

April 9, 2007

Volume 44, Issue 5



The Voice

LOVE FIRST Caring, Sharing, Connecting

Celebrating 180 years

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LIFT OFF!!!

Soaring To New Heights With God

Vacation Bible School is scheduled to begin Sunday evening, June 3 and continue each evening through Thursday, June 8.

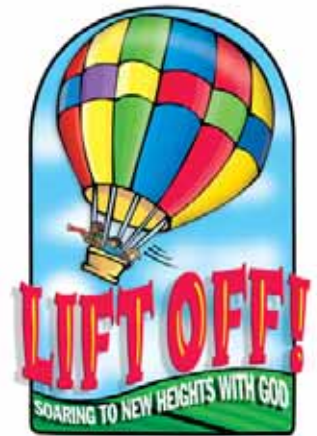
We will be providing our children with a flight plan for a lifetime!

The color, energy and excitement hot air balloons bring will lift our VBS to a new level. Our participants will become SKY SCOUTS as we reinforce the stories of Abraham who followed God even though Abraham didn't know where he was going. We'll hear about Joseph who trusted God even when things were not so good in his life. We'll

take some tips from Mary who listened to God and agreed with His plan for her life. We'll also practice repentance like Zacchaeus and serve like Peter as we become the church!

We hope you'll join us this June.

P.S. We are aware some schools will still be in session during the beginning of our Vacation Bible School. We will be in session from 6 to 8 pm and hope this will give your children the chance to attend VBS as well as to complete their educational needs during this first week of June.



What: Vacation Bible School
Where: Anderson First UMC
When: June 3 through 7
 6:00 at 8:30 p.m.
Contact: 643-6977
 Register Online at
www.andersonfirst.org

In this issue:

- Men & Women invited to Brunch and Program on Economic Globalization (p. 9)
- Sager Brown Distribution Center celebration (p. 6)

Summer Worship Schedule Begins Sunday, May 27, 2007

Mark your calendars! Our summer worship schedule begins May 27. Worship times will be as follows:
9:00 a.m. - Outdoor worship at Davis Park;
10:30 a.m. - Connections -

intimate traditional worship downtown; **11:30 a.m. Ensemble worship experience**—A modern worship experience with praise band, multi-media and interactive practical

message. **5:00 p.m. every fourth Saturday – Saturdays at the Park**—casual, informal worship with a special activity following service.



For Good

A message from Pastor Derek

*I've heard it said
That people come into
our lives for a reason
Bringing something
we must learn
And we are led*

*To those who help us most to grow
If we let them
And we help them in return
Well, I don't know if I believe that's true
But I know I'm who I am today
Because I knew you*

from the song "For Good" sung by Glinda the Good Witch
from the Broadway Musical "Wicked"

I received a card this week from a member of the church who wanted me to know how she felt about my leaving in June. The sentiment in the card was similar to what has been expressed by many of you in person or through other means. That sentiment is that while there is sadness, or even shock on the part of some people, there is also understanding and faith. The understanding may be in how our Methodist system works, or in how life brings changes, or how "nothing lasts forever." And the faith is both in a strong history of pastoral leadership and a system that will continue to provide that leadership, but also in a God who will continue to hold First United Methodist Church in powerful arms as you face a future filled with change, uncertainty and hope, all at the same time.

What made this card stand out in my mind, however, was a different word that was included along with all the above. Here is what was written – "Leave here knowing that you did make a difference." That's what we all want in the end isn't it? We want to know our presence, our participation made a difference. And, we would be so bold to hope, a difference for the better.

I have never doubted my family and I were loved here. I have never wondered if we were liked. This congregation has been most generous to me and my family. We feel connected here; we enjoy the company of this church and community. There are many caring people who have expressed that care in loving ways. I ended almost every one of my Charge Conference Pastor's reports with the words, "It is an honor to serve as your Pastor." And I still believe that. It has been a good six years, and we are grateful.

A few have asked and many more have wondered why I would even consider accepting another appointment. And the answer is in that hope to make a difference for the better. I have always tried to listen for the call of God in my own life, have rarely tried to plan where I should go or should be. I wanted to be faithful and to serve where I was sent. Yet, I cannot shake the feeling I have not lived up to the expectations or to the needs of this congregation and community. I remember writing in one of my first Voice articles all those years ago that what I wanted to do was to raise the bar, to make belonging to First Church mean something more than membership in other organizations. I don't think I was able to do that. I also wrote how I wanted to make worship a "must see" event you would be excited to attend and to invite your neighbors and friends to attend. It doesn't seem as though that happened either. By every measurable statistic, numbers our denomination loves to gather on a regular basis, we are worse off than we were six years ago. I take responsibility for that. I realize there are all sorts of sociological factors at work in Anderson; but I also know there are churches growing in town. And I know there are more unchurched residents of Anderson and Madison County than church attenders.

I gave what was in me to give, trying to be faithful to the call from God and to the trust invested in me by First Church and our Conference. I listened to what the family of First Church was saying and wanting and hoping for. I listened to what was going on in our community and where the needs were and what might provide alternatives to those needs. And I believe I listened to what God was calling forth from First Church and tried to move in that direction. I also tried to get as many on board as possible, moving frustratingly slowly for some as I sought opinions and advice. I hoped for consensus, for unanimity, but understood pleasing everyone was a difficult task. Yet, I hoped even when there was disagreement, when the body made a decision even the dissenters would accept and support and not complain or grumble or gossip. That didn't happen either. There are those who see it as their mission to undermine Council decisions, and to accuse me of manipulating the vote to get my way. I somehow failed to build the church we need to be, that we could be.

*Like a comet pulled from orbit
As it passes a sun
Like a stream that meets a boulder
Halfway through the wood
Who can say if I've been changed for the better?
But because I knew you
I have been changed for good*

For Good*Continued from page 2*

Glinda sings this refrain to Elphaba, the Wicked Witch toward the end of the story. This wonderful retelling of the Oz story posits the notion that the two witches, while wildly different in personality and priority became friends and this relationship profoundly affected both of them. That I made changes around here can't be argued. What remains to be seen is whether they were changes for the better. And that will depend on all of you, on what you do in the days and years ahead.

What I do know, because of the subject matter with which we wrestle as followers of Christ, is most of the most important things of life cannot be seen on the surface, or counted on a spreadsheet. Consequently, despite statistics, I still hope my time here as pastor of First United Methodist Church has brought about some good. That some of the changes – not just in structure or worship times or facilities – are changes for the better and the community has grown in some small way a little closer to the Kingdom of God.

I also know I am different, that I have learned and grown and will carry the imprint of this congregation with me wherever I might go in the future. Who and what I am from here on out is in part due to you.

Or as Elphaba sings in response to Glinda

*It well may be
That we will never meet again
In this lifetime
So let me say before we part
So much of me
Is made of what I learned from you
You'll be with me
Like a handprint on my heart
And now whatever way our stories end
I know you have re-written mine
By being my friend...*

In the next few months as we work toward transition, I hope to draw our attention to what lies ahead. Forgive my looking back this one more time. Now it is time to move toward what God calls us to be. In Christ the future is rife with possibilities and with hope. How can we do any thing less than trust in Him?

Shalom,



Bon Amis

Travel to LaComedia

Where: LaComedia

When: Wednesday, April 19

Location: Springboro, Ohio

Cost: \$48

Depart: 8:30 am - 5:30 pm

On April 19 the Bon Amis travel group is headed down to Springboro, Ohio, to the LaComedia dinner theater. This is a trip we usually take in November, but we decided to alter our schedule. The scheduled play is that great musical, “**Oklahoma.**” Dinner is always an incredible dining experience and includes the salad with papaya chutney dressing, chef-carved meats,

Norwegian cod, a variety of pastas and fresh vegetables, sweet potato soufflé, and dessert! The bus will depart at 8:30am and return by 5:30pm or so.

The cost for the day is \$48. We have to give our final count soon, so it is critical you sign up immediately if you are planning on going. You do not have to pay until April, but we need to know as soon as possible how many are planning to go.

J.O.Y. Luncheon

(Just Older Youth)

Come meet new friends and enjoy the, always exciting and interesting, programs scheduled each month. The J.O.Y group meets in fellowship hall on the third Friday of each month at First United Methodist Church. A donation of \$6 is requested for the cost of the meal. Call 765-643-6977 for more information or to make your reservation.

Guest Speaker for April is:

Judy Kratzert, director of RSVP—retired seniors volunteer program.

On The Road To Ordination

Ponderings from Pastor Donna

I have talked frequently in the past few weeks about fulfilling the requirements for ordination, and some of you have asked me for more details. The road to becoming a fully ordained elder in the United Methodist Church evokes a variety of emotions—excitement, frustration, fatigue, anxiety, etc. My own journey officially began in November, 1997, when I talked with my pastor about experiencing God's call to ministry. I didn't know where and how or what God was calling me to; but I knew He wanted me to be in some kind of full-time service for Him.

My pastor set me up with a lay leader in our church to explore what the call might be, and I became an "Exploring Candidate." I went through several other stages of candidacy and was validated by a variety of groups within the church and the district, and two years later became a "Certified Candidate." In 1999 I went to the local pastors' school at Tipton, a two-week "crash course" in learning the nuts and bolts of being a pastor. I was then appointed as a part-time local pastor at Good Shepherd UMC in Fort

Wayne.

I felt very strongly God was calling me to take the next step and go to seminary. I attended Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart part-time for three years and then transferred to United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio. I attended United full-time and graduated in May, 2005. During my last year of seminary I began the final steps of candidacy, which lead to commissioning. These steps include writing a spiritual autobiography, completing a psychological assessment, gathering recommendations from pastor colleagues, writing answers to theological questions from the *Book of Discipline*, developing a Bible study on a selected book of the Bible, preparing a sermon for a selected Biblical text, and being interviewed by the Board of Ordained Ministry. You see why fatigue is one of the emotions!!

These steps (or hoops, as we candidates sometimes call them) are tools used by the Board to discern God's voice as to whether we are appropriate for ministry. We really do appreciate

them, but they can be challenging when you are going through them! I was approved by the Board and recommended for commissioning. That meant I would be considered a probationary elder for three years or more—I would be able to serve full-time as a pastor in a north Indiana church, and I was appointed to serve Anderson First United Methodist Church.

As a commissioned pastor I fulfill all the responsibilities and functions and duties of a pastor at the church and for the congregation to which I am appointed; but I can't carry them out elsewhere. Part of my role is also to continue to meet requirements for ordination as specified by the *Book of Discipline*. These requirements are basically the same steps as for commissioning, but they are spread out over three years. I am in my second year of that process. I have completed all the paperwork for this year, will have a site visit by an elder the week of April 9, and then will be interviewed by the Board of Ordained Ministry on April 18. The Board will then vote to approve my continuing in the process or to delay my progress or to

reject me for ministry. (I am assuming the first will happen!!!)

That would then mean one more year until ordination. The same process of paperwork and interview would be conducted, and my hope and dream and expectation are that I will be approved for full ordination in 2008. Going forward in faith, I invite you to come to the ordination service on Saturday, May 21, 2008 (tentative date) and celebrate this milestone in my 10 year journey to becoming a pastor! But right now, I'd really appreciate your prayers for next Wednesday, April 18, as I go before the Board for my second year interview!

Thanks!!!!
Pastor Donna

More Than Just Cute!

Musings from the office at the end of the hall

David Starr Jordan, an influential zoologist, once said, "There is nothing in all the world so important as little children, nothing so interesting. We can dress the sore, bandage the wounded, imprison the criminal, heal the sick, and bury the dead, but there is always the chance that we can save the child. If the great army of philanthropists ever exterminates sin and pestilence, ever works out our race's salvation, it will be because a little child has led them."

I don't often quote zoologists (don't often even think about them I have to admit) but I'm working on developing Children's Sunday and when I "Goodsearched," I found this quote. It seemed very appropriate so I'm sharing it with you.

Have I mentioned to you about my friends who are adopting children from the Ukraine? They left Davenport, Iowa on the 12th of March with the express purpose of

adopting a pair of siblings and bringing them home. They have been very gracious to all their friends and family by creating a blog and every day (just about) since they've been in the Ukraine, they would write about what they saw or did or bought or heard or played! It's been a wonderful experience for those of us who get to experience the whole thing from the warmth and security of our computer chair!

My friends wanted children and the process of getting them involved several years of "hurry up and wait" which they did because it was important. It has taken up a great deal of their time and conversations. I'm pretty sure they wanted to add interest to their lives (and I'm pretty sure they don't have a clue how interesting their lives are going to be!). But those weren't the main reason they've spent the last month in the Ukraine. Most of all they wanted to love children and teach

them and influence them. So now they have their opportunity!

It's important to me for the youth and adult population of our congregation, to understand the importance of Children's Sunday and the participation in, no, the LEADING of, the worship service by our children. It's important because we can talk to our children until we're blue in the face and we can explain what God wants from us regarding worship, but until THEY DO it, it's just words. We can make them feel good by "letting" them sing or play bells but when they lift their voices and bells in songs of praise and adoration, they'll understand. And they'll take us places, wonderful places, holy places in the name of love. It's not just, "Isn't it cute that we have the children praying or offering prayers or reading scriptures?" It's the fact we are being led by children to a better life. Thank God.

My friends are in the final days of being a family of two. They understand the

notion of being led by a child because they've traveled far led only by the hope of a child. I hope the congregation of Anderson First United Methodist Church can clasp on to the hope our children offer when they lead us in worship on May 20 because, whether we like it or not, we're in the home stretch and we're going to be led by those children. We can do many things for these children, like bandage their wounds, shelter them from many harms, discipline their actions and even pray them through the hard times, but we need them to lead us home.

And speaking of home, my friends are on their way home to Iowa now. They are bringing home their children, their three children under four years of age and I can't wait to see where those three boys are going to take us!

Faithfully yours!

Miss Mary Margaret

Loaves & Fishes

The Loaves and Fishes Lenten Gathering sponsored by the Discover! 4th and 5th grade Sunday School Class "netted" more than the Biblical 12 baskets -- 44 loaves (boxes of crackers) and 146 fishes (cans of fish and chicken). On Easter the collection made an

impressive display near the baptismal font. On Easter Monday Bill and Deandra Rousch delivered the collection to Operation Love for distribution through their food pantry. Thank you to all who participated!!



Discover Sunday School (Grades 4 & 5) Project

An Operation Classroom In-Gathering At the North Indiana Conference - May 31 to June 2

Operation Classroom is in need of the following supplies!

Back packs – New or slightly used. (There's even a pattern available at the operation classroom website if you'd like to sew one!)

Children's multi-vitamins (Please get the ones with the

latest expiration date you can find.)

Complete packages of Copy paper

Tylenol – children and adult strength

First aid supplies – Adhesive tape, band aids, alcohol free antiseptic

wipes, sterile, non-fluffy, absorbent gauze, round-ended scissors, triple antibiotic ointment and gauze pads

United Methodist Women are also encouraged to donate a package of dried milk.

Sager Brown celebrating 140 years

Sager Brown, which serves as a depot for the United Methodist Committee on Relief in Baldwin, La., is celebrating 140 years of wide-ranging ministries. The depot receives, verifies, packages, stores and ships relief supplies throughout the world. A celebration will be held on April 21 on the campus. Those who have volunteered are invited to visit <http://new.gbgm-umc.org/umcor/work/sagerbrown/140anniversary/> and submit essays and photos about their experiences. All churches and annual conferences are invited to

collect relief supplies and sign a special card of congratulations. UMCOR invites contributions for more ministries at Sager Brown by giving to UMCOR Advance #901515, UMCOR Sager Brown. Mail checks to UMCOR at P.O. Box 9068, New York, NY 10087, with the words "UMCOR Advance #901515, UMCOR Sager Brown" written on the memo line. Credit card donations can be made by calling (800) 554-8583. Donations are accepted at <http://secure.gbgm-umc.org/donations/advance/donate.cfm?code=156500&id=3018386>.



Happy 101st Birthday

Mary Frances Grimm

celebrated her 101st birthday on April 9, 2007.

Anniversaries Don't Just Happen To Churches In Indiana!!!!

Understanding the importance of I Chronicles

I Chronicles is God's book celebrating the way God led His people in the past. I Chronicles 16:8-9 offers one way God wants us to celebrate His Grace and Faithfulness to us! "Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his

wonderful acts." The book of I Chronicles aims to facilitate our understanding of how God has taken care of His people for a long, long time. We learn from I Chronicles there were many people who loved and served Him before we were even a twinkle in our father's eye! Each of us, children and

babies included, can be assured God loves us and takes care of us, just as He has taken care of our church and its many buildings!

Take a few moments this week to talk with your children about how they have seen God working through the gift of their church. It could be as easy as mentioning how grateful

we are for the people who teach our Sunday School classes or as intense as explaining why we celebrate a Good Friday Service of Darkness.

Remember, Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Look to the Lord and his strength; seek His face always!

180 Years of Remembering

Have you been thinking about how old you are? Here's a more fun thought ... Have you been thinking about how old OUR CHURCH is? Before you go any further let me tell you. Anderson First United Methodist Church is one hundred and eighty years old. That would be 180 faithful years! Throughout

the Bible, the Lord reminds people to tell all generations of their LORD'S wonderful works. Part of what that means for us as church members is we must preserve the memory of how God has worked in our lives both individually and corporately. A church with a strong sense of its history will have a better sense of

identity to build on for the future. So, let's take time this month to look back into our memory banks and the memory banks of our church family members to rediscover how our church came into being, what it's early ministry was like and how it has and changed over the years.

Ichthus Music Festival

Sign up today! Deadline is April 25

Youth who will be entering grades 6 through 12 next fall are invited to join us for a weekend filled with camping, music, and lots of fun! Ichthus takes place each June—this year on June 13—16. There are four stages with all the music you could ever want and any style you like. *Pop, Rock,*

R&B, Hip Hop, and any other style you can think of. All youth are invited and need not be members of Anderson First—which translates to.....**Invite Your Friends!** Check out their websites at <http://www.ichthusfestival.org> or <http://www.myspace.com/>

[ichthusfestival](http://www.ichthusfestival.org) and take a listen. Contact Steve or Mary Kay Thomas at marykay@andersonfirst.org or steve@andersonfirst.org to get your all-inclusive package price. Price includes 4-day concert ticket, food, transportation and a luxurious accommodations

in our 8-man tents! :) Ichthus isn't just about the music; **it's an EXPERIENCE you'll talk about for years!**



United Methodist Women

Bible Study Circle

May 3, 2007 at 9:30 a.m.

Hostess: Betsey Bachman, 612 Ironwood Lane

Co-Hostess: Margie Wilken

Program: Ruth Jackson

Lesson: What God Thinks of My Ambitions

Matthew 6:19-34

Meetings are scheduled the first Thursday of each month.

Action Circle

May 9, 2007 at 9:30 a.m.

Conference Room #125

Meetings are scheduled the second Wednesday of each month.

Lydia Circle

May 8, 2007 at 6:30 p.m.

Home of Jill McDonald

Play in May (Fun, Food and Fellowship)

Bring a covered dish.

Meetings are scheduled the second Tuesday of each month.

Friendship Circle

May 3, 2007 at 9:30 a.m.

Hostess: Lou Ann Brown
765-643-0448

Devotions: Patty Counts

Program: Jennifer Smith

Meetings are scheduled the first Thursday of each month.

Resplendent Color

When our Creator God made the world in which we live, it was made resplendent with color.

Drabness was not part of creation, color was. From the brilliant reds and yellows we see in a sunrise, to the magnificent hues of a sunset, color is God's hallmark of creation.

One can stand at the edge of the Grand Canyon at sunrise and watch the glorious colors appear as the sun ascends into the heavens,

Later, as the sun begins to fall on the horizon, one can see dancing colors begin to wane and finally disappear in the dusk.

When our beautiful sanctuary was opened in 1963, there was much color within its stone, bricks,

walnut and fabric. For several years it was a source of amazing joy to those worshipping within its walls. But there was something missing, a lack of color to fully represent God's glory. And the people of this parish added color.

The beautiful windows added an amazing resource in the telling of the story of God's incursion into human history. The tall, glowing glass panels remind us of our religious journey through the ages, and they are such a beautiful part of this building we bring our friends into the building to see the wonder they represent.

A new chapter is about to unfold as tall panels of fabric will represent an even more colorful picture and

symbol of God's creativity. Some thirty (?) persons have spent the past several months designing and producing what will be additional color for our sanctuary. The love expressed in their labor will soon become evident to all who see in their work a new example of God's wonderful coloration.

The stained glass windows were an amazing addition to the beauty of our place of worship. Let's prayerfully ask the God of amazing colors to bless our new banners with the same kind of joyful acceptance the windows received. And let's ask God to bless the work of all those who have so lovingly labored.

Women's Ministries

Book Club

Morning Book Club meets the first Tuesday of every month (May 8) in the church library from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

For more information contact Nancy Upchurch at the church office.

Intercessory Prayer Team

Our desire is to pray for all needs brought to our attention. If you have a prayer request to share, please contact Francie Seybert at 778-4623. This group meets every Wednesday to pray at 1:00 p.m. in the church conference room.

If you would like to be part of this group, please come and join us.

Women's Reunion Group

If you have participated in the Great Banquet, Walk to Emmaus, or similar 72-hour experience, we invite you to join us. We meet every Tuesday at 4:30 p.m. in the conference room, as we support each other in our daily walk with Christ.

Children's Sunday "Runs In The Family"

Our children will be leading us in worship on May 20 for all three services that morning. The theme is "It Runs In The Family!" If your child would like to participate, please let Miss Mary Margaret know as quickly as possible. We need children willing and able to lead us in prayers, play the

postlude, prelude or offertory and to help usher and greet!!!! Please help your child discern which gift he or she can offer to God through the Sunday morning worship services and let me know within the next two weeks.

What: Children's Sunday

When: May 20, 2007

During all three worship services. 9:15 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.

Faith Sharing Workshop

When – April 21, 2007

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Where – Davis Park

What – This event is for individuals who have not attended a faith sharing workshop before.

Register - 765-643-6977

Cost - No Charge

An RSVP for this event is requested for ordering supplies. Please call the church office at 765-643-6977.

Help is needed in the Nursery!

Help is needed in the Nursery! Stephanie Leng, our Senior Nursery Caregiver, would like to have some assistance in the nursery during the 9:15 worship service and the Sunday School hour each Sunday.

We need 2 adults in the nursery each Sunday morning! If your young son or daughter would like to help in the nursery, Stephanie encourages you to come with them and be that second adult as your child serves God by working in the nursery.

Please go down to the nursery and sign up to take care of the youngest of our family. Those of you who have worked in the nursery in years past are encouraged to work again.

*Thank you.
Miss Mary Margaret*

Men & Women invited to Brunch Topic: Economic Globalization How "Fair" is "Fair Trade?"

The Women Alive in Faith committee invite men and women of all ages to gather for brunch, Saturday, April 28 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at Davis Park. Dave Peter will offer a special program entitled, Economic

Globalization. Have you ever wondered.....How "Fair" is "Fair Trade"? What are the effects of consumerism and an affluent society? Join us as we discover the truths! RSVP by calling 643-6977.

Women Alive in Faith Brunch

Guest Speaker:

Dave Peter

Topic:

"Economic Globalization"

An engineer's perspective on the global economy and its effect on the human condition.

What:

Women Alive in Faith Brunch

Where:

Davis Park
S.R. 32 & Layton Road

When:

Saturday, April 28
9:30 at 11:30 a.m.

To Register Call:

643-6977



First United Methodist Church is a community of Christians committed to the kingdom of God, focused on Loving First and Inviting all to join us in Caring, Sharing, and Connecting through joyful service in Jesus Christ.

Non-Profit Organization
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Visit us on the web at
www.andersonfirst.org

Coming Events

Apr 15 Raisin' the Roof with Bishop Coyner
Apr 28 Women Alive in Faith Brunch
May TBA Dinner Theater Camp Fundraiser
May 13 Choir Sunday
May 18 JOY Luncheon
May 20 Children's Sunday
May 20 Heritage Sunday
May 27 Summer Worship Schedule begins
May 27 Praise in the Park

June 3-7 Vacation Bible School
June 8 Bon Amis To Fairy Oaks Dairy
June 10 Weber Farewell Reception
June 13-16 Ichthus 2007
July 1 Bon Amis to Symphony on the Prairie
July 1-7 Senior High Institute
For updated and current calendar information, visit us on the web at www.andersonfirst.org.

Worship Opportunities

Sundays

9:15 am—Traditional Worship
10:30 am—Sunday School for Everyone

11:30 am - *ensemble*

Modern Worship

11:30 am - Connections - Prayer & Praise Worship

Saturdays

April 28—Saturdays at the Park—5-7:30pm

