



Dear Friends,

Our fair city is in the perfect location for the total eclipse of the sun on Monday April 8th. I know there are some who are already lamenting the disruption this will bring to our community. There will be many visitors. There are several local events that will likely experience large crowds. There will be additional traffic. Yes, it will be a disruption to our normally calm Monday activities. But it is also a great opportunity and to think, we are right in the middle of it all!

I found a quote from Fred Espenak who is a retired NASA astrophysicist, author, and eclipse expert. He goes by the nickname, Mr. Eclipse. He encourages people to travel if they are not in the direct line of the eclipse. He says, "Take the day off. Take the kids out of school. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for most people to see a total eclipse, and it is one of the grandest sights in all of nature. It's something you'll always remember, and you'll pass stories of it onto your grandchildren." Who am I to argue with an astrophysicist!

Because of the timing of the eclipse, schools have already been cancelled. Businesses are closed. (I have given the day off to our staff so they can enjoy this phenomenon.) And now we wait.

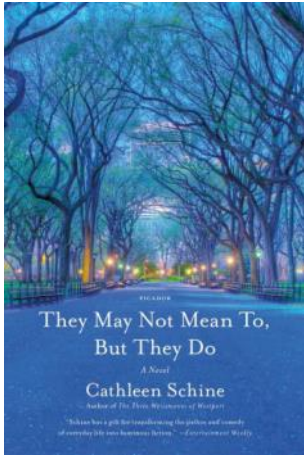
Anticipating this moment, one of the things I plan to do is offer a brief worship service that day at noon. This will provide time to view the eclipse from your chosen destination (home, Mill Race Park, the airport, etc.) But it seems appropriate on such a solemn occasion to gather together to pray and reflect upon the beauty of such a moment. The purpose of the service will be to call our attention not only to the coming eclipse, but also to the daily beautiful mysteries that fill our hearts with awe. I hope you will consider joining me at noon that day.

One thing we cannot control is the weather. What if it is overcast and cloudy? Worse yet, what if it rains? Nothing we can do about that. But I think the power of an eclipse is that it invites us to look around and discover other holy events all around us. If it rains, we can reflect upon the beauty of a springtime rain that nourishes the crops that fill our tables and feed our bodies. If it is overcast, we can look to the heavens knowing that there is something powerful beyond what we can see directly (isn't that a great image of faith!)

I hope it is clear. I hope it is sunny. I hope we experience the fullness of this incredible moment and I look forward to sharing that delight and awe and mystery together.

Pace bene (peace and all good things),

Howard



Book Club

The selection for the April book club is “They May Not Mean To, But They Do” by Cathleen Schine. This book addresses topics like aging, family dynamics, grief, loneliness, and the ability to adapt and change. Join us for this conversation in the church library on Sunday April 21st at 6:00 p.m. Copies of the book are available in the church library.



In the Garden

All the flowers of tomorrow are in the seeds of today
– Native American proverb

It takes love and a little work to nurture things in life. The Church Garden Group understands this and loves to nurture the flowers of tomorrow to bring beauty to our Church, our congregation, our community. We’d love to see you in the garden, too. You do not have to be a Master Gardener for the Church Garden Group. And, if you wear garden gloves no one will even know you don’t have a green thumb! (We really don’t care.)

During the season, the Garden Group meets most Thursday mornings (about 9:00am). We enjoy the great outdoors with a little work... and a lot of conversation! Whether or not you can do the physical gardening, but are interested in the church gardens, please join us at our Spring coffee get-together.

Church Garden Group Spring coffee get-together
Thursday, April 11th, 9:30 a.m.
Church Library

See what church gardening... and fellowship... are all about. If this time is not convenient for you, but are still intrigued by the Church gardens, contact Bill Poor, 812-372-1960, wepoor@comcast.net.

April 8 Eclipse

Join us on Monday April 8th at noon for a brief service of mystery and awe as we prepare for the solar eclipse. This service will offer a time of prayer and reflection as we prepare for the delight of this holy event. Please note that the preschool and church offices will be closed throughout this day.



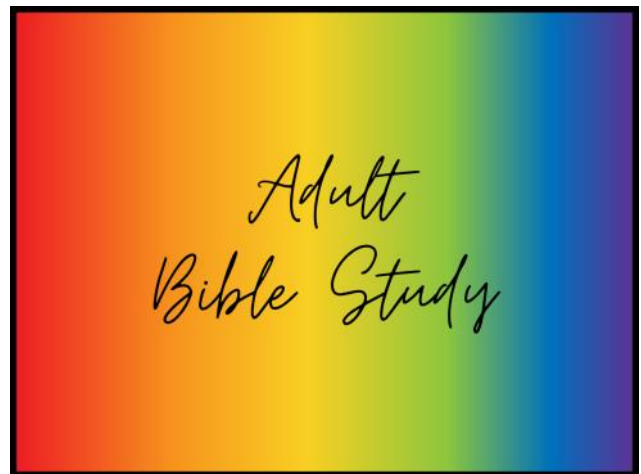


Sunday School

Beginning on Sunday April 7th, the Adult Sunday School class will begin a new study. We will be studying the parables of Jesus through a book by Amy-Jill Levine. This study will look at the Good Samaritan, the parable of the lost coin and other familiar stories Jesus told. The class is open to everyone and will meet in the Multi-Purpose Room at 9:00 a.m. on Sundays.

Bible Study

What are we to do with the biblical stories and verses that are often used to condemn homosexuality? These verses are often called “clobber verses” because they inflict a lot of hurt toward the LGBTQ community. But do they really mean what people think they mean? Utilizing Steve Harper’s book, “Holy Love” and many other sources, Rev. Boles will lead a four-week study on these verses, their meanings and a loving, biblical approach to human sexuality. Classes will be held on Tuesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. in the Blue Room beginning on April 9th.



General Conference

General Conference is the international gathering of United Methodists held every four years to set the official policies of the denomination. The General Conference will meet in Charlotte, NC from April 23-May 3. In anticipation of this important gathering, Rev. Boles will share insights into what legislation will be coming and topics to be addressed. All who are interested are invited to the Fellowship Hall after church on April 21st for this discussion.

Game Day!

Join us April 21st for Games and Fun! Following service make your way to Fellowship Hall for a light lunch and then board games! ALL ages are welcome!

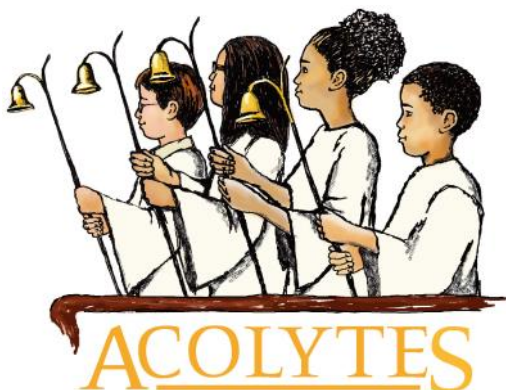


Graduation Celebration

Are you or someone you know graduating? If so, please send Shana Dublan a picture, a brief description of what's next, and your address at sdublan@fumccolumbus.org. We would love to celebrate this achievement together in May!

Breakfast Fundraiser

Biscuits and gravy AND waffles!! Join the youth group in Fellowship Hall on April 14th following the service for breakfast. We are continuing to fundraise for our mission trip.



Become an Acolyte!

Is your child interested in being an acolyte? Please contact Shana to find our more information.



Brown Bag Luncheon

The Brown Bag Luncheons continue on Wednesday April 17th 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.

LISTENING ASSIST AVAILABLE

VIA YOUR SMARTPHONE

HEAR THROUGH YOUR DIGITAL HEARING AIDS, BLUETOOTH EARBUDS, OR AIRPODS

01 Navigate to the app store for your device



02 Download "Listen EVERYWHERE" app



03 Connect to the WiFi "Sanctuary"
Password: "SanSound"

04 Open App

Questions - contact
Tom Bailey



Volunteers needed!

We are thrilled to bring back Interfaith Peace Camp for June 10th-14th, 2024. Camp will take place from 9am-4pm indoors and outdoors at UUCI 7850 E. Goeller Rd. Columbus, IN 47202. Volunteers make this week possible!! We look forward to sharing talent, time, and having fun together. The Children's Ministry Coordinator at UUCI, Adrienne Summerlot, will oversee day-to-day Peace Camp as well as training and oversight of volunteers. Please contact her at children@uuci.org with any questions. You can follow the hyperlink below to fill out the form to be a Volunteer for Peace Camp. To register your kids for camp, use the QR code on the next page!

[Volunteer for 2024 Peace Camp \(breezechms.com\)](http://breezechms.com)

June
10th-14th
9am- 4pm

ages 5-12 years

INTERFAITH PEACE CAMP

Questions:
Adrienne Summerlot
childreneuuccl.org

COST:
Sliding Scale:
\$50-\$125

REGISTER:



bit.ly/2024PeaceCamp



Music, Singing, & Friends!



Nature, Bubbles
& Outdoor Fun!



Special Guests!

OPTIONAL
Friday Night June 14th



Family pitch In
& Camp Out

Care Ministry

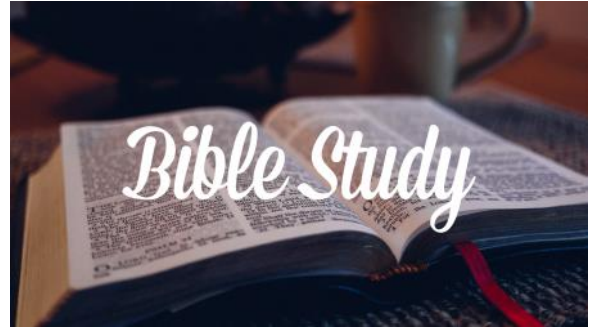
The Care Ministry meeting will be on Monday, April 1st at 11am in the church library. Future dates for meetings are:

Monday, May, 13th

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.



Crafting Extravaganza

Thursday, April 25, 2024 -- Fellowship Hall @ 10 am.

Pastor Harriet will have more Iris folding patterns available to make cards. Plus, she will have other craft supplies to make spring themed items.

Invite a friend to join you! Please sign up in advance to ensure Pastor Harriet has plenty of supplies.

Walk-ins are always welcome!



United
Women
in Faith

The next meeting of the United Women in Faith will be held Monday, April 15, beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the south Fellowship Hall by the outdoor garden. The date is a week later than usual due to the solar eclipse happening on April 8.

The hostess will be Mary Lu Fouts, with assistance from Nancy Riley.

All women on the church are invited to attend.

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



United
Women
in Faith

**United Women in Faith Executive Board Meeting
March 6, 2024**

Members present: Stephanie Taylor, Sue Romine, Susan Gobert, Jeri Ahlbrand, Cathy Custer, Cynthia Stephenson, Georgianna Waldrop

Jeri opened the meeting with the poem "Beauty of Spring."

Minutes were approved from the Dec. 6 Board meeting.

Treasurer's report-Bank says UWF is under incorrect tax number. Discussion followed about whether the name needs to be changed from UMW. \$25 was donated to cover the cost of doing so. The treasurer will pursue what is needed to change tax number and the name changed on the checks.

Cookie -walk report- Susan gave a review of what the committee thought went well and ways to improve the process. Most discussion felt the review was correct. Decided the cost of cookies should be raised from \$7 to \$8 and the cost of candy from \$5 to \$6 for next year. Sue Romine will chair again.

New Business- We plan to do a Lucille Raines fundraiser in May. We would like to have a mission moment video to play during a service to make church members realized the need. The Elevator is now finished, and the boiler has been replaced at the building.

March 23 is the UMF birthday of 155 years. The pastor will be asked to put it in his announcements at a service.

April 19-20 is the spiritual retreat in Donaldson, IN Registration is open until March 22. Fees vary for attendance.

Naomi Circle will be at 6:30 on Monday, March 11 in fellowship hall. Susan French and Cathy Custer will host. Naomi Circle will meet at the church again on April 15.

April 3 will be the birthday party for all women of the church who are 80+ years of age. Cathy Custer will pick up a half sheet of chocolate/white cake and vanilla ice cream. Cynthia will purchase flowers.

Thank you notes were reported. Suggested to share them with members at the get together.

Jeri closed the meeting with a poem "My Garden of Prayer".

Respectfully submitted,
Georgianna Waldrop



United
Women
in Faith

**Naomi Circle minutes
March 11, 2024**

16 members attended. 12 guests responded to Stephanie's invitation.

Marvelous sandwiches, desserts and drinks were served by Susan French and Cathy Custer.

Stephanie opened the meeting with a prayer.

Exec Brd. treasurer, Cynthia explained the problem with accounting due to changing the name from UMW to UWF. Unit treasurer, Jane explained the unit would like to have a pledge of at least \$15 from each member to pay to the district. She handed out pledge donation slips.

December minutes were approved with \$375 being added as the amount donated to Lucille Raines.

March 23 is the 155th birthday of UWF. It will be designated as a day of giving to the legacy endowment fund. It was moved and seconded that the circle donate \$25 from the cheer fund to this day of giving.

Prayer guide asked us to pray for a missionary who is studying for a BS degree in nursing.

Jeri gave a short program about the Lucille Raines home.

Georgianna's worship was a prayer for us to be more thankful for the blessings we receive from the Lord.

Program- Sue read us a children's book The Invisible String. It reminds us that, God, our family, our friends are always connected to us in our hearts. We are never alone.

Cheer fund- Mary Lu sent 3 birthday cards in January and 2 in February. Cheer fund balance was \$139. She bought stamps for \$68.

The April 8 meeting of Naomi Circle has been changed to April 15 due to the eclipse.

Hostesses are Mary Lu and Nancy. Jenny is worship and Jeri is the program. We will meet in South Fellowship Hall.

Gift bags were given to all the visitors.

Stephanie closed the meeting with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Georgianna Waldrop, Sec.



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.