

# FIRST NEWS AND NOTES

A Newsletter of The First United Methodist Church in Hagerstown IN

August 2023



Why is inviting friends and family to church so important? Because it just may change their lives.

Have you ever considered why friendships and other relationships are so important to us? Why do we spend so much time searching for connections with others? This is something we deal with all throughout our lives – from beginning to end, we strive to be connected – we strive to be in relationships. What is the big deal about relationships anyway?

It starts with Jesus. Jesus invited you. You were invited to follow Jesus in relationship. As a result of what God has done for you through Jesus, you should naturally want to share that message of God's crazy, life-changing love and hope for everyone with friends and family.

I am going to guess that as you're reading this, you can name at least one friend that you have. Or at least an acquaintance, neighbor, co-worker, family member, or another human being that you interact with every day. And if you're a Christian, God's main call for you is that your life reflects Jesus to those individuals and Sundays give you an opportunity to do that.

There are many Bible verses that talk about the importance of our lives reflecting Jesus to others. We're certainly called to do this every day, but Sunday mornings can be different. Sunday mornings can be a special, worshipful time where you could and should invite your friends to church.

Here are three short but important reasons we all should invite others (our friends & family) to church:

- 1) You get to be the host in a God-centered and loving community. It is one thing to have friends over to your house, but when you bring them into your faith community, something totally different happens. Your friends get to experience the love of Jesus through the songs, prayers, sermon, the greeter's welcome, and the interaction with other Christians they'll meet. **That's a glorious thing.**
- 2) **God loves people!** It is unfortunate that God's people, the church, have not always done a good job representing God. And many people feel ALL Christians are hateful and judgmental. Bringing your friends to church with you can show them that you and your church are not this way. This is a great thing, especially if it brings them closer to Jesus!
- 3) They'll get to clearly hear and experience the gospel. It is very important that we talk face-to-face with our friends about Jesus. It's hard to have those conversations because the busyness of life can sometimes interrupt things. But in church, you and your friends get to engage with the gospel without interruption.

Inviting and bringing your friends to church is a win all around. Have you prayed about whom to invite next Sunday?

## The Church Mouse

### CHALLENGES

I read an interesting devotion in the May Upper Room that described how the Lord used a hesitant Moses who felt unequipped to lead his people out of slavery in Egypt. "The Lord said to him What is that in your hand: Moses replied, A shepherd's rod." Exodus 4:2 Moses then performed a series of miracles using that rod with God's guidance and power. The writer challenges us to use our talents created by God to serve and bless others.

Multiple times over my years I have been challenged with opportunities to help or serve others in both big and small ways. Some of the more daunting times often made me feel inadequate or unqualified. I was called to work with developmentally handicapped children, volunteer as an emergency medical technician, serve as a Deacon and as an Elder, or write a column in the church newsletter. Amazingly God gave me the courage and tools I needed to perform these tasks he set before me. Sometimes it was very discouraging or difficult. I learned to lean on the others working with me and the power of prayer to comfort and encourage me when I felt overwhelmed.

A couple decades later, I am still using a pen and paper to write the Church Mouse. Each month, God helps me come up with a new column which hopefully will encourage or challenge others. God has given us all talents we can use to bless others. There are so many ways we can help in our church, our families, and our community. Lord help us to see our gifts and to reach out to share your love with others.

Paula Guth, the Church Mouse



We think connecting with others is important to our mental well-being so we want you to know that YOU are invited to join us! Our hope is that as we enjoy the great outdoors we will see how great it is to get to know each other too!

On **August 20th**, we will be hiking at **Ouabache State Park**. We will meet in the church parking lot at **1pm on August 20th** for those who wish to caravan or carpool together.

We hope you will join us for some family-friendly hiking and great conversations. We look forward to getting to know you!

**Sympathies** to the family of Jim Geise and to son Jonathan & Christy Geise at the passing of Sarah Joanne Oler Geise. They did experience the joy and arrival of little baby Catherine Joanne. How Sarah would have loved her second granddaughter. She loved her granddaughter, Jacqueline, so much.

A note from Sarah's first cousin, Joni Woodward Marcum: "I loved her so dearly. I want to thank you for being her church for all of these many years. She loved her church and her church family." I grew up going to Hagerstown FUMC. I remember the revival, part of the Jesus Revolution, when I felt God's call and was saved. Going to youth group, Bible studies, our youth choir, comprising of a bunch of close friends, under the direction of the always patient, Goldie Hashberger. I was married in this church 45 years ago, and so this church remains such a huge part of my life. Sarah is part of the growth of the church, a part of sustaining its welcoming spirit. We will be grieving her passing along with all of you. In Christ whom we adore,  
Joni Marcum

## Happy 80 + & 90+ Birthday to Our August Members

**Jackie Harrison celebrates August 5th**  
**c/o 348 S Plum St Hagerstown IN 47346**

**Don Benedict celebrates August 16th**

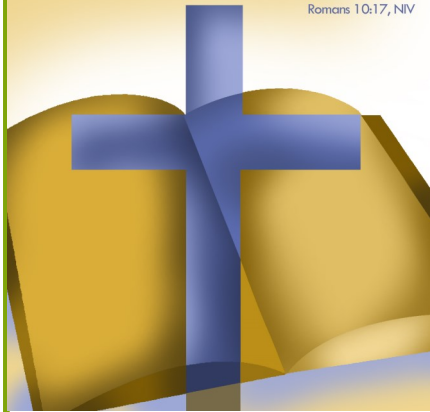
**During the summer Don celebrates in Hagerstown P O Box 42**

**Priscilla Sherry celebrates 94 August 28th**

**@ 11 E Southmarket St Hagerstown**



Faith comes from hearing  
**THE MESSAGE,**  
 and the message  
 is heard through the  
**WORD OF CHRIST.**  
Romans 10:17, NIV



It was so good to see our friend and former member, **Karen Leonard**. She finally was able to come and worship this past Sunday, July 23rd.

Her son, Dean and former active member, brought his mother to visit. Karen was so active and did so much for this church throughout the years. Thanks Dean for bringing your mom. Karen lives with daughter Kim and husband at Brownsburg. Dean and family lives out of state. This was the first to see her again after she moved from Hagerstown.

**Priscilla Sherry** will be celebrating Jubilee Days. It has been reported that her Hagerstown High School Class has been out of school 85 years. It is hoped this report is true.  
 Congratulations!!

## Treasurer's Report by Church Treasurer Greta Gustin

	<u>June 2023 YTD</u>	<u>June 2022 YTD</u>	<u>Increase (Dec13ease)</u>
Total Operating Contributions	\$ 81,936	\$ 95,517	\$ (13,582)
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 78,889	\$ 80,487	\$ (1,599)
Net Operating Income (Expense)	\$ 3,047	\$ 15,030	\$ ( 11,983)

Year-to-Date revenues are 14% below last year. Expenses are being managed slightly below last year.

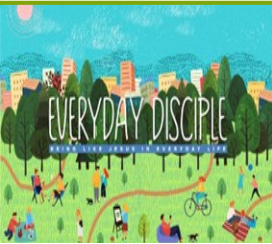
### Fund Balances at June 30, 2023

Operating Expense Fund	47,214	
Faith Promise	11,516	
Designated Giving	17,929	
GOOD Building Fund	13,775	
Long Term Savings	48,084	
		<u>Accrued Payroll Taxes</u> 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$138,517</b>	

### Designated Funds

Adult Work Camp	14,492	
Breakfast Supplies	125	
Youth or CAC	2,475	(c)
Food Pantry	237	(b)
Pet Damage Deposit	<u>600</u>	
<b>TOTAL Designated</b>	<b>\$ 17,929</b>	





**July/Aug Sermon Series** - Everyday Disciple: Being Like Jesus in Everyday Life **Big Idea of the Series:** What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus, and why does it matter? How are we live out being followers of Jesus in the spheres of our daily life? This series looks at the important concept of discipleship and applies it to our work, neighborhood, social media, and hospitality.

- July 30<sup>th</sup> – In the Neighborhood – Matthew 5:13–16

You missed church, look at all of July's sermons on Facebook. If you don't have that simply listen to

<https://firsthagerstown.org/category/sermon> OR  
at [www.youtube.com/@firstchurchumc/videos](http://www.youtube.com/@firstchurchumc/videos)



- \*Aug 6<sup>th</sup> – Technically Social – Mark 12:28–31
- \* Aug 13<sup>th</sup> – Hospitable Host – Luke 14:12–14
- \*Aug 20<sup>th</sup> – Philemon 1:1–11
- \*Aug 27<sup>th</sup> – Philemon 1:12–25

**August Sermon Series** - Philemon: Reconciliation in Christ **Big Idea of the Series:** This series works as a two-part journey through the awesome book of Philemon. In the first week, Philemon explores how forgiveness should influence how we treat those over whom we have authority as we extend grace instead of demands. The second week, in keeping with the book, unpacks how our family in Christ changes how we relate to others in conflict.

## Contact Us:

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**Connect with Us-**

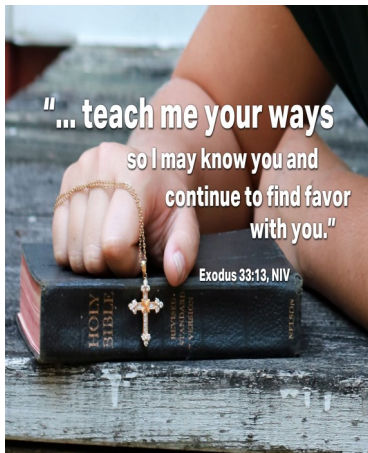
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Church Phone -  
765 - 489-4558

**First Hagerstown  
United Methodist Church**



## First United Methodist Church

199 South Perry Street  
Mailing Address PO Box 65  
Hagerstown, Indiana 47346



"... teach me your ways  
so I may know you and  
continue to find favor  
with you."

Exodus 33:13, NIV

**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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