



The Lighthouse

May 2020

“Rejoice in the Lord always.
I will say it again: Rejoice!”

Philippians 4:4

a note from your pastor...



Well, okay. I have been formulating what I would write in this month's newsletter article for weeks. Now that it is time to write, I find myself a bit 'speechless,' or 'wordless.' Certainly, we are living in interesting times. We are living in challenging times – for each of us, though in different ways.

I have appreciated hearing from all who have reached back with a text, message, email, phone call. I fret that our emails, newsletters, and Facebook posts, even though done with great intention, may not be reaching everyone! A group of 17 volunteers is working to keep us all connected – especially those who do not have email, Facebook, or internet. I applaud you who have expanded your social media horizon – in this time of safe sheltering and Covid-19. I pray that our great intention and plan is working to do just that!

I shared in one of my Messages that my new appointment, beginning July 1, is in the Fowler UMC. Just as your new pastor, Chris Tiedeman, and I have been undertaking transitional work, I am in the process of the same transitional work with the outgoing pastor at Fowler, Matt Wallace. It is a busy time! Here, at Hammond First, during this time of Covid-19, I have been in continuous communication with the Chair of SPRC, Kathy Smith, and Brenda Petty, administrative assistant – with our transitional work at Hammond First.

Pastor Chris' wife, Emily, and their children visited the parsonage about 6 weeks ago. Ella and the babies, Riversong and Arlo, received a grand tour of the parsonage. It was a good afternoon and evening together. The Tiedeman Family is looking forward to their move to Hammond First. Won't you join me in prayer for the Tiedeman Family as they make their plans to move to Munster/Hammond?

And, yes, I have begun pitching, sorting and packing. Packing is not one of my favorite tasks. I am in the middle of it all.

I am praying that our pandemic allows us to gather in person – before I move to Fowler. I have missed seeing you face to face and having in person conversations. However, safety first. I pray for wellness, for all of us. If we cannot gather, then we will be creative in our connection!

Bishop Trimble is due to present to the churches in Indiana his plan for 'opening up the churches.' Through this time, he has been supportive and informative. My 'bosses' have been also. Currently, as I am moving to another district, I have two Conference Superintendents and two Associate Conference Superintendents. Each of them are supportive and informative, also. This is good! I have gotten the hang of 'Zooming!' A wonderful tool!

After Bishop Trimble shares his plan and expectations with us, I will be in contact with our church leaders on how best to 'open' Hammond First. We will make the plan, and work the plan – to be safe, and to continue to carry out the mission, "making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."

I am, only because of Christ,

Pastor Mary

Hospital Visits

As a reminder, if you or one of your family members is hospitalized and wish to be prayed for and to receive visitation, please notify the church office (219-932-5915) Pastor Mary (219-741-9117), and/or instruct the hospital specifically to call the church office. Otherwise—we do not know that you are in the hospital! Being hospitalized can be a challenging time.

During this time, visits will be by phone or other social media.

If you wish your hospitalization to be known only by Pastor Mary, your confidentiality will be secure as well.

By Prayer and Petition



One would think that the Christian life is exempt from worry. But in reality, it is not. For it is our humanity that makes us vulnerable to anxiety, loneliness and fear. It is, however, true to say that the Christian life should be a life of peace. Paul reminds the people at Philippi *"The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."* **Philippians 4:5b- 6**

In **Acts 27: 21- 25** *"Paul stood up before (his captors) and said: "Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss. But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost... Last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul... God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.' So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me."*

Paul knew that the presence of anxiety, even though unavoidable, need not manifest itself in the form of a mental prison. **Ask yourself:**

- Am I laughing less?
- Do I view things from a negative point of view?
- Would people who know me describe me as increasingly critical or negative?
- Do I always look for something to go wrong?
- Is the glass half empty or half full?

If you see yourself in these examples, Christ offers a new way. These five verses that will help to lead you to God's awesome promise:

- **Philippians 4:7** And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
- **Philippians 4:13** I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.
- **Proverbs 3: 5-6** Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.
- **Philippian 4: 11b- 12** I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty.
- **Philippians 4: 19** My God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

The scriptures do not speak of the anxiety Joseph experienced as his brothers negotiated with the Egyptians for a fair price in exchange for his life as a slave. After refusing to bow down and worship the idol and god of Babylon, Shadrach, Meschach, and Abednego showed no signs of anxiety as they were thrown into a fiery furnace, which was heated seven times hotter than normal. Even though the king had sent out a decree for all Jews to be killed, Queen Esther was not deterred when she decided to go before him to plead for her people. Jesus, knowing the inevitable outcome at Calvary, prayed in the garden of Gethsemane saying, "Not my will, but thy will Lord."

God loves His children. He oversees our world. He monitors our lives. You don't have to check to see if the Boogieman is in the closet or if there is a monster hiding under the bed. Listen carefully and you will hear the Lord say, *"Be anxious for nothing."*

Matthew 6: 26 tells us *"Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?"* The son of God spoke to the storms and winds stood still. Never lose faith, for God is in the storm.

Celebrating Our Successes

With God's Help

Are we a missional church or just a go-to-meetin' place on Sunday?
I think we are beginning to be a missional church which has much potential, but what is a missional church?
What are our goals?

We know our mission statement is "To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world!"
When I read our mission statement, I ask myself,

How can I make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world?

To me it means to spread the joy and love of Jesus Christ,
which I feel and have received. And you?



The author of the book, "Shaped by God's Heart", defines the four dimensions of a missional church as:

- Love God as shown by our worship and obedience.
- Live his mission through serving and sharing our resources, spiritual gifts and time.
- Love people by embracing and inviting them to worship and to know Jesus by sharing our God-incidences.
- Lead others to follow Jesus through commitment and involvement in small groups, Bible study, prayer, mission trips and community outreach which will equip and empower us to be disciples doing His will.

I hope you will all read this book. *I hope to participate in a small group study of this book.*

As Martha Jones says, "Trust and obey!" that we continue to grow as a missional church!

I think we need to celebrate the successes that Pastor Mary's leadership has brought us! They are different for each us, let me name a few. *Some of the successes, which I have witnessed, are:*

- *Pertinent sermons on issues of our world problems, to broaden our perspective*
- *Expanding our concept of love for one another to realize we are ALL God's children, even though we may be very different*
- *Care of us through hospital visits, baptisms of new members, weddings and funerals*
- *Updating policies and procedures for more efficient functioning of our committees*
- *Writing new job descriptions and updating old ones*
- *Newsletter and handouts to improve communication and transparency*
- *And continuing to reach out into the community with the Food Pantry, Learning League and more visibility via technology, to name a few.*

Won't you be sure to thank Pastor Mary for other successes that you have experienced and appreciated!

I thank you, Pastor Mary, for all you have done for our church! We ask God to bless your ministry, your family and your health!



Calm Amidst the Storm

Matthew 8:18, 23-27:

Now when Jesus saw great crowds around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. . . . And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep.

And they went and woke him, saying, "Save, Lord; we are perishing." And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, O men of little faith?" Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. And the men marveled, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?"

Throughout this period of social distancing, I am grateful that I can still take my three-mile morning walk in the neighborhood six days a week. I cherish this time for centering, thinking, and planning, but most of all because it's a time for prayer, both speaking to and listening for God.

My walks have been especially quiet as everyone shelters in their homes, and not long ago, I was disconcerted by the sight of snow covering the daffodils. That morning it occurred to me that the strangeness of the April snow is in some ways not unlike our experience with the coronavirus outbreak and sequestration. It feels like we're living through an exceptionally long but quiet and powerful storm. We can't hear it or see the virus, but this is a storm. It is every bit as disruptive and deadly as a world-wide weather disaster, raging everywhere at once.

Unless we or a loved one are infected or are dedicated doctors or health care workers who are treating Covid-19 patients, we may feel oddly removed and helpless. We can't stop the storm, but we can't get out of the boat, either. Even if the storm has not yet blown into our neighborhood, its impact has upended millions of lives, the way we work and do ministry, and the way we practice our faith *in community*. And, we have no way of knowing when it will end. We try to maintain a positive attitude, but it can be hard to overcome moments of fear and uncertainty.

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Matthew's scripture tells us that when a storm suddenly arose that day on the Sea of Galilee, the fearful disciples in the boat with Jesus woke him. He already knew why they were afraid, but his question challenged them to live into their faith. Jesus wanted them to understand that they could let go of their fear because *he was with them*. Although his words admonished them, what he really meant was, "You have no reason to be afraid because I am *right here beside you*; you need to believe and trust in me. I have things under control, and I will save you." And he did. He spoke to the winds and sea and Matthew wrote that there was *great calm*. Just like that, the storm ended.

Among other devotions, I have a small calendar that I've used for many years; each day has a message and scripture. Just as the coronavirus was beginning to spread across America, the March 1 message read, "The Lord will either calm your storm or allow it to rage while he calms you." Those words seem particularly appropriate for this unprecedented spring. The viral storm is raging, but if we have faith, God will calm us and help us see our way forward. Even amidst life's greatest storms, God *is right here beside us* and has the power to give us *great calm* if we turn to and trust in Him.

We need His help, and we need each other, even when we are apart. As we allow Him to calm us, He will guide us to find the way forward, whether it's coping with illness, job loss, shaky finances, or our community of faith that seems painfully disconnected as we are unable to gather in person for worship or ministry. As we live out being the body of Christ in new and different ways and as we plan for the time when we can once again worship together, I believe we are all called to encourage and calm others.

Jesus assures us that faith will overcome fear. He is right here with us, and He is in control. We are not going to tip over or be lost at sea. And with His help and His great calm, we can persevere, focusing on the light that will come at the end of this storm. May God deepen our faith and help us to use our gifts of leadership, compassion, and service to model the calm and trust of Jesus.

~Submitted by Jane Harper-Alport, Church Council Chair
and North District Lay Leader

A Note from Children's Ministry.....



When all this blows over and we're back to regular corporate worship I'm excited (and nervous) to have been chosen to serve your church as Chair of Children's Ministry. When I was asked last December to serve I must say I was surprised by this, and after much thought, prayer, meetings, discussion, I agreed to accept position on a conditional basis.

One of the reason I was asked is because of my work in Girl Scouts. I've just completed my 5th year when asked, and in that time, I received 3 awards for my work in the organization. I'm hoping to bring the same excitement and enthusiasm to my new role with FUMC as I brought to Girl Scouts. I'm hoping to bring activities for our youth that will take place outside of the church property or not necessarily on Sunday morning. One thing I'm hoping to catch wings is a monthly movie night where kids and their families will be invited to watch a family friendly movie with all the snacks provided. Keelin (Kizman) and Shayla (Deering) stepped up to assist in this project. The other idea is the occasional field trip, like a nature trail hike at Gibson Woods. I've done light surveying on both of these ideas, and both were well received.

I look forward to serving your church and your children, and much like Girl Scouts, I'm hoping to make this "kid led," which is a concept I fully embraced during my years as a Girl Scouts leader.

Thank you all for allowing me this opportunity,

Mr. Mike (Kizman)

Intentional Discipleship Workshop Online in May



Our Indiana Conference's Leadership Development Team is sponsoring an **Intentional Discipleship workshop, "Membership to Discipleship,"** in an online format over three Zoom sessions on Thursday evenings, May 7, 14, and 21, from 5:00pm to 7:00pm Central time. The workshop will offer tools and strategies for creating an intentional discipleship pathway for local churches. The leader will be Ashley Moreland, who was trained by Dr. Phil Maynard, a nationally recognized coach/consultant for ministry leaders.

Information about the workshop and registration can be accessed at:
<https://www.inumc.org/uncategorized/online-intentional-discipleship-workshop/>

This is a great opportunity for all of us committed to the health and future of our church to learn about growing and deepening discipleship. Prior to the coronavirus outbreak, the workshop was planned to be a day-long event in Fort Wayne on April 25. Now, for a registration fee of only \$10, everyone will be able to reap the benefits of Ashley Moreland's discipleship training from the comfort of our homes without having to travel to the Northeast District. **Please don't delay; registration for the workshop closes on May 3.**

If you have questions about the Intentional Discipleship workshop, please contact R.C. Muhlbaier, INUMC Associate Director of Leadership Development—Laity & Discipleship, robert.muhlbaier@inumc.org.

Jane Harper-Alport
Church Council Chair and North District Lay Leader



Disciples' Daily News

A Note from the Mission Team

Hello First Church family! I would like to report:

- In January, \$455.00 was collected for Love Inc.
- In February, \$875.50 was collected for The Learning League, and
- In March, \$473.00 was collected for Strong Tower Church.



This is all through Second Mile Giving. What a wonderful blessing it is to be able to help these non-profit organizations whether through Second Mile Giving, or with the mission corner, or through prayer and bless them with a sense of hope. The Mission Team would like thank you, the Church Family for your contributions.

The Second Mile Giving contributions for the month of May will be for City Rescue Mission. City Rescue Mission is the homeless shelter where we serve the neighborhood meal once a month.

The Mission Team has decided to make City Rescue Mission the Second Mile Giving for May to help them offset the cost of new and needed expenses: masks, plastic serving gloves, and coffee.

The Mission Team encourages our Church Family, as we support Second Mile giving for May, to indicate on your check "Second Mile" giving – or indicate on your preprinted envelopes. Again, we thank you for your contributions.

Due to our global pandemic, the rummage sale, scheduled for May, has been *canceled* for this year.

Let us continue to pray and bless people with hope during these uncertain times.

~ One of your co-chairs of the Mission team, Richard Miller

Our newsletter may look a bit different here and there, while we are all living with Covid-19 and its effects.
Have questions?, please ask.

We will always do our best to serve one another.



Staff Parish Relations Committee* Notes for May



Hello Church Family, praying that you are all safe from the virus that has stopped the world. This committee is preparing for the transition between Pastor Mary leaving and Pastor Chris arriving.

How we will celebrate and thank Pastor Mary for her service to Hammond First will depend upon whether we are allowed to gather at our church in person or are still required to maintain social distancing. May 31st has been chosen as the recognition date; plans will be made for both situations.

If you have a great idea, please let one of the members of the SPRC team know.

Pastor Mary's last day to lead worship will be June 7, communion Sunday. Again, plans may change. Pastor Mary's move date is scheduled for June 2, with the possibility of a day sooner or later (so it goes with moving companies).

Chris Tiedeman and family are planning to arrive on June 16 as of this writing. He becomes our pastor on July 1, but will need some time to get his family settled and to get familiar with the church, so he will not be leading services until the second Sunday in July. Just a reminder, locate your name badge as it will be important to wear them the first month of July.

Recap:

May 31	Pastor recognition Sunday
June 2	Move date for Pastor Mary
June 7	Last Sunday with Pastor Mary
June 16	Tiedeman family move in
July 1	Official start date for Pastor Chris
July 12	First Sunday under Pastor Chris' leadership

Be safe and be well!

Your SPRC*

Pauline Luthi, Irma Mora, Pat Mosley, Jenna Province, Joe Ramirez, John Schu, Kathy Smith

A Note from Knit and Crochet...



The Knitting and Crochet group has had to suspend meeting during the quarantine period. However, as soon as we are given the go-ahead and the church opens, we will be back in the parlor each Thursday from 1PM to 3PM! Everyone is welcome. You do not have to be a member of First Church to join us. So bring a friend, relative, neighbor, or someone walking down the street.

And remember you do not have to be an expert knitter or crocheter; we are there to help you to improve your skills or even learn a new one.

Any questions just give Sonia Vincent a call.
708.946.6489



Finance News



From First Church's Finance Committee, this is the third time that financial data is included in the monthly newsletter. For this and future newsletters, the aim is to provide you with:

- Some of the same financial data reviewed and discussed by the Finance Committee at its regular monthly meeting,
- Comments which, hopefully, you will find informative if not useful, and
- Contact information should you have any questions or comments.

Financial data as of March 31, 2020:

	<u><i>March</i></u>	<u><i>2020 YTD</i></u>
• Current Expense (CE) Giving	\$16,933.00	\$62,471.00
• Expenditures	<u>\$23,143.00</u>	<u>\$68,894.00</u>
Giving Surplus or (Shortfall)	(\$6,210.00)	(\$6,423.00)

Comments:

- In addition to First Church's Finance Committee, there are other people and teams without which our church could not function from a financial perspective. They are:
 - Larry Alport – Treasurer. Larry pays our bills, runs payroll, reconciles our books with our bank's reports, and more.
 - Pam Longhi – Financial Secretary. Weekly, Pam enters church giving, for current expense, missions, memorials and more into one of our financial systems at church.
 - Georgia Brown and our 2 Counting Teams. This important job is done weekly, and ensures that all church giving is recorded in the accounts to which you intended it to be directed.

All of these “behind the scenes” people deserve our gratitude for their dedication and service.

- March was a fairly good giving month, however, the YTD gap between giving and spending has risen to \$6,423. Going in, we knew that 2020 was going to be a very challenging year financially.
- In spite of the challenges for each of us this year due to COVID-19, church giving has been very, very good so far this year. Thank you so much for your continuing faithfulness and generosity!! It means more than you know!

Contact Information for Questions or Comments:

David Moll, Finance Committee Chair, at bdmoll@att.net, or cell 219-801-4111



Giving Electronically

Some of you have asked how can I donate online to the church. You have two options for using Tithe.ly. The first option—download the app on your Apple or Android phone. You can easily set up reoccurring payments or a one-time payment using the app and select First United Methodist Church. The second option—go to our website (www.hammondfumc.org) and click on Donate and complete the form.

With either option - you can select to give your tithe to your offering, the second-mile giving, or memorials (it will default to Offering).

If you have any questions, please reach out to Sarah Ward at smw1213@gmail.com or 630-624-1318. Please note that Sarah is working Monday— Friday and may be delayed getting back to you. Sending a text message is sometimes the best way to get a hold of her.

~Submitted by Sarah Ward

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Support FUMC Using TITHE.LY



Download "TITHE.LY" from Apple App store.



Download "TITHE.LY" from Google Play store.



Go to www.hammondfumc.org



SERVING THE COMMUNITY

THE VINE FOOD PANTRY AT-A-GLANCE April, 2020

New Clients.....	65
Return Clients.....	394
Total Clients Served.....	459
New Households.....	34
Return Households.....	197
Total Households Served.....	231



Total Pounds Distributed: 10,041



Supporting the Food Pantry...

Many of you have asked, how can I support the Food Pantry? During this acute time in our pandemic, and while the building is *closed*, the best way to support the Food Pantry is to give financially. Supporting the Food Pantry financially may be completed the same ways we give our tithes and offerings to the church.

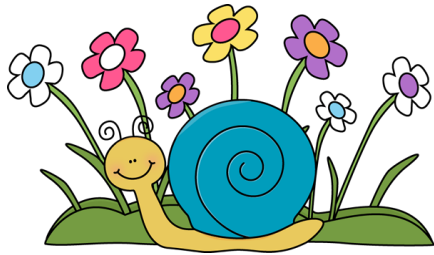
All financial offerings may be accepted through the U.S. Mail, using Tithe.ly (see Sarah Ward's article), or simply dropping it in our outside mailbox.

Any amount helps and is greatly appreciated.

Our Food Pantry has increased our standard hours during this Pandemic – adding Thursday each week, to the regular hours Monday through Wednesday. Jimmy Ortiz and Dave Armistead are staffing the Food Pantry each day, and have streamlined the routine, thereby reducing the incidence of infection.

Hammond First can be proud of the service these two are providing – not only being open, but also increasing the availability to serve our community.





HI KIDS! See if you can memorize
this Bible verse!

“Rejoice in the Lord always.

I will say it again: Rejoice!”

Philippians 4:4



Sometimes the simplest things mean the most.....



Dear Church Family,

I am getting used to being in a different area. I have met some neighbors who are very nice and willing to assist if I need anything. But with quarantine I mostly stay in expect necessities.

I enjoy Pastor Mary’s daily email and I have found a streaming service which I watch. I miss all my church family, but still feel this is where I need to be at this time in my life.

May God bless us all.

Love,

Fran Carpenter.



Dear First Church Family,

I want to express my gratitude to the members of First Church for their prayers, support, cards and expressions of love during my illness, surgery and ongoing recovery.

We truly miss our former church family and hope to return for a visit when life gets back to "normal". The newsletter helps us keep in touch so we don't feel so distant, just distantly connected.

Sending back all the blessings we have received,

~Nancy and James Milne

To Pastor Mary and All who reach out to take care of our flock,

Easter Services were beautiful.

God Bless UMFC,

~Rita Ashcraft



Riddle

Q: What has three feet but cannot walk?

A: A yardstick.



Birthdays 2020

5/1	Josiah Allen Hoffman
5/1	Rich Yehnert
5/2	Mario Bravo
5/5	Grace Adkinson
5/5	Bev Hornak
5/8	Irma Mora
5/8	Jim Wind
5/9	Russ Godbout
5/10	Judy Viehweg
5/11	Heidi Wicklund
5/19	DJ Williams Jr.
5/20	Noah Hernandez
5/28	Josie Hawkins



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 us know.*

Please pass along information about others in your household, as well.

Due to Covid-19,
we will not have a prayer calendar until
the near future.



Prayer Concerns

Jennie Baeza
Liz Berg
Roger Collier
Kathy Clarke
Maggie Foster Lerner
Jim Kizman
Sandy Kizman
Athene Knapik
Jerry Kolanowski
Cameron Little
Bernie Newell
Alan Piwowar
Logan Polich
Jane Schauer
Ralph Schauer
Dean Seehausen
Henry Showers
Pat Showers
Robert Speck
Pam Stahl
John Steele
Nancy Steele
Cheryl Walker
Sheryl Walters

Our homebound and those living in a
residential facility:

Adele Gawrys, Don & Joann Harris
Jim Moery, and Beryl Puckering

Deadline For Newsletter Articles

If you are interested in **submitting** an article for the **June newsletter**, please bear in mind you must turn in your submissions to the church office by **May 20th** or via email at admin@hammondsumc.org.

Thank for your cooperation!

