



We reaffirmed our covenant to each other as part of the Body of Christ and welcomed six new members: Val and Mike Winterland (with their children); Bri Sanders; Wes Crump; Carol and Richard Ritter.

Baby Dedications - Jan 25



From left to right: Bryan and Whitney Clark with Brynn and Brooklyn; Thad and Kelly Mool with Tristan and Spencer; Chad and Holly Hitchens with Cruz; Derek and Sarah Meiss with Eli.

Commissioning Prayer - Jan 25



We commissioned Brett Monge to the Lord's work in New Zealand. He left on January 26. See page 3 inside for more information.

Pancake Day



2014



Top: Emma Winterland and Hannah Ludy
Bottom: Tony Palmer, Dick Stanhouse, Dyllan Palmer

60th Annual Pancake & Sausage Day

Saturday, April 11
Serving 7 am - 1 pm

Volunteers Needed!
See Todd Morrison
or Denny Foor

More info coming soon!

Fit Club



Photo credit: Brian Buchanan

The Local Outreach team (LO) needs two Workout Leaders for the Tuesday and Thursday workouts.

Duties include greeting visitors, getting waivers signed, running the video equipment (with training), and updating the LO contact person of any needs.

If interested, contact Brian Buchanan: phone 309-262-0070; email briandbuch@gmail.com

Sunday Worship Services
Morning Worship 9 am-10 am
J.A.M. (ages 3 - PreK) every Sunday
K-3 Children's Church; 4-5th grades 1st & 3rd Sunday
Communion served 4th Sunday
Sunday School 10:30-11:15 am
406 W 7th Street, PO Box 280, Gridley, IL 61744 Phone 747-2299 web:www.1stiu.org

Youth Groups
Wednesdays
Jr. High 6:00 pm | Sr. High 7:30 pm

Pastoral Staff
Andy Huetter, Sr. Pastor
Grant Stauter, Associate Pastor



FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF GRIDLEY

United by common faith in the Lord Jesus Christ

*Open Bibles One Another Beautiful Feet
Spiritual Growth Authentic Worship*

FEBRUARY 2015

Dear Church Family,

In our church-wide Bible reading plan¹ this past week we read Matthew 22 in which Jesus is asked by the Pharisees which commandment is the greatest. Reciting the well-known passage of Deuteronomy 6, Jesus says that the greatest commandment is to love God with all of one's heart, soul and mind and he adds that the second greatest commandment is to love your neighbor as yourself. Jesus brilliantly distills hundreds of commandments into two, bite-sized phrases. The essential activity of the Christian life is found in only two great objectives: love God and love people.

At First United, we aim to facilitate love for God and love for others through a variety of programs and activities such as our Sunday morning worship gatherings, prayer meetings, Sunday School, coffee fellowship, youth groups, children's programs, mission trips, and much more. These programs each have their purpose in the life of the church, but a mark of authentic faith is found in loving God and loving others outside of church programs. That is, a healthy church will likely have some programmed gatherings, but much of the Christian's life is to be a demonstration of love for God and others in a non-programmed way. There are numerous examples of "unprogrammed Christianity" in the actions of believers at First United, and I want to share some of the ways people I have witnessed living out their faith in order that we may be "stirred up toward love and good deeds" (Heb. 10:24). Here are a few ideas:

- Play worship music in your home (or car) in the morning and begin your day singing to the Lord. This is especially helpful to get your heart prepared for worship on Sunday mornings.
- Fix a crock-pot meal Saturday night so that you're able to be flexible on Sunday with lunch plans and potentially invite

someone over from church for lunch.

- Send an encouraging email to a missionary. If you don't know the missionary well, simply send them an encouraging passage of Scripture.
- Offer to serve a single mom in some tangible way. Many single moms are bearing a heavy load of responsibility alone and would be blessed by a polite offer to serve.
- Spend a day fasting and praying for a specific purpose. Consider inviting a fellow believer to join you.
- Stop and Pray. No need to go through a list, simply thank the Lord for what comes to mind or ask Him to show you how to walk by faith with the day He has given.
- Make an effort to befriend your neighbors.
- Visit a widow. You'll be glad you did.
- Before and after church, seek to encourage someone else by listening to them, speaking words of grace to them, and by applying truths from that morning's worship service.
- Memorize a passage of Scripture. Consider inviting a friend or family member to memorize with you.

The danger of a list like this is that it could be read as a law of "what good Christians must do," but to read this list in such a way would be to miss the point. Rather, the aim to plant a few ideas of how we may each pursue love for God and others in response to the Holy Spirit's prompting in our lives. The "programmed" events at our church are helpful and good, but the majority of our Christian faith is lived outside of the church building. Every single day is an opportunity for us to live out our faith by loving God and loving others.

**Grace and Peace,
Andy**

¹ Copies of the plan are available at the Welcome Center or see "Project 51" reading plan on the YouVersion app if you are interested in starting (or restarting!) the plan.

Inside this newsletter:

- Pastor Andy's Letter
- Surplus Giving Explained
- First U News
- Milestones/Attendance
- January Photos

One Another



And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Matthew 22:37-39 ESV

Surplus Giving Explained

To whom much is given, of him much will be required.

from Luke 12:48

Our Surplus Giving Plan began in 2010. We had ended 2009 with over \$100,000 in the General Fund account. The church leadership, recognizing that every dollar is a gift from God, felt great responsibility for stewarding the abundance wisely. The Surplus Giving Plan was put in place so that we would not accumulate growing bank accounts for ourselves but rather give the money to gospel-centered ministries that would put the money to immediate use.

The plan takes into account that it's wise to have cash on hand. With that in mind, we keep in reserve three months operating budget and funds set aside for future capital expenses. At the end of each quarter, a percentage of the surplus is given away. At the end of the year, 100% of the surplus is given.

Our History of Surplus Giving

2010: Total \$39,420.66; \$13,140.22 each

- **Lifesong for Orphans, Gridley**
Advocates for orphans throughout the world. Go to www.lifesongfororphans.org to learn more.
- **Heart to Heart Counseling Services, Flanagan**
Provides Christian counseling services for individuals, families and married couples regardless of ability to pay.
- **Churches Helping Churches, Part of Harvest Bible Chapel**
Designated to Haiti's earthquake relief efforts.

2011: Total \$32,833.08; \$10,944.36 each

- **Lifesong for Orphans**
- **Midwest Food Bank, Bloomington IL**
Provides food for local food pantries and sends supplies and food to areas hit by natural disasters.
- **First United Adoption Fund (administered by Lifesong)**
Created a fund for First United couples who want to adopt.

2012: Total \$65,375.13

- **Lifesong for Orphans** \$21,791.71
- **Midwest Food Bank** \$21,791.71
- **Roanoke Flood Disaster Fund** \$5000.
Given in response to spring flooding. The Roanoke Apostolic Christian Church directed the area relief work and donations.
- **Salem 4 Youth, rural Flanagan** \$6000
A therapeutic boarding school for young men whose behaviors have escalated to the point that they should no longer remain in their homes
- **Common Word Institute** \$10,791.71
Helped our partners open an office/meeting place for their work in building God's Kingdom in the Middle East.

Our Prayer Calendar includes prayer requests for many of these organizations.

2013: Total \$51,650.67; \$17,216.89 each

- **Lifesong for Orphans**
 - **Common Word Institute, Middle East**
 - **G.O. Ministries, Seminary of the Americas**
Helped cover start-up costs of the seminary for Dominican Republic pastors.
- #### 2014: Total \$115,127.18
- **Lifesong for Orphans, Zambia** \$37,500
These funds built one Student Life Home. 41 students are now living in the Student Life Homes.
 - **Lifesong for Orphans, Ukraine** \$14,996.42
 - **Pontiac Caring Pregnancy Center** \$37,660.76
Helped complete the construction costs of Elizabeth Home, a home for unwed mothers.
 - **To Every Tribe Ministries (TET), Los Fresnos TX** \$5000
TET trains and sends workers to unreached areas of the world. We support Matt and Nati Taylor, missionaries with TET.
 - **Orphan Outreach, Guatemala** \$5000.
Designated to Good Shepherd Christian School—a school run by a local church in an area of extreme poverty.
 - **The Forgotten Initiative (TFI), Gridley** \$5000
TFI is a Lifesong ministry that works with the foster care community nationwide.
 - **Rechurch, New Zealand** \$5000
Helped fund a staff retreat and partial expenses for Brett Monge, their Interim Worship Leader. This assisted our partners, Joe and Amy Flammer, with their church plant.
 - **House of Joy, Navajo Nation** \$5000
Given to a church in the Navajo Nation to help with building and operational expenses.

Surplus answers for the number crunchers

The Surplus Giving Plan is based on a Target Cash Reserve of:

- **3 months budgeted expenses:** In 2015, that amount is \$91,060.38 (\$30,353.46/mo).
- **Future Planned Capital Expenses:** These funds are held in a savings account. On 12/31/14 that balance was \$28,046.53.
- **Additional Needs:** No additional needs have been identified in 2015 at this time.

At the end of each quarter, we distribute a percentage on amounts over the Target Cash Reserve.

- 1st and 2nd quarters, we distribute 50%;
- 3rd quarter, 75%;
- 4th quarter, 100%.

The percentages are lower in the first three quarters in case an unforeseen expense must be paid later in the year.

Thank you for giving so generously.

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You



From New Zealand

As freezing temperatures and ice cover the Illinois fields, the warmth of summer and excitement of a new year are setting in for New Zealand. The end of January in New Zealand marks the end of summer vacation, the start of a new school year, and a clear beginning to 2015.

This January, we are so excited that Brett Monge will be making the journey from Central Illinois, all the way over to New Zealand to be a part of what God is doing in our part of the world in this new year! Brett will be arriving in late January to help lead worship and develop local leadership over the course of the next three to six months. A vibrant worship service is a vital part of Rechurch's ministry and Brett will be helping to lead us to God's throne each week as people discover God's plan for their life and journey toward making Jesus their first priority.

We are so grateful that God has called Brett to be a part of this ministry for a time, and are so grateful that God has used First U to provide for his needs and support while Brett serves in New Zealand! —*Joe Flammer, Teaching Pastor, Rechurch*

"You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God." 3 John 1:6 ESV

OK Feet—Start Walking

Walking is mentioned 247 times in the Bible and was first mentioned in Genesis 3:8, "The man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day." It was while walking in the garden that God typically spoke to Adam and Eve. How meaningful for us to walk through our neighborhoods, through our parks, through our communities, or around the church while talking to our Creator, the One who knows us best!

Our bodies were made for walking and built to stand erect. Our organs function best when given room to work. Our joints need movement to maintain good range of motion. The U.S. Surgeon General states "significant benefits can be obtained by including a moderate amount of physical activity." Thirty minutes of brisk walking is among the recommendations. According to AARP, regular walking can prevent depression, lengthen lifespan, lower stress levels, relieve arthritis and back pain, strengthen muscles, bones and joints. The benefits

From the Missions Team

The church could have certainly afforded to send Brett without going to the congregation for a special collection. But without this collection, Brett would only have known that he has the support of leadership and the Missions Team. Now he can go knowing that his church family also supports him. He can be confident of a strong chorus of prayers working with him and for him in New Zealand.

The Flammers also know First United is a committed partner helping them move forward with the Gospel in Christchurch. Our partnership has eternal consequences.

We have been praying that we would raise up missionaries from within First U to send to the mission field. Our prayers are being answered.

Thank you for your support and prayers for the work of missions. —*Keri Hany for the Missions Team*

From Brett

Thank you for your support as I travel to New Zealand to serve at Rechurch! I am blown away by God's provision for this trip. Looking forward to the adventure! —*Brett Monge, Interim Worship Leader, Rechurch*

of walking for your heart health is overwhelming. Walking has been described as the "superfood of exercise".

The Walk to Jerusalem is an opportunity to get active, reconnect with family or friends and spend some time with the Lord. Our 6,295 mile route will be from Gridley to New York City, across the Atlantic (if we are not getting many miles we'll "fly across"), through Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Israel. We will pray for our missionaries in these areas and learn a bit about the countries.

Weekly devotions are included in the packets. They will be available the first two Sundays in February. The walk starts Ash Wednesday (February 18). We'll arrive in Jerusalem on Easter.

The miles are cumulative for the entire church family. Report your weekly miles so our progress can be tracked. —*Carrie Dixon, Parish Nurse*



Sign up the first two Sundays in February. Start tracking miles on February 18.

February

Birthdays

- 05 Katie Zeller
- 07 Will Wenger
- 08 Steven Barnhart
- 08 Randi Palmer
- 08 Grace Stanhouse
- 09 Hudson Huette
- 10 Dennis Stauter
- 13 Frankie Finck
- 15 Danny Kaupp
- 15 Cathy Smith
- 17 Samuel Stauter
- 18 Darien DeVary
- 19 Nathaniel Meiss
- 20 Sami Jo Allen
- 21 Alisa Ihlenfeldt
- 21 Noah Johnson
- 21 Liam Kiefer
- 26 Nicole Butikofer
- 27 Noah Wettstein
- 28 Katie Jeffreys

Anniversaries

- 25 Dan & Carrie Dixon

New Births in January

- 10 Maddilyn Rae Richard
Parents: Jake & Morgan Richard
Grandparents: Stephanie & Ron Richard
- 12 Franki Mae Finck
Parents: Frankie & Stephanie Finck
Grandparents: Frank & Nadine Finck
- 16 Jacob Ryan Krone
Parents: Joshua & Kansas Krone
Grandparents: John & Tonya Krone

Attendance & Offering

1/4	325	\$ 8,563
1/11	325	\$ 25,429
1/18	297	\$ 5,218
1/25	325	\$ 6,398