

The First United Methodist Church of Lowell

Tele-Christian July 2024 Edition

**The mission of the United Methodist Church is to
make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.**

Mark's Remarks...



The following is an essay on the 4th of July. Remember the reason and the cost of this holiday.

Remembering Independence Day

Have you ever wondered what happened to the 56 men who signed the Declaration of Independence? Five signers were captured by the British as traitors, and tortured before they died. Twelve had their homes ransacked and burned. Two lost their sons serving in the Revolutionary Army; another had two sons captured. Nine of the 56 fought and died from wounds or hardships of the Revolutionary War.

These patriots signed, pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor. What kind of men were they? Twenty-four were lawyers and jurists. Eleven were merchants, nine were farmers and large plantation owners; men of means, well educated. But they signed the Declaration of Independence knowing full well that the penalty would be death if they were captured.

Carter Braxton of Virginia, a wealthy planter and trader, saw his ships "blasted" to the bottom of the ocean by the British Navy. He sold his home and properties to pay his debts, and died in rags. Thomas McKeam was so hounded by the British that he was forced to move his family almost constantly. He served in the Congress without pay, and his family was kept in hiding. His possessions were taken from him, and poverty was his reward. Vandals or soldiers looted the properties of Dillery, Hall, Clymer, Walton, Gwinnett, Heyward, Rutledge, and Middleton.

At the battle of Yorktown, Thomas Nelson Jr, noted that the British General Cornwallis, had taken over the Nelson home for his headquarters. He quietly urged General George Washington to open fire. The home was destroyed, and Nelson died bankrupt. Francis Lewis had his home and properties destroyed. The enemy jailed his wife, and she died within a few months.

John Hart was driven from his wife's bedside as she was dying. Their 13 children fled for their lives. His fields and his gristmill were laid to waste. For more than a year he lived in forests and caves, returning home to find his wife dead and his children gone. A few weeks later he died from exhaustion and a broken heart. Norris and Livingston suffered similar fates.

Such were the stories and sacrifices of the American Revolution. These were not wild-eyed, rabble-rousing ruffians. They were soft-spoken men of means and education. They had security, but they valued liberty more. Standing tall, straight, and unwavering, they pledged: "For the support of this declaration, with firm reliance on the protection of the divine providence, we mutually pledge to each other, our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

They gave you and me a free and independent America. The history books never told you a lot about what happened in the Revolutionary War. We didn't fight just the British. We were British subjects at that time and we fought the British imposed government, for the right to govern our own country! Unfortunately, many Americans take these liberties for granted -- but we shouldn't. Please take a few moments (at least) to remember the price paid for your freedom. Publicly and privately remember the patriots who gave so much, for you and me.

Remember: freedom is never free!



Worship News

Trudy Corning and Linda Hayden, Co-Chairs

There are two opportunities to worship on Sunday mornings during the summer!

8:00am Olde Towne Square park located immediately west of our church. You will need to bring a lawn chair. Due to some uneven ground in the grassy areas and unlevelled cement on the sidewalks, we recommend that you wear comfortable sturdy shoes. In the event of adverse weather, the service will be moved inside the church.

9:30am Worship will continue in the sanctuary . There will be supervised activities for children after the Children’s Time. Martha’s Coffee House is not open during the summer months, but coffee is always available at the Keurig café located at the south end of the lower level Fellowship Hall.



Sermons for July

In July we will have a sermon series on giving. It’s not about the church asking for more of your money however. In this series, we’ll examine the spiritual principles of giving to God.



July Sermon Title and Scripture Schedule

July 7 ~ Scripture: Luke 14:28-33	Sermon Title: ‘Giving God’s Way’
July 14 ~ Scripture: Matthew 6:28-34	Sermon Title: ‘Giving God’s Way’
July 21 ~ Scripture: Romans 12:1-2	Sermon Title: ‘Giving God’s Way’
July 28 ~ Scripture: Matthew 6:19-24	Sermon Title: ‘Giving God’s Way’



Live Your Faith
TODAY!

LYFT is our Thursday evening worship service. We start at 5:30 pm with dinner and go right into worship at 6 pm. Worship includes music, a lay speaker or Pastor Mark speaking, prayer and followed by communion. LYFT is a casual worship service where we look forward each week to food, fellowship and fun! Everyone is welcome! Bring a friend!

LYFT gets transformed into Messy Church on the fourth Thursday of each month. Do you know what ‘Messy Church’ is? We really don’t get dirty or messy, it is just another way to say that we are doing church a little differently than normal. We start out as usual with dinner. After dinner, Pastor Mark divides us into 4 groups. The size of the groups depends on how many people are at LYFT that night, but it is usually around 6 per group. There is no communion or speaker on ‘Messy Church’ night. Try it you might like it!

The four stations that we have at ‘Messy Church’ are:

1. Dessert station
2. Craft or Mission station
3. Discussion station (with Pastor Mark)
4. Game station



Woman’s Devotion Group

Our next devotion time will be on Monday, July 8 at 12:00 pm in room 300. Please bring a sack lunch.

All are welcome to come. Call the church office with any questions. 219-696-9219



Kid's Retreat takes place during the 9:30 church service after the Children's Time. It is held in the church library and nursery directly across from the church sanctuary. We read Bible stories, color, play, watch movies, and enjoy snacks while you remain in the sanctuary to share joys and concerns and listen to the sermon. The Kid's Retreat facilitators are Nancy Lain and Kim Westerfield. Any questions, please call the church office.



Kidz Karnival

Our annual Kidz Karnival will be on Friday, July 19 and we need lots of help to make the event a success. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex to volunteer for different jobs. Some of the tasks are primarily sitting jobs. Others are more active. There is something for all to do. Plan on signing up!



Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Thank you all so much for your continual support of Vacation Bible School. We had a great time during SCUBA VBS, and could not have done it without your prayers, time, and donations.

Each day, all groups started at Tidal Treats for yummy sea-themed snacks. The kids prayed before snacks each day. Then the kids went on an undersea adventure where they learned about scripture from the Book of John aboard the 'Sticky Scripture Cyber Submarine.' They attended Deep Bible Adventure for story time. They learned that Jesus is alive. They also helped Lydia dye purple cloth while she told them about her friend Jesus. They took a discovery dive each day at Imagination Station and learned how big the ocean really is. Finally, Reef Rec included water games to help cool off from the 90+ degree heat.

The kids were introduced to mission projects and collected money for clean water. They also collected items to donate to our church's Household Pantry.

It was a week full of excitement, joy, fun, laughter, learning, singing, and fellowship. Thank you again for your support before and during VBS.

Amy Manier, Children's Education Chair





Be a Birthday Blessing!

Several months ago we asked for donations of greeting cards for our Congregational Care card ministries. The response has been great! The blue basket on an end table in the library is always full. Thank you to those who have shared cards you did not need! Your card donations are helping cut the cost of sending sympathy, get well, and thinking of you cards to our church family at times of loss or illness.

We also have received many birthday cards, including a recent generous donation. We want to offer these birthday cards to everyone to use to bless someone's birthday. Those of you who have 'adopted' a shut-in church member can certainly use these cards for your caring contact. For only the cost of postage, anyone can send cards to those listed in the Tele-Christian celebrating birthdays. Card recipients do not have to be church members. Reach out to your friends, neighbors, and especially the elderly or sick and BE a birthday blessing to them!



News From UWF

From Rachelle Ruge-Bernard, President

The United Women in Faith would like to thank all the guests who attended our High Tea on June 1. We really had a nice time. Everyone enjoyed the High Country String Band who played some great music. Good food, fellowship, and entertainment caused at least one guest to say they wanted to stay after the party was over. Thank you! More fellowship events will be upcoming.



In July we will be supporting Tree of Life Ministries in South Dakota. First UMC has a long history with Tree of Life. Ed & Becky Crabb went several times and others went with them on Mission Trips there.

Tree of Life is a relief agency, located in Mission, South Dakota on the Rosebud Reservation, serving several of the poorest counties in the United States. The reservation has an 80% unemployment rate. The ministries of Tree of Life include: The Warm Welcome-feeding program and food pantry, Tree of Life Boutique---thrift store and a construction ministry.

Tree of Life has made great strides in developing respect and understanding between cultures, helping to break down racial prejudice and distrust. This is accomplished by providing cultural presentations to volunteers, working together with tribal agencies, and being involved in meeting daily needs.

Your donations on the second Sunday and throughout July will help the needy on the Rosebud Reservation.



THANK YOU!

Thank you for the items from the Resale Shoppe. The money we received from the sale will be used to continue our work helping veterans.

Lowell VFW Post #6841
Auxiliary Members

Report on the Annual Conference June 6-8, 2024

Submitted by Nancy Lain

Note: I did not attend this year's conference but watched it on Yapp.

Bishop Julius Trimble opened the Annual Conference 2024 at St. Luke's UMC in Indianapolis with these words, "Be encouraged as we work together and give God the glory!" He emphasized God's steadfast love. "God loves you! And that's not up for vote!" He thanked the conference for raising \$379,000 for the Trimble Africa University Scholarship Fund over his 10 year term. Rodney Friedan, chair of Finance and Administration reported that the Conference income in 2023 as \$11,256,643 and expenses were \$10,766,812. The surplus of \$489,831 will be transferred to the Transitional 2024 Income Fund leaving a balance of about \$3 million in reserve. The proposed budget for 2025 is \$7,181,408. Friedan summarized "What I hope you hear is good news. We are positioned and ready to invest in the future of the United Methodist Church."

Shannon Priddy delivered the laity address. She challenged the laity that "If there is something you want to see happen at your church, you are empowered to do it." Then Rev. Russ Abel reported on the Postponed 2020 General Conference. He touched on the revised principles, regionalization, the removal of harmful language, and the General Church budget. "The General Conference has now cleared the way for a Jesus-centered, mission-based, world-transforming force for the Gospel to All people."

Then there was a retirement celebration for Bishop Trimble and the First Lady. Highlights included Rev. Larry Whitehead offering a tribute using the bishop's own words. "This is a unique and unrepeatabe moment," "Just because it's hard, doesn't mean we shouldn't do it" and "Be encouraged!" The Trimble's granddaughter, Corrine, offered an adorable tribute via video. Rev. Marti Lundy presented Bishop Trimble the Sagamore of the Wabash, the highest honor Governor Holcomb can bestow on citizens. In conclusion Bishop Trimble challenged laity to "Love your pastor. It will pay dividends." He concluded the evening with "I love you, and there's nothing you can do about it!"

On Friday Rev. Steven Conger reported that 80% of the retired clergy have a Medicare supplement through Via Benefits. In 2025 monthly church contributions for health coverage will be decreased by 14% to \$1426. Compassion Fund guidelines to include active clergy. A motion passed to reduce 10 districts in the annual conference to 5 effective July 1, 2025. Thirteen churches closed this year. Roselawn UMC was one of these. General Conference did not make any new legislation for disaffiliation but it did encourage annual conference to make a decision on ways to welcome back churches that had disaffiliated.

On Saturday this motion of Rev. Jon Meunier with an addendum by Rev. Duane Carlisle was passed: The Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church declares its intention to live into a new day in which we recognize not just the reality but the value of a diversity of theological views of marriage and human sexuality. Pastors, churches, and laity across the spectrum of theological understandings are valid, valued, and important to our mission in Indiana as we work together in unity to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. ADDENDIUM: Whereas Isaiah 40: 31 says that "those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength," the LGBTQIA+ community has been waiting upon the Lord, and our strength is renewed. Whereas in the 52/years that the United Methodist Church has been in difficult conversations around its relationship with the LGBTQIA+ community, members of that community who committed to staying in conversation have experienced pain, grief, and harm. There has been collateral damage to those relationships that extend from individuals who have taken active roles in this conversation. These include children, family, members, and partners of LGBTQIA+ people. Therefore be it resolved that we in the Indiana Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church commit this 2024-2025 year as a season of contemplation leading us for action on ways we can repair our relationships with the LGBTQIA+ community. We will be in prayer. We will listen for stories. We will adopt a posture of grace, humility, and holy conferencing with every conversation in which we engage around this concern.

A Staff Parish comment- Pastor Mark is reinstated to serve another year at our church!

To learn more about the Conference, go to inumc.org/annual-conference.

Next year's Annual Conference will be held June 5-7, 2025 at St. Luke's UMC in Indianapolis.



We invite all able bodied attenders on Sunday morning to **not** park in the church parking lot. Please save those spots for our elderly, folks with mobility issues, those with young children and visitors. You can park at Sheets Funeral Home, Chase Bank or behind the church. Thank you for your consideration of those who have trouble.



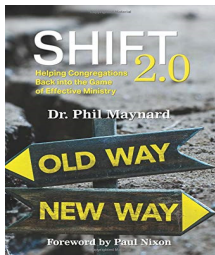
I'm the church mouse. I see all that goes on in the church and I love to gossip about it. Of course being a Christian mouse, I only say positive things.

My goodness, VBS is behind us now. It was a blast. There were about 20 children running around all week. I think there were more volunteers. It's wonderful to watch so many using their gifts to help children grow and to serve God. Special thanks to Kathie Stoner and Amy Manier for taking charge once again and doing such a wonderful job.

Be careful when you do good work for the church. I'm watching and just waiting to share that gossip.



Young at Heart Sr. Bingo will not meet in July. All of our volunteers are on vacation. We'll meet back on August 26 at 1 pm. There will be snacks, prizes for the winners and many games of Bingo all for no charge to you. Invite friends. We don't card folk, so anyone of any age can come. See you in August.



Dearest Bev,

My brain is fried right now. I can't even come up with a sentence on what to say about this....if anything. Please, please, please help me.

Love,
Kim



Mark Your Calendars

August 23 is Music in the Park

September 8 we'll have our annual Homecoming Service at 9:30

September 21 Chuck Wagon Dinner

December 7 we'll take part in Winterfest once again.

Make sure these big events are on your calendar.

All the details are coming closer to the dates.



Upcoming Events:

Pastor's Comic Corner

In case you haven't noticed, I love humor.

Below are comics that I've come across. Enjoy and smile! Pastor Mark

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"If God wants me to be thankful for vegetables, why did He make them taste like vegetables?"



"If I send my prayer as a text message, will I get a faster reply?"

WEEKLY EVENTS

Sunday - Worship ~ 8:00 am ‘Olde Towne Square Park Service 9:30 am (in Sanctuary), **Monday/Tuesday** - A/A 12 p.m. (303)
Wednesday - A/A - 8pm (Fellowship Hall), Al/Anon - 8 p.m. (library) **Thursday** - Dulcimers 10 am (303), *LYFT* Dinner 5:30 pm
 Worship 6:00 pm (Fellowship Hall), **Saturday** - A/A 11 a.m. (303)

July 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 UWF Exec. 5pm (lib.)	4 Independ- ence Day/ Office Closed	5 Office Closed	6
7	8 Women’s Devotion Group 12 noon (300) Outreach Meet- ing 6 pm (FH)	9	10 Worship 6pm	11	12	13
14 Mission Sunday ‘Tree of Life’	15	16 Household Pantry 9-12/5-6 (curbside)	17	18	19 Kidz Karnival 5-7:30 pm	20
21	22	23	24	25 Messy Church	26	27
28	29	30	31			