

May 28, 2007

Volume 44, Issue 8



# The Voice

LOVE FIRST *Caring, Sharing, Connecting*

*Celebrating 180 years*

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## Blessed at Anderson First

In the coming weeks we have the privilege of giving our blessing to a family who has made a difference to many during the six years here in Anderson. Their ministry has not only affected those within the walls at Anderson First, but within the community of Anderson. Rev. Dr. Derek C. Weber, and wife La Donna, Rhys and Maddie will soon begin a new chapter to their life story as they leave us here in Anderson and make their move to Fort Wayne.

Please remember to mark the afternoon of June 10th for the Weber family farewell party starting at 2:00 p.m. in the parlors downtown. If you wish to contribute to the love gift, please get those into the church at your earliest convenience marked "Weber Gift".

We are also privileged to welcome our new Senior Pastor, Rev. John Wortinger and his wife, Linda - they will join us on June 17.

Please continue to keep both families in your prayers. Pray for safe travels, pray for the congregations who receive them. Pray that through their ministry their congregations will rediscover that it is together we make disciples for Jesus Christ.

## Congratulations to the class 2007.



**Matt Monnier**

*Pendleton Heights High School*

**Matt Gallegos**

*Pendleton Heights High School*

**Randall Max Callahan**

*Highland High School*

**Wes Martin**

*High School Graduate*

**Ryan McCleary**

*Anderson University*

*Social studies education*

**Julie Elizabeth Surbaugh, Psy. M.,**

*Doctorate of Clinical Psychology (Psy.D.)*

*Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey,*

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## *Swan Song*

### *A message from Pastor Derek*

place, to capture the laughter we have shared and harmonize on the passion for mission and ministry.

Yet, joy is deeper than laughter. So my song would shift into a minor key as we sang about sorrow and struggle. We would sing of the losses we experienced with tears in our eyes. The hurt would be real, even as our faith and our confidence would stay strong.

Like a woodwind solo rising in the breathing space of our song, a theme of hope would emerge. Quietly at first, then it builds to a powerful statement, a dominant theme. Hope sustains, hope strengthens, hope enables us to act boldly – “we have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul” – a certainty in uncertain times. We can sing with confidence this strain of hope. We can sing as though we knew what was next, even when we are shaky on the words. Hope sustains us, vision drives us and the calling of God inspires us. The song would point to tomorrow and what might yet be to come, with the anticipation of our faith.

There would be spirit in our song. The living and active

Spirit of the living God who energizes us for the task of singing would be present in each of us – within and between us. The song would be a celebration of the evidence of the Spirit in the mission and ministry of the church. And that Spirit was seen in the big decisions and the small conversations; felt in the grand and glorious moments of worship and service and in the quieter, more personal moments of love shared and comfort given; and glimpsed in the faces of the young ones whose eyes sparkle with laughter and energy and in the visage of the older ones who have tasted the goodness of life in Christ. Yes, there would be Spirit in our song.

Lest our song simply be clanging cymbals or noisy gongs, love would be sung in our song. It would be hard not to sing of how we became a family, how our lives were entwined in the vine that is our Lord and made stronger by the sustenance we shared with each other.

I know, that’s a lot to put into one song, even a “swan song.” It sounds more like a symphony than a song, a cantata instead of an aria. But if I were to sing it, all those

elements would need to be there – joy and hope; Spirit and love. All of those are pointers to what we have shared together in these past six years. All of those are seeds that have grown into the garden we have become together. And I wouldn’t know how to find the words that would speak of all we have been and all of what we will be because of this time together.

The closest I could find were these simple words from an old hymn by John Fawcett. He was a poor Yorkshire man who was orphaned at age twelve. But one day he heard the preaching of George Whitfield and knew that here was something he was missing, something he longed for. He became a Christian and then a preacher, first with the Methodists and then the Baptists. He was a pastor who felt deep connections with the people he served. This hymn speaks of the kind of community he tried to create.

Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;  
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne we pour our ardent prayers;  
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts and our

According to legend, the mute swan, unable to make a sound during its life, sings the most heartbreakingly beautiful song just before it dies. It is from this that we get the phrase “Swan Song” referring to an expenditure of grand effort for a final performance before fading from the public view.

It is a beautiful story that has no basis in fact, unfortunately. First of all, mute swans aren’t really mute. They are able to make all sorts of sounds, though none of them could really be classified as singing. And they don’t, I’m sorry to say, suddenly develop that ability just before their departure. So, if you are waiting for me to sing to you, you’ll just have to keep waiting, I’m afraid.

It is probably just as well. Even if I could sing, and wanted to sing my way out, I would be hard pressed to choose just the right song to sing. It would have to be a song of joy in the first place. I would want to sing of the joy of serving the Lord in this

*Swan Song**Continued from page 2*

cares.

We share each other's woes,  
our mutual burdens bear;  
and often for each other  
flows the sympathizing tear.

When we asunder part, it  
gives us inward pain;  
but we shall still be joined in  
heart, and hope to meet  
again.

You will always be a part of  
me and my ministry no  
matter where I go in the days  
and years ahead. And I trust  
that something of me and  
my family will remain here.  
True community is not  
bounded by space or by  
time, but is held in the hand  
of God. I thank God for all  
my remembrances of you,  
and for the great privilege it  
has been to serve for a time  
as your pastor.

I give you into God's  
keeping, where you have  
always been. And I trust in  
the presence of Christ to  
continue to lead you home.

Shalom,


*Lost and Separated*

You can't go home again!  
That's what they say! The  
book of Ezra is God's book  
about His people in the Old  
Testament going back home  
and what they did when  
they first got back there.

In Ezra we can read about  
the first and second groups  
of God's people going back  
home to the promised land,  
rebuilding the temple, and  
learning how important it is  
to obey God's Word.  
Here's a traveling home  
game to help you and your  
family learn from Ezra  
about God's modern day  
people and going home!

Take your family outside  
your home and everybody  
draw a picture of it. Then,  
compose a story titled, "Our  
Home." Make it specific  
enough that strangers could  
tell which house it was.  
Don't just draw or talk  
about the outside, talk about  
who is inside this house too.  
Describe what each person  
likes about the house and  
yard and neighborhood.

Then talk about how it  
would feel if someone took  
your family away from its  
home for 70 years! Explain  
how God's people had  
that5very thing happen to  
them. Ask how each one

would feel if he or she heard  
the great news about being  
able to go home. Take a  
moment to think about what  
changes could have happened  
while your family was gone.

Open your Bible to Ezra  
chapters 1, 2, 7 and 8 and read  
about the first group with  
Zerubbabel and the second  
group led by Ezra.

Close off this time with a  
prayer of thankfulness for your  
home and family and ask God  
to help the families in Israel  
and Palestine who are even  
today feeling lost and separated  
from their family homes and  
lands.

*Davis Park Summer Concert  
Schedule Announced*

Details are still being ironed  
out, but the dates and artists  
are set.

Join us for the 2007 season of  
the Davis Park Summer  
Concert series; **June 21** will  
feature the *Lapel Community  
Band*, **July 19** will feature the  
*Madison County Director's  
Band*, and **August 9**, will  
feature *Sarah Scharbrough  
and friends*.

Fried chicken dinners will be  
available at each concert. **The  
cost is: \$5/adult, \$3/children  
under 10, or \$18/family.**

Watch for details in upcoming  
announcements or visit us on the  
web at [www.andersonfirst.org](http://www.andersonfirst.org)  
where new information is posted  
regularly.

*Dan's Fish Fry*

Friday, June 15 from 4:00  
p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Davis  
Park there will be a  
fundraiser for the Anderson  
Area Children's Choir -  
Chorale and Youth Chorale.

The cost is:

Adults \$8

Children under 12 - \$5

Come support the Anderson  
Area Children's Choir.

## “Jesus Loves Me!” Check it Out!



Remember the little song you learned as a child? "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so." In his book entitled **Jesus Loves Me**,

Calvin Miller uses this ditty to reinforce the premise Jesus really does love us. The Biblical record of this love proves the premise again and again.

As we age, and if we are in a loving relationship with our Lord, we readily accept the Biblical truth of being loved by our Creator and by our Lord. In fact, Jesus spent

his entire ministry loving God's created beings. Each and every day was spent loving children, youth, and adults. His teaching ministry was to prove God's love for us. His final act of dying on a cross was to validate the statement "Jesus loves us." And the reappearance following the crucifixion

was to validate God's eternal love for you and me.

For a simply written, but profound look at God's love for us, go to the section numbered 264.23 and relive an old, but a never outdated truth, **Jesus Loves Me.**

**Check it out!**

## About Our Library

At the present time, there are approximately 5000 books in the library. Thanks to the generous library contributions, we are continuing to purchase current books.

We also have many Christian CD's which can be

checked out. People are welcome to donate to this collection also.

For your convenience, we again will have a Library Drop Box located at Davis Park during the 9 a.m. worship service.

### Library hours

9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.

Monday through Friday

8:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.

Sunday

We do not have evening hours, except by request.

### Summer Office Hours begin June 2007

Monday - Thursday

9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Fridays

9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

### Worship Opportunities

#### Sundays

9:00 am - Traditional Worship

10:30 am - Connections

Intimate prayers & hymns

11:30 am - Connections

Modern worship experience

#### Every fourth Saturday

*Saturdays at the Park*

June 23 at 5-7:30 pm



## *Musings from the office at the end of the hall*

*“What then, brethren? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.”*

*1 Corinthians 14:26*

I found the above verse last night in our family devotions. It struck a deep chord within me. The first thing about it was how it sounded like a worship service. But then after the last month and preparing for Children’s Sunday, just about everything reminds me of a worship service!

The next thing I felt when we read this verse was the questioning at the beginning. Not necessarily the question but how it started by asking the regular people what they thought. The question was not just what does the preacher think, or what does just the older adult think, or what do the children want, but what do all the brethren think? We all, together in pray, need to decide what the answer is.

Then I realized this verse is my work mission statement! “Let all things be done for edification!” Worship is for edification; Sunday School is for edification; KNO is for edification; weddings

and funerals are for edification, even funeral dinners are for learning and edifying the family!

Now as I contemplate 1 Corinthians 14:26 again something else strikes me. This is not just directed at church workers. I think we’re seeing what we ought to see in our work and family lives.

Kaitlin and I are busy planning our “Aunt & Niece’s” time this year. The plan is to learn something about 13 different countries (she’s turning 13 this summer!), eat 13 different foods, hear music from 13 different traditions and play 13 games from those different countries! So based on my Bible study, we have hymns, lessons, tongues (well, maybe not in the Biblical sense!)...all for our edification! How about you? Can you see how your family vacation might actually turn into a time of connection with God?

It really doesn’t take more effort to apply scripture to your life. Mostly it takes an adaptation to our way of thinking. We already sing or hum or turn on the radio. Well, sing a praise song or hum a hymn (most of them make great lullaby’s

when hummed!) or tune the radio to a faith radio station. We read all the time...print out some of the Psalms and tape one to the bathroom mirror and read it while you shave or brush your teeth.

Now, LIVING the scriptures will take more effort than just sliding through life, but it’s just as simple to do. I heard this morning about some people who got fired from their jobs because they were gossiping at work. I do not intend to defend either side, but let me remind you there is something about not doing that kind of thing. It’s hard not to talk about other people or situations, but it’s hard because we want to talk about them not because we can’t stop doing it.

It is with a very grateful heart, I thank the children (and their families) and the teachers who have worked with our children at KNO or Quest or Sunday School this past year. Now there are some great examples of living out a Bible verse! I have seen families show patience when it was hard; I have seen leaders change their schedule because the children needed them; I have seen teachers live out

their commitments of love in front of strangers and children not their own all for the edification of the children of God.

“What then, brethren? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.” 1 Corinthians 14:26

So there you go, when we come together as the Family of First United Methodist Church Anderson, we are to come together for edification...whenever we come together even, as much as it pains me to say this, even when we come together for staff meetings, it is for our spiritual edification! I have the lesson – somebody has the hymn?

Faithfully yours,

*Miss Mary Margaret*

## An Operation Classroom In-Gathering

*At the North Indiana Conference - May 31 to June 2*

While I'm in a thankful frame of mind, I want to commend you all for sharing so generously with Operation Classroom and the In-gathering for this year's North Indiana Annual Conference. To paraphrase a verse ...my box overfloweth! I am going to be so proud to

drop off our gifts at the Operation Classroom collection truck! Thank you!

### What is Operation Classroom?

Operation Classroom is a non-profit organization partnering with selected schools and health care

facilities in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

We partner with the United Methodist Church in Liberia and Sierra Leone to:

- \* Provide a first-rate educational system in United Methodist Schools
- \* Develop a viable

vocational program in the schools

\* Train pastors, principals, and teachers in a basic understanding of counseling (WATTS)

\* Upgrade medical programs and facilities at Kissy Hospital, Sierra Leone, and Ganta Hospital, Liberia (Operation Doctor)

## Help Is Needed In The Nursery

For at least the last four weeks, I have published a request for help in the church nursery. So far, it has not garnered enough response to comfortably cover our needs! We need your help. We continue to need your help! Next fall, we will need even more

help! Are you prepared? We need two (2) adults in the nursery. According to the child safety policy First United Methodist Church Anderson developed and voted to accept, we are to have two adults whenever we are working with children! During the

summer months, we need two adults to help with the Ensemble/Connections worship services and when September rolls around we will again need two (2) adults in the nursery from 9:00 o'clock until 12:30 (It does not have to be the SAME TWO adults from

9:00 until 12:30!) I don't want to nag about this. I want you to look at this request as a way for you and your family to be of service. Remember, it runs in the family and we have to take care of that family!

Thanks again!

## Coffee Hosts Needed for Davis Park

*Is Coffee Hour a ministry we want to continue?*

We are still in need of individuals or groups to host coffee hour this summer at the park. We only have 3 of 15 slots filled. This hospitality ministry is one that we have enjoyed for years here at the church and it would be something I hate to see disappear. I am asking our congregation to prayerfully consider giving of your time on Sunday morning

to help keep this ministry alive.

If you are interested, please contact me by email at [mike@andersonfirst.org](mailto:mike@andersonfirst.org), or by phone at 617-6887 or call the church office. This ministry can not continue without you. Please consider giving of your time.

Serving Him,

*Michael Nicholson*



# Children's Sunday

Thank you to all the children who lead us in worship on May 20. The singing of the Children's choir was very special because you sang a simple song and then added a new part to it showing us how important it is to learn the basics and then to add our own special touch when we worship. Didn't you hear angels as Rebekah, Abby and Noah sang lead on the hymns? I loved hearing the Junior Bells play "Sweet Hour of Prayer," particularly as that was the first song I learned to play for church when I was a child. Quinten, Sara and Nathan have humbled me

throughout this past year as we studied and practiced reading the Holy Scripture so they could share the Word of the Lord with us. I marveled at the creativity of students and teachers as they adapted prayers and benedictions for our benefit. I was proud of Derrick for distinctly calling us to prayer so we could be in worship, and of Grace for clearly reminding us how all of us are welcome. I commend Bailey for offering a dedication of our gifts and offerings which should encourage us to give more generously for weeks to come, and I think the members of the 1,2,3 Go!

Class showed they are ready to help the ushers anytime they are called upon! I was so very proud of the Pick-Me Class members as they greeted the congregation and as they and their teachers and family members acted as hosts and hostesses. I know I couldn't have picked out the best cookies if Hope and Seth hadn't helped me!

You did a great job, all of you, and I know God was grinning from ear to ear as He watched His First Anderson UMC family!

# School of Christian Mission

## What is School of Christian Mission?

Schools of Christian Mission are an educational experience for United Methodist Women and others wishing to expand their concepts of mission in today's world. They are held every year across the United States.

## Who provides the leadership?

The Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries provides a basic plan, recommends resources for study and trains

leadership for Schools of Christian Mission. A school committee in each conference is responsible for putting the plan into action.

For more specific information on your school of mission, *Ellen Rhoades at 260.432.7500 or e-mail emr7962@comcast.net*

or contact your district/conference UMW.

## This Year's Theme:

"Sing Across the Walls."

This year's study includes: Mission Studies on Israel and

Palestine. Public Educational Study on Globalization - Its Impact In Our Lives.

The school will be held at Manchester College near Manchester, Ind.

The Drive in Day is scheduled for Wednesday July 11 from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The regular School of Christian Mission will run Thursday, July 12 through Saturday July 14.

It will run concurrently with SCM's Fun and Fabulous Children's Program: Chi-Mi-Ca for ages 3rd through 4th

grade; and Young People's Mission Camp: Yo-Pe-Mi-Ca for youth in middle school through age 17.

The school includes: Wonderful accommodations, inspirational worship, variety of learning opportunities and is designed for women, men, youth and children – a program for every age and study for every interest.

QUESTIONS? Contact Ellen Rhoades at 260.432.7500 or e-mail emr7962@comcast.net



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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**[www.andersonfirst.org](http://www.andersonfirst.org)**

## 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

**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](http://www.andersonfirst.org)  
Or call 765-643-6977 to submit a phone-in registration.

([www.andersonfirst.org](http://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 6<sup>th</sup> 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!

### *Coming Events*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Jun 3-7 Vacation Bible School                           | Jul 20 JOY Luncheon   |
| Jun 8 Bon Amis To Fairy Oaks Dairy                      | Jul 22 MAD (Music Arts Drama) Camp  |
| Jun 10 Weber Farewell Reception                         | Jul 29 Choir School   |
| Jun 17 Anderson First Welcomes our<br>New Senior Pastor | Aug 5 Sacred Music Concert  |
| Jun 13-17 Ichthus 2007                                  | Aug 9 Davis Park Summer Concert   |
| Jun 15 JOY Luncheon                                     | For updated and current calendar<br>information, visit us on the web at<br><a href="http://www.andersonfirst.org">www.andersonfirst.org</a> . |
| Jun 21 Davis Park Summer Concert                        |   |
| Jul 1 Bon Amis to Symphony on the<br>Prairie            |   |
| Jul 1-7 Senior High Institute                           |   |
| Jul 19 Davis Park Summer Concert                        |   |