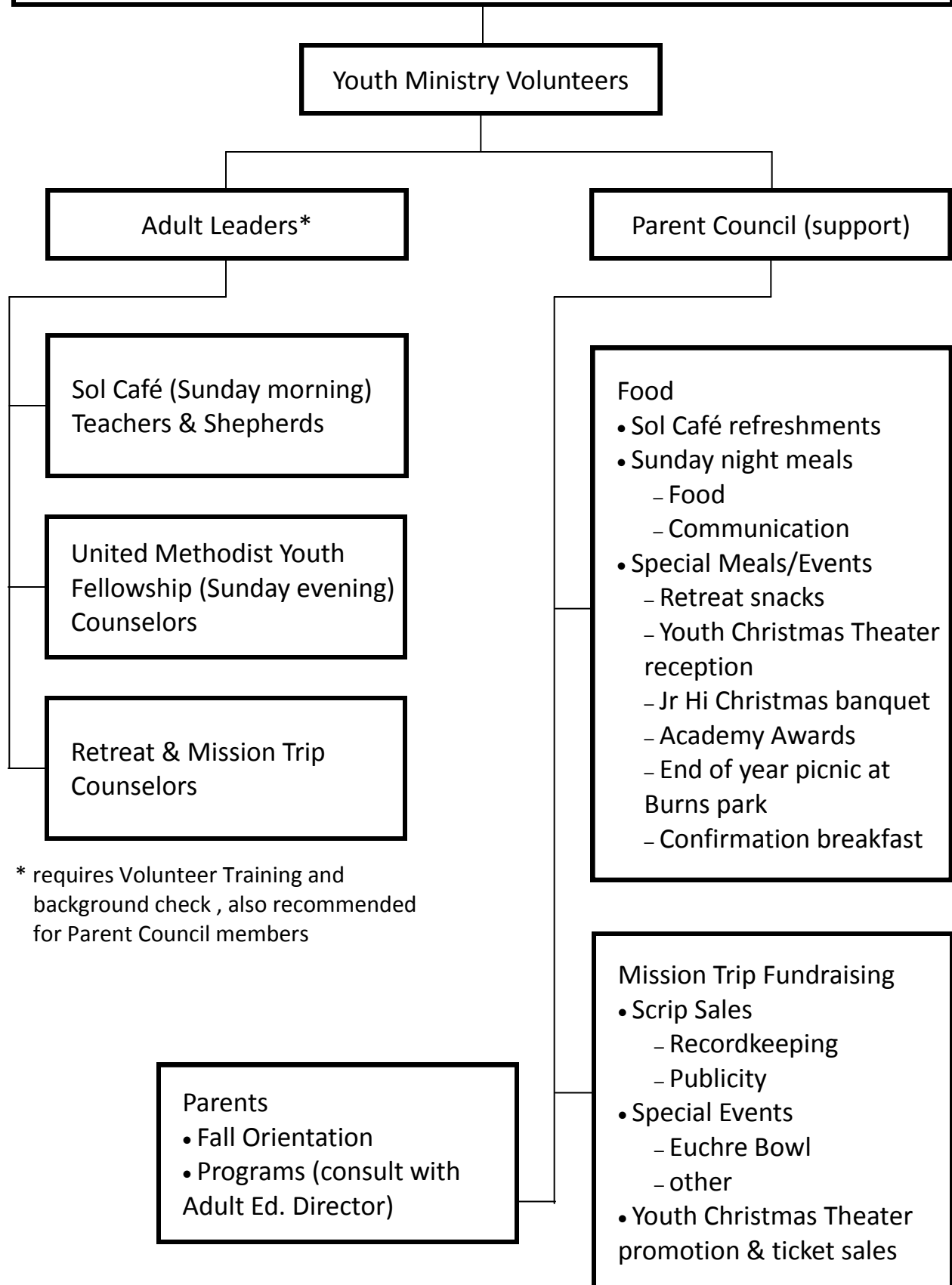
Deb has been volunteering as a youth counselor since her oldest Dylan (Class of 2009) was in youth group where she started out helping with the annual

Christmas play and attending the New Orleans mission trip. After that she caught the youth counselor bug. She loves working with the youth and appreciates their spirit, enthusiasm for life, and just being around all that energy, so much so that even though her youngest, Tanner (Class of 2014) graduated she still wants to spend time with these lovely kids. She also sings with the vocal trio "All About Eve", does some acting with Redbud Productions, plays tennis, and is on her bike or cross country skis when she's not doing any of the above. Oh and she works at an ad agency in Birmingham too.

# How We Work Together

Youth Ministries, First United Methodist Church of Ann Arbor

Staff: Melanie Snook, Youth Director; Wendy Everett, Associate Youth Director



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## Volunteer Training

We are a thriving, vibrant community of youth and families mainly due to our outstanding volunteers! We are now in our seventh consecutive year of volunteer training for those who work with children and youth at FUMC.

Just as CPR training requires annual updates to refresh the memory and stay up to date with important current info, we too require our volunteers to be screened with background checks and to participate in one of our annual training sessions once every three years. If you have been through the training and are due to re-new, we will let you know!

This fall we are offering the training on Sunday, Nov. 12, starting at 10:45am. The training lasts about 2 hrs. Please watch Youth Matters for an online sign up. We also plan to offer the training on a week night in January.

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## Contact Us

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Facebook: Youth Fellowship FUMC Ann Arbor

Flickr photostream: Youth FUMC A2