

ROBINSON FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH • AUGUST 2020

# *The Herald*

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

## THE GENEROSITY CHALLENGE

As we begin a new all-church study for the month of August, we are learning about flexing the Spiritual Muscles of Generosity and Stewardship. Look inside for ways to share these gifts with our church family and the community!

# From the Pastor's Desk

2014 really wasn't that long ago, in the grand scheme of things. I remember arriving at First UMC in August of 2014 (Happy Anniversary!), and as I tried to get a handle on what was happening at this church in the midst of rebuilding, I discovered a number of things. First, our congregation cares deeply about each other. That's been shown time and time again during the pandemic. Second, our congregation values a variety of ministry opportunities. While we haven't been doing those opportunities in quite the same way, our church has been able to maintain ministry with little disruption to people of all ages. Third, our congregation practices generosity. Even though we had fewer people, a smaller budget, and fewer ministries in 2014, people gave generously back then.

You've grown deeply in your generosity in these past six years. Our ministries have expanded, our staff has grown, our outreach extends further than it ever has, and it's because of your deepening generosity. When I arrived in 2014, for instance, this church had not paid its apportionment in full for several years. We have done so faithfully since 2015, and this year, I'm excited to share that your finance committee and church council have decided to pay our apportionment in full this month (early!). We're able to do that because of your generosity, even during a time of pandemic. While that means our income and expenses will be much closer together (for those of you who follow the numbers in the bulletin), our expenses will be lower for the last four months of the year).

Because you've shown generosity in the past, I know that we can count on you to be generous in the future. As we move toward further reopening of the church, we will need people to be generous with their time and talents as we do ministry in different ways. We'll need continued generosity in treasure as we grow in following Jesus to places we have not been before. God challenges us to be generous with every aspect of our lives, and our congregation is counting on each of us to do our part in making ministry happen. Let's flex our spiritual muscle of generosity this month - this year - and throughout our lives together!

Grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jay Regan", enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Pastor Jay

## The New Normal

Sue Roales

Covid-19 has caused challenges, and new ways of doing things, even at First United Methodist Church. Our tithes and donations have made possible a continuation of our past Outreach and services, while adding new ones.

The 9:00 am Sunday morning Worship Service has been broadcast on WTYE-FM for the past 50 years, and the Live Stream of the morning Worship has been transmitted since January 2019. We have had so many compliments on our services from Vermont to California and many vacation locations. Communion has continued with social distancing required by the State of Illinois, with the Host available at Pastor Jay Regennitter's house or the church.

Zoom computer software, purchased in March, has allowed Sunday School classes for Adults and Children, Refresh and Kids' Club, Stephen Ministry classes and church committee meetings. Vacation Bible school this year is using zoom, and mailed, or hand delivered materials, so more than 30 children can enjoy the fun and learning from home.

Donations of time and money have allowed First United Methodist Church to offer NOW lunches at the church every Monday - Friday throughout the month of July.

Throughout the last 3 months, First United Methodist Church has cherished their members and community in various ways, donations to the Pastor discretionary fund have helped member's whose jobs have been impacted by Covid-19. Mother's Day and Father's day gifts we delivered. The outreach committee has ordered and paid for weekly dinners to the Crawford Memorial Hospital night shift, C.C. Sheriff Department, Robinson Police Department, and Robinson Fire Department to show our appreciation.

Sunday July 5, 2020 started the new, 6:00 pm outdoor church service, to add to the morning Sunday Service. This fall activities at First United Methodist Church will continue with Covid-19 modifications. Cleaning, sanitizing, social distancing requirements will change how meeting programs will be held. First United Methodist Church members have supported the mission of the church and its outreach to the community through the past 75 years, and will continue to meet the needs of Crawford County and the world, no matter what challenges are in the future.

## Being A Faithful Steward

Susan Inboden

"Well done, good & faithful servant! ...Come & share your master's happiness." - **Matthew 25:21**

This verse of scripture is not just about wealth; it's about our resources in general. For example, if God gives you a mind that is strong & creative, you are expected to use & develop that mind. If God gives you children, you are expected to raise them to know & honor the Lord. And if God gives you wealth, you are expected to invest in ways that are productive not only for yourself but also for others. You are expected to use your wealth to create good things, to provide useful services, & to support others who don't have enough.

If you have a great deal, you can do a great deal with it. If you have a wealth of ability to run a business, it is your responsibility to use it well. If you have a wealth of ability to make music, or give wise counsel, or craft beautiful objects, or to grow a bountiful garden, or share words of encouragement, you are expected to use those abilities not only for your sake but also for the sake of others. Our Heavenly Father has this fair expectation of us---if we have been given many goods or abilities, we should be good stewards of these blessings.

As a member of the Finance Committee, I pray that our church members will live up to our Lord's expectations. I pray that we will be good stewards of our time, our talents, & our tithes so that we may all share in the happiness & joy of our divine master!

# Generosity: The Heart of the Stewardship Muscle

Janelle Oxford

“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.” - **2 Corinthians 9:6-8**

When my dad was alive, he always reminded our family how important it is to give with a warm hand. He was always excited that he could generously share with others when he was alive to experience it. It brought him joy to see his grandkids or his children light up when he would give us a \$10 or \$20 bill before we would leave after a visit. I also know my dad well enough to know he also meant that giving with a warm hand meant giving with a warm heart. It was in the joy of generous giving that he received blessings.

Do you know that there are at least 25 passages in the Bible that mention generosity? We may remember the widow who generously gave her last two coins in the offering plate or the young boy who generously gave his lunch to Jesus who then fed 5,000 people. You might remember the friends who generously gave of their time and physical effort to carry their paralyzed friend and lower him through a roof. In turn, their generous faith moved Jesus, and the man was healed. These are just a few of the many examples of generosity found in Scripture. Perhaps the greatest example is God who generously loved us so much that he came to us as Jesus, one who came to serve rather than be served and then generously gave his life, so we could have ours.

These words in 2 Corinthians remind us that the heart of our giving is just that-- our heart. Our heart is what encourages us to respond to the nudge from the Holy Spirit when we help our neighbor like the Good Samaritan did. Our heart is where we listen to God's still small voice in ways we can serve and use our gifts. Our heart is where we reflect the love of Jesus to those around us. Our heart is where we answer the challenge of generosity. Paul reminds us that God does not force us to be generous; God wants us to give cheerfully from our warm heart--whatever that may be for us. When we feel God's love so deeply and widely, His love will flow outward through our generosity--through sharing of our resources, time, and talents.

I challenge each of us to spend a generous amount of time with God during our 28 day generosity challenge. Spend time asking God how you can expand your generosity. As Paul again reminds us when we cheerfully give generously we receive abundant blessings from God, who provides exactly what we need to complete the good works He has started in each of us. I imagine if you look closely at your own life or the ministries at FUMC, you will see how God blesses, provides, and works. We are each given one lifetime to share the generous love of Jesus with the world in our own unique way. How might God be calling each of us to be more generous today?

## NOW Program

August is always a really busy time for NOW. We are running around getting ready for our shopping days and then at the end of the month we jump right back into weekend meal bagging! This is a wonderful time to be a good steward, monetary donations are wonderful but volunteering is an amazing way to be a steward of your time and talents! I have so many people ask me what I need and the first thing that comes to mind is volunteers! With Covid - 19 it has been a struggle but as the restrictions slowly lift and people are being let back in, we can have our volunteers back too! I'm so excited to see everyone's face again! If you are looking for a way to volunteer we have so many volunteer opportunities this month! Use the links next to each date to sign up! I hope to see you soon!

8/05: Shopping Day Set Up - <https://signup.com/go/yArJQdV>

8/06: Shopping Day 1 - <https://signup.com/go/BHakQgo>

8/07: Shopping Day 2 - <https://signup.com/go/BHakQgo>

8/27: Weekend Meal Bagging - <https://signup.com/go/QFTppWB>



## Care News from Stephen Ministry

Marcia Schmidlin

According to the United Methodist Church: Generosity is a matter of action, intentions, and heart. One way to describe it is the grateful outpouring of gifts to others, out of our love for God. Outpouring is a terrific description, since the priceless treasure of the gospel (and all the gift of covenant, relationship, and life that go with it) comes from God and is meant to be poured out through our living, upon others. <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/equipping-leaders/stewardship>

The Stephen Ministry “team” met on July 8 for supervision, and again on July 22 for supervision and the continuing education on “Caring for People before, during, and after Hospitalization”. Joining the Zoom training were Michele Elliott, (Good Samaritan Hospital), Rikki Fuller (Crawford Memorial Hospital) and Julie Brooks (Crawford Memorial Home Health Agency). They provided valuable information, and their expert advice is greatly appreciated. Our Stephen Ministry, our congregation, and our community can give thanks for these excellent professional caregivers who share the outpouring of God’s love in their daily work in the medical field.

Reverend Kenneth Hauck, Psychologist and originator of Stephen Ministry, wrote *Christian Caregiving: a Way of Life*. In Chapter 5 of the book he says humans crave identifying as members of groups. This is especially obvious in this time of isolation due to COVID-19. We must remember we as Christians are all members of the body of Christ. In 1 Corinthians 12:27, Paul reminds us Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. As Christians we have a right and responsibility to care because we are family, because people are hurting, and because in general, people desire Christian care. Believers are God-given gifts themselves who have God-given gifts, talents, and abilities of which they are stewards. Whether we use our gifts to refer fellow congregation members for Stephen Ministry or desire to become a Stephen Minister, Stephen Leader, or serve in some other ministry, it is a family affair with the outpouring of Christ’s love at the heart of our caring.

How can congregation members receive a Stephen Minister as a Christian caregiver? Anyone 18 years or older can receive a Stephen Minister. If an individual desires a Stephen Minister to walk through any situation or time with them they need simply to ask a Stephen Leader. Then they will be referred to Pastor Jay as the Stephen Leader Referral Coordinator. He will talk to them and facilitate their assignment of a Stephen Minister. Congregation members may also refer other members. The best way to refer a hurting person to Stephen Ministry is to say to them, “I’m going to refer you to Stephen Ministry,” then tell Pastor Jay. Many times if you just ask someone if they need a Stephen Minister or other type of help, they may say no since that is our human nature to try and handle things on our own. However, that is not how God created us in Christ. God calls us to take care of each other and walk together through life’s challenges. You may be aware of someone in crisis or you may simply notice someone is not acting the same, or is not following through like usual. Stephen Ministers have gifts and skills to share in caring for others, and when someone needs help, they are being good stewards of the gifts this ministry offers.

“As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. “ - **1 Peter 4:10-11**



## August Birthdays

8/3	Jay Holtzhouser
8/4	Mike Parker
8/6	Liz Dhom
8/7	Tyler Carter, Nancy Mattsey
8/8	Brian Wilson
8/10	Phuong Quick
8/12	Matthew Schmidlin
8/13	Kirbie Ackman
8/15	Janet Clark; Emerson Reinoehl
8/16	Dorothy Youngs
8/17	Emmanuel Regennitter
8/19	Paula Summers
8/22	Joyce Owen, Janelle Oxford
8/26	Doris Stanley
8/27	Brent Owen
8/28	Mike Bell
8/29	Antje Pippin
8/30	Justin Aydt, Amy Hartke
8/31	Walker Odom

## August Anniversaries

8/3	Brandon & Melinda Harmon
8/4	Jim & Suzanna Wallace
8/14	Jason & Amy Hartke
8/15	Brian & Julie Wilson

## Prayer Requests

Jeremy and Greg Markello; Carol Wolf; Carl and Helen Blanton; Michael Brady; Patty Steele; Cathy Thomas; Judson Richardson; Julie Zhang; Bill Thompson; Michael Keene; John Larrabee; Nicole Young; Evan Prah; Margie Moore McNamara; Richard Youngs; Kay Young; Nancy & Charlie Young; Fred White; Vonnetta Shipman; Becky Goodwin; Caius Bell; Ray & Nelda Dotson; Kim Collins; Claudette Mejean; Ava Seaney; Demmie Long; Emma Bodine; Charles Hough; Sheltyn James Henry; Susan Rodgers; Norris Adams; Rick Pritchard; Laurie Vaughn; Bill Jones; Kay Bonnell; Wally Leggit; Joe Schmidlin; Cathy Frakes, Judy Eckert; Bernice Kibler; Lisa Schaefer; Shirley Wakefield; Matthew Williams; Debbie Houser; Bob Callier; Larry Potts; Rick Richardson; Patricia Hodgson; Pamela Hart; June Watson; Maria Reis; Paul Davis; Kathy Kennedy; Roger Pethel; Jesse Newbold; Tina Klender; Paul Clinton; Duane Parker; Ruth Fiscus; Max & Debbie Tedford; Charlie & Janet Clark; Jan Riker; Alan & Joan Summers; Floyd Brinkman, Jr.; Kathy & Estell Keys; Karleigh Wampler; Carolyn Leggett; Dustin Ikemire; Sherill Oxford; Jim Krouse

# August 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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1

2 <b>9:00 am</b> - Worship (Live Stream, YouTube and Radio) <b>10:30 am</b> - Adult Sunday School (Zoom) <b>6:00 pm</b> - Outdoor Worship	3	4	5 <b>10:00 am</b> - NOW Shopping Day Set Up <b>6:30 pm</b> - Stephen Ministry Supervision (Zoom)	6 <b>10:00 am</b> - NOW Shopping Day 1	7 <b>10:00 am</b> - NOW Shopping Day 2	8
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9 <b>9:00 am</b> - Worship (Live Stream, YouTube and Radio) <b>10:30 am</b> - Adult Sunday School (Zoom) <b>11:00 am</b> Stephen Leaders (Zoom) <b>6:00 pm</b> - Outdoor Worship	10	11	12	13	14	15
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16 <b>9:00 am</b> - Worship (Live Stream, YouTube and Radio) <b>10:30 am</b> - Adult Sunday School (Zoom) <b>6:00 pm</b> - Outdoor Worship	17	18	19 <b>6:00 am</b> - Committee Meetings (Zoom) <b>7:00 pm</b> - Church Council Meeting (Zoom)	20	21	22
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23 <b>9:00 am</b> - Worship (Live Stream, YouTube and Radio) <b>10:30 am</b> - Adult Sunday School (Zoom) <b>6:00 pm</b> - Outdoor Worship	24	25	26 <b>10:30 am</b> - NOW Summer Lunches <b>6:00 pm</b> - Refresh (Zoom)	27 <b>4:00 pm</b> - NOW Weekend Meal Bagging	28	29
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30 <b>9:00 am</b> - Worship (Live Stream, YouTube and Radio) <b>10:30 am</b> - Adult Sunday School (Zoom) <b>6:00 pm</b> - Outdoor Worship	31					
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