

Newsletter of the
First United Methodist Church
Huntington WV

March 2019

Take Up Something New

The Season of Lent will begin in just a few days. Lent is a season of preparation—a time of personal and corporate devotion as we remember what Jesus endured so that we might know and live in the joy of the Resurrection. Each year the season begins with an invitation to the observance of Lenten Discipline. The pastor offers: “I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to observe a holy Lent” by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God’s Holy Word.” We pray and then the ashes (burnt palm branches from the previous year’s palm branches) are pressed upon our foreheads in the sign of a cross. We are reminded that we are dust (creatures of God’s creative work) and to dust we shall return (our bodies cannot last forever). Our hope and our life, even life eternal, are gifts to us from our gracious God.

This is where we begin the Lenten Season, with our face pressed hard against the reality of our sin and our death. If we did not know how the story ends, this would be a dark and depressing journey. But we do know how the story ends and therefore in the midst of self-denial and fasting we remember our faithful Savior and the Easter declaration that life is always victorious over death, always!

During the forty days of Lent (between Ash Wednesday and Easter—not counting Sundays) we experience the temptations of Jesus and remember our own. We recognize the rising hopes of the faithful followers as they expect a

triumphal entry of their Messiah. They dream of Christ taking political control and restoring the nation of Israel. Like them, we long for the time when the world knows the way of God’s Kingdom—the way of peace and love. But Holy Week comes and we see so many of those hopes dashed to their death. It is a somber time, but even in Lent we remember that each Sunday of the year is a little Easter.

Sometimes we focus on the self-denial of Lent. We choose to give up something that we like or something that we don’t necessarily need in our lives. That is good, and it can be a very holy sacrifice. But this year, I hope you will take up something new or revive a spiritual activity. Read the Bible more faithfully. You can use the *Upper Room* as a daily reading resource, or any other online devotional material. Make a conscious effort to speak or post on social media positive words, building up people rather than tearing others down. Make gifts to mission work (time or money) which support the way of sharing Christ with others. Use your God-given talents and abilities in service to others. Prayerfully be aware of opportunities to share the love of Christ especially with those who have never experienced the power of love, grace, and forgiveness that Christ brings to our world.

I pray that this Lenten Season will be a time of spiritual growth for you and our congregation.

Lenten Blessings.
Mark

Lenten Worship

On Wednesday, March 6 our downtown church families will join together at noon for worship at the Central Christian (Disciples of Christ) Church. Father Jim Morgan, interim pastor at Trinity Episcopal Church will be our preacher.

On Wednesday evening at 6:00 (following our Wednesday evening dinner) we will all - children, youth, and adults - meet together in the sanctuary for a 30-minute service that will include the offering of ashes. There will be children’s choir rehearsal, youth group time, and the adult choir rehearsal following the service. Adults are invited to share in a time of mission service after worship as we prepare backpacks for sharing with the children of Central City Elementary School. We will do that work in the Multi-Purpose Room on the lower level. (We do good work and enjoy ourselves as those backpack bags are filled.)

Our Lenten Services in the chapel will be starting once again on March 13. The services are each Wednesday at 12:05 and last thirty minutes. Lunch for \$2 follows in the Fellowship Hall. They will take place each week through Holy Week.

March 13	Rev. Skip Seibel First Presbyterian
March 20	Rev. Nancy White Milton UMC
March 27	Rev Barry Ball
April 3	Rev. Erik Porterfield Fifth Ave. Baptist
April 10	Schauna Chambers First UMC
April 17	Rev. Angela Gay Kincaid Pea Ridge UMC

Around the Church

Now that the dome has been re-installed, the Bovard Stained Glass Studio is doing work on the three major windows of the sanctuary and the five windows of the Chapel. Each window is being cleaned inside and outside, and cracks in the glass are being repaired, a new gluing compound is being brushed into the lead lines of the windows, and then new safety glass covering is being installed to protect each window. Workers had hoped to finish all this work by March 1, but that will not be possible. The company will schedule another week for workers to be here. (We will let you know when that is happening, but that week has not yet been scheduled.)

This major project has again been done through gifts to the Endowment Funds. Please remember that those gifts have allowed us to do many projects that would not have been possible if we had to rely only on our General Church Budget. Please consider leaving the church a gift from your estate so that future generations will also be able to do the necessary work to maintain our beautiful building.

Special General Conference Review

Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball will be traveling around the Conference to meet with laity and address how the actions of the Special General Conference will impact our work and ministry in our local churches and across the Annual Conference. She will focus on how we will continue to do our ministry and mission.

The meeting time for the Western District is Saturday, March 16 from 4:00 until 6:00 pm at the Community of Grace UMC in Huntington (located 3rd Avenue at 28th Street). If you want to share in the conversation but cannot attend this meeting, she will be meeting in other districts. The next closest opportunity is March 28 from 6:30-8:30 at St. Mark's UMC in Charleston.

Honoring Jack Broce

For more than 40 years, Jack Broce has served the First Church congregation as our custodian. Jack has decided that it is time to retire. The congregation will celebrate Jack's faithful service to the church on Sunday, March 10. A love gift will be presented to Jack. If you wish to contribute to that gift, please add it to your offering by March 3 indicating on the envelop or check the amount you wish to give toward this gift.

Custodial Care

With the retirement of Jack Broce, the church has entered into an agreement with Dirt Busters to do the weekly cleaning of the church facility. This local company began their work with the church during the last week of February. In addition, we will be looking for a part time worker for some time on Saturday and Sunday to care for maintaining the heating or cooling, caring for the entrances, security care during worship times, and opening and locking the building.

With this change in service, we would remind you that you share in the care of the building. If you get something out, please put it away when you have finished with it. Turn out the lights that you have turned on. If you know that you are one of the last ones out of the building, make sure you've turned out the lights. Pick up after yourselves. It will take a little while for new workers in the building to live with the schedule we know. They will not know where everything goes—nor should we expect them to. Your help is appreciated.

Rev. Berry Ball to Present Special Program

On Wednesday March 27, the Rev. Barry Ball will be our guest preacher for our noon Lenten Service and will stay with us for a special program in the evening. Rev. Ball, our Bishop's husband, travels the region talking about the addiction crisis in our area. His program is based around one question, "Why can't people who are addicted to opioids just quit?"

Rev. Ball has served as Chaplain for the Maryland Natural Resources Police and US Air Force, and when Bishop Steiner Ball was appointed to West Virginia he was assigned by the Natural Resources Police to the Drug Enforcement Administration Task Force in Hagerstown, Maryland, working western Maryland and the eastern panhandle of West Virginia.

Our Wednesday evening program will take place in the Fellowship Hall at 6:00. Everyone is welcome.

Church Finances

We began the new year by paying all our local church expenses, paying our Western District promotion fund, and sending \$2,000 toward our \$101,812 Conference Fair Share for 2019. In addition to our local church expenses, all United Methodist Churches offer support for ministry and mission throughout our annual conference and around the globe through our Fair Share giving. Locally we support mission work through Ebenezer Community Outreach Center, a child care with pre-school classes and afterschool programs for children in our community. Our Fair Share giving pays for a campus pastor at Marshall University as well as the costs of our UM space at the Campus Christian Center.

In Lent, we emphasize the use of our spiritual gifts. One of those gifts is generosity. We are generous with our gifts of money, time and talents as our response to the generosity of our God. We give of our money, not to support our church's budget, but as a way of honoring and serving Christ who shares with us an amazing way of love and grace.

Rev. Scott Sears To Be Appointed as New Senior Pastor

On Sunday, February 24, it was announced that Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball intends to appoint Scott Sears as the pastor of First UMC effective July 1. We welcome Scott and the family.

Greetings from Princeton, WV!

As most of you have heard by now, my name is Scott Sears – actually, it is Gregory Scott Sears, but I have been conditioned by parents and my spouse that the “Gregory” is only used when I’m in pretty big trouble.

Pam and I and our two girls have lived in Princeton for the last seven years. I, of course, have been serving at First UMC, Princeton. Pam is currently working for a Nationwide Insurance Agent as a bookkeeper. Erin, our oldest, graduated from Princeton Senior High School, went to Marshall University and graduated as a Vocal Performance Major and is now a freshman at Candler School of Theology in Atlanta. Allie also graduated from PSHS and is a junior at Concord University. My oldest daughter, Leslie, has lived in Canton, OH for the past five years. She has five children – bookend boys and three girls – ranging in age from 4 to 11.

I graduated from West Virginia Institute of Technology with a Bachelor of



Allie, Pam, Erin and Scott Sears

Science in Public Service in 1992, married Pam, and then went to The Divinity School at Duke University for my M. Div. Before graduating in 1996, I had served two student appointments. The first was in West Virginia – the Kincaid Circuit – and then one appointment in North Carolina – the Granville Circuit.

After graduation I returned to WV and served at St. Paul’s UMC in Ansted, Peterstown UMC, Stout Memorial UMC in Parkersburg, and then First UMC in Princeton. I have served on the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, and am currently the chairperson of the Conference Rules Committee. I was elected as a delegate to Jurisdictional Conference in 2004.

I enjoy both reading and writing. My

favorite books to read are science fiction and fantasy but I also read a wide variety of novels. I love walking and meditation and I have a rather unusual collection of playing cards.

Pam and I currently serve as the main staff for two cats, Brooke, who is close to 17 years old, and Rascal, who will soon be seven. I love setting out bird feeders to tease these indoor cats and entertain myself watching the birds.

We are all looking forward to joining the community at First UMC, Huntington and being a part of that great community. I hope to send a couple of videos to you soon so you can learn my voice early enough to train yourself to rest well in worship. (Just kidding, actually... I do love to joke a bit.)

I can be reached by email at sears.scott@gmail.com and I welcome you to send me a friend request on Facebook (search for me by email), Twitter (as @Table97), and/or Instagram (Table97). I also have a blog at <http://notquitehome.com>. Fair warning, my blogging tends to come in fits and spurts.

The most important thing to know is this: I love being loved by Jesus and sharing that love with every person around me. I hope you will help me do that in Huntington!!

Lenten Bible Study Begins March 13

Dive deep into the history of the last days before the crucifixion.

Although the Bible gives us insights into what Jesus was thinking between the time he entered into Jerusalem and the night he spent in the Garden of Gethsemane, we can’t totally relate. But what if we look at the “ordinary” people who witnessed the Passion events...the women around Jesus and his disciples? Or the “bad” guys...Judas, Pilate, and Caiaphas? If we look closely at the people who were part of Jesus’ life during the last days before the crucifixion—their relationships and roles in the story—how might that deepen our understanding of what happened?

Join us as we dig deeper into the Passion Wednesdays starting at 6:00 in Room 208.

Backpacks for Central City



March is once again our month to deliver backpacks to Central City Elementary. On Wednesday March 6, following the Ash Wednesday service, we will meet in the Multi-Purpose room to pack the bags. Our delivery dates are March 7, 14, and 21. March 28 is spring break. On delivery dates, we will meet at the 12th Street door of the church at 2:30 to load trucks. Loading and delivery usually only takes about 45 minutes. Everyone who can help is welcome. Thanks to all who pitch in to make sure these students have something to eat when school is out.

Men’s Group

Invitation to Breakfast with the Youth

This month’s Men’s Breakfast will be Saturday, March 16 (*note the change to the third Saturday this month because of the Potato Bar*). Our guests will be some of the youth who will be going on the mission trip this summer. The menu will be the same but we will add waffles. Come early and help cook and be sure to ask a youth or two to sit at your table so they can tell about their upcoming mission trip then stay to help prepare for the Potato Bar the next day.

See the back page of this newsletter for more information on the Potato Bar which will benefit the Youth Mission Trip.

In Our Thoughts and Prayers

Eternal God! Grant us gratitude enough to look backward and be thankful; courage enough to look forward and be hopeful; faith enough to look upward and be humble; kindness enough to look outward and be helpful. Together let us pray...

For those who are sick or homebound...

Bobby Adkins, Randy Adkins, Dawn Aikin, Drew Apgar, Kathy Bartram, Pris Beard, Mary Berry, Faye Brangham, Jeanne Burford, Nancy Campbell, Carolyn Cummings, Mary Jo Danford, David Daugherty, Leona Davis, Judy Davis, Jeanette Dorsey, Scott Drown, Paula Duckworth, Betty Duke, Jack Eblin, Sue Furbee, Barbara Gilbert, Grace Hammond, Ginny Lee Hastings, Dick Hensley, Christi Holley, Nancy Kincade, Gil & Sally Lester, Claire McClure, Harold McKenzie, James May, Barbara Pafford, Christine Phipps, Charlotte Tallman, Michael Waggoner, Wyatt Weeks, Jean White

For those celebrating new life...

Paxton James Brown son of Cameron and Andy Brown born on February 4

For those experiencing the waters of baptism...

Meagan Shepherd baptized on February 24

Parker Shepherd, son of Meagan and Jay Shepherd baptized on February 24

For those who grieve...

Linda Hay and family on the death of her father, Lewis Swann
Sally Lester, Pris Beard, Lisa Cooke, Sara Tschop and Karla Viglianco on the death of their brother, brother-in-law and uncle, Charles Beard

Remember those in the military who are in harm's way.



3/2	Edna Brooks Zoe Harold
3/4	Charles Neiborgall III
3/5	Carter Bacon
3/6	Jan Naegele Carole Bacon
3/7	Linda Hay Wayne Warner
3/9	Mary Lamb Pris Beard Brian Massie Belle Thomas
3/10	Bert Fulks
3/11	Logan Bush
3/13	Scout Arthur Will Cummings V
3/14	Cordie Jo Canterbury Sophie Bright
3/15	Daniel Maue
3/16	Shelby Nelson Winifred Chiles
3/17	Ken Wolfe
3/20	Sally Lester Katie Fulks Carolyn Chiles
3/22	Pat Daugherty
3/23	Logan Denning
3/24	Lynn Cummings Susan Nickels
3/26	Diana Archer Jonathan Perry Ian Bowman-Vidal
3/27	Alec Cyrus
3/28	Norah Gerlach
3/29	Bonnie Hamilton Vern Reichenbecher Nancy Crum
3/30	Eric Legg



New Picture Directory

It has been seven years since our last church picture directory and there have been many changes in our congregation since then. New families have joined, others have left, babies have been born and we have all gotten older (plus a new pastor is coming

in July) so it's high time to put out a new directory.

We will use our existing directory software that already has everyone listed, all we need from you are current pictures of your family. We know you have them, we've seen them on Facebook and other social media. So send us your photos and we'll plug them into our directory. They can be Christmas photos, vacation pictures, even selfies will work; we want to make this as easy as possible. You can email your pictures to the church office at fristume@firstunitedmethodist.com by the end of March.

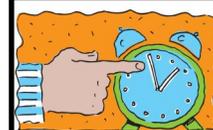
We will make arrangements to take pictures of those who don't have existing family photos, probably on a Sunday after church or a Wednesday evening to be announced.

UMW Spring Meeting

First Church will be hosting the Spring District Meeting of United Methodist Women on April 6. We will be providing both space and food for this 150th celebration. Please come and be a part of the fun. Call Jane Morse for luncheon reservations.

Dinner Theater A Success!

Thanks to all the angels (actors, those who set tables, helped cook, wait staff, cleaner uppers) who made Dinner Theater 2019 a rousing success. We fed 215 satisfied customers and cleared \$3,801.77!!!



SET YOUR CLOCKS

Ahead!

Daylight Savings time begins Sunday March 10.

Children & Youth



Notes from Debbie

The children will be singing for church again on March 17 as well as Easter Sunday, April 21st. We are also diligently rehearsing our spring musical each week and look forward to presenting it on the first Sunday in May, during the 10:45 worship service. Children who are taking piano or other instrumental lessons who would like to play a solo for church on that Sunday (May 5th) please see me right away so we can get those scheduled. We will be featuring children and youth throughout the service on that day.

Two & Three Year Old Children's Room News!

The downstairs 2 and 3 year old room is almost ready. When it opens, it will be during 2nd service. If you are wanting to volunteer anytime in the nursery, 2-3 year old room or children's church please let Schauna know. Eventually, there will be a 2-3 year old Sunday School class. We are so blessed with all the children and hope that we continue to grow.

Confirmation Class Starts March 24

Confirmation Class will be starting on March 24th at 9:30 am in the Stone Sanctuary Room on the second floor. We will be meeting for 9 weeks every Sunday Morning and diving into laying the foundations of our faith. If you are a youth 6th grade and older and would like to participate please contact Schauna Chambers.

Seeking Mentors: The 2019 confirmation class is seeking mentors. You will only be needed 3 out of the 9 Sundays. It is a way to build a relationship with a youth and show them that there are adults outside of the parents that would like to invest in their lives. Please contact Schauna Chambers if you are interested.

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY



Youth Lent Readings

Reminder for youth to sign up for a Lent Reading. You will get a text every morning with a scripture and reflective question. If anyone is interested in that please let Schauna Chambers know and get her your information.

Marshall Basketball Game

On Wednesday, March 6th, the youth will participate in the Ash Wednesday Service and then head to Cam Henderson Center to watch the Men's Basketball Game. We will meet back at the church after the game for pick up. Tickets are \$15 and money needs to be in by Sunday the 3rd unless you have talked to Schauna. If you are wanting to join the youth for the game, please let Schauna know.



Youth to Help With Potato Bar

The men are helping the youth raise money for their 2019 Mission Trip with the Potato Bar on March 17. They have invited the youth to breakfast on March 16th at 8 am and then we will begin prep at 9 am. If you are going to be at the breakfast, please let us know so the men will have enough food. The Potato Bar will be at noon on Sunday March 17th and the youth will start helping at 9:30 until clean up after the dinner.

Giving Back

Last summer, during our mission trip at the depot, Temple United Methodist Youth fed us every evening. We have the privilege to show them the same hospitality as they are coming to Huntington for a weekend. They will be staying at the church March 29th and leaving March 30th. More details to come.

Watch For Easter Rolls

The youth will be selling delicious Easter Rolls again this season. The order forms will be out at the end of this month. The youth will be making them on Saturday before Easter and the rolls can be picked up that day or on Easter Sunday. Proceeds will go to the Mission Trip.

First United Methodist Church
1124 Fifth Avenue
Huntington, West Virginia 25701-2288
Phone:(304) 522-0357
firstumc@firstunitedmethodist.com
www.firstunitedmethodist.com

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Huntington, WV
PERMIT NO. 173



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Senior Pastor,
Mark Conner

Associate Pastor
Stephen Hensley

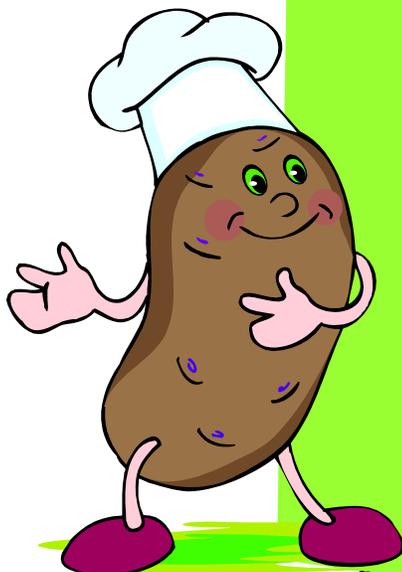
Director of Christian Education
Schauna Chambers

Sunday Worship Opportunities

First Light	8:45 a.m.
Sunday School	9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship	10:45 a.m.
Korean Church	1:00 p.m.

Next Tower Topics Deadline is March 25

**Baked Potato Bar Lunch To Benefit
The 2019 Youth Mission Trip**



**Cost: \$5.00
per person**

**First United Methodist Church
Fellowship Hall**

**March 17
Noon—1:30**

**Enjoy delicious
baked potatoes
with all the top-
pings and help
the Youth go to
Kansas City.**

Sponsored by the FUMC Men's Group