

March 2023

FOCUS

*One who
is not willing to learn
(begin again)*

cannot be helped.

*One who
is determined to learn
(begin again)*

*cannot be stopped.
See back cover.*

*First United Methodist Church is a caring place in a diverse urban community with you in mind.
624 S Adams St. Marion IN 46953 765.664.5177 info@marionumc.org*

624 S Adams St
 Marion IN 46953
 765.664.5177

9:15 Sunday Worship
 10:30 Sunday School



Inside:

TABLE OF CONTENTS

First United Methodist Church p. 1
 Table of Contents p. 1
 Prayer Concerns p. 1
 Front Cover p. 1
 St. Patrick p. 2
 Birthdays & Anniversaries p. 2
 Sermon Themes/Scriptures p. 2
 Discover Marion Downtown p. 3
 Education p. 3
 Gratitude for Finance Team p. 4
 Choirs through the years p. 5
 Celebrating Music p. 6
 Thank You's from Members p. 6
 Lenten Opportunities p. 6
 8
 1927 Sunday S. Orchestra p. 7-8
 Pre-school Postings p. 9
 Meals on Wheels Drivers p. 9
 Lenten Sermon Series p. 10-12
 Denise Harshman Letter p. 13
 Marie P. Brown Trust p. 13
 March Special Offering p. 13
 March Calendar p. 14
 Masthead p. 14
 SOS "Begin Again" p. 15

*First United Methodist Church of Marion is a caring place
 in a diverse urban community with you in mind.*

Our predecessor, First Methodist Episcopal Church, was founded in Marion in 1832 and by the 1920s had become The Methodist Church.

In 1969, the Methodist denomination merged with the Evangelical United Brethren denomination and became the United Methodist Church.

"First Methodist Church" is carved in stone over the Adams Street entrance above the canopy. Today, First United Methodist Church of Marion is an affiliate of the Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church.

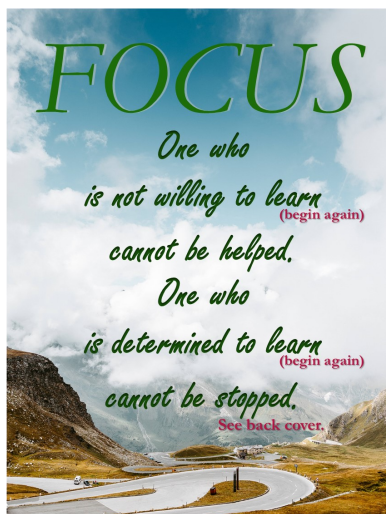
Prayer Concerns

Please call the office at (765) 664-5177

- Bob Salveter, hospitalized with pneumonia.
- Ryan Howell requests prayer for his family.
- Carolyn James, hospitalized for heart by-pass surgery.
- Mike Felver, friend of Susie Flynn, recovery from heart stent.
- Linda Simpson's granddaughter, Lucia Tomlinson.
- Trixie, friend of Susie Flynn, broken ankle, in rehab.
- Diane Fry, back injury.
- Missy (Sharon) Wilkinson
- Jim and Betty Fletcher
- Susie Seacott
- Willard and Ruth Ann Rust
- Friends living in Health Care Facilities.
- Government: national, state, and local elected officials and employees.
- Victims of disasters and relief workers.
- Unspoken concerns and needs of relatives and friends.
- Other churches in Marion and Grant County

Prayer requests will be forwarded to the Pastor, who will include them in the pastoral prayer during Sunday worship, and will bring them to prayer and meditation times throughout the week.

Front Cover



Three months into our centennial year, we continue to search our written and oral histories to learn the values and character of our predecessors who built the building and worshipped here for a hundred years. We're finding an extraordinary emphasis on music and fellowship. We're looking for evidence of outreach into the surrounding community and ministries of service and justice. We're committed to Jesus' clear admonition to "love your neighbor as you love yourself." We seek to learn new ways to "begin again" and create a new vibrant future of relevant service, nurture, outreach, witness and growth for all people. See back cover, page 15.

St. Patrick, Who Was He?

While millions of people celebrate St. Patrick’s Day every March, most have no idea who he was or what he did. St. Patrick isn’t the patron saint of wearing green, not getting pinched, and pots of gold. In reality, he was a former slave who used innovative methods to spread the gospel to an unreached people group. Here are seven things you may not know about him.

1. His birth name was Maewyn Succat. After a childhood in England, he was kidnapped by pirates as a 16-year-old and taken as a slave to Ireland. There, he tended the flocks of a Druid chieftain.

2. As a slave, he turned to Christ. Maewyn had been unconcerned with Christianity previously. But in captivity, he began to follow Christ. After six years, he escaped from slavery and returned to his homeland.

3. As a free man, he returned with the gospel. He became a priest—but he felt a burning desire to take the gospel to the land where he had been enslaved. Pope Celestine agreed and gave him the name “Patritius,” or Patrick, derived from two Latin words meaning the father of his people. Patrick’s experience with the culture and language helped him see more progress. Estimates are he baptized 10,000 Irish people and planted 300 churches.

4. He never officially attained sainthood. At his death, reportedly on March 17, 460, Patrick had spent decades ministering to the Celtic people. Though never formally canonized by the Catholic Church, he was recognized by local leaders as a saint for proclaiming the gospel across Ireland.

5. He evangelized leaders. Patrick focused his attention on the chiefs and other influential people, including his former slave master, Milchu. As these people were converted, they could sway others. Successful missionaries today still recognize the value of Patrick’s strategy.

6. He was countercultural within culture. Patrick knew the Irish people. He loved the Irish people. As a result, he reached them for Christ—despite being beaten, robbed, and threatened with death.

Instead of simply wearing green on March 17, people might value learning more about this slave turned missionary. St. Patrick’s work paved the way for Ireland to become one of the centers of European Christianity.



March & April Birthdays

Rick Harris	03/01
Mary Emrick	03/02
Nancy Worthy	03/02
Linda Simpson	03/04
Steve Sharon	03/09
Natice Miller	03/13
Glenn Evans	03/14
Peg York	03/14
Carolyn Ellis	03/15
Lauren Morrow	03/15
Matt Varner	03/22
Donna Wiley	03/22
Kathy Boxell	03/23
Barbara Piper	03/29

Barbara Salveter	04/01
AJ Varner	04/01
Tom Weesner	04/05
Ayden Covey	04/07
Joyce Rinker	04/10
Charlotte Swisher	04/10
Rob Wiley	04/10
Marilyn Lewis	04/20
Anne Moudy	04/21
Denise Pearson	04/24
Louise Webb	04/26
Scott Overman	04/28
Curtis Swathwood	04/28



Lent Themes & Scriptures

Feb 26th	Hallowed Be Thy Name	Matt 6:9-13
Mar 5th	Whose Will Be Done?	Isaiah 11:6-9 & Luke 22:41-42
Mar 12th	Our Daily Bread	John 6:30-31 & James 2:15-17
Mar 19th	Rev. Lamar Imes	
Mar 26th	Lead Us Not Into Temptation	Psalms 23:3 & James 1:13-15
Apr 2nd	Thy Kingdom, Power, Glory	Matthew 6:9-13 & 1 Chronicles 29:11

Anniversaries

Andy & Amanda Varner	03/30	10 yrs.
Joe & Linda Simpson	04/20	6 yrs.

Missions & Outreach



Grant County, Indiana, is home to nifty attractions, outta sight events and rebellious celebrities. Whether it's saddle shoes, cars, James Dean, motorcycles or Garfield, we love everything classic and cool. Marion, Gas City, Fairmount, Upland and our other towns are chock-full of nostalgic goodies and memorable sights.



Check out the many shops while you are downtown! First Church is participating in many upcoming events in the downtown area.

FUMC participated in one such event on Feb 10th & 11th. The third annual Chocolate Walk was held all over downtown.



Tickets were available for \$10 each, which entitled the bearer to visit 17 shops and get a lovely hand-made chocolate treat.

My daughter and I went to each of the businesses on the list. We were surprised to see that the downtown area has so much to offer; clothing stores, home décor, bike shop, even a record store! We will definitely be visiting more of these businesses throughout the coming months.

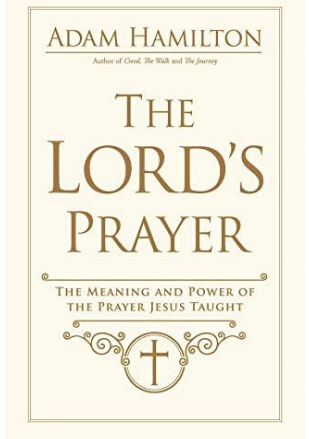
~Mary Malone



Phillip and Donna Worthy visit Bob Salveter after his recent hospital stay.

Education

Join your church family and friends for a Lenten Bible study Wednesday mornings in March. Beginning on March 1st at 10:00 am, the group will be discussing Adam Hamilton's book "The Lord's Prayer." Please call the Church office or leave a comment on our Facebook page to save your seat!



The season of Lent is a good time to deepen your connection with your faith and your church family. You can do just that at one of our Adult Sunday School classes.

The Koinonia Class meets in the Parlor. The group is taking a video tour of the Holy Land hosted by Kathie Lee Gifford.

The Epiphanies Class meets in the Fellowship Hall in front of the stage. During the month of March the class will be discussing two modern classics, "The Year of Biblical Living" by A.J. Jacobs, and "A Year of Biblical Womanhood" by Rachel Held Evans. You need not have read either of these books to enjoy stories of how these two authors apply biblical ideas to modern life.



Bonnie Lou Gamson



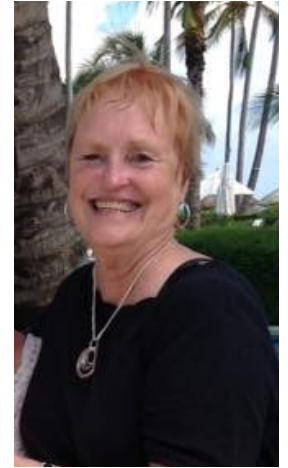
Denise Harshman



Debbie Ivey



Cathy Lane



Linda Simpson

COMMENDATION AND GRATITUDE FROM FUMC COUNCIL

The First United Methodist Church Administrative Council unanimously expresses an official commendation to five people who gave extraordinary time and over-the-top effort to the Church in the past year.

In July of 2022, the church was confronted with what could have been a fatal blow to its finances. However, we most fortunately had some people in the right positions and some others that stepped up to take charge of the situation.

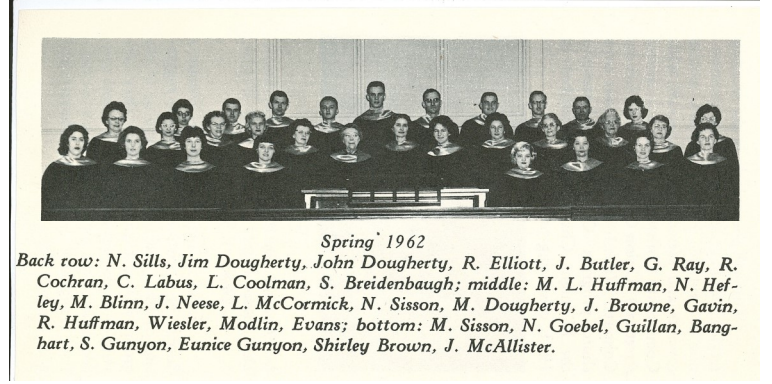
Bonnie Lou Gamson, Denise Harshman, Debbie Ivey, Cathy Lane, and Linda Simpson (in alphabetical order) have spent literally hundreds of hours since July doing the work that was necessary to clean up almost two years of theft and deceptive bookkeeping.

They have created a team that has worked together to untangle some very knotty financial issues. They, with help from their husbands, have agonized over the losses, picked up the pieces and reconstructed the financial structures for the church.

We as a congregation thank all of them for the long-term commitment and perseverance they have offered to First church.

It is a gift we can never repay or fully appreciate. But we do give our deepest gratitude to you Bonnie, Denise, Debbie, Cathy, and Linda. Not only have you done an amazing job with exceptional results, you have also given us an example of what we can accomplish when we work together, listen to one another, and use everyone's talents.

Choirs through the Years



Celebrating Music

Throughout the history of First United Methodist Church, music has been a major component of the life of the congregation. When our building was built in 1923, one of the major expenses was the installation of a new organ.

During the dedication celebration of the building in December 1923, distinguished organists were brought in to perform recitals on the new instrument. The pictures on the preceding page are examples of the vitality of the music program throughout the decades.

The picture on the top left corner was from the earliest church building for which we have pictures – the Methodist Church at the corner of 5th Street and Boots. This picture was the Choir on Easter Sunday, perhaps in 1880.

The picture on the right upper corner was the Washington Street church building, which set where the Firestone building is now. This picture was the choir in March of 1923.

The remaining pictures are all representative of the depth and breadth of the music program at First Church. The second picture down on the left side of the page is from Easter 1946. The third picture down is from the 1980's and is from a musical performance by the children.

The second picture down on the right side of the Chancel Choir is labelled with the date and includes names. The third picture down is the choir of the WSCS (Women's Society of Christian Service), the predecessor of the United Methodist Women and United Women in Faith. The fourth picture down is from a children's choir rehearsal, probably late 60's or early 70's.

The three pictures across the bottom are all youth bell choirs – the first two from the early 70's and the third one from 1962.

The music program for many decades was a vibrant part of the life of this congregation. With Cherub Choirs, Children's Choirs, Youth Choirs, Girls Choirs, Bell Choirs and the Chancel Choir, music was a profound influence for incorporating all ages into the life and ministry of the church. We have been fortunate to have been the recipients of the hard work, the creativity and the beauty that the musicians for decades have offered to us.



Appreciation

Dear FUMC,
Thank you so very much to everyone at First Church for the beautiful funeral service for my mother, Anne Gottschalk.

Our family couldn't have asked for a more beautiful service--especially how the sun shone through the windows onto her casket as she laid at rest.

All our love and appreciation,
Nancy Pickering and family.

Hello,
I appreciate the gift bag of Valentine sweetness and of course the Focus. Good job everyone!!
Sincerely Carolyn James

Dear Church Family,
Thanks so much for a pleasant surprise. You all are so clever. I appreciate your thoughtfulness.
Love Joan Brown

Lenten Opportunities

The season of Lent – Wed., Feb. 22 – Sat., April 8
Sundays in Lent – Sermon Series on The Lord's Prayer
Palm Sunday – April 2
Maundy Thursday – April 6:
 Pitch-in Dinner at 6:00pm
 followed by Communion.
EASTER SUNDAY – April 9:
 A light breakfast served at
 8:00am prior to the morning
 service.



Sunday School Orchestra

May 1927

From left: _____ Frye, Addis Thomas, Marcy Love, Delmar Weesner, Arthur Osborn, Max Barney, John Gormley, Martha Eastman (Dougherty), Harry Harreld, Jim Elliott, John Haner, Everton Sharon, Garland Hines, _____, Earl Richardson, Wilbur Foster, Walter Hamaker, Eldon Woodmansee Bradford

Psalter Lesson
7th Sunday
Hymns
108 332





Psalter Lesson
7th Sunday
Hymns
408 332

Preschool Postings

It has been a while since I have actually made time to write an article for the Focus. It has been a busy time for us in the preschool. Even though the enrollment has been low and still is, we have tried to make some changes to accommodate parents who are working. About four years ago we sent a survey out to parents asking if they were interested in an all day preschool program. Of course, we received a lot of positive response. Unfortunately it didn't work out for several and I became the teacher and aide for the afternoon time. This leaves me little time to get the duties of director done. This is my excuse for not writing articles.



This year we have five children on a regular basis; two are 2, one is 2 ½, one is 3 and a 4 year old. We have a new student who will be joining us two days a month on the weeks she is with her mother. Needless to say, most of the cute things that I used to write are not verbal but the cute things they do. Like running up the sidewalk to get into preschool, giving big hugs when they need one or crawling into your lap when they start getting

tired and need a little break. We have an open-door policy so everyone is invited to come visit and share with the hugs and laughs.

I do want to share an occurrence that will embarrass my former student but it is too funny not to share. Several years ago one of my students used to bring in a tool not appropriate for preschool use. I finally resorted to meeting him at the door and having him empty his pockets into his basket. Recently this young man came to church and asked me if he had to empty his pockets. After laughing I told him he was on his own now. I also found a note on my desk about a former student who was 3 at the time. They were playing with Potato Head people, Jeremiah picked up a mustache and said to his good friend Garret "Look at my mushmash."



We want to thank everyone who has donated to the preschool and/or participated in our fundraisers. They have helped immensely. We have done quite well with them and have been able to keep our preschool going this year with the help of the fundraisers added to tuition.

~Donna Wiley

Editor's note: My granddaughter, Marcie has started preschool with Donna a couple of days each month while she is here in Marion visiting her Mommie. Marcie loves to come hang out with the other children her age. She looks forward to seeing her "Fwiends." And this Mimi loves that she is close by and being cared for by Christian caregivers. ~Mary Malone

Meals on Wheels
MEALS ON WHEELS

SOCIAL ISOLATION IS AS DEADLY AS SMOKING UP TO 15 CIGARETTES A DAY

Help Meals on Wheels be there so homebound seniors know they're not alone.

GIVE TODAY MAKE GOOD GO FURTHER

MealsOnWheelsAmerica.org

MEALS ON WHEELS VOLUNTEER DRIVERS NEEDED

Monday through Friday
1 to 1 1/2 hours a day
Deliver meals to your homebound neighbors.
Call or text Joe Haynes
765-660-3280

Lenten Sermon Series Excerpts

February 26, 2023

“Our Father, Who Art in Heaven, Hallowed Be Thy Name,” Matthew 6:9-13. We hallow God’s name in the way we live. When we pray the Lord’s Prayer, we are tuning our heart on that for which we pray. Each line of the prayer is a commitment of ourselves as much as it is a request to God. Belief by life.

Ora et Labora:

Introduce the idea of *Ora et Labora* as a theme that will recur throughout this series. *Ora et Labora* is Latin for “pray and work.” When we pray, we not only ask God for something, we tune our hearts to what we pray for and hear a call to action, a commitment to work for what we pray as well. The two go hand in hand. Throughout this series, we will see each line of the Lord’s Prayer as a prayer to God, but also as a call to action for us that elicits a faithful response.

Our Father:

Jesus referred to God as “Father.” There are many names in Scripture for God, but this is the one Jesus used most often. In exploring what it means to call God “Father,” acknowledge that for some the image of “father” is negative or painful. Focus on the positive attributes of God as a loving parent—the ideal parent, who cares for us and provides for our needs. What examples of this love, care, and provision can you draw on? Focus also on the word *our*, highlighting that God is the father of *us*—all of us, not just me as an individual or my small community, but the God and Father of all people, everywhere.

Who Art in Heaven:

What does it mean that God is “in heaven”? In Scripture, heaven can refer to the realm above and beyond the cosmos, the realm of God. It can also refer to the atmosphere—in the imagery of the Bible, everything between the ground and the dome of the sky. And it’s the place that we go to be with God when we die. When we say that God is “in heaven,” we are saying all this and more. God is above and beyond the whole universe, but is as near as the air we breathe, and God will be with us when we die.

Hallowed Be Thy Name:

When we pray for God’s name to be “hallowed” (that is, holy or sanctified), we are committing ourselves to the hallowing of God’s name. Return here to the idea of *Ora et Labora*, “pray and work.” How do we hallow God’s name in our daily lives? Recognize that often, followers of Jesus give God a bad name. If we truly commit ourselves to this prayer, we will strive to be a faithful witness to God’s goodness and love, so that God’s name might be sanctified through us.

March 5, 2023

“Whose Will Be Done? Mine or Thine? Isaiah 11:6-9, Will we choose our will and our way, or will we choose God’s will and God’s kingdom?”

Thy Kingdom Come:

When we pray, we set our hearts on what we pray for. Emphasize *Thy* kingdom, *Thy* will. Our prayer here is to shift our focus away from ourselves—our desire, our power, our will—and toward the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God (or in Matthew, the kingdom of heaven) was the central focus of Jesus’s message and ministry. His healing, miracles, teaching, death, and resurrection were all an embodiment of God’s kingdom.

The Scriptures from Isaiah and Revelation give a glimpse of what it will be like when God’s kingdom finally arrives fully. This is what we pray for. But in the meantime, we can seek the inbreaking of God’s kingdom now through the way that we live. The kingdom of God is both a future reality that we hope for, and a present reality that is available to us right now. Whenever we pursue “thy and thine” instead of “my and mine,” God’s kingdom comes in our hearts.

Thy Will Be Done:

The second line of this section of the Lord’s Prayer expands upon and clarifies the first line. What does it mean for God’s kingdom to come? It means for God’s will to be done. Much of what happens in the world is contrary to God’s will. Human sinfulness, death, and disease—these things are not God’s will. Our very prayer, “thy will be done,” acknowledges that God’s will is not always done. Think about instances of pain, tragedy, or injustice around us. When we see pain or suffering in the world, our task is not to say it is God’s will, but to see how God is calling us to respond to it as a way of helping bring about God’s will. When we offer ourselves in pursuit of God’s will, we follow the example of Jesus who prayed in Gethsemane, *not my will, but your will must be done*.

On Earth as It Is in Heaven:

The kingdom of God is a future for which we pray and strive, but it is not a reality somewhere else. Our prayer is for God’s kingdom to come about on Earth, so that our world reflects God’s kingdom and God’s will. It is our calling to help make this kingdom a reality in our midst, so that the prayer tunes our hearts and minds. *Thy* kingdom come, *thy* will be done. Invite the congregation to consider examples of people pursuing God’s kingdom and God’s will in your community or in our larger society. End the sermon with a call to action, inviting the community to actively pursue God’s kingdom and strive to make it a reality on earth, as it is in heaven.

March 12, 2023

“Our Daily Bread,” Matthew 6:9-11, John 6:30-31. What we need to survive physically and spiritually.

Us and Our:

The prayer for daily bread is a communal prayer—our petition is not just for God to provide for our individual needs, but for God to provide for the needs of those around us as well. The prayer for “our daily bread” is a request for God to provide for everyone the food that they need to survive. If most in your congregation do not experience regular hunger or food insecurity, our focus should rightly be on how God calls us to help answer this prayer for those who do not have enough. Most often God works through other people. In this line of the prayer, we offer ourselves as instruments through which God can provide food for all. The Scripture passage from James shows that God calls us to both pray and work on behalf of those around us. How is God seeking to use us to answer another’s prayer for daily bread? What examples can you lift up to illustrate God providing through humans who responded faithfully to God’s call?

Our Essential Bread:

The Greek word often translated as “daily” is *epiousian*. A better translation of this phrase would be “our essential bread,” that is, the bread that we need. While for many the need for literal food is most urgent, we all have other needs as well, including the need for purpose, meaning, and fulfillment. Indeed, many who are rich in possessions have the greatest need for this kind of spiritual or existential nourishment.

When Jesus is tempted in the wilderness to produce bread from a rock, he responds (quoting Deuteronomy 8:3) that we do not live by bread alone. And in the Scripture passage from John, Jesus shows the crowd that he comes to provide more than literal food, meeting the people’s deepest spiritual needs. Jesus himself is the bread of life, and it is by serving him and following his example that we receive everything we need to live fully. If you are celebrating Communion, this is an opportunity to make that connection in the sermon.

The Answer to Our Prayers:

When we strive to meet other’s needs—to be the answer to their prayers—we find that in doing so our own needs for meaning, purpose, and spiritual nourishment are met as well. This third petition of the Lord’s Prayer encompasses both senses and again gives us a call to action. When we pray it, we are praying for God to provide for *all* our needs, for *all* people. But we are also fixing our hearts on these needs, seeking ways in which we can help meet them for others.

March 19, 2023

“Forgive As We Forgive,” Matt 6:9-15, Luke 23:32-34. Forgiveness is a spiritual need of ours—both our need for forgiveness of sins we have committed and our need to forgive others for wrongs they have done against us.

Sins, Debts, Trespasses:

Depending on your tradition, this line of the prayer could ask God to forgive us our *sins*, our *debts*, or our *trespasses*. All of these words are rooted in biblical imagery, and they each convey something to us about the reality of sin in our lives and in our world. In Scripture, the Greek and Hebrew words for *sin* mean to miss the mark or fall short in some way, or to stray from the right path. There is a right way to go, a target, and sinning is to miss that right way. Describing sin as a *debt* points to a debt that sin incurs and invokes the powerful idea that forgiveness is relief of an incredible debt, something owed that we cannot repay. To *trespass* means to go where you are not supposed to go and in this way relates to the idea of sin as missing the mark or straying from the right path. It also conveys the idea of *transgression*, going past a boundary or limit. All these words relate to the idea of a violation of others and God. Our prayer for forgiveness acknowledges that sin is a reality in our lives.

Our Need for Forgiveness:

Because we all sin, we all need forgiveness. Sin brings guilt, and it is a guilt that we often feel. The imagery of a weight or burden is helpful. When we sin, we pile weight on our shoulders like a backpack full of stones. Small sins are like smaller stones, while larger sins are huge, heavy weights that press us down and restrict our movement. The Greek word for *forgiveness* means “let go.” When we seek and receive forgiveness for our sins, we are relieved of this burden and freed to pursue life afresh. Jesus came offering forgiveness, and his death on the cross brought forgiveness to all people. Forgiveness is a deep human need, and it’s one that God recognizes and has provided for in Jesus Christ.

As We Forgive Others:

Just as our own sins create a burden for us, so also can a refusal to forgive become its own kind of burden. When someone wrongs us and we hold on to that wrong, it is also like carrying around a heavy stone. By extending forgiveness, we let go of our right for retribution. Forgiveness does mean letting go of our right to seek retribution. This line of the Lord’s Prayer links our own forgiveness with our willingness to forgive others. We are to forgive as we have been forgiven. Or, to put it another way, we are asking God to forgive us to the extent that we are forgiving toward others. This line of the prayer is a call to be as generous and gracious with our own forgiveness as we hope God will be toward us.

March 26, 2023

“Lead Us Not Into Temptation,” Matthew 6:13, Psalm 23:3, James 1:13-15. 1 Peter 5:8-9.

The Universality of Temptation:

Temptation is part of the human condition. We all are tempted, sometimes toward seemingly trivial sins like eating too much dessert and sometimes toward more serious wrongs such as an extramarital affair or theft from one’s workplace. We are all tempted. The question is how we will respond when temptation comes. Genesis 3 relates the archetypal story of temptation, when the serpent tempted Adam and Eve to eat from the forbidden tree in the Garden of Eden. The story helps us see how we are all tempted toward disobeying God and seeking our own way. Recall also that Jesus was tempted, with Satan three times tempting him in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13). Temptation is inevitable. But giving in to temptation is not. By God’s grace, we can follow God’s lead away from it.

An Odd Petition:

When we typically say this prayer, it’s as if we are asking God not to lead us into temptation—as if God might sometimes do that, and we’re asking God not to. But note how the meaning of the petition changes when we place a comma after “Lead us.” Then the prayer becomes: *Lead us, not into temptation [the way we might lead ourselves, or the way the tempter might lead us], but deliver us from evil.* This petition is asking God to lead us. We lead ourselves into temptation when we deliberately place ourselves in tempting situations, or when we entertain the idea of doing something we know is wrong. But if we ask, God will lead us. The invitation of Jesus is “come, follow me,” and the life of a Christian disciple is a life of following him. What are the means by which God leads us? How do we tune our hearts to follow God, building faithful habits by which we submit ourselves to God’s leadership in small things and in large things?

Lead US:

We often think of temptation as an individual thing. But like so much of the Lord’s Prayer, this petition asks for God to lead *us*, not just *me*. Entire nations and societies are capable of sin—think of the rise of anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany, or the Rwandan genocide in 1994, or slave ownership in the United States. We must constantly guard ourselves against the temptation to sin as a society, to seek power or wealth at the expense of others among us. This petition is not just for God to lead us as individuals, but for God to lead the church, delivering us from the evil of societal sin and helping us to actively oppose it in our day.

April 2, 2023

“Thine Kingdom, Power, Glory,” 1 Chronicles 29:11. In the concluding doxology to the Lord’s Prayer, we return to the central focus of God’s kingdom and the pursuit of “thine, not mine.” We end the prayer once again by seeking God’s kingdom, God’s power, and God’s glory, not our own.

Thine Is the Kingdom:

This doxology recalls the second petition of the Lord’s Prayer and returns us to God’s kingdom, which is the central focus not only of this prayer but of Jesus’s life and ministry. There’s a political element here that cannot be avoided. By seeking God’s kingdom, God’s reign and rule, we recognize God’s authority over and above any human government or authority. Where in your context does God’s authority and kingdom come into conflict with human authority? What examples can you lift up of people choosing to pursue God’s kingdom above all else? By seeking God’s rule and reign, we can avoid the temptation to many societal sins described at the end of the previous sermon.

Thine Is the Power:

With this line we submit our own power—that is, our talents, our ability, or skills, and our influence—to God’s purposes. Not only do we ascribe ultimate power to God, we give to God whatever power we have as well. Power corrupts, as the well-known saying holds, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. But in committing our power to God and God’s purposes, we avoid corruption and find that our power is used for the greatest purposes possible. Invite your congregation to consider what power, ability, and influence they have, and how they might direct these things toward God’s purposes.

Thine Is the Glory:

When we pray “thine is the glory,” we recognize that God’s glory, not our own, is to be the primary focus of our lives. This can challenge our pride to defer recognition for something good we have done, truly pointing to God rather than to ourselves. But when we seek God’s glory, we commit ourselves to living in a way that honors God, as we saw in the first petition of the prayer, “hallowed be thy name.” Do our lives reflect God’s glory, such that others will recognize it in the way we behave and speak? Do we focus our own energy and attention on what will bring glory to God?

Conclusion:

When we pray it each day, we focus our hearts on God’s holiness, kingdom, and will; on the essential bread of life; on the forgiveness of our sins and our forgiveness of others; on allowing God to lead us; and on God’s power and glory, forever.

FUMC is Alive and Well!

We have completed our year end accounting, and I am happy to report that thanks to the amazing generosity of our church family, and much hard work on behalf of the Finance Team, we ended the year in the black!

In the face of unexpected hardship and waning(hopefully) effects of the pandemic, we have emerged stronger and more committed than ever!

We are far wiser now, and I am confident that the newly formed policies and procedures will safeguard our finances now and in the future.

I'm excited for the future.

Instead of words, and wishful thinking, we are now planning AND implementing new activities, partnerships, and programs to bring life back to FUMC and downtown Marion.

In light of the uncertainty in the world, our country, our denomination, our church, it is understandable if you feel unsettled when it comes to stewardship and pledged giving.

Know that we are grateful for each and every gift. I hope you will prayerfully consider what you can offer to support our mission!

We have many volunteer opportunities, special projects and offerings. Watch the Focus and Sunday programs for new ways to share your unique gifts and talents!

"There are three things that remain- faith, hope and love- and the greatest of these is love" 1Cor.13:13.

Denise Pearson-Harshman
Finance Chair



STEWARDSHIP

Managing God's Gifts To Us

Marie P. Brown Trust

FUMC received a generous gift from the Marie P. Brown Trust in late December of 2022. As Finance Chair, I was curious to know the history of the Trust so I put on my detective hat and started digging! I found documents in the office including a copy of Marie's will and the charter document of the Trust.

The Trust was formed in 2004 and has provisions to donate to FUMC, the Community Foundation, and the Marion General Hospital Auxiliary. The Trust also provides funds to maintain the gravesites of several relatives. Apparently each of these groups were dear to Marie's heart. I was interested in knowing more about Marie, so I reached out to my lifelong friend Joan Brown, who was a friend of Marie's.

Marie was an educator, first teaching at McCullough Junior High, and then as Dean Of Women at Marion High School. She married at age 48 to Lymon Brown, a postman from Sweetser. She lived most of her life on Valley Avenue, and was a neighbor and close friend of Marie Whitecotton. She loved her church family and sat near the front of the sanctuary on the east side. Joan met Marie through the "Investors Club", which has since disbanded. Joan described her as an independent, self sufficient woman.

The Trust is managed by the Regions Bank Trust department and distributes her gifts annually.

We traditionally have received the gift in July, but the Trust was reformed in 2022; the formula and distribution were changed, to our benefit. The Trust specifies that the monies are to be used for monthly operating expenses of the church. While not "glamorous" or "spiritual", Marie was wise in knowing that a church cannot keep its doors open without paying for the lights, heat, air-conditioning, water, trash removal, cleaning, office supplies and staff.

We are grateful to Marie for this gift. Her legacy can truly be appreciated every day!

~Denise Pearson-Harshman
Finance Chair



March Special Offering

1st Sunday Coin Collection, Mar 5th, will go to Cancer Services of Grant County.

"Our mission is a comprehensive effort to increase survival rates and embrace families facing cancer in Grant County"

www.GrantCounterCancer.org



MARCH 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
			AA 6pm FH Al-Anon & Alateen 6pm 3rd Floor		Block Party 5 & 6 pm FUMC	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1st Sunday Coin Offering - Heart Association			Committee Chairs Noon Parlor AA 6pm FH Al-Anon & Alateen 6pm 3rd Floor	Missions & Outreach 10:30 am Fell. Hall		
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	Administrative Council Mtg 6pm Parlor		AA 6pm FH Al-Anon & Alateen 6pm 3rd Floor <i>FOCUS Deadline</i>	Noodle Making 1 pm Kitchen & F.H.	Noodle Bagging Kitchen & F.H. Open Mic Night 7-9 pm	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Pastor Out	Pastor Out United Women in Faith White Elephant Sale 6pm-F.H.	Pastor Out Endowment	Pastor Out AA 6pm FH Al-Anon & Alateen 6pm 3rd Floor	Pastor Out	Pastor Out	
26	27	28	29	30	31	
			Committee Chairs Noon Parlor AA 6pm FH Al-Anon & Alateen 6pm 3rd Floor			

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'It's time to begin again.'

Ball State department chair and Indiana Landmarks director addresses community following SOS guided tours.

By TAYLOR FRYMIER
tfrymier@chronicle-tribune.com

On Saturday, following the Celebrate Historic Preservation guided tours with Save Our Stories, a Ball State professor presented the talk, "Making A Way Out Of No Way In Anti-Black Space: Fourth World Nation Building in Indiana in the 19th and 20th Century."

"Our cultural landscape is in jeopardy," Olin Dotson told those attending including members of SOS and Discover Marion Downtown at the Gethsemane Episcopal Fellowship Hall."

"As a place like Marion continues to struggle in this post-industrial, post-agrarian, post-developing, what I call, 'fourth-world space,' we can learn from the trials, tribulations and trauma of the Black people who once lived in this anti-Black space," he continued.

Throughout the presentation, Dotson, who serves as chair of the Department of Architecture and Planning at Ball State University and as a board member at Indiana Landmarks, discussed the importance of acknowledging Black contributions to the development of rural America, and that preserving and restoring all of the cultural heritage found in crumbling architecture is consistent with preserving Indiana's soul.

"In fourth world space, the primary challenge is to

reimagine life as a means to heal humanity," said Dotson, "a humanity that has been subjected to the ills of hatred, greed and power for its entire existence."

"It's time to begin again," he continued. "Out of desperation and absolute necessity, ... individuals and groups of individuals, like SOS, are emerging through grassroots organizations and movements focused on transformation and survival."

He went on to highlight the important contributions of various African American architects, paying special attention to the work of Samuel Plato who built important local buildings such as the Hostess House, First Baptist Church, the Ginger Lee House, the Platonian Apartments and the J. Woodrow Wilson House.

Plato began his architectural career in Marion at a time when segregation and racism made it challenging for African-American professionals, such as architects.

Dotson concluded his presentation with a question-and-answer session where he addressed issues of Black architectural legacy and hope in the face of increasingly dire conditions.

"I struggle every day with hope," Dotson said. "But without hope, there is no reason to get up in the morning. There's no reason to come here and have this conversation with you."

Save Our Stories partnered with Discover Marion Downtown to host guided tours of important historical Marion sites in a "Celebrate Historic Preservation" event on Saturday.

Specifically focused on



Participants tour First United Methodist Church which is nearing it's Centennial.

South Washington Street neighborhoods, these guided tours took attendees to Gethsemane Episcopal, 1st United Methodist, Ridley Tower, God's House, PCC & St. Louis Train Depot, House of Worship for All People and the 917 South Adams Street house, also called the Ginger Lee House.

Tourists were transported from site to site via an old fashioned trolley rented from Wabash.

Save Our Stories is a local historical preservation group with the mission to protect and nourish the vitality of historic structures, landscapes and districts within the City of Marion.

"SOS has always been an amazing neighbor and advocate to our historic downtown!" Kayla Johnson, Neighborhood Association Coordinator for DMD, told the Chronicle-Tribune over the phone on Wednesday.

"A few years ago," she continued, "the Marion National Bank building was vacant and in need of care. SOS advocated at the state level, telling the story of that building and Indiana Landmarks placed the

building on a list of the ten most endangered spaces in the state of Indiana." continued from back cover: She went on to say that this advocacy attained the attention of developers, leading to Halstead's eventual purchase and restoration of the building. Additionally, the Ginger Lee house is currently being restored due to SOS's championing, and is currently being planned as a combination Airbnb and garden-to-table Italian restaurant. SOS announced at the end of the tours that they had closed on the Firestone Building and would begin renovation efforts there soon. Learn about Save Our Stories through their social media accounts or visit sosmarion.wordpress.com.

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