Dear Friends,

On February 23, the 2019 special session of the General Conference of the United Methodist Church will begin in St. Louis. The purpose of this special General Conference is to act on the report from the Commission on A Way Forward. This commission is a group of 32 people researching and helping the United Methodist Church lessen the schism and moving us forward on the issues of homosexual marriage, ordination of LGBTQ clergy and related topics. The commission’s report contained 3 proposed plans: One Church Plan, Connectional Conference Plan, and Traditionalist Plan (for their basic meanings please see Alan’s Musings article in the last week’s newsletter).

With regard to how this special General Conference will impact the United Methodist Church, Illinois Great Rivers Conference, and maybe our local congregation, Bishop Frank Beard will host meetings throughout the Illinois Great Rivers Conference (after February) to discuss the action taken by the special General Conference and what it means for us. You can register for the Bishop’s briefing here: https://igrc-reg.brtapp.com/PostGC2019briefings. The one closest to Carbondale will be at Harrisburg 1st UMC (Harrisburg, IL) on March 14 (Thursday) at 6:30 p.m. The meetings are free, but please register before attending.

When I grew up in China in the 1990’s and 2000’s, Chinese society embraced an enthusiastic and open-minded attitude towards Western culture (i.e., religions and festivals). One of the Western festivals we learned very quickly was the one celebrated this week called Valentine’s Day. My understanding of its theme focuses on romantic love. This love is often in the sense of passionate desire for someone with glowing fascinations. It can be short-lived after the self-centered desire decays.

Another kind of love that Chinese people are learning is the love of Christ, revealed in Jesus as a model of humanity. This love is what God shows for humans and the devotion we feel to God. A congregation (a body of Christ) is built on disciples’ love to Christ which drives us to express it to each other and to the world.

So regardless of which option will be adopted in the special General Conference and how the United Methodist Church may change, our disciples’ mission is to move forward in an attitude of better modeling this love of Christ. May the spirit of the living Christ be with us and empower us, such that our deeds reflect God’s will, to God’s people, for God’s glory.

See You Sunday,

Yiwen
CONCERNS

If you would like yourself or a family member removed from or placed on the Concerns List, please notify the office (457-2416). The information on this sheet is printed on Thursday mornings.

In Sympathy: Sympathy to Beverly Conrad & family & friends on the death of her husband, David, who passed away on February 9, 2019.

Call for Volunteers: We need volunteers to be Usher Captains for May/November 2019. Regular Us-herers needed at 8:15 a.m. for August and June/December. Please call the Church Office to volunteer.

Saturday Night Live: Join us at Hunan’s for Saturday Night Live, March 2, 2019, at 5:30 p.m. Your hosts for the evening will be Don and Jean Boehne.

In Church This Week

**February**

14 Thursday

**Valentine’s Day**

4:00 Chimes Rehearsal, Rm. 415
5:45 Gentle Toning, Stretch and Yoga, Rm 404
7:00 Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

15 Friday

9:30 Golden Yoga, Room 404

16 Saturday

11:00 Visitation for David Conrad
1:00 Funeral Service for David Conrad

17 Sunday

8:15 Worship Service
9:30 Sunday School
10:45 Worship Service

18 Monday

President’s Day - Church Office Closed

19 Tuesday

8:30 Men’s Group, Heritage Room
9:00 Daniel Plan Essentials, Room 403
10:15 Golden Yoga, Room 404
5:30 Rotary Club, Heritage Room
5:30-6:30 Healing Touch (by apt. only), Rm 403
10:00 Children’s Story Time, Diane Neill Dorsey Memorial Children’s Library, Room 413
4:45 Handbells Rehearsal, Rm 418
6:00 Grateful Hearts, Room 308
6:00 Youth Group, Chapel

21 Thursday

4:00 Chimes Rehearsal, Rm. 415
5:45 Gentle Toning, Stretch and Yoga, Rm 404
7:00 Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

22 Friday

9:30 Golden Yoga, Room 404

23 Saturday

8:15 Worship Service
9:30 Sunday School
10:45 Worship Service

24 Sunday

8:15 Worship Service
9:30 Sunday School
10:45 Worship Service

**Reminder!**

If you have not already done so, this is a reminder to please come in to the church office and add your 2019 activities and events to the calendar.

Thank you . . .

**Will not meet in February or March**

We plan to resume in April.

Watch the Asburian for News!!!

Parents and children are invited to join us

Diane Dorsey Memorial Children’s Library

Join Ms. Jane for stories, music, games, and crafts as we learn about the Bible

Disciples for Sunday, February 17, 2019

Coffee Hosts: 8:15 Lyn Christy & Jeff Anderer; 10:45 Cindy Bertsch, JoVonna Noble

February Nametags: Linda Meredith

Outside Greeters: The Hinde Family

Van Drivers: John Graig

Welcome Center: 8:15 Judy Dillinger; 10:45 Betty Bishop

Children’s Church: Jennifer Woolridge

Youth Helpers: Olivia and Lily Bishop

Children’s Church Registration: George and Shirley Everingham
Morning Circle will not meet in February.

March 7—Priscilla Circle, 1 p.m.

March 19—Morning Circle, 10 a.m.

April 4—Priscilla Circle, 1 p.m.

April 16—Morning Circle, 10 a.m.

April 27—UMW Cache River District Meeting
Location: Grace United Methodist Church

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**The Light Kids’ Conference**
Saturday, March 23
at Marion Aldersgate UMC

A one day event designed for children in grades 1-5, to get kids excited about the faith and the walk with Jesus.

We are planning to take a group from Carbondale First UMC.

The cost of $20/student if registered by February 17 includes lunch.

We will leave Carbondale First UMC at 8:15 a.m. and return around 2:30 p.m.
Contact Necia for registration forms.

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**SUMMER CHURCH CAMP**
is just around the corner!
Camps are available for Kindergarten —Adults.

Check it out at www.igrc.org/camping

Carbondale First UMC will pay half of the registration cost for students from our church who wish to attend a IGRC camp and half for one friend who attends with them. Please, register through the church office.
Camping brochures, camping information, and registration information are available from Yiwen Bi.

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**Lenten Devotionals**
The Sanctuary for Lent—
Journey...from Ash Wednesday to Easter Day, considering the dimensions of Christian discipleship that lead us into deeper relationship with Christ and our hurting world.

Available in the narthex

Love Life, Live Lent
A unique booklet that helps children change the world for the better during Lent by undertaking one small action at a time. Youth version also available.

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**YEAR-TO-DATE FINANCIAL REPORT**
**AS OF JANUARY 31, 2019**

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**CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS**

Morning Circle will not meet in February.

March 7—Priscilla Circle, 1 p.m.

March 19—Morning Circle, 10 a.m.

April 4—Priscilla Circle, 1 p.m.

April 16—Morning Circle, 10 a.m.

April 27—UMW Cache River District Meeting
Location: Grace United Methodist Church
**SUNDAY CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

**Children’s Opportunities, Sundays**

Sundays at 9:30 a.m. **Children’s Sunday School (K-5th grade)** uses the *Deep Blue* from Cokesbury.

Main Topic: “Family Wisdom” — **February 17 Sunday School—“A Family’s Faith”**

Sundays at 10:45 a.m. **Children’s Church (K-5th grade)**. All children are invited to Children’s Church following the Children’s Time at the 10:45 a.m. worship service.

**Youth Opportunities, Sundays at 9:30 a.m.**

9:30 a.m. Junior/Senior High Class meets in Room 414 and uses a variety of materials connecting the lessons of the Bible with issues relevant to today’s youth.

**Adult Opportunities, Sundays at 9:30 a.m.**

*Renew* - **Renew** is a group of women seeking deeper meaning in their lives through Bible study, reflection and prayer. Currently, they are studying *Unshakable Hope, Building Our Lives on the Promises of God* by Max Lucado. They meet in Room 402. Women of all ages are welcome.

**The Electives Class** - Scripture studies following the lectionary led by Rev. John Sims. They meet in the Heritage Room. All are welcome!

**Small Group Opportunities**

**The Daniel Plan Essentials** meets in Room 403 at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesdays. The discussion for Feb. 19 is to be determined. The group will not meet on Feb. 26. Everyone welcome.

**Grateful Hearts** meets on Wednesdays at 6 p.m. in Room 308. They are studying *Bad Girls of the Bible* by Liz Curtis Higgs.

**Youth Group** meets on Wednesdays at 6 p.m. in the Chapel.

**Men’s Group** All men of the church are invited to coffee and refreshments on Tuesday mornings at 8:30 a.m. in the Heritage Room. We discuss anything and everything from the perspective of our relationship with God.

**Gentle Toning, Stretch, and Yoga Techniques** meets on Thursdays at 5:45 p.m., Room 404, the Chapel.

**Golden Yoga** meets on Tuesdays at 10:15 a.m. and on Fridays at 9:30 a.m., Room 404, the Chapel.

Get Connected...to great opportunities for spiritual growth and fellowship on your Christian journey.

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**“Hosanna and Hallelujah!”**

The children of Sunday School and Children’s Church will be joining the Sanctuary Choir for the singing of the anthem, “Hosanna and Hallelujah!” on Palm Sunday, April 14, at the 10:45 a.m. worship service.

The children will be practicing during the first few minutes of Children’s Church at the 10:45 a.m. service **beginning Feb. 10. Pick up a copy in the narthex to practice at home.**

On Palm Sunday, April 14, the children will rehearse with the sanctuary choir in the sanctuary at **10:00 a.m.**. At the 10:45 a.m. worship service, the children will join Necia for Children’s Time and remain for the anthem. They will be dismissed to Children’s church.

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**News from the Green Team…**

The 2018 session of the First United Methodist Church-Illinois Great Rivers Conference adopted a legislative item which encouraged congregations in the Great Rivers Conference to form a Green Team. A Green Team is a group of people from a house of worship who keep consciousness about earth care at the forefront in its church. Team members also provide cooperative leadership to educate, connect, and advocate for environmental consciousness and healthier communities. Our church recently formed a Green Team whose members are Erik Oberg and Jon Gobert. The team seeks additional members!

Our team coach and mentor, Christina Krost, of Faith in Place, provides guidance and assistance to Green Teams in area churches and in the southern Illinois region. If you are interested in becoming a member of the First United Methodist Church Green Team, or would like more information about the purpose of the team, feel free to contact one of the team members (Erik Oberg - trailprogram@yahoo.com; Jon Gobert - j_gobert@msn.com). A survey questionnaire (paper and electronic formats) will be made available in the near future.

One community activity we are participating in is Adopt-A-Spot in Carbondale. This program is designed for volunteer groups or individuals in a cooperative effort to clean, maintain, improve, and beautify our local environment. If your small group, Sunday school class, church membership group, or organization affiliated with the church would like to be a part of our church’s Adopt-A-Spot team, please contact one of our Green Team members. We have adopted Jackson Street from South University Street to Wall Street and will remove litter from both sides of the street at least monthly.

Thank you, FUMC-Carbondale Green Team