



## First United Methodist

FAITH FIRST. FAMILIES FIRST. ANDERSON FIRST.

First United Methodist Church Phone: 765-643-6977  
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Anderson IN 46016-1652

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John 3:16

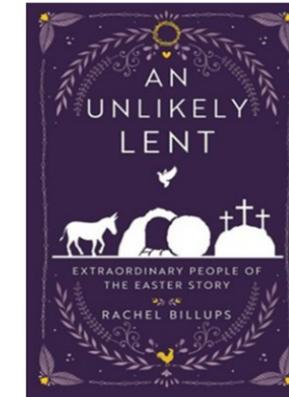


# THE VOICE

A Newsletter of First United Methodist

### ALL-CHURCH LENTEN STUDY

"An Unlikely Lent:  
Extraordinary People of the Easter Story"  
by Rachel Billups



Notice the unexpected in Easter. By seeing the Easter story through their eyes, we may discover that the resurrection is not just a past event, but an invitation into something new, unexpected, and unlikely. Walk through this season with eyes wide open, ready to see where God is moving, even in the margins. Since the cross is not the end of the story, embrace every unlikely moment along the way.

Don't miss out on this powerful 6-week opportunity!

#### Multiple Days, Times, Locations and Leaders are available:

##### Pastor Brian White

Mons, Feb. 23-March 30 @ 10:30 a.m. in North/South Parlor

##### Pastor Corinne Boruff

Weds., Feb. 25-April 1 @ 6 p.m. in North/South Parlor

##### Peg Peter

Fridays, Feb 27-April 3 @ 9 a.m. in North/South Parlor

##### Susan Selby & Judy Whitney

Weds., Feb. 11-March 18 @ 5 p.m.

at Susan's home (2647 E 100 N, Anderson)

##### Richard & Dorinda Cassidy

Tues., Feb. 17-March 24 @ 7 p.m.

at Cassidy Cottage (5396 S 100 E, Anderson)

##### Pat Walker

Weds., Feb.18-March 25@ 10:30 a.m. at Pat's home (310 Ravenview Ct., Anderson -- Longfellow Woods condos)

# Adult Ministries

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE – February 2026

- February 1 HOLY COMMUNION  
The Upside-down Kingdom  
Matthew 5:1-12 (MSG)  
Music: Joyful Sound
- February 8 FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY  
How Prayer Works  
1 Corinthians 2:8-13; Luke 11:5-13 (MSG)  
Music: AACC/YC
- February 15 TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY  
Rev. Rachel Billups, preaching  
Music: Sanctuary Choir & Kids Choir  
Lunch with Rev. Billups and Lenten Study facilitators following worship.
- Wed., February 18 – Ash Wednesday Service, 7 p.m.  
Preparing for the Journey  
Music: Sheryl Monnier, oboe & Sanctuary Choir
- “AN UNLIKELY LENT”  
by Rachel Billups  
Notice the Unexpected in Easter
- “The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus are at the heart of the story of Easter. But the resurrection was not witnessed in isolation; it unfolded before a crowd. What might the stories of those women and men teach us today? How will they help us step into the story of Easter? ... By seeing the Easter story through their eyes, we may discover that the resurrection is not just a past event, but an invitation into something new, unexpected, and unlikely. Walk through this season with eyes wide open, ready to see where God is moving, even in the margins. Since the cross is not the end of the story, embrace every unlikely moment along the way.”
- February 22 FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT  
“Unlikely Offering: Mary of Bethany”  
John 12:1-8; Mark 14:3-9 (NRSV)  
Music: Alpha Brass



Begin the season of Lent with this service of humility and remembering.  
Wednesday, Feb. 18 @ 7 p.m.  
in the Sanctuary  
Receive a cross of ashes as you are invited to remember  
God created you from the dust.

## Employee Phone Extension Directory

**Corinne Boruff—1001**

**Ally Hall—1002**

**Outreach (Dave & Susan Selby) - 1003**

**Heather Ashton—1006**

**Judy Whitney—1012**

**Brian White 1014**



## Outreach Ministries

### OUTREACH NEWS

No wonder this congregation is so happy! 2 Corinthians 9:7 "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." You definitely proved this point with our Christmas Outreach offering totaling \$8,526.00. Not only are you cheerful in your giving, but responsive to scripture. Deuteronomy 15:11, "For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore, I command you, 'You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.'" The Outreach teams are humbled by your concern for their success and actions to assist. Proverbs 11:24, "One gives freely, yet grows all the richer, another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want."

May God richly bless you for your faith, love and generosity.

Sincerely, Susan

### HELPING HANDS NON-FOOD PANTRY

With very cold winds and a forecast of snow, we were still able to serve 107 people at our January 14, 2026 Pantry. The bags we gave each person included two large rolls of toilet paper, toothpaste, a toothbrush, deodorant for a woman or a man, and a bottle of dish detergent. We also gave a pair of warm socks to each woman or man as a delayed Christmas gift, which were greatly appreciated! Along with our regular attenders, we continue to have people coming to our Pantry for the first time. We make sure to tell each guest that our Pantry is always the second Wednesday of each month from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Our Congregation is so supportive of our Pantry and the supplies they donate help us serve an increasing number of guests. They are truly a blessing to our Pantry and to the guests we serve!

Our next Helping Hands Non-Food Pantry will be on February 11, 2026 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. For that pantry, we are requesting donations of toilet paper, shampoo and/or lotion. Those items will help us serve more people and we are grateful for your help. Thank you!

Sincerely—Linda Verhulst, Juanita Slattery, Karen Ambler

### THANK YOU

Thank you everyone who have sent get well cards. They have been greatly appreciated during my illness and recovery. Johanne Coleson



Everyone is invited to ALL this church offers during this time of preparation for Easter and our Easter Celebration.

These include:

Lent Studies: "An Unlikely Lent" – 6 different groups to choose from  
Six Sundays of Lent

Easter activities with Family Ministries

Holy Week: Maundy Thursday and Good Friday

Easter Son-rise Service and Breakfast at Davis Park

Easter Traditional Service in Sanctuary

### LENT

The 40 days leading up to Easter can be the most life-giving, perspective-changing, hope-filled days of the year.

Purpose of Lent is to hunger for God and grow closer to him... by recovering the space and freedom from the many activities and desires that normally rule our lives.

### LIVING ASH WEDNESDAY

If you want Ash Wednesday 2026 to be more than just "a date on the calendar," here are some concrete ideas:

1. Participate in the Worship Service on Wednesday, Feb. 18 @ 7 p.m. Sounds basic, but it is the heart of the day.
  - Receive the ashes as a conscious gesture, not just a custom
  - Take a moment of silence and make an inner prayer such as: *"Lord, I recognize my failings and my sins. Help me live this Lent as a path of change."*
2. Choose a Lenten "Plan." Use Ash Wednesday as a day to draw up a simple, concrete "plan" for Lent. For example:
  - One **spiritual practice**: daily prayer, a psalm a day, Gospel reading, participate in the Lenten Study.
  - One **fasting practice**: sweets, alcohol, social media, unnecessary shopping, etc.
  - One **charitable action**: weekly donation, visit to someone lonely, volunteer work.Think of Lent as a spiritual "training season":  
Ash Wednesday is day 1 of 40.

### JOY LUNCH IS BACK!

Join us for great food and delightful fellowship as we kick off a new season of JOY Lunches on Friday, Feb. 20. DeWayne Landwehr will present an engaging program entitled "2<sup>nd</sup> Continental Congress". Lunch will be from Lee's Chicken. Make a reservation in the church office by Wednesday, Feb. 18.



### DISTRICT EQUALIZATION WILLINGNESS TO SERVE Indiana Annual Conference June 3-6, 2026 The application deadline is February 2 at 11:59 p.m.

Thinking about how to get more involved in the Conference in the new year? The District Equalization Members' Willingness to Serve form gathers names of those willing to serve as an equalizing member at the 2026 Annual Conference Session. To express your willingness to serve and find more information, **fill out the online form at <https://inumc.swoogo.com/Serve2026>**

Equalization Members will be elected at the District Conferences sometime between March 1 and March 15, 2026. **Those elected to serve as Equalization Members will be notified by email. Equalization Members elected will need to register to attend the Annual Conference in person for voting purposes.**

### TAX REFUND?

Donate to your favorite ministry at AFUMC  
OR

Invest in the Endowment where it will continue to give in perpetuity!

1. Grab an envelope out of the Narthex
2. Fill the envelope (cash or check) with the amount of money listed on that envelope
3. Bring the envelope back to church by March 1st

All the money goes straight to the Family Ministry! Thank you for supporting our Kids, Students, Young Adults, and Families. Reach out to Ally Hall for any specific questions or to explore more ways to serve the Family Ministries.

### CANDY DONATION Easter Candy Donations Needed!

We invite you to contribute individually wrapped, non-chocolate candies or small toys for Anderson First's Easter Event! **Please make sure that donations are able to fit inside Easter eggs!** You can drop off your donations in the designated buckets or in Ally Hall's office by March 15th.

Here are some ideas for what you can donate:

- Skittles
- Tattoos
- Stickers
- Swedish fish
- Nerds
- Laffy Taffy
- Bubble gum
- Tootsie Rolls
- Lifesavers
- Sour Patch Kids
- Twizzlers
- Starbursts
- Small erasers
- Gummy bears
- Fruit snacks

### EASTER EVENT

Egg-stra, Egg-stra!

Anderson First UMC is excited to host a new version of our Easter Eggstravaganza! We will be offering a Drive-thru experience and a sensory-friendly Easter event at our downtown location! We will offer egg hunt kits, crafts, games, and pictures with the Easter Bunny. This free event is perfect for all ages, offering a sensory-safe environment where everyone can celebrate the resurrection of Jesus.

We are currently accepting non-chocolate candy, stickers, and toys small enough to fit inside easter eggs. Additionally, we are seeking volunteers to assist in stuffing eggs, welcoming guests, managing craft and game stations, and setting up and taking down the event. If you're interested in volunteering for this reimagined community outreach event, please use the QR code to sign up! For any questions regarding the event or volunteering, feel free to reach out to Ally Hall.



**SNOWBALLS OF HOPE**—Thanks to our congregation's generosity, we donated over 500 socks, hats, and gloves to our Outreach Ministry. They are distributing them in conjunction with Community Cafe. Thank you for helping our community stay safe and warm this winter!



## Family Ministries

### FIRST KIDS

This month, we are excited to show kids what being "Totally New" looks like! We will teach kids the Simple Truth, "I Am Forgiven," and they will learn that God gives them a new start, a new heart, a new identity, and a new hope. No matter what, God will always forgive us when we ask. God wants us to have a totally new life that can only be found in Him. I can't wait to see you at First Kids on Sundays a 10am and Wednesdays at 6pm!

### YOUTH GROUP

Anderson First Students are meeting on **February 8<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>** for youth group. AFS is for people in 6th-12th grade to find a place to learn, serve, and have fun together. We currently worship and serve together on Sundays at 10 and gather in the Youth room on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month from 11:-1:15. During our time together, we play games and use Nua Origins curriculum to lead discussions about the Bible and how it applies to our lives.

### MOVIE NIGHT

#### Lights, Camera... MOVIE NIGHT!

Get excited for a Movie Night at Anderson First Kids on Wednesday, February 11th! We invite all kids to wear their coziest pajamas and bring pillows and blankets for the ultimate viewing experience.

Together, we'll enjoy a movie and delicious snacks. We can't wait to spend time with you on Wednesday from 6 to 8 PM in the Fireplace Room!

### KIDS CHOIR

**You are invited to join our Kids Choir!** Everyone from 3 years old to 6th grade is encouraged to participate.

Choir Details:

**When:** Sunday mornings, 9:25 to 9:55 AM

**Where:** Upstairs in the Choir room

Come for a fun time filled with singing, musical games, and worship. We'll have several performances throughout the year, with the next one on **February 15th at 10 AM.**

If your kiddo is excited to join, just swing by the Kids check-in on Sunday mornings. We'll take them to the Choir room and bring them back to their classrooms after rehearsal.

**Got questions?** Feel free to reach out to **Sue Finger** or **Ally Hall!**

### 200 ENVELOPES

Our Family Ministry Fundraiser is back!

Follow the instructions below for a super simple way to support the Family Ministry's 200 Envelopes Fundraiser!



### SATURDAY ANDERSON LENTEN BREAKFAST SCHEDULE 8:00 am—9:30 am

All persons, young and old are invited to attend the entire Lenten Breakfast Series celebrating God's Grace through fellowship, music and inspirational Christian speakers.

DATE	LOCATION	SPEAKER	MUSIC
Feb. 14	1st Presbyterian Church 230 W 9th St Anderson, IN Rev. Joy Edeker	Garri George Family	
Feb. 21	Ford Street UMC 925 Forst St Lapel, IN Rev. Aaron Taylor	Brent Schnepf	Rev. Julie Prichett
Feb. 28	New Horizons UMC 611 E 53rd St Anderson, IN Rev. Dr. Aaron Brown	Dr. Ken Robertson	
Mar. 7	Alexandria Nazarene Church 1401 S Harrison St Alexandria, IN Rev. Aaron Chester	Cocanower Family	Rev. Todd Edeker
Mar. 14	St. Ambrose Catholic Church 2801 Lincoln St Anderson, IN Fr. Tom Metzger	Matt McClintick	Rev. Steve Holdzkom
Mar. 28	Anderson First UMC 1215 Jackson St Anderson, IN Rev. Corinne Boruff	Rev. Dr. Brian White	Murray Family

## Historian's Note

In the middle of the night, 65 years ago, on Friday, December 23, 1960, the previous church building was destroyed by an arsonist. With Christmas just two days away, I imagine this was shocking and tragic for the congregation. I'm sure that those who remember can attest to that. Recently in my research, (which is what I call it when I'm "geeking out" over documents in the basement files) what really impressed me is that within a mere ten days after the fire, on January 2, 1961, the Nominating Committee was holding a meeting in what remained of the church building to name a whopping 42 members of two newly formed committees. Both the Building Facilities & New Church Location Committees were formed. The immense task of rebuilding the church was under way!

The New Church Location Committee had to first determine not just where the new building would be, but what kind of church they wanted to be. According to meeting minutes, the committee had to decide if they wanted to stay downtown and be a large "Cathedral Church" or relocate to the already acquired Davis Park location and be a medium "Community Church". This couldn't have been an easy decision to remain downtown.

The months that followed must have been quite stressful for all of the people involved. From demolishing the previous building, dealing with insurance, navigating how everything would be paid for, choosing an architect, considering bids from contractors, temporarily worshipping at the old State Theatre, all while prayerfully planning for the future...this was no small task to say the least.

Yet by August of 1962, the Building Facilities Committee (helmed by prominent businessman, Mr. Ward Stilson) presented their report to the General Building Committee. In that report, I found a passage that jumped out at me. Mr. Stilson commented that, **"This has been and will be for years ahead, a church which stands at the crossroads of the city's thoroughfares. It has a mission to the entire community. It must "Speak God" to the city in its very appearance."** In fact, a common item I saw in a few different documents was the desire of the congregation for the new building to **"look like a church"**. I found that interesting, but what was more interesting to me was that this report went on to include that **the new building MUST have facilities for the following four things; "Public Worship, Teaching God's Word, Fellowship with One Another, & the Welfare and Social Services of the Community"**. In other words, the new building must also **"act like a church"**.

I share this final thought. As "the new guy with a new family" who has no nostalgic connection to this church or its buildings whatsoever, I want you to know something. I think all that hard work 65 years ago has paid off! It is certainly true that you have a beautiful building, but more than that; I think of your wonderful and thoughtful worship services each week, your flourishing children's ministry, your Community Cafe and its faithful volunteers, your various missions, your ongoing commitment to the needs of the local community, and personally...how Joe Snyder learned my sons' names after the first week my family visited. My friends, you don't just "look like a church" you act like one too. Thank you for that.

Your Local History Nerd,  
Matt McClintick

## Devotions for February

by Steve Anderson

Colossians 3:14 "And above all put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony, and let the peace of Christ rule in your heart". February is arguably the special month of the year where we pause to recognize, examine and once again try to define love as it ebbs and flows throughout our daily lives.

Five-dollar Hallmark cards and the endless amount of heart shaped candy and red roses are props used in this annual quest to seek a clearer definition of love. Another example of a character attempting to convey what love is to a friend is Winnie the Pooh. This year marks the one hundredth anniversary of the first Winnie the Pooh books written by Alan Alexander Milne (A.A. Milne) and published October 14, 1926. Love is a recurrent theme in the Pooh series where Pooh and his friend Piglet have serious discussions about love.

Piglet asks Pooh "How do you spell love? Pooh responded, "You don't spell it you feel it". Pooh in bringing the invisible reality of love to life continued with Piglet by telling him, "If you live to be a hundred, I want to live to be a hundred minus a day, so I never have to live without you". Pooh continued with, "A Day spent with you is my favorite day, so today is my favorite day". Finally, Piglet asked "We'll be friends forever won't we Pooh"? Pooh replied, "Even longer". I am sure this conversation ended with Pooh hugging Piglet. A hug transcends societal protocols and protective barriers put in place during human interactions. Hugs communicate worthiness, forgiveness and the fact "I love you". Yes, even our pets understand our love for them when we hug them. Receiving a hug from a friend we haven't seen for awhile or giving and receiving a hug in saying good-bye continues the affirmation of the bond of love coupled with the parting words "I love you".

Were hugs a part of Jesus's sources of love? The answer may be found in Luke 5:12-16 when Jesus touched a leper. This was not just a timid, hesitant touch but was the full embrace of a hug. He did this to show the leper that he (the leper) was no longer an outcast but was now accepted. Jesus is the embodiment of love by making it very clear that love is available to all of humanity. The realization that we are all the same as God's children, whether we live in China or the streets of Anderson once cultural differences are set aside. The quest for dream fulfillment, continued hope and overall happiness are pursued. Grief of the loss of a child to ravages of war or to starvation are all universal. Colossians 3:14 tells us that love binds together the defining characteristics of love such as kindness, empathy and sacrifice for others. Jesus Christ through his teaching and example of his life is the ultimate source and definition of love.

May today be your favorite day.