FIRST NEWS AND NOTES

A Newsletter of The First United Methodist Church in Hagerstown IN May 2023

Since May is Mental Health Month, I wanted to share some information with you. Pastor Nate.

I am sure that these last couple of years have brought a lot of unseen changes to how you live your life. Unfortunately, along with these unseen changes little stowaways have tagged along – stowaways like uncertainty, altered daily routines, financial pressures, and of course social isolation/interaction. You may worry about getting sick or what the future will bring. We are all dealing with information overload and all this information can make things feel out of control and you are unclear what to do.

Over the last couple of years, you may have experienced more stress, anxiety, fear, sadness, and loneliness than ever before. Mental health disorders, including anxiety and depression, can even become worse. With all that being said I want to share some self-care strategies that can help you care for your mind and body.

Take Care of Your Body:

- **Get enough sleep** - Go to bed and get up at the same time each day. Stick close to your normal schedule, even if you're staying at home.
- **Participate in regular physical activity** - Regular physical activity and exercise can help reduce anxiety and improve your mood. Find an activity that includes movement, such as dancing or walking or yard work.
- **Eat healthy** – Try and eat a well-balanced diet. Avoid loading up on junk food and refined sugar. Limit caffeine because it can aggravate stress and anxiety.
- **Relax and recharge** – Remember to set aside time for yourself. Even a few minutes of quiet time can be refreshing and help to quiet your mind and reduce anxiety. Soak in a bubble bath, listen to music, or read or listen to a book — whatever helps you relax.

Take Care of Your Mind:

- **Keep your regular routine** - Keeping a regular schedule is important to your mental health. In addition to sticking to a regular bedtime routine, keep consistent times for meals, bathing and getting dressed, work or study schedules, and exercise. Also set aside time for activities you enjoy. This predictability can make you feel more in control.
- **Stay active** - A distraction can get you away from the cycle of negative thoughts that feed anxiety and depression. Enjoy hobbies, identify a new project, or clean out that closet you promised you'd get to. Doing something positive to manage anxiety is a healthy coping strategy.

Take care of your mind continues:

- **Focus on positive thoughts** - Choose to focus on the blessings in your life, instead of dwelling on how bad you feel. Consider starting each day by listing things you are thankful for. This can help to maintain a sense of hope.

Connect With Others – Build, support, and strengthen relationships

- **Make connections** - Find time each day to make virtual connections by email, texts, phone, Face Time or other similar ways. If you prefer in-person connection, invite a friend to lunch, visit family for dinner or get a group together for coffee and conversation.
- **Do Something for Others** - Find purpose in helping the people around you. For example, email, text or call to brighten the day of friends, family members and neighbors. If you know someone who can't get out, ask if there's something needed, such as groceries or a prescription picked up, for instance.

These are just some tips to help with mental health that I found on the Mayo Clinic's website. One other way that can help relieve stress and anxiety and can help the body and the mind – stay connected to God. Remember our Christian hope is not that we will never battle storms in life, but that God will be with us in those storms. Jesus is our Emmanuel (God with us) and in His last moments before being arrested, He was praying for you (John 17). During that prayer, He prayed for you to be kept safe. Jesus also encourages us to take heart because He has overcome the world. Let us be encouraged by the ONE thing that we know for certain – God is still on the throne!

Be encouraged. Be safe. Be blessed. Pastor Nate

Join us on May 13th for another fun day of hiking!

This is a great outing for all ages a very family-friendly. We will be hiking at Ouabache State Park in Bluffton, IN. We will explore the beautiful trails, see bison, and climb a fire tower (if you're not afraid of heights of course!) We will meet in the church parking lot on May 13th at 10am and then off to hike! See Pastor Nate if you have any questions.

The Church Mouse *by Paula Guth*

I have attached ANTICIPATION, my May Church Mouse. Yes, I know it is about me again, but I have been told to write about what I know-here it is. We all have lots of

ANTICIPATION

As a child I looked forward to holidays, family gatherings, playing baseball, picnics, swimming in the lake, sledding parties and the County Fair. I grew up in a large family on a typical dairy farm. We all had chores, learned good work habits and to faithfully care for our animals, younger siblings and elderly family members. Complaining about being bored resulted in either being sent out to play or more chores to keep us busy. Even if we didn't have much money or fancy toys, we spent our time together with siblings, cousins or neighbors doing chores and having fun. We learned to share many things including a double bed with a sibling in an unheated upstairs bedroom. Most of our friends and cousins shared a similar lifestyle that I remember with fondness.

As an adult, I was blessed to spend many decades working at a job I loved and volunteering in different ways to serve my community. It was very rewarding as I always got back way more than I gave, in love and friendship. I had lifelong neighbors, friends and relatives surrounding me. Then almost a decade ago, I moved from rural NE Wisconsin to rural eastern Indiana to be closer to most of my siblings and their families who had relocated to Indiana and lower Michigan. They did not want to leave me behind. It has been a good move. I have enjoyed more time with family and have a new church family. I look forward to regular family visits and gatherings. I have wheels and good health, so off I go if they don't come here.

Now, I am anticipating a road trip back to Wisconsin in May. I will share a house on the scenic Peshtigo River with my sister Greta and my niece Becky and Brian from Iowa. My baby sister has her 50th Class Reunion. We can't wait to visit with our WI extended family and old friends. Sadly, more of my loved ones

Church Mouse Continues: have gone on to heaven and I will have to wait a little longer to see them again. It makes me more aware of how short our time here may be and the need to intentionally reconnect. I am looking forward to the various green colors and colorful blooms of spring in WI. I hope to hear the frogs singing by the river in the evenings. As a farmer's kid, I'll check out the progress of spring field work signaling a season of rebirth. As wonderful as this all sounds, the best is yet to be. 2 Corinthians 4:18 "So we fix our eyes, not on what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal." With faith and by the grace of God, we can anticipate an eternity enveloped by heavenly glory with our Lord and Savior. I hope and pray we will all get together again in Heaven. To God be the glory!

Paula Guth, the Church Mouse

The Faith and Reason
Adult Sunday School Class
starting a new series May 7.

The class meets at 9am each Sunday in Fellowship Hall. Our new series is entitled How Jesus Became God. Our presenter is renowned biblical scholar Dr. Bart Ehrman. Using scripture as his base this study looks at the many facets of how and when Jesus became God. Each DVD session is 30 minutes long followed by class discussion.
Hope you can join us!

Ushers, Greeters, Flowers for the altar! Sign up sheets are on the Bulletin Board across the Church Office doors so that you may sign up for a Sunday, or for a whole month!

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN IS NOW UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH!

This new name is part of a refreshment of our organization that includes a new look, new and improved programs, and a way to nurture our current members as well as welcome new women into our organization. United Women in Faith will continue to put love into action as we advocate for women, children, and youth.

Our Logo for United Women In Faith! United Methodist Women will be maintained as the legal name of this organization while operating as United Women in Faith and is still the only official women's organization of the UM Church.

Our District's Spring Meeting was very nice. Hostesses of Losantville UMC made the event with the Speaker, Fellowship, Brunch and Lunch. They made us feel so welcomed. Hagerstown WIF had several of their members present.

Mission Moment

Making a difference in our Community

Chris Lane, Township Trustee

Our Jefferson Township Food Pantry continues to reach out to those in need. As part of our partnership with them, we will continue to collect donations at church and or take to the Food Pantry for distribution. **For May and June we are collecting canned goods. Can be vegetables or fruit. Thank you very much for your continued support.**

- Gleaners-Physically by participating in the distribution of the food provided once a month. Come on the fourth Thursday of the month at 9:00 a.m. to assist in repackaging and loading cars for those in need. The fellowship is great!

- Monetary donations can be made at any time. Just mark your check or cash envelope for Food Pantry and drop it in the offering plate. These funds will be used to purchase meat and discounted food from regional distribution centers.

Another Mission Opportunity Sends Us to Kentucky

reported by Jim Howell

A little over 16 months ago 190 mph winds destroyed more than 400 homes and damaged many more in Dawson Springs in Western Kentucky. Fifty-seven were killed. While many groups are Involved in recovery, much remains to be done. With that in mind our church organized our second workcamp trip to the area this past month.

Our group of 13 included 7 from our church, 3 from the Liberty area, 2 from Missouri, and one from Kentucky. We were housed in both the Hanson UMC and the Hanson Baptist Churches. Our cook crew kept us well fed … and at least some of us gained weight! We split into 2 work teams … one working primarily with Habitat for Humanity, the other with the Hopkins County Long Term Recovery group. The Habitat group worked on a new house installing joists, sub-floor and building and erecting both outside and inside walls …. the progress was amazing! The other group primarily put on vinyl siding and finished some fascia and soffit work on two older homes. We also finished a small deck, hung some interior doors and put down flooring on three separate new homes. We managed to stay busy!

Our church has been organizing these Construction Mission Workcamps for many years. We always seem to be of help to folks in need … and have a really good time in the process.

Game Night Tuesday, May 9 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Fellowship Hall

All Bring a Friend & tell others. Bring your favorite game. Available will be Euchre, Left Center Right, Mexican Train and Dungeons & Dragons.
Sloppy Joes and beverages or bring your favorite snacks and drinks.

Play a favorite or learn something new. No preachin' or teachin', just good fun and friends

May Sermon Series
Cross Reference

Connecting
The Old Testament
and
The New Testament

We Are the Church. The church is the people. Remember singing this in Church, Sunday School, Bible School. Church is not a steeple. You are the Church. We are the Church together. The body of Christ needs His people. See you in Church. Make a promise to come in May and worship our Lord.

Big Idea of the Series: The Bible paints a picture of God's ongoing work from creation up to the birth of the church. As we read, we realize that the Old and New Testaments speak to each other about what God is doing in the world. This series will show the connection between the Old and New Testaments in areas like God's covenants, Israel and the church, Jesus's death and resurrection, and even eternity.

- May 7th – Covenant Connection
  Hebrews 8:7–13; Jeremiah 31:31–34
- May 14th – Resurrection Connection
  Isaiah 52:13–53:12;
  1 Corinthians 15:1–11 (Mother's Day)
- May 21st – Family Connection
  Galatians 3, 6:16; Genesis 12
- May 28th – Eternal Connection
  Ecclesiastes 3:1–15; John 3:16

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United Methodist Church

First United Methodist Church

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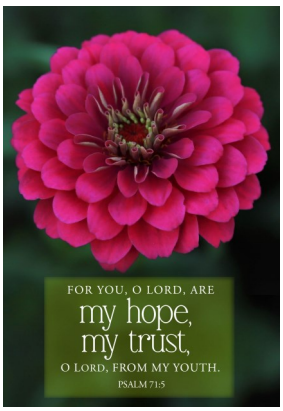
9:00 a.m.
Adult, Youth, Children
Sunday School
10:15 a.m.
Worship
K.I.D.S. during worship.
Join us!



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