



# First News First

VOLUME 15, ISSUE 1

FEBRUARY 2015

## First United Methodist Church of Mechanicsburg

### From the Pastor

#### Dates to Remember

- Feb 8.....Youth Sunday  
Health Lecture
- Feb 17.....Senior Fellowship
- Feb 18.....Ash Wednesday  
Grocery Bagging
- Feb 20-22 ..Men's Retreat
- Feb 20-21 ..Girl's Sleepover
- Feb 21.....Lenten Kick Off  
Breakfast
- Feb 22.....Mission Meal  
Rejoicing Spirits
- Feb 28.....Day of Pampering

I was watching an old western TV show a couple weeks ago (*Gunsmoke*, if you're wondering) where part of the story involved a bounty hunter who had come into Dodge City. He was passing the time at the Long Branch Saloon when someone came in whom he recognized...a "wanted" man who carried a bounty on his head. This was just the kind of person the bounty hunter was looking for...this is how he made his living, by finding such men and turning them in at the Marshall's office..."dead or alive"...and collecting the reward.

It struck me that this bounty hunter had done his homework: he had studied the wanted posters, he had tracked the various "wanted men" across the West, he had studied their habits and their haunts, he knew who their families and friends were and where they lived. So, when he was hanging out in one place or another...he wasn't just hanging out...he was expecting that one of these "wanted men" just might show up, he was prepared, he recognized them, and he was ready to take action to bring them to justice and to earn the reward.

That preparation took considerable time and energy, 'lots of research' we would say, but that was the very thing required if the bounty hunter was to be successful at his work.

That story came back to my mind a couple days ago when I read something that the great scientist Louis Pasteur said: "Chance favors the mind prepared." Pasteur was reflecting on some of his own discoveries, I think. He was explaining that even those things that seemed like chance discoveries, or unexpected opportunities were the result of long and careful preparation. The study, the research, the many experiments (both the failed and the successful ones), the countless hours spent in thoughtful reflection, the reading, the conversations with learned colleagues...all these things and more prepared him to give birth to a world changing insight or to make an earth-shaking discovery when the opportunity presented itself.

It was much like that well-prepared bounty hunter: when a wanted man "by chance" walked into the same room, he recognized him and moved to "take him in" because he was prepared by experience and by long hours of work and travel. Opportunity and understanding and discovery do not simply fall into our laps; these are the result of careful and diligent preparation for the moment when opportunity arises.

We never know when someone in need will step into First Church. It happened on Friday evening when a young man was looking for help: he needed to find a Narcotics Anonymous meeting and was hoping there was one here. He had come to the wrong place, but he found someone who was prepared...who knew how to check the calendar and to get him in touch with someone who knew where and when the

(Continued on page 2)

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meeting he needed was being held. He walked out the door knowing where to find the help he needed. 'Chance favors the *church* prepared.'

A new family came to First Church a couple of years ago and began to get acquainted. After a couple of weeks one of their children was sitting in the sanctuary before a service was to begin looking around. She was heard to say, "When I am here, I feel beloved." 'Chance favors the *community of faith* prepared.'

Every once in a while I hear someone say, "I wish my pastor would preach more from the Bible." My response is, "It is likely that your pastor does preach from the Bible. You have to know the Bible well enough to recognize it when you hear it." 'Chance favors the *Christian* prepared.'

Quite often I will see members of First Church respond to a person in need, a circumstance that requires attention, or a project that needs support. A person hears about a need and they respond... most often quietly, anonymously and graciously. There is much more kindness, much more generosity, much more ministry going on here than any of us sees. 'Chance favors the *heart* prepared.'

I hope you are doing the important work you need to do...in worship, in study, in fellowship, in friendship, in generosity, in love, in prayer...so that you are prepared to take action when the often unexpected "chance," or opportunity comes for you to show kindness or compassion, help or comfort, support or appreciation as Jesus' ambassador to the world.

Pastor Mike

## Worship

Sunday Morning  
Worship Services  
8:15 am &  
10:45 am

Sunday School  
9:30 am

Sunday Evening  
Anchor Worship  
will resume in the summer



### The 4th Sunday at 4:00...

an interactive and inclusive ministry for those with developmental disabilities, their families, friends and care givers.

## Holy Communion

Ash Wednesday	2/18/15	Loaves and Chalice
Lenten Communion	2/22/15	Pew Service
(both services each Sunday)	3/1/15	Loaves and Chalice
	3/8/15	Loaves and Chalice
	3/15/15	Pew Service
	3/22/15	Pew Service
	3/29/15	Loaves and Chalice
Maundy Thursday	4/2/15	Pew Service with Motzo and Grape Juice
Easter, both services	4/5/15	Pew Service
Bimonthly Communion	6/7/15	Pew Service
Bimonthly Communion	8/2/15	Pew Service
World Communion	10/4/15	Loaves and Chalice
First Sunday in Advent	11/29/15	Pew Service
Christmas Eve, 8:00 and 11:00	12/24/15	Loaves and Chalice

Note: Gluten-free bread available in the center of the bread plates for those who prefer to commune without gluten!

## Lent

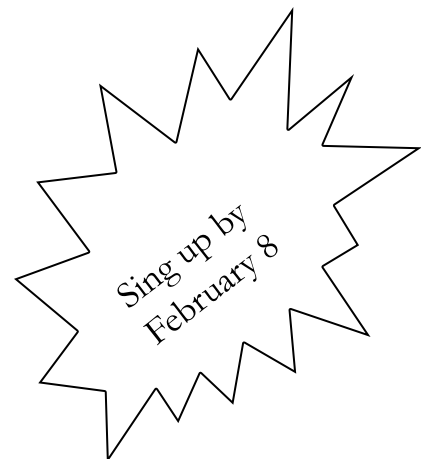
### New Sermon Series/Small Group Study for Lent and Easter Season

*SoulShift: The Measure of a Life Transformed* is a Lent and Easter season journey that will challenge us as we experience key transformational shifts. These shifts are life changes that God's Spirit brings about in our hearts, minds and behaviors. Together we will be moved into a deeper walk with God in ways that move our souls into alignment with our heavenly Father.



To get the most from this study, we suggest that participants read the chapter in the book that corresponds to the sermon for the upcoming Sunday, then attend a small group the week following the sermon. Books are just \$8.00. Please sign up by completing a registration card and placing it in the offering plate on Sunday morning or turning it into the church office, or see the display in the main lobby. Please sign up no later than February 8 so that books and materials can be distributed prior to the start of the study on February 22.

Questions? Contact Tina Eaton at [adultministry@fumchurch.com](mailto:adultministry@fumchurch.com) or call 766-4611, ext. 104.

 A registration card for 'SOULSHIFT' with a blue and white header. The card is divided into sections: 'INFORMATION' with fields for Name, Phone, and E-mail; 'INVOLVEMENT' with checkboxes for 'attend', 'host', 'lead', and '... a small group'; 'AGE GROUP' with checkboxes for 'teen', 'college', 'young adult', and 'adult'; and 'CHILD CARE' with checkboxes for 'Sunday AM' and 'Wednesday PM'.


### Lenten Lunch Fellowship

Join Pastor Dave at the West Main Family Restaurant, 710 West Main street, Mechanicsburg, from 12 pm to 1 pm on Thursdays during Lent. Enjoy lunch (dutch treat) and devotions during the 6 weeks for lent, beginning February 26. Sign up in the binder in the narthex so appropriate seating can be arranged.

### Lenten Kick Off Breakfast ~ February 21, 9:00-11:00 am

We will gather for a "pot-luck" style breakfast in the Adult Sunday school classroom, followed by a Lenten kick-off message from Pastor Mike and "coffee groups". Remember how much fun it was at the Lay Witness Mission weekend to gather in groups for discussion? This will be more of the same!

## Fellowship

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### Senior Fellowship February 17, 1-3 p.m.

All senior members are invited to come for a casual time of fellowship and light refreshments in the Guyer class space just beyond the church library.

Contact Janice Bowen at 766-4611 x112 or [wecare@fumchurch.com](mailto:wecare@fumchurch.com) for more information.



### Ham Loaf Dinner March 14, 4-6:30 p.m.

The Helping Hands Sunday school class will be having their delicious ham loaf dinner once again. The meal includes ham loaf, green beans, scalloped potatoes, roll, butter, beverage and dessert. Chicken nuggets are available for children. Watch your bulletin insert and March newsletter for more information.

## Missions

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### Operation Christmas Child 2014

First Church members have very generous hearts!! We collected 445 shoe boxes this year - that is almost 100 more than last year. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

We had over two dozen folks signed up to go to the new Baltimore Processing Center to volunteer their time in reviewing and boxing the shoe boxes - the last step before they are shipped out to over 100 countries in the world - to over 10 million children! Our trip, however, was cancelled. The Baltimore center had processed all 600,000 of their boxes through 9,000 volunteers before it was our turn to go! We will try again next year.

We all want to know who gets our boxes and do they make any difference? God knows who gets every one of the boxes and they absolutely make a difference. Here's a story Samaritan Purse shared in a recent newsletter.

"Back in 2000, a 8-year old girl named Joana in the Philipines got a shoebox packed by a 7-year old boy named Tyrel in Idaho. Through that box, Joana heard the Gospel and gave her heart to the Lord. So did her father, who is now a pastor.

In 2011, Joana wanted to thank the little boy whose gifts transformed her life. The only clue she had was the name on a picture she had kept from her shoebox showing a blond boy in a cowboy shirt holding a lariat: Tyrel Wolfe. She found him on Facebook, and they became such great friends online that Tyrel traveled to the Philipines to meet her. Then they fell in love, and guess what? In October they were married. For wedding gifts, they asked their guests to bring shoeboxes.

Tyrel said, 'I remember as a little boy, I was so excited to know the toys and other items I put in the box would bring joy to another child somewhere else in the world. I just didn't know the joy it would bring back to me one day.'"

Isn't God great!!!

## Missions

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### Grocery Bagging for Bethesda Mission

On the third Wednesday evening of every month members of First United Methodist Church gather at Mission Central to bag groceries for Bethesda Mission. All are invited to join and be a part of this mission opportunity. Join us at Mission Central on February 18 at 6 pm. Contact Eric King at 697-0933 or eeking@verizon.net for more information.



### New Hope Ministries

Thank you so very much for your generous donations over the Thanksgiving and Christmas season:

382# of food collected,  
467# of canned yams  
141# of Christmas Blessing gifts

You are such a blessing to our community.

Thank you again,

Don & Debbie Karns

### Sierra Leone Initiative      Part One - What is it?

The Sierra Leone Initiative of the Susquehanna Conference is one component of local United Methodist efforts in that country that go back over 150 years. The United Brethren Church was the most active of our predecessor denominations in sending missionaries to and establishing schools, hospitals and churches in Sierra Leone. Among the many United Brethren missionaries born and raised within the present Susquehanna Conference and/or send out by the Pennsylvania Conference was Mary Alice Lippert who attended First Church until her passing.

On September 12, 2006, Bishop Middleton, of the Central Pennsylvania Conference and Bishop Humper of the Sierra Leone Annual Conference, West Africa formally signed the dual conference approved contract beginning the work of the Sierra Leone Initiative.

Sierra Leone's infrastructure was destroyed by a ten-year long civil war which also devastated many of the churches. As a result of this war, congregations find it difficult to support pastors and their families.

As part of the Susquehanna Conference the Sierra Leone Initiative (SLI) provides a unique opportunity for Susquehanna Conference churches to keep pastors in full-time ministry in Sierra Leone. This provides the necessary support for pastors to devote themselves to making disciples for Jesus Christ.

The covenant amount a church agrees to provide annually is \$1,200 with a commitment term of 10 years. \$1,000 supplies the pastoral support and \$200 offsets the disbursement of these funds and helps pay for the delegates to travel once a year to the respective countries. SLI partners with the General Board of Global Ministries to ensure full accountability and quick delivery of all funds.

As a member of the SLI, churches have the opportunity to partner with a UM church in Sierra Leone. As this relationship grows each congregation covenants to pray for and correspond with each other, allowing a personal bond to form between the two churches.

(The above information comes from the Susquehanna Conference Missional Board website and the Sierra Leone Initiative brochure)

**Next month: Part Two - How is First Church part of the Initiative**

## Adult Ministry

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### Difficult Moral/Ethical Issues and Our Faithful Christian Response

By request, in late May/June Pastor Mike will be offering some special gathering times to address difficult moral/ethical issues and our faithful Christian response. These sessions will be held during the Sunday School hour on Sunday mornings and will allow for healthy dialogue. What issues do you want to hear more about, talk more about or think more about? Please write down your suggestions and place in the offering plate or return to the church office.

Issue Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information : \_\_\_\_\_

### Men of First Church - Retreat      February 20-22

This winter we are heading back to Wesley Forest, to where the clear night skies offer fantastic star-gazing and a fresh snow fall means great toboggan runs down the slope.

There are other benefits to heading north with us that are hard to duplicate here in Mechanicsburg, as well. Like building friendships with our Christian brothers that can help keep us accountable to His commands. It's amazing how much more you can get to know someone on one weekend retreat than you can in a year-full of Sundays attending church services. There is a strong contingency who come back to the mountains with us every year and we are also looking to initiate some new guys into this annual tradition.

Our format for learning and worship is structured enough to keep us grounded, but allows for plenty of free time to unwind and escape the daily stressors we may feel at home or work. (It also helps to have limited phone service while we are up at Wesley.)

The cost remains a reasonable \$90 for 2 nights of lodging, 4 hearty meals, and countless memories that will last you a lifetime. Scholarships available for anyone who needs. **Deadline for registering is February 8** and registration forms can be found in the narthex. See Bob Wertz, Jr. or John Bowen for any questions.



### Women's Ministry

Have you tried the SCRIP program yet? Would you also like to support the Women's Ministries of First Church (particularly the Women's Retreat)? The bell choirs have generously offered to share the SCRIP proceeds. If you purchase gift cards from Applebee's, Carrabba's/Outback Steakhouse, Cracker Barrel, Dunkin Donuts, Olive Garden/Red Lobster/Longhorn Steakhouse, Panera Bread, Red Robin, Subway, Texas Roadhouse, or TGI Friday's, the proceeds will directly benefit the Women's Retreat. Please check out all of the great restaurants, retail stores, hotels, etc that SCRIP offers. The SCRIP box and order forms are located at the end of the main entrance hallway, to the right. Any questions, please contact Patti Herring at 795-9721 or familyzeke@verizon.net.

## Adult Ministry

### 2015 Women’s Retreat ~ Connecting with God... Hearing God’s Voice ~ March 6 - 8

This year’s retreat will focus on hearing God’s voice through prayer, dance, worship, art and scripture. Join us for a weekend filled with fellowship, fun, food and faith! Program starts on Friday evening and concludes on Sunday at noon. Hotel-like accommodations and 4 meals included.

### *Mt. Asbury Retreat Center, Newville*

Please make checks payable to **FUMC** with 'women's retreat' in the memo section. Registrations may be mailed to Patti Herring at 613 Lavina Drive, Mechanicsburg 17055 or can be place in the **Script Box** near the coffee area. (Please do not place checks in her mailbox). Questions, call Patti Herring at 795-9721 or email at [familyzeke@verizon.net](mailto:familyzeke@verizon.net).

Return this portion with your payment

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies or diet restrictions \_\_\_\_\_

Medications \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Registration fee will be \$125. Fees include two-night stay and 4 meals. Handicapped accessible rooms. **All registrations are due by 2/22/15.**

\_\_\_\_\_ \$125 registration enclosed

Is this your first retreat? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No



### FUM Circle Meetings

**DEBORAH CIRCLE**

Sandy Walton\*  
790-9131 or  
swalton54@comcast.net

**MARTHA CIRCLE**

Marley Ann Schmick\*  
697-2233

**MARY CIRCLE**

Janice Bowen\*  
796-0809 or  
jjgbowen@yahoo.com

**RUTH CIRCLE**

Beryl Morgan\* 697-3554

***New Members are always welcome!***

*\*Contact Circle Leader for dates & times*

Don’t forget to drop you unwanted clothing and shoes in the Community Aid bin.

Money raised from your donations helps local schools, churches and other non profit charitable organizations.



## Youth Department

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Looking for information about the happenings of the youth department? Don't miss out on all that is going on. Make sure to send an email to [uthrock@fumchurch.com](mailto:uthrock@fumchurch.com) to be included on our email distribution list. Also, check the weekly bulletin announcements for the most up-to-date information.

## Children's Department

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**Children's Department Newsletter**- Are you receiving the Children's Department Newsletter by email? If not, contact Dawn Fisher or Sarah Jones to provide your email so you can receive this information packed Newsletter!

**Children's Department Help** – There are still opportunities to become **Partners in Ministry** for our children one Sunday per month:

**8:00am** 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays crib/toddler adult,

**9:15am** 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday greeter **9:15am** 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday crib/toddler adult and

**10:30am** 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday 2 crib/toddler adults,

**10:30am** 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Wee Worship Leader.

If you have any questions about these positions, please contact Dawn Fisher or Sarah Jones, or just sign up at the Children's Display area.

## Special Event

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### Wage Hope Benefit Concert

Music is an integral part of the Vensel family. Rick's love of music created a passion for music in his children. All three are studying music and as a result have countless talented friends. Rebekah, in an effort to say thank you for the love and support we've received throughout Rick's illness, decided to present a Surprise Benefit Concert for her Father. It is a way to give back to the community, keep Rick's spirits upbeat, and impact pancreatic cancer.

March 14 at 7:30 PM, please join us for an uplifting evening. Enjoy a variety of music presented by the family and friends of Rick Vensel, inspired to use their musical gifts to raise awareness and support those with pancreatic cancer. A free will offering will be taken for the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network. The Pancreatic Cancer Action Network is a nationwide network of people dedicated to working together to advance research, support patients, and create hope for those affected by pancreatic cancer, [pancan.org](http://pancan.org).

Your presence will make a difference on March 14 and we hope you will enjoy our gift to say thank you!

Wage Hope Benefit Concert  
Saturday March 14, 7:30 PM  
First United Methodist Church

Questions: Contact Rebekah, 717-713-7001 or [Rebe2016@gmail.com](mailto:Rebe2016@gmail.com)



## Finance

### Through December 31, 2014

#### General Fund

2014 budget	\$ 885,000	
Expected income	\$ 885,000	
Actual income	\$ 861,801	(97% of budget)
Shortfall	\$ 23,199	
Actual expenses	\$ 861,620	

**Building Fund** \$ 125,770

**Legacy Campaign** \$ 5,242

Income was less than we expected. As a result, we were unable to pay as much on the principal as we would have liked. Despite that, the debt is now at \$33,400. The full December 31 financial report, as well as the 2015 budget, is elsewhere in this newsletter.

The Building Fund includes the proceeds from the sale of the Keller Street rental properties. Those monies were paid on the church debt.

### Debt Status December 31, 2014

The building construction and renovation project completed in the 1990's cost approximately \$2.7 million. Through a three-year capital campaign, we collected more than a million dollars for the project. The church borrowed a total of \$1,450,000 from the Susquehanna Conference Loan Program to finance the balance of the project and to acquire the Wagner property on High Street. During 2008, additional borrowing of \$300,000 was authorized for an electrical renovation project. The original interest rate had been 6.0% but later was lowered to 4.5%.

We started 2014 with a debt on the church building of \$214,150. During 2014, we paid \$180,750 on the principal, leaving a balance on December 31 of \$33,400. Of the principal payments, \$55,000 was paid from the General Fund and \$11,463 was paid from Building Fund donations. In addition, \$114,287 was paid on the principal from the sale of the Keller Street rental properties. This means that the original debt is paid off and the balance remaining is from the electrical project. During 2014, we paid \$8,645 in interest on the debt.

## Health & Wellness

### Lenten Book Club - 40 Days of Better Living for Optimal Health

Are you looking for something different to do during Lent? Why not "take on" better habits to look, feel and live better? Read **40 Days of Better Living - Optimal Health** as part of the Lenten book club the Health & Wellness committee is leading. The group will meet on Monday evenings, 6:30 – 7:30 pm over the 6 weeks. Meeting location is Room 105. Sign up in the narthex for the book club by Feb. 9 so the books can be ordered in time for our first meeting on Feb. 16. Book club dates will be Feb. 16, March 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30.

### Health Lecture on A-fib – **Wear Red!**

February is Heart Month. Dr. Jeff Fugate will be our speaker at our Heart Month health lecture. This will be held on *Sunday, Feb. 8, 2015 at 9:30 am* in the multiple purpose room. Dr. Fugate will speak on **Atrial Fibrillation**. Please plan on attending this very important topic. Wear "**red**" on that day in recognition of Heart Month. The Health & Wellness committee will also be serving "heart" healthy snacks in the Coffee Café on that day.

## Facilities

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2015 has arrived. A new year of our Lord Jesus Christ! And a new year in the life of First Church! Our wonderful facility is showing its age in places, but we are hard at work to keep the facility safe, clean, comfortable and welcoming to everyone who enters. All of the members of First Church's Board of Trustees remain in place for the new year; we do have new leadership on the Board as Amy Erno has stepped up to the President's position and Cheryl Mengle was elected as Vice President. Here are some of the recent facility improvements and challenges we face for the new year:

- a. Stair treads. I am thrilled to report that the last of the replacement stair treads has been installed at the bottom of the Frederick Street stairwell leading into Fellowship Hall. Thanks to Jim Van Kirk for his assistance in completing that project.
- b. Updates to Education wing restrooms. Bill Seig, Eric King and I recently installed a base cabinet and double bowl countertop with single-lever faucets in the first floor men's restroom. We have also purchased base cabinets and countertops for the men's and women's restrooms on the second floor and hope to install them in the near future. Having a mixture of hot and cold water from the faucets is so nice after all the years of just cold water or separate spigots for the hot and cold. Thanks to Bill and Eric for their invaluable contributions to this project.
- c. Sewage pumps. The Trustees contracted with PSI Pump Solutions of York Springs to rebuild the existing sewage pumps and fabricate a new stainless steel pit cover. One of the pumps is being rebuilt right now. Once those repairs are completed, that pump will be installed and the second pump will be removed and rebuilt. We do have a submersible pump serving as a backup, but it doesn't form a tight seal on the pit cover and a strong odor is often present in the center stairwell and adjoining hallways. We apologize for this inconvenience, but please know that we are trying to resolve this problem as quickly as possible. Drywall repairs, cove molding replacement, and painting of affected areas in the lower level are on hold until we complete the pump rebuild process.
- d. Heating system. The recent bitter cold stretch really strained our heating system and we weren't able to get the temperature where we wanted it for Sunday worship on Jan 11<sup>th</sup>. I am working closely with our HVAC contractor to try and keep that from recurring.
- e. Roof leak above the center stairwell. I thought we had this leak fixed, but we're still seeing some minor water infiltration in this area. Our roofing contractor will check for a small slit in the flat rubber roofing once it is warmer and safe to be back up on the roof.
- f. Snow removal. Our snow plowing contractor has done a fine job for the two snow events to date, so we remain confident in meeting winter's challenge. We are still looking for persons interested in helping shovel steps and walks around the church, so let me know if you feel God urging you in that direction.
- g. Parsonage. Bishop Park has advised First Church that we will need to provide a parsonage for our incoming senior pastor. That process is commencing but, in accordance with the United Methodist Book of Discipline, no action can be taken to purchase any property without the approval of a church-wide Charge Conference. Expect to hear more about this subject as the process moves forward over the next few months.

Each day presents new challenges for our facility. We are striving to be excellent stewards of God's home here at First Church. Please alert me if you see something broken or malfunctioning so we can address the problem as quickly as possible. Thank you.

Roger Walton, Facilities Manager

## Library

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Even though I don't read many romance books, in February with Valentine's Day stuck in the middle of a dreary winter month, I at least think about romance books. I do love all things chocolate and/or sweet so the **Sweet Surprise Romance Collection** with a heavily frosted cupcake on the cover definitely got my attention. The book is a compilation of stories by nine authors with each story revolving around a sweet treat and romance. The author not only writes about a scrumptious dessert, but also furnishes the recipe in case you want to try it yourself. The publisher asks the question, "When it comes to romance, will the sweetest treats be any match for God's timing?" Answer that question after reading this fun-filled book. With the book divided into nine parts, the authors have made sure you won't overindulge!

Melody Carlson has had so much success with her Christmas short stories that she has decide to target Valentine's Day. In **Love Gently Falling**, Rita Jansen is living her dream as a Hollywood hairstylist. But then her mother suffers a stroke and can't work in her beauty salon in Chicago. Like any good daughter, Rita returns to help out. The Chicago salon is next to an outdoor ice rink where Rita had spent many fun hours with her friends. While trying to help her mom save the business, Rita also connects with some childhood friends including her best friend Marley and classmate Johnny at the skating rink. You will have to read this to find out if the Windy City wins out over Hollywood. My only question is has Melody Carlson ever ice skated? I have and there is no such thing as gently falling. (If you missed last year's Carlson book, **Once Upon a Winter's Heart**, it is on the shelf and ready to be checked out!)

On a more serious note, an excellent biography of Dietrich Bonhoeffer was recently donated to the library. In this insightful masterpiece a German Lutheran pastor combats not only the Nazis, but the brainwashed public. It was often said that Hitler was a charismatic speaker, but he met his match in Bonhoeffer. Even while imprisoned in the worst of conditions, Bonhoeffer could not be silenced. He could have railed against Hitler from the safety of England, but God sent him back to the people he loved. Hitler's only recourse against God's mighty warrior was death. Even from the grave Bonhoeffer's writing lives on: a testimony to what one man can do within a country gone mad. Yes, this is a lengthy read, but this winter seems like the perfect time to stay inside and read.

If you are like me, you have probably given up on your New Year's resolutions. So I suggest a new and easier resolution to keep. Visit our library on Sunday-every Sunday for some of the best reading available. We have many genres available and someone on duty to help you find a great book!

Donna & Pam

## Church News and Notes

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### Altar Flowers

The following dates are open to place altar flowers for 2015:

July 12  
July 28  
September 6  
October 18

Please call Marty Otto at 462-4198 or email [dotto431@comcast.net](mailto:dotto431@comcast.net)



## Church News and Notes

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### Thank you...

*Matt and I wanted to thank everyone for their many cards and prayers during this difficult time with the passing of my Dad. We truly appreciate the love and support we have received from our church family*

*Sarah Jones*

*Thank you for all the prayers cards and call during my recuperation from a recent fall.*

*Gerry Sheely*

### Love & sympathy...

to the family upon the death of Mabel Strock's brother, Samuel Leib, on November 24, 2014  
 to the family upon the death of Mabel Strock's sister, Roamine Sheaffer, on November 30, 2014  
 to the family upon the death of Paul Robinson on December 12, 2014  
 to the family upon the death of Darryl Small's brother, Dennis Humphrey, on December 13, 2014  
 to the family upon the death of Kim Guyer's brother, Jeff Seidel, on December 12, 2014  
 to the family upon the death of Kaia Mullen's grandmother, Ellen Hare, on December 16, 2014  
 to the family upon the death of Chuck Kershner's sister, Catherine Ayers, on December 16, 2014  
 to the family upon the death of Paula DeWalt's's father, Ken Woodhall, on December 20, 2014  
 to the family upon the death of Sarah Jones' father, Richard Jones, on December 26, 2014  
 to the family upon the death of Mark Grosz on January 2, 2015  
 to the family upon the death of Ruth Strock on January 3, 2015  
 to the family upon the death of Norma Lockney's step-father, Bill Lammedee, on January 14, 2015  
 to the family upon the death of Lori Hoffnagle's mother, Loretta Nichols, on January 17, 2015

### Special Birthdays

Betty Stambach ..... February 2  
 Joanne Ciampa ..... February 6  
 Les Reed..... February 8  
 Dottie Zimmerman ..... February 26  
 Mae Myers..... February 28  
 Janet Fertenbaugh..... March 6  
 Sara Meck..... March 15  
 Art Murray ..... March 16  
 Art Davis..... March 19  
 Mabel Strock..... March 28  
 Dave Scholl..... March 31

### Special Anniversaries

- ♥ Larry & Linda Hall married 54 years on February 4
- ♥ Denny & Sally Kauffman married 55 years on February 14
- ♥ Winslow & Caroline Brown married 60 years on February 19
- ♥ Jim & Gail Siemons married 51 years on March 21

*Addresses of these members can be found in the Church Directory.*

**FIRST NEWS FIRST** Editor: Kristin Brown

The **March** newsletter deadline is **February 15**.

All submissions should be received in the church office on or **before** this date. **Early submissions are always welcome!**