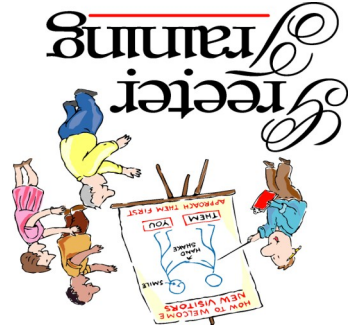


Church Office Summer Hours are
Monday—Thursday: 8:30 am—noon
& 1:00—2:00 pm and Fridays: 8:30
am—noon. The church doors will
lock when the church office closes
and will re-open 30 minutes prior to
scheduled meetings. Please make sure all meetings are on the
church calendar. If you need to get into the church during off
hours please notify the church office at least 1 day in advance.



Current greeters on Sunday or anyone interested in being a greeter
should plan to attend for (special) NEW instructions.

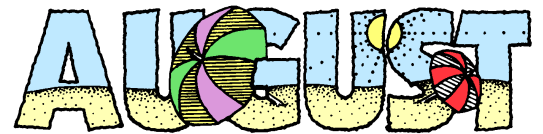
Greeter Training
Tuesday, August 23rd, 7:00 pm
At the church

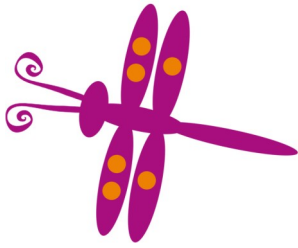


First United Methodist Church
118 West Jackson Street
Morris, IL 60450
815-942-0809

Return Service Requested
Postmaster: Dated Material—Do Not Delay

Non-Profit
Organization
Permit 127
US Postage
Morris, IL





Spirit Alive

August 2011

Staff

Pastors

Scott McClellan

Scott@morrisumc.com

Deborah Percell

Deb@morrisumc.com

Financial Secretary

Judy Burns

Judy@morrisumc.com

Church Secretary

Julie Pierce

Julie@morrisumc.com

Choir Director

Mary MacAdams

Organist

Cheryle Larson

Custodian

Don Kundert

Preschool Director

Lori Woodard

preschool@morrisumc.com

Sunday School

Superintendent

sundayschool@morrisumc.com

Children's Choir

Director

Leann Hill

Hand Bell Choir Director

Millie Dyer

A Note From Your Pastor . . .

Dear Friends:

It is very hard to look out at the brown grass here in Morris knowing that not very far away people have been dealing with storms, flash floods, and power outages—in some places several times in this past month. I remember the words of Jesus when he said God sends the rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. A corollary must be—God sends rain on some and not on others (whether they need it or not).

We call these storms “an act of God” not in the sense that God sends them as punishment—but that God allows them as a part of the bigger picture of God’s Creation. We need rain, wind, changes in barometric pressure in order to produce and maintain life on this planet. The result at times is catastrophic disasters. Of course some of these disasters are of our own making as we have built homes on flood plains and covered so much of the earth with concrete and asphalt.

I believe that God is able to use these “acts of God” in order for us to reach out in comfort and support to one another. They are an opportunity to build the true community that God wants us to be. Look at the outpouring of assistance this year in Japan after the earthquake and tsunami, Joplin after the tornado, and other places in the area after floods and storms. People have come together to help their neighbors, as well as strangers, and we are able to get through the storms together.

As I said in a recent sermon, there are no guarantees in life and we should never expect that today will be like yesterday, or tomorrow will be like today. But we are called to live as people of faith. We are not to be afraid of what might happen, but we know that with God’s help and with the support of the community God has given us, we can make it through these storms. The same is true of any acts of war or terrorism, failures in the economy, disease and even death.

God is still working among us and through us to provide comfort, strength and peace to calm the storms of life. We trust in God as we love one another.

Peace,
Pastor Scott

News of the flock

Hospitalized

William Osmanson
Lou Borger

Larry Anderson

Don Varner

Lois Hall

The beginning of life in faith . . .

Being baptized this past month was . . .
~ Kellan Brian Shannon, son of Chad & Amy Shannon

The beginning of life together . . .

We celebrate the following marriages this past month . . .
~ Tom Acker & Hope Medema
~ Tim Layne & Stephanie Vaughn

The beginning of life eternal . . .

Remember the following in your prayers . . .
~ John & Judy Claypool on the death of his brother-in-law, Otto Olson
~ Larry & Ellie Anderson on the passing of her mother, Glennie Wade
~ Family of Warren Blake

Opportunities Exist

In the three month period of March through May, 155 visitor units attended church service with us. (I am using "visitor units" to represent individuals, couples or families) These folks may be visitors, guests or newcomers. We don't know which until we introduce ourselves, welcome them to our church and listen to what they tell us.

Visitors are people who attend for a special purpose (baptism etc) and may not return because they live out of town or have another church home. We want to make sure they leave with a positive experience, especially the warmth and friendliness of our members.

Guests have been invited by someone from the church and may be expected to return. Those treated as "honored guests" are likely to come again.

Newcomers are relatively new but not yet members. They are trying to find a way into the life of the church, so it is important to remove barriers to serve their needs.

40 of the visiting units have joined us 2 or more times so OPPORTUNITIES EXIST to leave a lasting positive impression. Your welcoming actions are important.



I thank all the First United Methodist members who helped me out in June at St. Vincent's Table. I am so appreciative of everyone who brought food, served, cleaned up and did anything else that helped the night go smoothly. I give thanks for all.
Millie Dyer



St. Vincent's Table

Thursday, August 25, food for St. Vincent's Table will be provided by members from First United Methodist Church. All contributions are greatly accepted.

Donations of food and helpers for this date are needed. A sign up sheet is posted on the bulletin board. If you have questions, please call Millie Dyer 815-942-5068.



Word from Finance



I am happy to report to you that we are holding steady with our finances so far this year. We are still in a great position with our apportionment payment as well as the rest of our bills. We should all be excited with the fact that as long as we continue to receive the pledges that were made and with the general givings that we receive, we will be able to pay off the loan for the North street property by year end. We praise God for such a wonderful, giving church family. Enjoy the rest of your summer.

Lorraine Heffner

August Birthdays

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1 Dewey Anderson
Diane Sprole | 11 Joseph Sereno
Gail Smith | 26 John Norton
Ginny Bellamy |
| 2 Jonathan Carson
Jim Hill
Dennis McComas
David Sampson | 13 Gail Heck
Jonathan Hill
Jacob Nadess | Harion Enervold
Angela Greve
Stan Nix
Ryan Webster |
| 3 Jakob Eisenbeis
Jack Hacker
Tyrone Smith | 14 James Allen
Sue Anderson
Tyler Enerson
Alexis Matney | 28 Tracy Benignetti
Sam Lestina |
| 4 Greg Larson | Jacqueline Smith | 29 Geoffrey Lamaze
Megan Matney |
| 5 Geraldine Brown
Terry Klepp
Lewis Miller
Mary Ringer
Ed Wakeman | Dawn Weist
Gene White | 30 Susan Norton
Anthony Smith |
| 7 Margery Anderson
Kyle Enervold
Riley Jones
Nichole Nix | 15 Lois Hall
Katy Monk
Joe Murphy | 31 Diana McComas
Tom Merrick
Anthony Xydakis |
| 8 Ray Dite
Kelly Eisenbeis
Keira Frey
LaVonne Larson | 16 Erika Sue Gordon
Don Varner | |
| 10 Tayden Thacker | 17 Dorothy Hedenschoug | |
| 11 Matt Haberkorn | 18 Cindy Bryant | |
| | 19 Steve Holtan
Wayne McClintock | |
| | 21 Chris Carson
Jenna Steffen | |
| | 22 Katelyn Miller | |
| | 26 Alexandria Cook | |



The Fellowship Vision Team is in the process of making a church birthday calendar. We are trying to secure as many dates as possible. If you have not seen your birthday listed in the Spirit Alive, please call the church office, e-mail julie@morrisumc.com, or turn in this slip by September 1st with your special day.

**Birthdays
Wanted**

_____ Name

_____ Birthday

UMW Circle News

- ~ 2012 Budget Meeting will Tuesday, August 2 at 6:30 pm at the church. UMW Finance Committee, Circle Chairs & Co-Chairs and Circle Treasurers are invited to attend.
- ~ God's Girls will meet at the church on Friday, August 12 at 4:00 pm to go to Hollywood Movie Theater for dinner and a show.
- ~ Monday Circle will meet Monday, August 15 at 12:30 p.m. at the church.

STEPHEN MINISTRY



Stephen Ministry

I would like to thank the church and the church leadership for their support of our Stephen Ministry program and also for allowing me the opportunity to attend the Stephen Series Leader's Training Course in St. Louis, Mo.

Stephen Ministry is a system of Christian care-giving. Stephen Ministers are volunteer laypeople who receive 50 hours of training in how to provide one-to-one Christian care to individuals struggling with a life crisis such as grief, divorce, illness, unemployment, loneliness, etc.

Dr. Kenneth Haugk, a pastor and clinical psychologist, started Stephen Ministry in 1975 in his own congregation. It was so successful that other congregations became interested. Since then, more than 10, 000 congregations have been involved in Stephen Ministry. They represent over 150 Christian denominations. Stephen Leaders provide on-going supervision of Stephen Ministers and recruit, select and train new volunteers to become Stephen Ministers.

I attended the St. Louis, Mo one week long Leader's Training Course in May along with 366 other people from 37 states, Canada and France representing 40 denominations. It was a wonderful experience meeting so many people with different religious backgrounds, yet we were all unified with one purpose: how to bring Christ's healing love to hurting individuals. It was a spiritually uplifting week of praying, learning, reading, role-playing, and singing praises to our Lord. God's love and energy was wonderfully palpable during this conference and it flowed through the large meeting room to all participants. In addition to Christian growth, after attending this course I feel a renewed dedication to this important Ministry and I am very proud of being a member of this Stephens Congregation at the First United Methodist Church of Morris.

For more information about receiving Christian care from a Stephen Minister or about becoming a volunteer Stephen Minister please call the church office and speak with Pastor Deb or leave a message for Joyce Redford, Stephen Leader and Intake Coordinator.

With thanks,
Pat Cravens



All Church Members: Mark this date on your calendar!

September 11 at 10:30 will begin our 2011-2012 Sunday School year and this kick-off will be like no other you have experienced before. Games to play, crafts to make, Bible drama to see and hear, fun to have and lunch to eat. Many church members are working hard to put this event together for **everyone**, no matter what age you are. Plans are to use the alleyway and also the grass area on the former Muffler property so casual attire is needed. Come to church in your casual, play clothes and get involved in the Sunday School kick-off morning (or what many of you know as Rally Day!)

Bell Choir



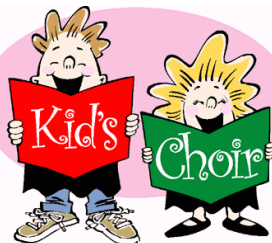
FUMC hand bells is coming back to rehearse and play for the congregation. Our first rehearsal after our summer break will be July 27. All interested parties please see Millie Dyer for further information.

Calling all kids grades 4—8.

Do you like to sing and have a good time together?

Then Kid's Choir is for you!!

If interested contact Leann Hill,
815-942-5938.



We are in need of a few good people to join our dynamic team of Sunday School teachers. If interested contact Leann Hill, 815-942-5938, or the church office.

STEPHEN MINISTRY



Stephen Ministry Training Opportunity!

Pat Cravens described Stephen Ministry well in her article about her recent experience at Leader's training and now you have an opportunity to serve as a Stephen Minister in our congregation. We are accepting applications for the upcoming Stephen Minister Training Course to begin in January, 2012. If you have prayerfully thought about becoming a Stephen Minister or you know someone in our congregation you think would make a great Stephen Minister, please call the church office to request an application packet or to speak with Pastor Deb or Joyce Redford, our Intake Coordinator. We also invite you to attend an informational meeting on Tuesday, September 20th at 7:00 pm to learn more about what it means to be a Stephen Minister.

We believe God works through Stephen Ministers to plant the seeds of hope and healing in these persons (called "care receivers") who are struggling and it is very important to our congregation for these hurting persons to receive Christian care from highly qualified and trained Stephen Ministers.

Stephen Ministers are:

- ◆ Always growing in their faith, praying with and for their care receivers;
- ◆ Compassionate, walking along side and sharing Christ's love to those who are hurting, struggling, discouraged, or stressed;
- ◆ Excellent listeners;
- ◆ Skilled in exploring feelings;
- ◆ Experts in maintaining confidentiality.

Stephen Ministers are committed to:

- ◆ Submitting to a selection process beginning with an application and interview;
- ◆ A comprehensive 50-hour training program to learn the skills required;
- ◆ Meeting one-to-one with their assigned care receivers typically once a week for an hour;
- ◆ Actively participate in continuing education and supervision meetings twice a month;
- ◆ Two years of service as a Stephen Minister (although most choose to participate longer)

And the rewards of Stephen Ministry are many. Gil from Maitland, Florida, writes,

The most incredible thing about being a Stephen Minister is how much I receive through this ministry. I now look on each day and its challenges from a whole new perspective. I became a Stephen Minister to give back to God some of the blessings I have received, yet I now feel more blessed than when I began.

Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

Galatians 6:2

Just for kids!!

HERO Sandwich

To celebrate the Bible's many heroes, make this sandwich for a picnic.

What you need:

- An adult to help
- Shredded lettuce
- Olive oil and vinegar
- Seasonings (salt, pepper, oregano)
- Italian crusty bread (six inches per person)
- Mayonnaise
- Sliced meat
- Sliced cheese
- Sliced tomato
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Pencil
- Toothpicks
- Tape



What you do:

1. Drizzle shredded lettuce with oil and vinegar; sprinkle with seasonings.
2. Cut bread in half lengthwise and spread mayo on both halves.
3. On bottom half, layer meats, cheese, tomato and lettuce.
4. Top with other half of bread. Cut in half.
5. Cut paper into small triangles. Write your favorite Bible heroes' names on them.
6. Tape the triangles to toothpicks to make pennants. Stick in sandwich halves. Enjoy!



action-packed faith

The greatest "super men" who ever lived put their faith into action.

Directions: Match each Bible character to the correct description.

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Noah | 1. This disciple wrote a gospel, recounting many events in Jesus' life. |
| Stephen | 2. This man responded to God's commands, including the order to move. God made many promises to this man and his descendants. |
| Abraham | 3. This man was eager to rebuild Jerusalem. He helped the people protect their city, reminding them that God was on their side. |
| Luke | 4. This man, who became king of Judah at a young age, obeyed God's laws and helped people repent. |
| Nehemiah | 5. God saved this honest, hard-working man from destruction by having him build a place of safety for his family and every kind of creature. |
| Josiah | 6. This man stood by God's Word, showing strength of character even when faced with persecution and death. |

On the lines below, write your name and describe how you're a "hero" for God. What are some ways you put your faith into action?

Name: _____

