

ROBINSON FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH • FEBRUARY 2024

THE HERALD

Listening to God's Heart from the heart of the city.



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

In a Peanuts comic strip, Charles Schultz showed a conversation between Lucy and Charlie Brown. Lucy said that life is like a deck chair. Some place it so they can see where they are going; some place it so they can see where they have been; and some place it so they can see where they are at present. Charlie Brown's reply: "I can't even get mine unfolded."

When we take time to look back, we have been given the opportunity to place our deck chairs and reflect. Just like Lucy tells Charlie Brown, each one of us are going to place our chair in an area with a different perspective on the year. Perhaps your deck chair is facing into nothing but fond memories of the year and the accomplishments that you achieved. There will be some whose vantage point from the chair is filled with loss and despair but will celebrate that there is an opportunity to embrace a new year. But then we also have the Charlie Browns of the world, that have difficulty just unfolding the chair.

The church deck chair has been placed in a prime spot to reflect on the previous year with celebrations inspired by new birth in the form of babies, under the refreshing waters of baptisms, joyous moments of welcoming new members to the congregation, and achievements in furthering the ministry of the church. Our chair is also positioned to rejoice in the many lives that obtained Heaven's great reward, and through our tears of loss we have experienced the celebration of God's promise of life everlasting. Our chair is also primed to gaze upon 2024 with all the hopes and dreams that come with "New Beginnings;" the opportunities to become actively involved in ministry, the goals of reaching the people that Christ calls upon us to search and find, and the excitement to be energized or re-energized through worship.

This year we have the unique situation that "Ash Wednesday" will fall on Valentine's Day. I could not think of a more fitting time for each of us. Ash Wednesday traditionally is far more than having ashes rubbed on your forehead. Yes, it is a moment that you were formed from the dust of the earth by God and someday, let's hope not too soon, you will return to be dust. Also, for some folks, Ash Wednesday marks a period of 40 days of "giving something up" in sacrifice for what Christ has done for you. Now before you start searching your mind on how you will justify not consuming raw or fried liver and peanut butter sandwiches for the next forty days.

Consider this notion for lent. Not giving something up but doing something more with the life that Christ surrenders his life. Perhaps serving with a local volunteer group like the NOW Program or helping at the local food pantry. Should those not be in your wheelhouse, perhaps volunteering to read to children at the local library or senior adults at the nursing home. Heck, if you are feeling wild and crazy volunteer to help around the church, I know we can find exciting fun stuff for you to do!

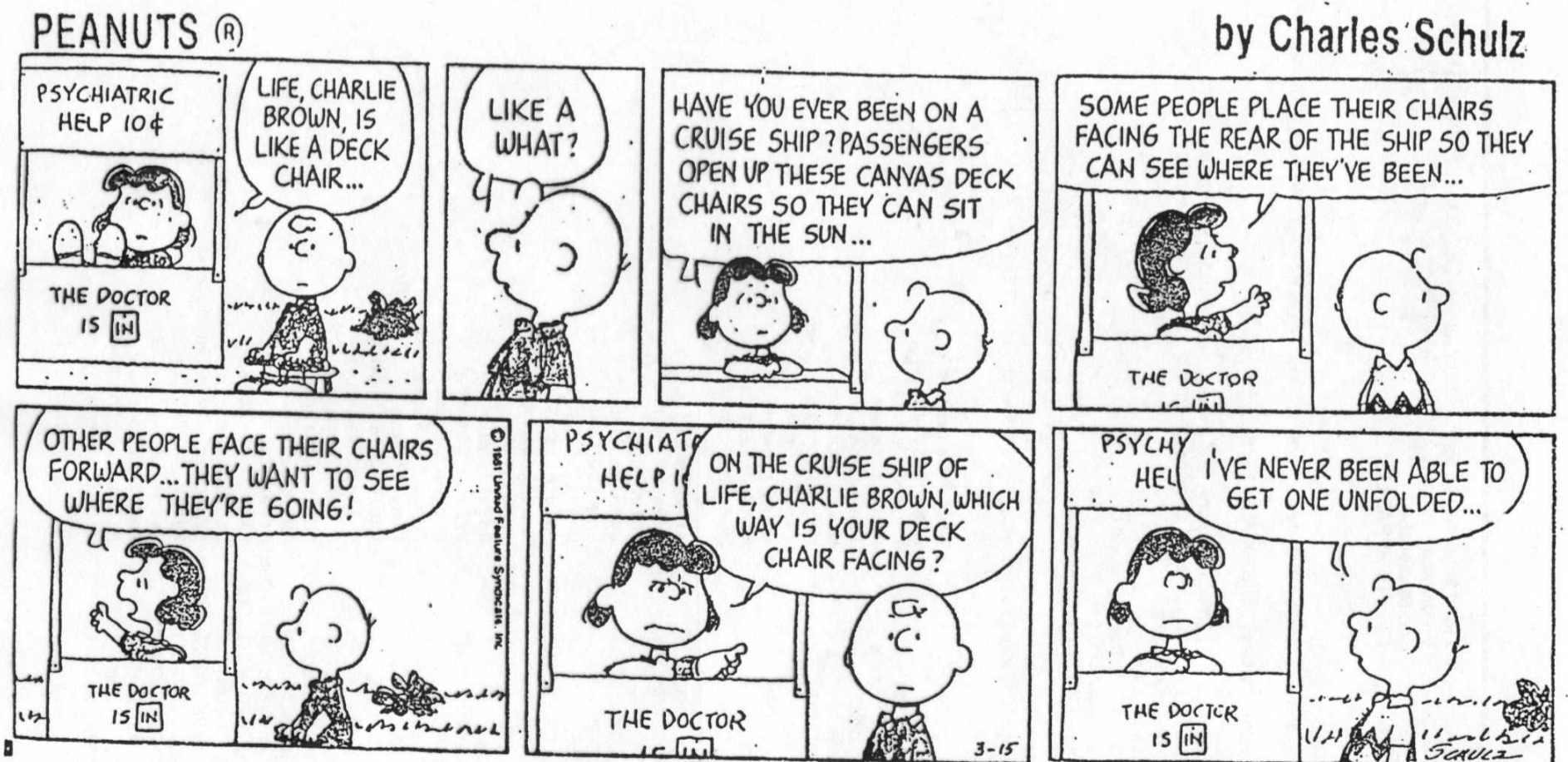
God is not asking for to give up something to show our connection. Christ is calling us to do something with our lives that can make a difference in someone else's life.

Jeremiah 29:11; "For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not disaster, to give you a future and a hope."

I pray that each of you embrace the opportunity to place your deck chair into the perspective that you wish for 2024. I further pray that God's plan upon your life is reached to its fullest potential.

Enjoy your liver and peanut butter sandwiches and I'll see you in Church,

Pastor Terry



BREAKING NEWS!

Ash Wednesday, Second Wednesday Dinner, and Valentine's Day, Oh My!

Mark your calendars and tell your friends, neighbors, or the old grouch down the street. This year, Ash Wednesday, Valentine's Day, and Second Wednesday Dinner all fall on Wednesday, February 14th. (Hallmark and the other card companies didn't check the church calendars for important worship times or the starting day of Lent!) So, with the help of our Nurture Team, we have a plan!

Second Wednesday Dinner will be at 5:30 pm in Asbury Hall. It will be hosted by Ruth Boatman and Lainey and Brenna Ayd. They will be serving lasagna, garlic bread, salad bar, and cupcakes! It will be a fundraiser for SPY.

Immediately after dinner, we will be having our Ash Wednesday Service at 6:30 pm in the Sanctuary.

Grab your sweetie, friends, or family, and join us for a great night FUMC.

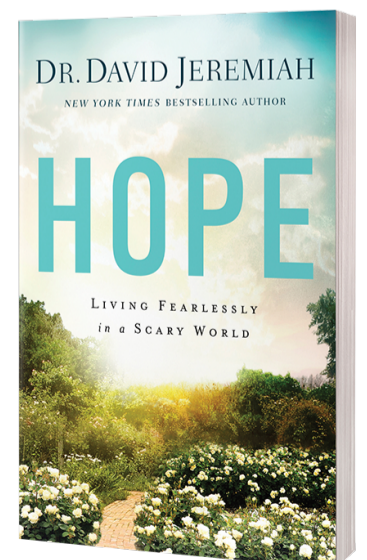
Conference

Attention team members of the Administrative Council and individuals that are members of Robinson First United Methodist Church! We have had some changes in our leadership positions for the upcoming year. These changes require us to have a specialized church conference. This is much like our annual Charge Conference session where we elect officers for the upcoming year. The Book of Discipline requires that we announce the meeting at least 10 prior to the session. This announcement allows the opportunity for you to attend and have your voice heard. Our church conference is scheduled for Feb 21, 2024 at 7:00 PM in Asbury Hall. The only issues that we will be addressing are those pertaining to the election of leaders to the Administrative Council and the Pastor Parish.

Christian Book Exchange

Greetings from the Book Exchange! Located next to the elevator in the narthex, our February highlight is *Hope: Living Fearlessly in a Scary World*

Is there any hope amidst all this darkness? There is. As Christians, we have been given all we need in order to face down even the most frightening, unexpected, and overwhelming obstacles in life. In *Hope*, Dr. David Jeremiah explores the fears that are holding so many of us back from the life God has called us to live and shares secrets for facing down these fears with hope in God. With each page, you'll grow in your conviction that God is the answer you've been looking for. As you look to the future, you'll begin to see nothing except His power and love guarding your every step.



Care New from Stephen Ministry ***Three Essentials for an Empathy Mindset***

Empathy is a powerful way to better understand others, forge stronger relationships, and care for those who are hurting. If everyone empathized with each other more often, it could go a long way toward overcoming the division, isolation, and misunderstanding that are so prevalent today.

But empathy doesn't just happen on its own. To see its benefits in our lives and the lives of others, we need to be intentional about putting this skill into action. That means developing and maintaining an empathy mindset.

Here are three essentials for doing that:

1. Be Open to the Other Person's Experiences

Empathizing with someone isn't complicated and doesn't mean putting a great deal of pressure on yourself to say or do the right thing. In fact, the starting point is simply being open to listening to and learning about the other person's experiences and feelings.

Maintaining this attitude of openness is critical to empathy. All you need to bring is a willingness to listen and understand. Be open to hearing what the other person has to say about their experiences.

2. Be Willing to Make a Personal Connection

Empathy isn't something you can do at a distance without actually interacting with the other person. True empathy only occurs when we make a personal connection—when we directly interact with someone by listening, asking questions to encourage more sharing, and being present as they tell their story. A personal connection unlocks the power of empathy, giving us the opportunity to listen and respond—to let the person know we've heard them, understand what they're saying, and care about what they're going through.

3. Be Focused on the Other Person

One of the many blessings of offering empathy is that it puts the focus on the other person for a time, letting them know that their feelings are valid, their experiences are important, and someone cares about them. However, a number of pitfalls can interfere with this benefit, unintentionally diminishing what they're sharing. Giving advice, talking about your own experiences, trying to ease the person's pain by talking about the positives—they all shift the focus away from what the other person is feeling and onto whatever we're saying. But when we maintain an empathy mindset, we keep the other person and their needs at the center of the conversation. stephenministries.org/caremail

If you are going through a difficult time and would like someone to talk with on a regular basis, please contact Janelle Oxford. (618 553-9598). Stephen Ministers are available to provide Christian Care.





Prayer Requests

Carol Wolf; Carl Blanton; Michael Brady; Cathy Thomas; Judson Richardson; Julie Zhang; Bill Thompson; Michael Keene; Lisa Schaefer; Nicole Young; Evan Prahll; Richard Youngs; Kay Young; Vonnetta Shipman; Thelma Gifford; Melinda Wehrle; Blain Loll; Miranda Waddell; Ruth Fiscus; Ray & Nelda Dotson; Margaret Beaman; Alexander Forrey; Ninette Faith; Claudette Mejean; Laurie Vaugh; Susan Rodgers; Adrian Hays; Rachel Tracy; Randy Butcher; Stephen Ministers; Care Receivers; Doug Finkbiner; Clem Aydt; Annette Leighty; Spencer Meagher; KJ Reid, Tricia Anderson; Jon & Joy Anderson; Alex Townsend; Brad Harris; Andy Limper; Dason Douglas, Lora Simmons; Mary Etta Whitmer; Rhonda Moade; Barbara Bell; Jocelyn Ramsey; Leth and Jeff Stanford; Becky & Donna Beabout; Roger Hamilton; Bennett Smith; Breanna & Melissa Young; Jimmy Vinson; Sarah Valdez; Kirtrina Carter; Sharon Miller; Stephenie Townsend; Tim Aydt; Sue Trimble; Linda Stewart; Clayton Avery; Debbie Goff; Glynn Legg; Paige Gower; Judy Rice; Bernie Limper; Jim & Stacey Baize; Marge & Ralph Boatman

February Birthdays

2/1 Katie Hartke
2/2 Mary Jane Parker, Nicholas Ramos
2/5 Allie Oxford, Nadene Keene
2/7 Taya Harmon, Tomi Skaggs
2/8 Brenda Graham
2/9 Heidi Wright
2/10 Jack Frakes
2/11 Dalton Davis
2/12 Lori Treadway
2/14 Dorcas Sills, Bonnie Banks
2/15 Stacy Baize
2/17 Roseanne Hart
2/20 Katelin Veenstra
2/21 Ernie Roales
2/22 Greg Catt
2/24 Connie Carter
2/25 Laurie Kubiak
2/26 Trevor Carter, Stephanie Townsend

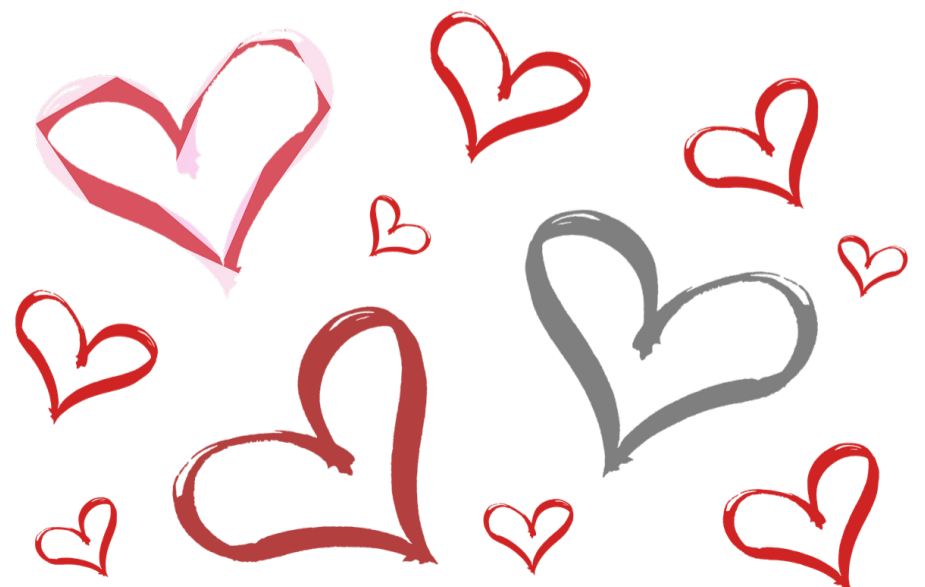
February Anniversaries

2/14 Stephanie Townsend &
Alex Lornes
2/28 Stacy & Jim Baize



FEBRUARY 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 9:00 am - CHEW 4:00 pm - NOW Weekend Bagging	2	3
4 9:00 am - Worship 10:15 am - Sunday School	5	6	7	8 9:00 am - CHEW 4:00 pm - NOW Weekend Bagging	9	10
11 9:00 am - Worship 10:15 am - Sunday School	12	13	14 4:00 pm - NOW Bagging 5:30 pm - Second Wednesday Dinner 6:30 pm - Ash Wednesday Service	15 9:00 am - CHEW 6:00 pm - SPY	16	17
18 9:00 am - Worship 10:15 am - Sunday School	19 OFFICE CLOSED	20 4:00 pm - Nurture Committee	21 6:00 pm - Committee Meetings 7:00 pm - Church Council Meeting	22 9:00 am - CHEW 4:00 pm - NOW Bagging 6:00 pm - SPY	23	24
25 9:00 am - Worship 10:15 am - Sunday School	26	27	28 6:30 pm - Stephen Ministry	29 9:00 am - CHEW 4:00 pm - NOW Bagging		



First United Methodist Church
201 West Walnut Street
PO Box 45
Robinson, IL 62454
firstumcrob@gmail.com
www.robinsonfumc.org
618-544-8016

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
Robinson, IL
62454
Permit No. 3

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Pastor: Terry Evans

robinsonfumcpastor@gmail.com

Office Manager: Kirbie Ackman

firstumcrob@gmail.com

Director of Christian Education: Nina Davis

nineah3@gmail.com

Communications Coordinator: Brennan Seth Tracy

firstumcrob.comms@gmail.com

Worship Leader: Daniel Boatman

danielnboatman@gmail.com

Accompanist: Kayla Holscher

kholscher@sycamores.indstate.edu

Custodians: Amy DeDoming, Mark DeDoming

Nursery Staff: Marnie Inboden