



The Lighthouse

March 2021

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.”

Matthew 5:3

a note from your pastor...



Since the beginning of the pandemic caused by the transmission of COVID-19, we've been awaiting the proverbial “light at the end of the tunnel”. Many of us have been patiently waiting to let down our guard where public health guidelines concerning wearing of masks, physical distancing, and gathering in groups are concerned. For some, it has been too hard to stay away. No matter where you fall there, it has been a long slog through a dark, dank tunnel with little hope of light in sight.

In recent weeks, trends in the numbers nationwide have paired with good news about vaccines to begin to give people that hope that there is light at the end of the tunnel. In the church, that has led folks to begin to ask with more frequency when we may begin returning to our sanctuaries for in-person worship. Admittedly, I have begun to give myself permission to see that light. Easter is less than 40 days away, and people wonder if we will be able to worship together in some form then. An announcement is forthcoming.

This is all extremely exciting for very many of us. However, we must remember that there are still thousands of people – disproportionately Black and Latino – that test positive and die from this virus each day. A disease which has killed more people in this country than died in two world wars. Healthcare professionals still see the ravages of this disease every day. People who contracted the virus early on are still dealing with the repercussions of what this disease can do. And the presence of vaccines does not mean that we can rip open the proverbial doors and start licking poles on public transit.

If numbers plateau and people get complacent, we could end up giving the virus – and it's more virulent forms – the advantage it needs to cause another spike in cases and death. Lest we forget, our faith calls on us to care for the sick and our neighbor. The best way we can do that is to monitor the situation and ensure our gathering together does not make an already terrible situation even worse. The light at the end of the tunnel is there. We have to ensure we do not

So, stay vigilant. Keep your eye on the light at the end of this tunnel. Wash your hands. Wear a mask. Keep your distance. Keep the faith. And remember God loves you.

Peace,

Pastor Chris



Hammond First United Methodist Church
6635 Hohman Avenue Hammond, Indiana 46324
www.hammondfumc.org admin@hammondfumc.org
(219) 932-5915

Reverend Chris Tiedeman, Pastor
Brenda Petty, Administrative Assistant

March 4, 2021

Dear First Church Family,

After a *very* long year and a Covid-19 case last fall that caused the church to close once again after a six-week limited reopening, we are delighted to share the news that the church will **reopen for in-person worship beginning on Easter Sunday, April 4**. The Church Council reached its reopening decision by consensus, and with Pastor Chris's blessing, in consideration of the increasingly widespread availability of effective vaccines and the decreasing number of Covid-19 cases in our area.

Thanks to everyone who has contributed financial support, participated remotely, and prayed for our faith community since the church was forced to close in March 2020.

Covid-19 remains a very serious and highly contagious virus, and variants are emerging. We must continue to use an abundance of caution follow safety protocols diligently. We believe our sanctuary can accommodate safely the number of worshippers anticipated for Easter, using only alternate rows of pews (unavailable pews are blocked off). No limitation on attendance will be imposed for Easter Sunday, but registration is requested so that we can prepare and staff appropriately. Accordingly, **please complete and submit the attached form (or call the church) if you plan to worship in person for either the 8:30 am (parking lot) or 10:00 am (sanctuary) service on April 4**. If by Easter, you find that there are additional family members or friends who would like to worship with you, please bring them; we'll do our best to accommodate *everyone*, regardless of whether or not they are pre-registered.

While pandemic conditions in Indiana are improving, Bishop Trimble encourages all congregations to continue to carefully follow the "3 Ws":

- **WEAR** masks . . . entering, exiting, and at all times in the building.
- **WAIT** . . . maintain social distancing in the pews and in the building.
- **WASH** hands regularly (and use hand sanitizer).

(Continue to page 3, Church Reopening Easter Sunday...)

(Continued from Page 2, Church Reopening for Easter Sunday...)

These provisions are credited with contributing considerably to the improved conditions we are experiencing. Although we celebrate the arrival of effective vaccines, the Conference emphasizes that “this is not yet the time to relax.”

This mailing includes updated **safety protocols that each person attending worship or other activities at First Church is required to follow during the pandemic.** The guidelines are based on recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control, the Indiana and Illinois Departments of Public Health, and the best practices of the Indiana United Methodist Church. Please become familiar with the safety protocols before entering the church building, where they will be posted.

For persons not worshipping in person for any reason, the Church Council decided last spring that the **online availability of our Sunday worship service, whether viewed via live stream or recorded video, will continue as a regular First Church worship opportunity.** So all First Church members and friends will still be able to worship in real time online—or view any Sunday’s service at a later date.

If you have questions, please contact Pastor Chris or a member of the Church Council, all of whom contributed to the decisions for reopening.

Thank you for your prayers and support, and we hope to see you on Easter morning!

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Chris Tiedeman

Church Council:

Jane Harper-Alport, chair

Georgia Brown, president, United Methodist Women

Larry Cybulski, director, Youth Ministries

Mike Kizman, director, Children’s Ministries

Richard Miller, co-chair, Missions Committee

Pat Mosley, Lay Leader

Jenna Province, chair, Memorials Committee

Katy Province-Garza, co-chair, Missions Committee

Kathy Smith, chair, Staff-Parish Relations Committee

Sarah Ward, president, FUMC Foundation

Ken Wheeler, chair, Board of Trustees

(Continue to Page 4, Church Reopening Easter Sunday...)

(Continued from Page 3, Church Reopening for Easter Sunday.....)

Hammond First United Methodist Church
Safety Protocols for In-person Worship during Covid-19 Pandemic
(updated April 2021)

In-person worship is planned to resume on Easter Sunday, April 4, 2021. Complete and return the enclosed form to let the church know you plan to attend either the 8:30 or 10:00 am service that day.

- Church entrances on the east and north side of the church will be open; seating available in alternate rows in each section of sanctuary.
- Masks required upon entry. Keep mask on, fully covering nose and mouth, at all times while in the building. *If you do not have a mask or have left your mask at home, a disposable mask will be provided for you.*
- Do not enter if you are symptomatic (fever, cough, shortness of breath, etc.), have been exposed, or tested positive for Covid-19.
- Hand sanitizer (70%+ alcohol) available at each building entrance and at multiple locations throughout the building.
- Maintain physical distance of 6 feet from persons outside of your family.
- No handshaking, no hugging. (No restrictions on smiles and vocal greetings!)
- Follow directions from greeters and ushers. Ushers will escort attendees to their seats and will dismiss worshippers by rows after the service.
- Sit only in open pews; keep 6 feet distance from members of other households.
- Avoid touching doorknobs, handles, fixtures, etc. as much as possible.
- Deposit tithes and offerings in marked plate outside sanctuary or in the plate offered by an usher during the service. Offering plates will not be passed.
- Sing only at the direction of the pastor, keeping masks on.
- One-person limit in restrooms (other than parent/guardian with young child).
- Wash hands before exiting a restroom.
- The south end of the building will continue to be off-limits on Easter (with the exception of access to handicapped restrooms, if needed).
- No Sunday School classes (children or adult), junior church, preschool, toddler room, or infant's room at this time. Children are welcome to attend worship with an adult/s in the sanctuary.
- No coffee or food in the building at this time. One exception: Please bring your own elements for Holy Communion. *Small, packaged elements will be available for worshippers who do not have their own elements.*
- No fellowship or visiting inside the church. Please converse in the parking lot before and after worship, wearing a mask and maintaining social distance.

(Continue on Page 5, In-Person Reservation Form...)

Hammond First United Methodist Church

Registration for In-Person Worship, Easter Sunday, April 4, 2021

As reopening plans are made for Easter and many folks become vaccinated against Covid-19, we are mindful of the ongoing threat of this virus and that we must proceed with an abundance of caution. Protocols introduced for the church's limited reopening last fall have been updated (see attached). We do not intend to limit Easter Sunday attendance. However, to be prepared and staffed for that morning's joyful gathering, we would like to register all those desiring to worship at the church.

If you plan to attend either the 8:30 am or 10:00 am service on Easter, please sign and return the attached form to the church office as soon as possible. If you already signed and submitted a registration form for the limited attendance period in fall 2020, you do NOT need to submit a new form. Instead, simply call the church office (219-932-5915) to indicate your plans for April 4 so you will be included in the count, and let the church know whether you will be fully vaccinated against Covid-19 before Easter. (NOTE: Indicating your status regarding the vaccine is OPTIONAL.) By Easter, if there are additional family members or friends who would like to attend with you, please bring them: all will be welcome, regardless of pre-registration.

If the Easter reopening runs smoothly and the church can remain open for worship, registration will not be requested for subsequent Sunday morning services.

Reservation for Worship, Easter Sunday, April 4, 2021

I plan to attend worship at (check one) 8:30 am in the parking lot (___) OR 10:00 am in the sanctuary (___) on Sunday, April 4. By signing this form, I attest that I have read and agree to follow the church's Safety Protocols during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Signature

Date

Print name

Phone number

Email address

Number of children who will
attend with you: _____

(Your response to the following question is optional.)

I/we have been (or, by April 4, will have been) fully vaccinated against Covid-19.

Yes ___ No ___



Disciples' Daily News

A Note from the Mission Team....

Hello First Church family! I would like to report:

- In January, \$595.00 was collected for Love, INC.
- In February, \$640.00 was collected for the Learning League.

The financial contributions for Second Mile Giving for March will be donated to **Strong Tower Church**. Strong Tower, or *Torre Fuerte*, is a congregation, which had its beginnings in our Chapel, with us. Strong Tower became a United Methodist congregation and now has their own place for worship and ministry in East Chicago, and is located at 3801 Deodar Street, East Chicago, IN, 46312.

They have come a long way and have made a lot of progress, but they still run into obstacles and need our help. Pastor Esequiel and his wife Suri are very appreciate of all our help. Some of the ways we can help Strong Tower is financially, donating items to their bin in the mission corner, which is located across from the church office, and praying for them. Speaking of donating items to Strong Tower, there is a list of items posted in the Missions Corner. The list is printed below – please not that clothes are NOT a need for Strong Tower, and cannot be accepted.

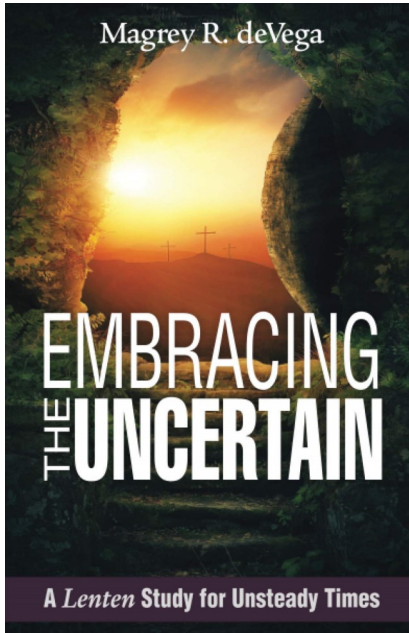
Strong Tower Needs List

Paper Plates
Napkins
Forks
Spoons
Coffee

The Mission team would like to take the time to thank everyone for all you do and for financially giving to Second Mile Giving every month, for donating items to the Mission Corner, and for all the prayers. What an awesome blessing it is to be able to give and to help people.

~Submitted by Richard Miller, one of your co-chairs of the Mission team





Lenten Study – Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom

Embracing the Uncertain, a study written by Magrey R. deVega
A Lenten Study for Unsteady Times

led by Pastor Chris Tiedeman

Everyone is welcome to the study and worship!

If you like a book, please contact the church office at (219) 932-5915 or purchase an electronic copy on Kindle (or other devices).

Donation for the book is \$10.00



We would like to have spring flowers beautify the church again this Easter. If you would like to order a flower, please complete this form and place it **along with your payment** in an envelope by mail or the church office by Sunday, March 21. Cost: \$10.00 per plant.

Please make checks payable to **FUMC.**

**First United Methodist Church
6635 Hohman Avenue
Hammond, IN 46324**

_____ Plants @ \$10.00

\$ _____

IN MEMORY OF _____
IN HONOR OF _____
FROM _____

(Please print so no translation errors are made.)

Everything I do, I Do for You

Have you ever been watching television and all of a sudden you hear the sound of a blaring siren and the words “This is only a test” scrolls across the bottom of the screen. If we are in a real emergency, what should we do? Run for cover, look for the ideal hiding place, wait until help arrives.



Christ is our refuge, a shelter in the storm, a light in the darkness. Scripture tells us in **2 Thessalonians 3:3**, “the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one.” But Christ desires more. He wants to be more than just a spiritual life preserver. He wants to be a part of every aspect of our lives. To achieve this level of relationship, we as Christians have to be willing to allow Christ to be the focal point of all that we are and all that we endeavor to be. It is not enough to seek Him in a crisis. Scripture teaches us that we live under the umbrella of He who wants us to abide in Him. to abide as defined in Webster’s Dictionary means to “endure without yielding” “to remain in a stable and fixed state.”

In the Old Testament, scripture tells us that God initiated a relationship with the Israelites by establishing a covenant with the people; first through Abraham and reaffirmed with Isaac. In His covenant, God fully acknowledged His love and commitment to the Israel nation. **Leviticus 20:26** shares these words, “You are to be holy because I, the Lord, am holy, and I have set you apart from the nations to be My own.” In His statement, God made no casual promise. This was an “I am going to seal this relationship with glue” type of promise. Why? Because (to paraphrase the words of God) “I have no intentions of letting you go.” **Deuteronomy 7:9** extols this promise, “Know therefore that the Lord your God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love (and abide in) Him.”

This is the expectation.

To abide in Christ implies more than just a casual relationship. Living a Christ-centered life is to live a life that is focused on a commitment to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. At the core of every human decision is a motivation. So what motivates us? Some center their entire lives around acquiring material possessions, getting the right job, accumulating money or seeking social status. These things are not wrong in and of themselves; however, when they become the focus of who we are, that which we seek can become our god.

The human heart is designed to love and to be loved. If we do not love Christ and make Him the center of our lives, we will love something else. Our god can be identified by how we think, how we talk, how we dedicate our resources and, most importantly, how we spend our time. Paul shared these words in **Philippians 3:10**, “I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.” So what does that look like? For Paul, “he preached in synagogues; he preached at riversides; he preached as a prisoner; he preached as an apostle;” he preached and he preached and he preached. His message was consistent; his focus was clear.

Paul knew what is meant to abide in Christ. But what should that look like for us? To abide in Christ, we must make Christ our focus, our goal, and our utmost desire. “Christ must be the center point of our bodies, hearts, minds and souls.” In everything that we do, we do for the glory of Christ, our Lord and King.

~Submitted by Patricia Mosley, Lay Leader



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

Support FUMC Using TITHE.LY



Download "TITHE.LY" from Apple App store.



Download "TITHE.LY" from Google Play store.



Go to www.hammondfumc.org



FUMC is Looking for a Backup Audio/Video Tech.....



Looking for an audio/video tech as a backup for Sarah Ward for preparation and presentation of Sunday Zoom and Facebook Services.

Detailed training will be provided

This is not a weekly commitment but a commitment to be available if Sarah is ill or on vacation.

Please contact Brenda at the church office if you are interested.



~Submitted by Kathy Smith, Staff-Parish Committee Chair (SPRC)

A Note from SPRC....

SPRC met on Saturday, February 20 for a Zoom training presented by The North District.

~Kathy Smith, Staff-Parish Committee Chair (SPRC)



Thank you First Church Family...



"Thank you" to everyone who contributed to the Neighborhood Meal on February 28.

The menu consisted of meatloaf, mac and cheese, a vegetable, cookies, candy, and fruit drink.



~Pam Longhi, Kathy Smith.

A Big Thank you

To those who have been filling the blessing box.

Your kindness does not go unnoticed.

Keep up the Good Work !!





"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."

HI Kids!

~ Mr. Mike

11

BLESSED
ARE THEY
POOR IN
SPIRIT, FOR
THEIRS IS
THE
KINGDOM
OF HEAVEN.

MATTHEW 5:3

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SERVING THE COMMUNITY

THE VINE FOOD PANTRY AT-A-GLANCE February, 2021

New Clients.....	13
Return Clients.....	242
Total Clients Served.....	255
New Households.....	7
Return Households.....	121
Total Households Served.....	128



Total Pounds Distributed: 5,361



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. Dave Armistead, Ray Liedtke and Roseanne Watson 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.



Scrip Cards



The holidays may be over, but you still may be thinking about gift giving for birthdays and special events.

Start your gift shopping with **SCRIP Cards for the person who has everything and is hard to shop for.** We have plenty of cards and if you don't see one that we have available, we can special order for you.

If you are interested, please call me or text me your order at **1-773-852-5306**. I will be happy to answer any question possible. Thank you for your interest.



~Roseanne Watson

Are you interested in donating items for our Blessing Box?

Items needed include: *non-perishable food items, diapers, hygiene products, toothpaste, toothbrushes, feminine hygiene products.*



Items may be placed inside the *Blessing Box* located at
First United Methodist Church
6635 Hohman Avenue

Thank you for being a blessing!

Used Ink Cartridges...



Do you have used ink cartridges?
If so, First United Methodist Church of Hammond is still collecting them for Staples Rewards.

Used ink cartridges may be dropped off inside the East door on the bench during office hours.



~Brenda Petty, Administrative Assistant

Daylight Saving Time
Begins at 2am
on **March 14**

Turn your clocks
forward one hour



SPRING AHEAD!



First United Methodist Church of Hammond is always interested in hearing and keeping in touch with you.

Please contact the church office at **(219) 932-5915, ext. 222** or
via email admin@hammondfumc.org
to update your contact information.



Birthdays 2021

3/2 Pat McCoy
3/3 Ken Baker
3/3 Mary Cook-Baker
3/5 Phyllis Widstrand
3/6 Shana Chelich
3/6 Kaitlyn Encinas
3/7 Jerry Kolanowski
3/9 Emily Tiedeman
3/10 John Adkinson
3/12 Rex Burton
3/13 Dean Seehausen
3/14 Bellamy Avina
3/14 Logan Malloy
3/17 Tim Petty
3/18 Jan Yehnert
3/18 Jack Yerkes
3/19 Amy Rummel
3/20 Peggy Link
3/21 Esther Bungler
3/22 Paolo Mejia
3/23 Ansley Avina
3/24 Alyson Hawkins
3/25 Isaiah Herrera
3/25 Pam Longhi
3/29 Blake Cook
3/30 Karen Mulcahy-Smith
3/31 Paulette Tapper



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.*



Prayer Concerns

Jennie Baeza
Roger Collier
Kathy Clarke
Sandy Kizman
Jerry Kolanowski
Nancy Kolanowski
Bernie Newell
Helen O'Mara
Alan Piwowar
Logan Polich
Jane Schauer
Dean Seehausen
Amanda Serna
Henry Showers
Pat Showers
Robert Speck
Pam Stahl
John Steele
Nancy Steele
Ella Tiedeman
Sheryl Walters

The Hawkins family on the loss of their mother Josie Hawkins

Our homebound and those living in a residential facility:
Wayne Barnes, Adele Gawrys,
Don & Joann Harris
Jim Moery, and Beryl Puckering

Deadline For Newsletter Articles

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

Thank for your cooperation!

