



THE FOCUS

FROM THE PASTOR

As I write these words, we are preparing for the most unusual Easter I can remember. At the moment, COVID-19, or coronavirus, is ravaging the United States. Indiana has shut down. Everyone has been asked to stay at home outside of essential travel. While we are operating in the hope that we will be able to gather together for Easter, I think we all have to admit that Easter will at least look and feel a bit different than normal.

As I am thinking about how unusual our Easter will look this year, I am reminded of just how unusual the first Easter was to Jesus' own disciples. They were preparing for their own celebration: Passover, one of the greatest celebrations in Judaism. As they celebrated the incredible deliverance of God, they were preparing to enter into the darkest moment in history. While the disciples were expecting Jesus to be the Messiah who delivered them, Jesus was killed at Passover. Suddenly, what was one of the most joyful days of the year became the most painful moment the disciples had experienced. When Jesus rose from the dead, the worst Passover the disciples ever experienced suddenly became the greatest event the world would ever know, and transformed the lives of the disciples.

Maybe, just maybe, this is what we can look forward to this year. Certainly, Easter will be painful this year. But God is able to take those painful things, like Jesus' death, and turn them into something beautiful, like Jesus' victory over death. I have had several church members remind me that, while we do have a normal Sunday when we celebrate Easter, we should be using every day as an Easter celebration. As Christians, we should celebrate Jesus' resurrection every day. So let's remember the hope that Jesus has given to us, and use this day (and every day) to celebrate Jesus' resurrection.

Pastor Jason Stanley

SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JASON

Because of the current CDC recommendations, we are cancelling all Sunday Schools and small groups, and we are not setting up new events on our calendar. Please stay home as much as you can. I know that this is a very difficult time, but things will only get worse if we do not take action now. Feel free to call each other, set up video meetings or group calls, and do anything else to stay in contact with each other while remaining physically apart. As soon as the guidelines have changed to allow small group gatherings again, feel free to begin meeting together again, and feel free to inform Rita in the office about the time of your group meeting. We are sorry for the inconvenience, but believe that this is in the best interest of everyone.

IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE CHURCH COUNCIL

Our board is continuing to meet and discuss what is happening each week. If there are any issues, please let someone on the board know so that we can address them each week. We are all trying to do our best during this time.

HIGHLIGHTS of the MARCH CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING:

1. Pastor Jason has visited people at Colonial Oaks, Northwood, York Place, Millers Merry Manor.
2. Church repairs: tucking pointing is almost done, repair on a leaky boiler pipe, checking on a leak on the roof that is possible creating a leak in the piper chamber.
3. The renewal of the lease agreement on the Annex building has been presented to the Grant County Rescue Mission.
4. Change for Missions for 2020 has been set and an insert will be in the bulletin.

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

Church Spending Plan as of February 2020

Monthly	February	Year to Date	
Income	\$11,358.05	Income	\$22,409.75
Expense	\$12,693.75	Expense	\$28,012.38

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.



2020 RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE DONUTS

April — J.O.Y. Class

May — Koinonia Class

Without Easter

Without Easter,
there would be no hope of heaven.

Without the hope of heaven,
there would be no repentance,
no personal transformation,
no attempt to follow biblical principles.

Without Easter,
the world would be in chaos
and darkness.

Jesus' death and resurrection
means we can be reborn,
to live better, to do better,
to shine light into the shadows.

Hallelujah!

Happy, Happy Easter.

By Joanna Fuchs

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

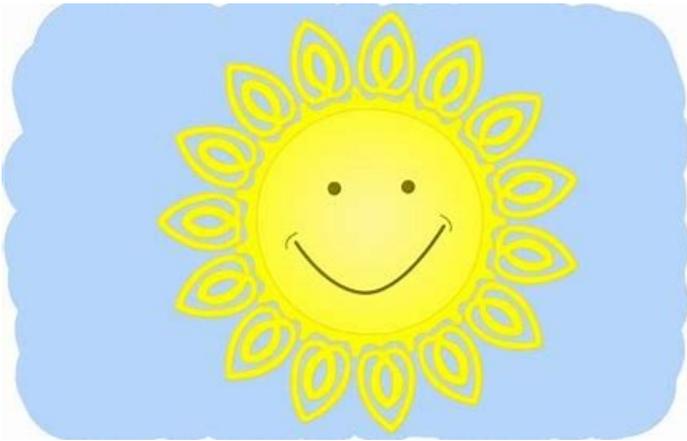
- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 Terrance Volden | 20 Bob Duckwall |
| 1 Barbara Salveter | 20 Marilyn Lewis |
| 1 AJ Varner | 21 Anne Moudy |
| 5 Tom Weesner | 23 Virginia Reese |
| 7 Ayden Covey | 24 Denise Pearson Harshman |
| 8 Frank Gulley | 26 Lousie Webb |
| 10 Charlotte Swisher | 28 Scott Overman |
| 10 Rob Wiley | 28 Curtis Swathwood |
| 10 Joyce Rinker | |



ANNIVERSARIES

21 Joe & Linda Simpson

RETIRING - Rev. Ed Fritz retirement will be celebrated at Annual Conference Retiring clergy are recognized annually for their years of service. Rev. Ed Fritz is among the clergy retiring this year. In order to let the clergy know how appreciated their service has been, the Conference is collecting pictures, cards, thank you notes, letters, etc. If you would like to show Rev. Fritz your appreciation for his years here, bring these items into the office, and we will get them sent to the Conference.



Preschool Postings

The preschool has been going on with our learning as usual minus a few classmates. Some of our parents have elected to keep their children at home during this time of illness. So we have had low class numbers and switched back to mornings. We have extended spring break a week and may need to be longer depending on travel restrictions. I have plenty to do at home but I find myself missing the children and the things they do to brighten our day or sometimes try it.

Because numbers are low we have done more learning games and have spent more time on the floor working with then children helping them to build with the block and drinking a lot of pretend tea, coffee and various other beverages that usually contain pretend thyme and cinnamon. I emptied out some spice containers and remembered how much fun it was to play with them so I took them in and they are having fun cooking with the spices.

A couple of afternoons before the virus hit us we took a toy that is on loan from Megan up to Fellowship Hall to play. The kids are always wanting to play hide and seek but there are not enough places to hide. I bought Megan a toy called "Hide N Squeak Kitty" when she got frustrated that her dad found her in a matter of minutes playing hide and seek with him (it usually was because with Rob said ready or not, Megan answered). We took turns hiding the kitty and turned it on to meow. The children have to listen and follow the sound of the cat. They had so much fun hiding the kitty. We are still working on the younger ones not telling where they've hidden the cat.

We will start enrolling for next year soon. Please continue to keep us in your prayers. We appreciate your support through prayers and fundraisers. We could not have preschool with out your support.



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

April 2020

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT

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

THE NEXT FOCUS DEADLINE
April 15, 2020

PASTOR—Jason Stanley
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(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

H O P E

Receiving Hope

Living Hope

Sharing Hope

SERVICE TIMES

MORNING WORSHIP— 9:15 A.M.

SUNDAY SCHOOL— 10:30 A.M.

YOUTH GROUP— 6:00 P.M.