

The First United Methodist Church of Lowell

Tele-Christian ~ February 2020 Edition

**The mission of the United Methodist Church is to
make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.**

Mark's Remarks.....

On Wednesday, February 26, the Lenten season begins. Lent is the forty days of preparation for Easter. From early in the life of the church, Lent was set aside as a time of prayer and fasting as Christians prepared for the events of Holy Week and the celebration of Easter. It became a tradition of the church that Lent would be a final time of learning for those desiring to join the church. On Easter Sunday, they would be baptized and join the church.

If you look at your calendar, there are 46 days between Ash Wednesday and Easter. There are six Sundays in this time period. Sundays don't count in this time of solemn preparation. Every Sunday is an Easter celebration. Sunday is the time to focus on the Risen Christ.

Many people focus only on the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. It is called Shrove Tuesday or Fat Tuesday or Mardi Gras. It is a party time to get in the last-minute feasting before Ash Wednesday. Traditionally it didn't involve sin and vice like you see in New Orleans. It was simply a time of indulgence before the sacrifices of Lent. You can't truly do Mardi Gras without including the sacrifice time of Lent.

Many people give up something for Lent. Our family typically gives up something. Typically, it should be something you truly love and that is a sacrifice for you to do without. A big part of the significance of this act is to realize what Jesus has sacrificed for you. It's up to the individual whether they continue their sacrifice on Sundays of Lent. (We always include Sunday as well, so we don't slip back into the habit.) You might want to give up a food you really love, television, video games, or tobacco. Examine your life. What are your favorite things that can be given up or decreased? Jesus gave us His all. What can you give to Him? In addition, spend some extra time in prayer, fasting, and Bible study. Easter will be a much bigger celebration for you if you do.

Ash Wednesday Service

Plan on joining us on Wednesday, February 26, for our annual Ash Wednesday service. Through hymns, special music, the message and a time to receive ashes from the palms of last year's Palm Sunday, you will prepare yourself for Lent and the coming Easter season. It will be at 7:00 pm.





**Bishop Trimble shares statement
regarding the recently proposed separation agreement
By Bishop Julius C. Trimble|January 8, 2020**

Yesterday, the Council of Bishops released a press release regarding a proposed separation agreement, the Protocol of Reconciliation & Grace Through Separation. This agreement was created through mediation by a diverse group of 16 persons representing various viewpoints across the Connection. The Council of Bishops shared the release on behalf of the Mediation Team members.

I always look for the good news inside the reported news. If the protocol for separation and new direction for United Methodists ends decades-old infighting at General Conferences over the full inclusion of LGBTQ persons in our churches as we do the work of ministry, I count it as a light of hope at the end of a long tunnel and a good way to begin a new decade.

This is what I know for sure: We have a tendency to initially interpret with eyes of suspicion and scarcity rather than first read and reflect with prayers of hopeful resolve. God is always doing a new thing and the Church born of Pentecost finds its Christian expression with Jesus the Lamb of God as the center of its mission and unity. Over the centuries, the Church has continued to evolve, splinter, experience decline and growth. For United Methodists, we know that reported proposed agreements have to be formally approved in our worldwide General Conference scheduled for May 2020 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

During the 2016 General Conference, the Council of Bishops was asked by the delegations to lead the church out of this ever-increasing divide that has proven to be painful for people in our families and pews and distracting from our many global missional challenges. While Bishops preside over the General Conference, they do not have a vote. Before being elected as a Bishop in 2008, I served for many years as a pastor and Elder. Bishops are entrusted to promote the Unity of the Church and the Order of the Church so that the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world can be advanced. The Bishops—and many others—have never stopped the pursuit for a more excellent way for the diversity of United Methodism to be freed from internal theological conflict so that love and respect can triumph over legislative votes that leave a divided church more wounded and less focused. So I invite you to join me in continuing to start this new decade off in prayer. I see God at work all across Indiana and the globe, and I am full of hope. The joy of the Lord is my strength, and I truly believe most of our limitations are self-imposed.

The news of resolution through negotiation as a pathway forward to General Conference is, for me, good news that leads to more good news for our work ahead as we follow Jesus's admonition to Simon Peter in John 21:15-19...In essence, Jesus asked us "Do you love me?" If so, "then feed my sheep, and tend my lambs." Let's tend to our flock well in this time.

Be encouraged,
Bishop Julius C. Trimble
Indiana United Methodist Church

February Sermon and Scripture Schedule

February 2 ~ Communion Sunday

Scripture ~ Matthew 5:1-12

Sermon Title ~ *'What's Your Attitude?'*

February 9 ~

Scripture ~ Matthew 5:17-20

Sermon Title ~ *'The Law and Christianity'*

February 16 ~

Scripture ~ Matthew 5:21-26

Sermon Title ~ *'A New Look at Sin'*

February 23 ~

Scripture ~ Matthew 17:1-9

Sermon Title ~ *'Jesus, The Fulfillment'*



Worship News

Trudy Corning & Linda Hayden, Chairpersons

The Lenten Season will begin on Ash Wednesday, which is February 26. Lent is a season of reflection and preparation before the celebration of Easter. By observing the 40 days of Lent, followers of Christ reflect on Jesus' sacrifice and withdrawal into the desert for 40 days. Many Christians celebrate Lent by fasting or giving up something like chocolate, television, social media or by adding good habits like reading the Bible, adding a daily devotional/inspirational reading, or performing random acts of kindness.

As you prepare for your Lenten journey this season, reflect on the words of Pope Francis.

Do You Want To Fast This Lent?

- **Fast from hurting words and say kind words**
- **Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude**
- **Fast from anger and be filled with patience**
- **Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope**
 - **Fast from worries and have trust in God**
- **Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity**
 - **Fast from pressure and be prayerful**
- **Fast from bitterness and fill your hearts with joy**
- **Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others**
 - **Fast from grudges and be reconciled**
- **Fast from words and be silent so you can listen**



Music Notes

Michelle Mishlove, Music Chairperson

The Music committee met last month and welcomed two new members! In the month of February, the Chancel Choir will follow its usual schedule -- singing at the 8:00 service on the first Sunday and singing at the 10:30 service the third & fourth Sundays.

We are looking forward to hearing the Sonshine Singers at the 10:30 am service on February 9. GodsBells will be playing that Sunday at the 8:00am service.

If you'd like to hear the Praise Team, they will be leading worship at Bread4Life on Thursday, February 20.

Below is a list of the members of the congregation who will be participating in various aspects of worship during the month of February:

February 2: Greeters: Bev Johnson, Carol Olson, Trudy Corning, Garrett Corning, Betty Kelley, Rusty Maas
Ushers: 8:00: Lynn Bochart, Bob Savich 10:30: Elaine DeVine, Dennis Olson
Liturgist: 8:00: Al Martin 10:30: Denise Smith
Children's Time: Kathie Stoner

February 9:

Greeters: Linda Snell, Maryrose Lynch, Amy Nichols, Virginia Kasparian, Mike & Nicole Hayden
Ushers: 8:00: Don Bales, Garrett Corning 10:30: Sharon Sanders, Tom Stoner,
Darin & Tammy Champanois
Liturgist: 8:00: Lynn Bochart 10:30: Deb Kelley
Children's Time: Kathy Taylor

February 16:

Greeters: Bill and Linda Hayden, Gisela Peterson, Amy Nichols, Phyllis Moser, Carolyn Savich,
Travis and Amy Manier and family
Ushers: 8:00: Charlie Haberlin, Rusty Maas 10:30: David Perry
Liturgist: 8:00: Peggy Hendricks 10:30: Susan Wells
Children's Time: Pastor Mark

February 23: Greeters: Anita Childress, Jenny Nichols, Peg Atherton, Nina Wilson, Dennis Olson,
Charlene Grant, Sue McQuiston
Ushers: 8:00: Luan Brown, Bill Bubness, 10:30: Ken Bisacchi, Scott Spry
Liturgist: 8:00: Trudy Corning 10:30: Rachelle Bernard
Children's Time: Beth Bales



Thursday BRD4Life Dinner/Worship Service

Our mid-week service, Bread for Life, offers an informal experience that will nourish both your body and your spirit.

Dinner begins at 5:30 in the Fellowship Hall and worship starts at 6:15.

Everyone is welcome! Bring a friend!

Below are the speakers, themes, and cooks for the month of February:

February 6 ~ Speaker: Al Martin
Theme: *Charles Dickens Day is Feb. 7*

Cook: Ellen Rosengard
Greeter: Susan Wells

February 13 ~ Speaker: Rick Bachman
Theme: *Get a Different Name Day*

Cook: Sharon Sanders
Greeter: Jenny Nichols

February 20 ~ Speaker: David Schoon
Theme: *American Heart Month*

Cook: Kevin Corie
Greeter: Pastor Mark

February 27 ~ Speaker: Susan Wells
Theme: *Leap Year*

Cook: Linda, Bonnie, Candy
Greeter: Jenny Nichols

From the Finance Committee

Don Bales, Chairman



Budget

Like any family, the church needs money to take care of its members and do its job. The Finance Committee is tasked with overseeing an approved budget and then is constantly reviewing, improvising, and sharing the results of actual monthly income and expenses. Many hours go into collecting committee budgets, compiling the total requested amounts, determining from history the church's giving and then applying those figures to create a new budget. Here are some of the reasons why it's important to carefully craft a church budget:

Churches need money to function. This is not something to be ashamed of, but to be treated honestly. Ministries, missions, building needs, education, and staffing are some of these needs. The church is a family, and every family needs to know its financial status.

If you don't share, the finances can be seen as a leadership secret and not a shared responsibility. People need to know where the church is financially as they pray for guidance in their giving.

Every week in the bulletin the church posts, in a small box, the financial amount that is required EACH WEEK to meet the approved financial ministries and obligations of the church. Also posted in the same small box is the number that reflects the average weekly amount given by the congregation from the previous month.

We live in challenging times and though our churches are about good news in Jesus, sometimes we must communicate bad news. Currently, many churches must communicate that the budget is not being met. The Finance Committee approved and submitted a 2020 budget to the Ad Council that reflects a possible \$19,000 deficit. Because our church leadership has done a very good job over-seeing finances through the past several years, we are able to absorb that deficit along with the 2019 deficit. The Finance Committee is discussing various avenues in which to address our budget deficit, one of which is communicating the current financial picture with our church family.

As with many things, we ask each and all to pray for God's wisdom and guidance as we make financial decisions for our church.

Endowment Fund

Did you know that Lowell First United Methodist Church has an Endowment Fund available for members and friends of The Church? The Endowment Fund provides the opportunity to make gifts and bequests that will be a permanent endowment of financial support and a living memorial to The Church. If you would like to learn more about it, you can pick up a copy from Kim in the church office.

If you have questions, feel free to ask any member of the Endowment Committee: Terry Donovan, Lynn Bochart, Kirk McQuiston, Carolyn Savich, and Laura Eller.

MEET OUR STAFF: Kim McGinley, Administrative Assistant



Hello Everyone!

It is fitting that I was asked to write a little about myself in the month of February as it is the anniversary month for being your Administrative Assistant. On February 28 of this month, I will have worked for you and this church for 15 years! We have been through a lot together, and I just want to start by saying how incredibly blessed I have been to know each and every one of you through the years!

I grew up in Merrillville, Indiana and graduated from Merrillville High School in 1983. I have a sister Cheryl who lives in Indianapolis and a brother Fred who lives in Valparaiso. I have a pretty big extended family as well. My father was one of fifteen children, and I have 39 first cousins.

I have lived in Lowell since 1987. I have been married to my husband Bob, who was born and raised in Lowell, for 26 years. I have two children. My oldest son Ken lives in Phoenix, AZ, with his wife Shelley and daughter Fiona who is 19 months old. My youngest son Shawn lives in Chicago with his wife Diana and son Sebastian who is 21 months old. I have a dog named Luke and a cat named Squeaky.

When I am not working or volunteering here at church I enjoy spending as much time as I can with my grandchildren and with my family at my brother's house on Flint Lake. I like to go to auctions and in the summer months to garage sales. Bob and I have a pretty big garden in the summer and do a lot of canning of the fruits (and vegetables) of our labor.

I have played the violin since the fifth grade. I currently play with the High Country String Band and occasionally at church for special music. I also sing in our church praise band and sometimes with the Chancel Choir.

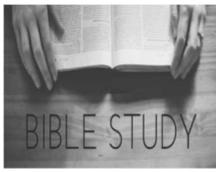
It has been a pleasure to be a member of this church and especially to be your Administrative Assistant.



Bus Trip to Shipshewana

First UMC is planning a bus trip to the Blue Gate Theatre in Shipshewana. We'll be going to see the Gaither Vocal Band. **The trip is Friday, June 5, 2020.** We'll leave at 7:45 am from the Strack & Van Til parking lot. We'll have an 11:00 am lunch buffet at the Blue Gate Restaurant. The show begins at 1 pm. After the show we'll stop by Yoder Department Store for some shopping. Yoder's has a little of everything. We should arrive home around 7 pm.

The cost for everything (bus, theater ticket and buffet) is \$109.95. **Please let Pastor Mark or the church office know by Monday, February 17,** if you are interested. We'll need firm reservations and the money by **Sunday, March 8.** Feel free to invite friends or family along for this trip.



Education Opportunities

WINGS CLASS

Reality often winds up very far from the life we wanted. Best-selling Christian author, Lysa Terkeurst deeply understands disappointments and life-altering losses. By walking through her own dark valley, she's discovered that in God we can find unexpected strength as we wrestle between our faith and our feelings of discouragement.

The Wings adult discussion class will begin the six-week DVD Bible study, It's Not Supposed To Be This Way, by Lysa Terkeurst on Sunday, February 2, at 9:15 in Room 300. Everyone is welcome to join us for this powerful study on how to cope with life's painful situations from a Biblical perspective.

Al Martin, Facilitator

FRIENDS CLASS

Meets at 9:15 a.m. in room 304 with facilitator Don Bales.

FOM Class

Meets at 9:15 a.m. in room 301 with leader David Schoon.

Pastor Mark will continue his Bible study on Wednesday's at 10:00 a.m. in the church library and on Sunday evenings at 6:00 p.m. at the parsonage. Dates for the month of February are: 2, 16 and 23 at the parsonage and 12, 19 and 26 in the church library.



Children's Ministry News

Paige Corning, Children's Director

SONSHINE Express, the children's education program, will now also be meeting on Thursday evenings during Bread4Life. Families can enjoy a hot meal together and fellowship with others. At 6pm the children will go to the Sunday school rooms for a lesson of their own while the adults have a time of worship.

There will be a Valentine's party on Sunday, February 9, at 3 p.m. in room 303. The children will make valentines to pass out to their classrooms. The children will also make valentines to give to the household pantry so families with children can pass them out to their school's classrooms. The Sonshine children enjoy making valentines for the children in the household pantry. This will be the third year doing this project and learning about missions.

SONSHINE Singers will resume singing during the 10:30 church service this month.

MINISTRY IN ACTION

NEWS FROM THE HOUSEHOLD PANTRY

Julie Donovan, Chairperson

2019...What a year!!

Our amazing congregation at Lowell FUMC remained committed and dedicated to the Household Pantry with their monetary and product donations and prayers. We served a total of 731 families/2,190 people during the year. THANK YOU for helping us be able to serve needy families in the Tri-Creek area. We had 159 registered families in 2019. Pantry attendance always varies from month to month, but our average monthly attendance was 68 families.

We were able to supply our families with laundry detergent, dish soap, household cleaner, paper towels, facial tissues, toilet tissue, bar soap, deodorant, toothpaste, sanitary napkins, and shampoo. Our total cost for the Household Pantry for 2019 was \$6,725.05.

We continued to work in partnership with the Lowell Family Dollar store in 2019. Our products were purchased there. Kelly, store manager, made sure our monthly orders got filled correctly. Please thank Kelly for everything she has done for us.

The Pantry was blessed with many donations in 2019. As of this writing, we have received monetary and/or product donations from Avery Dennison, Athletico, Tri-Creek Lumber (winter coats), Hawthorne Arbor of Gleaners, Sickingers, and many other personal donations from families within the church. Also, a big thank you to Dennis and Carol Olson and Terry Donovan for their diaper donations. How fortunate the Household Pantry is to be remembered by so many thoughtful people!!

We head into 2020 with a dedicated Household Pantry team of 20 compassionate servants with varied and multiple talents, whose hearts lie in serving those in our community who need assistance. Each month our families are able to come into a warm, welcoming atmosphere to get the much-needed products. But sometimes they need our listening ears and prayers, and we do our best to serve their needs. We are humbled to be able to serve these families.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!!



We are starting a Mom's Group that will meet once a month! Our Mom's Group will be a place where moms of young children can come together and have a time to fellowship, worship, and grow together. There will be snacks, activities, discussions, devotions, and much more. We are meeting the **third Friday of every month from 8:45am-11:15am in the church library.**

The meetings we currently have scheduled are February 21, March 20, April 17, and May 15. Please spread the word to any moms of little ones that you may know. Nursery will be available for children. If you have any questions, please contact Paige Corning or Trudy Corning.

Congregational Care Ministries provide opportunities for YOU to share God's love.

Prayer Blanket Ministry

Prayer Blankets were prayed over by the congregation Sunday, January 19, during worship and are ready for delivery. If you know of someone needing to feel God's love, please visit the church library and select a prayer blanket and take it to them. Help them to tangibly feel the warmth and comfort of God's presence through the blanket and your concern.

College Ministry

Our college students are back in school! Please **pray for them** as they start their spring semester.

Terra Kelley, Bloomington
Toby Taylor, Vincennes
Kristen Newlin, Indianapolis
Madison Lacy, Terra Haute
Bryce Hayden, East Peoria, IL
Kimee Mooney, Merrillville

Bradley Schroeder, Bloomington
Lauren DeVine, Florence, AL
James Nadolski, West Lafayette
Megan Snell, West Lafayette
Samantha Ingebretsen, Muncie
Becca Koon, Lowell

Robert Corning, Police Academy, Hobart

ASK Prayer

Did you know that every family in our church is prayed for by name for 3 months out of every year? Family names are sent to the members of the ASK Prayer team who then pray each day for those families. **Join the team** and pray in the privacy of your own home for other members of our church family. Call Ethel Devine at 219-616-6676.

CareNotes

“Take One --- and take heart Give one --- and give hope.”

Are you aware of the display of *CareNotes* in the church Narthex? These booklets are spiritual resources for grief and loss, for health care, for personal healing and growth, and for spirit care. Congregational Care provides these booklets for you **to take** when you are enduring a difficult life situation, and for you **to give to others** struggling with grief, stress, health or family issues. Browse the display occasionally for a *CareNotes* booklet that may match a current 'life challenge' for you or someone you know.

Funeral luncheons

Do you like to feel needed? Do you want to be needed?
Well, step right up! **You ARE needed!**

Jesus taught us to Love One Another. One of the ways our church family loves one another is that after the funeral service of a loved one we serve a nice dinner to the family and their guests. Congregational Care oversees these funeral luncheons.

Many of the ladies and some men, too, help in the kitchen to make these dinners happen. But lately we have been shorthanded. We need some more help. When I joined this church, I didn't know many people. I made so many friends right here in the church kitchen! I had fun! It made me happy! And I was doing the Lord's work! What more could I ask for?!

Please **volunteer** if you are able! It will make you happy too!
Sincerely,
Betty Kelley

From the Missions Committee...



“Love Thy Neighbor” Week
Feb. 9-16, 2020

No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted. Aesop

The Missions committee would like you to share love by committing acts of kindness. **Love Thy Neighbor Week** will celebrate the joy found in sharing love in simple ways. And we do not mean just being kind to those you love (yes, we know the week includes Valentine’s Day!), but to friends, co-workers, first responders, your mailman, a store clerk, neighbors, even complete strangers! We will offer some suggestions for acts of kindness in the bulletin on Feb. 9 to get you started, but we hope you will come up with other kind acts on you own. Challenge yourself to do at least one kindness a day! Jot down your acts of kindness. On Feb. 16, without including your name, we would like you to return your form and tell us one or two of your kind acts. After a week of this, we should all be ready for the official “Random Acts of Kindness Day” on Feb. 17!!

Have Fun!

Be creative!

Spread joy!

Share love!



Our Senior Citizen group, *Young at Heart* continues to run strong. The next meeting will be Tuesday, February 25, at 12:30 pm. We will have a light lunch and bingo. There is no charge for this event although a free-will offering is available. All who can make it at this time are welcome. Invite friends and come be a part!



World Day of Prayer at Lowell FUMC

Our UMW unit will be hosting the local community World Day of Prayer program on Saturday, March 7, 2020. Registration will take place from 8:30-9:30 am with a continental breakfast. The Bible study will be held from 9:30 - 10:45 am. Lunch will be served at 11:00 am. The program, entitled “Rise! Take your mat and walk.” (John 5:2-9), will start at 12:00 noon and conclude at 1:00 pm.

Children are welcome as we will learn about the animals of Zimbabwe.

WEEKLY EVENTS

Sunday - *Worship* ~ 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. (in Sanct.), *Sunday School for All Ages 9:15*: F.O.M. (301), WINGS (300), FRIENDS (304) Youth (303) Children (downstairs)

Monday - A/A 12 p.m. (rm. 300), Guitar 6 p.m. (rm. 303)

Tuesday - Household Pantry 9-12 and 5-6 (1st and 3rd Tuesday)

Wednesday - Weight Watchers 6 p.m. (300), A/A - 8 p.m. (Fellowship Hall), Al/Anon - 8 p.m. (library)

Thursday - Godsbells 4:30 p.m., *BRD4life* dinner 5:30 p.m., *Worship* 6:15 p.m. (Fellowship Hall), Chancel Choir 7pm

February 2020

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

						1 Time Capsule Trivia Night 6 p.m. (bsmt)
2 Bible Study 6pm (parsonage)	3 Staff/Parish 5:30 p.m.	4	5	6	7	8
9 Baby Shower 10 a.m. (bsmt)	10 Susanna Wesley Circle I p.m. (library)	11 Trustees 6 p.m. (conf. room)	12 Bible Study 10am (library) UMW Executive Meeting 4:30 p.m. (library) Worship Mtg. 6 p.m. (304)	13 Pre-School Valentine party (bsmt)	14 Pre-School Valentine party (bsmt)	15
16 Bible Study 6pm (parsonage)	17 **Tele-Christian Articles Due	18	19 Bible Study 10am (library) Praise Practice 7 p.m. (sanct.)	20 Outreach Meeting 10 a.m. (conf. room)	21 Mom's Group 8:45 a.m. (library)	22
23 Bible Study 6pm (parsonage)	24	25 Senior Bingo 12:30 (basement)	26 Bible Study 10am (library) Ash Wednesday Service 7 p.m.	27	28	29 Birthday Party 1 p.m. (bsmt)