Dear Friends,

We are in the midst of Lent in our Christian year. For these next five weeks, we will be focusing in worship on the things that can make our relationship with God stronger and richer. Sometimes we give up things for Lent in order for us to discipline ourselves and look seriously where we are on our life of faith. Last year, if you recall, I challenged us to think about what we might “add” to our life to grow our faith, instead of giving up something. How did you do? I had some of you tell me that you added some time in prayer, scripture, helping others, and other things that were particularly unique to you. That is really what observances of Lent are all about—whether it is something you give up or something you add. Denying ourselves certain things may be meaningful for some, while adding something might be meaningful for others. So, whatever works for you is what you should do. The important thing is that we take this season to focus our attention on our spiritual health and well-being.

Why is this so important? It is important because our Christian faith is not just a one time happening. Our Christian faith is a relationship that should grow as we move forward in our life. When we fail to prioritize our faith, we begin to lose some of the impact that our faith has on our everyday living. If we get out of the habit of praying, for instance, we can easily lose that sense of connection we have in our relationship with God. It doesn’t mean that our relationship with God is over, but is just not as strong as it should be. Sometimes when this happens and we find ourselves in a difficult time in our life, we might feel as though God isn’t there with us. Of course, God is, but we have just allowed our relationship to weaken. It may take us a little time to focus and reconnect with God in a way that gives us peace and hope. It is not unlike a friendship we have that we haven’t shared in a while. Often, when we do try and reconnect, we find that it is harder to do than if we had been relating regularly with him or her.

So, whatever works for you, in this season, is what you should do, to keep your faith and relationship with God where it needs to be. We have some excellent material to help you do that and I encourage you to attend one of our studies: Wednesday morning at 10 a.m., Wednesday evening at 6 p.m. and during the Church School hour at 9:30 a.m. Our study this year is on Jesus’ disciple “Simon Peter.” Even if you cannot attend a study, there are study books available as well as “Sanctuary for Lent 2019” a devotional booklet. Either way, take a little time to focus on your faith this season.

See You Sunday,

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

**Special Notice:** As of March 7, 2019, the phone number for Pastor Alan’s parsonage will no longer be in service. Instead, call the church office at 457-2416 and if you need to reach him, the office will give you his cell phone number. Remember: The Church office is open Monday-Thursday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Friday from 8 a.m. until 12 p.m.

**Saturday Night Live:** Join us at Paglia’s Pizza for Saturday Night Live, Date: April 6, 2019, at 5:30 p.m. Your hosts for the evening will be Charlena & Mike Bitting.

**Rosebud on the Altar:** If you wish to have a Rosebud on the Altar, it should be requested by 11 a.m. on the Monday prior to the Sunday that Rosebud will be displayed. This will ensure that the rosebud will be listed in both the Asburian and the Bulletin for that week.

**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 an 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.

**To Mars and Beyond VBS**

July 21-26

Be the first to join our crew of space explorers. Take the pledge to explore where God’s power can take us.

Teachers, escorts, crafters, musicians, puppeteers, food service, clean-up crew...there is a place in this adventure for everyone!!

Contact Necia to join the crew!!!

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**Disciples for Sunday, March 17, 2019**

Coffee Hosts: 8:15 Jean & Don Boehne; 10:45 Lianne & John Watson

Outside Greeters: Mike & Joyce Vancil

Van Driver: John Craig

Welcome Center: 8:15 Kathy Swindell; 10:45 JoVonna Noble

Children’s Church Registration: JoVonna Noble

Children’s Church: Tabitha Koch

Youth Helpers: Michael and Abby Koch
CAMP OUT 2019: Getting Smore of Jesus

An afternoon outdoorsy camping adventure!

Bible learning experiences, team-building games, cool camping songs, and Bible adventures are just a few of the activities that help faith flow into real life.

When: Friday, April 5 Noon-6:00 pm
Where: Little Grassy United Methodist Camp
Who: Kindergarten—5th Grades

A number of the local schools will be dismissing on that afternoon. Transportation to the camp is provided, leaving the church parking lot at noon. We will have lunch and a fun afternoon of activities. Parents and families are asked to join us at the camp, 5:00-6:00 p.m. for a wiener roast and a closing family time.

Pick up is at the camp. Watch the mail for registration information.

SOAR on Friday, April 19
1st grade through 6th grade
“With God all things are possible” Matthew 19:26
Watch for upcoming details about this New Adventure!!

Parents and children are invited to join us
Wednesdays 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.
Diane Dorsey Memorial Children’s Library

Join Ms. Jane for stories, music, games, and crafts as we learn about the Bible and how Jesus taught us to live and love.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

March 19—Morning Circle, 10 a.m.,
Location: Public Library Meeting Room
Program: Southern Illinois Eagle Watching
Co-Hosts: Judy Dillinger, Dorothy Rudoni

April 4—Priscilla Circle, 1 p.m.
April 16—Morning Circle, 1 p.m.
April 27—UMW Cache River District Meeting
Location: Grace United Methodist Church

Parents and children are invited to join us Wednesdays 10:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m. led by Pastor Alan
Sundays at 9:30 a.m. in Renew Class in the Chapel and in Room 308 led by Yiwen Bi

Lenten Studies

“An ordinary fisherman who heard an extraordinary call. He was not rich or educated, but was familiar with hard work. He was quick-tempered and impetuous, but possessed a passion that would change the world. He left everything to follow his teacher, yet struggled with doubt and fear.”

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News from the Green Team…

The FUMC Green Team is asking for your feedback through a survey. Beginning on March 18, 2019, the survey will be available on the church website and in paper form if you prefer that format. To access the survey on the church website, click the "Resources" drop down menu and look towards the bottom of the menu options. It is titled "Green Team Survey." Alternatively, paper copies of the survey will be available in an envelope in the church office. If you choose that option, you can return the completed survey to a second envelope in the church office. The survey will be available through April 8, 2019. Thank you for your feedback!

Thank you, FUMC-Carbondale Green Team

Singers Needed

The Sanctuary Choir needs new members. Anyone high school age and up is welcome. If you enjoy singing, please consider joining us in this important service to the church and our weekly worship services. Rehearsals are Thursdays evening from 7-8 p.m. If you have any questions, call Bob Weiss at 203-1672.

SUNDAY CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

SUNDAYS AT 9:30 a.m.

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: "Observing Lent with Your Family" — March 17 Sunday School—"The Two Debtors"

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 Class - Lenten Study, began Sunday, March 10, Simon Peter– Flawed But Faithful Disciple, by Adam Hamilton in the Chapel

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 the Chapel. 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!

Yiwen Bi Class - Lenten Study, began Sunday, March 10, Simon Peter– Flawed But Faithful Disciple, by Adam Hamilton in Rm. 308

Small Group Opportunities

The Daniel Plan Essentials meets in Room 403 at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesdays. 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., Rm 404, the Chapel.

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

Lenten Study, began Wednesday, March 6, Simon Peter– Flawed But Faithful Disciple, by Adam Hamilton

10:00 a.m. led by Pastor Alan, Rm 410
6:00 p.m. led by Pastor Alan, Heritage Rm