A New Year

"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. The wild animals honor me, the jackals and the owls, because I provide water in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland, to give drink to my people, my chosen." Isaiah 43:18-20, NIV

A new year, a new you. That is what we are told we can have or should have, a new you. So much money and energy are spent on making ourselves new each year. Resolutions are made that have us spinning out of control trying to reach somewhat unrealistic goals. We are going to lose weight, we are going to eat healthier, exercise more, spend less, get our “houses” in order, be nicer, more patient, the list goes on and on. How many of those resolutions are actually kept beyond January? Not many. I gave up a few years ago making resolutions, because I ended up feeling worse about myself and life in general because I never fulfilled them. Instead I try to start the New Year with a new focus on what God wants for my life and CHOOSING to see the new that God desires for me. Last year, I chose to focus on Joy. 2019 was a difficult year in many ways for me and my family, but God was ever present and you, my church community, showed up in ways that made it easier to choose joy. Thank you for all you do for me and my family!! As we look to 2020, I want to hear Isaiah’s words and find the new that God desires and is doing for me, my family, and our congregation.

The passage from Isaiah tells us that God is doing a new thing. We should not think about or dwell on old things, things in the past, but instead we should look for the new that God is doing around us. So, in 2020, what might God do new in your life? In the life of our congregation? In our community? Will we be able to perceive it? Not if we are focused on the past, but only if we put the old away and pursue God in the new. Seeing life through the lens of loving God with our whole hearts, minds, souls, and strength, and loving our neighbors as we love ourselves, will help us to experience the new that God wants to do.

I pray that in the New Year you can offer your life to God and see how God uses it. John Wesley used a prayer that has become The Wesleyan Covenant Prayer. The prayer is my hope for our church in 2020:

I am no longer my own, but thine. Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.

Put me to doing, put me to suffering. Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee, exalted for thee or brought low for thee. Let me be full, let me be empty. Let me have all things, let me have nothing.

I freely and heartily yield all things to thy pleasure and disposal. And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it. And the covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

See you Sunday!

Pastor Amy

Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World.
We do that as we Connect in Community, Grow in Faith, Serve in Love as followers of Jesus.
Thank You Notes...
Dear First UMC,
I deeply appreciated the card with those names of persons who were praying for me that I received in the mail. It was deeply appreciated. It’s great to know that other brothers and sisters in our connection are praying for churches and their pastors. It couldn’t have come at a better time for encouragement. Blessings to Decatur First as you make disciples for Jesus and do the work of ministry during this Advent and Christmas season. Grateful to you!
Tim Dilley, Lead Pastor
Fort Wayne Good Shepherd

Dear Friends,
I want to thank you for the special prayer you gave for me and my congregation. Thank you for the help and encouragement.
Larry D. Maddox, Pastor
Bethany UMC - Fort Wayne

Thanks to all who donated gifts to the Love INC Emmanuel Project.

Thank you, First UMC, for your continued generosity to your staff. We are so very grateful for the love and support you offer us each year at Christmas. May our ministry continue to be a blessing to you and our community!!
Pastor Amy and the Staff at First UMC

Dear Friends,
On behalf of all of us at Golden Meadows Home, I want to thank you for presenting a Thanksgiving Service for our residents. Everyone who attended told me that it was a beautiful service and they all enjoyed the goodies you brought for them. Your church family continues to be a great support to our residents throughout the year and we are very thankful to all of you. We wish your congregation a very Blessed Christmas and a wonderful New Year. Thank you very much for caring so much about our residents.

Sincerely,
Kristina A. Nichols, Administrator

I want to say “THANK YOU!!” to our church leadership! I am so grateful for all the persons who are using their gifts to help guide First UMC to live into the vision God has placed before us. 2020 will see some changes in leaders, but I know that we will continue to lead with passion and excitement so we can make disciples of Jesus for the transformation of the world!!
Grace and Peace,
Pastor Amy

Sunday Soups are back!!!
On Sunday, January 12, we will have our first Sunday Soup of 2020. Plan to stay after the 10 o’clock worship service for chili and hot dogs and all the fixin’s in the Fellowship Hall. The proceeds from the lunch will go to benefit Fishes Loaves. Hope to see everyone on the second Sunday in January for food and fellowship!!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!
January
1/04 Ryan Brickley
1/04 Angie Geimer
1/04 Rochelle McBride
1/04 Donna Owens
1/04 Corey Wilson
1/06 Doug Rieth
1/08 Stan Allison
1/08 Mia Jackson
1/09 Elva Smith
1/12 Carson Friedt
1/13 Don Heimann
1/15 Remington Everett
1/15 Mandy Poling
1/18 Natesha Witte

Birthdays
1/20 Lily Johnson
1/20 Phyllis Mills
1/22 Chris Everett
1/23 Colleen Gaunt
1/23 Dot Vanhorn
1/25 Deb Porter
1/25 Gail Taylor
1/27 Linda Drake
1/27 Beverly Hill
1/28 Jason Brune
1/29 Richard Evans
1/30 Helen Walters
1/31 Jane Friedt
1/31 Brendan Gilbert

January Anniversaries
1/09 Stan & Jane Allison
1/13 Rod & Teresa Simon
1/25 Richard & Janet Evans

Baby Shower for the Hope Clinic
We love babies! And we love their moms and dads! In support of Sanctity of Human Life month, we are providing you with the opportunity to purchase new baby items for The Hope Clinic in Decatur and Berne. We are hosting a church-wide baby shower during January, so that we can bless moms and dads who have chosen life for their child. The following items that are always needed: diaper bags, diapers (especially sizes 4 or 5 or 6) and wipes, new baby equipment (cribs, mattresses, high chairs, baby gates, strollers, carrier infant car seats, car seats for up to 40 pounds, and toddler seats/booster chairs, crib sheets, laundry soap, potty chair or ring, pacifiers, teething toys, bottles and sippy cups, baby tableware, baby toys, baby clothes (newborn through 2T), receiving blankets and formula. We would especially like to have children’s books for infant through at least 3 years of age. Items not needed at this time include: baby powder and baby oil. For our mothers, we need gently used maternity clothes in sizes large and extra large that are suitable for the work place. Bring your Baby/Mom items to church and place them in the boxes at the rear of the Sanctuary starting January 5 through January 26. Thanks!
Charlie Brune
260-223-1105

Baby Shower Coordinator for The Hope Clinic
The Hope Chest
The Little Shop with a Big Heart

The Hope Chest has been able to help several people through the past year. The Christmas Jar program last year was another big success. We were able to help several people in the community have a much happier Christmas thanks to all of your donations. It makes a big difference to everyone.

Happy New Year to all!
The Hope Chest Staff
Tana’s Colorful Words

Keeping Healthy During Winter Months

Here are a few tips on keeping healthy.

- **Wash those hands!!!** When your child sees you washing your hands, you’re teaching them to wash their hands, often. As the sign above our drinking fountain says, “Wash your hands and pray often as God and Germs are everywhere!”

- **Get plenty of sleep.** Make sure your child is keeping with a consistent bedtime schedule even during weekends and school breaks. This allows them to make sure they get their full 10 – 13 hours of needed sleep.

- **Staying hydrated!** Is important for all ages. A suggested amount of H2O for “little ones” follows.
  
  Toddler: 2 to 4 cups daily
  4-8 years: 5 cups daily

- **Dress appropriately.** With today’s car seats children may not wear coats. Make sure the vehicle is warm for the child and their coat is on when getting out of vehicle, if only a very short distance. A child that gets chilled runs the risk of getting sick.

Staying healthy or catching the bug, through the winter months, could be a choice.

Until the **come out again!**

That’s A Fact

Washing hands is fun singing this song to tune of “Row Row Row Your Boat.”

Wash Wash Wash your hands!
Tell the germs “So long!”
Tops, bottoms, between your fingers
Wash them to this song.

Toddlers want you to know.

“Catch your cough or sneeze in you elbow please!”

Helps keep germs from spreading.
# January 2020

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<td>6 pm-Faith 101</td>
<td>9 am-MamaTalk</td>
<td>5:15 pm-Fishes &amp; Loaves</td>
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<td>5 pm-Youth &amp; Confirmation, 8 pm-Harry Potter &amp; The Gospels</td>
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<td>Brianna’s Hope</td>
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<td>6:30 pm-Cub Scout Committee</td>
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<td>10:00 service</td>
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<td>7 pm-Vision Team</td>
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<td>6 pm-Finance Committee</td>
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Happy New Year!

January 12

Sunday Soup to Benefit Fishes & Loaves Chili & Hot Dogs