

NEWSLETTER

Urbana First Methodist

August & September 2022

A Message from *Pastor Bob*

Can you feel it? A slight change in the air. A crispness that you don't remember being there a few days ago. Or maybe a shift in smells and sounds around you?

It's true. Autumn is coming. The first day of fall is September 22nd and it's time to start talking about the holidays. Okay, maybe not all the holidays— that's for a different time of the year. For now, let's just talk about some September holidays and our time to offer thanks to God for another season.



The coming months are chock-full of both fun and sobering holidays. The most notable is Patriot Day (also known as 9/11 Remembrance Day). It's hard to believe that it's been 23 years since that fateful day. Even though the 11th of September is a federally recognized National Day of Service here in the U.S., it will be a day of service and prayer for our Church and that makes it a great day to help others, in tribute to those who were injured or killed on 9/11/01. At 9:03, 9:37 and 10:03 our Church Community will ring the bell in memory and honor of those persons who died and responded to this national tragedy. We ask our members and friends to take time to pause at those times and pray for peace and the hearts of all of humanity.

There are also some fun holidays to look forward to in September and to share with your customers, readers, and followers! Days like National Be Late for Something Day (September 5th) — I know there's a joke in there somewhere. Of course, there are some faith-based holidays as well, such as Rosh Hashanah (Sept. 6th) and Ganesh Chaturthi (Sept. 10th). There are lots of other great days, as well.

For First United Methodist Church of Urbana September has special meaning for us as well. It is our Birthday! The gospel of Christ began spreading in the Urbana area through the first Church established in Urbana and continues as the longest continuing faith community in the county. On the fourth Sunday we will be celebrating our birthday and invite all past members and friends to join us in celebrating our rich heritage. (We will be updating the website for more information and details)

Another exciting event happening in September is when we will officially partner with an indigenous community in the Republic of the Congo. We are working with a local pastor and his church family to promote the relationship between the church and their community.

We rely on their guidance so we can accomplish our goal of sharing Christ as we bring aid through sustainable outreach. We want the community to take a closer look at their local church and learn of how accepting Christ can make all the difference in their life. In every program, we stand behind the church, supporting and working as the hands and feet of Jesus. The focus was always directed at the empowerment of the church leaders to lead their communities to Christ. If you would like to know how you can partner with the Congo Church, please let me know or Noisy Offering – Missions chair her at Urbana First.

So not only will there be special holidays, our Church (Birthday) Anniversary, but the furtherance of the Gospel to the people in the Congo. Let's give praise and thanks to God !

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

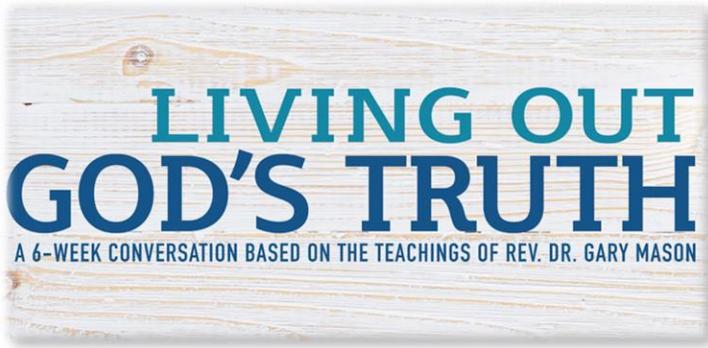
HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



August	September
Margie Jobe, 08/01	Dani Evans, 09/01
Ryker Spencer, 8/02	David Gordon, 09/06
Nancy Moser, 08/03	Michael Reynolds, 09/06
Paige Banovz, 08/22	Joyce Smith, 09/08
Betty Newton, 08/22	Stanley Paul, 09/12
Bob Burnett, 08/26	Joan Christian, 09/16
Prentice Freeman-Choi, 08/27	Eva White, 09/23
Linda Bailey, 08/29	Felecia Freeman, 09/26
Nelson Bond, 08/29	David Fritz, 09/26
Donna Blume, 08/31	Layken Zech, 09/29

Did we miss your birthday or anniversary? Please let us know so we can celebrate you! Email Paige at office@urbanafirstmethodist.org

September Sunday School



Welcome to **Living Out God's Truth**, a 6-week conversation based on the teachings of The Rev. Dr. Gary Mason that were offered at the 2019 North Georgia Annual Conference Gathering of the United Methodist Church.

A Methodist pastor, Mason has spent decades living out the truth of the Gospel in his home country of Ireland, including the violent conflicts of the late 20th century, known as The Troubles. His experience guiding individuals and communities to find healing and reconciliation following violent division now informs his teaching and coaching in communities across the globe. Through the lens of scripture and Wesleyan theology, he invites and challenges Christians to seek a faith of authentic, embodied, and communal truth. The goal of which is beloved community.

In one of his presentations during the 2019 North Georgia Annual Conference, Mason asked whether we as followers of Christ are becoming more like Jesus or conversely trying to make Jesus more like ourselves. Mason continued by stating that rather than squeezing and shaping the Gospel to fit our American culture and politics, we should be allowing the Gospel to shape us as we discover the truth about ourselves.

After these statements, Mason argued that the “cross ought to be raised again at the center of the marketplace.” This claim is in line with our Wesleyan foundation that is rooted in grace and social holiness. Yet, many of us have compartmentalized the practice of our faith as separate and apart from our everyday comings and goings. Thus, the faithful religious practices that were once at the center of everyday life seem to have been relegated to the inside of the church walls and used solely on Sunday morning for sharing among “friends.”

Today, however, our nation is in need of connection to grace and a social holiness—love for one another—because we are extremely divided. We, as followers of Jesus, should be providing a different way of being that is a witness to that which we all need: unity and an agape love for all. Our actions should be the witness in the center of the marketplace. But, doing so is no cheap matter, as Mason would say. Allowing our faith to intersect our Monday through Saturday life requires more authenticity and a belief in something bigger and better than what we currently see when we look around.

Allowing ourselves to live out our faith requires hope, courage, and commitment to the realness of Christ. Living a truth that goes against cultural norms will require us to examine ourselves, reconcile our differences, restore relationships with one another, and recommit to living out our social covenant together.

(continued on the next page)

It is our hope that this six-session conversation will help you extend your practice of faith to all aspects of your life so that the Gospel may be known by others as authentic and hope filled truth. These weekly discussion topics and exercises are intended to challenge you to dig deeper both personally and collectively about what it means to be a Christian today. 4 Ultimately, we pray for your transformation: personally, communally, and broadly in the marketplace.

The best way for us to begin is by allowing ourselves to be honest even though it may be uncomfortable.

I am an African American female from the South. I am an Ordained Elder in The United Methodist Church. I have achieved a higher level of education and now live out my calling to make disciples and transform the world, beginning with the university community and students under my charge. I draw on many different facets of my life and experience to inform who I am and how I view the world. Just as this is true for me, it is also true for each of us, which means we all view life through a unique lens.

Because of our varied perspectives, it is important that we are honest both with ourselves and also with one another. In our differences, we have much to teach each other. Our differences, however, should not supersede those things that we have in common—our commitment as Christians to love and respect one another. This is beloved community: the ability to see one another's differences and appreciate that our authentic diversity makes us all better. —Rev. Dr. Tonya Lawrence-Miles

Solitary religion is not to be found there. "Holy Solitaries" is a phrase no more consistent with the gospel than Holy Adulterers. The gospel of Christ knows of no religion, but social; no holiness but social holiness. Faith working by love, is the length and breadth and depth and height of Christian perfection. —John Wesley

BACK TO SCHOOL PRAYER

by Rev. Marilyn E. Thornton

Bless my paper and my pen. Guide my spirit deep within.
Help me think and help me play, This whole school year, day by day.

As I move from class to class, Guide my footsteps; clear my path.
Keep my tongue to speak your words. Let your will for me be heard.

In every subject high or low, May God's excellence be shown!
Keep me strong to reach the prize, To grow in grace, becoming wise.

Whether far from home or near, May I hold God's precepts dear.
To do my best at every task; For this blessing, I do ask.

Help my family be a part, As I lift my mind and heart.
As I study, work, and pray, Be with them throughout the day. Of whom much is given, much is required.
May learning be your greatest desire!



COMMUNITY NEWS & VIEWS

Service Opportunities

To sign up call the church at 217-367-8384 or register online at www.urbanafirstmethodist.org/service

Annual Blood Drive—**August 1st through 13th** Rotary Club and Urbana First United Methodist Church's blood drive is happening at the Impact Life Blood Center (1408 West University, Urbana.) Schedule an appointment by calling 800-747-5401. On arrival, please mention that you are participating in the Rotary if your appointment occurs August 1-6, or Urbana First UMC if your appointment occurs August 7-13.

Back to School Supplies Drive—**August 6th through 9th** The Champaign County Sheriff's Department is hosting a "Back to School Drive" to provide school supplies to children so they are prepared for the start of the school term. Items they are looking to include: backpacks, boxes of 12 colored pencils, boxes of 24 crayons, #2 pencils, two-pocket folders, rulers, highlighters, 2 composition notebooks, and glue sticks.

The sheriff, our own Dustin Heuerman, can also accept donations at Rotary meetings on August 1st and 8th. You may also drop them off at the Sheriff's Office (204 E Main, Urbana). If you drop items off, please let us know the items and the quantity you dropped off to help us know what we have donated as a Church or you can bring the items to the Church office.

Children's Center Day Care Fun Day!—**August 26th** Urbana First will be hosting a ice cream truck for the children at CCDC from 4:00-5:00 p.m. We are looking for volunteers to help us make this a special day for the kids!

Day of Remembrance and Community Service—**September 11th**—We will be meeting to clean our community by picking up trash around Lincoln Square Mall and the Church meeting at 7:00 a.m.

Food Drive—On **September 15th** we will be asking you to drop plastic bags at desinated locaton for donations of non-perishable goods for the Eastern Illinois Foodbank and then on Sunday **September 19th** we will have volunteers to pick up the items from those homes who choose to donate! We will have treats and fellowship once we are done!

All Church Clean-Up— On **September 17th** from 8:00 a.m to 10:00 a.m., please join us for a time of work as we will be doing some fall cleaning and minor repairs around the entire church. We will have treats and fellowship following.

Unity For Ukraine

My name is Jennifer Payan and I am part of a community committee who is organizing a benefit concert to help the people of Ukraine. It is called "Unity for Ukraine" and will be held on **Friday, August 5, 2022, at 7pm at Meadowbrook Church in Champaign.** Tim Pico is heading up the committee as he has felt it on his heart that our local community should do something that would help the Ukrainian people who have been affected by this war. You may have already been contacted by someone in the committee, and if this is the case thank you for your assistance!

We have partnered with Mission Eurasia, which is a nonprofit organization, who already have people and contacts in Ukraine. Our goal for the benefit concert is to fund as many ICARE packages as we can. One ICARE package can feed a family of four for one week and costs around \$50. This package also includes Scriptures in Ukrainian and printed resources. There is no set admissions fee for the concert. We are only asking for donations.

Below are the websites for the event itself, information on how to donate online, and Mission Eurasia's website:

<https://organizationweb.wixsite.com/unityforukraine>

www.missioneurasia.org

You can also visit Mission Eurasia's YouTube channel to view videos that can be shown during a service to explain their mission and what impact the ICARE boxes have for families. Just search "Mission Eurasia".

Thank you for your time, your help, and your prayers!

"Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and He will repay him for his deed." Proverbs 19:17

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
MISSION
EURASIA

Unity for Ukraine

Help us encourage and bless the people of Ukraine, fill our auditorium, and fund ICARE Packages for people in Ukraine through our donation to Mission Eurasia.

EVENT INFO

Meadowbrook Community Church, 1902 S. Duncan, Champaign, IL 61822

Friday, August 5, 2022
7-9pm

SUPPORT

One ICARE Package can feed a family of four for one week!

Check out www.missioneurasia.org

CALENDAR FOR AUGUST & SEPTEMBER 2022

AUGUST

Sunday, August 7, Communion Sunday

9:15 am—Church School & Fellowship
10:30 am—Sunday Service (*In-Person & Online*)

Tuesday, August 9

5:00 pm—Community Health Clinic (*Parlor*)

Wednesday, August 10

5:00 PM—Community Health Clinic (*Parlor*)

Thursday, August 11

6:00 pm—Dulcimer Group (*Parlor*)

Sunday, August 14

9:15 am—Church School & Fellowship
10:30 am—Sunday Service (*In-Person & Online*)

Sunday, August 21*

9:15 am—Church School & Fellowship
10:30 am—Sunday Service (*In-Person & Online*)

Tuesday, August 23

5:00 pm—Community Health Clinic (*Parlor*)

Wednesday, August 24

9:00 am—Bike Across America Stay (*Parlor/FH*)
5:00 pm—Community Health Clinic (*Parlor*)

Thursday, August 25

6:00 pm—Dulcimer Group (*Parlor*)

Sunday, August 28

9:15 am—Church School & Fellowship
10:30 am—Sunday Service (*In-Person & Online*)
12:00 pm—All Boards Meeting (*Library*)

Weekly Recurring Events

Wednesdays, 7:30/10:30 am—Bible Studies
(*In September*) 6:30 pm—Church Choir
Thursdays, 10:00 am—Men's Discipleship

11:00 am—Exchange Club (*Parlor*)

6:00 pm—GSA Meeting (*FH*)

Saturdays, 8:30 am—United Men of Faith

SEPTEMBER

Sunday, September 4, Communion Sunday

9:15 am—Church School & Fellowship
10:30 am—Sunday Service (*In-Person & Online*)

Monday, September 5, Labor Day

Office Closed

Thursday, September 8

6:00 pm—Dulcimer Group (*Parlor*)

Sunday, September 11

9:15 am—Church School & Fellowship
10:30 am—Sunday Service (*In-Person & Online*)

Tuesday, September 13

5:00 pm—Community Health Clinic (*Parlor*)

Wednesday, September 14

5:00 pm—Community Health Clinic (*Parlor*)

Sunday, September 18*

9:15 am—Church School & Fellowship
10:30 am—Sunday Service (*In-Person & Online*)

Thursday, September 22

6:00 pm—Dulcimer Group (*Parlor*)

Sunday, September 25

9:15 am—Church School & Fellowship
10:30 am—Sunday Service (*In-Person & Online*)
12:00 pm—All Boards Meeting (*Library*)

Tuesday, September 27

5:00 pm—Community Health Clinic (*Parlor*)

Wednesday, September 28

5:00 pm—Community Health Clinic (*Parlor*)

*Noisy Offering Sundays



First United Methodist Church of Urbana
 304 South Race Street
 Urbana, Illinois 61801

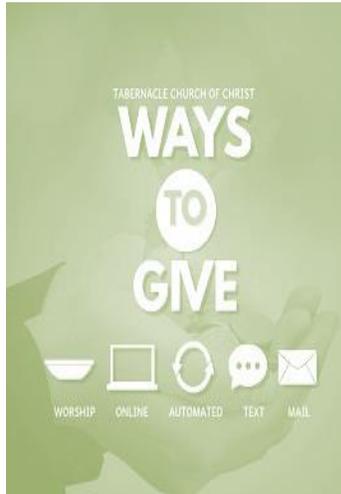
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SUPPORTING & GIVING



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www.urbanafirstmethodist.org
 Click “Online Giving”

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