



September 2017

THE FOCUS

FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN

What Is Our Strategy?

We have been through recent evaluation processes with Fruitful Congregation Journey and Sacred Places. I am currently preaching a series on The Church and developing a plan for our Jr. High confirmation. The Church Council has been prayerfully making decisions about changes and improvements with an eye on our future sustainability. As I was thinking about who we are, and who God is calling us to be, I came across this article by a retired UMC pastor friend, Art Collins, that I found thought provoking, so I wanted to share it with you.

I still like to play cards. And I play a lot of games with youth, whether on mission trips, retreats, or campouts. Lately, I've been getting a fearsome reputation as a Hearts player. My younger opponents want to know why I win so often.

Well, this is not the time or place for a seminar in card-playing strategy. But with Hearts, there is one significant choice to be made: Are you going to play to win, or are you going to play not to lose?

You see in Hearts, the low score wins. Points are bad. You want other people to get points. You get points for taking tricks with Hearts in them, or by taking the Queen of Spades in a trick; she's worth 13 points in herself, whereas all the others Hearts are worth one point apiece. So most people attempt to arrange their hand in such a way as to avoid taking tricks. If you never take a trick, you never take any points, right?

But just dodging and weaving, trying to avoid bad stuff, is not a winning strategy. If you're playing to win, you have to take tricks as well as avoid them. You want to dictate who gets the points, and that means you have to control when and how certain cards get played. And since the fastest way to give points to other players is to take all 26 points yourself (in which case you get zero and they all get 26), you need to think about how to take all the tricks with points in them (called "shooting the moon").

A high-risk strategy can backfire, of course. Being willing to take points means sometimes you take a lot of them. But as a general rule, you can't count on stumbling into a win because other people messed up more. The way to win is to control the game, and that means you have to lead. And be willing to accept failure as well as success.

There's a lot of people playing the church game who are playing it not to lose. They're afraid of playing to win. Oh, they'd like to win. They'd like to see the church grow, they'd like to accomplish big things—but they're afraid of failing, or of making people mad, or of getting stuck in the lead. They don't want the responsibility. And so, of course, they rarely win. But there's another name for not winning. It's called 'losing.'

Things don't stay the same if you refuse to try. They get worse. Sometimes slowly, sometimes swiftly. But if you're not winning, then you are losing. Me, I'm playing to win. How about you?

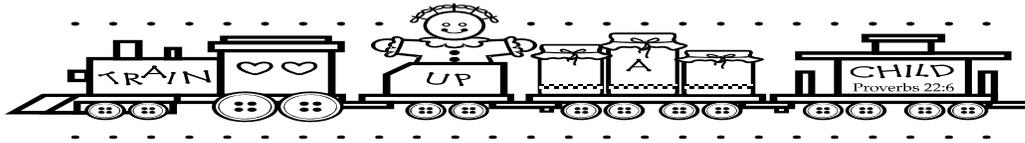
Do you not know that in a race all runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it (1 Corinthians 9:24).

Arthur W Collins is a retired elder in the Indiana Annual Conference. He serves on the Board of Indiana Confessing Movement. This originally appeared on his personal blog, The Wordsmith Forge, in 2012.

"New Electronic Sign"

We are looking at a new outdoor sign. This would be an electronic digital sign that we can manage from our computer. This sign would enable us to promote church and community activities by giving us a variety of messaging options. Also, it will let people know that we are still active on the corner of 7th and Adams. We would like to raise the funds so we won't have to use any Trustees' money. *Thank you for helping us to achieve our goal!*

Please make checks to First United Methodist Church (in the memo place "Sign")



Preschool Postings

It's simply amazing that school has started already. Something happened to summer all the plans made are now plans for fall.

We are slowly getting children enrolled and have 5 children at least verbally committed. Nancy Worthy has taken flyers around to so many places we had to start a list. Plus, she has thought of a lot more than I ever have. Thank you, Nancy and Philip, Philip goes with her and is additional advertising, since he's planning on coming this year and he is so cute about it.

We are going to hold an Applebee's Dine to Donate fundraiser again this fall. It will be Thursday September 28. Flyers will be available in the bulletin and in the church office. You need to present a flyer to the server when you order so that the preschool can receive 15% of the amount you spend. So let's have a good time eating with our friends and family on the 28th.

Please keep the preschool in your prayers as we start out this year. We are a small preschool but the children seem to enjoy coming and the parents seem to like and feel comfortable bringing their children.

THANK YOU for hosting the Neighborhood Block Party. Though our numbers were small, it was still a worthy endeavor and a first step in getting the Historic Marion going again. You and the members of your church are pretty awesome. I look forward to working with you again. Sincerely, *Mary Eckerle*

THANK YOU - Pastor Colleen and Friends, just isn't enough to say for all the kindness shown to my family recently. First was Drew's recognition and party. You and the church members supported him to the fullest. Next was Sue's surgery. So thoughtful you coming to Indianapolis and staying with us during this time. The prayers, calls, cards and concern have been grand. Thank you all. We are still not out of the woods. Now Scott had surgery and only time will tell. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you all! Fondly, *Jane Scholar*

THANK YOU! Dear Members and First UMC. Shirley Stace loved this church and enjoyed participating in UMW, Esther Circle, Choir, and Children's Sunday School. On behalf of her family we thank you for your hospital visits, calls, and cards. She enjoyed the prayer shawl and was thankful for your prayers. Shirley was grateful for Pastor Colleen's many visits during her month-long hospital stay. We take comfort knowing she is safe in the arms of our Lord and Savior Jesus. *Jack and Sidenia Stace*

HIGHLIGHTS of the AUGUST CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING:

1. Representatives from Pro-Print Gear and Huston Sign came and presented their plans for indoor and outdoor signage.
2. Pastor Colleen is going to start confirmation classes after Rally Day (which is Sunday, Sept. 17th).
3. Preschool will be starting on Tuesday, September 5th. We would like some from the congregation here each morning the first week to greet the new students and parents.
4. Mississinewa Valley Choir will be presenting a concert here at First Church on October 26th.
5. The awning on Adams St. will be removed. It is torn and can't be repaired.
6. We have had to borrow more money from the Foundation, Scrip Fund and Trustees. This should help the budget for the rest of the year.
7. The Shoe Drive is set for October 7th. We will also give toothbrushes and paste to each child that attends.

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

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

- 1 Curtis & Jennifer Swathwood
 5 John & Kathy Boxell
 25 Jim & Betty Fletcher



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Ruth Fuller
 3 Jeanette Renbarger
 6 Imogene Tucker
 7 Ralph Pack
 11 JoAnn Blood
 12 Jeannette Ball
 15 Pat Wickham
 16 Debbie Ivey
 20 Willard Rust
 23 Noah Todd
 23 Joan Brown
 26 John Wood
 27 Jeff Todd



2017 RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE DONUTS

August—J.O.Y. Class
 September—Koinonia Class

SAVE THE DATE!

Eight Month Birthday Celebration

February, March, April, May, June, July,
 August, September

Worship & Welcome Center at 10:10
 (ages pre-K through high school)

September 17, 2017

CONFIRMATION CLASS

This fall and spring, we will be offering Confirmation Class to any interested young people 7th grade and older. This will be a fun and informative time of learning what we believe as Christians and what it means to become a part of the Church universal through baptism and of our local congregation of the United Methodist Church through membership. Pastor Colleen is looking for mentors and other adults to help make this a memorable experience for these youth. More details to come!



BACKPACKS

On Rally Day the windows of the sanctuary will be filled with backpacks with names/pictures of the children/youth of FUMC. We ask you to take one or more and pray for that child/children for a year.



CHANGE FOR MISSIONS

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

June—Clean Water	\$79.00
July—Marion School Supplies	\$103.00
August—Preschool	\$69.00

RALLY DAY - September 17, 2017. Pastor Colleen, during worship, will recognize our pre-school, the Crossing as well as our Sunday school children and adults and teachers. Our confirmation class will also be recognized. Backpacks with a child's picture and name will be posted on the windows of the sanctuary. You will have a special opportunity to become a prayer partner for one of the children by choosing a backpack with a child's picture and name on it. Carry-in luncheon will follow worship with fried chicken and drinks provided. You bring the sides and desserts. **September 17 is a red-letter day.** Be sure to mark your calendar.



SHOE DRIVE - The FUMC Shoe Distribution will be on Saturday, October 7, in the Fellowship Hall. We will be providing shoes for the preschool thru 6th grade.

This is an outreach program of our church which needs prayers, shoes/monetary donations and workers. Oh, yes and socks. Tennis shoes only! No sandals, crocs or dress shoes. If you have any questions or want to sign up to help, talk to Joyce Rinker, Barb Salveter or the church office.

2017 Church Spending Plan

Monthly	July	Year to Date
Income	\$13,970.40	Income \$103,374.72
Expense	\$19,712.71	Expense \$125,844.23

*\$25,000 was taken from the Endowment Fund from the Foundation in April 2017.



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.***

September 2017

THE NEXT FOCUS DEADLINE
September 20, 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.