

# First News

First United Methodist Church

February 2020

Volume 20, Issue 2

## A Note From Pastor Toni

Friends,

We remain in a season of uncertainty.

With the dome of our sanctuary building having been stabilized, we have been awaiting (oh, so patiently) the outcome of conversations between experts studying policies, documentation, cause and effect, and who is responsible for what. It's been a long process with seeming inactivity, though I know good people are representing our best interests and I trust they will eventually provide us with the information we need to make good decisions about our next steps.

There have certainly been moments of discouragement. Last summer we hadn't imagined that we would celebrate Christmas in

our Fellowship Hall! And yet, our worship commission led a team of creative individuals who decorated our worship space

beautifully.

Though we miss the vibrant sounds of our pipe organ, our talented musicians led us in filling the room with joyful songs as we celebrated Christ's coming into the world.

Little things have made a big difference: Tom Boys

and Jeff Mills hung speakers from the ceiling, eliminating lots of wires and sprawling speaker stands, making our temporary chancel less cluttered and more inviting. Other monitors have helped amplify sound in the middle and back of the room. I've even heard folks say they're getting to know people better

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# February Community Meal 2/19/2020 Note date change!

Please note the date change for the Community Meal in February. It will be on Wednesday, **February 19th**, from 5-7 pm. There is a sign up sheet at the back of the worship area for donations and/or help.

The menu will include:

Chicken and Noodles,  
Mashed Potatoes, Corn,  
Mixed Fruit and Cookies.

Please come and welcome the community diners!

Many thanks to this committee and its helpers.

Sign up sheets are available in Fellowship Hall. Please sign up to provide food or help serve.

In December, over 80 people were served. We are truly making a difference in Plymouth.



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## W.O.W. by Donna Hemmig

Ward Byers will speak at the February meeting of W.O.W. Director of Operations for Marshall County Community Corrections, he will share information with us about the programs that are being utilized to bring about positive change in the lives of those in the Corrections community. Join us on Monday, February 3rd at 1 pm in Fellowship Hall.



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## Mothers' Club by Robin Cupka

Mothers' Club will meet in Fellowship Hall on Monday, February 10th at 7 pm. Come join us as we learn how to make bath bombs!



# A Note from Pastor Toni continued from page 1

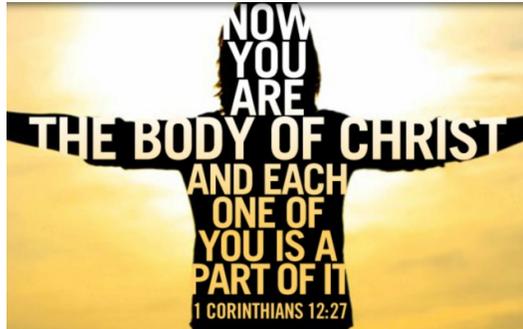
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because we're sitting closer and in different places than usual.

There have been unexpected blessings in these unexpected circumstances.

With the Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace Through Separation that was released on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, uncertainty arises as well, from our greater church. Though conversations have been happening for many years, a group of faithful people called together by Bishop John Yambasu of the Sierra Leone Episcopal Area, are proposing this protocol at our upcoming General Conference in May to help pave the way toward a separation that is believed by many to be necessary in order for us to focus on our shared mission of making disciples rather than focusing on our differences.

I don't know the specifics of what is ahead of us: I can't predict the news about our building or the outcome of General Conference. But I do know that we're so much more than bricks and mortar or a Book of Discipline. We are Christ's Body, and we have been empowered by the Holy Spirit to do God's work. We've



been making a difference in this community for many years, and we will continue to do and to be what God calls us to do and to be. We have already shown our strength and resilience in uncertain circumstances and

I know that by God's grace we will continue to focus on our mission and ministry.

I am thankful to serve alongside you, even in these uncertain times. God is good. God is faithful. God is with us. With God, we can.

In Christ,

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## Social Concerns by Mary Kaufman

Your generous contributions help Care and Share (which assists the needy with rent and utilities), Neighborhood Center, Bread of Life food pantry, and David's Courage.

After Christmas is a time that donations to food pantries are low. You can help by giving

cold cereal, spaghetti sauce, canned fruit, peanut butter, jelly and soup. You may



place these items in the grocery cart.

Our gifts to these local agencies help us answer God's call to help those in need right here in Plymouth.

## Youth & Education by Barbie Pickut

Did you know that the 2nd floor open area is (approximately) 48 feet, 26 1/2 inches stairwell to stairwell? We measured it in Junior church on a recent Sunday, and we learned that God's everlasting love is even bigger. If you would like to help our kids learn about God's immeasurable love, we have openings for people to help with elementary SS and with Junior Church either as teachers or helpers. In between the wiggles and the crumbs and the perpetual efforts to focus, you get to glimpse a young boy's genuine eagerness to get



downstairs, so he doesn't miss Communion. You get to remember that the vast love of God reaches out to us even though our learning is gradual at any age, even though His efforts to get us to focus must also feel perpetual. If Christ's love compels you to invest in the lives of our young people by teaching and learning with them, we'd be glad to have you join us. You can get in on this opportunity by contacting the church office or Barbie Pickut (574-870-4981 or email:

[barbara.e.b.pickut@gmail.com](mailto:barbara.e.b.pickut@gmail.com)).



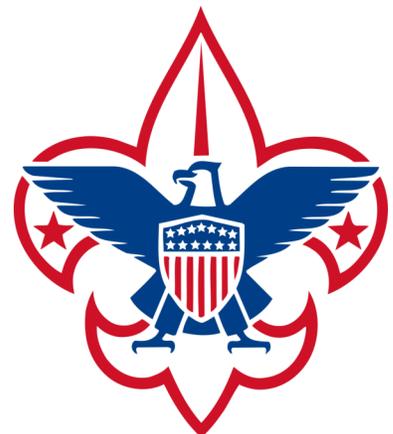
## Sunday Brunch

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2, WE WILL BE GATHERING AT SYMPHONY AFTER THE SECOND SERVICE. PLEASE SIGN UP AT THE BACK OF FELLOWSHIP HALL OR CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE!!**

## Troop 251 News by Scoutmaster, Michael Stephan

Troop 251 had a successful fundraiser meal for their annual Christmas Adopt-A-Family project. The troop partnered with the local American Legion to raise \$2,700. All funds were used to adopt 5 families with a total of 15 kids for Christmas. Thank you to those who supported our adopt a family project for 2019!

Michael Stephan  
Scout Master  
Troop 251 of Marshall County



# Thank You, God, for Your Faithfulness by Dorothy Steinke

Whatever you do, work at it wholeheartedly as though you were doing it for the Lord and not merely for people. *Colossians 3:23[ISV]*

I take my walk every morning unless it is raining or icy- I do not want to fall. As I walk, I listen to the birds or talk to the dogs that greet me and I do a lot of talking to myself. Last week a thought popped into my head with no prior thought - did I ever thank God for my calling? When I first joined the church, Ed McClure was the pastor. During a Bible class we discussed being called. I told him I didn't know about a calling but when I was asked what I wanted to be, I always answered that I wanted to be a nurse. He said that was a calling. Growing up it was my focus. In school I took all the college prep courses along with all the business courses. After high school I worked a year as a bookkeeper to earn the money for my tuition into nursing school. My father thought I had a good job - why did I want to quit to go into nursing. I told him that was what I wanted to do. I trained at Methodist Hospital in Gary - the same school where my mother had trained. I enjoyed working with my patients. Yes, there were days I wondered why am I here? I greeted my patients every day with a positive attitude and worked at making them comfortable with me. Nursing was my calling and I thanked God that day for calling me to a profession that I had enjoyed and still have good memories of.

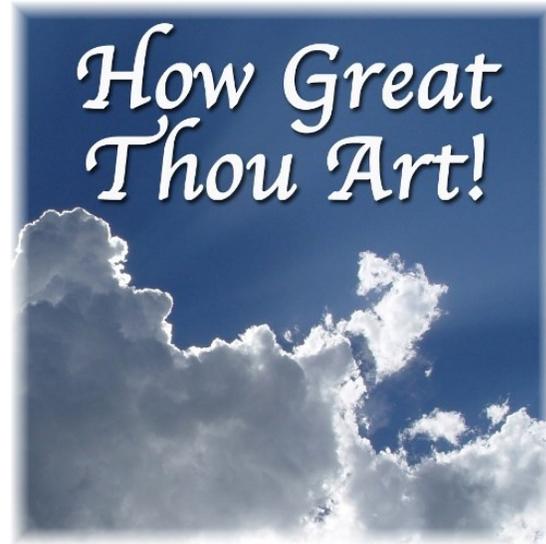
## Mission Witness

Tansen Mission Hospital is located on top of a hill just outside of town. When the electricity fails in the area and the hospital generator kicks in, it looks just like the "city on a hill that cannot be hidden." We

pray that our lives will shine in spiritual darkness as our hospital shines in the darkest nights.

*Lester and Deborah Dornan*

Global Missionaries from Ohio serving in Nepal



Yesterday in church we sang "**How Great Thou Art**". We sang all the verses but somehow the second verse spoke to me:

***When through the woods  
and glades I wander,  
I hear the birds  
sing sweetly in the trees;  
when I look down  
from lofty mountain grandeur  
and hear the brook,  
and feel the gentle breeze;***

***Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to  
thee;  
How great Thou art, how great Thou  
art!***

***Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to  
thee;  
How great Thou art, how great Thou  
art!*** Words & music by Stuart K. Hine

## MISSION MINDED

### Upcoming Mission Trips:



**April 26 - 30, 2020 MIDWEST MISSION DISTRIBUTION CENTER**  
At Chatham, Illinois we prepare "kits" that are then available when disasters occur or requests are made. Things like cleaning buckets that are ready to be shipped out when floods happen; school bags with supplies for students; or personal dignity kits for the homeless. There may be sewing or carpentry jobs for persons skilled in these areas.

Now is a good time to start thinking about joining our crew. The "minimum skill level" required is to be able to count to 5 while sitting in a chair!

- Carol Beiter is the contact person for this trip.

### **October, 2020 HENDERSON SETTLEMENT**

Our annual work trip to Kentucky will take place in the fall. It's not too early to think about joining our crew.

- Mike Woolfington is the contact person for this trip.

### **January 8 - 16, 2022 MISSION GUATEMALA**

We have already scheduled our next trip to Guatemala, although it is 2 years off.

- If you are interested in going or have questions, Pastor Toni and Troy Spencer are the contacts for this trip.

### Missions Budget for 2020:

Missions Commission has requested \$6,000 from the church budget for 2020. It will be disbursed as follows:

Missions Commission – 2020 Budget		
UMCOR: Disaster Response, International	International	\$ 350.00
Operation Classroom - thru Conference	International	\$ 250.00
Mission Guatemala - thru Conference	International	\$ 500.00
Henderson Settlement - Missionary Support	National	\$ 2,500.00
UMCOR: Disaster Response, United States	National	\$ 350.00
Broadway Christian Parish (South Bend)	Indiana	\$ 300.00
Bashor Children's Home (Elkhart)	Indiana	\$ 500.00
Neighborhood Center	Local	\$ 500.00
Boys and Girls Club - Scholarships	Local	\$ 250.00
David's Courage	Local	\$ 500.00
Total		\$ 6,000.00

Other activities, donations, and our mission trips are financed through monthly basket offerings, fundraisers, and contributions given specifically to Missions Commission. Additionally, each trip participant is expected to pay ½ of their expenses for the trip, which may be supplemented by scholarships. Mission trips are not financed through the church budget. At this time, some of our fundraisers have been put on hold since the Fellowship Hall has become our worship space.

Feb 2020



## It's Still About Your Church

*The following was written by Bishop Gary E. Mueller of the Arkansas Annual Conference in response to the Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace Through Separation that was released on January 3. It was read during our 20/20 Vision gathering on January 11 and in worship on January 12. It is a word of encouragement as we continue to focus on our task of ministry and making disciples.*

I am ready to admit something I've been in denial about for a long time. Even though I've invested a great deal of blood, sweat and tears trying, I simply cannot fix what's broken in the United Methodist Church. I can't fix the polarization that now imprisons us. I can't fix the outcome of this May's General Conference. And I can't fix the uncertainty we face as a church.

Even more significantly, the Holy Spirit has helped me realize I don't have to fix the church. It belongs to Jesus, and he's got it covered. This doesn't mean I'm stepping back, shrugging my shoulders and saying, "It's going to be what it's going to be." Rather, I will be focusing on what Jesus is calling every United Methodist congregation in Arkansas to do – becoming the most Jesus loving, disciple-making and sharing Jesus' love church you can be.

I love the United Methodist Church and the way of being Christian it shares. But ultimately, local congregations matter more than denominations – even our beloved United Methodist denomination. People need your local church, not a denomination. Your community needs your local

church, not a denomination. And most importantly, Jesus needs your local church, not a denomination.

This means the single most pressing task is enabling your church that has a unique location, is filled with a unique group of people and possesses a unique history to become the church Jesus wants you to be – a vital congregation that makes disciples of Jesus Christ, who make disciples equipped and sent to transform lives, communities and the world.

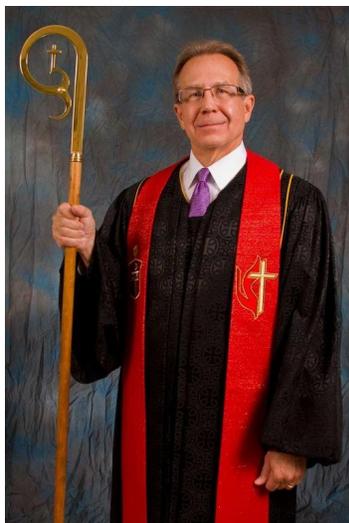
Embrace your identity. Your church is literally the Body of Christ. So act like it! Love Jesus, follow Jesus, grow in Jesus, be transformed in Jesus and share Jesus in ways that make it clear whose you are. Get serious about investing in those things that form you

as the Body of Christ: prayer, Bible study, involving people in intentional discipling groups and reaching out to your neighborhood in ways that touch real people in real ways with real love.

Live out your purpose. Jesus uses your church, and the disciples in it, to continue his mission of making disciples, forming disciples, and equipping and sending disciples to transform lives, communities and the world. Help people discover their spiritual gifts, bless them and then unleash them in your congregation and into the mission field that begins right outside the doors of your sanctuary.

Demonstrate the difference Jesus makes. Almost every congregation has figured out how to

*(Continued on page 9)*



## WE NEED YOUR HELP!

In July 2019, several organizations in Marshall County received a federal planning grant to help those struggling with substance abuse. The group has already gathered information from the criminal justice system, physical and mental health service providers, hospitals, schools and other agencies. However, we also want to hear from families and individuals who may have struggled



with substance abuse or currently face this problem but are not sure where to go for help. We need your ideas on things that should change or be implemented to include them in a new grant application that will be submitted this spring. To share your ideas, please contact Joyce Long: 574-647-2107 or email

[jlong2@beaconhealthsystem.org](mailto:jlong2@beaconhealthsystem.org).

### It's Still About Your Church continued from page 8

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thrive with a diverse group of people who have perspectives that are diametrically opposed. Don't see this as a problem; see it as a wonderful opportunity to show how Jesus brings together people who normally wouldn't give each other the time of day. Keep people worshipping together on the same pew, praying together, studying together, serving together and caring for each other.

I want to be absolutely clear about something that some people may consider to be a scandalous idea. Yet I am convicted of its truth. The future of your church is not dependent upon what happens in the United Methodist Church.

Don't let the uncertainty, or brokenness, paralyze you. Move ahead boldly and confidently. Your church will still be part of the Body of Christ. Your church will still make disciples of Jesus Christ. Your church will still form deeper disciples. And your church will still equip and send disciples to transform lives, communities and the world.

The painful reality is that we United Methodist Christians face an uncertain future. As Jesus leads us toward it, I want you to know something. I consider it an honor and a privilege to walk with you. I believe in you. I trust you. And, most importantly, I love you.

## Preaching Plan for February

### **February 2**

*4th Sunday after Epiphany*

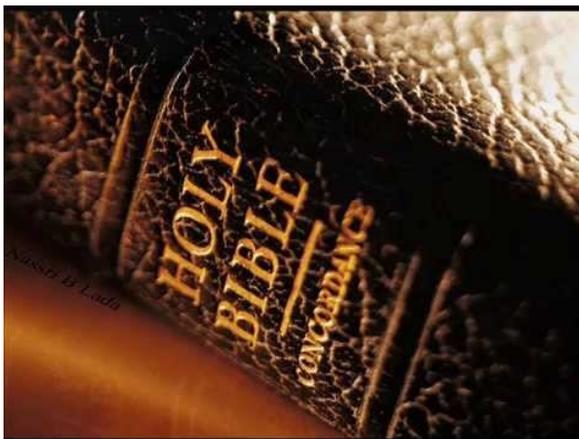
*Communion Sunday*

Mike Dixon preaching

Text: Jeremiah 1:4-10, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Title: The Love Test

Theme: Love is the test of our faith—it's the test of our community, and it's the test of each one of our lives. We are gifted people. Are we using what God has given us?



### **February 16**

*6th Sunday after the Epiphany*

Text: Matthew 5:21-37

Title: You Have Heard It Said...

Theme: The righteousness commended by Jesus is more than just conventional common sense. Jesus' teaching overturns our commonly held notions of

what's right and what's wrong, calling us to a more demanding way, a way closer to the will of God.

### **February 9**

*5th Sunday after the Epiphany*

Mike Dixon preaching

Text: Matthew 5:14-16

Title: Is Your Light Shining?

Theme: On Sunday the Church gathers. Christians hold their lights up. We talk about the light. As Jesus' followers and God's ambassadors, we bear His light. Jesus' strategy always involves believers being the light of the world, to penetrate the world's darkness with His message of life, hope, and forgiveness.

### **February 23**

*Transfiguration Sunday*

Text: Matthew 17:1-9

Title: Living with Purpose

Theme: We worship Christ for no greater purpose than the enjoyment and glorification of God, without regard to human benefit. Yet in our "purposelessness" we come to know the true and deepest purpose of our lives.

# United Methodist Men

The United Methodist Men will be meeting on Saturday, February 15, at 8:00 A.M. for breakfast. Mandy Campbell, a member of Marshall County's Stellar Committee, will be the program. She will be sharing all the exciting aspects of the county being named a Stellar Community. The meeting is open to all men of the church and the community.



- tour the facility.
- June/July: Cook out with spouses
- August: Program about Henderson Settlement.

Every Wednesday at 6:45 A.M. there is a men's Bible study at Christo's. Contact Brent Kaufman if you are interested in attending. They are working their way

through the Bible.

## Here is a list of some of the future programs for the men's breakfasts:

- March: Mike Dixon will be talking about the meaning of Lent
- April: Brian Liechty will be sharing where we are with the sanctuary. There will be an opportunity to

Other activities of the United Methodist Men are SAW's, Brush of Kindness, attending a South Bend Cub's game, and supporting the Boy Scouts. The men are looking at having two fund raisers to help underwrite our church's scout troop.



## The Outreach and Support Committee Needs Your Help as we lead into the future with 20/20 vision!

We have members of our church family who live at Miller's Assisted Living. They would like to attend our Sunday worship service, but are unable to drive. If you are able to reach out to these Methodists, please contact the church office, or Susan Wautelet on the Outreach Committee.

able to attend church. If you feel called to perform this loving and blessed outreach and support to our members, please contact Susan Wautelet or anyone on the Outreach/Support Committee.

We are also planning to gather church members who would be interested in visiting our shut in FUMC members no longer

*"This is my commandment. That you love one another as I have loved you." John 15:12*

**THE OUTREACH  
COMMITTEE INVITES  
YOU TO PARTICIPATE  
IN THESE EVENTS :**



*How great is the love  
the Father has lavished on us,  
that we should be called children of God!  
1 John 3:1*

**Share the family of FUMC  
with friends & neighbors**

**Lunch Bunch: The 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the  
month: RSVP Carol Beiter**

February 21, 2020...Autumn Trace

March 20..... Sun Rise

April 17..... Mean Bean

**Dominos and Euchre** will be featured on  
the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month from 2-  
4:00 PM. Contact Dean Luther for fur-  
ther details at 540-2196.

**Blessed Bookies:** The 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays of  
the month at Miller's Assisted Living at  
5:30 PM. The next gathering will be Feb-  
ruary 24 as we discuss "The Life We  
Bury". Please join us as we examine this  
historical and informative book. Even if

you have never come, please join us for  
a stimulating discussion!

**Bad Girls:** This gathering of women  
meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays at 11:00  
in the Education Building (main floor).

It's not too late to be part of this group!  
We always go to lunch afterwards!! Con-  
tact Susan Wautelet for further infor-  
mation.

We began studying "Fierce...Women of  
the Bible" by Alice Connor on January  
14... but it is never too late to join in.  
Bad girl or good girl? Come and find  
out!!

**Knit Two...Pray Three:** Will be meeting  
the first Tuesday of every month in the  
Education Building from 10:00 to noon.



Dr. Anthony  
Witt's program  
on Route 66 to  
the UMM on  
January 18<sup>th</sup>



# February Worship Participants

	<b>8:30 LITURGIST</b>	<b>10:30 LITURGIST</b>	<b>GREETERS</b>	<b>10:30 USHERS</b>	<b>SOUND BOARD</b>	<b>NURSERY</b>
<b>2</b>	Mike Kyser	Ruth Van Vactor	Mike & Jane Woolfington	Woody Schinbeckler	Tom Pedavoli	Robin Cupka
<b>9</b>	Dick Tobias	Brent Kaufman	Bill & Donna Hemmig	Scott Heeren	Ken Daren	Barbie Pickut
<b>16</b>	Don Wilson	Brent Kaufman	Jon & Ruth Van Vactor	Marc Laudeman	Ralph Booker	Melissa Christiansen
<b>23</b>	Susie Kreighbaum	Ruth Van Vactor	Dave & Diane Hogsett	Troy and Katie Spencer	Robin Cupka	Jane Woolfington

## February 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
		<b>HAPPY BIRTHDAY, ONE AND ALL!</b>					1
2 Mae Christiansen	3 James Cochern Megan Senter	4 Janet Smith	5 Jenny Cerrato Debbie Wise	6	7	8 James Rimel Jennifer Tobias	
9	10	11	12	13	14 Mark Rose	15	
16	17 Marilee Douglass	18 Dean Byers Rose Woodke	19	20 Sue Stinson Steve Westfall	21	22	
23 Timothy Smith	24 Cris Causey	25	26 Paul Cleeter Emma Konefsky	27	28 Pam Michel Marsha Wilson	29	

First United Methodist Church

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Love God ~ Love Others ~ Serve Others

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Love God ~ Love Others ~  
Serve Others

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## Coming to The Well in February....

February 2nd: Continuing **THE WALK** by Adam Hamilton. This week's lesson: "Giving". Communion Sunday with Rev. Rose Woodke. Carry In Meal's main dish is spaghetti. Please bring a dish to share. Also we'll have a fun celebra-



tion of Groundhog Day!

February 9th: **THE WALK**: "Sharing"

February 16th: **THE WALK**: "The Five Practices from the Cross"