

FIRST NEWS AND NOTES

A Newsletter of The First United Methodist Church in Hagerstown IN

February 2021



Dear First Church Family,

On Sunday, February 7, our SPRC chair, Amy Zetzi, announced that I have been appointed to serve at Churubusco United Methodist Church in Churubusco, Indiana. This new appointment will begin July 1st. This news has been a shock to many, and it is quite natural to be sad or upset. It will indeed be hard to say goodbye to all of you when that time comes in the summer. In this letter, I would like to briefly explain why this has happened and how you as a church can move forward.

First, as Amy stated in the announcement Sunday, this change in appointment was not requested by the SPRC or myself, but rather was a missional appointment made by the Bishop and cabinet after much discernment and prayer. Although it will be hard to say goodbye, I have accepted this appointment and believe it will be a good one. As a United Methodist ordained pastor, I believe that God works through the appointment process and the work of the cabinet.

In the United Methodist Church, all ordained elders enter a covenant with one another. Part of that covenant is that we will go where the bishop and cabinet sends us. The cabinet consists of the conference superintendents of our conference. From January through May, the cabinet has many meetings to make church appointments for the appointment year, which starts in July. The cabinet spends time in prayer and discernment as they seek to match churches in need of a pastor with someone whose gifts will match what that church needs. The cabinet has decided that I am the best fit for that church.

So what now? This means that the Bishop and cabinet will now be looking to find a pastor for our church. During this process, our conference superintendent will be in conversation with the SPRC team to hear what attributes they feel our church needs in a new pastor. The input of the SPRC will be taken into account as the cabinet makes their decision. This process could take a while so please be patient. When a pastor is chosen, he or she will meet with the conference superintendent and our SPRC team to make the appointment official. On a Sunday shortly following that meeting, an announcement will be made in church as to who your next pastor will be.

While we are now in a moment of transition, there is still a biblical mandate to advance the Kingdom of God in Hagerstown as it is in heaven. We are called to be the hands and feet of Jesus even while we enter into a season of goodbye and hello. The lost are still in desperate need of rescue, the gospel still needs preached, the hungry and hurting still need to be cared for. My hope is that we will, as I have always encouraged, keep our eyes on Jesus and live out our call.

Grace and Peace, Pastor John

Church Mouse Musings

JOYFUL HOPE

Good News! The Indiana Bureau of Health opened up Covid vaccinations to people age 70+. I managed to get scheduled for my first shot after ten hours of frustration and multiple failures using the online link. I tried the alternate phone number which had two hour plus wait times when I called only to get a message eventually telling me to register online. Obviously the system was overwhelmed by a torrent of seniors desperate to get released from Covid lockdown. Persistence produces character and my eventual success. Praise God! I was elated, feeling relief and hope.

Then the next day I got a call that the online system had scheduled me for the wrong day. I needed to reschedule online. Horrors! I begged the caller from my local Reid Health system to help me if she could. Praise God for kind, compassionate health care workers. After an extended pause, "Could I do an early 8:00 AM slot" on a later date? "YES!" So now I wait with renewed anticipation with all the other newly registered seniors. I am grateful for all those who developed, produced and are now administering the Covid vaccines. There are new reports that the outgoing federal officials had falsely promised to release additional vaccine doses from their reserves for 2nd round shots. There were no reserve doses. States would not be getting the promised additional amounts. Again we wait to see if we will get our scheduled vaccinations. Hopefully the vaccination program can be improved and expanded quickly to stem the catastrophic spread of the virus and get our country back to a new normal. We need to pray for our new administration, for our country and our people as we deal with multiple problems. May God protect and bless you all. By Paula Guth

Romans 12:12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

Winter Greetings
Church Family!



UMW & Others—
Continue saving
postage stamps &
box labels.
Containers in

How I miss seeing
you on Sunday Mornings and at
various functions. Maybe someday soon we can again
see each other face to face. With help from a couple of
friends, I've put together a Calendar of Events for our
Unit of United Methodist Women for the year 2021
which I'll be sharing with you in this article.

So let's get started: We need to have a ZOOM
Executive Meeting in February to make decisions about
our Bank account, in light of the change in treasurer
we made this year. So we will have an Executive Zoom
meeting Tuesday, February 9th at 7 p.m. This should be
a fairly short meeting as I will only have the one item on
my agenda. Please, if there are things you want to
bring before our Executive Committee, please contact
me this week to get those added. I will be reaching out
to all officers this week to make sure you know this
meeting is slated. As for the rest of the Calendar, here's
what we've put together:

Tuesday, March 9th @ 7 p.m. Zoom Executive
Saturday, March 20th @ 10 a.m. Zoom General

Tuesday, June 22nd @ 7 p.m. TBD Executive
Monday July 5th 5:30 p.m. TBD Gen.
Morning Glories host

Tuesday, August 10th @ 7 p.m. TBD Executive
Saturday, August 28th 5:30 p.m. TBD Gen.
Reflections host

Tuesday October 19 @ 7 p.m. TBD Executive
Saturday, November 6th @ 12:30 TBD General
O of Friendship host -light lunch served

Circle Sisters you don't need to worry about getting
these dates on a calendar. Our sister Susie Lewis has
been busy putting together a Date Book for us and we
will be getting them to all of our Membership soon. At
the January Zoom meeting for O of Friendship, Jean
Dilley pointed out the Board for United Methodist
Women had determined they would not be printing
Date Books for the year 2021 so Susie graciously
offered to step up and create a Date Book for our
Hagerstown Women. She's done a great job and as I
stated above, we will be working to get them into
everyone's hands in the near future.

In a recent devotion I read the scripture reading from
Isaiah 26:3-13 and the particular verse featured in the
Devotion was verse 3...You will keep in perfect peace
those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in
you." As the writer shared her thoughts she reminded
us "...God invites us to be honest with Him...He remains
with us and refreshes our spirits with enduring hope." I
know I need God's enduring hope to get thru this
challenging New Year of 2021. I pray you are seeking in
His word daily to find the hope you need.

President Mindy Smith

80+ & 90+ Birthdays

George Anderson
February 5

110 W Graceland
Heights Dr Hag.

JoAnne Sager
February 12

249 W Main St Hag.

Martha Giggy **February 21**

2507 Oak Park Ct Richmond

Karen Leonard **February 26**

152 W College St Hag.

FEBRUARY



Sympathies to Our Church Families



To **Bob Hansen's family** at the passing of his
mother, Audra, on January 14, 2021. She joined our
church in 2018 and participated in Jean Dilley's Sunday
School class. It was so nice to have her at worship each

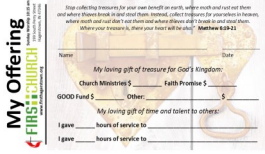
Sunday. She was living with her caregivers,
son Bob & wife Pat.

To **Susie Lewis and family** at the recent passing of
her mother, Mae Monroe of Richmond.

To the **families of Raymond Sharp** who passed
away November 25, 2020. He was an active part of the
church in construction/remodeling the kitchen, the
upstairs room for Children's Sunday School,
Work Camps and an active community person.

To **Ron Luellen and his family** at the passing of his
wife, Doris, December 5th, 2020. Doris was retired from
the elementary school as a wonderful teacher. She was
loved by many of her former students as their favorite.
She always had a smile for everyone and participated in
church activities before her health declined.

To **Debbie (Asche) and Steve Cox and their
families** at the passing of her mother, Mary Asche, on
December 17, 2020. Mary was active in many church
activities before Ted's and her health declined. She was
one of our newsletters volunteers. She is missed not
only for helping but for her fellowship sharing.



Treasurer's Report by our Church Treasurer Greta Gustin

	Total 2018	Total 2019	Total 2020
Total Operating Receipts	\$188,423	\$186,394	\$181,214
Less: Total Operating Expenses	(\$194,049)	(\$185,032)	(\$161,525)
Net Operating Income (Loss)	(\$5,626)	\$1,362	\$19,689

**Operating revenue\expenses exclude Faith Promise, GOOD Fund and Discretionary Spending.

The last few months of 2018 our leadership stood before you to say that contributions were not enough to cover our operating expenses. Despite receiving a \$10,000 boost in December 2018 contributions, we ended 2018 with a **\$5,626** shortfall.

In 2019 we were focused on the roof replacement with our entire goal of \$35,000 met and paid. We made the tough call to not replace the departing Youth Director with a paid position. Volunteers stepped up to fill this need. Adam left the beginning of August. This saved us \$11,600 in 2019 versus 2018.

In 2020 we had the Covid-19 challenge preventing in-person-worship for much of the year. The Federal Payroll Protection Plan provided \$18,800 which was added to Operating Income to compensate for reduced contributions and cover our payroll expense. The eliminated Youth Director position saved \$18,400 compared to 2019 (\$30,000 vs. 2018).

But the bigger story for 2020 is the difference we made using money donated and spent from Faith Promise and Discretionary Funds. While Adult Work Camp and CAC (Children's' Art Camp) had to be cancelled, the Leadership Table decided to use accumulated funds in Faith Promise to help those struggling with the impact of the Covid-19 virus.

\$3,000 was donated to the Jefferson Township office to be used as needed for Food Pantry or Utility Bill support for those locally out of work due to Covid – 19 shutdown.

\$2,820 was sent to the Northern Dine Covid-19 Relief Effort to provide emergency grants to tribal communities and organizations to bring food, water, and other emergency supplies to some of the hardest-hit families and communities impacted by COVID-19 across the Navajo, Apache, and Pueblos of New Mexico and beyond.

\$2,000 went to the Lucille Raines Residence in Indianapolis. Owned and operated by United Methodist Women of Indiana, the men and women, who are residents, are actively engaged in rebuilding their lives from substance abuse. The residence had a special need in 2020 for critical building maintenance.

\$1,000 was transferred from Faith Promise to the fund for Recharge Meals.
\$1,100 cash was donated directly from members and the community for Recharge Meals.

Additionally many members donated food, time, labor and gas to make and distribute these meals. At its peak we fed 130 people a night. \$790 remains along with supplies for future meals when a reduction in the Covid risk allows.

\$1,839 was donated by members for pass-through to the Township Food Pantry.

Full financial reports are available upon request and I am glad to answer any questions.
Please forward questions to the Church Office. Greta Gustin

First Church Bank Balances at Dec. 31, 2020		Designated Gifts Balances	
Operating Expense Fund	\$33,105	Adult Work Camp	\$8,650
GOOD Building Fund	\$22,021	Hurricane Disaster Fund	\$ 897
Long Term Savings	\$47,149	Recharge Dinner	\$ 793
Faith Promise	\$10,554	Youth CAC	\$2,850
Other Designated	\$14,931	Plastic Table Fund	\$ 420
Total All Funds	\$127,760	Memorial Gifts - Music	\$ 321
		Memorial- Undesignated	\$1,000
		Total Other Designated	\$14,931

WANT TO TALK ABOUT RACE?

Our Women's Sunday School class latest book is "So You Want to Talk About Race" by Ijeoma Olou. It is a New York Times best seller, and also on the UMW reading I list. We have been having great honest discussions and learning a lot about ourselves and others. It helps us see how people of color see the world, and it is both enlightening and helpful. One reviewer stated that her words are daggers that pierce through injustice, while also disarming you with humor and love.

I have chosen some lines from the book. I am not telling you if the author thinks they are true or not. You will have to read the book or come to our class to find out.

We need to focus more on class than race.
You get more because they exist to get less.
It is about race if it disproportionately or differently affects people of color.

We have been having 9-12 people at each meeting.
We would love to have you join us any Sunday eve at 7 pm for an hour via ZOOM.

Please call me or the church office if you would like to join our study.

Jean Dilley

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First Hagerstown
United Methodist Church



First United Methodist

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