



Dear Friends,

Read any travel magazine or book and they will likely list the hidden gems of a destination. These are the little-known restaurants, often a hole-in-the-wall place, which serves excellent cuisine. Or you may find a listing of the surprisingly free museums or places of interest. Such places are called hidden gems, but they are not so well known.

I was thinking about that with regard to the church itself. Even for folks who have been members here for many years, it is not uncommon for someone to say, "I never knew about this space." So, I wondered about the hidden gems of First UMC.

Here are a few that come to mind. Did you know that we have an outdoor labyrinth? This peaceful space located north of the church is a wonderful place to have a meditative walk. Labyrinths have been a sacred space in many churches and cathedrals allowing people to walk and pray. The goal of the labyrinth is to walk slowly and deliberately toward the center. It isn't a maze where you have to make choices or face getting lost. The labyrinth leads directly to the center where you can pause before returning on the exit route.

Many folks may know about the church library, walking past it on their way to the sanctuary. But have you stopped to check out the book selections? All of the books from our Sunday night book club can be found there. And some great resources for Bible study. Are the children or grandchildren coming to visit? There are some great books to read with your favorite young person. If you haven't checked out a book, stop inside some Sunday or weekday or whenever you are at the church.

Have you visited the memorial gardens? Located on the southside of the church, the memorial gardens can be found by following the walkway east of the sanctuary and down the steps. Once there, you will find a peaceful oasis where you can sit and relax, pray, read, or just have some quiet time. Along with beautiful flowers, there is a water feature that offers a soothing background to the gardens.

I may have to make this a series because there are so many other possibilities in and around the church. The chapel, the artwork in the education wing, the "little museum" inside the Blue Room and so many other hidden gems. One of the worries about sharing such places is that they will no longer be hidden, everyone will know about them. But that is ok. That is what these spaces are for. Come, explore, find a holy space, let your spirit be nourished in new and unexpected ways at First UMC.

Pace bene (peace and all good things),

Howard



Love Chapel

The local ministry, Love Chapel, has developed a new logo and tagline (Altogether for Good) and will be holding an official launch to share this with the community. They will be hosting a cookout at their food pantry, 311 Center Street, on May 1st from 1:00—5:00 pm, which is open to everyone. If you are available and in the area, stop by for a bite to eat and get to know this important ministry supported by First UMC.

Columbus Interfaith

A special service of prayer will be held on Thursday May 2nd at Southside Elementary School's auditorium. This is an interfaith service featuring the prayers of several different religious organizations in our community as we join together to pray for peace in our nation and in our world. The service begins at 6:00 p.m. and is open to everyone.



Lucille Raines Residence

Lucille Raines Residence is a mission of United Women in Faith, formally known as United Methodist Women. Before the conference sponsored Ester Hall for young women coming to the city for jobs or to go to school. The United Methodist church wanted to enlarge this ministry so in 1968, the Nottingham Court Hote in Indianapolis was purchased and a two-level addition built. When the ministry moved to this new location the name was changed to Lucille Raines in honor of Bishop Richard C. Raines' wife in appreciation of her service.

For over nine years it served as a home away from home for young women as an Indiana Area project. In 1976, occupancy declined to the point it was not financially possible to continue and it was decided to close.

Evelyn Saffer, associated with the Salvation Army, asked about using the building for those seeking to turn their lives around from drug and alcohol addiction. Lucille Raines Residence opened in May 1977. Since then, Lucille Raines Residence has been home for men and women who have become undone by their own doing. They come to Raines following treatment. The United Women in Faith want this ministry to continue.

On Sunday, May 5th, Carolyn Marshall from the Lucille Raines Home will be here to share information about this important ministry of the United Methodist Church. Located in downtown Indianapolis, the Lucille Raines home has adapted its ministries with the changing needs and now serves those who are recovering from addictions, providing housing, counseling and support. Carolyn will join us in the Fellowship Hall after church to talk more about the good work they are doing. We will also be taking a special offering to support this ministry.

Cookie Walk



Cookie Walk

The Cookie Walk Kick-Off meeting will be Thursday, May 9th at 10:30 AM in the Conference Room.



In the Garden

Hosta Sale

Saturday, May 11, 9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

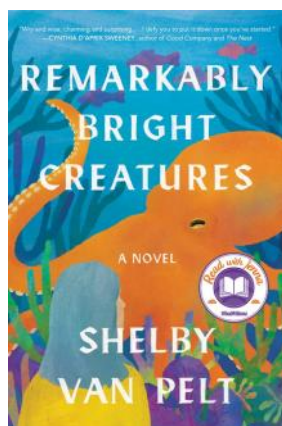
The Church Garden Group is excited to announce this year's Hosta Sale.

**Saturday, May 11th, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
in the Church parking lot.**

Please plan to stop by to purchase a nice variety of Hosta at a great price... \$8.00 for small, \$16.00 for large. Last year's sale was very successful and was a sell out of plants, providing a benefit to the Church missions fund.

Brown Bag Luncheon

The Brown Bag Luncheons continue to Wednesday May 15th at noon. This is an informal time to share lunch and meet new people. Along with enjoyable fellowship there will be a time for conversation together. No advance sign up is needed. Just bring a lunch for yourself and meet us in Room 116.



Book Club

The selection for the May book club is "Remarkably Bright Creatures" by Shelby Van Pelt. With a giant Pacific octopus named Marcellus as the primary character, this novel weaves stories of friendship, care and hope into an uplifting message of kindness. We will discuss this novel on Sunday May 19th at 6:00 p.m. in the church library. All are welcome.



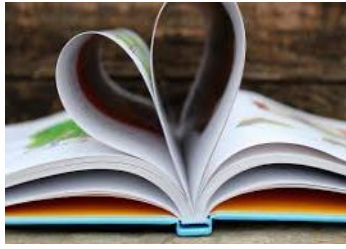
Thank you to everyone who donated to our Love-A-Child Scholarship Fund. This year we raised over \$23,000. Your kindness and continued support of LTP will help to make a difference in many children's lives.

Volunteers needed!

Once again this year, Love Chapel will be hosting a food tent at the Bartholomew County Fair. They have asked local churches to sign up to cover a meal. First UMC has chosen breakfast on Friday June 28th, which will run from 6:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. that day. We need a minimum of eight volunteers for that shift. If you can help with this, please call the church office. You can also volunteer for other shifts, breakfast, lunch or dinner for any of the dates the fair is open. To do so, you can email volrecruiter@columbuslovechapel.com or call 812-372-9421.

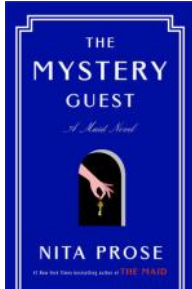
We have all been changed by someone in our lives who has taken the time to teach us something. Maybe our now favorite bible story or verse or how to better live into the scriptures we are reading. May 26th we would love to lift up those who have made such a difference in our lives. If you are a leader, plan on staying after the service for reception in your honor. If you have received the benefits from some of these leaders, plan on attending to let them know how much of a difference they have made in your life. We are also lifting up someone who has taught for 50 years, shaping our young minds! I hope to see you there.





New in the Church Library

The Church Library contains over 2,000 titles ranging from Biblical studies to modern fiction. Below are a couple new items. You can search the library catalog at <https://www.fumccolumbus.org/library> For more information about the library or any book(s) contact Bill Poor.



The Mystery Guest, by Nita Prose

The sequel to a previous Church Book Club selection, **The Maid**, by Nita Prose. Could another situation at the Grand Regency Hotel put Molly, now Head Maid, in jeopardy?

Mark Schweizer



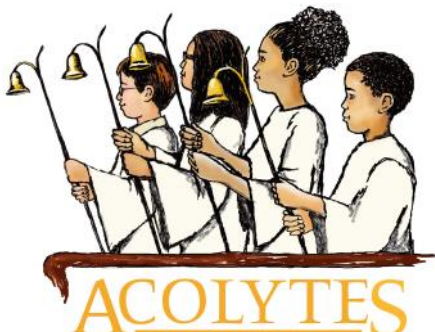
The Alto Wore Tweed, by Marc Schweizer

Another tie in to the Church Book Club. **The Christmas Cantata** was the group book this past December and was Mark Schweizer's 10th book in his liturgical mystery series. The **Alto Wore Tweed** was the first book to introduce this series.

Graduation Celebration

Everyone is invited to join us in Fellowship Hall on May 19th for a reception for our Graduates following service.

Plan on stopping by Fellowship hall to say CONGRATULATIONS and enjoy some cake and visit their table.

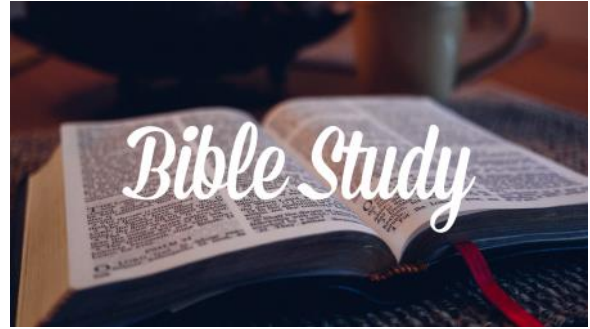


Acolyte training

If your child is interested in being an acolyte, please plan to have them attend the training on May 5th at 9:30 am on the third-floor youth room.

Care Ministry

The Care Ministry meeting will be on Monday, May, 13th at 11am in the church library. The last Care Ministry meeting with Harriet will be Monday, June 10th. We will be using the Bible Study— **Creating Sacred Space**, written by Pastor Harriet Wilkin in our monthly meetings. If you would like a copy of the Bible Study, please contact Pastor Harriet for a copy.



Youth Group will be on May 12th from 5-7. Plan on attending to find out about Summer plans!



United
Women
in Faith

The United Women in Faith will hold their next meeting on Monday, May 13th, in the South Fellowship Hall.

A salad/dessert pitch-in meal will begin at 6 p.m., followed by a presentation by Kelly Daugherty, director of Love Chapel.

While a monetary donation will be given to Love Chapel by the UWF, ladies may donate boxes of cereal or rice, if they wish.

For more information, please contact Stephanie Taylor, UWF leader.

All women of the church are invited to attend.

First Quarter 2024 FUMC Financial Update

We are blessed at FUMC to have the resources to operate thanks to your financial support! We'd like to give the congregation an idea of where we are on our budget, expenses and income.

First, we have budgeted our 2024 expenses at \$732,000 against a projected income of \$585,000 resulting in a "faith gap" of \$147,000. While this faith gap is close to 50% higher than in 2023, we are monitoring our financial position closely, have faith that our income will improve through the year, and have actions we can take to reduce the size of this gap should it be needed.

Second, our "checking account" of available funds is very healthy and it meets our current target of at least 3 times our monthly expenses, which protects FUMC if we need to address any short term emergencies. This provides some space to address the faith gap in funding, but it is obviously not a sustainable long term solution.

Third, it is important to understand that it is challenging to track income versus plan because the timing of donations to the church are extremely seasonal. We generally have a large set of donations early in the year, a general slow-down mid-year, and a pick-up at the end of the year.

So, where are we after the first 3 months of 2024? Our percentage of income received versus planned YTD is 45% versus historical income target of 39%. We are above expected income to date, and have not yet needed to tap into reserve funding.

You can be rest assured that the finance committee will continue to monitor our income and spending. Thank you for your continued generosity and support of FUMC. We ask you to prayerfully continue to support our church's financial needs, and please do let us know if you have any questions.

Rob Heathcote

FUMC Finance Committee Chair

Our 2024 Graduates



Frankie Polyak

Frankie is graduating from Columbus North High School. He plans on attending either Duke University or the University of Chicago, to major in History.

Address: 1034 Parkside Drive
Columbus, IN 47203



Sami Heathcote

Sami is graduating from Purdue University with a BS in Industrial Engineering. Sami will be moving to Greensboro, NC and will be working for Herbalife as a process engineer.

Address: 3723 Mockingbird Drive
Columbus, IN 47203



Helen Rumsey

Helen is graduating from Purdue University with a BS in Mechanical Engineering. She will be moving to Michigan and will be working for Williams International.

Address: 9152 W. Tulip Drive
Columbus, IN 47201



Zander Roggow

Zander plans on attending the University of St. Francis in Fort Wayne where he will play soccer and double major in Sports Management and Kinesiology.

Address: 3446 Sycamore Dr.
Columbus, IN 47203

Our 2024 Graduates



Keegan Harris

Keegan plans to attend Purdue University and major in Computer Science.

Address: 2290 Lakecrest Drive
Columbus, IN 47201



Laurence Dublan

Laurence is graduating from Bloomington North High School and will be attending Ivy Tech.

Address: 831 N Chandler Drive
Ellettsville, IN 47429



Caio Guimaraes Ferreira Lopes

Caio is graduating with his PhD in Choral Conducting from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music.

Address: 2677 E. 7th Street Apt. 1
Bloomington, IN 47408



First United Methodist Church

618 Eighth Street,
Columbus, IN 47201
Phone: 812.372.2851

The Spire

Church Staff

Pastor, Howard E. Boles
Associate Pastor, Harriet Wilkin
Director of Youth and Family Ministries, Shana Dublan
Music Director, Caio Lopes
Organist, Destin Wernicke
Handbell Choir Director, Joyce Crowder
Co-Director of Learning Tree Preschool, Gayle Kelley
Co-Director of Learning Tree Preschool, Teresa Nickerson
Business Administrator, Daron Thayer
Administrative Assistant, Vivien Teo
Maintenance Supervisor, Steve Heyerdahl
Custodian, Jacob Perry

Do we have your email address?

If not, please send to fumc@fumccolumbus.org.

The Spire is a monthly publication of
First United Methodist Church.

www.fumccolumbus.org

Worship Services:

Sunday Mornings

9:00 a.m. Sunday School for kids up to 8th
grade (multiple classrooms; **won't meet during
Summer Break**)

10:00 a.m. In the Sanctuary

Will also be livestreamed via our Facebook or
YouTube pages:

www.facebook.com/columbusfumc

https://www.youtube.com/@FUMC_Columbus

Church Office hours:

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday-Friday

Articles for *The Spire* should be submitted to
Vivien Teo at vteo@fumccolumbus.org by the
20th of each month.