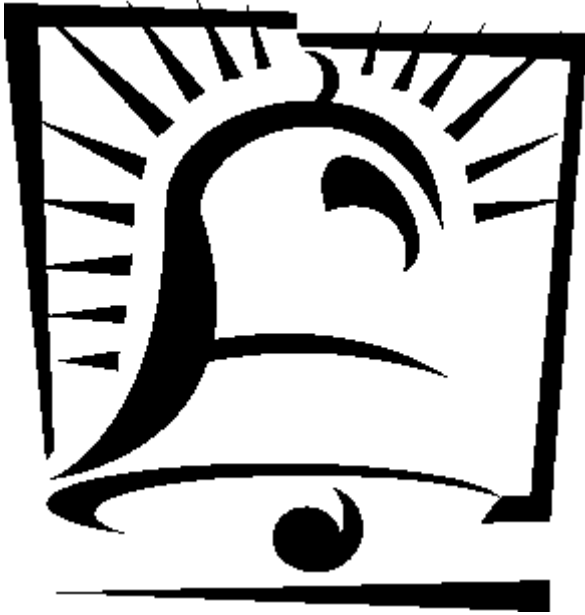


July 2009



Independence day

July 4, 1776

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



How's it going? School is out. Summer is under way. For some, those vacation plans that were made are becoming reality. For others those vacation plans will remain dreams. Not enough time, not enough money, responsibilities that hold us fast, **kids' activities** - oh well, maybe next year...

**As I have matured (I like to think of myself as "vine-ripened"), I have come to realize that vacation is more a state of mind than a place. If this is vacation time - then I must be on vacation.**

What do you like to do when you are on vacation?

Travel - then go for long walks, take the train into Chicago, visit a friend, check out the travel section in the library. It is a state of mind.

If vacation means beach, head for New Buffalo - take a good book (and your sunscreen) and imagine that you are on the French Riviera.

Vacation should mean new experiences with loved ones and old friends. Who you are with is always more important than where you are. Take someone with you on your walk, on the train, to the library, to the beach - **you're on vacation.**

One of the reasons that I like to do a summer book study is that it gives us a good excuse to settle in and read a good book, and it also gives us a good excuse to get together with others and talk about what we are reading. If the book is less than what we hoped for - then getting together with others for meaningful conversation more than makes up for a little dull reading.

**Last fall many of us read Bishop Schnase's book on the 5 Practices**, and then we gathered together in small groups to discuss it. At the time, I encouraged YOU to become part of a small group for prayer, study, spiritual growth, encouragement, fellowship, and support. I know that some of you were already part of a small group, and I know that others have become part of a group or have started a group. Today I want you to commit yourself to become part of a small group or becoming more active in a small group.

As our church continues to grow, and as we celebrate at three different times and in three different settings, we need to realize that we cannot truly know and share meaningfully with that many people. We need to arrange for other times, settings, and groups for the kind of loving community that I would hope that our church will become known for. That kind of group is the right size when every member can pray for every other member individually and by name.

My wife, Barbara, has recently introduced me to an author, John Eldredge. In his book, *Waking the Dead*, Eldredge says a couple of things about this type of group, and I want to share this with YOU.

*"Dorothy takes her journey with the Scarecrow, the Tin Woodsman, the Lion, and of course, Toto. Prince Caspian is joined by the last few faithful Narnians, and together they overthrow the wicked king Miraz. Though in the eyes of the world they are only gladiator slaves, walking dead men, Maximus rallies his little band and triumphs over the greatest empire on earth. When Captain John Miller is sent deep behind enemy lines, he goes in with a squad of eight rangers. And, of course, Jesus had the Twelve. This is written so deeply on*

*our hearts: You must not go alone.*" (Waking the Dead, p. 188)

An hour together on Sunday morning is essential and a great way to get spiritually refreshed and truly experience the joy of worship with other believers, but in a church that is growing and is as big as ours, it will never be enough.

*"Church is not a building. Church is not an event that takes place on Sundays. I know, it's how we've come to think of it. 'I go to [First United Methodist.]' 'My parents got married in that church.' 'Is it time to go to church?' Much to our surprise, that is not how the Bible uses the term. Not at all. Certainly, the body of Christ is a vast throng, millions of people around the globe. But when Scripture talks about church, it means community. The little fellowships of the heart that are outposts of the kingdom. A shared life. They worship together, eat together, pray for one another, go on quests together. They hang out together . . ."* (Waking the Dead, p. 192)

You are never alone - God loves YOU and sent his Son as an example. YOU have a constant companion - the Holy Spirit. YOU have your friends and family at First UMC, you have me.

So, vacation people, get away, and get together. The journey has begun - Your fellow travelers are ready to go - enjoy your trip.

See you Sunday,  
Evan

# THANK YOU!

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Dear Friends,  
Thank you for praying for our granddaughter, Kara, these past few months. She has finished this series of chemo and hopefully it eradicated the cancer from her body. The P.E.T. scan was positive but to say now she is cancer free would be wrong. She is in the hands of the ONE whom we pray to for HIS loving care, as all of us are. We were overwhelmed with your loving prayers for her. Just as all of you that have had cancer know, having a positive attitude is a big plus. Kara certainly has demonstrated this through all of her treatments thanks to all the prayers lifted up for her. She is now attending summer school at Hillsdale College and getting on with life. Thank you again for being a part.  
Dom & Bernita Liberatore

FUMC:  
Thank you so much for the care-gram! Your warm wishes are so encouraging to me as I begin the new journey in my life! I am excited to attend Anderson University to major in **Spanish Education.** I'm looking forward to seeing what God has in store for me! Also, thank you so much for the cross made out of the old windows. It is such a wonderful keepsake, and I will cherish it!  
Jennifer Shelton

Thank you for your generous outpouring of items for the Lucille Raines Bath-tub Ministry. I will be delivering them soon and I know that the staff will be overwhelmed by your kindness. I also have the names and addresses of current residents. If you would like to send someone a card or a note of

*(Continued on page 7)*

*(Continued from page 6)*  
encouragement, ask Sharon. These personal notes make a huge difference in the lives of these persons in recovery. Thanks again!

Barbara Jackson

Dear Church Friends,  
We are so blessed to have such a wonderful church **family**. **Jake Tanner's baptism** was an amazing event for our family and we are fortunate to have

FUMC as his religious foundation.

Thank you so much for your prayers and the prayer blanket. The sentiment that came along with the prayer blanket made it that much more special. It is beautiful and we will treasure it.

Thank you again,  
Jodi & Rory Bunce  
Justin & Jake

Please sign up now to have your picture taken for our new pictorial directory. Pictures will be taken on August 6-8, 10, 11. Go to [www.laportefumc.org](http://www.laportefumc.org) to sign up or at the church on Sunday mornings from now through July.



## All in our Church Family Life

We Celebrate the  
Baptism of  
Ophelia Layne  
Baughman,  
daughter of Andrew &  
Alisha Baughman  
granddaughter of  
Matt & Debi Baughman,  
great-granddaughter of  
Don & Jane Stephani

We celebrate the  
life triumphant of  
Edna Smyers  
who died on May 28

We gratefully  
acknowledge the  
following gifts

In Memory of  
Betty Dmitras  
Georgia & Jack Whitted

In Memory of  
Charles Nye  
Georgia & Jack Whitted

In Memory of  
Edna Smyers  
Naomi Circle



# See You in Church

## Famine Update

The youth group would like to thank the congregation for all of their support during the famine. The prayers, words of encouragement, and donations were wonderful! The total raised was \$2651.65! That will go to feed a lot of hungry people.

### Market Day

During July and August we will do Market Day. You can either order online or get a form from Terri Hundt, Lori Dowty, or Jennifer Casper. The orders are due the Sunday (or Monday if you order online) before pick-up. Pickup days are July 16 and August 13. This is a great fundraiser for the youth group. This money will be going towards our summer plans- like **fixing up some things at the youth house. It's an easy way for everyone to support the youth- and get a lot of yummy food!**

## Thank you

Thank you to all of who have welcomed me with your kind words and encouragement as I began my journey with the youth in May. So far, it has been a wonderful experience and I have also been overwhelmed by the wonderful support of the congregation and by our amazing youth!



## Youth Group News

This summer, we are planning to fix up some things at the youth house, learning more about sharing our

*(Continued on page 10)*

spiritual journeys and having some summer fun! We meet every Sunday morning after the 9 am service in the youth house for our Think Tank discussion about the sermon. On



Sunday evenings, we meet from 6-8 for our youth group meeting. Anyone from 6<sup>th</sup>- 12<sup>th</sup> grades is welcome to join us! If you would like more information about upcoming events, please call or e-mail me at 575-0135 or [mrsghost@verizon.net](mailto:mrsghost@verizon.net).

As fall soon approaches, I am always looking for people who would like to volunteer to help with the youth. There are many ways you can help. You can come once a month to help with the youth activities, offer an idea for an activity the youth might be able to do, ask the youth to help you with some work for Operation Serve hours, donate to Operation Serve, donate pop or snacks for the youth house, and, most importantly, pray for the youth and volunteers! If any of these opportunities interest you, please let me know.

Jennifer Casper



## The UMW Library

The new UMW library will be located in the Parlor, on the shelves next to the fireplace. We thought this would be a nice place to relax and read, perhaps with a cup of coffee or tea from the kitchen. Books are being ordered and you will soon see them begin to appear on the shelves. We will also have available the UMW Reading Program forms, if you would like to participate and keep track of the books you have read.

Books may be checked out by anyone for up to four weeks. We also plan to have other forms of media available, such as audio books, videos, and DVD's. We have added a section entitled "Health and Wellness", and if you have books, exercise videos, or DVD's that you would like to donate, we would be glad to add them to our collection.

Memorial gifts may be made at any time. Most books cost around \$15 each. If you like, you can request that we purchase a book in any of the following categories, either in your name or that of a loved one: **Children's Books; Young Adult Books; Adult; or Large Print.** Checks should be made out to "United Methodist Women". **You response to date has been gratifying.** Thank you for your support in reviving this ministry!



Dear Friends,

Greetings! This homeland assignment in the US has quickly passed and Cam and Anne are preparing to return again to Ghana on June 20. We are thankful to have had the opportunity to meet with 23 churches and many supporters of the ministry in Ankaase. For those we could not meet with this time, we hope for another opportunity the next homeland assignment time.



We are also thankful to the Krug and Nagle families for making their homes open to us in South Bend, Indiana, so that Caylor could attend the last semester of 6<sup>th</sup> grade at Covenant Christian School in Mishawaka. Caylor will be going to HoneyRock camp in northern Wisconsin this summer with her good friends Laura and Julia Nagle. She will then accompany the Brandenburg and Baldwin families to Ghana in mid July as they will serve for 2 weeks with us. We will do some outreach at the Reading Town Library as well as some medical outreach at Ankaase Hospital, Lake Bosumtwi Clinic and the **new Twifo Hospital in Ghana.** Cam's physician brother, Curt, will also join us for his 6<sup>th</sup> journey to Ghana over these past 11 years.

The summer in Ghana looks busy. When we return

*(Continued on page 13)*

*(Continued from page 12)*

on June 20, we will set aside 2 weeks to search for a home to rent in the capital city of Accra. We will then proceed to Ankaase to reconnect with our Ghanaian ministry partners and prepare for the mid July team. Please pray for us to find a suitable home in Accra this month when we return. We will **relocate there in August for Caylor's education at an American school**. Please pray for that transition and new ministry opportunities that we will have as well as our frequent travel back to Ankaase for encouragement and support of our Ghanaian colleagues carrying on the work at the hospital and library.

If anyone would like to help with sending learning games and educational materials for the library outreach in Ankaase, or medical supplies and equipment for medical outreach in Ghana, please contact us at [annegongwer@gmail.com](mailto:annegongwer@gmail.com) or [camerongongwer@gmail.com](mailto:camerongongwer@gmail.com) .

Thanks again for your encouragement and support for our family and the ministries in Ankaase these past 11 years. May God richly bless you in your calling and service!

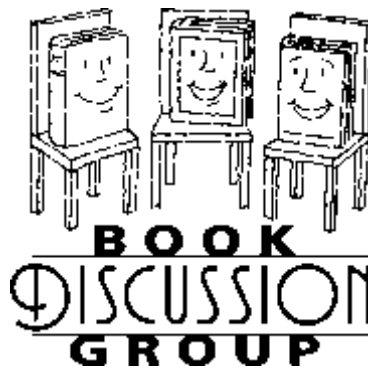
Cam, Anne and Caylor Gongwer

# 11

## —Summer Book Study and Sermon Series

It is not too late to get your copy. They are available in the church office for \$15.00 each. An easy inspirational read for the summer – based on the premise that we need persons in our lives who perform 11 different roles. You can join with us for a discussion time at either an afternoon or evening session. Wednesdays, July 8, and August 12 at 7:00 in the evening – or come on the afternoons of July 9, or August 13.

Phil Miller and Pastor Lash will be leading these discussions. All summer, Pastor Lash will be preaching a sermon series on the 11 figures from the book. So come on – have some fun reading a book together this summer.





Deborah Bremer  
Windham Bremer  
Jennifer Brown  
Willis Brown  
Gaye Davis  
Marilyn Decker  
Donna Homann  
Jay Kurzydlo  
Michelle Kurzydlo  
Amber Ruiz-Burleson  
Jennifer Shelton  
Michael Shuler  
Linda Shuler  
Joan Trimble  
Pam Wampler  
William Wampler  
Samantha Cook

When you see these people be sure to make them feel welcomed into church membership.

## Timbers Restaurant Offers Church Rebate

When members of our congregation and friends go to the Timbers Restaurant for Sunday Brunch during the months of July and September the church will receive 10% of your total bill. Take your bulletin and present it to the waitress. At the end of the month the bulletins will be totaled and the church will receive a check for 10% of the amount spent. The Timbers Restaurant is open for Brunch each Sunday from 10:00 to 2:00.



# *HAPPY JULY BIRTHDAYS*

1. Doris Buell, Sarah Hundt
2. Karen Hubble, Thomas Toll
3. Eleanor DeMarco, Hannah Neal
4. Jean Caddy, Ian Laue
5. Abby Zila
6. Jackie Brooks
7. Jeff Anderson
8. Becky Read
9. Andrew Caratini, Eloa Schultz
10. Kristin Anderson, Rick Gleim
12. Laura Gould, Bill Meinhard
13. Justine Caldwell
14. Lilly Dowty
15. Kathy Anderson , Karen Bortz, Cathy Eldridge,  
Jim Maurer
16. Harry Gardner
19. Toni Lux
21. David Goodwin, Emily Morris
22. Barb Dreiner
24. Martha Brady, Jan Hadley, Macoy West,  
Pat Zeisig
25. Eric Yandt
27. Kyle Schreiber, Ben Walker
28. Don Major
29. Zack Liberatore, Michael Steele,  
Cheri Thomas
31. Josh Burleson, Harry Carbon,  
Cassie Dragos, Katherine Small,  
Olivia Steele



## USHERS THIS MONTH

8:00—Ron Schafer, Ray Irons, Stanley Small,  
Jackie Brooks

10:30—Mel Shreve, Dom Liberatore, Ron Miller,  
Scott Simerlein, Steve VanScoik

HOSTESS COMMITTEE: Angie Baugher, Karen  
Bortz, Karen Buckmaster, Susan Denzine, Rose  
Marie Dure, Fran Estep, Diane Graham, Lynn  
Karagory, Esther Kendall, Linda Kmitta, Carol  
McCombs, Fran Mickelson, Robin Podell, Duryne  
Porter, Pam Steele, Linda Straub, Cathy Sweet,  
Kathy Trevillian, Brenda Zirzow

## FLOWER CALENDAR:

July 5 Hundt and Music Ministry  
12 Cooper  
19 Available  
26 Thornburg and Weist

Year to date average attendance: 311  
Year to date general budget income:  
\$184,887.03  
Year to date general budget expense:  
\$193,110.52



calendar

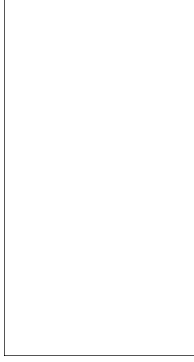
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**SUNDAY SERVICES**

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