



# FIRST NEWS

First United  
Methodist  
Church  
May 2026

## Easter SUNDAY



*He is Risen*



# from the PASTOR



Dear Church Family,

As spring unfolds with its vibrant colors and gentle warmth, we are reminded once again of God's renewing work in creation. The blooming flowers, singing birds, and lengthening days invite us to pause and rejoice in the beauty that surrounds us. Each new leaf and blossom is a quiet testimony to hope, renewal, and the steadfast love of God.

This same spirit of renewal is stirring within our congregation. Just as nature awakens, we too are being called to awaken to God's vision for our shared future. Christ's love empowers us to care for one another, to nurture our community, and to step boldly into new possibilities rooted in faith.

One of the most meaningful steps before us is the work of making our church home more accessible to all. As part of our upcoming capital campaign, we are committing ourselves to building an elevator—an act of hospitality and justice that ensures every person, regardless of age or mobility, can fully participate in worship, fellowship, and ministry. This is more than a construction project; it is a tangible expression of Christ's welcome.

This season invites us to plant seeds of generosity and vision, trusting that God will bring growth in ways we cannot yet see. Together, we have the opportunity to strengthen our ministry, expand our reach, and prepare our church for the generations who will come after us.

As we prepare for this campaign, may we embrace this spring as a sacred moment to grow closer to God, to one another, and to the mission entrusted to us. Let us celebrate the gift of creation, cherish the love of Christ, and join together in building a hopeful future—trusting God's guidance every step of the way.

With gratitude and prayers for a blessed spring,

Pastor Lauren





# Community Meal

If April showers bring May flowers, we will be blessed with a multitude of flowers! Happy Spring. The May community meal will be Wednesday May 27 from 5:00-6:30 p.m. The menu is Pulled Pork Sandwich, Potato Chips, Coleslaw, Fruit and Cookies. We continue to see new faces attending the meal. There were a number of church members at the March meal who came not only to enjoy the food but also sat and fellowshiped with our dine in guests. It was interesting to hear the members share the stories they heard.

We encourage this fellowship to continue. Bring your friends and join us on Wednesday May 27 from 5:00-6:30 p.m.

The Community Meal Committee



# MEN'S BREAKFAST

## UNITED METHODIST MEN

The United Methodist Men will be meeting Saturday, May 9, at 8:00 A.M. Katelyn McGrift from 1st Source was to speak about fraud and scams but will not be able to come because of a family obligation. However, Mark Aikins will be talking about his novel *Captain John Pullings, Jr.: His Lamps Are Stil Burning*. Ed Pullen commissioned Mark to write the novel about his relative who put the lamps

in Old North Church for Paul Revere's ride. Mike Woolfington will be in charge of the breakfast. There will be a sign-up sheet at the Welcome Center on May 3. You can sign-up by contacting Dave Hogsett at either [davidh15503@embarqmail.com](mailto:davidh15503@embarqmail.com) or 574-936-6927.

The June meeting is yet to be determined.

Troy Spencer will have the program in July. He will speak about his trip to Uganda. Troy spent his first week touring agriculture programs, visiting FAIO UN headquarters, and learning about Ugandan culture. The next two weeks he spent teaching agriculture and starting a school pig farm at Lira secondary school, located in Lira city. Troy spent his final week between seeing Ugandan wildlife at Muchison Falls National Park and touring Iowa State University's Ugandan campus. The Missions Committee will have the breakfast.

This summer there will be a road trip to the P.J. Gilsinger & Company Museum in Winamac, Indiana. This very likely will be on a Sunday afternoon.

Mike Woolfington is looking for persons to help with his SAWS program. They build ramps. Contact Mike if you are interested.



SAVE THE DATE!  
CHURCH PICNIC  
SUNDAY, JUNE 28

## HAPPY MAY FROM THE OUTREACH COMMITTEE

### SMALL GROUPS:

**Bad Girls** This group of Girls meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 11:00 am, followed by lunch out. Beginning in June we will be studying "Lies Women Believe" by Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth. Sound interesting? All are welcome! Please join us...we really aren't all bad! You can contact Susan Wautelet for further information.

**The Lunch Bunch** gathers on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month. Plan to join this thriving group as we dine in restaurants in and around Northern Indiana. On Friday, May 15, the Bunch will eat at the Streamliner in Rochester. Meet at the church at 11:00 am and RSVP to Carol Beiter.

**Blessed Bookies** usually gather on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month at 5:30 pm in the Education Building. In May we will meet on **May 18, the third Monday.** We will discuss "The River is Waiting" by Wally Lamb.

**Knit Two, Pray Three** This group of talented knitters gathers on the first Tuesday of the month in the Education Building. These knitters are part of the Shawl Ministry designed to support our church and community family. See Carol Beiter or Lynn Gee for further details. In the narthex are beautiful prayer shawls and scarves for those requiring TLC or just a beautiful wrap. Thanks to Lynn and the knitters!

**Columbus Building Breakfast:** This breakfast usually occurs on the third Sunday of the month, but check the Columbus Club website for any cancellations. Plan to eat breakfast around 8:30 and be back for worship at 9:30!

***Outreach and Support Committee:*** Susan Wautelet, Carol Beiter, Grace Blanding, Mary Ecker, Betty Kay Eley, Lynn Gee, Sarah Smith, Genie Tobias, and Pastor Lauren Hall.

***Youth and Education Committee:*** Barbie Pickut and Laura Blackford



"The problem with the world is that we draw the circle of our family too small."

— Mother Teresa

Thanks to the generosity of this congregation, we are able to extend the circle of our local family beyond the walls of the church. This past month the social concerns committee voted to support our larger family by distributing the money received as follows: Link to Hope Assistance \$800, Link to Hope Administration \$100, Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ Food Project \$300, Bread of Life \$200, David's Courage \$200, Neighborhood Center \$200, Community Meal \$200, and St. Thomas Non-food Pantry \$200. Additionally, we agreed to give \$200 to the Bikes for Kids program.

Thank you for your continued support of this community.



# Mother's Club

All Ladies are invited to join us!

## LOOKING AHEAD:

**Wednesday, May 20** Mother's Club will meet at 6:30 at the church. Then we will go across the street to *Scoops and Sweet Bubbles* and enjoy fellowship.

**Thursday, June 18** will be the Murder Mystery, "The Rhyme Crime" at 6:30 in the Fellowship Hall. Characters include Jack and Jill, Bo Beep, Red Riding Hood, Wolf, Cinderella, Jack Horner, Miss Muffet, and Spider. We still have 2 open parts if any other ladies would like to join us!



**Thursday, July 16** Mother's Club will meet at Culver's in Plymouth at 6:30 for fellowship and food.

**Thursday, August 20** Mother's Club will be at the LaPaz Diner in LaPaz at 6:30.

## LOOKING BACK:

In April our program was "Karen in the Kitchen". Karen Capper taught us how to make pretzels, which also tied in to the devotion she shared. She also helped us make "S'More Popcorn". Everything was delicious!



## THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bill Keane



**ARE YOU SPRING CLEANING?** If you have any of the following, here are some destinations...

- **BIBLES** – Midwest Mission is collecting gently-used Bibles to send to Jamaica. Please bring them to the Narthex on Sunday, or to the church office. We have 2 opportunities to deliver Bible donations: when our work team goes to Midwest on May 3; or our reps going to Annual Conference in June can take them.
- **EGG CARTONS** – Bread of Life needs egg cartons. Bring them to the Narthex or put them in the box in the entryway of the Education Building.
- **MISCELLANEOUS** – *Relay for Life Marshall County* is having their Annual Sale in the Park on June 6. If you have items to donate, see Betty Kay. (No clothes.)



**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITES**

- **Midwest Mission:** May 3 – 8, 2026 We have 5 people leaving after church on May 3.
- **Cultivate:** Monday, May 4; We leave from the church parking lot at 5:15 p.m., carpool to South Bend where we work from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., returning to the church parking lot about 8:45. Lauren Rich and Diane Hogsett are our coordinators. Sign-up sheets will be at the Welcome Center. *This is a fun, easy way to serve others! No experience or skill is necessary; sit-down jobs are available.*



**FUNDRAISING**

**Saturday, May 2 – Tenderloin Sale at Centier Bank**

\$12.00 gets you a delicious, fresh, hot tenderloin sandwich and French fries. Between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Advance tickets available from any Missions member or the Church office.



**Saturday, June 13 – Bake Sale at the Farmers Market**

Come to the Market and purchase something delicious, or help by providing baked goods.

**DONATIONS**

At our April meeting, Missions Commission voted to donate \$450 to Cultivate Food Rescue and \$250 to Bikes for Kids. The funds come from Basket Offerings, Direct Donations, and Fundraisers.

**The Great Confirmer**

The words of the Amen

Revelation 3:14

The word *Amen* solemnly confirms what went before, and Jesus is the great Confirmer; immutable forever is "the Amen" in all *His promises*. *Sinner*, I would comfort you with this reflection. Jesus Christ said, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."<sup>1</sup> If you come to Him, He will say "Amen" in your soul; His promise shall be true *to you*. He said in the days of His flesh, "A bruised reed he will not break."<sup>2</sup> Poor, broken, bruised heart, if you come to Him, He will say "Amen" to you, and it will be true in your soul as in hundreds of cases in years gone by.

*Continued on page 8*



**Plymouth Youth Fellowship**  
will meet at  
**Plymouth Church of the Brethren**  
on Sunday, May 17, 4:30-6:30 pm  
All ages K-12 are invited.  
Free meal included!

Fun and games at  
Plymouth Youth  
Fellowship!



### GRADUATION SUNDAY

On Sunday, May 17 we will be honoring our PHS graduates

***Emma Konefsky and Jonah Rich***

Help them as they transition to their next adventure  
by writing a note of encouragement or advice.

Please bring these notes/cards to the  
worship service on May 17.

## Mission Fundraiser

# Tenderloin Sandwich with Fries - \$12.00

(Cooked by Ralph Smith)

Saturday, May 2

11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Drive Thru Service



**CENTIER BANK**

**Corner of Jefferson and Oak Rd.**

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**Proceeds to benefit Mission Trips**

Tickets Available from any Missions Member or  
Church Office, 400 North Michigan Street, 574-936-2943.  
(Advance tickets not required)

## SAVE THE DATE FOR BETTER WAY!

All youth finishing 8th-12th grade in 2026 are invited to the Better Way Trip 2026 to Alabama. We will travel by bus to Montgomery, Selma, and Birmingham from **July 11-17**, to learn, reflect, and experience together the continuing fight for equality and justice. Don't miss this opportunity to grow in your understanding of past and current lived experiences. Registration, cost, and details to come; mark your calendar now.

*Continued from page 6*

*Christian*, isn't this very comforting to you also, that there is not a word that has come from the Savior's lips that He has ever retracted? The words of Jesus will stand when heaven and earth pass away. If you get ahold of but half a promise, you will find it true. Watch out for those who ignore the promises and so miss much of the comfort of God's Word.

Jesus is Yes and Amen in all His *offices*. He was a Priest to pardon and cleanse once; He is Amen as Priest still. He was a King to rule and reign for His people and to defend them with His mighty arm; He is an Amen King, the same still. He was a Prophet of old, to foretell good things to come; His words remain trustworthy and true—He is an Amen Prophet. He is Amen as to the merit of His blood; He is Amen as to His righteousness. That sacred robe will remain most fair and glorious when nature shall decay. He is Amen in every single title that He bears; your Husband, never seeking a divorce; your Friend, sticking closer than a brother; your Shepherd, with you in death's dark vale; your Help and your Deliverer; your Refuge and your Strong Tower; the Vessel of your strength, your confidence, your joy, your all in all, and your Yes and Amen in everything.

<sup>1)</sup> Matthew 11:28

<sup>2)</sup> Matthew 12:20

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**Karen Swallow Prior**  
KEYNOTE SPEAKER

**JULY 16-18, 2026**

# WCWC

## WINONA CHRISTIAN WRITERS CONFERENCE

Drawn together by our unique perspective as believers, WCWC focuses on excellence, beauty, and craft.

Held on Grace College campus beside picturesque and historic Winona Lake, Indiana, our conference welcomes emerging writers of all walks: from college students and graduate students to teachers and other adults seeking to improve and publish their writing.

We offer a world-class conference experience in a resort location at an affordable price. Enjoy readings, lectures, cultural events, a banquet, and keynote speaker Karen Swallow Prior.

**REGISTRATION: \$425** (includes most meals)

### WORKSHOPS

FICTION · CREATIVE NONFICTION/MEMOIR · POETRY  
WRITING FOR YOUNG ADULTS · WRITING FOR CHILDREN  
GENERATING SONNETS

**Learn More / Register Now**

[GRACE.EDU/ABOUT/THE-WINONA-CHRISTIAN-WRITERS-CONFERENCE/](http://GRACE.EDU/ABOUT/THE-WINONA-CHRISTIAN-WRITERS-CONFERENCE/)



SCHOOL OF  
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Humanities

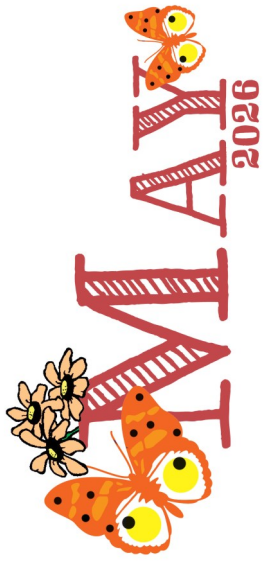




Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9 Luke Felde
10 Linda Hagan	11 Kelsey Miller	12	13	14 Tom Douglass	15 John Wauetelet	16 Dan Darda
17	18 Judy Stump	19	20 Ryan Gray	21 Allie Rans	22	23 Marilee Johnson Dick & Genie Tobias (A)
24 Betty Kay Eley Nancy Felde	25	26	27 Barbie Pickut	28	29	30 Shirley Magnuson Bob & Carol Beiter (A)
31 Ron & Janet Smith (A)						

### MAY SERVICE PARTICIPANTS

	5/3	5/10	5/17	5/24	5/31
<b>LITURGISTS</b>	Sarah Smith	Jonah Rich	Donna Hemmig	Carol Beiter	Laura Darda
<b>NURSERY</b>	Ashley Corwin	Carol Beiter	Laura Blackford	Melissa Christiansen	Angela Binkley
<b>USHERS</b>	Pam Michel	Pam Michel, Donna & Bill Hemmig	Pam Michel, Linda Hagan	Pam Michel, Mike & Jane Woolfington	Pam Michel, Marilyn Rans
<b>LIFT ATTENDANT</b>	Bill Binkley	John Finlay	John Finlay	John Wauetelet	John Wauetelet



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 11:00 am-2:00 pm Tenderloin Fundraiser @ Centier Bank
3 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am Sunday School	4 12:00 pm W.O.W. At Mimi's Café 5:15 pm trip to Cultivate 6:00 pm Trustees Committee Meeting 6:00 pm P.E.O.	5 10:00 am-12:00 pm Knit 2, Pray 3	6	7 6:00 am Early Birds (ZOOM) 12:00 pm Joy Breaks 12:30 pm Women's Bible Study	8	9 8:00 am Men's Breakfast
10 <b>Mother's Day</b> 9:30 am Worship Service 10:45 am Sunday School	11 6:00 pm Finance Committee Meeting 6:30 pm Social Con- cerns Committee Meeting	12 9:30 am Worship Commission meeting 11:00 am Bad Girls Bible Study	13 6:00 pm Mission Commission Meeting	14 6:00 am Early Birds (ZOOM) 12:00 pm Joy Breaks 12:30 pm Women's Bible Study	15 11:00 am Lunch Bunch to Stream- liner in Rochester	16
17 <b>Graduation Sunday</b> 8:30 am Breakfast at the Columbus Club 9:30 am Worship Service 10:45 am Sunday School 4:30-6:30 pm Plymouth Youth Fellowship @ Church of the Brethren	18 5:30 pm Blessed Bookies 6:30 pm Outreach Committee Meeting	19	20 6:30 pm Mother's Club	21 6:00 am Early Birds (ZOOM) 12:00 pm Joy Breaks 12:30 pm Women's Bible Study	22	23
24 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am Sunday School	25 Memorial Day Office Closed	26	27 5-6:30 pm Communi- ty Meal	28 6:00 am Early Birds (ZOOM) 12:00 pm Joy Breaks 12:30 pm Women's Bible Study	29	30
31 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am Sunday School						