



THE FOCUS

FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN

What If....?

In a television movie I was watching recently, the main characters were playing a “What if...?” game, where they were letting their past regrets and hurts influence their future hopes and plans. It’s a game that most of us have played in moments of reflection or indecision. What if I had not gotten angry and said those hateful words? What if I make the wrong choice and get hurt? What if I had been more adventurous and gone on that trip? What if I never get this chance again? And on it goes...

So I started playing a version of the “What if...?” game as I thought about the early church in those post-resurrection days, and where we are today. Think about it. What if Peter and the other disciples lived their faith like many of us in the American church do today? What if they had said, “Well, things just aren’t the same as they used to be when Jesus was here with us, so we’ll just wait and meet together once a week, for our own encouragement, in Galilee until he comes back for us.”? What if they had let the disinterest and hostility (*people were trying to kill them!*) of their culture make them timid and reluctant to share the Truth of Jesus’ resurrection because they did not want to be challenged? What if those fishermen, tax-collectors, etc. had not been willing to get out of their comfort zone and trust God with new experiences in reaching out to unknown people? Where would the Church be today?

Now, What if we in the Church today were more like those early disciples? What if we speak boldly and unashamedly about our faith in Christ because we have experienced the reality of new life? What if our daily lives reflect joy, peace and hope in good times and bad? What if we give generously to others because we trust in God’s future provisions? What if we celebrate each of God’s blessings and see every situation and person we meet as an opportunity to share God’s grace? What if sharing the Love and Truth of Jesus is the most important task of the Church: more important than our plans, our structures, our finances, our worship styles, or what makes us comfortable? Where could the Church be tomorrow?

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” Jeremiah 29:11

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.

Church Spending Plan as of 2017

Monthly	March	Year to Date
Income	\$17,107.78	Income \$42,310.42
Expense	\$17,333.67	Expense \$54,289.13

HIGHLIGHTS of the APRIL CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING:

1. Finished the study on 'Creed'.
2. Taking a break with the Wednesday Prayer Time starting in May.
3. Pastor Zachary Manton resigned from Youth Pastor effective April 9.
4. We moved \$25,000 from the Endowment Fund at the Foundation to the General Account to help with operating expenses.
5. We have finished the Fruitful Congregational Journey. Pastor Colleen has one more meeting.
6. Ideas about a Welcome Center were talked about.
7. It was brought up that we need to have task forces in place for Angel Tree, Shoe Drive, etc.

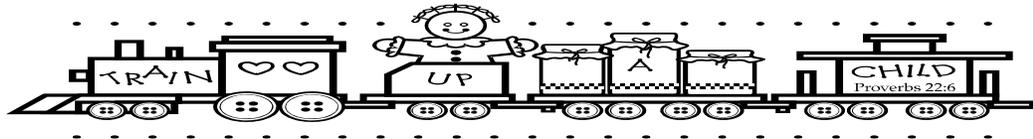
Full report of the March meeting is on the bulletin board in the church office hallway.



CHANGE FOR MISSIONS

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

February—Gilead Ministries	\$55.75
March—Special Olympics	\$163.00
April— Circle of Grant County	\$57.62



Preschool Postings

Where oh where did the year go? We are finishing off the school year already. We have some special things for the children. For the older children we are having a snow-cone party for learning the alphabet, at least most of the letters and in some cases more than they knew when they started. For the younger children just a special treat, they have finally learned to sit on the floor for group time and other things that make teaching easier.

The two boys that were not quite 2 when they started are finally using words that Megan and I can understand. Boy, are they using their words, they talk most of the time now, usually in a loud voice which gets louder if we don't respond fast enough for them. Response time depends on how long it takes us to figure out exactly what they are saying.

Garrett, one of two-year old, loves to sweep and that is one word we understand. One day he was sweeping with Megan's little Bissel (from when she was young) when Jeremiah decided he wanted to sweep too. But since Garrett had the sweeper Jeremiah pulled out the chairs and put them back. So, then Garrett gave Jeremiah a turn to sweep and he pulled out the chairs. Real team work going on.

We are also working on asking for things rather than stating they want things. This week two-year old Jeremiah got marker on his arm. I told him that after he put his paper in his cubby he could get a wipe from Megan. He put his paper away, came in and told me he had marker on his arm. I told him to go ask Megan for a wipe. Jeremiah walked up to Megan and said, "Ask Megan for a wipe." I guess he at listened.

Megan has loaned the preschool some of the toys she used to play with. One day we got something out and I told the kids that Megan had loaned us the toys and that she used to play with them when she was their age. Four-year old Rayleigh looked at her and said, "Boy, that really is old". I'd hate to think what they'd say if I brought one of my toys in.

We are enrolling for next year and could really use your help. Because enrollment was so low this year, our finances are not good. Please pray for us and help us spread the word that we are here. It doesn't matter if the people you are talking to have preschoolers. Word of mouth is our best advertisement.



THANK YOU – We would like to thank everyone who came and worked at the Indoor/Outdoor Work Days. Many hands make light work, it was much appreciated. Thank you for making the church presentable to the community. Thanks once again for your willingness to help!

THANK YOU! We want to thank Pastor Colleen for all her help and time with us in our time of need. We also want to thank all of the people who made us such a wonderful meal after the funeral. Thank you to all for your visits at the calling and the funeral. It meant so much to us. And thanks for all the cards and gifts. You are a wonderful church and may God bless all of you. God is so good to me at this time!
Jeri Orrell and family



MAY BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Corey Boxell | 12 Belva Pickerel |
| 1 Ed Pirl | 16 Dee Aguilar |
| 4 Cathy Swathwood | 17 Mary Jane Downing |
| 5 Cathy Lane | 22 Kay Dougherty |
| 6 Liz Johnson | 23 Mickey Bournique |
| 6 Erika Devine | 25 Corey Sultz |
| 7 Sue McVicker | 28 Marjorie McClure |
| 9 Linda Powell | |

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

17 Ron & Barb Piper

2017 RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE DONUTS

May—Koinonia Class
June—J.O.Y. Class



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 REPRESENT-

ATIVES: 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.



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.***

May 2017

THE NEXT FOCUS DEADLINE
May 17, 2017

PASTOR—Rev. Colleen Harden
Home: 765-662-2414
Email address: colleen.harden@inumc.org

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

H O P E

*Discovering it
Living it
Sharing it*

SERVICE TIMES

SUNDAY SCHOOL—9:30 A.M.
SUNDAY WORSHIP—10:45 A.M.
JR/SR HIGH YOUTH—5:00-7:00 PM