

FIRST NEWS AND NOTES

A Newsletter of The First United Methodist Church in Hagerstown IN

September 2022

Pastor Nate

Shares: When you hear the phrase "God Sightings," what comes to mind? Is it a sunset or a sunrise? Is it the beauty of nature?

Is it friendship and love? What about the less obvious things like a hot meal or a full tank of gas? God Sightings are all around us, we only need to look.

God Sightings are where we see God at work in our lives or the lives of others and we can declare these through our praises. They are also areas of life where we would love to see God work more because we know it is needed and we express these through our prayers. The idea behind watching for God sightings is to help us to become more observant to all things in life that have God's fingerprint on them and those that are in need of His special touch. Essentially, God Sightings are noticing where God's love is intersecting with our lives.

Many of us, myself included, spend a LOT of time bird watching, people watching, kid watching, parent watching, TV watching, movie watching, sports watching, nature watching, whale watching...you get the point. We are always watching something. Whether intentionally or unintentionally, our focus is always on something or someone. While none of these things listed are bad in and of themselves, I wonder how many of us are noticing God's love in them.

Are we being intentional about seeing God? Do we look for Him to show up in only the BIG things of life? Are we just as excited to see Him in the little things as we are in the life-changing things?

I am not a perfect person, nor do I notice all the great and incomprehensible ways that God's love intersects with my life. That is probably because I am too focused on other "stuff" or, even worse, myself. However, when I do notice His love intersecting with my life, I let Him know! Noticing God interacting and intersecting with your life is a great way to grow in your faith because it helps us notice how God is working to change us.

Philippians 1:6 says, "And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns." This verse tells us so much about God sightings. We should have no trouble seeing God at work if we understand this verse. The two most important things we learn from this verse are God never leaves us (I don't know about you, but working on me is a 24/7 kind of job!) and God cares enough about us to stay until the job is done. That takes love and commitment – two things that God NEVER stops giving to us.

So this day, week, month, and year take some time to notice the ways that God's love is intersecting with your life. Be intentional about your God Sighting!



A BAND OF ANGELS?

We all wonder what heaven or our journey there will be like. Recently I heard "Angel Band," a sweet lyrical Oak Ridge Boys gospel song describing a band of angels coming for a believer who is passing from this world to the next. "O come angel band, come and around me stand. O bear me away on your snowy wings to my immortal home." It creates a beautiful peaceful image in my mind of how we will journey from this life to our eternal life with Jesus.

I have a different boisterous exciting image of my final journey involving my beloved Aunt Joyce. She had a congenital chronic heart condition which meant a life with periods of good health interspersed with the need for extended bed rest at times. She lived life to the fullest, loved others with a joyful spirit and always had time for us kids. One of my favorite childhood memories is the time I spent an afternoon with her riding a golf cart on a local golf course. It was my first and only exposure to golfing as a kid. Sometimes we would stop and try to hit a golf ball, but mostly we just cruised around and giggled a lot as I remember my special day with Aunt Joyce.

She died way too soon. Shortly after her death we learned a familiar black gospel song in junior choir at church. "Swing low sweet chariot coming for to carry me home." I visualized a singing band of black angels coming down after me. My blue-eyed Aunt Joyce with her light brown hair surrounded by a glowing angel halo was driving the lead golf cart chariot. She would pick me up for a rollicking ride up to heaven. We would be surrounded by the black angel choir for our golf cart chariot trip while singing the rousing "Swing low sweet chariot" hymn. What a joyous adventure that would be!

I don't know which band of angels might show up to carry me home. I would love to be escorted with heavenly music on angel wings or with Aunt Joyce's chariot choir for my final journey to my immortal home. Praise God for all the beautiful inspiring music and those who play and sing it. To God be the glory! *Psalm 90:1 "Sing to the Lord a new song, Sing to the Lord, all the earth"*

Paula Guth, the Church Mouse

Reflections Circle take note: Due to Labor Day Celebration, we will be meeting Tuesday 9/6/22 at 1:30 in Fellowship Hall.



We will have our World Thank program and offering this year in September. Kay Ulerick will do the program and refreshments by Kay and Marcia Miller.

MOBILE FOOD PANTRY 2022

If you need extra help, Joe Smith will assist you. Located at 47 E Main Street, Hagerstown. Office will be closed most holidays. Please call Joe Smith at (765) 489-4824

Jefferson Twp - Hagerstown 4th Thursday

| Date | Serving Hours |
|--------------|---------------|
| APRIL 28 | 10 am – 12 pm |
| MAY 26 | 10 am – 12 pm |
| JUNE 23 | 10 am – 12 pm |
| JULY 28 | 10 am – 12 pm |
| AUG UST 25 | 10 am – 12 pm |
| SEPTEMBER 22 | 10 am – 12 pm |

Mission

Dawson Springs Work Camp 8-11-22 Most Productive



TRIP

Dawson Springs, Kentucky, a town the size of Hagerstown, was hit by a tornado during the late evening on Friday, December 10, 2021. This tornado, now called the “Western Kentucky Tornado,” was on the ground for nearly three hours and traveled 166 miles, which is the ninth longest in recorded history. It was an EF4 tornado with estimated peak winds of 190 mph. The tornado caused 57 fatalities, with fourteen of those deaths in Dawson Springs. Dawson Springs had 1200 houses prior to the tornado and over 400 of the homes were destroyed, along with numerous businesses and other buildings.

Our base for the work camp was the Hanson Baptist Church in Hanson, Kentucky, which is about a half hour north of Dawson Springs. We ate our meals at the Baptist Church. Due to the availability of space, half of the group stayed at the Baptist Church and the other half stayed at the Hanson Methodist Church, which was about two miles away. Most of our 22 work campers arrived on Sunday, July 31. Our group consisted of 17 people from Indiana, 2 from Kentucky, 2 from Missouri, and 1 from Georgia.

We worked on seven different houses plus we did some work in the habitat warehouse in Madisonville, which is the county seat of Hopkins County where we were working. The work we did included: Concrete Patios Painting Hanging doors, windows, and blinds, Drywall on ceilings and walls; Installing roof trusses Installing updated bathroom fixtures Installing handrails on a balcony Other miscellaneous work.

Our kitchen crew was led by Donna Winters and consisted of Susie Lewis, Sharon Howell, and Lisa Warner. The meals were great all week long!

The Baptist Church is next to a very active set of railroad tracks so we had to get used to hearing multiple trains through the night. The church is also next to the Hanson Fire Station, so we were awakened three times by the severe storm warning sirens on Monday night. Hanson received over 2.5” of rain that night and again on Thursday night so we were also fighting muddy conditions at some of the worksites.

Overall, this was one of the most productive work camps that we have been on. Numerous organizations are helping with the reconstruction of houses in the area so when one group ran low on work due to rain/muddy conditions or lack of supplies, we were able to quickly coordinate with the other groups and perform work at another location. Because the need is still there, because this was such a productive work camp, and because it takes less than five hours to get to the Dawson Springs area from Hagerstown, we have already arranged to have a work camp at this same area from April 16 through April 22, 2023. We hope many of you will consider attending the work camp next year. As usual, I believe our work campers all got more out of the work camp than they gave. We help rebuild houses, we have good fellowship and good food, we make new friends, and we are able to help people in their time of need..

80+ & 90+ Happy Birthday!

Dixie Fast is **80** on September 7

14130 Jones Rd Hagerstown



Happy Birthday! Don Myers

Don Myers is **90** on September 24

Friends Fellowship, 2030 Chester Blvd
Richmond IN 47374



United Women in Faith September News

United Women in Faith are getting used to our new name. We all have stumbled over and around it, but each time we say it, it glides across our tongue a little easier. We are still the same active bunch, and we are here with open arms to have you join us.

Here is what is going on:

On **Saturday, Sept. 10** the women of East District will be attending our Fall meeting at the Yorktown UMC. Registration begins at 9:00, and the program will start at 9:30. The speaker is Cecelia Whitfield, founder and director of "Use What You Got" prison ministry. She introduces herself by saying, "My name is Cecelia Whitfield, and I am the mother of an inmate." Come and hear how she lives her life, makes sure families throughout Indiana visit their beloved inmates, and why she named her ministry, "Use What You Got." (Our District Team is collecting yarn for the Indiana Women's Prison. Please bring your unwanted yarn to this meeting. Do NOT buy any new yarn.)

Two weeks later we have our regular General Meeting in Fellowship Hall at 10:00 a.m. on **September 24th**. Morning Glories Circle will provide a brunch. Our speaker will be our very own Heather Eckert. She will tell us about her work at A Better Way. Their mission is to reduce domestic abuse, and sexual assault, suicide, and homelessness through service, shelter, crisis intervention, and prevention. Heather will tell what it is like to work there, and how we can volunteer.

The **Car Show is Saturday, October 8**, at the elementary. It was decided that we would again have breakfast and lunch served there like we did last year. In the near future we will have more information and a sign up sheet. It is our fundraising that makes our missions possible.

Jean Dillely submitted this month for President Mindy Smith

What has our President Mindy been doing?

She has been so busy. She had a wonderful time in July with all her family visiting. She and Joe saw their granddaughter from Canada for the first time in the flesh. It had not been possible since the Covid outbreak. Matthew, Drew, & Erin threw a 50+ wedding anniversary party for their Parents.

Since Mindy & Joe sold their home (cabin in the woods) earlier in the year, it was time to move. So moving they have done.

**Preparing the home is what they are doing now.
Their address will be 249 W Main St.**

May God bless their new home!



**September Sermon Series –
Church Hurt: Finding Healing**



**September 4th – You Hypocrites
Matthew 23:1–36**

**September 11th – Gone, Gossiping
James 3:1–18 (Jay Marshall)**

**September 18th – Judgment Jerks
Romans 14:1–12**

**September 25th – Reconciliation
Reality 1 Corinthians 12:12–27**

**September Sermon Series –
Church Hurt: Finding Healing**

Big Idea of the Series:

This series addresses common causes of wounds that people experience from church life. Many people have been burned by other church members or church leaders, and the pain often leaves them feeling confused, hurt, and isolated. God does not take this lightly; in Scripture, he calls out our hypocrisy, hurtful tongues, and judgmental attitudes.

Church life is messy,

*but it is also a place of hope,
comfort, and reconciliation.*

It is never too late to start fresh
with God and his people.

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