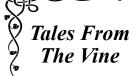
"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 8:12

### What Does It Mean To Be A Lighthouse?

Lighthouses are rich with symbolism and conceptual meanings. They illustrate concepts such as danger, risk, adversity, challenge and vigilance. But they also offer guidance, salvation and safety. Lighthouses symbolize the way forward and help in navigating our way through rough waters, whether those waters be financial, personal, business or spiritual in nature.



It was a cold winter day when "Louise" walked into our food pantry, **The Vine.** She was a regular client, elderly, small and frail, and usually stopped by on her way home from The Wound Center at the hospital. She probably didn't feel her best when we saw her. But she enjoyed chatting and reminiscing about cooking "in the old days". I told her I enjoyed making chicken noodle soup in cold weather, and she shared that she grew

up helping her mother make chicken and noodles by boiling a whole chicken, then made soup from the bones. She had looked at chickens at the grocery store the previous week, but they were too expensive for her. So, I gave her a small, whole chicken, and she promised me that she would make chicken and noodles for herself.

The next month, Louise returned and thanked me again for the chicken. As she spoke, her blue eyes sparkled! She did make the chicken and noodles, and also invited a friend to share lunch with her. After her lunch, she had divided her leftovers and sent half of them home with her friend! What a kind, generous soul!

I saw Louise's obituary in The Times in December, 2017. She was 90 years old, and in her younger days, had driven a school bus for 40 years! I feel privileged to have known her, and will truly miss talking with her. Does God send angels to our food pantry? Absolutely! Sometimes they are disguised as "Louise".

Sue Robertson

### To our First Church Family,

Thank you all so very much for attending the all-church potluck honoring John and me on February 18. We appreciate the time spent together enjoying that great Methodist food extravaganza (aka potluck) and the time of sharing. Thank you also for your good wishes, kind words and understanding as we prepare to make our move to Zionsville in May. First Church has indeed been 'family' throughout these past 40+ years. Who knows what the future holds? Trust in Him, and He will direct your path.

John and Grace Adkinson



**We are well on our Lenten journeys** ... this coming Sunday is our 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent. Our worship and study focus is *Walking the Journey of Lent*. Sunday school classes, Wednesday morning Bible study and 20+ folks are gathering Wednesday evenings for Soup and Study with Pat Mosley. Amen!

**How is your Lenten journey?** Lent may be seen as "spring training" for Christ followers. Just like the baseball players who have been called to spring camp, we, too, have this opportunity to prepare ourselves in three ways: 1. Getting in shape 2. Practicing fundamentals – prayer, worship, giving, fasting, ... 3. Developing a positive mental attitude. As we read in Joel 2:13a – "Return to me (God) with your whole heart...rend your hearts and not your garments, and return to the Lord, your God." We are called to become the very holiness of God. Daunting, isn't it? Thankfully, it is a journey! And we do not travel this journey alone ... Jesus walks with us and we journey *together*.

**On February 11, Transfiguration Sunday** (the Sunday which precedes Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent) I preached on 'Glory Sightings.' After worship and many times that week several of you shared with me *your Glory Sightings*. I thank you for your sharing, and more importantly, I am grateful you are aware of *God at work among us*, and moving in your life!

Ash Wednesday – in addition to our Wednesday evening worship we offered "Drive-thru" ashes from 6:15am to 8:15am and from 11:30am to 12:30pm. When this was shared on Facebook I noticed that one person's response was "Is this a joke?" No joke! Pastor Donna and I had spoken about this last year, and this idea also "bubbled up" organically from one of the Sunday school classes. So! We made it happen. Dave Dean provided materials for a welcoming campfire – which provided welcoming light and warmth. In the morning we provided coffee, with ashes and prayer. Pauline Luthi joined me in the morning and at noon; each person also received a handmade Valentine (made by our Learning League students) and Lenten readings. In all, we made connections with 9 people – some a part of our congregation and two "visitors." We also greeted many of our neighbors, who left their homes for the day, or walked their dogs. Was it a "success?" Yes! We may tweak it a bit for next year ... it is an instrumental way to make a way ... to invite others into the Lord's presence, and for us to be in theirs. *I was blessed*. Thank you Dave and Pauline for making it happen!

**Holy Week** – begins with **Palm Sunday**, March 25. Our choir will present their Cantata – "The Power of the Cross". Thursday evening, **Maundy Thursday**, we will worship at 7:00 pm. The focus of worship will be "service." Friday evening, the darkest of days in our Christian calendar, **Good Friday** worship, will be a Service of Tenebrae, also at 7:00pm.

**Easter morning** – **April 1.** We will worship, and it will be glorious! To fully realize the splendor and glory of Easter, it is important to journey Lent with intention ... and to worship at least once during Holy Week. Easter is our hinge-point as Christ followers. I *hope* to see you in worship!

**Moms Demand Action** – I attended the organizational meeting Saturday February 24 in Valparaiso (at a United Methodist Church), and joined this national chapter. Moms Demand Action – for gun sense in America. I am standing with the young people of Parkland, Florida. On the average, 7 people are killed in the United States each day due to gun violence. African Americans are killed 10x more than white people. I am working for, taking action for, justice. How is your faith leading you?

**Godspell** — presented by our Genesius Guild — March 2, 3, 4 and 9, 10 and 11. Fridays and Saturdays, 8:00pm, Sunday afternoons at 3:00pm. We had a sneak preview in worship February 25. I hope to see you there!

I am, only because of Christ ... see you in and around the church, pastor Mary



## **A Note from the Missions Committee**

Hello, Hammond First Church family! We want to give you an update on the items Dave Hinshaw bought with *your second mile giving donations for November* for veterans living in the veteran's home in Lafayette, Indiana. He bought 15 electric razors for men, 5 electric razors for women, 5 extra large coats for men, and 5 extra large coats for women. The mission committee thanks **Dave Hinshaw** for the work he has done for the Veteran's Home in Lafayette. Many kids at Kenwood School also made Valentines for the veterans. What a wonderful way to express their appreciation for what the veterans did for them *and* us!

Richard Miller, Missions president

### A Perspective from your Lay Leader - Radical Hospitality

I am very proud of our church which greets people openly and warmly! We are a diverse congregation and, hopefully, we welcome and are open to all! However, I admit I don't know everyone in the church and need to step it up a notch!

When I attended my friend's church in Gary, I was treated like a royal guest! Many greeted me and introduced themselves, gave me a Welcome packet and a gentleman even opened the hymnal and marked the pages for me! That was a Thank you Jesus experience! I felt very welcome, valued and appreciated!

Hopefully, visitors will return and this gives ALL of us the opportunity to improve our hospitality! Here are four of nine servant actions for us to consider:

- ~ Pray as you ENTER the church property. Pray for guests, our services, the pastors and the sermon.
- ~ Park farther away than usual to save the closer parking places for guests and those who need to park nearer the entrance.
- ~ Greet all people. They may be guests or members, but it's okay to introduce yourself to either.
- ~ Look for people to help. Don't leave this up to others. We know the place well, but many others will not. Help someone who looks like they need help! ( LOL. Not me, even though I may look like it!)

These are simple acts. Your acts and service are appreciated! They are acts of service for making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world!

Thank you, Jesus!

Pauline Luthi



# Pineapple Pieces

Thanks to our "Publisher" consultant, Grace Adkinson, for patiently helping us navigate the Publisher program. Amazingly, no editors were harmed in this process, and Grace survived!

Never give the devil a ride. He will always want to drive.

"A lie can travel halfway around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes." Mark Twain

"If you want your children to improve, let them overhear the nice things you say about them to others."

Haim G. Ginott

### Concerned about too many carbs in your diet?

- ~ The Japanese eat very little fat and suffer fewer heart attacks than Americans.
  - ~ The Mexicans eat a lot of fat and suffer fewer heart attacks than Americans.
- ~ The Chinese drink very little red wine and suffer fewer heart attacks than Americans.
  - ~ The Italians drink excessive amounts of red wine and suffer fewer heart attacks than Americans.
- ~ The Germans drink a lot of beers and eat lots of sausages and fats and suffer fewer heart attacks than Americans.

**Conclusion:** Eat and drink what you like. Speaking English is apparently what kills you. *Author Unknown* 



Who: Staff/Parish Relations Team Chairpersons and Members

Lay Leaders, Treasurers and Finance Members

What: Workshops to assist you in your ministry and mission.

When & Where:

March 6th 6:30—8 pm ET Nappanee UMC

SPRC Workshop 301 E Market St, Nappanee

March 8 6:30—8 pm CT Church of the Four Seasons
SPRC Workshop 9100 E 109th Ave, Crown Point

March 10 Gathering at 9 CT/10 ET La Porte First UMC SPRC, Lay Leaders, Finance workshops at 9:30 CT / 10:30 ET

1225 Michigan Avenue, La Porte

Mark Your Calendar!

Plan to

Attend!

March 11 3—4:30 pm ET Mishawaka Coalbush UMC
SPRC Workshop 15977 Jackson Rd. Mishawaka

**WHY:** Healthy Leadership is vital to your local congregation. You will want to attend the relevant workshop to ensure you have proper bearings for your course and set healthy practices. The SPRC events are identical. There is no cost to attend. Please RSVP to <a href="mailto:north.district@inumc.org">north.district@inumc.org</a> so that we may be prepared.

SPRC Chairpersons are expected to attend 1 of these identical workshops, all SPRC members and Pastors are welcome and encouraged to attend. Watch your email for more details.

"Never worry about numbers. Help one person at a time, and always start with the person nearest you."

-Mother Teresa

It's so exciting to witness God's hand moving in and through the people at First Church! Everywhere I look, God is working. Unfortunately, far too often we are so focused on "what used to be" or "what's not happening" that we don't notice what God is actually doing. Why is that? Maybe it's because our heads are too full of our own plans and ideas, or because things are not happening the way we want them to happen, or because our eyes are not looking in the right direction. No matter what the reason, let me assure you that God IS working right here at First United Methodist Church in Hammond Indiana . . . one person at a time!

How can I be so sure of this? Because I am honored to witness to the amazing things God is doing in the hearts and lives of individuals on a daily basis. Although I see God working everywhere, the one place I see Him moving is in the lives of the women who participate in the Wednesday morning Bible study. There are so many stories to tell and so many transformations taking place that all I can say is WOW! Over the years we have moved from light book studies [always Christian books!] to discussing Sunday sermons, to lively discussions on current topics, and the past few years we have grown into life-transforming in-depth study of Scripture. It has been amazing to witness all the "Ah-Ha" moments when someone really gets what God is saying. And not only gets it, but actually puts it into action. It has been so encouraging to me personally to have played a small role in facilitating the class discussions as the Holy Spirit teaches the lessons God wants each individual to learn.

Let me share just one story that comes to mind. [There are many!] One woman has been working for years with an "extra-grace-required" person and their relationship was rocky, to say the least. For whatever reason, they just didn't get along. Then, one day— after we had a lively discussion in class about trying to reach the people who are hard to reach--she felt the leading of the Holy Spirit to speak to this EGR person differently than she had in the past, and low-and-behold, the co-worker's attitude towards her changed. Not over time, but immediately! Now, even though they aren't quite good friends, [yet!] they get along and the work environment is much more peaceful.

Some might say this is a coincidence. I say it is a *God-incidence*. God IS working in the hearts and minds of His children -- all the time. We must simply pay attention and listen for His "still small voice." More than likely God is not going to call you to move to Africa, Asia, or South America to be a missionary. But He is calling you on a daily basis to "start with the person nearest to you," no matter who, or how unpleasant, that person might be. God wants to use you to touch their life with His love and grace. Are you paying attention?

Blessings, Pastor Donna

### RUMMAGE SALE REMINDER

Please start now collecting things you want to bring to the all-church rummage sale on May 12, 2018. Items not accepted are clothing, large televisions, computers and printers. If you have any questions, please contact Cheryle Seljan.

### How the newsletter got its name!

As you can see from the first page of our newsletter, it now has a name! **The Lighthouse.** Congratulations to Pastor Donna for submitting the winning entry in our "Name the Newsletter" contest! She will soon be receiving a "fabulous" prize. Others who entered our contest will see their name suggestions sprinkled about in our newsletter, from time to time, as section headings as well! Thank you to all who entered!

The Editors, *Karen Little and Sue Robertson* 

# **Electronic Giving**



In 2017 we began offering the ability to give to the church via an electronic format. The company that we use is called **Tithely** and it is accessible through the church's website. To date

we have had 7 families give electronically. Four families give on a regular basis. The total electronic giving last year was \$10,050. The process is easy and convenient. If you are interested in exploring this giving option, please see Sarah Ward, Larry Alport, or Bob Brown.

Also, I am pleased to share that with the generous giving in 2017, we paid 100% of our tithe to Conference and to the District.

Bob Brown

BRING THE WHOLE FAMILY AND INVITE YOUR FRIENDS FOR THE CHANCEL CHOIR'S PRESENTATION OF

"THE POWER OF THE CROSS"

Written, arranged, and
orchestrated by Mark Hayes

Sunday, March 26, 10:30 a.m. In the Sanctuary During the worship service.



Don't forget the Learning League fundraiser at Five Guys in Munster on March 22, 2018!!

# **Children's Ministry**

2017 was a successful year for Children's Ministry in our church. So far in 2018, Children's Ministry has worked to refresh the nursery and Sunday School rooms to better meet the needs of our children. This continues to be a work in progress. Currently we have more school age children than babies/pre-k, so we are working to create a space that meets the needs of this age group. Children have requested puzzles, board games, and Legos for this space, which we are working to gather, clean and organize these items. The junior church room will come next!

Sunday School children are working to create a display to decorate the food pantry and encourage these families to get involved in our programming.

The nursery has changed formats at this time. There is no longer a paid staff member in this position, so the nursery is only open when there is a volunteer or when a parent stays in the room with the child. I have created a signup sheet and will write announcements to encourage others to volunteer. Nursery volunteers will be asked to supervise children only after the children's message (last 15-20 minutes of the service).

Mike Kizman's Pineapple Heritage group got started last week and will sing at the 10:30 service monthly. More children are needed and welcome! Children's Ministry needs volunteers! We have strong leaders running many of our programs, but extra adults are needed to help monitor larger groups and meet the child safety guidelines. Please spread the word that a volunteer will not be thrown into managing a group alone—extra adults help with passing out and cleaning up supplies, walking little ones to the restroom, etc.

# Prayer and Scripture Calendar 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				I Exodus 14:10-31, 15:20-21	2 Genesis 1:1-2:4a	3 Romans 6:3-11
	₩ <b>&gt;</b>			Katy & Jen Province- Garza	Jenna Province	Beryl Puckering
4 Psalm 19	5 I Corinthians 1:18-25	6 John 2:13-22	7 Exodus 20:1-17	8 Matthew 7:1-5	9 Philippians 1:3-11	10 Acts 10:34-43
Jerry Rados	Joe Ramirez	Charlotte Moore	John Reed	Sue Robertson	Liz Roman-Merced	James & Amy Rummel
11 Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22	12 Numbers 21:4-9	13 Ephesians 2:1-10	14 John 3:14-21	15 Romans 3:21-28	16 Matthew 12:1-8	17 Deuteronomy 30:1-10
Ralph & Jane Schauer	John Schu	Dean & Lois See-	Cheryle Seljan	Mary Seljan	R. Serna Family	K. Shelton Family
18 John 12:20-33	19 Psalm 51:1-12	20 Jeremiah 31:31-34	21 Hebrews 5:5-10	22 Ephesians 3:17-29	23 Luke 8:9-10	24 Matthew 5:43-48
Henry & Pat Showers	Kathy Smith	Richard & Karen	Gwen Sonner	Barney & Pam Stahl	Kathleen Stricker	D. Tapper Family
25 Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29	26 Isaiah 50:4-9a	27 Philippians 2:5-11	28 Mark 14:1-15:47	29 Exodus 12:1-4(5-10) 11-14	30 Hebrews 10:16-25	31 1 Peter 4:1-8
N. Tompulis Family	A. Valdez Family	M. van Wijk Family	Jerry Vestal Family	Judy Viehweg	Ken & Sonia Vincent	Janet Voorheis

March 2018				March 2018	4	April 2018
				Su MO 10 We III 4 5 6 7 8 11 12 13 14 15 18 19 20 21 22 25 26 27 28 29	17 88 80 MMO	10 We In FT 58 10 11 12 18 14 17 18 19 20 21 24 25 26 27 28
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Feb 25	56			Mar 1 GG Tech Week 1:00pm AA (women)-1 1:00pm AR (women)-1 3:00pm TLL-3.4.5.6.7.K 7:00pm Parents who have lost a child to gun violence 7:00pm Bell Practice-choir room	2 Closed except for scheduled events 3:00pm TLL-3,4,5,6,7,K 8:00pm Godspell Performance-8,K,1,4-6	3 Closed except for scheduled events 8:00pm Godspell Performance-8,k,1,4-6
4	5	9	7	8	6	10
BROWN BAG SUNDAY 8:30am Lent 8:30am Worship-Chapel	3:00pm TLL-3,4,5,6,7,K	3:00pm TLL-3,4,5,6,7,K 7:00pm Adam's Rib-Parlor 7:00pm Overeaters Anonymous-1	9:00am Staff Meeting, 3 9:30am Quilters (4,5,6) 10:30am Bible Study-1	1:00pm AA (women)-1 1:00pm KnitiCrochet-Parlor 3:00pm TLL-3.4.5.6.7.K	Closed except for scheduled events 3:00pm TLL-3,4,5,6,7,K 8:00pm Godspell Performance-8, K, 1,4-6	Closed except for scheduled events 12:00am Lay Leader Training-LaPorte UMC
9:00am Breakfast-Kitchen 9:15am Bible Study-various 10:30am Worship-Sanctuary 3:00pm Godspell Performance-6,K,1,4-6			3:00pm TLL-3,4,5,6,7,K 6:00pm Pineapple Heritage-S 6:00pm Soup & Study - 5,6 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	6:00pm La Leche-Parlor 7:00pm Parents who have lost a child to gun violence 7:00pm Bell Practice-choir room		8:00pm Godspell Performance-8,K,1,4-6
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
8:30am Lent 8:30am Worship-Chapel 9:00am Breakfast-Kitchen 9:15am Bible Study-various 10:30am Worship-Sanctuary 3:00pm Godspell Performance-8,K,1,4-6	3:00pm TLL-3,4,5,6,7,K 6:30pm G.S. Leaders-4	3:00pm TLL-3,4,5,6,7,K 7:00pm Overealers Anonymous-1	9:00am Staff Meeting, 3 9:30am Quilters (4,5,6) 10:30am Bible Study-1 3:00pm TLL-3,4,5,6,7,K 6:00pm Pineapple Heritage-S 6:00pm Soup & Study - 5,6 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	1:00pm AA (women)-1 1:00pm Knit/Crochet-Parlor 3:00pm TLL-3.4.5.6.7.K 7:00pm Parents who have lost a child to gun violence 7:00pm Bell Practice-choir room	Closed except for scheduled events 12:00pm EGALS (off-site) 3:00pm TLL-3,4,5,6,7,K	Closed except for scheduled events
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Genesius Clean Up & Clean Out-8 8:30am Lent 8:30am Worship-Chapel 9:00am Breakfast-Kitchen 9:15am Bible Study-various 10:30am Worship-Sanctuary 12:00pm Missions-A	Genesius Clean Up & Clean Out-8 3:00pm TLL-3,4,5,6,7,K 7:00pm SPRC-1	Genesius Clean Up & Olean Out-8 3:00pm TLL-3,4,5,6,7,K 7:00pm Finance-A 7:00pm Overeaters Anonymous-1	Genesius Clean Up & Clean Out-8 9:00am Staff Meeting, 3 9:30am Ouitlers (4,5,6) 10:30am Bible Study-1 3:00pm TLL-3,4,5,6,7,K 6:00pm Pineapple Heritage-S 6:00pm Soup & Study - 5,6	Genesius Clean Up & Clean Out-8 5 Guys Fundraiser for TLL 1:00pm AA (women)-1 1:00pm Knit/Crochet-Parlor 3:00pm TLL-3.4.5.6.7.K 7:00pm Parents who have lost a child to 7:00pm Bell Practice-choir room	Genesius Clean Up & Clean Out-8 Closed except for scheduled events 3:00pm TLL-3,4,5,6,7,K	Genesius Clean Up & Clean Out-8 Closed except for scheduled events
25	26	72	28	29	30	31
Neighborhood Meal Prep-K 8:30am Lent-Palm Sunday 8:30am Worship-Chapel 9:00am Breakfast-Kitchen 9:15am Bible Study-various 10:30am Worship-Sanctuary	3:00pm TLL-3,4,5,6,7,K	7:00pm Church Council-A 7:00pm G.G. Board-parlor 7:00pm Overeaters Anonymous-1	9:00am Staff Meeting, 3 9:30am Quilters (4,5,6) 10:30am Bible Study-1 12:00pm UMW Board (parlor) 6:00pm Kids Club 6:00pm Pineapple Heritage-S 6:00pm Soup & Study - 5,6	1:00pm AA (women)-1 1:00pm Knit/Crochet-Parlor 3:00pm TLL-3.4.5.6.7.K 7:00pm Maundy Thursday Worship	Closed except for scheduled events 7:00pm Good Friday Worship	Olosed except for scheduled events

We want to celebrate **your birthday** by including you on this list. If your special day is during this month, and your name is not listed, please let the office know. Please pass along information about others in your household, as well.



3/31 Paulette Tapper 3/30 Karen Mulcahy-Smith 3/25 Pam Longhi 3/24 Alyson Hawkins 3/23 Ansley Avina 3/22 Paolo Mejia 3/21 Eather Bunger 3/20 Peggy Link 3/19 Amy Rummel 3/18 Jack Yerkes 3/18 Lois Wade 3/14 Logan Malloy 3/14 Bellamy Avina 3/13 Dean Seehausen 3/12 Rex Burton 3/10 John Adkinson Kaitlyn Encinas 9/8 Shana Chelich 9/8 Phyllis Widstrand 3/2 Pat McCoy 3/2

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