



THE FOCUS

FROM THE PASTOR

“Ordinary Time”

When I first arrived back in Marion, I had a church member ask me if we could change the color of the cloths at the front of the church, called paraments. They had been green for months, and it was getting boring. I answered that, sadly, I couldn't help it. The paraments are green for “ordinary time,” and wouldn't get changed until Advent, which was still months away.

I think that encounter encapsulates what most of us feel about most of our lives. Things that are “ordinary” feel dull and boring. We want to regularly experience the “extra-ordinary,” and we do whatever we can to avoid staying in the “ordinary” for too long. Because we view the “extra-ordinary” as positive, we cast our faith in God and God's work in us as “extra-ordinary.”

If we use the Bible as our guide to faith, the view that God's work is “extra-ordinary” is problematic. In Acts 2, the disciples receive the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Acts 2:42-47 describe the life of the disciples after Pentecost, and the rest of the book of Acts describes the story of how the Church continued to grow and spread in the time after Pentecost. To be sure, there are plenty of “extra-ordinary” stories to be found in the book of Acts. But the longest period of time that the Church describes as “Ordinary Time” is the season of the Christian year called “The Season after Pentecost,” and our current period of history is also “the season after Pentecost.”

Certainly, our Christian life shouldn't be boring and uninteresting. The book of Acts is far from a boring book. But the Holy Spirit's work in our life is “ordinary.” The fact that God is at work in the world, and especially in the Church, is supposed to be “ordinary.” And while many of us would like to avoid the “ordinary” parts of our life in favor of the “extra-ordinary,” it is often in the “ordinary” that God can be found.

As I write this, we are once again in “Ordinary Time.” while this time is a time between “extra-ordinary” celebrations, I pray that God helps us celebrate the “ordinary” in our lives, and that we all may find God in our “ordinary.”

Pastor Jason Stanley

HIGHLIGHTS of the JANUARY CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING:

1. Pastor Jason is asking the church to work with Riverview Elementary School. They have several programs we can get involved in.
2. We are having more tuck pointing done to stop leaks around the church.
3. The Parlor kitchenette has a new counter top. The sink and stove top have been removed.
4. The 2020 Proposed Spending plan has been approved. There is a copy on the bulletin board in the church office hallway.

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

Church Spending Plan as of December 2019

Monthly	December	Year to Date	
Income	\$21,102.00	Income	\$181,345.63
Expense	\$12,175.16	Expense	\$147,365.20

Happy Valentine's Day

BIBLE STUDY - Our weekly Bible study will begin again during Lent. The Thursday evening group will begin meeting Feb. 27 @ 6:30 P.M. The Wednesday afternoon group will begin the next week, March 4 @ 1:00 P.M. We will be taking a look at worship through a study designed by a group of IWU worship students including our own Christine Stanley, who will be helping to lead the study.

CONFIRMATION/NEW MEMBER CLASS - Starting Feb. 16, we will have a confirmation and new member class meeting Sunday evenings at 5-6:30 P.M. The first part of each class will discuss our baptism and membership vows, and the second part will look at spiritual practices through Richard Foster's book, *Celebration of Discipline*. There is a sign up sheet in the fellowship hall.

DID YOU KNOW that Leland Gamson has a devotional in The Upper Room? His devotion is on page 25 of the January/February 2020 edition. It is for Friday, January 17th. He is also featured on the back cover.



2020 RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE DONUTS

February — J.O.Y. Class
March—Koninia Class

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.



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS



2/04 Jeff Weesner
2/12 David Devine
2/14 Bill Varner
2/20 Jane Sharon
2/22 Marsha Moon
2/22 Drew Varner

ANNIVERSARIES

Feb. 5 Tom & Rita Holloway
Feb. 20 Bob & Barb Duckwall

THANK YOU! I would like to thank everyone for the generous Love Offering that was given. But most of all the love and support that has been shown to me for almost 17 years. Thank you for being a loving and kind family! *Rita Forsythe*

THANK YOU! Dear FUMC Friends, As you know 2019 has been a rather eventful year for the Morrrows. We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to each and every one of you for the continued prayers, love and support offered on our behalf. Scott and I are doing well at this time and hope to continue on the same path in the future. Hopefully the path will not be so bumpy. Again, thank you for everything that has been done for us. We wish everyone a Happy New Year and we are looking forward to a healthy 2020. With God's love, *Sue, Scott, Andrew and Lauren Morrow*

THANK YOU! My wife and I wanted to thank all of you so much for the extremely generous gift that you gave to us this Christmas. We are overwhelmed with the love and support that you have given to us, not only through this gift but also with your regular support. Thank you, and we love all of you. *Jason Stanley*

THANK YOU, I would like to thank you for the generous gift you gave to me this year. I appreciate it very much. It is very kind of all of you to include me in the love offering. It is a pleasure to serve the church through the preschool and helping out in the office. Thank you for all you do for the preschool and the help you give me in running the preschool. *Donna Wiley*

THANK YOU! – Today Steve and Jane Sharon delivered to me a lovely altar Christmas poinsettia that someone donated as a gift or a memorial to a loved one. I just wanted to let the donor know this gift kept going and I appreciated your generosity. Sincerely, *Carolyn James*

2020 PLEDGE CARDS If you haven't turned your card in, there is still time. You may turn it in to the church office. We asked that you prayerfully consider your pledge for this year. The pledges help us to set the 2020 budget. Thank you for your continuous support to the ministry of Marion First United Methodist Church!



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

February 2020

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT

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

THE NEXT FOCUS DEADLINE
February 19, 2020

H O P E

Receiving Hope

Living Hope

Sharing Hope

PASTOR—Jason Stanley

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ORGANIST— Susan Seacott

PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR— Donna Wiley

CHURCH PHONE — 765-664-5177

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SERVICE TIMES

MORNING WORSHIP— 9:15 A.M.

SUNDAY SCHOOL— 10:30 A.M.

YOUTH GROUP— 6:00 P.M.