

October Newsletter

First United Methodist Church
Pastors Michael Lawson & Tara Keehn
2637 McCool Road, Portage, IN 46368
(219) 762-3846

The Witness
Issue X
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From Pastor Michael...

FOUNDATION

When Methodism came to America it was a reform movement within the church of England. However, we soon became an independent church and our circuit riders set out into the American frontier with the purpose of "spreading Scriptural Holiness throughout the land." Then they set out across the wilderness on horseback traveling from village to village and gathering "the people called Methodists" into classes and bands.

These early Methodist pastors carried with them a Bible and a hymnbook and whatever volume they were studying. They were to read and study as they were on horseback. They were to learn the Bible in its original language, and they were to use their meager salaries to buy their own paper and pencils. A real commodity in early America! Now whenever we find pictures and drawing of Methodist Pastors from this early America, you see them on their horses, reading and studying.

Methodist congregants did not begin by building church buildings but met in groups in people's homes. There they would learn their Methodist hymns as a means of learning Methodist theology. The hymnal was just as much a teaching tool as any textbook. These early followers took seriously John Wesley's admonition to "Learn these songs before all others."

This mixture of music, education, Bible and Life, took on a distinctly Methodist Character. Concepts like saving rather than spending, doing good, doing no harm, these became calling cards for Methodist people. They did not hoard wealth but instead they built strong communities through their giving and sharing.

I am so happy that Portage First is continuing that tradition. We continue to value education, we sing old hymns as well as new, we bless our community with our sharing and giving. It is as if in a Spiritual sense, all of us, like the Circuit Riding Preachers of old, are on the road together. Traveling from place to place to spread Scriptural Holiness across Portage and the world. Let us be thankful to be on the road together.

Note from Pastor Tara...

Mark 6:31-32 English Bible (CEB)

Many people were coming and going, so there was no time to eat. He said to the apostles, "Come by yourselves to a secluded place and rest for a while." departed in a boat by themselves for a deserted place.

Reflecting on September, it has been one busy month! The Lifetouch Photo Directory Photo shoots completed, Fall Christian Education started, we had the rummage sale, a blood drive, community dinner, along with "normal" programming meeting weekly! I also started two online classes with Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary.

With the whirlwind of activity, a few things happened. 1) I was very proud of how much we as a church accomplished; and 2) I got emotionally worn out. You know how turkeys have those little pop-up timers in them that pop up when they are done? I have a similar mechanism that lets me know my limits... I start tearing up and crying at the drop of a hat. When that happens, I know that it's time for me to slow down and focus on self-care. Do you have a "tell?" Your version of a "turkey timer?" - something that lets you know that you need to slow down, ask God for help, and re-center? As we enter October and the beginning of the "Holiday Season," a time that can be stressful for many, I would like to ask you to take a look at your current plan of self-care and see if it needs adjustment. Are you getting enough sleep? Water? Vitamins? Movement? Sunlight? Meditation/prayer time? Do you need to recommit to scripture reading? sleep schedule, etc.? If not, I hope you take some time to recommit to taking care of yourself physically, spiritually and emotionally this month.

Mark 1:35 Common English Bible (CEB)

Early in the morning, well before sunrise, Jesus rose and went to a deserted place where he could be alone in prayer.

If you do not already, carve out some time in your day before you get busy for some private prayer time. Rest, abide, and be with the Lord so that you may reconnect with him on a daily basis. Just with God. Whether it's 3 minutes or 30, set some time to just listen and be with God this month.

May God bless you with health, emotional and spiritual well-being this month.

Trustees' Corner ...

September has been another busy month for the trustees and our church. Our new baby boy "Lanier" copier/printer has arrived. This new machine will provide our church with time and cost savings. Feel free to visit the conference room for a demonstration. Unfortunately, September also brought some serious roof leaks requiring immediate attention. Repairs are now in process. Projects completed included painting the parsonage deck (thank you Ed Piontek). Air conditioner problems in the narthex requiring hours of work installing new drainage pipe in the attic, fixing leaks and repairing thermostats (thanks to Paul Keaton, Rich Coates, & Ron Cutler). New step stools were purchased for the four bathrooms to assist our children in reaching the soap and faucets safely. Just like our homes, our church building needs to be regularly maintained and may even involve some capital expenditures. On our radar is a new water heater for the education wing, a new DVD/TV for our nursery along with some fresh paint for the nursery bathroom, and new handrails up the middle of the chancel steps. We are also looking towards 2020 to complete a facelift of our kitchen. Thank you to those who have been giving above and beyond this year towards this project. Slowly but surely, we will obtain enough special funds to replace our double ovens, 6 burner & grill unit, replace flooring, install more ceramic wall tile, new ceiling lights, new painted walls, and obtain new counter tops. Let's make our 185th anniversary in October 2020 a time of celebration for our kitchen.

Other longer-term capital projects include an electronic church sign, new flooring for the education wing including bathrooms, building an overhang over north door entrance to help shelter those who use that door especially in the winter, and to provide more protection of the concrete landing and enhancements to our sanctuary and chancel area. Portage First is a thriving place to worship and fellowship. The trustees sincerely thank our congregation for their continual sacrificial giving and financial support of the many projects and special events held and/or sponsored by Portage First. As always, we welcome your comments and suggestions. Forms can be found in the trustee box located in the narthex.

All Saints Sunday, November 3 ...

On All Saint's Sunday, we will honor those who have gone to be with our Lord since, October 31, 2018. As is tradition, we will light a candle in honor of each Christian person who has passed away in the last year. If you have a loved one whom you would like to memorialize in this way, contact the church office with their name and date of passing. If you can include a picture for display on our screen during worship we would appreciate it. Help us not overlook anyone!

United Methodist Men ...

Calling all United Methodist Men!

Guest speaker for October 5th 's breakfast meeting at 8:00 AM — Pastor Michael Bean from Crossroads Family Church here in Portage will be joining us and be our guest speaker at our upcoming men's breakfast meeting. He plans to come speak and share a message to our men. He also plans on inviting some of the men from his church to come and share in our gathering.

Hoping we might have a good turnout of men to hear Pastor Mike's message and to share in men's fellowship with one another. Please spread the word and invite someone. It doesn't have to be a church member. Invite a friend from church, a neighbor, a family member, a friend or a co-worker. I'm know they will be rewarded and blessed by being a part of this fellowship.

We as men of the church and spiritual leaders in our families need to be open and receptive in our interactions with other Christian brothers and sisters in other denominations and churches for building up God's kingdom here and now. Chris Adkins will be leading this meeting, as I will be out of town and not able to be with you, regretfully. Sorry I am unable to be with you.

Sincerely, Mike Matthew

Youth Group ...

Our next meeting is on October 6th from 2-4 PM. We will be participating in box city with Family Promise. The first two meetings have been great! Looking forward to continuing to grow this ministry. Our next message will be on conquering fear and anxiety!

Community Meal ...

The next Community Meal will Friday, October 18 at 6:00 PM. Hope to see you there!

First Friday Fellowship ...

We will meet on Friday, October 4 at 5:00 PM at Mexico Lindo, 5908 US Hwy. 6, Portage. Please RSVP to Sandra Robinson at (219 764-8433 no later than Thursday, October 3rd.

United Methodist Women ...

Friday, October 4 at 9:30 AM - October is aof year for you tous for fellowship, conversation, breakfast snacks and a speaker. Women of ALL ages are welcome!

Operation Christmas Child (Shoe Box Ministry) ...

It's coming! It's coming! Our 2nd "stuff the box" event for Operation Christmas Child. This year's event will be held in the fellowship hall on Saturday, November 2 at 10:30 AM. October will bring to a close a year long collection process of child appropriate items for the shoe box ministry. Thank you one and all for your generous contributions of shoe boxes, empty bill bottles, school supplies, and toys. Three hundred + children will be blessed by the donations from Portage First. Please come, grab a box to fill, and be part of a world-wide ministry through Samaritan Purse. The goal of the shoebox ministry is to let every child know there is a God who loves them. Your box just might be the one thing that brings hope and happiness to a child, age 2 to 14, who may be a victim of war, poverty, natural disasters, disease, or famine.

Marilyn Pies for The Holidays ...

Cub Scout Pack 487 will be selling Marilyn Pies before and after services on November 3rd. All pies are \$16.00. Pies will be available for pick up on November 16th from 3 to 5 pm. If other arrangements are needed please let Kim Adkins.

Family Promise of Porter County Fall Funfest ...

Come to the FALL FUNFEST on October 6th from 1-4 PM at Crossroads (the property next to our church). We will have hot dogs and hamburgers, root beer floats, games, a bounce house, and hayrides. We will be doing the annual box city during this time and plan to give tours of the Resource Center (farmhouse) to show the progress we have made. It is a free-will offering and please remember to bring our own chairs. We truly appreciate all of your generosity and support, Church!

Family Promise is a national, non-profit organization that serves homeless children and their families. We are working hard to get this operating so we can serve Porter County families. Come see the progress and hear more about us on October 6th.

If you have any questions or are wanting to get more involved in Family Promise, please do not hesitate to contact Amanda Jennings at (219) 781-1924 or ajennings21@hotmail.com.

From the Finance Committee...

PORTAGE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FINANCE UPDATE

August 2019

Non Designated Giving	\$24,198.23
Operating Expenses	\$30,964.30
Debt Reduction Giving	\$1,829.00

Debt Reduction Expense	\$2,080.92
Apportionment Paid	\$2,870.86
YEAR TO DATE 2019	YEAR TO DATE 2019
Non Designated Giving	\$220,479.38
Operating Expenses	\$226,501.15
Net Year To Date	(\$6,021.77)
Debt Reduction Giving	\$18,485.00
Debt Reduction Expense	\$16,647.36
Net Debt Reduction	\$1,837.64
Overall Net Current & Debt	(\$4,184.13)
Apportionment Paid	\$26,070.34

What 'Apportionment'? From www.umc.org —

The main way we support the ministries of the church is through our apportioned funds, a method of giving that proportionally allocates the churchwide budget to conferences and local churches. For United Methodists this method of giving has become a strong, generous tradition. Together, through our connected congregations, we accomplish what no single church, district or annual conference ever could hope to do alone. In this way, each individual, each family, each congregation gives a fair share for the church's work. We combine our prayers, presence, gifts, and service to make a significant difference in the lives of God's people. The Indiana Annual Conference asks that each church provide 11% of the prior month's income as their apportionment, 10% to the conference and 1% to the district.

Happy October Birthday to...

01	Joyce Shone	11	Marilyn Allen	23	Sue Andryuk
02	Marge Hines	15	Sandy Morgenroth	23	Emma Burns
04	Amity McKiddy	15	Gabe Comegys	23	Val Sliter
04	Kim Syren	17	Sue Jongsma	24	Sande Robinson
05	Karen Blakely	18	Pat Glenn	25	Robert Cheeks
05	Rileyann Welch	18	Paul Keaton	25	Tiffany Hamilton
06	Kaleb Bush	19	Stephen Hameetman	28	Vicki Evanatz
06	Lydia Wilkening	21	Livia Kegley	29	Madelyn Lorenz
07	Barbara Steiner	23	Sally Reynolds	30	John Black
09	Addyson Neace	23	Lil Falk		

Happy October Anniversary to...

01	Bob & Glenda Dixon	19	Fred & Gloria Nystrom
01	Tony & Kortni Centracchio	19	Tod & Karen Blakely
02	Bill & Sande Robinson	19	Richard & Marcia Guth
07	Randy & Miranda Wilkening Jr.	20	Tom & Connie Ellefson
10	John & Heather Shebel	20	Don & Sandy Morgenroth
12	David & Leigh Coffey	21	George & Janice Stewart
16	Jim & Bev Reeder		

