

August 2009



George Forrest

Church Staff

Pastor: Evan Lash

Director of Music Ministries: Rose Marie Dure

Coordinator of Youth Ministries—Jennifer Casper

Coordinator of Children & Family Ministries: Robin Podell

Secretary: Sharon Daniels—Receptionist: Becky Read

Housekeepers: Phyllis Jones & Pam Braddy

Maintenance—Paul Lux

Discovery Days Preschool Staff

Dorothy Cahill, Shawn Cothran, Kyleen Fuller,

Jaunda Kneller, Melissa Newland, Shae Taylor

calendar



Last year at this time, I was introducing you to a book by Bishop Schnase, **"Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations."** The first of the practices described in the book was Radical Hospitality. Today I want to remind you of the importance of this basic concept.

Christian hospitality refers to the active desire to invite, welcome, receive, and care for those who are strangers so that they find a spiritual home and discover for themselves the unending richness of life in Christ.

It describes a genuine love for others who are not yet a part of the faith community; an outward focus, a reaching out to those not yet known, a love that motivates church members to openness and adaptability, willingness to change behaviors in order to accommodate the needs and receive the talents of newcomers. Beyond intention, hospitality practices the gracious love of Christ, respects the dignity of others, and expresses **God's invitation to others, not our own.** (p. 11-12)

Radical means "drastically different from the ordinary practice, outside the normal," and so it provokes practices that exceed expectations, that go the second mile, that take welcoming the stranger to the max. It means people offering the absolute utmost of themselves, their creativity, their abilities, and their energy to offer the gracious invitation and reception of Christ to others. (p.21)

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

(All page numbers refer to Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations, by Robert Schnase, Abingdon Press, 2007)

Please consider how we could improve our hospitality, our welcome, and our inclusion of others. Are we expecting first-time guests? How do we treat them? Is our building inviting to older persons, to families, to children? We are a loving group of folks—there is no question about that. We offer great worship—there is no doubt about that. We have much to give and to share. Please consider what issues we need to address as we look ahead.

Who are we trying to reach? How can we express that **in what we do? Let's talk about it as we plan for this** next year together.

Mark your calendars!!!

ALL CHURCH PICNIC

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER

20th

CUMMINGS LODGE



Mid-term Celebration of Progress

The Bell Tower project has been completed. (As you recall, water was leaking into our church; and, had caused extensive damage to the wood framing of the tower). Even the heavy equipment tire marks, in the **yard, are pretty well healed. In addition, the "pit" project** has been completed; but, not without many fits, and jerks, along the way. Still some fertilizing, and **grass seed planting to be done. Isn't it great to be able to flush with confidence? (The "pit" problem was really brought to light as a result of the Monroe Street construction project).**

These projects could not have been completed without your generous financial support. We have repaid the \$40,000 loan to the bank and borrowed from ourselves. You are all to be commended for your support.

Maintaining infrastructure is essential for maintaining the value, and operation of our church, just as our church activities are essential for the spiritual growth of each, and every one of us. By standing and looking at **our church; and, walking its halls you can't tell that the Bell Tower, and "pit" projects have been completed.** But, you need only come to Sunday services; or, meet a fellow Christian on the street to know that the SPIRIT is at work within each and every one of us because of our God, through our church.

Our next project (underway at this time) is to upgrade our Friendship Hall. Not just to make it pretty; but, to
(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

improve the media for teaching, preaching; and, our spiritual well being. There will be more to report as this project takes shape, and nears it's completion.

God bless you all.

Ad Council



THANK YOU!
THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Dear Friends,

Thank you so very much for your recent donation of food to the La Porte Salvation Army. We truly appreciate your donation and your commitment to the people of the community of La Porte County. Know that your generous donation is greatly appreciated and will be utilized to assist the neediest in our community.

Once again, thank you for your donation and we truly value your ongoing support and friendship. God Bless!

Capt. Timothy Farquharson

Dear "Angels" at First Church,

Thank you for all the cards, food, errands run and stopping by to cheer us up. We love you all!

Jack & Georgia Whitted

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

To the Congregation at FUMC,

I am writing to personally thank you for allowing me to work along side of three of your youth during our VBS. Sam Cook, Olivia Steele, and Rafael Casper, came to Bethany during our VBS and helped in very significant ways. They were great models and provided wonderful leadership to the children who attended. I wanted to pass this along to the congregation recognizing the wonderful work God did through these youth that **week. They are true models of Christ's love. God bless** them and all who worship at your church.

In His Service,

Chris Buresh, Director of Christian Education

Dear Church Members,

Thank you for allowing me to go to camp. I had a great time. I learned that Jesus loves me no matter what. We went horseback riding. I went swimming. I went tubing and on the high swing. The food was delicious and the cabin beds were cozy.

Once again, thank you.

Sincerely, Olivia Rivera

To the Church Congregation,

I would like to thank everyone for their prayers, hugs and concerns during my recent home invasion and robbery on May 19. I am so grateful I wasn't injured. It was very frightening, and was the longest 45 minutes of my life! Thanks again, I appreciate your thoughtfulness.

Colleen Fairley

All in our Church Family Life

We celebrate the lives triumphant of Ermabelle Thorndyke who died on June 22 and George Schultz who died on July 1

We gratefully acknowledge the following gifts

In Memory of Ermabelle Thorndyke Bruce, Beth & Jessica Parker, Naomi Circle, Duryne Porter, Delilah Euler, Rita Morrival, Edwin & Alice Mueller, Pat & Glenn Kessler, Richard & Pam Kievert, Wilbur & Joni Peak, John & Georgia Whitted, Gina Urban & Family, Marilyn Dunk, James & Elizabeth Habdas, Ryan & Teresa Snyder, David & Crystal Snyder, Lorna Cooksey, Janet Kenyon, Peggy

Rose, Larry & Gayle Curtis, Judy & Byran Butler, Thelma Taylor, Dawn Broughton, Carrie Bowman, Dennis Butler, Carolyn Mosson & Family, John & Sharon Hysong, Bennie & Karen Rison, Gertrude Butler, Ed Butler & Family, Ron Butler & Family, Frances Rameier, Anne Wegner

In Memory of Charles Nye Will & Marilyn Smaka

In Memory of George Schultz Colleen Fairley, Anne Wegner, Marian Heath, Doris Buell, Victoria Pajer



Wellness Committee

Discipline, perseverance, attitude, motivation, strength, and endurance are all words found in the Topical Index of the NIV Prayer Devotional Bible. These words apply to prayer and a deepening faith, but also to exercise and a healthier lifestyle.

This fall and winter, allow us to motivate you to improve your overall health, strength, and endurance through exercise. A positive attitude will allow you to be more disciplined to try some exercise programs being offered by the Wellness Committee.

_____ I am interested in an exercise program, but unsure of what type.

_____ I am interested in a specific type of exercise program. Please list your preferences_____.

_____ **I am interested in a "light exercise program" involving stretching and walking.**

_____ I am interested in an exercise program for children.

Please fill in this form and return it to the Church Office. Another opportunity to fill in a form will be available in an August worship bulletin. Thank You for your input!

Or talk to one of the Wellness Committee Members—
Jim Maurer, Kitty Maurer, Lamar Koontz, Becky Read,
Colleen Fairley, Becky Zurawski

Your Name _____

Phone # _____

United Methodist Women at a glance...

Once again we have exciting news to share with you.

A group of young women met several times and decided to form a new church circle. One of their first decisions was a name for their circle. After several discussions on various possibilities (one suggestion was **"The Squares"**—since other groups were called **"circles"**) **one member of the group read a passage from the Bible describing Abigail's many accomplishments as a peace maker and wise counselor to David.** Everyone agreed they would like to be known as the **"Abigail Circle"**. **We welcome them as members of UMW and offer our support in all their mission projects.**

After hearing about the origin of the Abigail Circle, at their summer picnic, the question came up concerning the origin of the Wesley Ann Circle. Chairperson, Jan Mayes, decided to research old minutes in search of an answer. Jane Langford remembered that Ann Conklin was the person who started the circle. Jane contacted Ann, who provided the following information: **"When we moved to LaPorte in 1976, there was no circle that had a babysitter. Our Mike was 3 then, so I needed a sitter. I was the one who organized the group and recruited members. Yes, I admit, the Frog Kissers was my suggestion. However, it was Helen Her-**

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

shberger who came up with the name Wesley Anns. There had been a group of that name in another church of theirs. I am so happy to hear the group is still going strong and having picnics! (Probably Frog Kissers wouldn't have had such longevity.)"

Thank to Ann Conklin, the Wesley Ann Circle members now know about the history of their circle that will be added to UMW records.

As always—WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!!

Membership and Outreach Co-Chairperson,
Millie Condon & Alberta Tolton





God has blessed us with seventeen new members to our church. The following are thumbnail sketches of these men and women and

pictures of most are on the bulletin board to help **you get acquainted. Please join the Newcomer's** Committee in welcoming these new members of our church family.

Windham and Deborah Bremer have lived in Heston, Indiana since 1980, enjoying country living with their son, Michael. Win began practicing medicine in Michigan City in 1970 and has been semi-retired since 1999. He is an antique car enthusiast and more of his time is spent serving as chairman of our finance committee. Debbie enjoys her three dogs and is especially fond of beagles. She has joined a circle, teaches Sunday School at 9:00 and Win and she attend the 10:30 service.

Willis and Jenny Brown met at Purdue University through their participation in musical organizations. After their marriage they lived in several Indiana towns before discovering LaPorte. They are the proud parents of 18 month old Nora and are expecting a baby boy very soon. Both Willis and Jenny work for G. W. Berkheimer and in their limited spare time Willis enjoys cooking and grilling and Jenny

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

professes to be the handy person around the house. They attend the 10:30 service.

Samantha Cook is the youngest of this new member class but has long been part of the Church with her active participation. She belongs to the Youth Group, serves as an audio/video technician for the 9:00 service and was a student leader of the Vacation Bible School. Sam is an honor student and has been an award winner in vocal and instrumental groups at LaPorte High School where she will be a senior. Her hobby is photography and her work finds its way into the videos enjoyed during the Contemporary service. Samantha is the daughter of Larry and Kris Cook who also attend the 9:00 service.

Gaye Davis attends the 10:30 service. After the death of her husband of 34 years, Gaye felt a change was needed and she found her way to LaPorte where she now manages the Beacon Hills Banquet and Conference Center. Gaye enjoys traveling as often as her busy schedule allows to visit her four children and fifteen grandchildren. Gaye is impressed with the friendship she has experienced and has already joined a church circle.

Marilyn Decker is a former member of this church and we are happy to welcome her back to our Church family. Marilyn stays busy as a homemaker and as an active volunteer with the American Red Cross and at

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

the LaPorte Regional Hospital. Marilyn enjoys the 8:00 service.

Donna Homann was an active member of our church in her tweens and teens but left after marriage to join her husband in his church. Recently she **felt the pull to come back and feels like she “has come home” as she enjoys the warmth and friendship** of the 8:00 service. Donna is the daughter of Marilyn Decker, wife of Dave and mother of Ben and Emily and was a preschool teacher for many years.

Jay and Michelle Kurzydlo found our church because of its proximity to their home and they and their three children, Josh, 11, Ciera, 10, and Phoebe, 6, enjoy the 9:00 service and Sunday School whenever possible. They are expecting a new baby at the end of September. Jay and Michelle like doing puzzles and hiking and as a family they like to visit zoos and state parks as often as they can.

Amber Ruiz-Burleson is a new member but has been part of our family for several years, attending the 9:00 service with her husband, Josh Burleson, and children, Lilly, 3, and Connor, 1, and they are expecting a new addition. Amber teaches Sunday School, was a leader at Vacation Bible School, and is a member of the new evening Abigail Circle one of many hats she wears.

(Continued on page 15)

(Continued from page 14)

Jennifer Shelton is a 2009 graduate of LaPorte High School, where she was first in her class with a 4.0 GPA. Jennifer enjoyed filling most of her time with music ensembles in high school and as part of **the Church's Chancel and Handbell Choirs**. This fall she will attend Anderson University to major in Spanish Education and minor in Biblical Studies. Jennifer is the daughter of Fred and Ronda Shelton, the sister of Kathy, and all four have been part of our Church family for eight years. She is excited to be a member of the Church and to see what God has in store for her life!

Mike and Linda Shuler attend the 8:00 service. Mike was a high school administrator and now that he has retired from his vocation he has time to enjoy his avocations of running, reading and golfing. Linda will begin her 30th year of teaching this fall. During her precious summer vacations you can find her on Pine Lake where she is an avid water skier and where they enjoy time with family and friends on their boat.

Joan Trimble retired to LaPorte and condo living 16 years ago with her husband, Delmar, who was called to his Heavenly Home in 1999. Her son and daughter-in-law enjoy musical careers in Georgia and her grandson is about to start high school and band with his tuba. Joan has spent her life in church work of all sorts in the Swedish Lutheran tradition

(Continued on page 16)

(Continued from page 15)

but now feels that God has prompted her to become a part of our fellowship of believers where she will do her best to serve Him. Joan attends the 10:30 service.

Bill and Pam Wampler will be married 55 years this year and mentioned that one of the elements of their premarital counseling was demonstrated by making a **triangle. Bill's name was placed on one corner, Pam's on another and God's on the third. It was noted that** the closer they moved to God the closer they were to each other. They lived in LaPorte the first 30 years of their marriage and moved to Crown Point. They returned to LaPorte five years ago. Faith, family and friends are the fibers of the rope of their lives. Pam enjoys teaching Sunday School but her one concern is **the lack of consistency of the children's attendance.** She and Bill know that Pastor Evan is a real blessing for the church and they enjoy the 10:30 service. Family and volunteer activities keep both Pam and Bill on the go.

This is a special invitation to these new members and their families to join us for the all church picnic on September 20th and the Wellness Committee invites everyone to come for the fellowship, food and festivities that day while welcoming this new branch on



PRISON MINISTRY

Kairos Prison Ministry

The United Methodist

Men were enlightened on this special ministry at a recent meeting. Just what is the KAIROS PRISON MINISTRY? I believe it's Mission Statement sums it up:

The mission of the Kairos Prison Ministry is to bring Christ's love and forgiveness to all incarcerated individuals, their families and those who work with them, and to assist in the transition of becoming a productive citizen.

Subsequent articles in the Tower Talk will delve deeper into what the dedicated volunteers do within the ministry.

At this time the United Methodist Men are seeking your assistance in helping these volunteers. How? By baking cookies. Sounds odd, I know, but cookies play an important part in the process. If you can help by baking chocolate chip cookies we will be doing a big part in helping reach inmates across the state. Men AND women of the church, please call the church office soon to volunteer or if you just have questions on the ministry. You will be contacted. Cookies are needed before August 15th so there is little time after you receive this request.

Please Help!!! Thank you!
United Methodist Men

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

1. Janet Brady, Eric Schreiber
2. Steve Laue
3. Lamar Koontz, Peter Steele
4. Elizabeth Hajek
6. Nancy Magnuson, Karen Swanson
8. Syd Philbrook
9. Lester Chadwick
11. Kathryn Bormann, Lois Thomas
12. Justin Caldwell, Joan Slade
13. Ed Bowers
14. Miles Fettingier, Josh Kurzydlo, Madeline Potter,
Steve VanScoik, Donn Weiler
15. Brenden Gould
16. Caitlin Miller
18. Julie Becknell, Carole Buettner, Dick Reel
19. John Kolar
20. Bernie Garber
21. Jena Caldwell, Tyler Liberatore, Whitey Thornburg
22. Paul Graham, Lynn Karagory
25. Chris Ahlders, Mayme Stump
26. Clyde Crass, Elle Dragos, Tom McPherson,
Jan Yandt
27. Conner Bureson, Cindy Singleton
28. Karen Buckmaster
29. Rosie Flitter, Allyson Richey
30. George Forrest
100th Birthday!
31. Michael Smelser



First Indiana Annual Conference Session

It was the "first annual conference" for all the Methodist Churches of Indiana. Ball State University was chosen as the site for this Methodist event. For those familiar with Ball State's campus, Emens Auditorium was the gathering place for most of the activities during the four day conference. The conference was a little later (June 25-28) than in past years when both the North, and South Conferences held separate annual conferences. The venue was different, as well, as the North Conference has met on the Purdue University campus for many years. Ball State will, again, host next years Annual Conference.

Mission Statement: We, the United Methodist congregations of the Indiana Conference, join together in the mutual support and assistance to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

The theme for this years Indiana Conference was/is "Rethink Church". We, the combined congregations of all Methodist Churches (in Indiana) are invited to "Rethink Church". A couple of initiatives directed toward our Methodist theme are Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations; and, Church Clusters (ours is the New Prairie Cluster). Both of these initiatives, when put into practice, help us to live out our faith not just in our church; but, in our communities. It is not coincidental that these two initiatives seem to mesh very well with the mission statement, above.

The activities packed into the four day conference were: Social; business; musical, community outreach; and, recognition.

SOCIAL—There were roughly 2,000 in attendance. Old

(Continued on page 20)

(Continued from page 19)

friends get to see each other, to catch up on children, grandchildren, and other weightier concerns. There was plenty of time for socializing between planned events.

BUSINESS—This was one of the major reasons for gathering. Business was conducted in Plenary Sessions. Plenary means a full/complete gathering of persons, all authorized to vote on the issue at hand. The Plenary Sessions were convened on June 25, 26, and 27. All business, at hand, was concluded on Saturday.

Committee reports were read, amended, and accepted. The Transition Team, those who will be responsible for overseeing the INDIANA CONFERENCE were conducting sessions. While we are operating under a new structure; the, effective date for fully combined operations is January 1, 2010. In the interim, there is a lot of work to be done. All Indiana Conference operations will be consolidated under one roof on the Northeast side of Indianapolis. Just as an industrial, or commercial, venture must operate with financial prudence; so, must our church.

Business was conducted by *Roberts Rules of Order*. It took the full three days of sessions to hear all the motions, and debating of the motions. As we might expect, pensions and insurance, were the time consuming issues.

The main floor of Emens Auditorium was the "bar of the conference". Voting members with official name tags; and, the proper color voting card were allowed in during the proceedings. All others were seated in the balcony.

The proceedings, monitored by Bishop Michael Coyner, were smooth, and orderly. Voting took place by the show of our voting card (for/against) when we were instructed to cast our vote.

MUSICAL—We were provided wonderful music from vocal, and instrumental groups. Listening to them warm up before

(Continued on page 21)

(Continued from page 20)

their performance added to our musical enjoyment of the conference.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH—Muncie is reeling from the decline in the automotive industry. The Planning Team developed different projects to let the people of Muncie know that God cares about their city. Saturday afternoon, nearly half of the 2,000 participants carried out the community outreach, and mission projects, that had been planned. Each participant wore a red T-shirt that identified him/her as a member of our group. This Methodist outreach was well received.

RECOGNITION—Sunday morning was for the Order of Commissioning, Recognition, and Ordination with The Giving and Receiving of Appointments. This was the important activity which would bring the four day conference to a close. Pastors are retained in present church; or, moved to a new church, by the action of each annual conference. Bishop Michael Coyner gave a sermon titled "Finish the Song" which went hand-in-hand with the Mission Statement, and the initiatives for the Conference Theme---- "Rethink Church". We are truly blessed by Bishop Coyner's direction.

The balance of the service, and the processional were very moving. The following numbers have been accepted, commissioned, ordained, or retired:

- 16 Commissioned into ministry
- 1 Associate member of Annual Conference
- 1 Ordained a deacon
- 15 Ordained elders
- 29 Retired

USHERS THIS MONTH

8:00—Gordon Kuchel, Pete Luther, Jack Miller,
Dick Ulam, Bob Caldwell

10:30—John Kolar, Leona Collins, David McCain,
Perry Stump, Craig Keson

HOSTESS COMMITTEE: Bev Barnes, Barbara Euler, Jackie Foldenauer, Carolee Gardner, Terri Hundt, Betty Jones, Jane Langford, Carol Lee, Jan Mayes, Mary Ellen McCain, Pam McNeal-Laue, Pat Meinhard, Pam Miller, Rose Philbrook, Sherry Price, LaVicie Runkle, Ruth Soetje, Mayme Stump, Tammy Stump, Anne Wegner

FLOWER CALENDAR:

August 2 Available
9 Duryne Porter and Don Welch
16 Available
23 John & Betty Woods
30 Available

Year to date average attendance: 310

Year to date general budget income: \$237,372.41

Year to date general budget expense: \$224,179.37



calendar

First United Methodist Church

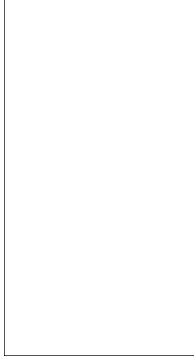
1225 Michigan Av.
LaPorte, IN 46350
Phone - 219-362-2443
www.laportefumc.org
Return Service Requested

Non Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
LaPorte, IN 46350
Permit No. 60

SUNDAY SERVICES

8:00 - Chapel Service
9:00 – Contemporary Service
10:30 - Sanctuary Service

OFFICE HOURS
Monday - Friday
8:00 to 4:00



Sharing Christ's Love