

May 14, 2007

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The Voice

LOVE FIRST *Caring, Sharing, Connecting*

Celebrating 180 years

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“Sending of the Saints” *A proposal for Annual Conference*

Greetings! Below is information about the Sending of the Saints proposal, which will be dealt with at Annual Conference. I encourage your church to talk about this opportunity and to let its Annual Conference members know whether or not they should support it.

Know I'd welcome your comments, and please keep it in your prayers.

Thanks! May God's will become clear! -- Ed Fenstemacher

What is the recommendation?

The Church Development Ministry Team is proposing that "In 2008, each North Indiana Conference (NIC) church-alone or in cooperation with another church or churches-is expected to help start at least one faith community or congregation in order to reach, disciple, and serve persons outside their existing congregations." A "faith community" or "congregation" would be an on-going group that consists of persons who regularly participate in worship, discipleship, and mission/service.

Does this mean we're being asked to start a new church?

No. Although some churches may sense God calling them to reach the unchurched through the starting of a new worship service or an off-site congregation, for most, it will likely be starting a small

group targeting unchurched persons-for example, a Sunday school class, home Bible study, ALPHA group meeting in a home or prison, a study/worship/service group meeting in a mobile home or retirement home community.

What's the point of this?

The objective isn't to grow your church, but rather to go out and reach and disciple those outside your church who are in need of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Why is this important?

- Jesus Christ calls us to do it (Matt. 28:19).
- It helps us fulfill our U.M. church's purpose to make disciples of Jesus Christ.
- Studies show that 50% of our population is unchurched.
- Studies also show that starting new faith communities and congregations is the best way to reach the unchurched.

- It builds on our Bishop Coyner's dream of Sending 70 to start new faith communities.

Why is it "expected" rather than "encouraged"?

Jesus didn't say, "I encourage you to go." He simply said, "Go!" The intention is that every church would participate.

Isn't this top down, rather than local?

Yes and no. The expectation (if approved) is coming from the top--from the Annual Conference, which is made up of members of every local church. Each church, however, will need to discern locally how God is calling it to be a part of this effort. There is no set formula or model because every church's context is unique.

How would our church do this?

"Saints Story"
Continued on back page

In this issue:

- Staff Parish announces changes which will enhance our music ministry (p. 2)
- 21 dates set to meet, up close and personal, with our new Senior Pastor. (p. 7)



Singing a New Song

A message from Pastor Derek

There are six different psalms that talk about singing new songs. My favorite is probably Psalm 96.

“O sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth. ² Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.

³ Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples.”

And that is just the first three verses! I also like Psalm 96 because it ends with “the trees of the forest singing for joy.” I don’t know that I’ve ever heard trees singing, but it sounds wonderful to me. Of course it doesn’t say whether the trees are singing new songs or old songs. Just that they are singing and are joyful about it.

We like singing old songs a lot too. We like the familiarity and the comfort that comes from singing old songs. We can recapture moments and feelings and experiences that correlate to those old songs quite easily. And there isn’t any learning curve with old songs. Everyone knows them, everyone can sing along. We like singing old songs.

But there is an excitement in singing new songs. There is

adventure, there is possibility, and there is also the process of learning the new songs well enough so they become old songs too, and are just as familiar and just as comforting.

New songs are times of growth and times of possibility.

Oh, no, you’re thinking – we’re going to wrestle with all those never heard of them, well nigh *unsingable* hymns, on Sunday mornings now. We don’t know who put that hymnal together but there are some doozies in there, that’s for sure.

Relax; this isn’t about hymn singing on Sunday morning. This is about a new song we are learning to sing here at First Church. In particular this is about using the gifts of those who help all of us sing in the best ways we can.

The change I am introducing here may seem sudden to some of you, but it has been a long time in coming.

Steve Thomas, our Director of Music Ministries and Susan Finger, our Organist and Assistant Director of Music Ministries, have worked with me for the past few months and now with the blessing of the Staff Parish, we are presenting a realignment of the two positions to enhance our ministry of music in new directions.

At the request of many members of First Church for the past several years, Steve has been developing worship music of a different sort from what First Church is best known for. The labels “contemporary” and “traditional” are somewhat inadequate to describe the depth of both types of music, but they are the words we tend to use most often. The new genre, the more “contemporary” style of music, began in small ways here at First Church involving many people as both singers and instrumentalists, and also finding different outlets or opportunities to enhance worship. For a long time it was most prominent in our weekly Saturdays at the Park services. In the past year it was the ensemble service that became the new song we were singing together.

At the same time, the work Steve was doing with the Community Dinners in providing the worship has come to be called “Community Café” and convinced him we have a significant outreach opportunity through music and worship of a different sort from what we are used to providing.

We are tapping into a whole new audience; a whole new community of people could

become a part of the First Church community if we paid more attention and focused more people resources in these new areas.

With this came the realization it was hard to do justice to both styles of music and worship at the same time. Work with one would suffer from attention given to the other. So, together we began to seek ways to allow for the growth we needed.

It has also become apparent that First Church is blessed to have someone as gifted and as dedicated to her art as Susan Finger already on staff.

In the time I have been here, Sue has moved from a supportive to a leadership role in the music ministry of the church.

It only made sense to see if we could ask her to become the architect of the traditional music ministry of the church as a whole. First Church has a rich tradition in organ and choral and ensemble music done well. We need to build on that, to draw attention to talents and the service of so many – we ought not to keep it to ourselves. We need to sing more loudly! Or perhaps more widely so others can hear the songs we sing.

With those distinct but

Singing a New Song:
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Singing a New Song *Continued from page 2*

compatible goals in mind, the Staff Parish Committee of First United Methodist Church would like to present Susan Finger as our Director of Music for Traditional Worship and Stephen Thomas as our Director of Arts for Contemporary Worship / Downtown Anderson Outreach Coordinator.

What's all involved in those positions? Well, a lot, and some is still being born. Job descriptions are available on our website at www.andersonfirst.org should any be interested enough to want to read them. But I would recommend you talk with Susan and with Steve to hear what is on their minds. You might find it exciting enough to want to join with them. And they could use the help. A vision for music at First Church can't be realized by one or by two. Come alongside and find your place, maybe in the traditional, or classic worship

style of our United Methodist Heritage – or maybe in something new, contemporary, modern worship for a changing world.

One more note, we are ahead of the curve yet again! At the Annual Conference meeting a proposal is being presented that would require every United Methodist Church in the North Indiana conference to commit to ministries that would reach new communities beyond the local church (*see story on the front page.*)

By restructuring to create a planned approach to reach out to our neighborhood we are already compliant to the new directive. We are already in the business of enlarging our borders. We are in the process of learning to sing a new song.

Come and sing along.

Shalom,



Celebrating our legacy of Faith and freedom

Memorial Day weekend at First United Methodist Church will be a celebration.

We will start at **5:00 p.m. on Saturday night (May 26)** at Davis Park with a **cook-out and our monthly Saturday night worship service.** We will serve hamburgers and hot dogs, and everyone is asked to bring a side dish—salad, veggie, or dessert. Table service and beverages will be provided.

Please call the church office to let us know you will be attending (so we can plan the right amount of food).

Our worship will focus on celebrating our legacy of faith and freedom. **We will honor and remember the lives of those who have given their lives in battle for our country, and we will celebrate the legacy of freedom they have helped to provide for us. We will also honor and celebrate the legacy of faith we have received from our family and friends--those who**

have gone before us and those who are still with us. As part of this celebration, we need names and pictures. We need the names and a picture if possible of any who have served or are serving in the military. We also would like candid photos of you and your family—especially, the fun ones where you aren't posed for a picture! Please bring to the church office by Thursday, May 24. Make sure your name is on the back. All pictures will be returned.

Sunday morning we will begin our **summer worship at the park at 9 am**, and **the youth will serve a pancake breakfast immediately following the service.** We will also worship at the downtown site with our **Connections service at 10:30 am** in the parlor (note the change in time) and the **Ensemble service at 11:30 am** downstairs.

Bring your family and friends and come join us Memorial Day weekend.

A.J. Cronin wrote "Life is no straight and easy corridor along which we travel free and unhampered, but a maze of passages, through which we seek our way, lost and confused, now and again checked in a blind alley. But always, if we have faith, a door will open for us, not perhaps one we ourselves would have ever have thought of, but one that will ultimately prove good for us."

Lift Off! Soaring to New Heights with God *Vacation Bible School*



“Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation.” Psalm 25:5

That’s the **POWER PRAYER** for the first day of Vacation Bible School 2007! We’ll learn about “Following the Path” and “Staying On Course” during our Discovery Science time and we’ll be making Hot Air Balloons during our craft times. This year we’re expecting you to come and

see God in science experiments as well as in the games we play and the songs we sing!

New this year is your ability to register for VBS on-line! Yes, Anderson First is gaining techno skills! Don’t wait until the last minute. Get onto the church website (www.andersonfirst.org)

and book your tickets to **SOAR TO NEW**

HEIGHTS WITH GOD!

Miss Mary Margaret and Mrs. Justine!

PS. There will be classes for children aged 4 through those finishing 6th grade. There will be an adult class taught by Pastor Donna.

Make plans to attend! Head out to the lake the week AFTER Bible School!

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
Or call 765-643-6977 to request a brochure

Check it Out!

“Lessons I Learned in the Dark – Steps to Walking by Faith, Not by Sight,”



Sarah Rothschild, blind for the past 24 years, has written about learning from the dark. She has not only learned how to maneuver in the dark, but she has found the way to tremendous spiritual maturing in this same period. So much of her growth has been found in her faith in a God who allows blindness to handicap persons, but also enables those same persons to grow in their personal faith as life continues to challenge and mature them at the same time.

Perhaps you are feeling a loss of purpose and a satisfying life. You ought to be able to recognize God’s plan for your daily living. Sarah has come to the conclusion much of our wants and hopes can be met when we begin to recognize the truly important elements of life. We can be so confused by the myriad of sight stimulations around us we don’t recognize the wonder of God’s personal love for us.

Darkness often brings wisdom to struggling persons. With the absence of all the “stuff” of life, we can begin to understand the many

gifts available from a loving Creator. Found in the “270.092” shelf in our church library, “Lessons I Learned in the Dark – Steps to Walking by Faith, Not by Sight.”

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



Summer Office Hours begin in June 2007

Monday - Thursday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Fridays 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

The Blessings of Family

Musings from the office at the end of the hall

When I was in high school, my family home was a foster home. We took in babies straight out of the hospital while the state of Indiana sought adoptive homes for them. Sometimes we'd keep them for a few days and once we had one for 10 months. We even had twins for a bit!

We'd name these precious children and claim them as our own. We would love them and pray over them and talk with them about everything! We'd take them on walks and to camp and, of course, to church. They taught us as much as we taught them; okay maybe they taught us more since mostly we taught them to trust the love that surrounded them. Bobby and I learned to change diapers and mix up cereal and formula and to keep important papers or tiny toys out of reach.

And then, they'd leave us. Those little people we loved and considered a part of our family would leave us. Sometimes we had a week's

notice and I remember once "our" baby was at home when I left for school and was gone by the time I got home that afternoon.

I had 10 foster sisters and brothers, each of whom I loved with all the passion a high school girl can give. I knew when we picked our babies up our babies were going to leave us and yet each time they did, I thought my life would never be the same.

My whole family grieved the loss of our family member and we cried. Not because we weren't excited about the forever family our baby was going on with, but because we felt the baby-sized hole it was leaving in the fabric of our lives.

My parents came up with a way, a great way I think, to help us with the letting go. We would go to the store and buy a box of Ritz crackers, a block of cheese and a ring of bologna. When we got home, we'd sit around the coffee table and put our supplies out along with a knife and a

box of tissues. We'd each slice a chunk of bologna and cheese and make a Ritz sandwich while we reminded the rest of the family about something we loved about our baby. And we'd cry. As long as we had bologna, we could cry and bemoan our loss and be sad. Once it was gone, we could cry but we weren't to be sad because OUR baby was going with God to a place that was more perfect than our place (and of course, we knew how perfect our place was!)

I checked my calendar this morning and realized we're losing four members of our family in a little more than three weeks. Let's find a ring of bologna and we can all, them included, slice off memories to share and cry and be sad. AND THEN, we need to remember our people are going with God to a place that will be more perfect because they will be in it!

God was faithful to my family because there was always another baby



coming, sooner or later. The next baby would be just as cute, in its own way and just as special, in an extraordinary way, and just as dear as the baby that left. May it be to us as well. Our next pastor and family will be just as endearing, just as exceptional and eventually just as treasured as the one we send on.

Oh, two weeks after our first baby left, I was a guest at a church in the next town over from ours and there was a baptism that Sunday. Wanna guess whose baby was joining the family of God? We never truly lose those we love.

Faithfully yours,
Miss Mary Margaret

**For information on coming events and
the most current information, visit us on the web at www.andersonfirst.org.**

Ph. 765-643-6977 Fax 765-643-5232

Downtown Facility: 1215 Jackson street, Anderson, IN 46016

Davis Park: 4507 Nichol Avenue (corner of S.R. 32 & Layton Road) located in West Anderson, IN.

An Operation Classroom In-Gathering

At the North Indiana Conference - May 31 to June 2

Keep Those items Coming In!

Thank you very much for helping to gather supplies for this year's annual conference Operation Classroom collection! Thank you for taking those little blue and purple tags and for returning them with supplies! In case you haven't had a chance to pick up some tags (and may

not know which supplies you can bring) here is the whole, big list. Please choose one or two items and bring them in. You'll be glad you did and the churches, schools and hospitals connected to Operation Classroom will be glad too!

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.

Help Is Needed In The Nursery

Help continues to be needed in the Nursery! Stephanie Leng, our Senior Nursery Caregiver, will be with us until June 10. We need persons who are willing to assist with the children during the 11:30 a.m. worship services downtown during the

summer and those who will be willing to help staff the nursery during the 9:15 a.m. worship service and the Sunday School hour each Sunday next fall! (Yes, I'm thinking about next fall already! Isn't everybody?)

We will need 2 adults in the nursery on Sunday

mornings! 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

UMCOR Helps Kansas Residents Rise From Statewide Damage

NEW YORK — Storm damage in Kansas is widespread from a violent weather system that blew through the Midwest May 4 - 5. "An entire community was destroyed in Greensburg but nearly the entire state is suffering insult from the powerful phenomena of nature," report Shirley and Joe Edgerton in a statewide assessment. They are UMCOR-trained disaster response volunteers for the Kansas East Annual Conference.

Wind and rain caused severe damage in the state prompting 25 counties to declare local disaster emergencies from flooding alone. Steve Burnett, another UMCOR-trained disaster responder, is working to set up a disaster response office and is locating housing for the many volunteers who will be needed not only to rebuild Greensburg, which lost 600 homes in a tornado on May 4, but also for other areas affected by the severe weather. "Not only do we need teams preparing to

rebuild a town, but somehow we can't lose all those folks living on the country roads hidden by broken trees, or the ones in their basements tearing up carpets," comment the Edgertons.

Throughout this process UMCOR disaster consultant Bob Baer has been providing support to the conference disaster coordinators.

UMCOR will continue to provide financial and personnel support to the areas affected by these severe storms for as long as it is needed.

How You Can Help

Cash gifts will help provide for recovery. Checks can be mailed to UMCOR PO Box 9068, New York, NY 10087. Write "UMCOR Advance #901680, Midwest Tornado Response," on the memo line of your check. One hundred percent of every donation to any appeal, including appeals for Kansas recovery, goes to support the designated program.

If you are interested in volunteering to help in the storm recovery effort, please call the Volunteer Hotline at 1-800-918-3100.

Opportunities to meet our New Senior Pastor

The most important part for a new pastor joining a congregation is creating an opportunity for pastor and congregation to know one another as rapidly as possible. To facilitate this in our church with Rev. Wortinger joining us, a series of small group opportunities are being organized. These will offer each of us an excellent

opportunity to meet and become acquainted with Rev. Wortinger and share experiences, dreams and hopes for our future. Rev. Wortinger has already set up 21 dates in his July through October calendar for these gatherings, including both day and evening hours. Leaders for each of these are being identified. They will be

contacting you soon about attending one of the groups. This is a wonderful opportunity to get to meet and talk with Rev. Wortinger. It is important that each of us become involved, either as a leader or participant.

“Pancakes Anyone!” Youth “Summer Camp” Fundraiser

It's that time of year when many of us start thinking about getting away to relax at our lake cottages or taking a vacation. For the Youth of Anderson First, they are thinking of Summer Camp. Camp is of course fun, but as many of you know, can be a life-changing experience. The cost for each camper ranges from \$265 (Sr. High) - \$330 (Jr. High) per student.

For the past several years the Youth of Anderson First have hosted 2-3 Pancake Breakfasts throughout the summer to help offset the cost of camp. This year we will

only be having one **Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, May 27 after the 9:00 a.m. service at Davis Park.** This will be our first Sunday out at the park (May 27) and we usually have quite a crowd. This year we will be preselling tickets during the month of May and for all of those that buy tickets in advance you will be registered to win one of two gift baskets that we will be giving away.

The funds raised from this breakfast will go to assist in paying for summer camp for our youth.

If you are not able to attend

What: Pancake Breakfast
Where: Davis Park, 4507 Nichol Avenue - West Anderson
When: May 27
Immediately following the 9 a.m. service
Contact: 643-6977
Posters available at www.andersonfirst.org

the breakfast and would like to make a monetary donation to help the Youth Camp Fund please drop your contribution in the offering plate or come by the office and drop it off. Be sure to mark it Youth Camp Fund and as always thank you for your support of UMY programs.

Thank You

Dear friends,

I want to thank all of you for your prayers during the last few weeks of my mother's life. Since her death on Easter Morning, I have received so many beautiful cards and notes from many of you. Each one means so much to me; thank you. You are such a special group of friends and I do miss you a lot.

May God continue to bless each and every one of you.

Blessings

Ellen Rhoades

Memorials Given in April, 2007

Rosemary Davis

Leisa and Brian Jones

Vivian and Robert Prater

Thommy Brown to Thommy Brown Fund

Carolyn and Mike Goldsmith

Dorothy and Wil Hiday to Thommy Brown Fund

Carolyn and Mike Goldsmith

Carolyn Hart

Betty Hart



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.

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Visit us on the web at
www.andersonfirst.org

“Saints Story”

Continued from front page

The conference will provide your church with tools to help it get started including the following:

- Guide for your church to pray for its community,
- Guide to help your church discern what God's will is in this matter-who God might be calling your

church to intentionally reach, how you might do that,

- List of optional workshops providing training opportunities,
- List of other potentially helpful resources.

Your district will also provide your church with support, encouragement,

accountability, and prayer through cluster meetings within the districts. And the conference's Prayer Team will pray for your church's effort.

What if my church gets stuck or can't seem to do it?

It will be encouraged to team up with another church or churches that do have an outreach plan.

What if after discerning God's will, we decide God doesn't want us to participate?

If after spending time discerning God's will, your church's leadership clearly believes God is calling the church to focus elsewhere at this time, simply inform your district superintendent.

What's our next step?

Begin working through the Sending of the Saints' Implementation Guide, which encourages churches to spend at least this summer in prayerful discernment.

Who do we turn to if we have a question?

Contact your district superintendent or Ed Fenstermacher at 800 783-5138 or ed@nicumc.org.

Ed Fenstermacher

Coming Events

- | | |
|---|--|
| May 26 Saturday at the Park Cookout! | Jul 1-7 Senior High Institute |
| May 27 Summer Worship Schedule begins | Jul 19 Davis Park Summer Concert |
| May 27 Pancake Breakfast “Fundraiser” | Jul 20 JOY Luncheon |
| May 27 Praise in the Park | Jul 22 MAD (Music Arts Drama) Camp |
| Jun 3-7 Vacation Bible School | Jul 29 Choir School |
| Jun 8 Bon Amis To Fairy Oaks Dairy | Aug 5 Sacred Music Concert |
| Jun 10 Weber Farewell Reception | Aug 9 Davis Park Summer Concert |
| Jun 13-16 Ichthus 2007 | |
| Jun 15 JOY Luncheon | For updated and current calendar |
| Jun 21 Davis Park Summer Concert | information, visit us on the web at |
| Jul 1 Bon Amis to Symphony on the Prairie | www.andersonfirst.org . |