



THE FOCUS

FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN

“Pearl of Great Price”

I love to read. I read all sorts of books, whenever I have a chance, both e-books and paper books. Because I love books so much, I love to tell people about an app on my phone that has revolutionized the way I interact with books. It's called Goodreads. On this app, you can track what books you have read, see what others are reading, list books that you would like to read, and keep track of your current reading progress. It's a very handy app for people who love to read. I've even used it to keep track of books I'd like to receive as gifts, so I can easily answer that question around Christmas. I love to tell anyone about this app, because it has been so helpful for me.

Interestingly, I have found it easier to share about an app on my phone than to share about my faith and my church (or, in my special case, my churches). Jesus described the Gospel in a parable, saying, “Again, the Kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it (Matthew 13:45-46, ESV).” Our relationship with God, the life we have in Jesus and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, are of such great value that we should give up everything for them. Our church, in which we have experienced God time and time again, is of such value that we should give up everything for it. Many people around the world have done exactly that. And yet, when I have to speak to others, I am far more likely to praise all of the benefits of Goodreads than mention the incredible blessings of God in my life.

Maybe you have not experienced this yourself, but most of us have a Goodreads that we share. Maybe it's a favorite company. Maybe it's a favorite sports team or TV show. Whatever it is, we speak about it often. I don't think we are wrong to; these things are good things. But how much greater is the God who we serve? Jesus is the greatest gift humanity could have ever been given, and the gifts of the Spirit are so much better than a book. Maybe, we just need a reminder of how great our God is. Maybe, we just need to take a moment to reflect on the blessings of God in our past and present, and praise God for them, because God is so good, and God is far more worthy of our praise than anything we find on earth. Even Goodreads.

Pastor Jason Stanley

RALLY DAY

Sunday, September 9, is Rally Day - the day to celebrate Christian education - the children and adults and the teachers who guide them. Following Sunday school will be a carry-in lunch, a great time for fellowship. The church will provide chicken and drinks and you get to provide the side dishes. Please bring your table setting and a hungry tummy.



HIGHLIGHTS of the AUGUST CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING:

1. The volunteer signup went well. If you did not sign up, please contact the office and let us know what you would like to volunteer for.
2. Moving forward with the Annex repairs, parking lot holes have been filled, the Sanctuary air conditioner is working again, and the parsonage is rented, along with most of the outdoor lights on the annex are working, Triple G Lawn Care is mowing the church yard for the rest of this season.
3. We are moving forward with Sacred Places. We will be doing a case study.
4. We are looking at doing Trunk or Treat this year. If you are interested, please let us know.
5. Pastor Jason is looking at starting a Bible Study. More information to come.
6. We are reviving the Shepherding Program, or more information check out the Shepherd Program below.

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

SHEPHERD PROGRAM - We are looking for Shepherds to "watch over a flock of 8 to 10 sheep" (fellow church members) by calling them at least once each month to see how they are doing and/or if there are 'concerns' for Pastor Jason to follow up on. If this sounds like a membership care ministry you'd be interested in doing, sign up on the 'shepherd sheet' clipboard or call the church office, 765-664-5177. We will have an organizational meeting soon to get the program launched. In the meantime call Jane & Steve Sharon at 765-664-5346 or (cell) 765-661-4428 with questions.



2018 RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE DONUTS

September—Koinonia Class

October—J.O.Y. Class

NEW ADDRESS – Ruth Fuller is now at York Place in Room 131. If you would like to send her a card please mail them to 1411 N Richard Rd., Marion, IN 46952 c/o Randy or Sue Wagaman.

CHICKEN NOODLE DINNER

OCTOBER 20

4:00 – 7:00 PM

Tickets are: Adults \$8.00

children 5-12 \$4.00, 4 and under free

Dessert by Donation

If you can help in any way, please talk to

Bonnie Lou Gamson.



TRUNK AND TREAT - We are thinking about having Trunk and Treat this year. If you would like to participate in Trunk and Treat by having a car and/or provide candy. Please let the church office know. Thank you for helping us to reach out to our neighborhood.

Church Spending Plan as of 2018

Monthly	July	Year to Date
Income	\$14,416.96	Income \$96,075.48
Expense	\$13,659.69	Expense \$113,991.63

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Ruth Fuller | 18 Christine Stanley |
| 3 Jeanette Renbarger | 20 Willard Rust |
| 7 Ralph Pack | 23 Noah Todd |
| 11 JoAnn Blood | 23 Joan Brown |
| 12 Jeannette Ball | 26 John Wood |
| 15 Pat Wickham | 27 Jeff Todd |
| 16 Debbie Ivey | |



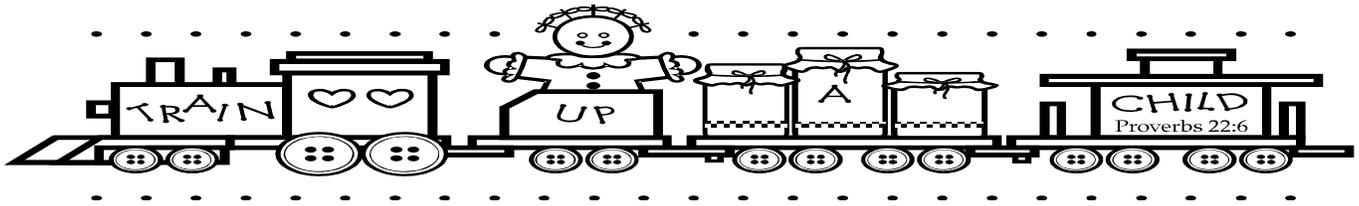
SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

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



THANK YOU! We would like to thank you for supporting our Preschool. Our Applebee's fundraiser was a success. We received \$110.09. We are looking at having another Applebee's fundraiser on Wednesday, September 26th. Come out, support our Preschool and have a good meal!

IT'S A GIRL! Mike and Nancy Worthy had a girl on Saturday, August 11th. Donna Louise Worthy was welcomed by her parents and big brother, Philip.



Preschool Postings

Another school year and summer have gone by and now we are getting ready for a new year with a few returning children and a couple of new ones. We have five children enrolled and another verbally committed. There are plenty of spaces open for others so if you know of anyone, send them our way.

We also have a new teacher's assistant this year, Jessica Hewitt. She is an elementary education major taking on line classes, with experience in childcare, and working another job at night. I am so glad she is full of energy and is very excited to get back into a classroom setting and working with the children.

We want to thank everyone who came out to Applebee's in July to support the preschool with the Dine to Donate fundraiser. We raised \$110.09. We also had a couple of people donate some money since they couldn't come that night. We thank them as well. We are planning on having another the end of September. Stay tuned for more information as it comes in.

Three-year-old Waylon and his mom, Tilar, came in to enroll the other day. His mom said he has been asking about school all summer until a few weeks ago. She said as soon as they pulled in the drive, he got so excited and said, "It's my school". He wouldn't say much to me, as he just nodded his head, I guess he needs to get used to me again, that won't take long. Tilar said that everywhere they went this summer, people were so impressed with his knowledge. She credits the preschool. It's nice to get some positive feedback.

Please continue to keep us in your prayers as we start the new year.



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

September 2018

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT

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

**THE NEXT FOCUS DEADLINE
September 19, 2018**

H O P E

*Discovering it
Living it
Sharing it*

PASTOR—Jason Stanley
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Marion, IN 46952
(765) 438-8107

Email address: jason.stanley@inumc.org

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT— Rita Forsythe

ORGANIST— Susan Seacott

PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR— Donna Wiley

CHURCH PHONE — 765-664-5177

Email: info@marionumc.org

www.marionumc.org

SERVICE TIMES

MORNING WORSHIP— 9:15 A.M.

SUNDAY SCHOOL— 10:30 A.M.