



The First Word

January, 2016

First United Methodist Church, Racine

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January 2016 Newsletter, First United Methodist Church, Racine, WI

When the dusts have settled down ...

The prophets' prophesy of hearing a voice of one calling: ***"In the desert prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level and the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people together shall see it. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken!"*** (Isaiah 40: 3-5).

Similar call is reiterated in the Gospels with the same emphasis: ***"A voice of one calling in the desert, prepare the way for the Lord, Make straight paths for him!"*** (Matt. 3: 3). This call announces the Advent Season which eventually leads to the proclamation and celebration of the mystical birth of the Creator and Savior of world, God's grace reaching down and dwelling among sinful humanity in the person of the Christ-Child. Leveling the valleys, lowering the hills and mountains; straightening the rough and rugged paths seems to require lots of efforts and could result in huge dusts in the air that may have the propensity to cause environmental pollution. What a very powerful metaphor! This definitely describes the physical, emotional and monetary energies we each bring to the Advent /Christmas Season each year. Whether we know it or not, the Advent season raises our expectation level higher than any other season I have known. There seem to be an inherently desperate sense of anticipation to either give or receive something during this season. This observation holds true among both Christians and most non-believers. There are overflowing joys as well as chronic stresses and anxieties as the result of our must give or receive tendencies toward the Advent call as we understand it and in ways that our families, neighbors, communities and the world have made us to believe they're the best responses.

Remember, the call is simple: ***"Prepare the way for the Lord; make straight paths for him; And the Lord will be revealed!"*** When the dusts of all the preparations and celebrations are settled, the questions we need to ask ourselves each Advent season should be what's left? What's next? And finally, whom do all of these reveal? At times the dusts of preparations and celebrations get so thick to the extent that the nature of the call for preparations gets lost! Simple, yet most important task: our preparations and celebrations must reveal the Christ Child!

As we prepare again to begin our faith and service journeys anew this Epiphany and upcoming Lenten Season, here're my prayerful invitations:

1. That we come prepared with penitent hearts and minds to renewed our relational covenant with our Creator and Savior;

2. Renew our zeal and enthusiasm for the Lord as though we were meeting him Epiphany and Lenten Season.

Have a blessed Epiphany and Lent,
Rev. Jakes

for the first time;

3. Give ourselves permission to allow God's Spirit to use us in ways that we've never imagined to God's own glory by serving him through our congregation and our community as a way of living out our faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Live an Active Faith Life that reveals the Christ-child day-by-day in this life throughout this

SERMON THEMES FOR JANUARY

Epiphany Sunday- 3, January 2016

Holy Communion

Psalm 72: 1-7; Isaiah 60: 1-6

Matthew 5: 3-12

Theme: Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness...

Remember, Jesus faced persecution for being righteous. In the same way, he is letting his followers to know that following him might not be as easy they might think. In the first seven sessions of the beatitudes, Jesus spoke in general to all of his present and would followers. In this last session, he is specifically speaking and challenging those who have already made up their minds and are his disciples. As tough as it might be, the good news, greater is the reward for those would persevere to the end. Those who endure persecution because of their faith are rewarded with the kingdom of heaven.

Epiphany 1st Sunday- January 10, 2016

Psalm 29: 1ff.; Isaiah 43: 1-7

Acts 8: 14-17; Luke 3: 15-17, 21-22

Theme: Accepted, Redeemed and Sealed

When John the Baptist preached repentance in preparation for the coming of the Messiah, there were various responses from his listeners. Some came to John hoping he was the expected messiah, others wonder questioned his authority, yet other believed and he baptized them. During the baptismal ceremony, John clarified that his baptism was with water, but the One whom he heralded would baptize with the Holy and fire. The Holy Spirit and fire baptism signify one's acceptance, purification, and approved /sealed as God's own.

Epiphany 2nd / Human Relations Sunday - January 17, 2016

Psalm 36: 5-10; Isaiah 62: 1-6

1Corinthians 12: 1-11; John 2: 1-11

Theme: Wait! No short circuit in God's plan

As a young man attending a wedding party in Cana

with his parents, Jesus's mother tried to talk him into working a miracle to replenish the depleted wedding wine. Jesus responded that his time had not yet come. What a lesson to learn to wait on God's time! Don't short circuit God's plan. This service will also include a "Ceremony for the Consecration of short-term Missionary" – The Liberia Mission Trip Team

Epiphany 3rd - January 24, 2016

Psalm 19; Luke 4:14-21

1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

Theme: Christian Bodybuilding

Guest Preacher: Ken Miller- Certified Lay Speaker

Epiphany 4th Sunday - January 31, 2016

Genesis 19:1-8; Luke 14:7-15

Theme "Who Is at the Table"

Preacher: Rev. Rich Rubietta, Conf. Evangelist, IL
UM Conference



Pastor Rich Rubietta is a songwriter and worship consultant who conducts high-energy, interactive worship experiences which include audience participation and upbeat versions of familiar Hymns and original material. You don't want to miss this service!

HOT MEAL PROGRAM

First Church is responsible for the Hot Meal at St. Luke's Episcopal Church on Monday, January 18. If you can provide a casserole, please sign on the sheets located on the sanctuary tables. Please deliver your casserole to St. Luke's by 4:30 pm on January 18th and thank you for your help with this important outreach ministry.

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Tuesday thru Friday, 8:30 - noon

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Racine, WI

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Each Sunday

Choir Rehearsal	9:00 am
Morning Worship	10:00 am
Sunday School for Children	10:15 am
Fellowship Time	11:15 am
Faith Forum Sunday School	11:15 am
Casa de Dios Worship	5:00 pm

Each Monday

Keith Griffin Choir Rehearsal	6:00-8:00 pm
Casa de Dios Bible Study	6:30 pm

Each Wednesday

Kiwanis Club Luncheon	Noon
Praise Team Rehearsal	5:30 pm
Chancel Choir Rehearsal	6:00 pm

Each Saturday

Sack Lunch Program	Noon
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Sunday, January 3

FFRANC Breakfast	9:00 am
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Monday, January 4

Crafting Conversations Group	6:00 pm
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Wednesday, January 6

Youth Group at Trinity UMC	6:00 pm
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Thursday, January 7

Faith to Life Bible Study, Reep Room	3:00 pm
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Saturday, January 9

Controlling Community Violence	9:00 am
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Wednesday, January 13

First Alive Wednesday Pot Luck	5:00 pm
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Thursday, January 14

Faith to Life Bible Study, Reep Room	3:00 pm
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Monday, January 18

Hot Meal Program at St. Luke's	4:30 pm
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Tuesday, January 19

Hospitality Team meeting, Reep Room	6:30 pm
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Wednesday, January 20

Youth Group at Trinity UMC	6:00 pm
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Thursday, January 21 thru February 4

Mission Trip to Liberia – We pray God will bless our Missionaries!

Saturday, January 30

Controlling Community Violence	9:00 am
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A NOTE OF THANKS - I want to thank all of you for the many tokens of appreciation I received during the holiday season. I appreciate your kindness and well-wishes as well as your friendship and support as we serve the Lord together. May God bless you all!
Nancy Cook

TOGETHER, WE EXTEND A HELPING HAND TO THOSE IN CRISIS SO THEY CAN OVERCOME FORMIDABLE OBSTACLES.

Human Relations Day is January 17, 2016

Turn on the news or drive around the outskirts of your town and you will find what Jesus called “the least of these.” Those living in the margins of society, struggling to survive. People like:

An immigrant teenager in Texas’ poorest county, being recruited by a local gang

A father struggling for sobriety in Little Rock, Arkansas

An Oklahoma woman recently released from incarceration looking for work

Over and over Jesus served people like this, embracing them. And that’s what we want to model as the people of The United Methodist Church. To continue the ministry of Jesus we established Human Relations Day as a Special Sunday that calls all of our churches to participate in helping all God’s children to realize their potential.

Equipping The United Methodist Church to Be the Church

As a member of The United Methodist Church, your gift, on this day, allows the work of folks like Bruce and Becky Ballou to build relationships with those teens in Texas. Your gift allows Montey Payne to lead

recovering addicts towards healing. And your gift helps Rev. Steve Burr find work for ex-offenders.

This work, and hundreds of other ministries, are possible because you give.

Will you continue to support Human Relations Day?
Will you continue nurturing at-risk youth,
strengthening communities' self-improvement efforts
and advocating for the oppressed?

HAPPY BIRTHDAY IN JANUARY

2 – Connie Boehm
7 – Tracie Feest
16 – Garfield Voker
24 – Daphne Schnaare
25 – August Grulich
29 – Joy McClelland

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY IN JANUARY

14 – Jayne & Jerry Dresen
21 – David Piggins & Carol
Christensen

ALTAR FLOWERS

3 – Mary K. Tsuchiya
10 –
17 -
24 -
31 -

OUR FOOD PANTRY ITEM for January is paper grocery sacks and/or toilet paper. Bring your contributions to church any time and place them in the crates near the church entrances. Thanks for helping supply the food pantries.

LOOSE CHANGE OFFERING FOR JANUARY will benefit the Racine Literacy Council. The Racine Literacy Council is a volunteer-based organization that provides adult literacy programs in Racine County and works to educate the community about the importance and impact of

Rev. I Maliik Safir, whose church works with those gripped by addiction in Little Rock, sums up the work of Human Relations Day by recalling Jesus' story of the Good Samaritan: "to meet the poor, the disadvantaged and the underserved at the places where others have robbed them and help them to recover from the wounds of social inequality."

literacy. In 2012-2014, 279 adult learners were served by 133 trained tutors. Place your loose change – or more – in the small brown envelopes found in the pews and place it in the offering plate.

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USHER SCHEDULE

Jan. 3

Roger & Betty Oakley
Dave Johnson

Jan. 10

Chuck & Jean Harmon
Jeff Fernholz

Jan. 17

August Grulich
Ricky Castro
Jan Rosellini

Jan. 24

Dave Johnson
Roger & Betty Oakley

Jan. 31

Jeff Fernholz
Chuck & Jane Bragg

If you are unable to be a greeter/usher on your assigned day, please contact someone from the usher list to substitute for you. Thanks.

"FIRST CHURCH ALIVE WEDNESDAY" The second Wednesday of the month is First Alive Wednesday. This time it falls on Wednesday, January 13. We feature a potluck dinner starting at 5pm. The event,

hosted by the Hospitality Team, is open to everyone. This is a time of fellowship, fun, and good conversation. This month we will watch a video: "ACTS A dramatic Presentation of the birth of Christianity – part one". Hope to see you there and don't forget to bring your favorite dish to share.

OFFERING ENVELOPES FOR 2016

are located on the table in the sanctuary. Look for the box with your name on it. If you do not find a box with your name, take one of the blank boxes then record your name and box number on the sheet provided.

Dear members and friends,
You are invited to be a part of our FFRANC (Fellowship of Families, Relatives, Acquaintances, Neighbors, and Co-workers) breakfast on Sunday, January 3 at 9:00 am. We hope you had a blessed Christmas and that your new year is filled with wonderful things.

FFRANC Sunday offers opportunities for all members of our congregation and their invitees to gather on the first Sunday of each month for a time of fellowship and to celebrate the blessings of special days in their lives over delicious breakfast. Those special days may include birthdays, anniversaries,

graduations, newly wedded, first job, etc. We note that you have a special event happening in your life in January and will start off the new year in a great way.

January's FFRANC event will be sponsored by the people who were recognized as having special occasions in December.

Thereafter, on the **first Sunday** of

TIPS On LIBERIA MISSION TRIP:

The thoughts and talks about a mission trip to Ganta City, Nimba County, Liberia started forming just five months ago. Ganta City is located in northern Liberia, one hundred twenty eight miles away from Liberia's commercial capital, Monrovia. It has a population of fifty six thousand according to the 2006 census report. Ganta City is also known for being the city with the largest United Methodist Conference Mission Station situated on three hundred acres of land. The Mission Station comprises the following outreach ministries: The only United Methodist Hospital and the best Nursing School; a maintenance Ministry; a historic Stone Church building; a High School and the main campus of the Medical College of the United Methodist University (UMU).

Having gone through the struggles of finding the convenient dates and times that would fit into everyone on the trip schedule, we finally agreed on Thursday January 21, 2016 thru Thursday February 4th 2016. Thursday, January 21, 2016, we'll depart the U.S. from the Chicago O'Hare Airport @ 5:30p.m and arrived in Monrovia @8:15 p.m Friday, January 22nd, 2016. On our return, we'll leave Liberia February 3, 2016 @ 9:35 p.m and arrived at Chicago O'Hare Airport @ 4:23p.m. Thursday February 4, 2016. Flight time is about 22 hours each way, and we'll stay in Liberia for ten days.

The following people are going on the trip:

1. Rev. Jakes Voker – Team leader 1st UMC

each subsequent month, people whose special days were celebrated in the preceding month, along with the entire congregation, will provide the breakfast for those celebrating in the current month. The FFRANC Breakfast has been a resounding success. Let's keep it going!

Again, we would like to

encourage everyone to invite someone and be present at each celebration, even if you aren't able to bring a dish! We prayerfully look forward to a joyful celebration with you at each FFRANC **Sunday**, all in the name of Jesus Christ, the one in whom our joy is made complete!

2. Esther Voker – Racine 1st UMC
3. Dr. Ellen Spiering - Racine 1st UMC
4. Austin Feest - - Racine 1st UMC
5. August Grulich - Racine 1st UMC
6. Patsy McDonald- Sherman Ave. UMC-
Madison
7. Maureen Beck - Milwaukee
8. Gwen Beck - Milwaukee
9. Marice Beck - Milwaukee
10. Alysia Kohn - Beaver Dam

We will be working on various projects at two locations in Ganta City: Dr. Ellen Spiering will work with the Out-patients Department at Ganta U.M Hospital alongside another doctor and the nurses. The rest of us will work at Jabez Elementary School and Junior High School. Our projects at the school will include painting the school buildings, rearranging the mini-library, tutoring students and many more.

Finally, we would like to thank the United Methodist Women, all who made personal financial and material donations and the entire congregation for helping make this trip possible. We certainly need and would appreciate your prayers for God's presence and protection as we reach out to serve and make a difference in the lives of our sisters and brothers in Ganta-Liberia for the sake of Jesus Christ.

You all have a blessed New Year as we prayerfully look forward to seeing you upon our return.

Blessings,

The 2016 Liberia Mission Team

First United Methodist CHURCH HISTORY ~THEN & NOW~

Racine, Wisconsin Judith D. Schulz, Church Historian
Editing assistance from Carol Michael Feest & Judy Johnson Madsen

~180 Years Old~

**Our congregation was formed in 1836,
Making us 180 years old in 2016!**

In 1836 Wisconsin wasn't even a state yet. On April 20, 1836 the Congress passed an act making the area/region the Wisconsin Territory Racine wasn't a city yet; it was the year of the 13th national presidential election of our young 60-year-old country; Andrew Jackson was president; the Battle of the Alamo occurred; father of Laura Ingalls Wilder was born; painter Winslow Homer was born; flag maker Betsy Ross died; Davy Crockett died; "Teetotalism" became a movement in the 1830's; Phillips patented the match; and there were just 25 states that made up the USA. This is the year our congregation began.*

*The Wisconsin Territory initially included all of the present-day states of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and part of the Dakotas east of the Missouri River. Much of the Territory had originally been part of the Northwest Territory.

WRITTEN

80 years ago to us...

a hand written note sent to our church in 1936 for the celebration of our

Congregation's 100th Year.

The note is one of many in the Centennial Scrapbook in our archives. [In the transcribed text that follows I have added notes in

brackets for clarification.]

Portland Oregon Sept 30, 1936

Rev. F.J. Turner, Racine, Wisconsin

Dear Sir; I couldn't begin to tell you how much I would like to be with you all for the one hundredth anniversary celebration of the First Methodist Church, but as it is impossible for me to be there at this time I will just send my greetings to all the members and friends.

There are so many happy memories connected with the "First Church" that it is hard for me to single out the thoughts that would be most interesting.

My first memories, tho, would go way back to the old church. [bldg.. before our current bldg.] Altho the building wasn't such a beautiful structure as the present one, the services were very well attended and even tho some of we younger ones of that day "wiggled around" a lot during the service we really got more out of it than what we were given credit for. Some of the sermons have stuck with me thru all the years.

The Christmas, Easter and Children's Day programs will always stand out in my memory, as well as the "Watch Night" services of New Year's Eve.

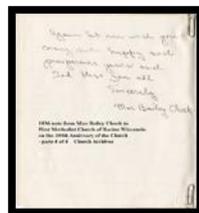
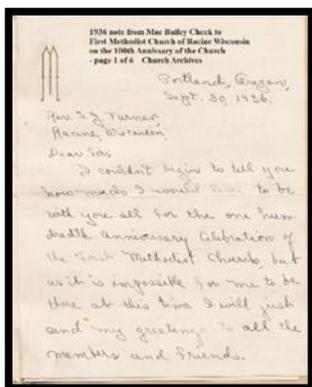
Then the time when the church services were held at "Guild Hall," [on 7th St] what a noisy place that was. The Junior League [church youth group] meetings on Sunday afternoons and how patient our teachers were. I guess I didn't realize until later years just how much time and effort Mr. Augustine put forth to help the younger generation of that day to prepare themselves for later years.

Then what a happy day (altho a stormy one) it was when the "corner stone" of the new church [our current bldg's outside cornerstone] was laid. Still further the first Sunday that services were held in the new building; how proud we all were of our individual Sunday school rooms. [East end of sanctuary & balcony]

Taking everything into consideration I believe the happiest days of my life were spent in the "First Methodist" Church of Racine; and altho I have traveled a great deal in the eighteen years since I left there and have attended many churches I have yet to find one that can take its place or even seem like "home" to me.

Again let me wish you a many more happy and prosperous years and God bless you all

*Sincerely
Mae Bailey Cheek*



.....
RESEARCH & THEORY NOTES: Who is Mae? Mae Margueritte Bailey (1900-1969) was born in Racine to Vial Lewis Bailey & Mariah A. Huff. Mae married Frederick King Cheek in 1919 in Oregon. ~ **Her membership years`at our church:** She would have been 12-14 yrs. old during the years the congregation met in Guild Hall, while the current bldg. was being built. She may have been at the groundbreaking, too? She was about 14 years old when the current cornerstone was laid and it sounds like she was at the event! She wrote this note when she was about 36. I wonder where she traveled in those 18 years. I am hoping to learn more about who she was and maybe find a photo from a descendant so we can identify her if she is in the ground breaking photo (of this current building.) Wouldn't that be wonderful, for us, and for her descendants... to find her in the 1913 group photo in front of the old church or in the 1913 ground breaking photo! I have studied the photos over and over, wondering about each face, and if she is there.

January 2016 History pages by Judith D. Schulz
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It's 2016. Do You Know Where Your Sunday School Attendance Pin Is?

Do you have any photos showing you wearing it? Please share the photos with us. Ask Jane Johnson Bragg about the requirements to receive the yearly bars. Did you notice which 2 adult members wore their old pins to the 2011 event where we opened the outside cornerstone box? Take a look in the exhibit cases at the

many Methodist pins of Carol Feest. If you have yours, now is the time to put a short note with it for others to know who earned it, when & where it came from & what it meant. *It is part of your church history.*

Did you know... that Dotti Bent's **Methodist Pie** at the Time Capsule Filling ceremony, 2012, was purchased by Racine's Mayor, John Dickert! Thank-you.. to the many bakers who have baked Methodist pies for so many church events.

STAR WARS?

A Methodist you may have heard of:
 George Lucas, movie producer and creator of the original

"Star Wars" series, is Methodist.

Can you name the 5 Methodist presidents?

James Knox Polk (11th President, 1845-1849)
 Ulysses S. Grant (18th 1869-1877)
 Rutherford B. Hayes (19th 1877-1881)
 William McKinley (25th 1897-1901)
 George W. Bush (43rd 2001-2009)

If you "google" & research more, you will see how each was connected in their own unique way to the Methodist Church.

Other Methodists: Click here:
http://www.adherents.com/largecom/fam_meth.html

New Photo Display this winter

From the United Methodist Women's Jan 2011 meeting and program "Our Church History Records"

Superannuated?

I have seen that word used in the biographies of many Methodist pastors of the 1800's. One example from Leach's book, p. 69, the bio and photo of our pastor Julius Field. [served our congregation Aug 1845 to Aug 1846]

"In 1839 he was sent as a Sunday School Missionary to Wisconsin and built the first frame church in the territory at Sylvania (Kellogg's Corners.) [now Somers in Kenosha County]. Was Presiding Elder of Milwaukee District, Rock River Conference and the station at Racine and built the first Methodist church here, on College Ave., between Fifth and Sixth [St.]. In 1846 he returned to New York conference, and was active there for many years **being superannuated in 1871.** He died at Durham, Conn. Sept 22, 1884."

I was again puzzled by this word and finally decided to look it up. The word is pronounced "su-per-AN-you-ayed" and comes from the Medieval Latin word superannatus, which means "to be too old." It can describe things that are obsolete because of age, so it mostly likely means "retired or ...in retirement." Now it makes sense in the biographies of those eras..

Circa 1950's! Do you know where this is in our church?



A Meeting. LtoR: Our minister (1940-1967) Dr. Clarence Seidenspinner, *name needed*, our church secretary Gladys Reep and our Sunday School Superintendent Esther Wulff.

Photo by Carl Wulff

January 2016 History pages by Judith D. Schulz

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
745 Main Street
Racine, WI 53403-1211

**The Mission of
First United Methodist Church**

- **To provide a place for people to experience God and find inspiration for daily living.**
- **To welcome all people as valued members of the community.**
- **To encourage growth in faith and service on their spiritual journeys.**
- **To work for social justice.**
- **And to invite all to experience eternal life through Jesus Christ.**