Love Wins

28 We know that God works all things together for good for the ones who love God, for those who are called according to his purpose.
35 Who will separate us from Christ’s love? Will we be separated by trouble, or distress, or harassment, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?
37 But in all these things we win a sweeping victory through the one who loved us. 38 I’m convinced that nothing can separate us from God’s love in Christ Jesus our Lord: not death or life, not angels or rulers, not present things or future things, not powers 39 or height or depth, or any other thing that is created. Romans 8:28, 35, 37-39 (CEB)

It doesn’t always feel like love wins, does it? When words are spoken that hurt deeply, or when people’s answer to anger is violence it doesn’t feel like love is winning. It is hard to hold onto the commandment to love as we have been loved, when so many people are hurting the innocent in the world. But, Paul reminds us that in the end, God’s love is ours and nothing can separate us from that love. There are days when we must cling to faith and allow that faith to see us through the difficult situation at hand. God’s promise is true, God is present with us always, even if we don’t feel that presence.

One of my favorite quotes was written by a prisoner in one of the Nazi concentration camps. There is no name given to the quote, but it was on a wall of the camp. It reads:

*I believe in the sun even if it does not shine.
I believe in love even if I do not feel it. (or when I am alone)
I believe in God even when he is silent.*

This quote is framed in my office, it is the home and lock screen on my phone, and it is scribbled on a post it note by a friend who has now passed into eternity. It is a quote that reminds me that love wins. Even when it doesn’t feel that way, love wins. If this were not true, then the celebration of Easter is a joke. God raising Jesus from the dead proves that love wins. Jesus died for a sinful and broken world, and in his death we find forgiveness and salvation. Jesus was raised from the dead so the broken and sinful world would know that love conquers even death, and in Jesus’ resurrection we find the hope of eternity in the reality of our present day.

When the world doesn’t make sense, when a loved one is diagnosed with cancer, when depression overwhelms the spirit, hold onto the faith you have in God, and know that love wins. Don’t give up hope that the sun will shine, that God will speak, and that love will be felt. If you are struggling with a difficult situation, or you are doubting that any of this is true, then I invite you to be with us for worship each Sunday. Through Mother’s Day, we will wrestle with God’s will, asking tough questions, clinging to faith and love. Join us as we hear the Good News proclaimed and as we claim for our own lives the promise that love wins.

See you Sunday,

Pastor Amy
Present: Pastor Amy Covington, Bev Stuck, Helen Walters, Roger Thompson, Lowell Martin, Mike Pettibone, Scott Porter, Mike Snyder, Frank Montgomery, Nancy Thompson

1. Devotions and communion were shared by Pastor Amy in the Chapel.
2. Mike Pettibone opened the meeting by stating his gratitude for all the hard work and good things that are happening at 1st Church and for us not to get tired in the journey.
3. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as read.
4. Treasurer’s report: Lowell reported for Aaron Gower that all bills are paid and our tithes to the Conference and District are paid through Feb. All the tithes for 2014 were paid in full. Pastor Amy said we have received commendations from the Bishop and District superintendent which will be printed in the newsletter.
5. Staff Parish: The committee is in the process of evaluations for all paid staff. Pastor Amy announced our new District Superintendent will be David Neckers who will begin July 1.
6. Trustees: A discussion was held on how to make the church more secure. Representatives from law enforcement have met with our childcare and ministry leaders and some new procedures and additions will be put in place. Mike Pettibone would like to meet with Frank, Karen Stahl, and John August to work on a facilities plan. Scott said that such planning needs to take into consideration all the ministries. Frank reported that the closing on the sale of the Cross Creek property is still in the process. Trustees will have an internal workday at the church on Saturday.
7. Kids First: Bev reported that Becky and Tana are attending monthly classes in Kokomo. They also attended a workshop and the whole staff has participated in webinars. Registration is due by May 1 for the elementary summer day camp which will begin in June and run to Aug. 7. Currently at the daycare there are 63 registered children from 53 families. Families are pleased and supportive or the efforts of the staff and church for the welfare of the children.
8. Youth: There are 24 signed up for the mission trip – 6 adults and 18 youth. They will be going to Myrtle Beach doing home refurbishment, wheelchair ramps, etc. The trip theme is “Pray as you go.” The envelope fund raiser is in progress. The Sunday morning disciple group is becoming too large for the Loft and is planning to move to the balcony during the 10:45 hour.
9. Other business: There was discussion on moving to a single board administrative organization. Frank made a motion to start the investigation of how this single board structure would look at 1st church. Bev seconded and the motion was approved. We will be celebrating our 175th anniversary in 2016. Plans are underway to have events throughout the year with the Bishop coming on April 10 and a monthly focus on our history. Pastor Amy has applied for a renewal grant which, if accepted, would have guest speakers and former pastors bringing the message during the summer months.
10. Helen Walters closed the meeting with prayer.
Worship and Discipleship This Month


A question we ask many times in our lives. This question leads us to ask what God’s will is? Is it God’s will that people die of cancer? That children die before they can experience life? That natural disasters are a plan of God’s to cleanse? Why do these things happen?

May 3  Why?: Seeing God’s Will for Me
Colossians 1:9-10, Romans 12:1-2

May 10 Why?: God’s Love Prevails
Romans 8:28, 35, 37-39

Discipleship Groups are meeting in the Family Life Center, Ocean Room, and Fellowship Hall. Alpha & Omega meets in the Lounge and is studying 1 John.

May 17
Wait  Acts 1:1-11
How often in life do we plunge ahead before seeking God’s guidance? There are times we need to wait to hear what God wants us to do.

May 24
Set Us on Fire!  Acts 2:1-21
The Church was born with the fire of the Holy Spirit. On Pentecost, we invite the Holy Spirit to come and set us on fire again.
Please join us for the next
Coffee with Pastor Amy
Sunday, May 17
10:45 am
Pastor Amy’s Office

This is an informal way to get to know Pastor Amy and others new to the church. We will share the history of our United Methodist Tradition and the mission and vision of First UMC. Children are invited to attend the Discipleship Groups meeting in our Children’s Area. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Amy at revcovington@gmail.com, or 724-3158.

Our first Ask the Pastor discussion and brunch is coming May 24 at 10:45 am.

May 24 is Pentecost Sunday. Pentecost is the celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit on the disciples and the birth of the Church. There are usually many questions about the Holy Spirit and Pentecost. Join us in the Fellowship Hall on the 24 to ask your questions and have a great discussion and fellowship. What a great way to Connect in Community and to Grow in Faith.
Thank You Notes...

First UMC Staff,
The kind generosity of good friends like you has been a
great blessing to us during this difficult time.
My family and I would like to offer our most sincere
thanks for the Amazing Grace Wind Chime you sent in
memory of Dad.

Thank you for your loving support,
Jeff, Tana, Justin & Jimmy Sheets

The Family of First United Methodist Church,
We would like to take a moment to say “Thank You” for
all the prayers lifted up by you for our God Driven Jour-
ney! This 4 1/2 year journey has been forever uplifting as
God’s timing is always perfect. Prayer has kept us diligent
and faithful to our God when times have seemed like this
journey would never end. Thank you for praying for us
and new son, Tyius!

God Bless You!
Craig & Michelle Simon

Decatur Church family,
Thank you for remembering me in prayer during my
surgery and recovery.

Rex Clinker
(Diane Valentine’s brother)

Dear Friends,
Thank you so much for blessing the clients of the Hope
Clinic with the wonderful baby shower gifts. We were
blessed with so many wonderful items to help stock our
shelves!
This ministry is truly a community effort, and would not be
possible without your prayers and support. Thank you so
much for your on-going partnership with us.
We consider it an honor that you choose to join God’s hand
at work through the ministry of the Hope Clinic!

Sincerely,
Hope Clinic Board of Directors, Volunteers & Staff

May Birthdays
1 Craig Seitz
2 Blake Taylor
3 Robert Thompson-Witte
4 Cindy Wilson
5 Chad Poling
6 Colin Heimann
7 Jamie Basham
8 Jessica Basham
9 Chirsty Scott
10 Miranda Putteet
11 Joe Friedt
12 Blake Taylor
13 Sam Burgin
14 Cindy Wilson
15 Eldon Habegger
16 Jo Bollinger
17 Tana Sheets
18 Aaron Gower
19 Judy Dowell
20 Quentin Taylor
21 Wanda Boyd

May Anniversaries
7 Kent & Jean Koons
9 Darrell & Diane Valentine
13 Duke & Taya Bollinger
14 Talon & Delanie Foley
16 Ian & Erin Gilbert
19 Jeff & Kelley Miller
20 Jason & Kim Brune
22 Aaron & Annette Gower

You Are Invited...

Dr. Dean Fager will retire on June 30, 2015. In honor of
his long service in the Lord and to the United Methodist
Church, there will be a reception for people to come, visit
with him, and wish him well. The gathering will be held
on June 14, 2015, from 2:00-4:00 pm in the Fellowship
Hall of Logansport First UMC (800 E. Broadway,
Logansport). Should there be pictures of Dean taken
during the time he was associated with you, please send
them to Elizabeth Billman, 200 E. Roselawn Drive,
Logansport, IN 46947 by June 1. We hope to create a
PowerPoint for people to enjoy. Written memories to give
Pastor Dean would be appreciated also.

In Honor of Your Mom
Red Geranium Sale

Remember your Mom with a beautiful red geranium and
help the flower fund! The altar will be blooming with red
flowers in tribute to that special person in your life. Dead-
line is May 3.

_______ 6” pot $7.50
_______ 10” pot $26.00

$__________ contribution to flower fund

In honor of
In memory of
Given by

175th Anniversary 2016

At our last meeting we got excited about our church’s his-
tory and looking around the church for “relics” from the
“old” church. If you have a favorite story about the church
and/or how the church was important in your faith develop-
ment, please see Bev Stuck, Doug Rieth, Karen Stahl,
Sandy Collier, Nancy Thompson, or Pastor Amy, or come
to the next meeting on Tuesday, May 26, at 7 pm in the
Lounge. Our goal is to be making disciples of Jesus Christ
for the transformation of the world for the next 175 years!!!
Spring has sprung! The youth group is ramping up for summer. We are busy fundraising for our summer mission trip to Myrtle Beach! Our envelope fundraiser will wrap up this month and by the time you read this the fish fry will be right around the corner! If you still need tickets the youth have them. The youth are also in need of gently used furniture for our new Loft space.

We are wrapping up a study on chaos and stress. In May we will start a new series called Judgment Call. Here is a taste.

When was the last time you had to make a tough call? Was it when deciding what to eat for lunch? To drink Coke or Pepsi? Go to the gym or skip it? The truth is, we make judgment calls all day long, from what we watch on TV or who we hang out with to more complicated decisions like whether to attend a party or stick with a tough friendship. And, in every decision, we’re forced to ask the question, “Which option is better?” The problem is, our natural tendency to judge leaks into places it shouldn’t—like our relationships. We start thinking of people as options and deciding which ones are better or worse. Many of us are even tempted to make those judgments about ourselves. Unfortunately, most of the time, we make decisions about people without all the facts. We don’t know someone’s whole story, their whole situation, or their whole potential. We miss the big picture. Maybe that’s why, in the Bible, God makes it super clear: Judgment is His call. Not ours.

Join us on Sunday mornings at 9:30 worship, 10:45 discipleship, and 2-4 for Loft! If you have any questions, please email me at theloftfumcd@icloud.

Grace and Peace

Christopher
FISH AND TENDERLOIN
DINNER
MAY 2nd
4 pm to 8 pm
Please Join Us!!

The Hope Chest
The Little Shop with a Big Heart
Like us on Facebook

THANK YOU to all who contributed to The Easter Basket Drive. We collected items to fill over 50 baskets. They were delivered to Adams County Hospital, Child Family Services and to children at our Wednesday night meals.

Mother’s Day Tea / Bake Sale

May 8th 10 am to 5 pm

Join us for Hot Tea and pick up a few “goodies” from our Bake Sale!
SPECIAL MEMO

CLOSED !!!!
May 25th
Honoring Memorial Day

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Easton Ripley
Brayden Butcher
Kane Gage
Trey Rumschlag
Claira Foreman

MAY RIDDLE

What bow can’t be tied?
A rainbow!!
Keep Smiling!

TANA’S COLORFUL WORDS!

Love and Limits

Children thrive on the combination of love and limits. Teaching and parenting children is like using a balancing beam. If tipped too much in one direction, the person may fall off. It’s the same with children. If they have just love with no limits, they are not being prepared for the real world. They don’t learn to respect their boundaries or others. If given too many limits minus love, the child can continue to grow feeling unlovable to others and to themselves. Children do need both love and limits. Remember, the Bible says, “Those who spare the rod of discipline hate their children, but those who love their children care enough to discipline them.” Proverbs 13:24 “Lord, Please help me and our children to know as I discipline them for their misbehavior, it is out of love for you that I choose to teach them right from wrong. Amen”

Until the come out again!

THAT’S A FACT

Mother’s Day, is May 10. Proverbs 31 honors “A Wife of Noble Character”: 10-11 A good woman is hard to find, and worth far more than diamonds, Her husband trusts her without reserve, and never has reason to regret it. 14-15 She’s like a trading ship that sails to faraway places and brings back exotic surprises. First thing in the morning, she dresses for work, rolls up her sleeves, eager to get started. She senses the worth of her work. 26-28 When she speaks she has something worthwhile to say, and she always says it kindly. Her children respect and bless her; her husband joins with words of praise charm can mislead and beauty soon fades.

30-31 The woman to be admired and praised is the woman who lives in Fear-of-GOD. Give her everything she deserves! Festoon her life with praises

Mothers are to be celebrated!

THAT’S A FACT!!
April 15, 2015

Dear Friends:

I am writing to thank you for your faithful payment of your 2014 tithes and district askings. According to our records, you are one of 671 churches which tithed at or above the 90% level! Thank you!

Because of your faithfulness, the budget of the Annual Conference is supported, our denomination’s shared ministries are supported, and the necessary underpinning has been provided for all of the additional mission giving, Advance Special, special offerings, and related efforts which depend upon our connectional structure.

Because of your faithfulness to tithing, a young child was able to make her first public commitment to Christ through our camping program, a pastor’s spouse was able to be treated for a life-threatening disease without experiencing catastrophic financial drain, and a college student received guidance from a university chaplain. Along with these ministries you have enabled your church to be connected to people in need around the world.

Thank you for your generous giving in the past and thank you for your faithfulness this year in meeting your obligations and opportunities for ministry. In recognition of your faithfulness, I am enclosing a special recognition that I hope you will post and share with your congregation.

May God continue to bless you with generous hearts and with abundant resources to share.

Yours in Christ,

Bishop Michael J. Coyner
“Making a Difference in Indiana ... and around the World”

MCJ/ekm
March 2015

Pastor Amy and the members of Decatur First UMC:

Thank you for paying your full Tithe and District Asking in 2014! According to your end of the year report and the conference records, you and 94 of the 135 district churches were faithful in your financial support of the connection.

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<th>Ave Worship</th>
<th>Tithable Income</th>
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<td>167</td>
<td>362,068</td>
<td>2,168</td>
<td>38,330</td>
<td>106%</td>
<td>3,626</td>
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The Stewardship # above is your tithable income reported divided by your average worship attendance. The district average is $1,586.

In our District income reported for the tithe (basically a church’s operating budget) was down 1%, while both giving to the tithe and district asking were down about 5%. So thank you for your faithfulness! All but a couple of churches in our district paid something toward our connectional ministries.

Because of your faithfulness we were able to fund together aid for widows of pastors, run a great camping program, help churches in need, set up the framework for the United Methodist Committee on Relief so that 100% of whatever is given goes directly to the people it is intended to help. You have helped fund African University, whose fruit of changed lives will be evident for decades. Because of your faithfulness, Bishop Michael Coyner was able to initiate some new programs in the conference, enabled us to help pastors in need, and in our District you’ve helped support administrative help for churches through the District Office, and provided me with the means to help new pastors get their start in Candidacy and serving as pastors.

The Annual Conference and the Districts were able to reduce our budgets by about 25% through the creation of the new Indiana Conference and District realignments. This has resulted in premerger giving of 14%+ going to 11% connectional giving, enabling the local church to focus more on local ministry. I believe we are much better stewards since this change. Many other conferences require over 25% of the church’s income go toward connectional giving.

I know we primarily support our connectional ministry out of faithfulness, not for the kudos. But I wanted to give you a big thank you - there are things we can do better together than separately, and you helped us do that!

I wish all the best for you as you continue in faithfulness and fruitfulness in 2015 and beyond.

Peace of Christ

Rev. Dr. David Michel
April 10, 2015

Dear Friends at First United Methodist Church,

Thank you again for your prayers and partnership as we take the gospel to every person on every screen! In both open and closed countries people are responding in faith; lives are being changed—now and for eternity!

By making the JESUS Film Project library readily available to all connected devices, people are able to share Jesus in significant ways. Here is a story from a university student who attended a Cru Spring Break outreach event called Big Break:

"I just came back from Big Break, where I made a decision to commit a year after graduation to intern with the JESUS Film Project. At Big Break, I also downloaded the Jesus Film Media app. On my way home from Big Break, I thought, "How am I going to break it to my family that I am not accepting the job at the NIH to do cool research for a year, to instead work for an organization that they have never even heard of?" Although most of my family is Christian, the thought of the conversation was daunting. So, after going home I was chatting with my mom about all the cool things that happen at Big Break and told her I downloaded a cool app that I thought she would love because they have material in our native language, Yoruba. She was so interested, that even after watching some of the film, she got my phone back from me so she could keep watching more. She particularly loved the "Growing In Christ" material in Yoruba. The next day, I came back from church and my grandma asked me if it was Sunday. Because of her age, it is hard for her to go to church especially in the cold because she is not used to it compared to the warm weather in Nigeria. I felt bad that she sometimes feels limited in her walk with Jesus since it is hard for her to get to church. But then I thought, "Wait! She would totally love the JESUS film!" My grandmother knows very little English and I can only understand basic Yoruba, so there is sometimes a language barrier between us. I started the JESUS Film and set my phone in front of her and she could not take her beautiful aged eyes off the phone the whole time! Further in the film, she started to just raise her hands and sing praises to Jesus. It was so cool to watch and I felt connected to her in a way that I never felt before! I am so glad I downloaded this app, because not only will my family not be as surprised when I tell them that I am interning for JESUS Film Project, but through this, my grandmother got to experience hearing God's word in our native language!

This summer I'll be heading to Colorado to take required theology classes and attend the biannual staff conference “Cru15”. I am so excited to learn to study and teach the Word of God and to have opportunities to plan, network, and interact with our leadership and staff from across the country and around the world. In addition, it will be a time of vision-casting and spiritual renewal. It is important for all our staff to step back, reflect, and remember all that...
God has done. The conferences is intended to be a time similar to what Christ modeled, with His disciples in Mark 6 and elsewhere in Scripture.

I also have the opportunity to go to the Middle East this fall to do on the ground ministry with Jesus Film Mission Trips. Often neglected on the world stage, this friendly but arid country desperately needs to hear about the love of Jesus. Overshadowed by rich and influential neighbors, it is home to only a handful of nationals who have experienced the message of the Gospel. The vast majority will never hear without outside assistance. Those who show interest in spiritual things will receive follow-up from long-term workers, as we trust God to work in the lives of others. We get to be a part of a long-term plan for exposing the next generation to the message of hope found in Jesus Christ. It is an incredible opportunity for me to get to do front line ministry and connect with the needs of those ministering in incredibly difficult locations.

I am responsible for my personal ministry expenses to take classes, attend “Cru15”, and to participate in the Middle East trip. The total needs for the trip, the conference, and ministry expenses are about $6,000. Please join with me in praying that the total need will be met.

Would you prayerfully consider giving a special gift of $50, $100, $200, or some other amount? Because of your prayers and partnership, I have been able to serve the Lord in making Gospel resources available around the world. Thank you for the part you have played. May God lead you as you consider an investment in this venture, one that will help to renew and equip me for greater effectiveness.

Until All Have Heard,

Jennifer

P.S. Use the enclosed commitment card and envelope to send in your gift by May 20 or give online at, https://give.cru.org/give/0583097. If giving by check please make it payable to “Cru.”
Mark your calendars!!!

VBS is coming
July 19th - 24th.

April was a wonderfully full month for our MOPS group! Dr. Jessamine Hippensteel joined us to talk about health issues related to women and children. She did a great job answering all our questions! Then we spent some time crafting a we created large wooden growth charts. We'll be finishing those up in May.

Our second April meeting was our annual tea & testimony. Mandy Arnold, a fellow mom the same age as many of us, joined us to share her journey with breast cancer and Crohn's disease. She is a beautiful witness to faith in Christ. Her story is filled with one God moment after another that speaks so much truth about how big our Creator is, how much He loves us and how He is always there even in the storms of life. We continue to pray for healing for Mandy as she is still in active treatment for cancer.

We are so thankful for all the vendors, shoppers and supporters of our annual MOPS RefreshHer Expo fundraiser that took place in April. Everything went great and we praise the Lord that we were able to raise money to support this outreach ministry to moms another year. A 10% tithe of the profits will be donated to the Women's Crisis Shelter.
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<td>Neon National Day of Prayer Service southwest corner of Courthouse</td>
<td>Hope Chest Mother's Day Tea Bake Sale</td>
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<td>6:30 pm-Board of Trustees</td>
<td>2 pm-Tea for Reservation of the Penny Depot</td>
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<td>8:15 &amp; 9:30-Worship 10:45-Discipleship Groups 5-6 pm-Community Meal 6:15-Prayer in Chapel</td>
<td>Memorial Day (Church office closed) Newsletter Deadline</td>
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<td>8:15 &amp; 9:30-Worship 10:45-Discipleship Groups 5-6 pm-Community Meal 6:15-Prayer in Chapel</td>
<td>Annual Conference - May 28-30 (Pastor Amy out of office) 2 pm-Anniversary Meeting 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

May 10

Mother's Day

May 2

Community Fish Fry
4:00—8:00

Honoring Graduates

May 31