

# First News

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First  
United  
Methodist  
Church

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## A Note from Pastor Toni

Dear Friends,

Last week, a dear family friend purchased a brand-spanking new, 4-wheel drive, Midnight Blue Chevy Trailblazer, and she is absolutely in love. She's been driving an old Buick that stopped dead in its tracks a day or two before the vehicle shopping began. Her son took her to the



dealership and said, pick out what you want. She looked around and considered her options. Kicked some tires. The salesperson spent some time with her and listened to her needs. Then he said, I'll be right back. He went outside, located this SUV and brought it to the showroom where she waited. She saw it, spent

some time with it, and agreed that this was the vehicle for her.

I look forward to seeing it, because it sounds like it is absolutely beautiful. My friend manages her son's small business, does the

banking, the billing, the pick-ups and deliveries, and pretty much anything else he needs so he can focus on what he does best. I'm grateful that she now has this dependable transportation. And besides that, she looks good in it.

Did I happen to mention that my friend is 86 years old?

I love this story. Not only because it's absolutely true, but because this woman still

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## A Note from Pastor Toni *continued*

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has the vim, vinegar and health to put good miles and use on her new vehicle. To her, age is just number, and it doesn't define who she is or what she can do. She's a role model and inspiration for me and for all who know and love her.

*Psalm 92:14* says, "They shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing." In *Proverbs* we read "Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life," and "The glory of youth is their strength, but the beauty of the aged is their gray hair" (16:31 and 20:29). And we can't forget *Isaiah 40:3-31*: Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. I think of Abraham and Sarah, and of Moses, and all they did to serve God and to accomplish God's purposes. I'm sure there were days when their bones were weary and they looked forward to

someone else taking over—and yet, they did good work, inspired others, and were role models.

Too often in our world today, it seems that when we reach a certain age we hear the message, "step aside, you're done." Or maybe we just think that's what is expected of us. But perhaps what needs to be communicated instead is this: "because of your years of experience and the wisdom you've gained, would you consider mentoring?" A positive response to that question results in a win/win for everyone involved.

I've got nothing against taking a break, enjoying retirement or time in Florida. Those moments are well-deserved! But, no matter our age, we're useful to God's mission and there is a place for us in community.

Maybe we all won't be able to drive an amazing looking Midnight-blue Trailblazer in accomplishing the task we've been given to do, but we can be blessed with the knowledge that God is using us and blessing others.

Stay open to the possibilities.

In Christ,

*Toni*



## Social Concerns *submitted by Mary Kaufman*

Your kind-hearted giving made it possible for us to give to these agencies in the month of February: Link to Hope \$400 (help with rent and utilities), Neighborhood Center \$300 (food pantry and financial help), Bread of Life Food Pantry \$300, David's Courage \$100 (help for recovering addicts).

Please continue to give generously as our economy and COVID have devastated many families in Plymouth. Proverbs 19:17 says, *"When you help the poor you are lending to the Lord and He pays wonderful interest on your loan!"* (Living Bible) It also shows that we are fulfilling our mission of serving others, which is what God expects us to do.

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## Happy March from the Outreach Committee

In spite of the growing number of Covid cases in our community, we are blessed to recognize that many in our church family are being vaccinated....

As Desmond Tutu reminds us : "Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness." An inspirational way of saying that God is providing light at the end of the tunnel.

It is the determination of Pastor Toni that we conduct all gatherings via Zoom at this time. We are so close to the end of this very dark tunnel, that it seems foolish to take our foot off the brake now. We see the light despite the darkness, as Desmond Tutu reminds us.

Our two book studies will continue to meet via Zoom with a few changes in scheduling.

**Blessed Bookies will continue to gather on the 4th Monday at 5:30 PM.**

March 22, 2021: "To Kill a Mockingbird"

April 26, 2021: "The Girl with the Louding Voice"

**Bad Girls will now be meeting ONLY on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 11:00 AM.**

Beginning March 9 "flunking sainthood" by Jana Riess will be the focus. This book describes "A Year of Breaking the Sabbath, Forgetting to Pray, And Still Loving My Neighbor."

If you are interested in participating in either or all of these discussions, please contact Kathy at the office, or [swautelet@aol.com](mailto:swautelet@aol.com) for Zoom log on information.



## Moving Forward Information

*submitted by Brent Kaufman*

You might recall that within the last newsletter I noted our Moving Forward Committee has done some brainstorming in relation to our facility and its future. You would think that it would be simple to note a number of options concerning the facility itself. However as I learned (and I believe the committee also realized) that coming up with ideas about what we want in a church facility is a lot more than just brick and mortar. That holds true in examining our sanctuary and education building, whether we repair and renovate the building(s), build new, add on, or whatever the direction. The facility needs to meet the needs that God has set forth to us to accomplish in Plymouth (and for that matter, Marshall County and the world). In understanding this, the committee began looking at the ministries in our church membership, the community, and beyond. Here is an example: The need to feed the hungry and provide fellowship was identified and we have a dinner that is prepared for anyone who will come—without cost. This wonderful food ministry works well because of caring members. But it also relies on the facility to meet this ministry. Fellowship Hall with its access, large area for tables and chairs, and a kitchen for preparation (prior to COVID) has been a great place to provide this meal. Thus the facility is an important part of our mission to “Love God, Love others, Serve others”.

Another example is serving our member-

ship in learning about God, helping us grow into God’s hands, and supporting each other in God’s word as we travel down the road of Christian life. Our sanctuary has been a key to that since 1915. It has provided classrooms, music area, pulpit area, seating for many, beautifully adorned windows, and on and on. Along with Fellowship Hall, our congregation has come together for worship, education, celebration, nurturing and fellowship to be equipped for ministry to members of our church, our community and our world.

I have listed these two examples in hopes that you will begin to look at our church facility in terms of our many ministries. You might see how many of these ministries we perform. Our committee identified about 30 ministries we have at First Church. As you think about them, examine how the facility affects those ministries. Understand, I am not suggesting nor pushing the idea that we need a new facility. What we do will be the congregation’s decision. However, it is important to think about how the facility might need to change or be updated to meet the needs of our ministries and meet the needs of those who will inherit the debt. Of course, these decisions will have a financial cost tied to them and it is much more than just putting the sanctuary back together again. The issue of finances is huge. But so are

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## Prayer is a Gift to be Shared *submitted by Dorothy Steinke*

*Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Romans 12:12*

If radio's slim finger can pluck a melody  
from night, and toss it over a continent or  
sea;

If the petaled white notes of a violin  
are blown across a mountain or a city's  
din;

if songs, like crimson roses, are culled  
from thin blue air--

why should mortals wonder if God hears  
prayer?

*Ethel Romig Fuller*

### MISSION STATEMENT

The Susanna Wesley House in Phnom Penh currently houses 19 young women from various provinces who could not afford to attend a university in the city. It is a joy to see these young women not only to pursue higher education to break the cycle of poverty, but also to see them grow into young leaders in their church and communities as they grow in God.

*Andrew Lee*

Global Missionary from the United States  
serving in Cambodia

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## Moving Forward Information *continued*

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the facilities to meet the needs for 2021 and beyond.

At some point we as a congregation will be having discussion about what we want to do to our church facility. Each of you will need to face the type of questions our committee is currently discussing and exploring. So I am suggesting that each of us pray about our future and how our missions can continue to thrive and Move Forward.

As a final bit of information, I want to re-

mind you the Moving Forward committee is not making decisions for the congregation, it is an Ad Hoc committee of Church Council. Our committee is exploring, considering options, and probable financial costs. We are doing the study needed to assist the church. And we will present the study, our general costs considerations, and any recommendations we believe would be pertinent to the Church Council. The Church Council and/or Trustees will then finalize any recommendations and present them to the whole congregation for your decision.



# Lent in a Bag



Be sure and pick up your Lenten worship bag in the southern entry of the educational building. There are still more bags for those who are able to get out and about. Your name is on the bag. In addition, there are extra

bags on a table in Fellowship Hall for you to take and distribute to those who might enjoy their message. Contact Kathy at the office if you are unable to pick up your worship package.

Many thanks to those who assisted in packing and delivering Lent in a Bag. We hope everyone has received their bag, either via pick up at the church or delivery. In spite of Covid, the FUMC family remains strong and is able to discover creative ways to celebrate Lent and to worship God.

*Lent is a time of going very deeply into ourselves... What is it that stands between us and God? Between us and our brothers and sisters? Between us and life, the life of the Spirit? Whatever it is, let us relentlessly tear it out, without a moment's hesitation."*



## Catherine Doherty

Again, we want to extend heartfelt thanks to Pastor Toni, Kathy, Jeff, Tom, Cindy, Brian, Kay, Sarah, Ralph, Katie, Donna, our trio of singers (Mary Kaufman, Julie Boys and Kathy Mills) and all those who make it possible for us to worship on Sunday mornings. Our online presence continues to grow, so we are reaching many who would be unable or unwilling to attend in person service. We are reminded that the technology that we used to complain about now enables us to maintain contact with those we hold dear.

Once again, thank you for spreading love, and remember....God is good....all the time!

God bless you all.

The Outreach and Support Committee

Susan Wautelet, Carol Beiter, Norma Booker, Betty Kay Eley, Cindy Flagg, Ed Kelso, Bert Rans, Irma Slack, Sarah Smith, Genie Tobias, Beth Pinkerton, and Anthony Witt



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## Community Meal News



Beginning March 31st from 5-7 pm, Community Meal will again be served as carry out only. The menu for March will be spaghetti, applesauce and cookies.





# March 2021 First United Methodist Church

400 N. Michigan St.  
Plymouth, IN 46563

Love God ~ Love Others  
~ Serve Others

Phone: 574 936-2943  
Email: [office@plymouthfirstumc.org](mailto:office@plymouthfirstumc.org)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
7 3rd Sunday of Lent	8 6:30 pm Social Concerns	9 11 am Bad Girls Zoom	10 6:30 pm Zoom Bible Study	11 12	12 13	13
14 4th Sunday of Lent	15	16 6 pm Finance Zoom	17 6:30 pm Zoom Bible Study	18 9-4 ACS Daffodil Days	19 20	20
21 5th Sunday of Lent	22 5:30 pm Blessed Bookies Zoom 7 pm Youth & Ed	23 5:30 pm Trustees Zoom	24 6:30 pm Zoom Bible Study	25 26	26 27	27
28 	29	30	31			

## **MISSION MINDED**

*Each month we will highlight a different organization that our church supports through offerings.*

\$700 from our offerings goes to **UMCOR**; divided evenly between disaster relief in the U.S. and international disaster relief. These donations go through the Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church.

**UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief)** is the global humanitarian aid and development organization of the United Methodist Church. UMCOR is a non-profit organization operated under the auspices of the General Board of Global Ministries. One hundred percent of donations are directed to an earmarked project or relief effort.

Administrative expenses are funded by an annual offering collected by United Methodist churches on UMCOR Sunday.

UMCOR works through programs that address, hunger, poverty, sustainable agriculture, international and domestic emergencies, refugee and immigrant concerns, global health issues, and transitional development.

In the United States, UMCOR is one of the few agencies pre-approved by FEMA to be allowed access to disaster sites in order to provide immediate aid. Because they have established funds for disaster relief, UMCOR is ready to respond immediately when a disaster occurs.

You can donate directly to UMCOR through our church or through their website. To give to disaster relief in the USA, use Advance #901670. To give to international relief, use Advance #982450. If you prefer, UMCOR has many additional funds to donate towards found on their website.

The latest news can be found on Facebook at "UMCOR – United Methodist Committee on Relief."

### **Upcoming Mission Events:**

#### **MAY 16 - 22, 2021: WORK TRIP TO 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. Sometimes we fill school bags with supplies for students, assemble personal dignity or new baby kits, or make other types of preparations. There may be sewing or carpentry jobs for persons skilled in these areas.



- Carol Beiter is the contact person for this trip. Contact Carol with questions or to get signed up to go. Now's the time to get signed up!!!!

#### **MAY 8, 2021: FISH FRY FUNDRAISER**

Drive-thru Service in the Parking Lot (Ralph Smith cooking)



#### **SEPTEMBER 11, 2021: FISH FRY FUNDRAISER**

Drive-thru Service in the Parking Lot (Ralph Smith cooking)

#### **OCTOBER 2021 HENDERSON SETTLEMENT**

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

- Mike Woolfington is the contact person for this trip.

*Additional fundraisers may be scheduled depending on community restrictions.*



## March Birthdays



3/4 Logan Binkley

3/13 Sue Kay Smith

3/16 Joyce Gibbons

3/16 Amanda Witt

3/17 Mike Mercer

3/18 Shelley Heiden

3/18 Darlene Snyder

3/19 Marc Laudeman

3/19 Dorothy Steinke

3/22 Jane Woolfington

3/23 Tabatha Goebel

3/23 Deb Jung

3/24 Don Dick

3/26 Barry Capper

3/26 Steve Jung

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## March Preaching Plan

### March 7

#### ***Communion Sunday***

#### ***3rd Sunday in Lent***

Text: John 2:13-22

Title: Then, It Made Sense

Theme: They say that hindsight is 20/20. That rang true for the disciples after the resurrection of Jesus. Things he said earlier now made sense. Jesus “turned the tables” on the moneychangers and seeks to teach his followers how true worship occurs.

### March 14

#### ***4th Sunday in Lent***

Daylight Savings time begins

### UMCOR Sunday

Text: John 3:14-21

Title: God so Loved...

Theme: God’s mercy, grace and love shines upon God’s people, bringing hope for the weary and new life to all who believe. This brings light to our world. How can we, as followers of Jesus Christ, be light-bearers? What difference does it make that “God so loved the world?”

### March 21

#### ***5th Sunday in Lent***

Text: John 12:20-33

Title: Worth Dying For

Theme: A grain of wheat falls to the earth

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## First United Methodist Church

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*Join us Sunday at  
10:30 am on "Facebook  
Live" for Service*

Love God ~ Love Others ~ Serve Others

## March Preaching Plan *continued*

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and dies. From it springs the stalk that in time produces much fruit. Death's sting is tempered by the promise of new life. As Jesus prepares to give his life up for our sakes, what makes his sacrifice worth it? What are we willing to die for? Or maybe we should ask ourselves—what are we willing to live for?

**March 28**

***Palm Sunday***

Text: Mark 11:1-11

Title: The Stage is Set

Theme: Jesus prepares to enter Jerusalem. He will enter majestically, hearing cries of "Hosanna in the highest!" His sight is set on what he must do; his intention is to be faithful to God, who sustains him. But soon the crowds will disperse and adulation will give way to betrayal and arrest. We are filled with equal parts dread and wonder as we consider what lies ahead.