



THE FOCUS

FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN

Jesus Paid It All

During Lent, we have been singing many hymns about the cross and Jesus' ultimate sacrifice for our sin. One of my very favorite hymns about the atonement is *Jesus Paid It All*, with words written in 1865 by Elvina M. Hall.

In his book Then Sings My Soul, Robert J. Morgan writes this about this wonderful hymn's creation.

It was Sunday morning at Monument Street Methodist Church in Baltimore. Rev. George Schrick was droning on in a lengthy prayer while, up in the choir loft, Evina Hall's mind was wandering. She thumbed quietly through the hymnbook, then began doodling on the flyleaf. By and by, these words came to her, which she scribbled on the front flap of her hymnal:

*I hear my Savior say
Thy strength indeed is small,
Thou has naught My debt to pay,
Find in Me thy all in all.*

As a United Methodist pastor, I was immediately struck with two things. One, I can't help but wonder what constitutes "droning on in a lengthy prayer" and how often am I guilty of it? Secondly, how rich is our denominational heritage with those who have heard God's voice in unlikely scenarios and then go on to contribute significantly to the Church. Remember John Wesley's *strangely warmed* experience when he "went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans."?

That is one reason why gathering together for worship is important! Even when we may not be overly excited about the morning's music or sermon, the very fact that we have put ourselves in the midst of the Body of Christ, positions us to hear God's voice in very real and transforming ways. It is often in the very ordinary times of obedience that the Holy Spirit breaks forth in powerful ways.

It is in those times of feeling small, weak and powerless that we find ourselves drawn to the Lord's strength. It is in times of defeat and hopelessness that we can claim with confidence that JESUS PAID IT ALL! That is what Holy Week celebrates. That is the victory of Easter! That is why I love the last verse of this hymn: *And when before the throne, I stand in Him complete; "Jesus died my soul to save," My lips shall still repeat. Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe; Sin had left a crimson stain, He washed it white as snow.*

Easter eggs spoil, chocolate candy melts, and baskets filled with toys eventually deteriorate. The only Easter gift guaranteed to last for all eternity is the message of the empty tomb. See you at our Easter Celebration!

"For God so loved the world that he gave his on and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

Pastor Colleen Harden

Prayer Partners

Pastor Colleen is inviting any who would like to join her for prayer immediately before Sunday morning worship. We will gather in the former pastor's study on the 2nd floor northwest corner of the church at 10:30. We will pray that God will work freely in our hearts and church through our worship time.

HIGHLIGHTS of the MARCH CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING:

1. Sunday Night Life is averaging between 25-30 weekly.
2. Good Friday Service will be at Gas City UMC on Friday, April 14th at 7 PM.
3. Pastor Colleen is looking into starting a membership class after Easter.
4. Work Day is set for March 25th and a list will be made for tasks that need to be done.
5. We talked about landscaping the side yard by the Sanctuary.
6. \$8,000 was transferred from the Trustees (The Crossing) to the General account.
7. We are finishing up the Fruitful Congregational Journey with in the coming month.
8. Sacred Places is still moving forward with a congregational meeting soon.

Full report of the February's meeting is on the bulletin board in the church office hallway.

SACRED PLACES PROJECT

Pastor Colleen, Jim & Kay Dougherty, David Devine, & Sue Bratton have attended three workshops for Sacred Places sponsored by Indiana Landmarks with support from the Lilly Foundation. Sacred Places offers training to help engage with communities in creative ways, develop fresh sources of funding, make the most of buildings as assets for outreach & ministry, and increase eligibility for building assessments, planning & capital grants. There was a carry-in lunch after Sunday School to learn about how Sacred Places can benefit 1st United Methodist Church on **Sunday, March 26**. Questions? Please contact one of the team members.



2017 RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE DONUTS

April—J.O.Y. Class
May—Koinonia Class



CHANGE FOR MISSIONS

The first Sunday of each month we pass a galvanized bucket around to collect change for missions.

January—Meals on Wheels	\$93.00
February—Gilead Ministries	\$55.75
March—Special Olympics	\$163.00

Church Spending Plan as of 2017

Monthly	January	Year to Date
Income	\$12,207.35	Income \$12,207.35
Expense	\$20,279.19	Expense \$20,279.19

Celebrate the
resurrection of
our Lord!

Happy
EASTER





READING TO OUR PRESCHOOLERS - There is a signup sheet on the bulletin board outside the church offices. If you would like to read a story or two to our preschoolers, please sign up. They love to be read to and would like to hear you read to them. **We need readers for April and May!** Thank you for taking the time to share a story with them.

EASTER EGG HUNT - Why First Church's Egg Hunt is Just a Little Different - There is no sadder sight on a happy Easter morning than the face of a three year old who has only spotted one hidden egg at the annual egg hunt. To prevent such sights, First Church's egg hunt have always been just a little bit different. Our children hunt for unfilled plastic eggs and are asked to exchange a certain number of those eggs for a small bunny bag filled with treats. The egg hunt becomes a cooperative event, with children helping each other spot eggs to redeem for their own treat bag. Your help is needed to fill those treat bags. Donations of wrapped candy and small toys are most appreciated. There will be a box just outside of the church office for your donations which must be here by April 9 to give us time to prepare the treat bags. Please, though, no little bags of jelly beans with the "jelly bean prayer" written on them. We have our own version of the prayer that we will be using with the children. Thanks for all the help you can give us!

UPCOMING BOOK STUDY

THE ART OF NEIGHBORING: Building Genuine Relationships Right Outside Your Door

Our Vision Statement is **HOPE: Discovering It, Living It, Sharing It.** How can we share the Hope of Jesus Christ without first building relationships that afford us the privilege of entering into people's lives?

In this book the authors ask, "What if Jesus meant that we should love our actual neighbors? What would happen if every follower of Jesus took the Great Commandment literally? Is it possible that the solution to our society's biggest issues has been right under our noses for the past two thousand years?"

This **6-Week** study will begin **Wed., April 19 at 10:00 am.** The book is \$10.79 and is also available in Ebook (\$14.99) or audio (\$15.79). Please sign-up in the office by April 12, so books can be ordered and distributed.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

NEW TEAMS FORMING

God has called and equipped **ALL CHRISTIANS** to serve in Kingdom work. If you are wondering how you can make an eternal impact on others, here are some teams which are now being formed and seeking willing members:

PRAYER: We serve the same Savior who changed the world starting with 12 unlikely, but committed disciples. From Biblical times until now, powerful works of God **are always** preceded by the prayers of His people. As we look to the future of our church and community, we are aware that changes are inevitable. We want to make sure that the hearts of Marion First UMC are in tune with the direction that God is leading us. Is prayer a passion for you? Pastor Colleen is seeking those willing to commit to meeting together weekly for 30 minutes dedicated to praying for the future of our church and community. Please contact Pastor Colleen about your interest.

VISITATION: We have several members of our church family who for various reasons are unable to be present at worship and other congregational activities. They miss the fellowship of their friends and the spiritual encouragement of their Christian brothers and sisters. If you have a loving heart and generous smile, being a part of the visitation team, may be your calling! Call Sue Wagaman (765) 662-8645 to be a part of this ministry blessing.

DUST BUNNIES: The Dust Bunnies need you! Join the Dust Bunnies if you can do some light dusting a few times a year at the church. Call Sidenia Stace at (765) 674-9128 or 860-4332.

BUILDING MAINTAINANCE: Are you handy with a hammer? Do you notice and want to fix those little building maintenance issues? If so, your help would be greatly appreciated. Call Jim Dougherty (765) 618-3605 to volunteer your help.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVES:

First UMC is located in the Historic Marion neighborhood association. As we work with the city to help revitalize our community, we need laity along with Pastor Colleen to represent our church at neighborhood meetings and events. If you want to be aware of what is going on in our city and desire to help the church make a difference, contact Pastor Colleen.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

1	Barbara Salveter	17	Shirley Ball
1	AJ Varner	20	Bob Duckwall
4	Jean Landis	20	Marilyn Lewis
5	Tom Weesner	21	Anne Moudy
6	Alfred Ellis	23	Virginia Reese
7	Ayden Covey	24	Denise Pearson Harshman
8	Frank Gulley	26	Lousie Webb
10	Joyce Rinker	28	Scott Overman
10	Charlotte Swisher	28	Curtis Swathwood
10	Rob Wiley		



PLACE TO PRAY – We are opening up the church on Wednesdays from 12 noon to 1:00 PM to give people a place to pray. *We know that prayer makes a difference and a good place to pray is in the church. Everyone is welcome!*

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS In January we celebrated October, November, December, and January birthdays with a special birthday party during Welcome & Worship Time on the third floor. Allison Harshman, Rosaleigh Harshman, Shawn Swathwood, Miranda Puckett, Lauren Swathwood, Philip Worthy, and Pastor Colleen were honored.

In February we celebrated Presidents' Day - and vacation from school - with a Bring-a-Friend bowling party at Crest Lanes. Four teens and a bevy of Pre-K to 6th graders bowled along with Pastor Colleen, Terry Ivey, and Erica Devine. Sunday school teachers and parents cheered on the bowlers - and, more importantly, fed them pizza, tangerines, and brownies.

In April, two events will take place. Rather than give-up something for Lent, we decided to do something special for someone else during Lent. April 8 we will bake cookies to give to the children and teens at our pre-school and the alternative school. Of course, there will be some extra for our adults participating in the workday at the church.

On Easter, the children will participate in special activities. At the 9:30 Sunday school time, we will meet in the Welcome and Worship Center for an Easter treat followed by Pastor Colleen telling the Easter story. The children will then go downstairs for our Easter Egg Hunt. As in the past two years, the children will find a pre-determined number of eggs (these eggs are empty) to exchange for a special Easter treat bag - followed by an activity as we wait for parents and worship.

"How can I help, you ask?" We need help . . .

- filling the treat bags with Easter candy and treats
- hiding the eggs
- assisting with the cookie baking

Call the church office or Barb Pack (664-7162 or 506-7672) to offer your assistance. Thank you.



First United Methodist Church
624 S. Adams St.
Marion, IN 46953

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FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT

***Making disciples of Jesus Christ
for the transformation of the
world.***

April 2017

THE NEXT FOCUS DEADLINE
April 19, 2017

H O P E
*Discovering it
Living it
Sharing it*

PASTOR—Rev. Colleen Harden

Home: 765-662-2414

Email address: colleen.harden@inumc.org

YOUTH PASTOR—Zachary Manton

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT—Rita Forsythe

PIANIST — Sheila Todd

ORGANIST— Susan Seacott

PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR— Donna Wiley

CHURCH PHONE — 765-664-5177

Email: info@marionumc.org

www.marionumc.org

NEW SERVICE TIMES

Starting April 2nd

SUNDAY SCHOOL— 9:30 A.M.

SUNDAY WORSHIP— 10:45 A.M.

SUNDAY NIGHT LIFE—5:00-7:00 PM