Excited for 2017

36 One of their religion scholars spoke for them, posing a question they hoped would show him up: “Teacher, which command in God’s Law is the most important?” 37 Jesus said, “Love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence. This is the most important, the first on any list. But there was a second to set alongside it: ‘Love others as well as you love yourself.’ These two commands are pegs; everything in God’s Law and the Prophets hangs from them.” Matthew 22:36-40 The Message

On January 22, 22 leaders of the church gathered for a time of training and planning for 2017. We spent time looking at our mission and vision, which you can read at the bottom of this page, and we spent time in prayer asking God to give us a clear focus for ministry this year. We evaluated our 2016 events asking if we felt God calling us to do them again. It was a great afternoon, and I am excited to continue our work this month at our Ad Council meeting.

I was most impressed and excited about our time of prayer before evaluating 2016. All 22 people prayed; every one of them. People who don’t like to pray aloud, or share in group settings, prayed, giving thanks to God and seeking his direction for our church. I was moved to give God praise for opening the hearts of those present. It was an amazing time of drawing close to God.

We asked how God would lead us to become a full church with unified diversity, being transformed as a congregation so that we can transform the community. And what can we do to grow in our faith this year so that we can help others grow in their faith? We discussed how important it is to understand that we can be unified in our mission of making disciples, how we can be unified in our love of Jesus, and not be in agreement about everything politically or even theologically. We can work together to love God and others and think differently from one another. When we understand that all we are called to do is love God with ALL our passion, prayer, and intelligence (from The Message), and love others as we love ourselves, we will be transformed so we can work to bring transformation to Decatur and Adams County. We can only come to this understanding as we grow closer to God. All of this comes together to help us be the best church for the community, loving God with all we are and seeking to be obedient to his call.

These kind of discussions/conversations are important for us to better understand God and his claim on us. I am excited to continue these discussions and to have more of them with others in the church. I encourage you to pray, seeking God’s guidance as you ask the question, “How is God leading First UMC to become a full church with unified diversity, being transformed as a congregation so that we can transform the community. And what can we do to grow in our faith this year so that we can help others grow in their faith?” I want to hear from you and talk with you about what God is sharing with you. I want to talk with you so that we can come together and begin to discern how God is leading and guiding you to be a part of the focus and ministry for this year. I pray that you will pray with me and be a part of our planning.

See you Sunday,
Pastor Amy

Our mission is To Make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World. At First UMC Decatur, we do that as we Connect in Community, Grow in Faith, Serve in Love as followers of Jesus Christ.
Greetings everyone. As we begin the new year, I’d like to take this opportunity to thank current and former members of the Staff Pastor/Parish Relations Committee for helping to make my first year as Chairperson a rewarding one. Specifically, I’d like to thank the outgoing members – Joe Hawkins, Jeff McIntosh and Roger Thompson (Former Lay Member to Annual Conference) – for their contributions this past year, and also welcome new members Sarah Wolfe, Elaine Plew and Mike Pettibone (Current Lay Member to Annual Conference.)

Also, as I am sure all of you know by now, Pastor Harold Klinker recently announced his decision to step away from his Visitation Pastor role with FUMC. Pastor Harold and Joy will certainly be missed, and I join with all of the congregation in wishing them the best and conveying our appreciation for their Christian service, love and compassion these past few years. Moving forward, the SPPRC is already searching for a suitable replacement and will provide updates to the congregation as this search progresses.

Finally, I invite all members of First Church to contact me or other members of the SPPRC with any questions, concerns or suggestions pertaining to our church staff. My cell number is 223-3049, and my email address is mboyd@formulaboats.com. In addition to Pastor Amy and the new members noted above, returning Committee members are Scott Porter (Lay Leader), Leanna Noble, Vicky Koning, Ian Gilbert and Phyllis Irwin. Thank you, and God Bless.

Michael Boyd
Chairperson, Staff Pastor/Parish Relations Committee
Thank You Notes . . .

Dear Friends,
On behalf of the residents of Golden Meadows Home, I want to thank you for your recent donation of ham. The residents enjoyed a very nice meal. Shortly after we received your generous donation. May God Bless all of you. We hope you all have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Sincerely,
Kristina Nichols

Dear Friends at First U.M.C.:
Thank you for having the Agape Express Puppets at your church this Christmas season! We pray hearts were touched from the Lord through the message! Thanks too for your love offering! May God bless you all in the new year!

In Christ,
Rick & Christine Garner

Dear Friends at First Church:
Thank you for all the remembrances I received this past holiday season. They were greatly appreciated. Also thanks to those who give of their time and talent in the Church office and to those who faithfully help with the newsletters each month.

God Bless You All,
Janet Fraughiger

DRIVERS NEEDED:
Golden Meadows and others in our community have requested rides to church on Sunday mornings. We are currently picking up 4 persons from Golden Meadows and a few people from the Wednesday night meal. We pick them up at 9 am and take them back after the 10 am service is finished. So far, Mike & Carol Pettibone have volunteered to pick up the first Sunday of each month. Steve & Mary Pilkington the second Sunday of the month. Phylis Ulman the third Sunday of the month. Scott & Shelley Porter have helped. We are looking for any help possible. You may commit to a set Sunday per month or any way that fits your schedule. You would let Janet in the office know your availability and she will mail reminder cards with phone numbers and instructions. All our drivers are currently using their own cars.

MISSING FROM YOUR HOME?
Did you provide a dessert, cake, or brownies for a recent Church function? A “collection” of “leftovers” glass and plastic containers, some with lids, are “stacking up” in the Church kitchen. Check out the “leftover collection” and see if a container belongs at home in your kitchen. Thank YOU!!

February Birthdays
2/01 Morgan Briede
2/02 Katelyn Engstrom
2/03 Marshall Davis
2/03 Kelley Mies
2/03 Vic Porter
2/05 Roy Ehrsam
2/06 Arabelle Landis
2/07 Waveland Howe
2/07 Peggy Hunter - G.M.
2/08 Jenna Koons
2/08 Carter Wolfe (12)
2/09 Kolton Littler (11)
2/09 Bobby Smith
2/09 Dudley Vanhorn
2/10 Patrick Briede
2/10 Coni Mayer
2/10 Leah Noble
2/11 Hannah Wilson (10)
2/12 Esther Miller
2/13 Lou Anne Stevens
2/13 Darrell Valentine
2/14 Betty Fifer
2/14 Amanda Geimer
2/16 Whitney Menter
2/16 Chris Smith
2/19 Mark Valentine
2/21 Dustin Bollinger
2/21 Emily Lee
2/21 Rebecca Lee (17)
2/21 Brice Vanhorn
2/21 Brad Wilson
2/21 Ryan Wilson
2/22 Mable Pettibone
2/22 Jon Smith
2/23 Dawn Brown
2/23 Mike Eguia
2/23 Alfred Plew
2/23 James Taylor
2/24 Rileigh Wolpert
2/25 Kodee McIntosh
2/26 Emma Hawkins (17)
2/26 Megan Jewell
2/27 Diane Kaehr
2/27 Adam Miller
2/28 Connie Snyder
2/29 Mary Piper

G.M. - Golden Meadows

February Anniversaries
2/09 Kyle & Kara Martin
2/18 Don & Sheila Heimann
2/23 Justin & Brittnay Landis
The Hope Chest
The Little Shop with a Big

February 14, 2017
We are celebrating Valentine’s Day
And Customer Appreciation Day

Stop in and check out all the new items. We will have snacks, specials and of course free coffee. You may also register for a free gift.

The Christmas Jar project made it possible for us to help 15 families have a nicer Christmas. Throughout the year we also helped 59 families with clothes and school supplies. Your support has made this all possible.

Thank you

The Hope Chest Staff
**Tana's Colorful Words**

**Thinking A New Way**

I would like to suggest a new way of thinking. When you just let your thoughts wander, do they tend to wander to your concerns or problems? When this happens your mind swirls around with all the things you have to do or have done. Your thoughts become busy thinking about ways to try to solve or correct them. You waste time and energy. Worst of all, your mind is so filled with your thoughts and problems that you lose sight of your Savior Jesus Christ! Jesus is all around you at all times. You just need to take the time to stop, look, listen and feel! When you are thinking of your Savior you feel safe, loved, and at peace! When you hear a bird singing, see the sun shining through the clouds, receive a friendly smile from someone passing by... could these be signs that Jesus is right there with you, watching, caring, and holding you? Try Thinking a New Way this year and enjoy his presence in all you say and do!

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will. Romans 12:2

Until the come out Again!

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**February Joke**

**Do Skunks celebrate Valentine’s Day?**

Sure, they’re very scent-mental!

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**That’s A Fact**

**What Is Valentine’s Day**

Tuesday, February 14th is Valentine’s Day. A time to show affection to family, friends or someone extra special. This could be done by giving a valentine greeting card, candy, flowers or even jewelry. We wondered what children at Kid’s First would say when asked, “What does Valentine’s Day mean,” here are a few replies.

Chloe, Adalyn, Claire all thought it was about hearts. Kane thought maybe a snowman.

Charlotte, Bristol, Colton and Corinne stated, “It’s about the box of chocolate candy!” Dylan thought maybe it’s about animals.

Cooper said, “It’s still about pumpkins.” Tristan believes lighting is involved. Russel, Lillie, Hudson, Rylee, and Shaylie were a little unsure.


This next answer caused me to tear up and might touch your heart too. Emmett and Daxton stated, “It’s about Jesus and his love for us!”

The children gave their honest and great answers! At Kid's First, we want to share our LOVE by saying, “Happy Valentine’s Day to YOU!”

That’s A Fact
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<td>6:30 pm-Boy Scouts &amp; Cub Scouts</td>
<td>9 am-MamaTalk 2 pm-Bible Study 5:30 pm-Staff Meeting 7 pm-A.A.</td>
<td>5-6 pm-Community Meal</td>
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<td>6:30 pm-Boy Scouts &amp; Cub Scouts 7 pm-Worship Design Team</td>
<td>2 pm-Bible Study 7 pm-A.A. Newsletter Deadline</td>
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<td>9 am-MamaTalk 2 pm-Bible Study 6 pm-Stewardship &amp; Finance Team 7 pm-Ad Council 7 pm-A.A.</td>
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Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world

Connect - Grow - Serve

Sunday, February 19

Jeff Miller’s Ham Loaf Church Dinner

Fishes & Loaves Fund-Raiser