

Dear Reader,

I received a wonderful recommendation of the book, “Bye Bye I Love You: The Story of our First and Last Words” by Michael Erard. I must confess that it is far from my field of knowledge and there are moments I feel out of my league. The first half of the book addresses how we learn language and children’s first words. The second half is about our final words and what we say in our final weeks of life. This is an intriguing field of study.

One of the insights is that it is often presumed that children’s first words are “mama” or “dada.” While these are common first words, the author points out that most first words deal with the life around the infant. Their first word might center around the family pet, who is there at eye level, saying “kitty” or “doggy” or some variation thereof. Or their first words might be a favorite food like a banana or milk. Linguists have a list of several hundred words that are among the most familiar first words of children around the world.

Behind these first words, linguists note that there are gestures and other ways that newborns communicate. These are significant as well, perhaps equally significant to the historic first words that are spoken.

The author points out that in the Navajo (or Dine) culture, it isn’t first words that are significant. It is the first laugh. Families eagerly await the first time a baby laughs. And they will strive to encourage that laughter. It is a great honor to be the first person that makes a child laugh. And when that laugh happens, there is a party, hosted by the person who brought forth the laughter.

This I find very interesting. Imagine a culture where there is importance placed upon making a child smile, laugh, giggle. What a blessing it is to think that something we said or did (even just making a goofy face) brought joy to another human being.

We may not have the honor of making someone laugh for the very first time, but there is still great delight in spreading joy. I offer that as an encouragement this week. Find a reason to laugh and smile and share that gift with those around you.


Peace,

Howard



Prayer Concerns

Please pray for: Yvonne Achterberg, Nathan Ayers, Sue Ellen Brown, Wilbert Carr, Gloria Chandler, Joe Davis, Melody Devoe, Dave Evans, Susan Gobert, Roberta Hartwell, Vicky Huckaby, Julianna Jerome-Drerup, Steve Johnson, Jane Pettit, Terry Reimer, Tom Sharp, Melissa Stanley, Sara Taylor, Connie Wilson and Jacob Woodworth



Upcoming Activities

Annual Conference Delegates

First UMC is in need of two delegates to represent our church at the upcoming Annual Conference in Indianapolis. This gathering of United Methodists throughout the state will be held June 4-7. Along with conducting the business of the denomination (setting the budget, approving committee work) the Annual Conference is a great way to learn more about the work of the United Methodist Church in Indiana and beyond. If you would be interested in being a delegate, please contact the church office.

Boogie Down (or up) to Bargersville

Join us on Saturday May 17th for the next social gathering, a trip to nearby Bargersville. We begin at the church at 9:45 a.m. and begin at Miss M's Home and Garden Center. After a bit of shopping, we will enjoy lunch at the historic 1950's style diner, Knuckle Sandwich.

Graduation Sunday

We will be honoring our graduates on Sunday May 18th. We don't want to overlook anyone, so please share your graduate's information with Shana Dublan at sdublan@fumccolumbus.org. Please include a photo and their graduation info.

Book Club

On May 18th, the FUMC Book Club will meet in the church library to discuss the Pulitzer Prize winning novel, "March" by Geraldine Brooks. Set during the Civil War, this work of historical fiction,

“March” tells the story of a chaplain serving in the Union army who must come to grips with his own capacity for evil and an understanding of who he is and what he truly believes. The discussion begins at 6:00 p.m. on May 18th.

Brown Bag Luncheon

The Brown Bag Luncheons will return on Wednesday May 21st at noon. Along with a time for food and fellowship, Rev. Boles will share some of the details of his trip to Peru. All are welcome to attend.

Love Chapel at the County Fair

Once again this year, Love Chapel will have a food stand at the Bartholomew County Fair. We have signed up to staff the lunch on June 26th. We are looking for 10-12 volunteers. If you would be interested in helping that day (or any other day), we will have sign-ups after church for the next two Sundays.

Upcoming Activities

May 30 Red Cross Blood Drive, noon to 5:00 p.m.

Next Sunday's Sermon

May 18 "Do All the Good That You Can"

Text: John 10:22-30

On this Sunday when we will recognize our graduates, one of life's pressing questions is always, "What shall I do with my life?" Such a question is important and worthy of reflection. How shall we live. In today's readings, folks are asking Jesus who he is. Is he the long-awaited Messiah? A prophet? He doesn't answer directly but tells them to look at his actions and that will provide the clues necessary to know him.