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***Celebrating the Connection of the United Methodist Church Through Clusters***

On March 15, Barry Turner, Tom Schamp and I attended the Indiana East District Cluster Tip-off (it is basketball season!) Celebration at High Street United Methodist Church. We sang, prayed and heard a presentation from Bishop Michael Coyner with the vision for the new conference which included disciples living by Wesley's Three Simple Rules, churches being fruitful through the five practices, and churches coming together to share in the ministry as clusters, essentially "rethinking church", the theme of our Annual Conference gathering in June.

A cluster is a group of local churches who choose to work together to accomplish the Gospel mission in their area, who share common ministry needs and who will learn from each other. The core questions we will be asking as we cluster – (1) "How are each of our congregations doing in our local church ministries toward accomplishing our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world?" and (2) "What can we do better and more effectively together in our ministries to impact our area for Christ than we can do as individual congregations?"

We will accomplish this by praying for each other by name during worship; studying the demographics and praying and dreaming for ways to impact our shared mission area; supporting each other by sharing resources, expertise or best practices; encouraging and holding one another accountable in our faithfulness and fruitfulness; and learning from our experiences, both positive and negative.

In case we think this seems like a revolutionary idea that has never been seen before, the idea comes from a Biblical model of sharing among Christians (Acts 2:44-49) and is based on other models such as the Wesley's class meetings and societies, Covenant discipleship groups, and team ministry (started with Jesus calling two sets of brothers). Other conferences have also been using cluster ministry to reach people for Jesus Christ.

We met in the fellowship hall at High Street with our church signs and churches that felt a sense of wanting to be in shared ministry "clustered" together. We are very excited to be in the cluster we named – very creatively we might note – "Cluster". The "Cluster" Cluster includes High Street, College Avenue, Selma Christ, Selma United, Union Chapel, Gethsemane, Hartford City Grace, Center Chapel and Riverside UMCs. Our next step will be to meet at High Street on April 28 to select a leader of the cluster and to begin getting to know each other. For now the focus is on "getting to know you" and praying for one another.

God has prepared Riverside for such a time as this. God has led us the past three years to offer the resource of our building and to share resources and ministry with other churches and organizations. We have had therapy dog training, invited groups to use various areas of the building, invited youth from six churches to meet here once a month for SAF, been in ministry together with Gethsemane through music, worship and study, partnered with six other churches for the Alpha program – these are just the beginning. There are other groups that have expressed a potential interest in ministry through Riverside and our prayer is that God will continue to bless this congregation in ways we may never have thought of as we look to the future with hope as Christ followers. We don't have to do it all ourselves!!! God is full of surprises and imagines more than we ever can.

God has called us to make disciples for the transformation of the world as the body of Christ, not as lone units vying for people to help our own cause. We are first called to be transformed in our heart, mind and soul as we love God through Jesus Christ, our first love. Out of that first love we will feel compelled to love others and to share in ministry because we long for people to live abundant and fulfilling lives as they hear the Good News of the grace and love Christ offers them.

Please pray for "Cluster" cluster churches, our Bishop, and all of the Indiana Conference as we learn to Rethink Church as a verb not just a noun as a place we come and sit on Sunday morning!

May we look forward to looking back to this time and saying "WOW, GOD!" You are awesome....

In Christ's Service, *Pastor Karen*



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## April/May Reminder

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### Birthdays and Anniversaries

#### April...

1<sup>st</sup> Melinda Shocklee  
5<sup>th</sup> Tammy Holt  
6<sup>th</sup> Pat Ashcraft  
7<sup>th</sup> Pat Brown  
Gary Shadoin  
Nicole Affolder  
13<sup>th</sup> Charles Gronendyke  
John Spence  
16<sup>th</sup> Mary Ann Curtis  
17<sup>th</sup> Allison Mitchell  
19<sup>th</sup> Caity Baird  
21<sup>st</sup> Kendra Ervin  
24<sup>th</sup> Lydia Brown  
29<sup>th</sup> Jeanine Souders  
Susan Reno



#### May...

2<sup>nd</sup> Shelby Murphy  
4<sup>th</sup> Carla Wheeldon  
9<sup>th</sup> Nancy Carver  
12<sup>th</sup> Earlene Harvey  
13<sup>th</sup> Eric Schamp  
18<sup>th</sup> Jeff Reese  
20<sup>th</sup> Barbara Strauch  
Jolene Murphy  
22<sup>nd</sup> Carl Baney  
28<sup>th</sup> Florence Shelby



#### April...

3<sup>rd</sup> Joe and Debbie Ervin  
18<sup>th</sup> Bill and Leona (Floyd) Barber

#### May...

5<sup>th</sup> John and Marlene Boyer  
17<sup>th</sup> Derek and Kara Priddy  
18<sup>th</sup> Tom and Diane Baird  
Fritz and Deb Dolak  
26<sup>th</sup> Joe and Sara Mitchell

## April/May Reminder

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*"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Jesus (Matthew 6:21)*  
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*Give thanks with a grateful heart for...*

- The Trustees, Choir, UMW and UMM from Gethsemane, worship team from Gethsemane, for preparing meals for Alpha
- Everyone who went to the Christian Ministries Sleep Room to provide meals and to be present to have fellowship with the men
- Worship team for preparations for Lent and Easter
- Tom Baird who is leading our singing with great joy
- Everyone who helped prepare the sanctuary for Lent
- Everyone who is leading and attending Alpha – for those who went to the week-end retreat, those who attended Saturday morning and for those who will be a part of the April 4 workday
- The 31 people who took the time to fill out the survey to express their thoughts and ideas for the Neely property
- Endowment Team faithfully received another gift from the Margaret Hoover estate
- Jim and Bev Reese for weeding and landscaping to prepare the church for Easter
- Wilma Grile and Susan Reno for continuing their efforts reorganizing the kitchen and storeroom – there has been a transformation.
- For the Caring Friends who faithfully keep connected with those who are not able to be here physically
- The Riverside Mens' Quartet for providing beautiful music.
- Harold and Wilma Grile for providing new Exit signs in Fellowship Hall and thanks to Ron Brown for installing them.
- Ron Brown and Barry Turner who continue to provide maintenance and repair for the heating and air conditioning units
- Deb Dolak and the Therapy Dogs who are now providing joy and comfort to many people
- The generous giving for One Great Hour of Sharing to support UMCOR
- The library dedication and for the work that many people, especially Karen Blank, contributed to make this a reality in honor of Joe Rankin.
- Fred Wallace who served as liturgist (and filled in at the last minute on one Sunday)
- Prayer partners and those who faithfully prayer walk each week
- The Bibles and Bagels group who gather for food, fellowship and help prepare for Sunday's message together
- Tom and Barry who attended the Cluster Tip-off meeting
- Everyone who contributed in donating items for the troops in Iraq
- Harold and Wilma Grile, Dorothy Bowman, Sandy Abbot and everyone who will be allowing Linda Keyton a restful recovery.

***Do no harm, do good, stay in love with God***

## Trustees' Corner

The Trustees will be busy over the next few months preparing the Parsonage for Pastor John Young and his wife, Missi. We also discussed some exciting fund raising ideas that I'm sure you'll hear more about later this year.

A Church Work Day has been scheduled for Saturday the 25<sup>th</sup> of April from 8:00am until noon. Please mark it on your calendar so you can help beautify the church grounds. Of course, you don't have to wait until the 25<sup>th</sup>. If you see some work that needs to be done and you feel like you want to spend time outside go for it. The Trustees would certainly appreciate it.

### **A REPORT FROM THE ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE**

The Endowment Committee is pleased to report receipt of \$27,864.98 as final payment from the Margaret Hoover Estate. The funds have been invested with the United Methodist Foundation and a United Methodist Certificate of Deposit. These funds are in addition to \$100,000 previously received. We are reminded only the income from these funds will be used for ministry. We give thanks to God for the generosity of Margaret Hoover and her husband Wayne. If you are interested in applying for the use of the funding that is generated from these investments, please see any member of the Endowment Committee for an application. You will be asked to relate your request to one of the five practices of fruitful congregations

### **Neely Property Survey**

On Sunday, March 15, we conducted a survey of the congregation to discover creative ideas and thoughts and for the future of the house on Neely Avenue. The majority of the 31 surveys submitted felt that selling the house or tearing it down was in the best interest of the church for the future. The Trustees and Administrative Board will review all the ideas submitted and will continue to discern where we feel God is leading us for the use of this resource. Please see Tom Schamp, Trustees Chair, or Darwin Keyton, Administrative Board Chair for additional ideas or updates.

## *Extravagant Generosity*

**FYI...** Each month we **tithe** 10% of our operating income for connectional support of the United Methodist Church around the world ( this used to be known as our apportionment). Some of these funds are used for the Africa University Fund to support ongoing operations. This is the only United Methodist degree-granting school on the continent and educates hundreds of men and women from 20 countries. A student from the Democratic Republic of Congo said "If in the future I'll be able to help even one person, I'll do it with happiness and love because of what the church has done for me. (from the *United Methodist Giving Program*).

### **FINANCIAL INFORMATION THROUGH FEBRUARY**

Total giving support for the Church	\$ 35,031
Total operating cost for the Church	33,228
Surplus or (Loss)	1,803
NOTE: Expenditures for repair work to the wall outside the front door were restated for 2008 when the work was done.	
Current debt - Church Renovation	\$154,978
- Endowment/Consolidated Loan	19,796

*Congregational Care & Discipleship*  
*Intentional Faith Development*

**RIVERSIDE LIBRARY DEDICATION**

Finally, we have the “new and improved” library ready for your use! We invite you to come to the library and check out a book or just come and sit and relax. This is a wonderful place for reflection and we have a great selection of books to help us grow in our faith.

**BOOK OF THE MONTH CLUB**

This month’s book is *The Christmas Sweater* by Glen Beck. Please see or email Karen Blank at [Karen@pawsinc.com](mailto:Karen@pawsinc.com) if you are interested in either purchasing the book or getting together to share your thoughts about how you were touched by the book.

**Upper Room** devotionals are available right outside the sanctuary. If you have not started a daily time with God, this is a good way to begin that spiritual discipline.

**Prayer Partners Ministry**

The prayer partner team at the church has two purposes. One is to plan retreats and other ways to help us grow in our prayer and overall spiritual life. The second is to gather to give thanks to God, to pray for individual concerns, and for the future of the church.

The prayer partners will be meeting on the last Monday of the month at 7:00 in the sanctuary for thanksgiving and prayer. Everyone is invited to come to this time of being present with one another and the Lord.

Planning for special times of prayer and retreats will take place in times separate from this time together. Please see Fred Wallace for more information.

**BOOK NOOK**

Check out a couple of new titles ---

*Quiet Strength* by Tony Dungy

Leading the Indianapolis Colts to win Super Bowl XLI, Tony Dungy made history as the first African American coach to take home the Super Bowl trophy. He has overcome many obstacles to achieve success in life, both on and off the football field. In his memoir, Dungy shares the secrets to his unique leadership style. Find out the principles, practices, and priorities Dungy lives by in *Quiet Strength*

*Become a Better You* by Joel Osteen

How often have you said "I can do better"? In his much-anticipated book, *Become a Better You*, Pastor Joel Osteen reminds you that God does not want you to settle for anything less than His best! He wants you to continually rise to new levels of freedom and victory, whether you're struggling or thriving in your current circumstances. Seven key steps, devotions, and personal testimonies pave the way for you to discover your unique purpose and destiny. Achieve personal success and leave a lasting impression for generations to come when you *Become a Better You*.

**Riverside Riders**

The Riverside Bike Riders are looking forward to another great season of bike rides. We'll be gathering at 8:00am at the Century 21 Real Estate office at the McGalliard Rd. Trail Head on the **2<sup>nd</sup> of May** for our first bike ride of the season. Our destination is the Mill St. Restaurant in Gaston. So, now's the time to clean up the bike, oil the gears and check the brakes so you'll be ready.

*Passionate Worship and Radical Hospitality*

<b>WORSHIP IN APRIL AND MAY</b>			
<b>SERMONS AND SCRIPTURE</b>			
April 5	Palm Sunday	<i>From Hurrah to Horror</i>	Mark 11:1-11; 15:1-39 Choral Cantata at Gethsemane, Holy Communion
April 9	Maundy Thursday at Gethsemane UMC, 7:00		
April 10	Good Friday at Riverside UMC, 7:00		
April 12	EASTER	<i>Tradition!</i>	Mark 16:1-8; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 Choral Cantata at Riverside, Holy Communion
<b>GREAT 50 DAYS OF EASTER</b>			
April 19	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter	<i>Sharing our Stuff</i>	Acts 4:32-35 Festival of God's Creation
April 26	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter	<i>Beloved Children</i>	1 John 3:1-7
May 3	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter	<i>Open Eyes, Burning</i>	Luke 24:13-35 Hymn sing and Celebration of Graduation, Holy Communion
May 10	5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter	<i>Sheep Protection Policy</i>	John 10:11-18 Celebration of Women in our Midst
May 17	6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter	<i>Going on to Perfection</i>	1 John 4:7-21
May 24	7 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter	<i>Practicing Fruitfulness</i>	John 15:1-17
May 31	PENTECOST	<i>Awesome! Amazing! Huh?</i>	Acts 2:1-21
June 7		<i>Against All Odds</i>	1 Samuel 17
June 14			Isaiah 6:1-8

Worship Colors: **PURPLE** through Good Friday to represent repentance, turning back to God. **WHITE** during Easter for the purity and power of Jesus Christ in the resurrection. **RED** on the day of Pentecost to represent the fire of the Holy Spirit.

You are invited to Holy Week Services  
Maundy Thursday (April 9), 7:00 at Gethsemane UMC  
Good Friday (April 10), 7:00 at Riverside UMC

AVERAGE WORSHIP  
ATTENDANCE THROUGH MARCH-  
96

*The Indiana Annual Conference will hold an **Ordination Service** on Sunday, June 28 at 10:00 at Emens Auditorium. If you have never attended an ordination service, you are welcome to come and experience worship as the body of Christ across the state celebrating ministry together and welcoming those who have prepared and been called for ministry as ordained clergy. Our churches are being asked to provide leadership for that morning at their church as our clergy and Lay Members will be attending this service. Annual Conference will meet at Ball State this year and in 2010 but may be at another location in 2011.*

Hosts and Minglers

## April/May Reminder

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In case you've misplaced your schedule, below is the schedule for April & May. We've added some additional hosts for Easter so we can meet and greet all our guests.

DATE	OUTSIDE DOOR	INSIDE DOOR	LOBBY MINGLER	SANCTUARY MINGLER
<b>4/05 Palm Sunday</b>	Terry Jacobs, Bob Harvey	Cindy Miller	Lynn Wright	Gladys Hunter
<b>4/12 Easter</b>	Harry Shelby, Charles Gronendyke	Bill & Nellie Campbell	Amy Clevenger	Odessa DeHaven & Bob Harvey
<b>4/19</b>	Gary Shadoin, Joe Mitchell	Dorothy Bowman	Joanne Ware	Laura Shadoin
<b>4/26</b>	Bill & Ruthanne Watson	Henry Dorton	Dorothy Bowman	Kay Farling
<b>5/03</b>	Rob Grose, Dale DeHaven	Debra DeHaven	Kay Farling	Fred Wallace
<b>5/10</b>	Mark & Amy Clevenger	Diane Baldwin	Sandy Hunter	Susan Reno
<b>5/17</b>	Dick Garringer, Jack Richardson	Ruth Garringer	Jeanne Richardson	Wilma Carney
<b>5/24</b>	Bob Harvey, Morris Carver	Nancy Carver	Sandy Abbott	Pat Ashcraft
<b>5/31</b>	Jim Reese, Jack Stanton	Beverly Reese	Judy Turner	Janet Schamp

### Media and Sound Ministry Assistance

As you know Pastor Karen and Steve will be moving on to a new challenge in the next few months. Steve was one of our dependable computer operators and he'll be hard to replace but I know you or someone you know is up to the challenge. Since we do have a good number of operators you'll only be scheduled about once a month. Prayerfully consider joining this important ministry. Ask Tom Schamp for details or any of our Media Team.



## ***RISK TAKING MISSION AND SERVICE***

**SAF Youth Special Event! FOR EVERYONE** You'll want to put a special mark on your calendar for Sunday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May so you won't miss seeing something Strange. That's right, Greg Strange Christian Comedian & Songwriter is bringing his own brand of comedy to Riverside for a free concert (an offering will be received). Greg resides in Nashville, TN and has planned engagements throughout Indiana from January thru May. This is a multi-denominational, all ages event with youngsters and oldsters encouraged to attend. The concert will start about 5:00pm and will last approximately one hour and will conclude with a special prayer for our community. We hope you'll be able to come and support Greg and the SAF Youth.

### **COVENANT PARTNERS COMMUNITY DAY**

**Community Day** will continue on the fourth Thursday of the month. Please bring your bags of supplies by the Tuesday before that Thursday. Also, please see Susan Reno or Mary Schumacher if you would be willing to share part of your day on that Thursday from 10-2 with the people at Covenant Partners. You will be blessed.

**Indiana Conference Opportunity.** The first Annual Conference of our new Indiana United Methodist Church will begin Thursday, June 25 and will go through Sunday, June 28. On Saturday, June 27, we will be having a day of outreach into the Muncie Community. We have been asked to be a host church for one of the districts on that day. To do that we will need a Team Leader and 4-5 Coordinators to work with a local agency, government, and prayer walkers to manage the details for that day. If you would like to participate in this exciting day please let Pastor Karen know.

**A SPECIAL THANKS** to Mary Schumacher for serving as the leader for our mission team here at Riverside for many years. Mary will be stepping down as the leader/coordinator of this group but will remain on the team. We are thankful to Mary for keeping us connected with the many opportunities to serve the people of Muncie and for her loving heart of caring and compassion for those in need, especially those of Christian Ministries and Covenant Partners.

*We appreciate you, Mary!!!*

#### **Alpha for Muncie Mission**

Please keep Sandy Hunter, Susan Reno, Barry Turner and Pastor Karen in prayer as we, two other leaders and the men at Muncie mission share Alpha together.

#### **2009 Away Work Camp**

We are planning our 2009 Away Work Camp trip for the week of June 7<sup>th</sup>. We are planning on going to Bellefontaine, Ohio to frame a home using a kit. We will be staying in a cabin at a church camp in the area. We will also be doing some site seeing in the area. Bellefontaine is located northeast of Dayton. The cost is \$95/person. This is a great opportunity to have some fun and help someone less fortunate to have a new home. Please contact Joe Speece at 286-0262 ([jmspeece@aol.com](mailto:jmspeece@aol.com)) or Nancy Campbell at 759-9819 for more information.

#### **One Great Hour of Sharing**

On March 22, Riverside provided \$200 for the administrative support of the United Methodist Committee on Relief. The other \$215 will be allocated by the mission committee for various needs such as the current flooding in North Dakota. Opportunity will be provided to specifically support each of the chosen areas of need as well. Please pray for those affected by unexpected disasters and crises in our world.