

FARMER CITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER ~ MARCH 2020 EDITION

MARCH

Activities and Meetings

Focus Meeting: March 10th at 6:30 pm

UMW Meeting: March 11th at 9:00 am

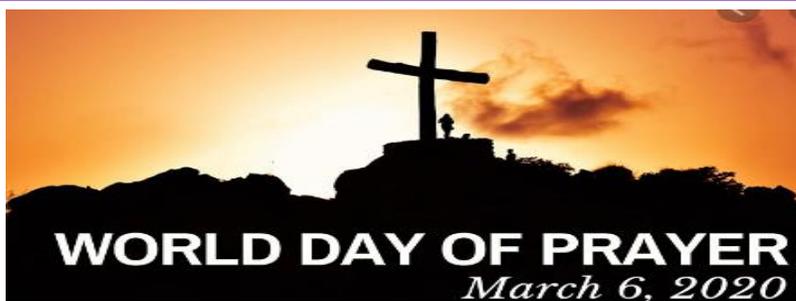
Admin Council Meeting: March 19th at 6:30 pm



East Bay Summer Camp: Scholarships are available for all camps but need to be applied for ASAP. Teresa Drinkwater can help you fill out the scholarship form. Contact her at 309-212-2592. Go to:

www.igrc.org/registrationforms or
www.igrc/camping for more information.

You are invited to join us for a soup dinner and game night on Saturday, February 29th from 6-8 pm at the church. Bring your family and your friends. All are welcome.



Office Contacts

Do you need to contact the office or Pastor Steve?
You may call, text, or email to the following.

For Office Needs:

Diana: 309-830-2267 diana.homann56@gmail.com

Church: 309-928-2355 fcwm101@gmail.com

For Immediate Needs:

Steve: 217-737-4948 pastorsteveanderson@gmail.com

Farmer City United Methodist Church

Find this newsletter on FaceBook at

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March Birthdays

- | | |
|----|-----------------|
| 1 | Brayden Evans |
| | Kelsey Byrd |
| 2 | Russa Milburn |
| 3 | Lawren Wendell |
| 10 | Julie Lutz |
| 11 | Trista Kramer |
| | Ryan Howell |
| 11 | Jodi Riegel |
| 18 | Abby Johnson |
| | Jill Anderson |
| 21 | Brent Hawn |
| 26 | Kristan Maxwell |
| | Cindy Hanafin |
| | Keith Evans |
| 27 | JoAnne Smith |
| | Guy Keysear |
| 30 | Teri Bulta |
| | Emmerson |

March Anniversaries

March 14th: Mike & Carol Mullen

March 27th: Mark & Amy Phillips

A Message from Michael Madden



Call To Serve

Thank You



Thank you all for the support, encouragement, and generous financial gifts you have given me as I pursue licensed ministry. Your gifts have helped me cover several expenses including a candidate weekend, psychological testing, a meeting with a psychologist to interpret my results, and the cost of licensing school and books for licensing school.

In early January, I attended a candidacy retreat weekend in Springfield where I learned more about the process, met my mentors, and underwent psychological testing. That was followed by a meeting with a psychologist and a few meetings with a mentoring group. I am now in the process of preparing for a meeting with the District Committee on Ministry on April 25. That committee will decide whether or not to allow me to continue pursuing licensed ministry. If that committee approves me, then I will be appointed to serve a church or multiple churches beginning July 1. From July 12-23, I will attend licensing school in Springfield where I will have nine courses I must pass to become licensed. I am currently working on the mountain of homework that I must complete in advance of the start of school; then comes, a five year course of study that I will complete while I am serving as a pastor.

Thank you again for your support and generous gifts. I believe that all of the costs for this first part of my journey have been met. I will be sure to keep everyone updated on what is happening in our lives as we embark on this unknown adventure. Please keep Ashley, Alexis, and me in your prayers.



SPRING FORWARD

Daylight Saving Time begins on March 8th.

*To Everything there is a Season.
To Everything there is a Time.*

by Marilyn Hirschman

Grace and Peace To Our Church Family –

Years ago our choir sang an anthem that began, "To everything there is a season. To everything there is a time." After 42 years, my season as music director has come to an end. I'm just not physically able to continue.

May I share a little of the "season" history. Prior to moving here, I had been organist for 4 years and choir director in 2 different churches for 3 years each. My former pastor had written your pastor, Don Wise, when we moved here. So, when FC was looking for a choir director, Don showed up on my doorstep. I knew nothing about bell choirs so I looked for a place to learn.

Nina Diamond had left the church \$400 that was to be used for music education. And, that's what paid my way to The Fellowship of United Methodists in Music and Worship Arts. Two years later FC bought the third octave of bells, and we were off and running (ringing). We purchased octaves 4 and 5 over the next few years-1 bell at a time. All the bell choirs played at worship services and concerts around Illinois. We even took an overnight to Indiana. You may remember that for 26 years we did "pops" concerts.

Sanctuary Choir has been an integral part of our own worship services for all the years. And, who knows how many cantatas we've done? While music has always been our primary focus, we've certainly brought much creativity (and not a small amount of laughter) to our services and community. Do you remember when we sang in Zulu, or how about when we sang in Spanish and couldn't finish the anthem because we were laughing so hard? Our church has supported us all along the way. When we needed new robes, we announced it at worship and had all the money to pay for them before our congregation left the building.

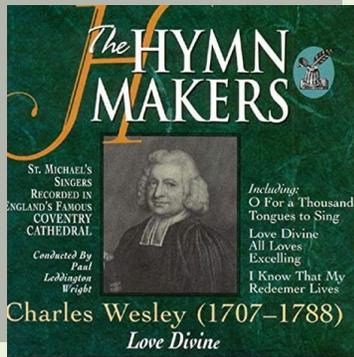
Thank you for a wonderful "season."

Marilyn Hirschman

Thank you

Builta Flooring will begin to lay the church kitchen flooring on Monday, March 2, 2020. It will take approximately three days to complete this project. The project was made possible through monetary gifts from the congregation. We wish to thank everyone for your generous donations and contributions to this project.





Charles Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, passed away on March 29th of 1788. In his honor, I share the story of Charles', along with his brother John's, Holy Spirit moment. Do Charles and John hold a key to unlocking the Holy Spirit?

After college, Charles, who was not religious at the time, joined his brother John on a missionary trip from England to Savannah, Georgia; where they were to serve as missionaries to the Native Americans. During a scary storm at sea, the brothers met German Moravian Christians, who showed the brothers a great faith in God. This meeting would form the foundation of faith for both Charles and John; although, neither one suspected it at the moment.

After they arrived safely in America, Charles was to serve as secretary to both General James Oglethorpe and Indian Affairs. However, they were met with great conflict from the colonists; and therefore, only stayed 6 months. While traveling to Boston to make their way back to England, Charles became sick. His illness kept him from sailing to England and he was forced to stay in America an extra month. Two years later, in May of 1738, Charles fell ill again and this time he was concerned for his survival. He began to focus on his spiritual health. He thought back to the Moravian Christians on the boat and of their great faith.

At the same time, John who had already sought out the Moravians to learn more about their faith was being taught that Christians had an "assurance of faith." Wanting to understand this more, John began to study the Bible looking for evidence of this assurance.

On May 21, 1738, Charles still sick in bed encountered the Holy Spirit. He journalized his excitement of believing in God, his faith of a loving Christ, and of his feeling of peace. Charles began to write hymns and thus began his participation in the Methodist movement.

When John came to visit Charles, Charles shared his experience and together they prayed that John would experience the Holy Ghost. Later that week, John went to a society in Aldersgate Street, where his heart became what he described as "warmed" and he believed this was the movement for which he prayed for. This Holy Spirit Moment is often referred to as the "Aldersgate Experience."

Many believe that in order to hear from God, we must prepare our hearts as Charles and John did. Is this the "key" to awakening our Holy Spirit?

Ash Wednesday Service was held on February 26th at 6 pm

What do ashes on your forehead really mean?

According to Christian writer, Sarah Garrett, placing a cross of ashes on our foreheads is a sign of mourning and that we should mourn our sins and ask for forgiveness. It also reminds us that we are made from dust and that one day we shall return to dust. During Lent, we need to turn our thoughts toward Christ and recognize our sins for which Jesus saved us from. After the 40 days of Lent, (and fasting, if you choose to) we will celebrate the "feast" of the Resurrection for "He is Risen" and saved us all! **Join us April 12th for Easter morning worship.**

Start Today!

A New Way to Celebrate Lent by Steve Anderson

Lent is that time of the year when many Christians reflect and prepare to celebrate Easter. This year, this period falls between February 26th and April 12th. Some people use this as a time to give up something, while others begin some new activity. How about a new way to celebrate Lent? I am proposing that each of the six weeks of Lent have a theme and that as a congregation we participate together around that theme.

I am suggesting that during the first week, (Feb 26- March 3), we all look for opportunities to **Encourage** friends, family, neighbors, coworkers etc. We all know how great we feel when people encourage us. Pay it forward and share some encouragement. During the second week (March 4-10), look for ways to **Appreciate** people in your life through words and actions. They can be anonymous or not; your call. I'm going to try to do this through words, because the next week (March 11-17) will be a time when we look for ways to **Serve** others. This could include running an errand or some other act that meets a need someone has. In week four (March 18-24), we will **Thank** people for things they do (or don't do) in our lives as we let them know how much they mean to us. The fifth week (March 25 -31) will be time in which we invite people to **Explore** their relationship with God. We might start by sharing the Lenten journey with them and all the ways we have been blessed with people and experiences in life. We might share that we care for others in response to how we see God working in our lives every day. You might ask if this is something they think about. You can help them thank, believe and trust more through gentle, supportive, affirming conversation. The final week (April 1 - 8) will be a time to **Reflect** on the experience. How has it changed you and other people? What of it do you want to continue? How do you want to change your life?

Record your experience to reflect on later. This activity might help us better prepare to celebrate **Easter** by **Encouraging, Affirming, Serving, Thanking, Exploring and Reflecting.**

A Note from Pastor Steve

Friends,

I want to share a change in my life with you. Jill and I have prayed, discussed and decided that on July 1st, I will retire after 42 years of ordained ministry. Since Jill is five years younger than me, she is still undecided about when she might join me in retirement. Our plans are to move to Bayles Lake, near Loda, IL.

I served the Loda UMC between the years of 2007-2015. For some time we have been working on a small home that we own there and hopefully Troy Jamison, as well as the electrician and HVAC contractor will have all of the repairs and remodeling done by that time. I have been in conversation with our district superintendent about the possibility of serving a small church (es) near Loda part-time, and I am talking with a non-United Methodist congregation about being their part-time pastor. I am also considering working part time delivering for Amazon, in real estate or at Menards (I'm there a lot of the time already). Who knows, I may just spend my days fishing and doing some woodworking!

We have a lot to do in Christ's name in our community and world between now and July, and I plan to be busy with you. While retirement was not on my radar a year or two ago, it should not come as a tremendous surprise. While Jill will only be 62, I will be 67 in April. It is normal for people to make this decision in our season of life. Our ten district superintendents and bishop will be in conversation with our Staff-Parish Relations Committee concerning who will be your new pastor. Our joint Staff-Parish Committee had a meeting with our district superintendent, and I will keep you notified as the process takes its course. Hopefully, an announcement will be made in the coming months and the proper process will be followed.

While I will not be your pastor after July, I hope to always be your friend. You will have a new pastor and I will do everything I can to make their transition as positive as possible. While it is not ethically appropriate for pastors to return to places they once served to perform pastoral duties, I would love to keep up with you and would enjoy being a part of your lives as a friend. I don't believe that I have left out anything, but as always, I am happy to answer any questions you have.

Steve