

ROBINSON FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

THE HERALD

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



April 2017

PRACTICE

RADICAL

HOSPITALITY

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

I am always fascinated by the relationships we have with one another, and I see those play out in smaller groups. Over the past few months in Kids' Club, we have been working on developing character and hospitality. It always amazes me that, even at a young age, children can begin to isolate themselves, wanting to be around the people who are most like them. One day, due to a shortage of adult helpers, I had all of the children together in one large group (normally, they are divided into groups by school), and I partnered the children together so that a Lincoln Grade School student was with a Washington Elementary School student. Some of the students embraced this pairing, but I observed (in particular) one LGS student who complained and ignored the WES partner. The WES student hasn't returned to Kids' Club.

Hospitality is a Christian practice, and one that we need to be engaged in on a regular basis. During the month of April, we will be observing Holy Week, celebrating Easter, confirming ten youth, and much more. We will see new faces, and it's a perfect time for us to think about radical hospitality. Here are some ways you can approach being hospitable this month:

- In worship, please do not scowl at a visitor who is sitting in your seat (after all, we haven't been in the new sanctuary long enough for your posterior to have molded to a seat!). Instead, smile and greet them, and offer to sit with them.
- When you arrive for worship, spend some time looking for unfamiliar faces, rather than automatically going to speak to your friends. Go to those new people, introduce yourself, and shake their hands. Introduce them to someone else.
- If you are not a Sunday School attender (and you should be!), invite a visitor to go out to breakfast with you, your treat. You know you're going to go out to eat anyway!
- If you go to Sunday School, invite a visitor to come with you.
- When you arrive at church, consider parking further away than you normally would, so that visitors can park closer to the church. For families with young children, this is especially important.
- If you see families with young children, let them know that there is a staffed nursery available (as well as the cry room); personally show them where the nursery is and introduce them to the staff.

These are just a few ideas specifically related to Sunday morning. Think about some other ways that you can practice radical hospitality, and put them into practice. Let's work together to make people feel welcome and a part of First UMC.

See you in worship!

PASTOR JAY

THE IMPORTANCE OF HOSPITALITY

By Kurtis Goebel

Before one can describe the importance of hospitality, a definition might be helpful. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the definition of hospitality is the "generous and friendly treatment of visitors and guests" or "the activity of providing food, drinks, etc. for people who are the guests or customers of an organization". I believe we all feel this is important in the life of our church and community but are we living examples of hospitality? Please don't get bogged down by whether you are an introvert or extrovert or if you are comfortable to meet new people or not. Hospitality can mean a variety of things.

First, this means you may enjoy being able to welcome new guests when they visit our church services and have the ability to find common ground with them. This kind of hospitality is very important in making our guests feel welcome and helps to eliminate the first barrier of uncertainty that is more than likely crossing their minds coming into the new place. Keep in mind that at FUMC we strive to have "open hearts, open minds, and open doors." Currently, we have new faces showing up every week. I have personally had an opportunity to welcome two mothers that were visiting one weekend and this was our trial run. We had one shot to make it count. Fortunately, I happened to be in the narthex 15 minutes before church service when they walked in. We spent the next few minutes touring our church and explaining the different ministries that are in action. They were very much engaged and appreciated the opportunity to experience the other moving parts outside of the service itself. You just never know when someone will come through

that door and God is calling you to be hospitable towards them! Be ready.

Secondly, you may be called to the kind of hospitality that provides food, drinks, clothing, shelter, etc. for a variety of different reasons. These functions may include but not limited to the NOW program, cooking for funeral dinners, providing shelter for the members of the Bethel Choir, writing cards to women participating in jail ministry, or even bringing food to our shut-ins. It is as Mother Teresa once said "be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies." If each one of us would find one small way to help welcome an outsider, think of the enormous impact that our congregation could have as a whole.

To conclude, God has equipped each of us with unique talents and gifts but we must remember to use them to help glorify Him and spread His message.



HOSPITALITY

In our lives, hospitality is a word that tends to make us uncomfortable. It brings thoughts of scurrying around our homes picking up toys, sweeping our floors, and making an impeccable meal. The idea of entertaining friends, family, possibly strangers for a few hours can seem daunting. The idea of offering hospitality can make you feel tired before it has even happened.

Let's think about Christian hospitality...ahhh, this sounds less overwhelming. The greatest thing about Christians is that we are a messy, hodge-podge group. We are broken, we are poor, we are sinners, we are loved, we are joyful, and we are all the hands and feet of Jesus. As Christians, part of our job description is to tell others about the love of Jesus, and to extend that love to them. This is the basic definition for Christian hospitality! To offer Christian hospitality, you don't have to put on a shiny outfit and have a beautiful home; you simply have a heart that is bursting with the same love that Jesus has shown us.

How can I show others the love that Jesus has shown me? What opportunities do I have? Showing or offering Christian hospitality can be the easiest form of outreach ministry available to FUMC. Opportunities come our way daily in our personal lives and in our community. Offer a handshake or phone call to new attendees at church. Did you know studies show most people leave or do not return to a church because of the congregation, not because of the pastor? Reach out to college students; reach out to new moms; reach out to children; reach out to the elderly. In Luke 10:38-42, it tells the story of Mary and Martha when they had opened their home to Jesus and his disciples. Martha is running around trying to get the house and food perfect while Mary is sitting with Jesus....listening to Him. Perfect choice, Mary!!

Christian hospitality is something we can all be more actively participating in. We can listen, we can smile, we can pray, we can bag food, we can open our homes.....we aren't supposed to be perfect, but we are supposed to show love.

With love from a Christian (and a sinner),

- Michele Elliott



AN INVITATION TO WORSHIP

Radical hospitality doesn't always have to occur on our property. Sometimes hospitality is sharing and inviting people to participate in the ministries of our church. During the month of April, we have several different worship experiences happening that may help people hear the good news. Check out the following opportunities for you to worship, invite someone to join you, and sit with your guest:

- Sunday, April 9 - Palm Sunday Worship at 9:00 am (sanctuary) and 6:00 pm (chapel)
- Thursday, April 13 - Maundy Thursday Worship at 7:00 pm (Asbury Hall)
- Friday, April 14 - Good Friday Worship at 7:00 pm (Otterbein UMC)
- Sunday, April 16 - Easter Sunday Worship at 9:00 am (sanctuary) and 6:00 pm (chapel)

HOST HOMES

When we extend hospitality, we do so because Jesus calls us to offer a radical welcome, not because we expect anything in return. One of the ways we have the opportunity to experience this concept in action is when Bethel College's Choir (Jeshua Franklin, director) comes to Robinson on their spring tour. They'll be presenting a concert here at First UMC on Wednesday, May 3, at 7:00 pm. We can show hospitality in many ways:

- Serving as a greeter or an usher to welcome concert attendees.
- Helping to provide food for the choir's dinner prior to the concert (sign up at the welcome center).
- Be a host home for students to spend the night (you must be able to house at least two students), providing transportation to and from church to your home, and providing breakfast (sign up at the welcome center). We still need host homes for 4 students.
- We may never see any of these students again, but we have an opportunity before us to welcome them and show them the hospitality of Christ. Think about how you might participate!

NOW IS THE TIME TO SHOW HOSPITALITY

Want to show someone you care? Interested in helping someone have dignity? There are two easy ways to show that kind of hospitality with the NOW Program this month. The first way is by helping with our next food order. We will be going to Ruler Foods in Olney on Monday, April 3, departing at 9:30 am. We need at least two trucks to go, because we will be picking up food for the rest of the school year, so please contact the office if you can drive. Also, we will be unloading food around 11:30 am at the church, so if you can assist, please be at the church that day around that time.

In addition, we continue to collect our "Just One" items as we prepare for this year's Kids' Shopping Day. During the month of April, we will be collecting erasers (pink block). Please do not bring erasers that fit on the end of a pencil. You can bring your donations and place them in the bin outside the church office. Thanks for showing some hospitality to the least of these.

VISITING VISITORS

Did you know that last year, the outreach team assembled a group of folks to call on first-time visitors? The outreach team ordered several gift items that have First UMC's information on it. These gifts are placed in a bag, along with information about the church, and a fresh baked good. The first-time visitor callers stop by the church to pick up a bag (adding their baked good to it), and drop it by the visitor's home. It's an easy way for us to acknowledge someone new to our church, and it also gives us an opportunity to serve. If you'd like to be a part of this group, please contact Kirbie in the church office.



2ND WEDNESDAY HOSPITALITY

Please note that due to Holy Week ministries, there will be no 2nd Wednesday Dinner in the month of April. The youth will be hosting a taco dinner for the May 2nd Wednesday Dinner as a mission trip fundraiser, so it is a perfect time to invite someone new to come and visit our church (and buy their meal). And, while we often want to sit with our close friends to dine, it's also an opportunity for us to expand our hospitality and make new people feel welcome, so be looking to sit at new places!

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 4/2 Ken Martin
- 4/3 Karen Stram
- 4/4 Doug Finkbiner
- 4/13 Joel Wise, Valerie Wright
- 4/15 George Hays
- 4/17 Janet Miller, Tim Veenstra
- 4/19 Alisa Lowry
- 4/20 Lori Crozier
- 4/22 DJ Kelly, Lucas Bell, Connie Calvert
- 4/23 Melinda Harmon
- 4/24 Hayden Treadway
- 4/26 Ann Foote, Amy McGahey,
Becky Veenstra
- 4/27 Dennis Inboden
- 4/29 Tancy Finkbiner
- 4/30 Elizabeth Nolan

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

- 4/4 Steve & Rita Diel
- 4/9 Ken & Nancy Mattsey
- 4/29 Floyd & Sabra Adams

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; Gary Albin; Donna Reed; Mike Richards; Charley Clark; Neema Mutayoba; Patty Steele; Jackson Barry; Mike Richards; Marty Attaway; Cathy Thomas; The women in the Crawford County jail; Judson Richardson; Jerry Adkins; Richard Youngs; Susan Polgar; Shirley Allison; Jay Holtzouser; Janna Coonce; Jennifer Newlin; Jean Arrington; Kaye Parrott Weger; Dale Regennitter; Bob Laswell; Jennifer Null; Julie Zhang; Bill Thompson; Bob Duzan; Janey Branson; Kate Dale; Shirley Treadway; Chance & Brantley Moore & family; Hannah Dean; Madelyn Storckman; Bev Turkal; Maris Rogers; Bob Berty; Connie McCord; Jan Kelly



APRIL 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						I 9:00 am Cub Scout training
2 8 & 11 am Chancel Choir rehearsal 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Confirmation Session 2:00 pm Lenten Bible Study 3:00 pm Youth Laser Tag	3	4 6:00 pm Disciple III	5 6:30 am Youth Breakfast/ Bible Study 3:00 pm Kids' Club	6 9:30 am Disciple III 4:30 pm NOW Bagging 6:00 pm Jail Ministry 6:00 pm Handbell rehearsal 7:00 pm PraiseFest Meeting	7	8
9 8:00 am Praise Kids rehearsal 9:00 am/6:00 pm Worship 10:00 am Sunday School 11:00 am Chancel Choir rehearsal 2:30 pm Health Heritage Service 4:00 pm Lenten Bible Study	10	11 4:30 pm NOW Bagging	12 6:30 am Youth Breakfast/ Bible Study 3:00 pm Kids' Club	13 6:00 pm Handbell rehearsal 7:00 pm Maundy Thursday Service	14 7:00 pm Good Friday Service at Otterbein UMC	15
16 8:00 am Handbell rehearsal 8:15 am Confirmation meets 9:00 am/6:00 pm Worship 10:00 am Easter Egg Hunt 10:00 am Confirmation and Easter Celebration Session	17	18 6:00 pm Disciple III	19 6:30 am Youth Breakfast/ Bible Study 3:00 pm Kids' Club 6:00 pm All committee meetings 7:00 pm Church Council meeting	20 9:30 am Disciple III 4:30 pm NOW Bagging 6:00 pm Jail Ministry	21	22
23 9:00 am/6:00 pm Worship 10:00 am Sunday School	24	25 6:00 pm Disciple III	26 6:30 am Youth Breakfast/ Bible Study 3:00 pm Kids' Club	27 9:30 am Disciple III 4:30 pm NOW Bagging 6:00 pm Jail Ministry	28	29
30 9:00 am/6:00 pm Worship 10:00 am Sunday School						

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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