



Our congregation is responsible for the St. Vincent's Table meal on Thursday, April 28. We need volunteers to sign up for the meal. If you can prepare and serve the meal, help with setup and clean up, sign up on the sheet on the bulletin board and/or call Millie Dyer 815-942-5068.



If you are interested in helping in any way, please contact the church office.

Mark your calendars
June 20-24
9:00 am—noon
Vacation Bible School



Trustees is looking for people who are willing to mow the pastors' yards and the church property once a week starting the week of April 17. Please sign up on the bulletin board.



First United Methodist Church
118 West Jackson Street
Morris, IL 60450
815-942-0809

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Spirit Alive

April 2011

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Children's Choir

Director

Leann Hill

Hand Bell Choir Director

Millie Dyer

A Note From Your Pastor . . .

Dear Friends:

Have you started your Spring Cleaning yet? I don't know the origins of the tradition of spring cleaning, but it seems to make sense to me when you think about what Spring is all about. Spring is about new things sprouting. It is about the hope of new possibilities. It is about things returning to life after being dormant, hibernating, or migrating away during the long, cold months of winter. Easter with all of its symbols and traditions is the epitome of Spring—new life resurrected from the dead!

So it seems to me that in order to prepare for new things, it is fitting that we clean up some of the old. (This isn't a commercial for our upcoming Rummage Sale—but that is a good way of clearing out some of the STUFF that we no longer need but which could be of use to someone else.)

I am thinking more about the emotional/spiritual STUFF that we carry around with us. Again, the Church calendar allows for a time of "spring cleaning." The season of LENT is a time to rid ourselves of the things that get in the way of our celebration of Easter.

The leaders of our congregation have been looking at how we can best fulfill our mission of *Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World*. Our Visioning Team has presented to the Church Council six strategies for fulfilling our mission. Some are ways to support and nurture our current membership, others are ways to reach new constituencies currently not part of our congregation, and many are ways to do both at the same time.

The strategies include: 1) invigorate our present members to grow in their discipleship, 2) meet the wants and needs of young families in our community, 3) offer worship services that, in structure and style, speak to a diverse faith community, 4) effectively communicate, within and outside our walls, the activities of our congregation, 5) gather in small groups to enhance the spiritual, social, and service-oriented aspects of our faith journey, and 6) be a hospitable church. I do not have space to define all of these strategies.—Members of our Visioning Team have been meeting with a variety of groups within our church to have conversations about the strategies and what these groups can do to begin to implement them.

As we look at these ways to become focused on our mission, we also need to do some "spring cleaning" and look at those things that are keeping us from truly fulfilling this mission. It is sometimes hard to give up things that we have been doing for many years. It's even harder to think of new ways of doing these old things to give them new vitality. It's also hard to look at the things around us with "new eyes" (like those of a newcomer or guest) and to realize the many things that we just take for granted.

Springtime: We look for ways to clean out our homes, simplify our lives, and help our church to become focused on the mission that God has placed before us. New things are happening in the life of our congregation. Join us as we celebrate this season of new possibilities.

Peace,
Pastor Scott

News of the flock

Hospitalized

Selma Finch

Dave Finch

Don Varner

Margaret Gunnerson

The beginning of life in faith . . .

We celebrate with the following families on the baptism of their children . . .

- ~ Jacqueline Faye Murphy, daughter of Lonnie Murphy II & Brooke Wilch
- ~ Alaina Paige Close, daughter of Richard & Christy Close, grandparents are Rick & Cathy Webster
- ~ Troy Aaron Larson, son of Chad & Jackie Larson, grandparents are Greg & Cheryle Larson

The beginning of life eternal . . .

Remember the following in your prayers . . .

- ~ The family of Clarence Zingre
- ~ Barb Jones and family on the passing of her sister, Helen Bedford
- ~ The family of Shirley Casper—Memorial service will be Saturday, April 2 at 1:30, visitation will be prior to the service beginning at noon at our church.



The Book Club will be meeting on Monday, May 2nd at 4:30 pm in the church library to discuss "The Latecomer: A Hmong Family Memoir" by Kao Kalia Yang. All are welcome to join us.



Dear Friends at FUMC,

Thank you for your \$292.25 donation to We Care of Grundy County, for our Souper Bowl of Caring Program. We truly appreciate your efforts and hope you had a great "game day!!" Your support, along with others like you, enables us to help thousands of Grundy County families in need with rent, utilities, medications, and food each year.

In these economic times, many families are struggling just to make ends meet, and are unsure of where to turn for help. In 2010 we have served 5,064 families and 2,586 of those families have been served at our food pantry. Thank you for supporting us and in turn giving hope and help to the community.

Sincerely, Denise Gaska, Executive Director

What joy each card brought as I opened them and most important was the peace each and every prayer brought during my hospitalizations in February. Pastor Scott and Pastor Deb, a special thank you for being there through each of the procedures. Family—personal and church—are the best blessings in our lives.

Love & blessings to each of you, Connie Kundert

The paths we take through life can lead to obstacles and it is up to us to continue on as best we can. We can be helped by the relationships we establish along the way. The best relationship I feel I have chosen is being a Christian and a member of the First United Methodist Church of Morris.

During my recent illness, the warmth and concerns have been felt through prayer, cards, phone calls and genuine concern when we are in church or meet someone on the street.

A special thank you goes out to Pastor Scott and Rev. Deb for their visits to the hospital and our home.

Thank you, Dave Finch

Thank you for your prayers, telephone calls and cards that I received during my brief stay in the hospital. I am grateful for our thoughtful and caring church family.

Selma Finch



Upcoming Events

April 10	At the Church	4:30 pm	Jr. High
April 17	At the Church	4:30 pm	

Sn. High	April 10	Evening Gathering At the Church	7:00—8:30 pm
	April 17	Pack the Pew Sunday Come to Church	9:00 am
	April 17	Mission Night—ASP At the Church	7:00—9:00 pm

It's time to get serious about your spring cleaning! You can start bringing your treasures on Monday, April 18. We will be accepting donations until NOON on Monday, April 25. We look forward to seeing you for this week of fun, food and fellowship.



Round –up your old treasures and donate starting April 18.
Unbelievable finds!
Many hands make light work.
Make room for more treasures!
All are welcome to help.
Give your clean and complete donations.
Enjoy the fellowship!

Sort the old on 4/25-26 and shop for new 4/27-28.
Affordable prices.
Lunch and laughter provided for the workers.
Everything must go, help us pack up on Thursday at 5 pm.



Word from Finance



The finance committee would like to thank the congregation for their prompt responses to the recent Stewardship Campaign. The preliminary figures show a pledged increase in giving for the upcoming year, which is an amazing thing considering the continued struggle of our economy. We would also like to thank the Preschool for their recent “love gift”. This gift will enable us to stay ahead in our monthly expenses and apportionments to the conference. We are truly blessed.

Kevin DeVries
Vice-Chair Finance

UMW Circle News

- ~ Executive Board: Tuesday, April 5 at 6:30 pm at the church
- ~ Rebekah Circle: Thursday, April 14 at 7:30 pm at Barb Ewalt's home
- ~ God's Girls: Retreat, Friday, April 15 from 6:00-10:00 pm at the church
- ~ Monday Circle: Monday, April 18 at 12:30 pm at the church
- ~ Wednesday Circle: Wednesday, April 20 at 12:30 pm at Julie's Java
- ~ Martha Circle: Thursday, April 21 at 9:00 am at the church

Rummage Sale sorting is April 25 & 26, sale is April 27 & 28.

Aurora District Spring Meeting will be held at Community UMC in Naperville.
Registration deadline is April 23

Come to the



Mother-Daughter Banquet

This year's Mother/Daughter Banquet will be on Friday, May 6 at 6:30 pm in fellowship hall. Join us for an evening of good food, fun and music. Tickets will go on sale after worship services the weekend of April 16 & 17. You may purchase your tickets after worship or in the church office during the week. Ticket prices will be:

- Adult = \$10
- Children 4-12 = \$5
- Children under 4 = \$2.50

April Birthdays

- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Kelly Devries | 13 Erin Kindelspire | 20 Tyler Carson |
| Paige Wilson | David Light | Calynn Cook |
| 2 Barbara Anderson | Elizabeth Poore | 21 Owen Burns |
| Donna Holtan | 14 John Cravens | 22 Clyde Chandler |
| Randy Miller | Emma Karras | Kerry Gardner |
| 3 Todd Lyle | Larry Kingsbury | Eric Washburn |
| Amber Miskell | Brian Laughary | 23 Craig Brown |
| Patrick Schuster | John Lyle | Cindy Higgins |
| Lois Snyder | 15 Ann Dorrrough | Jessica Williams |
| Alice Vanderhyden | John Frey | 24 George Dare |
| 4 Katie Lincoln | Zachary Harper | 25 Sam Allen |
| 6 Tyler Greve | Linda Klepp | Maureen Headrick |
| 7 Barbara Hildy | Florence Mitchell | 26 Randy Gordon |
| Colin Monk | Michael Painter | Tim Hanley |
| 8 Denny Hackett | 16 Jose Delgado | Tom Higgins |
| 9 Richard Davis | Kevin Devries | Ruby Morrison |
| Ryan Goodale | Courtney Gordon | Jared Roth |
| Everette Green | Kaytlyn Neushwander | Jameson Turas |
| Rich Woodard | Derek Redford | 28 Carl Monk |
| 10 Max Babcock | 17 Amy Brummel | 29 Barbara Kesman |
| Charlotte Farrell | Christopher Finch | Kaelyn Kindelspire |
| Louise Nelson | Mark Heffner | 30 Julie Brown |
| 11 Kyle Darlington | Chris Nix | Layne Kief |
| Christian Miller | Kati Vertrees | |
| 12 Darrin Carson | 18 Donna Burnham | |
| Kai Devine | 19 Bessie Hexdall | |
| 13 Grant Davis | Rachel Lynch | |

H O L Y W E E K S E R V I C E S

Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday services, Saturday, April 16 at 6:00 pm and Sunday, April 17 at 9:00 am. Sunday School kids will be processing with palms at Sunday service.



Come and have communion on Maundy Thursday, April 21. 'Come & Go' Communion will be served from 5—7 pm.



Good Friday Walk with the Cross of Christ pilgrimage will start at noon and process through the downtown churches with a prayer, hymn, scripture and short devotional at each stop.



Good Friday Service will be Friday, April 22 at 7:00 pm.



Easter Prayer Vigil will begin after Good Friday service and will continue until Sunrise Service on Easter morning. To participate sign up on the bulletin board.



Our Chancel Choir will present the Easter Cantata on Saturday, April 23 at 6:00 pm and on Sunday, April 24 at 9:00 am.



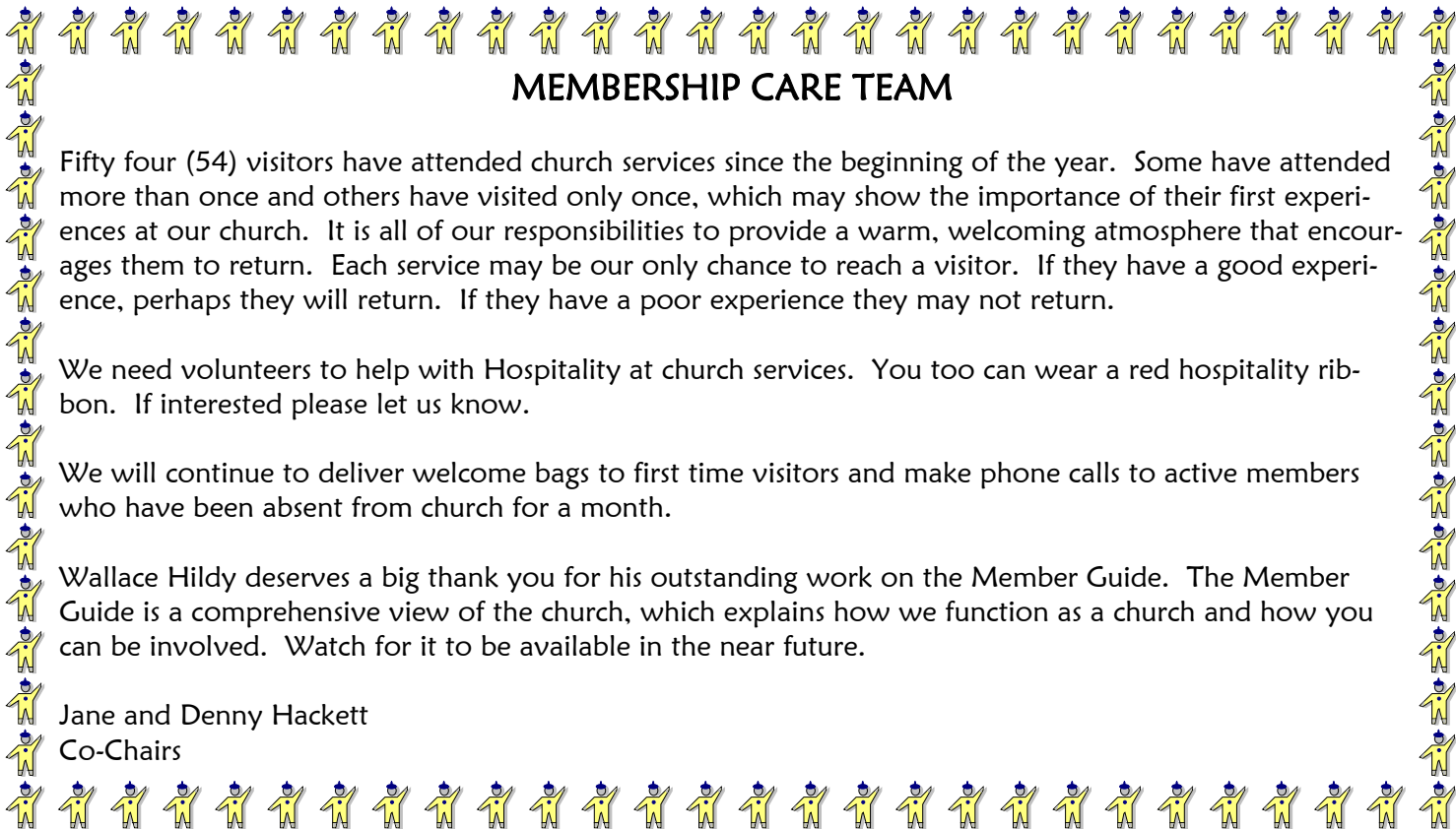
Sunrise Service

Easter Sunrise Service will be Sunday, April 24 at 7:00 am followed by our Easter Breakfast at 7:45 am.



Join us for our traditional Easter Celebration on Sunday, April 24 at 10:30 am.

Sunday school for preschool through 5th grade at 10:30 am.



MEMBERSHIP CARE TEAM

Fifty four (54) visitors have attended church services since the beginning of the year. Some have attended more than once and others have visited only once, which may show the importance of their first experiences at our church. It is all of our responsibilities to provide a warm, welcoming atmosphere that encourages them to return. Each service may be our only chance to reach a visitor. If they have a good experience, perhaps they will return. If they have a poor experience they may not return.

We need volunteers to help with Hospitality at church services. You too can wear a red hospitality ribbon. If interested please let us know.

We will continue to deliver welcome bags to first time visitors and make phone calls to active members who have been absent from church for a month.

Wallace Hildy deserves a big thank you for his outstanding work on the Member Guide. The Member Guide is a comprehensive view of the church, which explains how we function as a church and how you can be involved. Watch for it to be available in the near future.

Jane and Denny Hackett
Co-Chairs

Please join us for Family Lenten Soup Supper and Devotion.



Sunday, April 10
5:00—6:00 pm
Devotion by Pastor Scott

Sunday, April 17
5:00—6:00 pm
Devotion by Pastor Deb

Sign up on the bulletin board.



Easter Lilies

If you would like to order Easter Lilies for Easter morning to honor or remember someone, please fill out this form, return it to the church office or put in the offering plate at church. We will be listing the names of those who are being honored and/or remembered in the Easter bulletin. The cost for the lily is \$13 and we need your order & payment received by April 15. Lilies should be picked up after the 10:30 am service Easter morning or anytime that following week.

I would like to order _____ lilies at \$13 per plant for a total of \$_____ (enclosed).
I would like them . . .

_____ in honor of _____

_____ in memory of _____

They are given by _____