



First United Methodist Church
 127 N 4th St
 Vandalia, IL 62471



March Pews News

First United Methodist Church of Vandalia
*Planting and nurturing seeds of faith, cultivating devoted disciples of Christ,
 and feeding souls for the glory of God.*

Office Hours:

M-W-TR: 8a — 4p
 T-F: 8a — 12p
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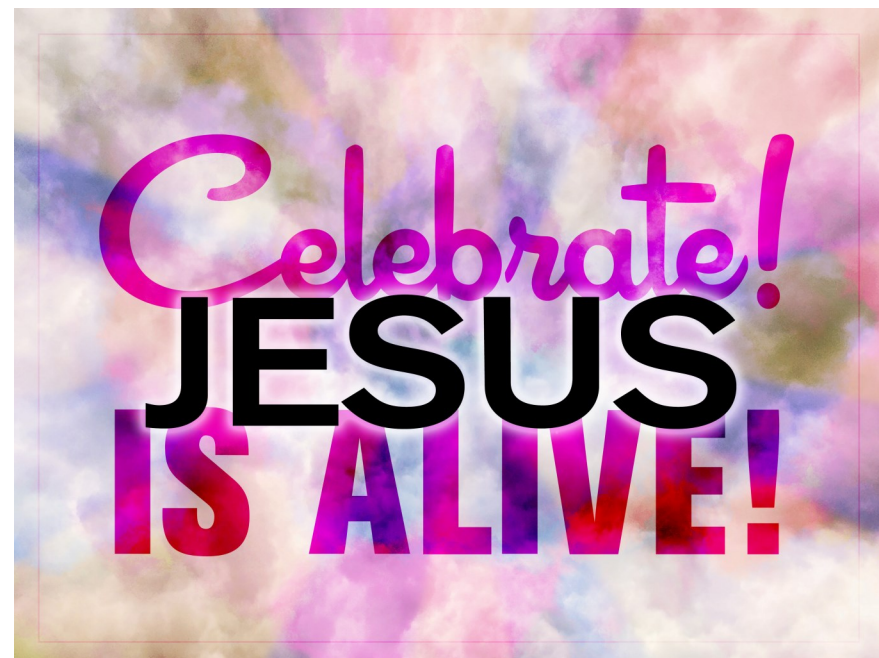
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- Palm Sunday (March 24)** — 9:00am, Children's Easter Egg Hunt at Hohlt & File Funeral Home lawn (Family Center in case of rain), 9:30am Worship
 Community Palm Sunday Service...time and place to be determined soon
- Maundy Thursday (March 28)** — 6:30pm, Worship in the Sanctuary
- Good Friday (March 29)** — Church office is closed, 6:30pm, Worship in the Sanctuary
- Easter Sunday (March 31)** — 7:00am, Sunrise Service
 8:00am, Continental Breakfast in Wesley Hall;
 9:30am, Easter Worship in the Sanctuary

Church Staff

Pastor: Curtis Flake: rev.cflake@gmail.com, 217-273-4432
 Administrative Assistant: Casey Kistler: vandaliafumc@outlook.com
 Secretary: Sue Miller (Tues. & Fri.)
 Minister of Praise Music: Sarah Vu: vandaliapraise@outlook.com
 Director of Choirs: Taryn Flake: taryn.a.flake@gmail.com
 Director of Young Children's Ministries: Amanda Milam
 Preschool Director: Cindy Laramée
 Custodians: Mike & Sharon Hagy
 Assistant Custodian: Andy Sidwell



**GOD IS ANSWERING THE PRAYERS OF ADULTS AND CHILDREN
WORLDWIDE THROUGH OCC AND THE GREATEST JOURNEY**

Information Provided by: Samaritan's Purse

What a privilege to serve as OCC leader and witness the way that God works through our members! I am truly blessed by each and everyone of you!

A PERFECT FIT

A 13-year-old in South Africa desperately needed new clothes. He was so excited to find an outfit just his size in his shoebox gift. Touched by God's provision, his mother accepted Jesus Christ as her Savior, and they are attending the church that hosted the Operation Christmas Child outreach

PRAYING FOR SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Two friends cried for joy when they opened their shoebox gifts and saw lots of school supplies. They had been praying that God would provide these items since their families couldn't afford to buy them. Their parents thanked God and prayed with the team in the Philippines who had organized the outreach even. Both families are now attending church and learning more about the Lord and His Word.

OUR CARING CONTINUES

Last month, I reported that we had received an anonymous donation of items. **From this donation, 25 older girls boxes were filled (ages 10-14) when added to other items that had been bought or donated by others.** A special thank you to the person who donated these items and blessed the older girls!

Perfect timing in God's timing! A monetary donation was received this month, which allowed us to pack **75 little boys and girls boxes!** Filler items had been bought; however, we needed a larger item (a **WOW** gift that the child sees, as soon as they open it). With this monetary donation, we were able to finish filling 75 boxes. We can only imagine the faces of the little girls when they see **Uni the Unicorn** or the boys open their boxes and see **Curious George.** **Thank you to the couple who shared their blessings to bless others!**

Andy Sidwell continues to find Beanie Babies for our boxes. You would think the Beanie Baby supply in Vandalia would be depleted with as many as Andy has found and donated through the years! We filled 2 huge totes with the Beanie Babies donated! Thank you, Andy for blessing the kids!

Sherry Schneider has been a **GREAT** help packing extra boxes! Thanks Sherry for your dedication!

Kim Warner made cute purses and coin purses to go in our girl boxes. Thanks, Kim for your beautiful work! You are appreciated!

Submitted By: Jill Zimmer



March

MARCH
Birthdays

- 1—Bob DePaolo
- 2—Ellie Doyle
- 4— Deb Durbin
Amelia Moulton
- 5—Wendell Dugan
- 6—Kara Dugan
Sherry Schneider
- 8—Megan Grapperhaus
Eric Miller
- 9—Aubrey Brouk
- 10— Jeff Burnam
Mark Miller
Bill Warner
- 11—Gail DePaolo
Dennette Guyer
Bryce Kistler
- 12—Tim Edwards
- 14—Richard Knebel
Mary Woolsey
- 15—Susan Casey
- 17—Zac Stombaugh
Wade Thompson
- 19—Adeline Bowen
Duane Dugan
- 22—Trevor Clark
Betty Schaub
- 23—Danielle Miller
Frank Roeder
Ann Schwarm
- 24—Betty Guffey
- 25—Matthew Hagy
Bev Hood
- 26—Dean Black
Greg Fulk
Andy Schwarm
- 28—Darin Dugan
David Dugan
Madalynn Metzger
Suzie Thompson
- 29—Sarah Vu
- 31—Jody Burnam

MARCH
Anniversaries

- 8—Bill & Kim Warner
(11 years)
- 26—Bill & Cindy Bennett
(34 years)
- 31—Jeff & Jan Casey
(39 years)

Acolytes

- 3—Trevor & Parker Clark
- 10—Michael Crothers
- 17—Haven Burnam
- 24—Addison Flake
- 31—Austin Warren

Liturgist

Dean Black

Sound Tech

Patrick Myers

Video Tech

Rand Craycroft

Offering Collectors

- 3—Bill LaDage
- 10—Bryce Kistler
- 17—Barb Paine
- 24—?
- 31—John Burnam

Ushers

- 10—Bill & Kim Warner
- 17—?
- 24—Darrel & Susan Casey
- 31—?

Bus Ministry

- 3 **Driver:** Bill Warner
Rider: Kim Warner
Greeter: Mary Fulton
- 10 **Driver:** Ed Taylor
Rider: Kim Taylor
Greeter: Robin Kistler
- 17 **Driver:** Darrel Casey
Rider: Alan Lurkins
Greeter: John Blythe
Diana Tippit
- 24 **Driver:** Max Durbin
Rider: Deb Durbin
Greeter: Jan Casey
- 31 **Driver:** Bill Warner
Rider: Kim Warner
Greeter: James Hejl

Head Ushers

- 3 —JD Vieregge/Mike Black
- 10—Dean Black/Bryce Kistler
- 17—Greg & Jacy Fulk
- 24—JD Vieregge/Dean Black
- 31—Dean Black/John Kaiser

Greeters

- 3—Max Durbin,
Carolyn Daniels
- 10—Bill & Kim Warner
- 17—Linda Dugan
- 24—Shelly Haislar
- 31—?





Bells and choir will both resume on Wednesday, March 6th. Handbells will be practicing to play on Palm Sunday, as well as April 28th. If you are interested in joining us, there is always room for one more ringer!

Sanctuary choir will be practicing 2 Lenten songs, "Calvary" and "A Clean Heart" to sing on March 10th and 17th. We would welcome more singers! Reading music is not a requirement.

Here is the March choirs schedule:

Rehearsals:

March 6th	5:30 Handbells	6:30 Sanctuary Choir
March 13th	5:30 Handbells	6:30 Sanctuary Choir
March 20th	5:30 Handbells	

Anthems:

March 10th	9:30 Sanctuary Choir "Calvary"
March 17th	9:30 Sanctuary Choir "A Clean Heart"
March 24th	9:30 Handbells "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"

Thank you all for the words of encouragement as I learn more about playing the organ and providing music for the services! It has been a joy to serve as director of choirs and play for worship services. I thoroughly enjoy it. I am glad to be accepted into the church family so quickly after moving here and to be able to share music for the joy of the Lord! I can only think that God was instrumental (pun intended) in the timing of our move to the Vandalia First UMC.

Musically,
Taryn Flake

Mark your calendars!

The United Methodist Men will host a biscuit and gravy breakfast on Saturday, April 6th, from 7:00am to 10:00am, in Wesley Hall. Dine in or carry out options available!



Thank You

I want to thank your church family for the many cards and expressions of support and encouragement as I faced cancer surgery. It meant so much to know I was surrounded with your prayers. The surgery went well and I will be receiving radiation treatments for a while.
—Gary Jenkins



You may bring your donations in to the Fireplace Room and place them in the tote.

Our Church is on duty at the Food Pantry on Thursday, March 21st, from 4:30pm to 6:00pm. Please arrive at the pantry by 4:00pm.

6:35
PANTRY



There will be a children's Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, March 24th, at 9am, at Hohlt and File Funeral Home lawn (Family Center in case of rain). Donations of candy and items to stuff the Easter eggs with are appreciated. Please bring your donations to the Church office by Sunday, March 17th.



Mark your calendars!

Vacation Bible School is set for June 3rd, 4th, and 5th, 9am-11:30am, at the Family Center. It takes many volunteers to make VBS a huge success every year and we look forward to working with everyone again! Contact the Church office or Amanda Milam if you are able to help with this year's VBS. There is a place for everyone!

The Lenten Journey: Reflection, Discipline, and Renewal

As we continue our Lenten journey, we are reminded of the importance of slowing down and embracing the path towards Easter with intentionality and reverence. Lent offers us a profound opportunity for spiritual reflection, discipline, and renewal as we journey towards the celebration of Christ's resurrection.

In our fast-paced world, it is easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of daily life, often neglecting the need for quiet contemplation and introspection. Yes, on Ash Wednesday, we are reminded that time is short, but through the life of Jesus, as reiterated in other places of Scripture, rest is important. We look at Jesus' command of Sabbath, or the fact that Jesus disappeared to quiet place, or even Jesus' napping on the boat, and see that we are called to rest. Lent may be calling us to pause, to take stock of our lives, and to journey inwardly towards a deeper understanding of ourselves and our relationship with God.

Reflection is a fundamental aspect of the Lenten season. It is a time for us to reflect on our spiritual journey, our shortcomings, and our blessings. Through prayer, meditation, and self-examination, we can discern areas of our lives that require attention and transformation. As we reflect on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, we are invited to align our hearts more closely with His, cultivating virtues of love, compassion, and forgiveness.

Discipline plays a central role in the Lenten observance. By embracing practices such as fasting, almsgiving (giving to the poor), and acts of self-denial, we discipline our bodies and minds, freeing ourselves from distractions and worldly attachments. Through discipline, we open ourselves to God's grace and allow Him to work within us, shaping us into more faithful disciples.

Renewal and redemption are the ultimate promises of Lent. As we journey through this season of repentance and preparation, we are reminded of the hope and promise of new life in Christ. Through the sacrifice of His death on the cross and the triumph of His resurrection, we are offered the gift of redemption and reconciliation. Lent invites us to renew our commitment to God, to deepen our faith, and to live more fully as His beloved children.

As we embark on this sacred journey of Lent, let us embrace the opportunity for reflection, discipline, and renewal. May we walk this path with open hearts and minds, seeking God's presence in every step we take. May this season be a time of spiritual growth and transformation, preparing us to joyfully celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday, and may the practices that we learn in this process have a lasting effect on our lives.

Blessings,

Pastor Curtis Flake



Nursing Home Residents & Shut-ins:

Brookstone (1607 W. Fillmore)
 Diane Adams (Apt. 15)
 Margaret Carroll (Apt. 10)
 Edith Knebel (Apt. 43)
 Larry Peyton (Apt. 16)
 Frank Roeder (Apt. 25)
 Jean Stombaugh (Apt. 35)
 Herb & Mary Woolsey (Apt. 32)

FCH/Long Term Care (650 West Taylor)
 Arlene Hoffman (Rm. 510)
 Deb Endres (Rm. 708)

Dolan Memory Care Homes

(Dublin—11330 Dolan Way, St. Louis, MO 63146)
 Phyllis Rames

Stillwater Senior Living

(1111 University Dr., Edwardsville, IL 62025)
 Patti Bohner

Shut-Ins:

Mike Beckett, 2625 W. Jefferson St., Vandalia



Dennis Ambuehl (Patty Donaldson's brother, radiation treatment for prostate cancer)
John Campbell Sr. (home; recuperating)
Roger Corrington (Health issues)
Matt Cors (Taryn Flake's cousin; stage 4 oral cancer)
Whitey Daniels (health concerns)
Ryan D'Arcy (friend of Pastor Curtis & Taryn; (health concerns)
Dannie Donaldson (continued prayers for recovery)
Willard Fulk (health concerns)
Leonard Gehle (Deb Durbin's father; prostate Cancer treatment)
Amy Holaday (friend of Gathe's; breast cancer has returned)
Gary Jenkins (recuperating from surgery for salivary gland cancer; home)

Heather Jones (friend of Donna Johnson; (diagnosed with hemochromatosis)
Carson LaDage (praying for new treatment plan to continue to work)
LuAnn Newman (friend of Taryn Flake; surgery on February 19 for breast cancer)
Heather Overlin (Larry Osborne's daughter; health concerns)
Rights for Children (foster care, sex Trafficking, etc.)
Stacey Weaver (daughter of Dwayne and Laura (Zimmerman) Weaver; pretzel syndrome; rare neurodevelopmental disorder)
Darin Wells (stage 2 non-Hodgkin's lymphoma; chemo treatments)
Jeff Williams (BJ & Sharon Mueller's son in law; lung cancer)



Time to spring forward! Remember to set your clocks ahead one hour on Sunday, March 10th !

God's love is enough! When I fall, He catches me. When I'm sad, He holds me. When I cry, He wipes my tears. When I am broken, He puts me back together. Thank you, God, for always loving me. Amen. (Beautiful Life) —Thanks Andy Sidwell for submitting this.