

March & April 2014

The Observer



First United Methodist Church

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An E-pistle ...

from Bishop Mike

"Making a difference in Indiana ... and around the world."



"A Serious Concern"

In his first letter to the church at Corinth, the Apostle Paul says (in Eugene Peterson's translation *The Message*):

"I have a serious concern to bring up with you, my friends, using the authority of Jesus, our Master. I'll put it as urgently as I can: You must get along with each other. You must learn to be considerate of one another, cultivating a life in common." (I Corinthians 1:10)

I share the same concern for our Indiana state legislature, for our U.S. Congress, for our United Methodist Church, and for many of our congregations here in Indiana. We live in a time when there are too many conflicts, too little cooperation, and too few people who are willing to get along. Simple courtesy, the ability to compromise, and the willingness to think of the larger good – those things seem to be in short supply. We are reaching the point where the very social fabric is coming unraveled.

"Simple courtesy, the ability to compromise and the willingness to think of the larger good – those things seem to be in short supply. We are reaching the point where the very social fabric is coming unraveled."

This inability to cultivate what Paul calls "a life in common" is on the rise. In its most extreme versions, it leads to shootings here in Indianapolis and to "stand your ground" violence in other states. In less extreme versions, it leads to angry postings on social media. And in its church manifestation it leads to people

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labeling others with whom they disagree. I see terms like "heretic" and "Nazi" and "unbeliever" thrown around by persons who claim to be followers of Christ. I receive notes and e-mails from persons wanting me to take sides and settle their rather petty disputes with one another (and you can bet that if the Bishop did intervene and judge the worthiness of their position, they would accuse me of being an "autocrat").

I don't have factual proof that my concern is accurate or that disharmony is on the rise, but I think anyone who follows the news is aware that we are becoming a less harmonious people – even in our churches.

How can we turn this around? I suggest the following steps for each of us and all of us to take:

1. Start by saying "I could be wrong" when expressing your opinions. That simple caveat allows room for the other person to have a different opinion. And it is also the truth – we may well be wrong, even when we have a strong opinion.
2. Practice stating opposing opinions without labeling or cynicism. The ability to explain positions with which we disagree means that we have truly listened and learned. It also makes it more likely that we will convince others to consider our opinions.
3. Agree to disagree without becoming disagreeable. There is nothing which says we must always agree, but our disagreeing can be civil and polite.
4. Don't go thermo-nuclear on every issue. Most issues are not ultimate, so don't ramp up the rhetoric on every little thing.

Allow God to speak for himself and don't presume God agrees with you on every one of your opinions.

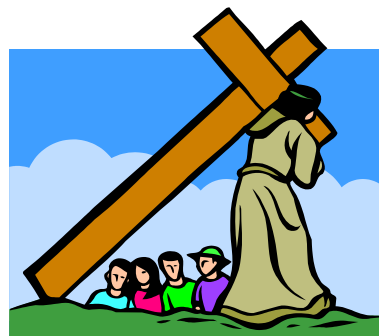
Will these five steps eliminate all of the divisions and violence in our society and all the divisions in our churches? Of course not. But we must start somewhere. As the Apostle Paul says, "We must get along with each other." We must.

Lenten Study to Begin

Beginning on Wednesday, March 12, Pastor Susan will be leading a Lenten Study, **"A World Worth Saving: Lenten Spiritual Practices for Action"** by George Hovaness Donigian.

Please sign up on the round table for the time that is most convenient for you. 10:00am or 7pm (will have each

class if 4 people sign up for that time)
Books can be ordered for your Kindle or Susan will order for you. The cost is \$9.99 + tax for the Kindle or \$9.52 + tax for the paperback from Cokesbury. (This will also be the theme of our CAMA Lenten Breakfasts).



Katie Says, “Thanks for Saving Cans!”

As many of you know, Katie Long, is going to have braces and jaw work done. Recently, she requested help in saving aluminum cans to defray expenses. That project is still ongoing! You may drop off cans at Molly Britton’s house, 624 S. 9th St. in Clinton. Or, Molly will pick them up. Please call 765-832-1649.



See Katie’s Thank you note below:

Thank you for the cans. So far I have \$375 from the cans and donations.



I am going to an orthodontist in Terre Haute so it will cost \$5,500. With your help and Mom’s tax return, On February 27th I had molds done, and braces will be put on possibly the next week.

Thank you and
God bless you,
Katie Long

Prayer Shawls Are Blessed



Pastor Susan blessed four more prayer shawls during the February 23rd service.

38 Shawls Given--“Wrapped in His Love” is both a Bible study group and has a ministry of making prayer shawls for those who need comfort and love during times of hardship. To date, 38 shawls have been given. Some months ago, the group benefited greatly when a daughter donated trash bags full of crocheted granny squares made by her deceased mother. Mary Ten

Have promptly made them into shawls. Other crafters, such as Sally Harris, have also created some beautiful shawls! Also, the Mission Team donated \$100 from the Byrum Fund for supplies, which was much appreciated.

Please contact Freida Rutan or Kathy Davis if you know of someone who could benefit from a prayer shawl.



Easter is Coming.....and So Is an Easter Egg Hunt!

**Believe it or not (and it is hard to believe)
Easter will be here before we know it. What
could be more fun for kids?**

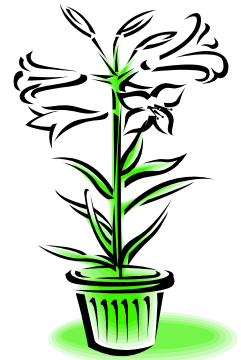


**Shelby Marsolf is requesting items be donated
to fill Easter eggs. So, when you are out
shopping, think of the little ones and pick up a
few things for the eggs. When and where will be
announced later.**



Lilies for Loved Ones!

Easter lily sign-up sheets will be available in the lounge area on March 9th. They are \$8 each. Please sign up in memory or honor of loved ones. Checks should be made out to the church. See Phyllis Marsolf if questions



Lent Begins! Ash Wednesday Service At Our Church, March 5, 7:00 pm



Quick Review of Lent: What is Lent and why does it last 40 days?

Lent is a time when Christians remember the 40 days and nights Jesus spent alone in the desert without food being tempted by the Devil. Jesus used this time to prepare for His work by fasting and praying . So, as in the Bible, Christians spend forty days in preparing themselves to rejoice at the resurrection of Jesus Christ at Easter.

The number 40 is a special number in the Bible, signifying preparation for something special:

- >The rain lasted for 40 days in the mighty flood – Noah
- >Moses stayed on the Mount Sinai forty days (Ex 24:18)
- >Jonah gave the people of Ninevah forty days to repent (Jon 3:4)
- >Jesus, before starting his ministry, spent forty days in the desert in prayer and fasting (Matt 4:2)



Lenten & Easter Events:

Theme: “A World Worth Saving:
Spiritual Practices for Action”

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Believe it or not, Lent is almost here....to be followed Finally! by all the glories of spring! Take a peek at some of the activities during this blessed time of the year.

>**Ash Wednesday Service at our church 7:00 p (See p.4)**

>**CAMA Lenten Breakfasts/Services**

Each church holds a service followed by the breakfast.

Saturday mornings from 7:30 -8:30 a.m.

March 8 Wayside UMC

March 15 United Presbyterian

March 22 Salem UMC

March 29 First Christian

April 5 First Baptist

April 12 Clinton First UMC

>**Palm Sunday-- April 13**

>**Good Friday--April 18 Community Service at
Clinton First UMC 7:00 pm**

>**Easter April 20--Easter Sunrise Service 7:15 am
Easter Service 9:30 am**



Esther Circle Meets, *Prepare Love Plates*

March meeting:
Tues. Mar. 18 7:00 pm
@ Phyllis Marsolf's

The Esther Circle met at the church Tuesday to prepare the annual love plates. These

plates were delivered to shut-ins, members in nursing homes and church members who are ill.

Members attending were Karen Hartman, Margie Lapworth, Ruth Hollingsworth, Karen Carlson, Phyllis Marsolf, Kathy Davis and Audrey Lientz.

Current officers who will retain their offices for 2014 are Karen Hartman, president; Lou Ann Andis, vice president; and Audrey Lientz,

secretary/treasurer.

During the business meeting a letter was shared from the Compassion Child the group supports. Also, a fund-raiser project was discussed and will be finalized at a later date.

Phyllis Marsolf will host the March 18 meeting, and Karen Hartman will have the lesson. The April 15th meeting will be hosted by Audrey Lientz, and Kathy Davis will present the lesson.

The meeting closed with a prayer circle; refreshments and fellowship were enjoyed.

April meeting:
Tues. April 15 7:00 pm
@ Audrey Lientz's

Thanks!



Lasting Treats

Thank you to the Esther Circle for the love plate for Chuck and the nice visit from the deliverer of the plate (Karen Carlson). It made our evening very special and Chuck will have treats to last for quite a while. Your message of love in making these plates for shut-ins is so kind.

God bless you all.

Love, Peggy [Strobel]

More Thanks!

During the Feb. 23rd service, Sally Harris thanked the Esther Circle members for love plates for her and Dean. She also appreciated the meals brought in by Margie Lapworth and Sara Nield and Molly Britton. Stan Shew, Henry Hogan and Marge Douglas also voiced their appreciation for the plates..



March		2014 CALENDAR		April	
MARCH					
Day(s)	Date	Time	Event		
Monday	3/3	6:30 pm	Intentional Faith Development Meeting		
Monday	3/3	7:30 pm	Radical Hospitality Meeting		
Wednesday	3/5	7:00 pm	Ash Wednesday service at our church		
Saturday	3/8	7:30 am	Lenten Breakfast at Wayside UMC		
Wednesday	3/12	10:00am/7:00p	Lenten Study begins		
Saturday	3/15	7:30 am	Lenten Breakfast at United Presbyterian		
Tuesday	3/18	7:00 pm	Esther Circle Meets at Phyllis Marsolf's		
Saturday	3/22	7:30 am	Lenten Breakfast at Salem UMC		
Saturday	3/29	7:30 am	Lenten Breakfast at First Christian		
APRIL					
Saturday	4/5	7:30 am	Lenten Breakfast at First Baptist		
Thursday	4/10	7:15 pm	Church Council meeting		
Saturday	4/12	7:30 am	Lenten Breakfast at Clinton First UMC		
Sunday	4/13	9:30 am	Palm Sunday Service		
Tuesday	4/15	7:00 pm	Esther Circle meets at Audrey Lientz',		
Friday	4/18	7:00 pm	Community Good Friday service at Clinton First UMC		
Sunday	4/20	7:15 am 9:30 am	Easter Sunrise Service Easter Service		



Prayer Concerns



*Telecare Prayer Chain: Contact Pastor Susan at (765) 592-3445 if you have a prayer request or concern. Or, email church at clintonfirst@gmail.com



Registration for Summer Camp

Go online to check out camps and register at

www.beacamper.com

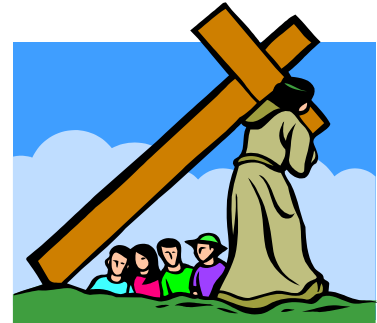
The easiest way to register is by using the navigation bar, selecting Camps & Events, finding the camp you would like to attend and clicking the green button to register.

Mission Offerings: On the first Sunday of each month we will continue to take a special mission offering during Holy Communion. Please bring your mission gift forward when you receive communion or designate on your check the portion of your offering you wish to go toward that month's recipient.

April--Wabash Valley 83 United Methodist Cluster--supports youth and children's ministry--Seven churches work together to do things we cannot do alone!!

Contact Information

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Rev. Susan Martin
<http://clintonfirst.org>

Happy Easter



Regular Events Calendar

Sun 9:30 am >Worship service

>Communion 1st Sunday

>Food Pantry, Hillcrest, or
CAMA donations on 1st
Sunday

11:00 am Sunday school for all ages

Tues. 7:00 pm Worship at Chateau

Weds. 6:00 pm Praise Team Rehearsal

7:15 pm Choir Rehearsal as announced

Thurs. 2:00 pm Backpack