



the chimes

Ringin' out the Good News of God and of the Adrian United Methodist Church

From the Pastor... "The Elephant in the Room"

A few weeks ago I was going through some of the papers in my office and I came across a copy of the special edition newspaper that was created to commemorate our church's 100th anniversary back in 1981. The articles told stories of the church's past, present and plans for the future. There were stories about mission groups, Bible studies, youth ministry and worship. Stories were shared about the founding of the church and growth over the years.

One story in particular that caught my attention was about the main church building. The original church building was built in 1881 and was torn down in 1907 to make way for a larger one. The second church building was destroyed by a fire in 1921. While the fire was still being fought, the leaders of the congregation made plans for the construction of the new (our current Sanctuary) building. After the insurance kicked in \$8,000, the congregation had committed to taking on \$22,000 of debt to build the beautiful Sanctuary building we still enjoy today.

The Pastor at the time, Rev. C.W. Schowengerdt, was determined that this debt was not going to encumber the congregation or hang over their heads any longer than necessary. Shortly after the new building was dedicated (in 1922) a large cardboard elephant was constructed and placed inside the Sanctuary. As the debt was paid down, the elephant moved closer and closer to the door until the day, four years later, when the congregation paid off the debt and once and for all kicked the elephant out of the room.

I share this story with you, one because it is a neat story and part of our history, but also as a way of introducing one of the goals for our congregation in 2016. Back in 2009 our new building was dedicated. The total cost of this building was around \$700,000. When I began ministry here in 2010, the balance of the mortgage for that building was around \$360,000. As of today, the balance of the mortgage is around \$68,000. That means that in under 6 years we have paid in the area of \$292,000 and are well on our way to having the building paid off. About four years ago the congregation set a goal of 2016 to be the year we get out of debt. I believe we can accomplish this goal this year, but not without your help.

You may be asking why we need to rush to pay off the mortgage? We have been making great progress on it for the last several years and it is now manageable, why focus on paying it off? Being debt free for a church, the same as it would for an individual or family, changes how you are able to operate. No longer would we have a monthly payment for debt hanging over our head. Instead, those thousands of dollars each year could go to funding more ministries, putting Bibles in the hands of more kids, teaching youth more about the Lord, providing opportunities to reach out into our community and improve the overall quality of our ministries. Coming up in 7 years will be the 100th anniversary of our Sanctuary building. I envision several updates (improved lighting, new carpet, protection for the stained-glass windows, improved audio/visual systems, etc) being undertaken to prepare that building for the next 100 years of ministry. These things will all be possible if we are no longer encumbered with the current debt we have.

Back to the image of the elephant, have you ever heard how you eat an elephant? One bite at a time. And this year, I would like to encourage you to join myself and the church leadership in committing to taking a bite out of the elephant as we seek to kick the mortgage elephant out of the room. \$68,000 is a lot of money. I know that I couldn't pay that off on my own, none of us could. I know that together, with each of us taking the size bites we are able to, come this time next year we as a congregation will be debt free and the elephant will no longer be in the room.

Stay tuned over the coming weeks for more information about this effort and an opportunity to make a commitment about how a big a bite you are going to take in this effort. Together we will kick the elephant out of the room!

Blessings, *Chris*

Lord, Hear Our Prayers...

Thank you to everyone who assisted with the Christmas Luncheon. Over 50 people were served by this community ministry.

SUNDAY SCHOOL
9:45 a.m.
SEE YOU THERE!



Upcoming Acolytes

January 10: Avaleigh S. & Ava U.
January 17: Paige C. & Presleigh S.
January 24: Jaclyn J. & Harper P.

If you cannot be there on your assigned Sunday, please find a replacement to take your place.

Jeremy Maus	Aaron Pearson	Jay Atchison
Jamie Bise	Eric Sechrest	Max Tindle
Lynn Saathoff	Jonna Petty	Sharon Findley
Harvey Cumpton	Mary Cumpton	Jack Rabourn
Hubert McCall	Jack Willerton	Sandy Maxwell
Barbara Pruden	Gale Eason	Archie Weeks
Beverly Cornelious	Andy Tyhurst	Shirley Smith
Rhonda Walley	Ava Sutton	Wendell Eason
Brent Fletcher	Lu Hooper	Johnny Cates
Olen Gray	Reta Jackson	Sam Weeks
Erin Newport	Oliver Oates	Rhonda Lemer
Rhonda Batschelet	John Morris	Peace...

Remember our military personnel...

Grant Bunch, Dustin Delmont,
Randy Hubbard, Casey Talley, Kaylee Tindle

Worship Wrap Up for January 3, 2016

"Thinking Outside The Box"

Beginning a new message series, the sermon was titled "*Recognizing the Light.*"

The biblical people who were expecting the light of the world had pre-conceived concepts of what the Messiah would be. As stated in the scripture from John 1: 1-14, many did not recognize Jesus as this promised light.

Many believed he would be a powerful person to overcome all enemies. Some had ideas of what the Messiah could do or should do. But Christ was sent to spread the love of God in the world. Jesus told the disciples that people would know them by their love.

We can't put this light in a box with regulations, rules, or constrictions.

God reminded Job that he was not in charge but God was and had no parameters to follow.

What limitations have we labeled God with? God is much bigger and more abstract than we can ever understand. God created us so he knows us well in ways we will never be able to fully comprehend.

Please join us on Sunday as we ask God to help us remove those boxes or limitations we have put on him, and ask him to help us recognize the light in our world.

Submitted by Linda Casey

Upcoming Meetings and Studies

Sunday, Jan 10: Worship at Passaic UMC, 9 am

...Worship at Adrian UMC, 10:45 am

...Scouts, 2 pm, Classroom #2

Monday, Jan 11: Exercise Group, 7:30 am, FH

...Adrian Youth Cheer, 5-7:30 pm, FH

Tuesday, Jan 12: Houston Plaza Bible Study,

1 pm, Clubhouse

...Tuesday Table Talk, 6:30 pm

Wednesday, Jan 13: Youth, 6-8 pm, FH

...Leadership Team Meeting, 7 pm, Classroom #2

Thursday, Jan 14: Exercise Group, 7:30 am, FH

...Passaic Bible Study, 9 am

...Church Ladies, 9-11 am

...Al Anon, 6 pm, Classroom #2

...Fit Club, 7 pm, FH

Saturday, Jan 16: Fellowship Hall in use all day

Sunday, Jan 17: Worship at Passaic UMC, 9 am

...Worship at Adrian UMC, 10:45 am



Snow Removal

The trustees are gathering a list of people who might be able to help clear the sidewalks when snow arrives. Please email or text Pastor Chris with your contact information if you are willing to help. He will put you on the list to contact when needed. Thanks for your help.

The Chimes is the official weekly publication of the First United Methodist Church, 202 East Main Street / P.O. Box 126, Adrian, MO 64720.

Deadline: Mondays at noon

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Adrian, MO 64720

Sunday School . . . Children, 9:45 am Adults, 9:45 am

Worship...10:45 am

Let go

Well, I haven't really started yet, but isn't January, the beginning of the year, the time to start cleaning out and "letting go."

I did go down into our basement a few minutes ago just to see where I needed to start. I have everything down there, you know—a real adventure.

Now don't get me wrong. I have been cleaning on this basement for, let's see, I guess around 40 years.

We have been living here since 1976 so I presume my math is right even though I am an English teacher.

And I want you to know I have made progress. I have been able to throw away, finally, hall passes for kids going to interview for stories in year-book or newspaper. Why I kept them I don't know. Just sentimental, I guess.

When I start going through the four big standing file cabinets, it really should get interesting. I did pull out a bag of cards that I had kept with one dating back to 1991 from my mom. Well, how can you throw that away?

Now I really am going to have to go through that stack of 1996 Better Homes and Gardens.

Really I just need to pass those on and share with someone else.

And I really don't need to hang on to the 1993 Flower and Garden magazines that I pulled out of the trash up in Minneapolis years ago. But after all if I could find time to read them, I might learn something new.

I see the March issue has an article on "Twelve Dependable Perennials." It would be interesting to see if they're still considered dependable today 23 years later.

Yeah, maybe it's time to let go though. Of course, I know that it's time to let go of more than magazines and cards and used hall passes.

I need to see what I have stashed away in the basement of my heart like maybe fear or selfishness or worry and I need to get that out right now.

No delay. And no questions asked. Just into the trash right now.

And with God's help, I'm going to do it. "*A time to keep and a time to throw away.*" (*Ecclesiastes 3:6 NIV*)

Love in Jesus,
God's "letting go" servant,
Liz Ray

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Address Correction Requested