



Our hand chimes have arrived!  
Come join us. We are having a ball.  
Millie Dyer, Director  
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# Spirit Alive

## March 2011

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**Leann Hill**

### Hand Bell Choir Director

**Millie Dyer**

## *A Note From Your Pastor . . .*

Dear Friends:

This month we begin the season of Lent. For most Christians this is a time of reflection and preparation for the events of Holy Week. It is arguably the most "spiritual" time of the Christian year. Many choose to use this time to do something (or to give up something) in order to grow closer to God.

As a church we will have many opportunities during the season of lent to reflect upon our relationship with God and to walk with Jesus once again on the journey which led him to Jerusalem and the Cross.

We begin on Ash Wednesday (March 9<sup>th</sup>). On this night we will gather for worship at 7pm. The service will include the imposition of ashes as a sign of our mortality and as an act of repentance. In this way we begin the Lenten season by asking God for forgiveness and making the conscience choice to get right with God.

On the remaining Wednesdays of Lent we invite everyone to come together with friends and neighbors from other churches for a time of fellowship and reflection on various Spiritual Disciplines. We will be doing this with a series of "Lenten Luncheons" hosted by various churches in the area. Each gathering will consist of a simple soup and sandwich lunch and a meditation by the host pastor on one of the Disciplines.

Our Schedule is as follows:

|                 |  |                  |
|-----------------|--|------------------|
| March 16        | First Presbyterian Church, Morris            | Simplicity       |
| March 23        | Park St. Congregational Church, Mazon        | Giving           |
| <b>March 30</b> | <b>First United Methodist Church, Morris</b> | <b>Scripture</b> |
| April 7         | Immaculate Conception Church, Morris         | Prayer           |
| April 14        | West Lisbon Lutheran Church, W. Lisbon       | Fasting          |

Each gathering will begin with lunch at Noon and conclude no later than 1:00. This is a chance not only to think about Spiritual Disciplines (which John Wesley calls: Means of Grace) but more importantly it is an opportunity to be in fellowship and conversation with our neighbors and friends from neighboring churches.

There will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board by the front entrance for those interested in attending these Lenten Luncheons. We would like to have an estimate of how many may attend so that the host church can plan for the meal. (This also gives our church another opportunity to practice hospitality on the week which we host.)

In addition, we will be holding two family gatherings on April 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. These Sunday evening gatherings will be an opportunity for our church family to come together and reflect on the Lenten season. Our Fellowship Vision Team is coordinating these events and more information will be forthcoming.

With Holy Week being so late this year (Easter being the last Sunday in April) we have time to plan the various special events. Our Choir is working on another wonderful cantata for Easter weekend and we will once again have a Sunrise Service and breakfast to start the day. Again, more information will be given in next month's Spirit Alive.

May we each find ways to grow in our relationship with God and one another during this wonderful season of Lent.

Peace, Pastor Scott

# News of the flock

## *Hospitalized*

Max Babcock  
Connie Kundert

Linda Olson  
Sheldon Davis

Jeff Beck

Gene White

Dave Finch

## *The beginning of life . . .*

We celebrate with Rick & Christy Close on the birth of their daughter, Alaina Paige. The grandparents are Rich & Cathy Webster.

## *The beginning of life together . . .*

We celebrate with Amy Spiezio and Pete Brummel on their marriage February 5.

## *The beginning of life eternal . . .*

Remember the following in your prayers . . .

- ~ Max Babcock and family on the death of his brother, Verne Babcock
- ~ Doc Newcomb on the passing of his sister, Jean Ann Lautzenheiser
- ~ Greg & Cheryle Larson, AJ Larson, Eric Larson and Chad & Jackie Larson and family on the death of their mother and grandmother, Charlotte Larson
- ~ Clarence Zingre and family on the passing his wife, Muriel Zingre
- ~ Marilyn Lestina and family on the death of her father, Curtis Riley
- ~ Joe & Beverly Sereno and Tom & Jacquelyn Sereno and families on the passing of their mother, Blanche Sereno
- ~ Shirley & Tom Joyce and Jake & Kristine Lestina and families on the death of their brother and grandfather, Jesse Kuntzelman



## *Thank You Notes*

I want to express my gratitude for the many acts of kindness expressed at the time of Dad's death. From phone calls, cards and attendance at visitation/funeral—to donations and prayers, I felt your love and support. Many hugs to all of you.

Paula Steffen

Dear Friends at First UMC:

Just a note to say good-bye that we weren't able to say in person. We have recently moved to Florida in the Tampa area and are settling in to our new home. We have visited different Methodist churches, each with many great qualities.

Thank you to all of our friends who gave us a wonderful luncheon before we left and for those who came to see us off. Thank you, "Morris Friends", for the Soul Food book, we have enjoyed reading it.

First Church has been a wonderful church home for our family for the past 10 years from the Youth Groups, ASP, God's Girls, Children's Choir, Knitting, Handbells, Issues and youth Sunday School (there is more but I won't go on). There are many wonderful people involved in the many different parts of the church which made this a special church to attend. Please know you remain in our thoughts and prayers.

Blessings,  
The Neal's

Thanks for the prayers while I was in the hospital also thanks to Rev. Scott and Rev. Deb for their visitation.

Linda Olson



# Upcoming Events

|          |               |         |                 |
|----------|---------------|---------|-----------------|
| March 6  | At the Church | 4:30 pm | <b>Jr. High</b> |
| March 20 | At the Church | 4:30 pm |                 |

|                 |  |  |               |
|-----------------|--|--|---------------|
| <b>Sn. High</b> | March 6                                | Evening Gathering<br>At the Church   | 7:00—8:30 pm  |
|                 | March 13                               | Steak Dinner & Concert<br>5:30 pm—Hors d'oeuvres<br>6:00 pm—Dinner<br>7:00 pm—Entertainment by "Bruce & Dan" | At the Church |
| March 20        | Pack the Pew<br>Come to Church Service | 9:00 am  |               |
| March 20        | Game & Pizza Night<br>At the Church    | 6:00 pm  |               |



Join us  
Sunday, March 13  
For a Steak Dinner to benefit our ASP teams.

5:30 pm—Hors devours  
6:00 pm—Dinner (Steak, vegetable, potato, dessert)  
7:00 pm—Entertainment by "Bruce & Dan"

The cost is \$25 per person.  
We only have 150 tickets so see a Senior High Youth to buy your ticket.

"Bruce & Dan" were here 2 years ago and sang songs that they had written about their ASP experiences. They have played at the Illinois State Fair and the Annual Conference of the Northern Illinois United Methodist Church. Bruce and Dan are deeply involved with the Appalachian Service Project and have written the ASP theme songs for several years. You don't want to miss this night of delicious food and great entertainment.

## UMW Circle News

- ~ Executive Board: Tuesday, March 1 at 6:30 pm at the church
- ~ World Day of Prayer: Friday, March 4
- ~ Wednesday Circle: Wednesday, March 16 at 12:30 pm at Turtle's
- ~ Martha Circle: Thursday, March 17 at 9:00 am at the church
- ~ God's Girls: Thursday, March 17 at 7:00 pm at the church
- ~ Rebekah Circle: Thursday, March 17 at Verna Ripsch's home
- ~ Monday Circle: Monday, March 21 at 12:30 pm at the church

The program this month is "Call to Prayer and Self-Denial" and will be given by Jean McKinney. There will be a special offering taken.



Start your spring cleaning now! Your target date is April 18, when you can start bringing your gently used treasures for the Spring Rummage Sale. The sale is scheduled for the week of April 24-28. More details to follow in April Spirit Alive.

## March Birthdays

- |                        |                    |                    |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 2 Marge Olson          | 20 Richard Davis   | 29 Tim Brehm       |
| Michelle Schindlbeck   | Olivia Magers      | Samuel Call        |
| 3 Jim Wright           | Richard Webster    | Eric Greve         |
| 4 Angel Dinelli        | 21 Lauralyn Bogart | Shirley Mason      |
| John MacAdams          | Gerald McKinney    | 30 Aspen Gordon    |
| Andrew Ulrich          | Charlene Potts     | Marty Wantland     |
| 6 Wendy Easson         | Virginia Splain    | 31 Grace Allen     |
| Jody Ferguson          | Tracy Thompson     | Michael Benignetti |
| Cheryl Kingsbury       | 22 Karie Anderson  | Cassie Brown       |
| 8 Dominic Messina      | Carl Berry         | Drew Darlington    |
| 9 David Anderson       | Alexander Magers   | Tommy Dinelli      |
| Brad Dite              | Brittany Riley     | Fran Kief          |
| Janet Dix              | Dean Tambling      | Madelyn Olson      |
| Emma Gaertner          | 23 Sara Klepp      |                    |
| James Hedenschoug      | Jacqueline Larson  |                    |
| Douglas Koren          | Paul Patterson     |                    |
| 11 Sara Conley         | Greg Stewart       |                    |
| 12 Patrick Bednarik    | Catherine Webster  |                    |
| Darrell Brown          | 24 Erin Baczynski  |                    |
| Selma Finch            | Lorene Hutchings   |                    |
| Colin Smith            | Jim Ringer         |                    |
| 13 Lori Woodard        | Carla Ripsch       |                    |
| 15 Jamison Acker       | Delany Welsh       |                    |
| Luke Miskell           | 25 Chelsea Cravens |                    |
| 16 Irilla Vaughn       | 27 Kim Beck        |                    |
| 18 Benjamin Weller     | Jane Montero       |                    |
| 19 Lesa Gordon         | Rance Welsh        |                    |
| Jacquelyn Nelson-Sklut | 28 Vincent Larson  |                    |





# Word from Finance



It is that time of year that we want to hear from you about how much our church home and family means to you. We know that everyone has been touched in many ways whether it be through programs for children or adults, uplifting services, small group fellowship or community outreach. We want to not only continue all of those programs but grow some new ones while not only maintaining our buildings and keeping with our regular budgets but improving them as we go.

During the 2011 Stewardship campaign (March 5-13) we hope that you will look back fondly upon those wonderful memories and also will continue supporting our growth. Please consider the tithing challenge that Pastor Scott issued and if that is out of reach, consider stepping up a step. Participating in electronic banking is another step you can make.

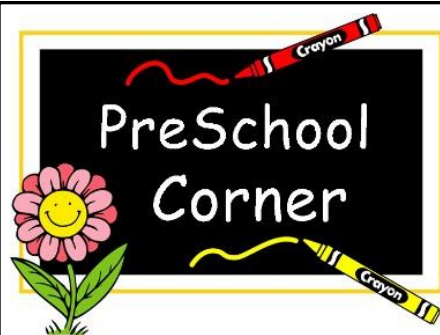
God Bless,  
Lorraine Heffner, Finance Committee

## MUSIC NOTES

Do you love to tell stories? Do you love to sing and express your love of, and faith in God and his Son Jesus Christ through the ministry of music? If so, then it's time for you to join the FUMC Chancel Choir for this years Easter Cantata "Ascend to Heaven".

This cantata is full of energy with upbeat and soul searching music that has you tapping your toe and whipping your eye. Please come and join us starting Wednesday, March 2nd @ 7pm as we begin our journey into "Ascend to Heaven".

What I love about this Cantata is that it brings "the story" to the here and now. What's so amazing is that this story NEVER ends because it lives on in each one of us. The story continues as we all live our everyday lives. It's what we do with "the story", with what we know, what we continue to learn, and what we do with that precious gift that was given to us through the Grace of God and his Son's ultimate sacrifice. "Every generation, every congregation, every tribe and nation sing "Our God is here" Every tongue and spirit, let the Father hear it, He is drawing near, let's sing "Our God is here!" I'm really excited about "Ascend to Heaven" because it re-enforces the fact that the Easter Message is "NOT JUST A STORY". The theme song of "Ascend to Heaven", that I have quoted from above, "Not just a story" really spells it out. "And all of us, with all our hearts, are standing up to say: It's not just a story, He rose from the grave, it's my testimony, I'm forgiven and saved. It's not some old fable handed down through the years. My God is willing and able, mighty and stable. It's not just a story....."



The students of our school continue to amaze us with their great abilities to raise funds for our Christian efforts each month! February's Hop-A-Thon raised \$1,800. This project not only encourages our students to help others but serves as an aide to promote gross-motor skills and teach counting numbers.

For the month of March, the students will collect box-tops for education. Mrs. Woodard will also be hosting parent-teacher conferences in March.

The staff and Board of Directors are proud to say after last month's initiation of 2011-2012 registration, the program is set to run at full capacity for yet another year.

