Lenten Focus and Schedule

“Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life.’” John 14:6 (NIV)

If this statement of Jesus’ is true, has it transformed your way of life? I like to think it has transformed mine, then I decide that my way is the best way, that my truth is real, and that life is mine to control. As a follower of Jesus, if I believe this to be true, then my life will reflect that it has been fully surrendered to the way and the truth and the life that is Jesus Christ. This daily surrendering is the path of discipleship, and it is a path that is lifelong and in need of constant attention.

Lent is a time set apart in the Church Year for the followers of Christ to reflect on who Jesus was, what Jesus did, and how Jesus taught his followers to live. It is also a time for the followers of Christ to put aside that which distracts us from the path of discipleship, and live our lives in a way that shows the world whom we follow. This 40 day (not counting Sundays) journey begins this year on February 18, with Ash Wednesday and ends on April 5, with Easter. At First Church we are focusing on worship and discipleship in Lent with a new Sunday morning schedule and a new church-wide study.

Our new schedule will begin on Sunday, February 22. We will have ONE worship experience at 9:30 am in the Sanctuary followed by Discipleship Groups for all ages at 10:45 am. Our prayer is that this new schedule will allow us to live out our mission of Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. This will also allow us to Connect in Community as the two worshipping congregations join as one, and will allow us to Grow in Faith as we participate in discipleship groups with people in our age group, studying who Jesus was. The study we are doing is Renegade Gospel, the Rebel Jesus, by Rev. Michael Slaughter, lead pastor at Ginghamsburg UMC in Tipp City, Ohio. This study will look at what Jesus said, who he said he was, and what he told his followers to do. It will challenge us to move beyond the “Western” Jesus that so many of us have come to follow. It will challenge us to look at what a life fully surrendered to Jesus looks like, and it will help us prepare to celebrate the resurrection of Christ with a better understanding of just how radical that resurrection is.

One way for us to prepare for this study is to read the Gospels. The study focuses on the “red letters” of Jesus. In many Bibles, the words of Jesus in the Gospels are printed in red. If you want to begin now to prepare for Lent, then I invite you to read the Gospels focusing on the words of Jesus. If that sounds like an impossible task, then begin with the Gospel of Mark. The Gospel of Mark is the shortest of the Gospels, was most likely written first, and shares much in common with The Gospels of Matthew and Luke. You may want to read the Gospel of John alongside the Gospel of Mark, or after reading Mark. The Gospel of John is different than the other three Gospels, reading them both will give you a full experience of the “red letters” of Jesus. In reading the Gospels, I encourage you to write down the words of Jesus that are new to you, or that have a new impact on you at this stage in life. I encourage you to write down the words of Jesus that leave you with questions or doubts, and those words that bring joy and comfort. I also encourage you to enter the Lenten Season with open eyes, hearts, and minds so that the Holy Spirit can speak to you. If you have questions or concerns about our new schedule or the study, please do not hesitate to call me. My door is always open and I want you to be heard. I believe with hearts open to what God is doing in our midst, we will all experience a Lent that is transformational for our lives and the life of First UMC.

See you Sunday!
Pastor Amy
Present: Aaron Gower, Pastor Amy Covington, Frank Montgomery, Gerry Kline, Mike Pettibone, Mike Snyder, Roger Thompson, Nancy Thompson

Pastor Amy opened the meeting with a devotion from our Lenten study *Renegade Gospel*. She shared that if we want to see Jesus we must expect that we will see him. Matt. 25: 1-13. She then served communion.

1. Treasurer: Aaron reported that the year ended in the plus with all bills paid. All tithes to the conference have also been paid.
2. Minutes: the minutes were approved as read.
3. Children’s ministry: The children and youth as well as the adults will study *Renegade Gospel* during Lent.
4. Evangelism: The communications team reported that we will have more presence at community events and will apply for a grant for display items for the Spotlight on Decatur. Kyle Martin will work on a design for the items. Scott Porter is working on updating the sign out front. He hopes to make it electronic and will need someone to update it.
5. Missions: Pastor Amy said there is some discussion about a mission trip to Guatemala in January of 2017 for youth and adults.
6. Discipleship: The team has three ideas to improve Sunday opportunities for discipleship training. The first is to have the same schedule and emphasize the Sunday School. The second is to provide more time for study by moving service times to 8 and 10:45 leaving a full hour for study, and providing time for fellowship and second service preparation. The third idea is to move to one worship service around 9 to be followed by an hour of study. The worship team will consider these options at their meeting.
7. Other Business: Motion was made for Roger Thompson to be the representative from Administrative Council to the Endowment Fund Committee. (Frank, Mike Snyder) The motion carried. As the chairman, Mike Pettibone, will be gone on the scheduled date, he asked for the February meeting to be moved to Feb. 24 at which time there will be discussion of the new leadership board structure. The date for the leadership retreat will be on Saturday April 11. We need to increase our emphasis on prayer.
8. Pastor Amy closed the meeting with prayer.
Leadership for 2015

2013 and 2014 were years of transition as First UMC prepared for Pastor Martha’s retirement and for the arrival of Pastor Amy. Many leaders were asked to remain in their positions to see the church through the transitions, and those leaders led with grace, when they could have given the leadership over to someone else. We want to thank Roger Thompson who has led our Administrative Council for many, many years, and chaired the Stewardship/Finance committee for many of those years. Roger did a fantastic job of leading through the transitions of not only senior pastors, but other staff members too. Mike Pettibone is the new Administrative Council Chair, and we want to welcome Mike and thank him for leading us these next few years. Aaron Gower and Chad Johnson are co-chairing the Stewardship/Finance committee after spending a year working with Roger to make this transition. Aaron and Chad have been faithful members of the Stewardship/Finance committee and have helped us to be good stewards of the gifts we have; they will continue to provide strong leadership.

Penny Hinsky continued the chair of Staff-Pastor Parish Relations for an additional two years, with Clint Knaub serving as a Vice-Chair last year to work with Penny in making a transition this year. Please thank Penny for her dedicated leadership through the change of senior pastor, which is a stressful time for S-PPR. She led remarkably. Clint will serve as chair this year, and Phyllis Irwin, Vicky Koning, Ian Gilbert, and Mike Boyd are serving as new members. Thank you to Jon Stevens, David Smith, and Wilma Pilkington who finished their terms on S-PPR in 2014.

After many years of coordinating our College Ministry, Nancy Collier is passing the baton to Terri Boyd and Phyllis Seitz. Nancy did a great job of keeping our college students connected to the church while they were away at school. She also made sure the church knew how to contact those students. We thank Nancy for her faithful leadership. The Library Team has new leadership as well. We thank Deb Bolduc for her leadership and Ellen Basham for keeping the Library organized. Jolie Lee and Crysti Scott will be the new leaders for the Library Team.

Other people are serving in new roles this year too. Steve Pilkington is a new Trustee, Kenn Vanhorn and Trevor Callahan are new Hope Chest Board Members, and Jean Koons is serving with Sandy Collier on the Memorial Gifts Team. We thank Jennifer Littler for serving on the Hope Chest Board and Ellen Basham for the ministry she has done in sending thank you notes for the Memorial Gifts Team. In 2014 we created new teams for ministry involving new people in leadership roles. Our Hospitality Team is composed of Ricki Wenger, Katie Gent, Karen Stahl, Carol Pettibone, and Scott Porter. Our Communications Team is Sarah Anderson, Aaron Gower, Kyle Martin, and Scott & Shelley Porter. Our Discipleship Pathway Team is Greg Andrews, Chris Covington, Annette Gower, Ken Meyer, Mike Pettibone, Shelley Porter, Mike Snyder, and Wilma Pilkington.

Unfortunately, 2014 also saw the transition of a new Treasurer and Accountant with the unexpected death of Al Noble. We are so grateful to Aaron Gower and Lowell Martin for taking those positions during a difficult time, and for serving well. They will continue those positions in 2015.

We appreciate all of the leaders and servants of First UMC!
The Committee on Lay Leadership (Nominations)
YOU ARE INVITED!!!

Baked Potato Bar

Following Discipleship Groups Sunday, Feb. 22

A free-will offering will be collected to help the LOFT youth serve in mission in July.

Everyone is welcome!

The LOFT Events

The Loft Meetings
Sundays 2-4 pm
Feb. 1, 8, & 15

Prepare for Baked Potato Bar
Saturday, Feb. 21
Noon in Fellowship Hall

Sunday, Feb. 22 be at church at 9:00 am to finish set up for Baked Potato Bar
Thank You Notes . . .
Thank you for the gift. You’re a very generous congregation, and the money is greatly appreciated.

Debbie Bolduc

To the congregation,
Thank you for your kind and thoughtful Christmas gift. It is a joy to be a part of your music ministry again :) Yours in Christ,
Mary Witte

We want to thank everyone who helped take down and put away the Christmas decorations. It was a big job. God Bless you all!

First Church friends,
We want to thank you for your prayers for Tyson and our family. He looks forward to the cards each week. He continues to slowly get worse. ALS is such a horrible disease. We went through colon cancer with Ben and it was awful, but I truly believe this is so much worse. Please continue to pray for him - and us! There are days we are totally mentally, physically and emotionally exhausted. We need the strength to continue to care for him.
We still miss all of you. No church can ever be the same as First Church! Tyson’s own church doesn’t even check on him. The pastor was here once. Sad!
Bless each of you,
Dan, Linda, Tyson & Gunny Shacklely

Dear Decatur FUMC family,
Thank you for lifting me up in prayer as I serve the United States. I believe your prayers have kept me safe from harm. It is very nice to know that people from my hometown are thinking of me, even when they don’t know me. Also, I wanted to thank you for the gift of money for Christmas. That was totally unexpected and brought a smile to my face. Thanks again for everything!
Yours in Christ,
CW3 Vince Everett

Dear Friends at First UMC,
Thank you again for having Agape Express Puppets at your church this Christmas season! We thank the Lord for His continuous work through us in telling the story of Christmas! Thanks too for your love offering for this ministry!
In Christ,
Rick & Christine Garner & Youth

175th Celebration in 2016
Next year will be our church’s 175th anniversary! If you would like to help in the planning for this celebration, please tell Janet in the office at 724-3158.

From the Custodian’s Closet
Thanks to Jim Pollock and Tom & Dusty Gase for helping pick up bulletins, candy wrappers and other trash from the pews. Their help makes my job run more smoothly and timely.
On occasion I find things left in pews or on tables. If you’re missing something, you may check the lost and found area at the 5th St. door. Or you may give me a call at 260-557-3455. Your Custodian,
Deb Bolduc

Operation Help
A reminder that laundry detergent is needed for Operation Help. A large basket with a sign indicating Operation Help is located at the end of the hall between the Chapel and the Narthex.

February Birthdays
1 Morgan Briede
2 Katelyn McIntosh
3 Marshall Davis
4 Kelley Mies
5 Vic Porter
6 Arabelle Landis
7 Waveland Howe
8 Jenna Koons
9 Carter Wolfe
10 Kolton Littler
11 Bobby Smith
12 Dudley Vanhorn
13 Patrick Briede
14 Coni Mayer
15 Leah Noble
16 Whitney Menter
17 Chris Smith
18 Mark Valentine
19 Dustin Bollinger
20 Emily Lee
21 Rebecca Lee
22 Brice Vanhorn
23 Brad Wilson
24 Ryan Wilson
25 Mable Pettibone
26 Jon Smith
27 Dawn Brown
28 Mike Eguia - G.M.
29 Alfreed Plew
30 James Taylor
31 Rileigh Wolpert
32 Kodee McIntosh
33 Emma Hawkins
34 Megan Jewell
35 Diane Kaehr
36 Adam Miller
37 Connie Snyder
38 Mary Piper

Second Sunday Soups - February 8
It’s that time of year again, time for Second Sunday Soups. Chili, hot dogs, fruit, veggies and cookies will be served in the Fellowship Hall following the 10:30 worship service.

February Anniversaries
9 Kyle & Kara Martin
16 Whitney Menter
18 Don & Sheila Heimann
23 Justin & Britney Landis
G.M. - Golden Meadows
Both our meetings in January were cancelled due to weather.

**MEETING DATES**

1st & 3rd Tuesdays of each month from 9-11am

February 3rd
February 17th

**Interested in joining MOPS?**

Contact Annette Gower 724-6067 or gowercrew@gmail.com

**ISAIAH 43:18-19**

Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past.

See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?

I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.

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**Children's Ministry**

In February the children will be wrapping up their study from our What's in Bible Curriculum on the book of Leviticus. Then, as Lent begins they'll be diving into the same study as the adults titled, “Renegade Gospel, The Rebel Jesus.” This will create a great opportunity for families to discuss what they are learning in their classes, and small groups throughout the weeks at home.

"Our commitment to Jesus means commitment to a revolutionary lifestyle, in which we do not subjugate our allegiance to Christ to any other priority." ~Mike Slaughter from Renegade Gospel, The Rebel Jesus.

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**If we don't teach our children to follow Christ, the world will teach them not to.**
Meet Volunteer

Judy Plum

Hi, I am Judy Plum. I have worked as a volunteer at The Hope Chest for 3 years. Linda Brown asked me to give it a try and I love it. Before moving to southern In., I taught Sunday school at FUMC. I have been back in Decatur for 10 years.

PAJAMA DAY
Feb. 17th. Be sure to wear your pajamas and join in the fun, snacks and the specials.

We are still collecting hats and gloves for children.

Thank you for your continued support, prayers and all your service. We are blessed to be able to serve our community!

Hope Chest Management and Staff
First United Methodist Church

Kid’s First CHILDCARE MINISTRIES

February 2015

Fools think they need no advice, but the wise listen to others. Proverbs 12:15

February Dates
Don’t forget ❤️
Closed !!!
April 3rd
Good Friday

Happy Birthday!!!
Russell Dues
Wyatt Foor

Children’s Humor!!!
Knock, Knock
Who’s There?
Justin

Justin who?
Justin time! Here’s your valentine!

Routines & Needed Fact

January’s newsletter showed children’s nap routine. Daily routines are needed to keep each day running smoothly. No exception at meal time. The children are learning the importance of sitting correctly at their table and chairs.

Before enjoying yummy healthy food they learn to thank God first with prayer, good table manners, using silverware, a cup, and napkin. Oh, and don’t talk with food in your mouth but quietly chew up your food. These daily routines take place at all breakfast, lunch, and snack times. Ms. Shannon appreciates the children learning the task to help others. Each child carries their dirty dishes to the kitchen window and puts trash in container.

Yep, learning is FUN at First United Methodist Church’s Childcare Ministry!

Tana, Got Her Out...

We’re never too old to learn and grow! We all should continue to learn something each day. Children teach us and amaze us, daily. One mother shared how amazed she was when her daughter showed her a picture of a sleeping bear, she had colored. Then stated, “Mom this bear is doing a 4 syllable word, Hibernation.” This sharing mother was amazed and surprised to hear what her daughter had learned at Kid’s First Childcare during a classroom activity for that day!

Ms. Becky and Ms. Tana are continuing their education. For the next 9 months they will travel to Kokomo every Saturday taking a Child Development Association (CDA) class. Parents may be asked for input or fill out surveys to assist their classroom learning. Ms. Becky will be learning more about one and two year olds. While Ms. Tana will be focused on three and four year olds. Yep, it can be fun learning and working together!

Until the ? comes out again!
# February 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
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| ![Image](image.jpg) | 8:15 & 10:30-Worship  
9:30-Sunday School  
2-4 pm-Youth | 6:30 pm-Boy Scouts & Cub Scouts | 9-11 am-MOPS Meeting  
6:30 pm-Discipleship Team  
7 pm-A.A. | 5-6 pm-Community Meal  
6:15 pm-Prayer in the Chapel  
6:15 pm-Kids First Board | ![Image](image.jpg) | 8:15 & 10:30-Worship  
9:30-Sunday School  
Second Sunday Soups after the 10:30 service  
2-4 pm-Youth | 6:30 pm-Boy Scouts & Cub Scouts | 6:30 pm-Discipleship Team  
7 pm-A.A. | 5-6 pm-Community Meal  
6 pm-Finance Committee  
6:15 pm-Prayer in the Chapel  
7 pm-Worship Team | 6:30 pm-Board of Trustees | 13 | Pastor Amy out of town | 14 |  
| ![Image](image.jpg) | 8:15 & 10:30-Worship  
9:30-Sunday School  
2-4 pm-Youth | 6:30 pm-Boy Scouts & Cub Scouts | 9 am-MOPS Meeting  
5:15 pm-Staff  
7 pm-A.A. | 5-6 pm-Community Meal  
6:15 pm-Prayer in the Chapel  
7 pm-A.A. | 18 | Ash Wednesday  
5-6 pm-Community Meal  
6:15 pm-Prayer in the Chapel  
7 pm-Ash Wednesday Worship Service | ![Image](image.jpg) | 19 | 20 | 21 | Noon-Baked Potato Bar Prep |
| ![Image](image.jpg) | 9:30-Worship  
10:45-Discipleship Groups  
Youth Baked Potato Bar following Discipleship Groups | 6:30 pm-Boy Scouts & Cub Scouts | 2 pm-Renegade Gospel,  
Rebel Jesus Bible Study  
7 pm-Administrative Council  
7 pm-A.A. | 5-6 pm-Community Meal  
6:15 pm-Prayer in the Chapel | 26 | 27 | 28 |
February 8
Second Sunday Soups
Chili & Sandwiches
Following Second Service

February 18
Ash Wednesday Service
7:00 pm

February 22
Youth Baked Potato Bar