



November 2019

THE FOCUS

FROM BISHOP TRIMBLE

Finishing Strong

Sprinters and long distance runners often have a goal of finishing strong. Students who are nearing graduation with victory in sight want to finish strong.

I have had the privilege of speaking at a number of celebrations for people who are nearing retirement or finishing a term before moving on to a new assignment. These occasions are a great opportunity to thank them for their faithfulness and encourage them to similarly finish strong.

If you are in a church with an uncertain future due to dwindling attendance or insufficient finances, I encourage you to ask good questions and offer fervent prayers. *Dear God, How do you desire to use us for your mission? How can we finish strong?* These are questions your Conference Superintendents and district and conference leaders can help you with. It may be a season for new life or new focus. How can we get this missional thing right in our community or context for ministry?

Thank you for the many ways you share the Gospel of Jesus Christ in your communities. As I leave this week for Africa University, I am reminded of the hundreds of ways we as United Methodists touch and transform lives as a Church.

But there is still more to do. We have less than 100 days left in 2019. I want to finish strong, and I invite you and your church to finish strong with me this year.

I believe God's mission of reconciliation and redemption will be advanced by those who are determined to finish strong. For some, that may look like fulfilling your tithes and offerings. If you are a layperson, lay leader, or lay member to Annual Conference ask the question: *If we have more than enough, why would we not finish strong?* If you are clergy, active or retired, leading worship or engaged in a worshipping congregation, ask the question: *Are we going to finish strong? Will we give more or less than last year? Shouldn't our goal always be to be more generous, not less?*

My mother is my role model for stewardship. At age 97, she supported the church with her tithe when she was enthusiastic about who her pastor was and when she felt the Conference was neglecting the smaller churches. She prayed for the pastor, church and the bishop when segregation was in vogue, and she supported the church even when some of her friends left for other churches. She voiced her opinion for change when she wanted to see change and kept showing up and supporting the church when change didn't come as she would have desired.

Her theology is simple: "All I have comes from God." God doesn't ask for it all, nor does God ask for what we do not have. As my mama would say, "God has been consistently good, so I want to be consistent and finish strong."

...let it be so for our churches in 2019 and beyond.

Be encouraged,
Bishop Julius C. Trimble

2019 CHARGE CONFERENCE will be on Sunday, October 27 at Hanfield United Methodist Church from 3:30—5 PM. All are welcome to attend and Church Council members are encouraged to attend.

HIGHLIGHTS of the OCTOBER CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING:

1. Funds were found to preserve the MJ Lowe money at the foundation to finish the tuck pointing project.
2. Thanksgiving Dinner will be on Sunday, November 24th at Sunday School.
3. Pledge Sunday will be Sunday, November 17.
4. The parsonage siding and outside repairs are finished. Drive by and take a looking at the house.
5. Working to finalize Fruitful Congregation Journey is in the last stage.
6. We will be working on getting Sacred Places/Indiana Landmark finished.

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

Church Spending Plan as of 2019

Monthly	September	Year to Date	
Income	\$13,856.00	Income	\$128,110.78
Expense	\$9,909.87	Expense	\$111,320.12



2019 RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE DONUTS

November — Koinonia
December — J.O.Y.



TRUNK OR TREAT - We are having Trunk or Treat on Thursday October 31st from 5-7 PM. If you would like to participate in Trunk or 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.

THANK YOU! The "SHOE DAY" was again a success. Ninety-seven pair of shoes walked out on 194 "happy feet". Your contributions of shoes/socks, support, time and prayers keep this outreach program going. THANKS and Blessings to all. A special thank you to Rita for going up and beyond...



THANKSGIVING DINNER – We will be having our annual Thanksgiving Dinner on Sunday, November 22 at 11:45 AM. More information will be provided later.

SHIRTS!! If you are interested in a FUMC T-shirt, we have some available. They are \$10 each and come in various sizes. Please see Carroll DeVries if you are interested in purchasing a shirt. There are a limited number of shirts in the church office, but we will be ordering again.

UMW NOODLES

We have noodles for sale!
Just stop by the church office.
They are \$3.50 a bag.



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS



2	Bob Salveter	16	Miranda Puckett
2	Barb Duckwall	21	Jim Dougherty
2	Terry Ivey	22	Sally Varner
10	Shawn Swathwood	26	Martha Russell
12	John York	26	Doris Schnar

RANDY & SUE WAGAMAN'S NEW ADDRESS
211 Robie Drive Auburn, CA 95603.

ANNIVERSARIES

11/01	Tom & Jane Weesner
11/22	Jack & Sidenia Stace
11/23	John & Peg York

Fruitful Congregations

The Fruitful Congregations committee met to review the recommendations made during Fruitful Congregations Journey and see what we can attempt to put in place to move forward. We are working on proposals to improve the signage around the building, starting with signage helping people get to the sanctuary. In addition, we will soon be publishing clear communication pipelines so that we can all improve communication. We discussed possible outreach opportunities in our community. Some of these focused on needs in our community, like focusing on single-parent families, and others focused on strengths of our church, like how we can use our beautiful organ for outreach and how friendly our congregation is.

It was during this discussion about potential outreach that we realized how vital it will be for our congregation to come to a shared understanding of our vision, mission, and spiritual growth plan. By vision, I mean a clear picture about what the church and our community should look like in a perfect picture. Our mission then explains our church's role in moving towards that vision. For the church to be able to plan outreach, we need to understand what is currently not true about the vision that we believe we are called to change through our mission.

Because a vision, mission, and spiritual growth plan are too big to create in one hour, we decided to adjourn and come back together to solve these three key issues. We will be reconvening in November. If you would like to join us, we have one primary task before that meeting. Every member of the Fruitful Congregations committee will be sharing our faith journey so that we can attempt to create the spiritual growth plan. These stories are our story, the story of how God has been changing hearts and lives at Marion First UMC. If you would like to share your story, join us at our November meeting or send your story to Pastor Jason.

Merlin J. Loew update

I wanted to update everyone on how the board has spent the money that Merlin J. Loew generously set aside for the church from his estate. The church received \$221,271.44 from the Loew Trust. We set aside \$12,071.44 to fulfill our conference tithe. \$3,000 has been set aside to pay for a new expense for churches when a pastor moves, and \$7,200 has been designated for ministry and/or missions spending. \$16,000 has been set aside for repairing the air conditioner in the sanctuary, and \$1,500 has been set aside to improve signage inside and outside of the church. We spent \$5,000 to repair the organ. We spent \$3,500 to find the leak in the bell tower, and then \$68,500 in repairing that leak, with \$60,000 from money designated for the repair, \$3,000 coming from money left over from other repairs, and \$5,500 coming from the Trustee's Capital Investment. We then spent \$10,000 making necessary repairs to the parsonage.

The numbers above were set out in advance because the Loew committee decided to save \$100,000, placing it in our Endowment. While repairs were being made on the bell tower, there were two more major leaks that were found. As a board, we decided that the leaks needed to be repaired now, rather than allowing the leaks to become worse over time and cost the church significantly more money to repair in the future. Rather than take the money out of the \$100,000 we just placed into the endowment, however, we took the \$28,300 from the Trustees Capital Investment. We believe that this decision best protects the building and keeps money in savings protecting the future well-being of our church. From Pastor Jason



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

November 2019

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT

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

THE NEXT FOCUS DEADLINE
November 20, 2019

H O P E

Discovering it
Living it
Sharing it

PASTOR—Jason Stanley
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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.

YOUTH GROUP— 6:00 P.M.