

First United
Methodist Church

DEC. 2016

THE HERALD

LISTENING TO GOD'S HEART FROM THE HEART OF THE CITY



Poking Holes in the Darkness

From the Pastor's Desk

The nights are quickly getting longer. The sun rises earlier (while some of us are still sleeping), but with the time change and where we are in the seasons, the majority of our days exist in darkness. I know that there are a number of people who struggle with this time of year; with darkness comes loneliness. Several churches have a “longest-night” service close to the winter solstice.

I have wondered sometimes if Mary felt darkness creeping around her. Here she was, a young woman, engaged but not yet married, and pregnant with child. In spite of these factors that could have worked against her, Mary took the visit from Gabriel and her own visit to Elizabeth to heart. Each one of those experiences, as well as Joseph's own vision, poked holes in what could have been a dark time in her life.

Advent is like the birthing process. We wait and we watch with anticipation for what is to come. Around First UMC this year, we're waiting and watching with anticipation for a lot of things. We're really in a birthing process ourselves, as we continue to wait and watch with great anticipation about how we will “sow seeds” through our capital campaign. Many of us are watching with baited breath to see the apartment building next door torn down.

And in other places, there are things that have been in the birthing process several months, including a new meeting structure and a new worship service to reach new people. Please make sure that you continue reading through the pages of this newsletter to find out more about when those new things will be birthed, as well as other opportunities where you can “poke holes” in someone else's darkness.

I look forward to waiting and watching with you this month. God has exciting things in store for First UMC!

Grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Regan", enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Pastor Jay

We're Birthing . . .

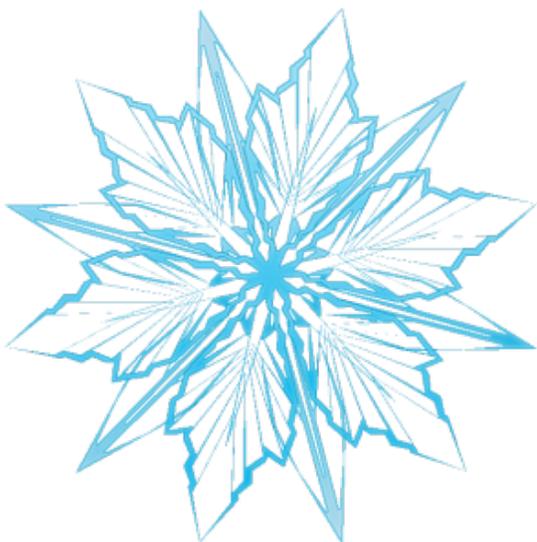
A New Worship Service

Yes, that's right, a new worship experience is coming to First UMC! In response to a need in our community for there to be a United Methodist worship service outside of Sunday morning, and in response to a need for an alternative worship time for those who serve in helping professions, are traveling, or have other Sunday morning commitments, the worship committee is launching a new worship service.

For the first three months of 2017, we will be having "preview" services on the 2nd Sunday of each month at 6:00 pm. These services will be held in the chapel. They will have a fairly simple structure, with congregational song, prayer, Scripture, sermon, and communion. Our first preview service will be January 8.

After these three months, we plan to launch the service weekly, beginning on Easter Sunday. Childcare will be available during the worship service.

In tandem with the new service, we are also in the process of "birthing" a Sunday night Sunday School for those who desire some additional Bible study, which will not begin until Easter, and will take place at 7:00 pm.



We're Birthing . . .

A New Meeting Structure

Over the course of the past several years, your church's leadership has discovered that people are busy – and while that's not new information to us, it has caused our lay leadership committee to think about the effectiveness of our meeting schedule. For instance, during 2016, we realized that we had not planned or budgeted for a confirmation class (which has 10 students, by the way!). The education committee needed to decide that they wanted to do confirmation, and provide a budget figure. The finance committee needed to have a meeting to review the budget figure and recommend a budget increase to the church council. The church council then had to meet in order to approve the budget change. This whole process took weeks!

In order to make the meeting process be more nimble, and allow people to begin and carry out ministry in at a faster rate, the lay leadership committee has proposed a new meeting structure. Beginning in 2017, all administrative committees (trustees, SPRC, finance, lay leadership, worship, education, outreach) will meet on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 6:00 pm. By meeting at the same time, committees will be able to "talk" with one another, sharing their ideas and getting faster approval for ministry to happen. At 7:00 pm, the church council will meet monthly to hear about upcoming ministry (rather than what has happened in the past), and will provide swift decision-making.

Please note that Kirbie will be assigning committees rooms for their meetings, so please make sure that you are checking the calendar on the front door of the education building for those room assignments.

We hope this process makes it easier for people to "birth" ideas for ministry through our church, and allows us to be in better communication and be more supportive of existing and new ministries.

December Birthdays

- 12/5 Joy Anderson
12/7 Tyler Devonshire
12/9 Kate Imhoff, Sandra Hale
12/11 Stacie McMillan, Wesley Parker
12/12 Nancy Brigham
12/15 Jim Wallace
12/16 Grant Oxford, Katie Odom,
Mary Etta Whitmer, Andrew Hays
12/18 Julia Albin
12/19 Bonnie Wright
12/23 Jean Decker, Nita Bradbury
12/24 Ken Mattsey
12/25 Susan inboden, Karen Marchand
12/26 Suzanne Wallace
12/28 Kay Albin, Nancy McCracken, Kristy Veenstra
12/30 Kirtina Carter, Elliott Veenstra
12/31 Rita Diel, Joyce Maurer

December Anniversaries

- 12/9 Steve & Patty Lycan
12/18 Jon & Joy Anderson
12/22 Don & Alice Taylor
12/23 Dave & Sharon Freeland,
Amy & Mark DeDoming
12/28 Mike & Mary Jane Parker

Prayer Concerns

Peg, John, Jeremy, and Greg Markello; Ken Martin; Carol Wolf; Lois McConnell; Carl and Helen Blanton; Judy Wilson Wall; Marilyn Musgrave; Michael Brady; Elaine Siler; Nancy Young; Gary Albin; Donna Reed; Mike Richards; Charley Clark; Neema Mutayoba; Patty Steele; Darrell Barry; Rich Morris; Mike Richards; Marty Attaway; Cathy Thomas; The women in the Crawford County jail; Judson Richardson; Jackson Barry; Jerry Adkins; Richard Youngs; Kay Albin; Susan Polgar; Shirley Allison; Lisa Graham Miller; Jay Holtzouser; Janna Coonce; Carolyn Vanway; Jennifer Newlin; Karleigh Wampler; Phillip Salesman; Jean Arrington; Jerry & Mary Correll; Raymond Hays; Christine Alspach; Karen Marchand; Tom Cravens; Kaye Parrott Weger; Dale Regennitter; Bob & Eleanor Laswell; Jennifer Null; Daniel Ramsey; Shirley Treadway

Ways to Poke Holes in the Darkness

NOW Mitten Tree

Our NOW mitten tree will be in the entryway of the education building. Please bring donations of hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, and other warm “aids” for our children this holiday season. We will be distributing those in the children’s NOW bags on December 19. Please place your items on or around the tree.

Ark of the Covenant

As we seek to shine light into the lives of those in need, our friends at Ark of the Covenant soup kitchen are always in need of food donations. During the month of December, we will be collecting large (#10 – commercial-sized) cans of vegetables and fruit. Please place your donations in the narthex outside the cry room.

Fellow of Christian Athletes

Fellowship of Christian Athletes: The Robinson High School FCA group will be meeting at our church on Wednesday, December 7. Please sign up at the welcome center to provide a variety of snacks and beverages. We are always happy to host these students!

Sowing Seeds

As of November 27, 2016, our capital campaign has received gifts and pledges in the amount of \$166,180. If you have not yet considered making a pledge, please do so, and help us reach our \$514,000 goal. Every gift makes a difference!

Youth Mission Trip

Plans are underway for the 2017 youth mission trip! If you are interested in helping to poke holes into someone else’s darkness, this is the trip for you. Our trip will include working with children, animals, the homeless, the hungry, and more. You must have completed 6th-12th grade to participate or be an of-age adult to serve as a chaperone. Mark your calendars for June 25-July 1, 2017. More information will be coming soon. Please sign up at the welcome center by January 1 if you plan to participate.

DECEMBER 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 9:30 am Disciple III 4:30 pm NOW bagging 6:00 pm Jail Ministry 7:00 pm Handbell rehearsal	2	3
4 8 & 11 am Chancel Choir rehearsal 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Confirmation Session 5:00 pm Youth Dinner/ White Elephant	5	6 6:00 pm Disciple III	7 6:30 am Youth Breakfast/ Bible Study 3:00 pm Kids' Club 7:30 pm FCA Huddle Meeting	8 9:30 am Disciple III 4:30 pm NOW Bagging 6:00 pm Jail Ministry 7:00 pm Handbell rehearsal	9	10
11 8:00 am Handbell rehearsal 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Sunday School 11:00 am Chancel Choir rehearsal 2:30 pm Worship service at Heritage Health	12	13 6:00 pm Disciple III	14 6:30 am Youth Breakfast/ Bible Study 3:00 pm Kids' Club 6:00 pm Finance Meeting 7:00 pm Church Council	15 9:30 am Disciple III 4:30 pm NOW Bagging 6:00 pm Jail Ministry 6:00 pm Foundation Meeting 7:00 pm Handbell rehearsal	16	17
18 8:15 am Kids' Club rehearse 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Confirmation Session 11:00 am Chancel Choir rehearsal	19 4:30 pm NOW Bagging	20	21 6:30 am Youth Breakfast/ Bible Study 6:00 pm Lay Leadership	22 6:00 pm Jail Ministry	23	24 5:00 pm Christmas Eve Service
25 9:00 am Worship	26	27	28	29	30	31



First United Methodist Church
201 West Walnut Street
PO Box 45
Robinson, IL 62454
fumcrob@frontier.com
www.robinsenfumc.org
618-544-8016

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
Robinson, IL
62454
Permit No. 3

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

FIRST UNITED METHODIST

Pastor: Jay Regennitter

fumc@frontier.com

Office Manager: Kirbie Ackman

fumcrob@frontier.com

Communications Coordinator: Brennan Seth Tracy

brennansethtracy@gmail.com

Music Director: Antje Pippin

antje2959@hotmail.com

Organist/Pianist: Brenda Graham

doubleg@mediacombb.net

Custodian: Harold Guyer

Nursery Staff: Jennifer Boatman, Danielle Stuller