



First Church NEWS

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

WORSHIP

Sunday, February 27

Youth Sunday
8:30 am - Epworth Choir
11 am - Chancel Choir

Sunday, March 6

Pastor Jon Priebe preaching
8:30 am - Epworth Choir
11 am - Chancel Choir

Sunday School/Confirmation at 9:45
Nursery/Preschool at 9:45 & 11
Children's Worship at 11



NOTES FROM PASTOR JON

Psalm 83:1 - *O God, do not keep silence; do not hold your peace or be still, O God!*

There are a billion questions I would ask God if I had the chance. Thinking through them now, I realize that most of them begin with "Why?" Why such a big universe if it's only us on Earth? Why is life so short when it's at its sweetest and can drag on endlessly when it's so difficult? Where are the ethical lines in medicine and science and our continuing tinkering with life? Why have you allowed evil and suffering so long? Why do bad things happen to good people? And just as importantly, why do good things happen to bad people? Unfortunately, most of these questions are going to have to wait until my personal eternity with God starts.

Part of why we have so many questions is because the Bible, though it contains all that we need for the health and salvation of our souls, doesn't directly address some of the topics and questions that vex us. Especially in our modern, constantly advancing and changing world. For this season of Lent, we will be digging deeply at a few of these areas where the Bible is silent or not so clear in a series called "The Silence of God." We will also be incorporating some new spiritual disciplines in worship for the next seven weeks. I am so excited to share with you what Dean and I have been planning!

Blessings,
Jon



**REMEMBER THAT OUR ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE
WILL TAKE PLACE ON MARCH 2 AT 7:00 PM.**

Goal: Consider living a life Sticking with Love

By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love(:) joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. Galatians 5:22-23 NRSV

Action: A school near the church often uses their road sign for encouraging messages, and recently read “We have decided to stick with love.” I’m very glad to see our schools sending positive, character-building messages like this. When our Bible boldly proclaims “God is love,” (I John 4: 16), you would think that we churchy folk are the subject matter experts on love. Yet surveys consistently report that Christians are known much more for what we are against than what we are for, and that a lot of non-Christians think of Christians as being judgmental, hypocritical, irrelevant, disconnected from real issues.

I don’t know how true it is, but “they say” restaurant servers “know” churchy types are the poorest tippers and the biggest complainers. Is that how others see our “love”? What do those around you see in your life that might help them think of churchy folk as FOR, rather than against, as loving, rather than judgmental, as persons of integrity rather than hypocrites?

When Jesus and our Bible talk about abiding in God’s love, they’re not talking about some warm and wonderful feeling, they’re talking about visible action FOR others. Revisit I Cor. 13, known as “the love chapter” — “love is patient and kind, love is not envious, does not boast, it keeps no record of wrongs.” Where people you interact with might describe you with these words, that’s evidence of living in love.

The Greek language in which the New Testament was written did not use punctuation, so wherever you see commas, periods, colons and such in those documents, it’s only ever an educated guess. Revisit Galatians 5: 22, where “the fruit of the spirit” is/are described—Some scholars suggest that first comma should be a colon, in which “The fruit of the Spirit is love:” All following the colon are then behaviors by which others know our LOVE, through our “joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.” The Greek also uses the singular form of “is” here, so that “the fruit of the Spirit IS love:” as described by what follows, rather than “the fruit of the Spirit ARE” inclusive of the full listing that follows.

Journal Reflection: How might it change how we treat servers, cashiers, sales people, mechanics, co-workers, neighbors and such, if we live the fruit of the spirit in this way? Restaurant workers are likely overworked these days—you see how many “help wanted” signs are popping up everywhere? What might happen if rather than complaining about bad service (likely because they’re overwhelmed), you ask how you might be able to pray for them, if you compliment what they DO well (it’s never ALL bad, is it?), and make it a habit to be a big tipper? Might we join that school and “stick with love,” but make sure it’s a love that others can see lived out in all our interactions. Otherwise, is it really love?

Shared with permission from Rev. Jim Lewis

Easter Flowers... Now is the time to order the flowers which will adorn our altar on Easter morning. The plants are \$8.50 each. The list of donors and those memorialized or honored will appear in the Easter Sunday bulletin. Please make your check out to First Church and return it with the order to the church office **by noon on Tuesday, March 15**. Please indicate the number of each plant that you are ordering.

 Tulips Hyacinths Lilies Daffodils

In memory or honor of (circle one)



Donor _____ Phone _____

All Children's activities have now resumed.

Sunday School for all ages from 9:45 to 10:45 a.m.

Children's Worship during the 11:00 a.m. service.

ROCK will return with some changes.

Music Rehearsals – 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

****Those children who play bells or chimes need to talk with Dean Wagner about their availability this semester.**

Dinner at 5:00 p.m. – the cost has gone up to \$3 per child and \$4 per adult.

Rock rotation will take place from 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

This means that the evening will end thirty minutes early at 6:30 p.m.

February 20 is also being added back into the schedule as the Wesley Trip will end on Saturday.

There will be child care for children up to age 3 during Sunday School and the 11:00 a.m. worship service. It will also be available from 3:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. each week for those parents participating as helpers with the evening's activities or in Adult Discipleship classes.

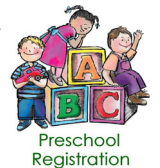


Items Needed for the Easter Egg Hunt

With snow falling and covering the ground, Easter seems a long way off, but our Annual Easter Egg Hunt will be Saturday, April 9, from 11 am to noon. We are in need of small toys and candy, preferably nut free as well as small boxes of raisins and individual bags of chips. Donations need to be dropped off by Sunday, April 3. If you would like to help with this community outreach, please contact Pastor Karol.



Weekday Christian Preschool... The preschool has begun registering for the 2022-2023 school year. Classes are on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, mornings and afternoons, for children aged 3 (by Sept. 30 and potty trained) to 5 as well as a Tuesday/Thursday Enrichment class for 4 and 5 year olds. There is also an all day option. To register or for more information please contact director Jennifer Brooks at 330-923-5243 or jbrooks-fallsumc@gmail.com.



The Epworth Choir is going on tour and could use your help. Yes, after 2 years of no tours, we are heading to Florida and South Carolina on March 25. After spending time for a couple of days of play at Disney, we will be singing concerts on Tuesday March 29, at 7pm at Community UMC in Fruitland Park, FL and Hibben UMC in Mount Pleasant (Charleston), SC on Wednesday the 30th. Home concert will take place on April 10, Palm Sunday at 7pm.

We have some youth who could use some financial assistance with their tour, so if you would like to sponsor a youth in part that would be great. Also we did not hold our annual fund raiser of a Pasta Dinner last month, so if you usually attend the dinner, would you consider making a small donation of what you might usually spend for that dinner and send it in and mark it "Epworth Tour" and that would greatly help us out. We thank this congregation always for your generosity and support of our youth!

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Jon Priebe - Lead Minister x211; Mike Ward - Associate Minister x217; Forrest Waller and Marvin Brown - Senior Ministers Emeriti; Dean Wagner - Director of Music Ministries/Organist x221; Karol Lewis - Director of Spiritual Formation x218; Jennifer Brooks - Director of Weekday Preschool x220; Jen McKenna - Youth Ministries Coordinator; Tim Zuschin - Assistant Choir Director; Donna Curfman - Children's Ministry Coordinator x219; Kathy Kuzas x212; Christy Meyers x210; Nancy Yeager x216; Ann Kaiser; John Fox; Joe Demeter; Alicia Stone; Kathy Just



The Gift/Memorial Book is located in the parlor and is open to **Fred Bloss**.

Our Sympathies to **Tim and Leigh Potokar and family** on the death of their son, **member Matthew Potokar**, on 2/8; to **Rev. Jon and Kattie Priebe** and family on the death of his mother, **Kathy Priebe**, on 2/11; to **Tiffany and Brian Lieberth** and family on the death of her mother, **Linda Brooks**, on 2/19; to **Patsie Lewis** and family on the death of her husband, member **Jim Lewis**, on 2/20.

Baptisms at First Church: Joseph Vincent Cambria III and Joseph Vincent Cambria IV, son of **Joseph and Madison (McBryer) Cambria**.



ORGAN RECITAL
The Thursday Organ Recitals will return for the Sundays of Lent beginning March 3. Dean Wagner will present half hour concerts of live music in the sanctuary from noon to 12:30. Feel free to come in and hear the organ only as the organ can be heard. So many people say that while it is nice to hear the organ online, it also needs to be felt! There will be plenty of room to spread out in the sanctuary. We hope to see you there.



Thank you to everyone who donated coats for the past 3 months for Heart4theCity. They distribute them to the children and youth of the area. The next collection for Heart4theCity will be in the spring.

NewsLetter
DEADLINE

The deadline for the next FCN is **Thursday, February 17**. Please submit your articles to Kathy Kuzas at kkuzasfumccf@gmail.com.