



THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 OF FRANKLIN PARK
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The First News

March 2011

Building Improvements Planned for March

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Our church building has undergone a number of improvements—and will continue to—as we seek to catch up on deferred maintenance and make this a more adequate facility for us and our space-sharing partners. Since December, we have replaced locks and doors with fire-rated doors in the classroom space and at entrances. We have added a fire safety system and an entrance camera and remote entry system, as well as motion lights at the parking lot door. In March, we hope to replace lights and windows in the Fellowship Hall area, along with the fire exit door in the front of the sanctuary near the piano. New doors will be painted, and we hope to replace heavy banquet tables with lightweight ones, too. Thanks for your patience as our Trustees and Ad Council continue this important work!

Quick Takes:

- Nobius meets March 12 and April 2 at 5:30 p.m. in the sanctuary/parlor
- Leadership Development Committee (nominating) will be working in March—please respond willingly as they call you

World Day of Prayer Worship Service March 4 at 1 p.m. at First UMC of Franklin Park

The United Methodist Women of our church are hosting the annual World Day of Prayer worship service on Friday, March 4 at 1 p.m. This year, our prayer and worship was planned by the women of Chile and focuses on the struggles we share in common with this South American nation. The theme this year is “How many loaves have you?” Readings, hymns and songs will be both familiar and new to us as we are reminded that Christian worship around the world is both like our worship and unique to its context. A special offering will be taken to support the World Day of Prayer committee’s program of grants to women in the focus country of Chile this year. All people, women, men, and children are welcome to this day of prayer followed by action.



Celebrating Birthdays & Anniversaries in March

3/1	Don Clark	3/11	Mary Lou Stefanski
3/1	Tami Ericksen Idelman	3/12	Vi Hermanson
3/2	Delyle Densborn	3/15	Stanley Das
3/3	Michael Hoiney	3/17	James Biggs
3/4	Diane Pritchett	3/18	Alexzandra Kasza
3/5	Pamila Singh	3/20	Barbara Yager Collins
3/6	Cathy Lutzke	3/23	Manisha Singh Elfering
3/6	Dan Pritchett	3/28	Malini Massey
3/7	Katherine Balsis	3/30	Grace Ann Nelson
3/9	Barbara Spain	3/31	Wilma Bookless
3/10	Griffin Ericksen Idelman	3/31	Joan Clark
	♥ 3/6 Mickey & Sam Anthony		



Standing in the Need of Prayer



Those in need of healing prayers:

Manoj Das Carol Michaels Helen Winkel

Those in need of our continuing prayers:

Marilyn Oxyb Signe Howell Arvis Knutson
 Mary Pease Margaret Jackson Virginia Densborn
 Edna Kirchhoff Louise Spain

Many thanks from Carol Michaels for prayers, calls, & notes of encouragement during her recovery and rehab from knee replacement surgery last month.

Please remember in prayer ...

- the teachers, staff, and students of the school that meets in our building as they learn together while working through some difficult life issues.
- our space-sharing congregation, Pure In Heart, its member and Pastor Peter as they seek to be faithful to God's call in their lives.
- our United Methodist connection, our Bishop Hee-Soo Jung, District Superintendent James Preston, and Conference leaders.

Meet Scott Hotaling, Our New Church Administrator

Our new church administrator, Scott Hotaling, is familiar to many of our members, having previously served as our Sunday church musician. SPRC and Ad Council created the half-time church administrator position in December to help facilitate our expanded space sharing partnerships. Scott's work includes working with Pastor Denise to respond to building concerns, welcoming church visitors while school is in session, light bookkeeping to help our treasurer, entering donations to assist our financial secretary, changing light bulbs, spreading ice melt on the sidewalks mid-day, etc. You may hear his voice when you call the church office, and Scott's may be the smiling face that greets you when you come by for a daytime meeting. Scott continues to play with the Nobius band and frequently preaches and provides music when Pastors Denise and Randy are away. Scott will take a few weeks' break in the summer when school is out. Please welcome Scott back to our church family!

From the Pastor's Desk...

Rev. Denise Janssen

"How many loaves have you?"

In March, we gather for a time of informed prayer followed by prayerful action as part of the international World Day of Prayer movement. The service is held annually on the first Friday of March. The point is not that somehow God hears us differently when we concentrate our praying efforts. God is very much aware of the struggles and challenges of the Chilean people—the focus of this year's day of prayer—and is with these beloved children of God always. The point of a service like the World Day of Prayer is when something in us changes. We become aware of the needs of these people who live so far away and seem so removed from our situation. And we begin to consider what we can do to help. That's why this day was envisioned to be a day of informed prayer followed by prayerful action.

One of the ways I can already feel this service changing me is through the question that forms the theme for this year's service: "how many loaves have you?" This is the question Jesus asked the disciples when they came to him with the problem of feeding the multitude of people who had gathered to hear him teach. When he asked, "how many loaves have you?", it was as if he was asking the disciples to go beyond calling out to him for help. Indeed Jesus was asking the disciples to participate in the help they were praying for! If you recall, the disciples answered that they had five loaves and two fish—what seemed to them like a pittance in light of the multitude's great need. Yet, in God's hands, even what seems like an insignificant gift becomes enough! The question comes to us, too: "how many loaves have you?" Can we trust and answer, "in God's hands, our loaves will be enough!"?

Worship, Music, Study, Devotional Materials for Lent

As we seek to pay special attention to our spiritual growth in the season of Lent, there will be a variety of different offerings to aid in your participation in the Lenten journey. First, please see the table in back of the sanctuary for Lenten devotional books and other materials for your personal study. A Lenten study based on some of those materials is planned—more information about day/time will be provided in the Sunday bulletin in the coming weeks.

We will also enjoy a slightly modified order of worship through the season of Lent to accommodate our sharing in Holy Communion in a variety of forms each week. An ensemble will provide special musical offerings in worship during Lent, as well. This group is rehearsing to share a few old favorite hymns and choral pieces that fit the theme of worship each week.

Beginning with Ash Wednesday on March 9, and continuing through Easter Sunday on April 24, we will share together in this season of self-reflection and corporate repentance. Lent is an excellent opportunity to make a mid-course correction, to “turn around” and follow God’s path with greater intentionality. Come, all who seek to follow God, and join the journey!

United Methodist Women News

World Day of Prayer will be celebrated on Friday, March 4 at 1 p.m. in our sanctuary, hosted by UMW. We have invited UMC cluster congregation and Franklin Park area churches to join as we pray with others around the world on this day. A fellowship time with coffee and cookies will follow the service. There will be no general meeting of UMW in March so we can focus on this event.

United Methodist Women are collecting vegetable and flower seeds for Red Bird Mission in Appalachia. Watch for sales on vegetable seeds and buy early. As a guide, if you can supply ten seed packets, please buy nine of vegetable seeds and one of flower seeds. Families use these donations primarily for food. Please place your donations in the boxes provided in the lobby. The goal for shipping seed packets is April 1.

Aunt Libby Circle has its next meeting on Thursday, March 10 at 1 p.m. at Doris’s place.

Wesleyan Circle meets Thursday, March 11 at 7:30 p.m. at Charline’s house.

Susannah Circle meets on Tuesday, March 15 at 1 p.m. at a location to be determined.

UMW Mission Team meets on March 31 at 9:30 a.m. to plan for the general meeting on April 5.

Due to the elections held in the Parlor, the **April 5 General Meeting** will be hosted by Pastor Denise at the parsonage.

Tuesday Cluster Soup Suppers Highlight Lent

We will be sharing in **Ash Wednesday Services** as a Cluster to offer a greater variety of times for worship.

March 9 at **noon** River Forest UMC, 7970 Lake St, River Forest

7 pm First UMC, 9857 Schiller Blvd, Franklin Park **AND** 7 pm First UMC, 324 Oak Park Ave, Oak Park

Cluster Soup Suppers take place again this year on Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. through Lent. Each Tuesday, we gather at a different Cluster congregation to enjoy fellowship over a simple supper of delicious soup, bread, and dessert. After supper, about 7 p.m., our focus turns to study using the book *A New Way of Seeing*. Join us at:

Tuesday, March 15 – Cornerstone UMC, 171 N. Cuyler, Oak Park

Tuesday, March 22 – Neighborhood UMC, 1817-19 W. Washington, Maywood

Tuesday, March 29 – River Forest UMC, 7970 Lake Street, River Forest

Tuesday, April 5 – Elmwood Park UMC, 3000 N 77th Ct., Elmwood Park

Tuesday, April 12 – First UMC, 324 N. Oak Park Ave., Oak Park

Tuesday, April 19 – Cosmopolitan UMC, 1112 N. 9th St., Melrose Park

On **Palm Sunday**, April 17, we will gather for worship with a brunch following in Susannah.

Holy Week Worship Services offer a times of worship and reflection.

April 21 – Holy Thursday Worship Services 7 pm River Forest UMC, 7970 Lake Street, River Forest
AND First UMC, 9857 Schiller Blvd, Franklin Park

April 22 – Good Friday Worship Service (cantata), 7 pm First UMC, 324 N. Oak Park Ave, Oak Park

And don't miss **Easter Sunday worship** in our sanctuary with special music at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday, April 24!

Stewardship Update



Our Stewardship Campaign is coming in March! You will receive information in a separate mailing regarding 2011 pledges and our Walk of Faith. Please see the Pastor if you need additional offering envelopes—you may continue to use any that you have. Watch the weekly bulletin for more current reports of our financial stewardship as a congregation. Your faithfulness in giving is deeply appreciated!

Our Giving by the Numbers...

Monthly Giving for February 2011	\$ 3,078.00
Total Giving in 2011	\$ 6,715.00

March 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6 9:30 am Worship with Communion 10:30 Coffee Hour 10:45 Confirmation Class	7	8	9 7 pm Ash Wednesday worship	10 1 pm Aunt Libby @ Doris's 7:30 pm Wesleyan @ Charlines's	11 7 pm Cub Scouts Pack Night in Fellowship Hall	12 5:30 pm Nobius
13 9:30 am Worship with Communion 10:45 am Sunday School	14 6:30 Girl Scouts	15 noon Susannah @ TBA 6:30 pm Soup Supper @ Cornerstone - Oak Park	16	17	18	19
20 9:30 am Worship with Communion 10:30 Coffee Hour	21 6:30 Girl Scouts	22 6:30 pm Soup Supper @ Neighborhood - Maywood	23	24	25	26
27 9:30 am Worship with Communion 10:45 Sunday School	28	29 6:30 pm Soup Supper @ River Forest UMC	30	31		

Ad Council Update from the February 20, 2011 Meeting

This update is provided in lieu of minutes to keep members aware of Ad Council's work on their behalf. Please thank them for their work, and encourage and support your Ad Council members.

Finance

- reviewed income and expenses, expected vs. actual through the end of 2010 from treasurer
- stewardship report (see article elsewhere in this newsletter)
- reviewed proposed 2011 budget; motion to approve passed (Jeri Lynn/Andrea)
- audit of the books following GCFA guidelines is scheduled for February, per the *Discipline*; Mary Lou, Irene, Bill, and Mohini are meeting to conduct the audit

Trustees

- Jeri Lynn noted the updated Pure In Heart space sharing covenant, and it was approved (Bill/Lisa)
- moved to extend contract for sidewalk snow removal for an additional month (Andrea/Jeri Lynn)
- Jeri Lynn noted improvements and upgrades to the building to be undertaken coming weeks/months; approved up to \$20,000 for window replacement in Fellowship Hall (Lisa/Bill)
- Jeri Lynn noted that estimates are being sought for replacement of light in Fellowship Hall; painting in the Emerson Street entrance has been deferred due to water leaking from an ice jam; Tom Riordan was thanked for his work in the building, esp. installing parking lot entrance motion lights; the report from the Conference architect is still in process
- building use requests for a baby shower on 2/26 in Susannah, a bridal shower on 4/9 in Susannah, and a wedding on 5/14 were approved by consensus
- as a result of the parsonage walk-through, Tom Riordan brought a list of work to be done with likely cost estimates totaling \$12,000; Jeri Lynn moved that up to \$1,550 be approved to replace necessary doors at the parsonage with Tom authorized to do the work; motion passed

Nurture see attached Nurture calendar

SPRC no report at this time

Pastor's Report provided report in writing (filed and posted with minutes)

New Business motion to elect Tom and Irene Riordan as at-large members of Ad Council to fill vacancies until Special Church Conference election of leadership for 2011 (Andrea/Lisa)

The next meeting of Ad Council is Sunday, April 10 at 10:45 a.m.

Newsletter Order Form

As good stewards of church resources, every effort is made to limit mailing costs by having the newsletter available for pick-up at worship no later than the first Sunday of the month. We mail newsletters not picked up after the first Sunday to members/friends living within reasonable driving distance of the church. If you'd like to have your newsletter mailed automatically, please indicate that preference below. A \$10 donation will help defray mailing costs for newsletters. Or help save even more and receive the newsletter by email - FREE!

Yes, please mail the newsletter to me each month (donation enclosed)!

Please email me the newsletter for FREE (indicate email below)!

Name _____ Email Address _____

Address _____ City/State/ZIP _____

Phone _____ (in case we have questions or need clarification)

MARCH 2011

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REV. DENISE JANSSEN, PASTOR

FREE - Wood Banquet Tables

We're giving away about a dozen sturdy wooden banquet tables, making them available first to church members now through March 13. Contact Pastor Denise to reserve your table and make arrangements to pick it up. Donations welcome but not expected!