

ROBINSON FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH • OCTOBER 2020

# *The Herald*

Listening to God's Heart from the heart of the city.

## UNFETTERED HOPE

As the seasons change,  
we realize God has a bigger plan.



# From the Pastor's Desk

As you know, we've been holding worship outdoors for the past three months. Many of you have not taken advantage of the opportunity to join us, even as we've sung hymns, prayed, and worshiped together. On September 20, I preached a sermon based on Exodus 16:2-15, and several in attendance wished that I would share that with the whole congregation. Therefore, I am sharing it in this month's *Herald* as a means for us to find hope as the seasons change, and as we continue to adapt during this time.

If you've not seen "Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs," it's a really cute movie with a deeper underlying message. Flint Lockwood is an inventor, but conducts a science experiment that goes bad. His invention explodes, causing cheeseburgers to rain down on the city. Well, it's not bad, because people like the food. Eventually he tweaks the invention so that people can order what they want, but their orders and sizes get bigger and bigger. Eventually, their greed swells to the point that someone orders a smorgasbord. Because of it, food rains down over all of the cities, creating a pandemic. They have to fight food, the machine is eventually destroyed, and the storm finally ends. The movie ends with the mayor saying "this was not well thought out."

We might wonder if that was the question on the mind of the Israelites. "This was not well thought out." After all, their complaint to Moses was this: "we had fleshpots; we had bread in Egypt. But here we are in the wilderness, and even though Pharaoh and the people drowned in the Red Sea, we are dying of starvation." They would have rather died in Egypt, enslaved, with the food that they had, than be free people and learn to live off of the wilderness.

God tells Moses that he has heard the people's complaint. Bread will rain down from heaven six days a week, but with restrictions. They should gather enough for that day, but on the 6th day, they should gather twice as much. Moses and Aaron relay the message to the people, but they want out of the way - Israel's complaint is against God, not them.

After Moses and Aaron share this news with Israel, they turn to the cloud and see God. God spoke to Moses and said that Israel will have meat in the evening and bread in the morning. When it happens, Israel will know that he is the Lord their God. And it happened, just as God said! In the evening, quail covered the camp. In the morning, dew covered the ground around the camp, and when the dew went away, a flaky substance was left. No one in Israel knew what it was - manna from heaven; it was their bread, supplied by God.

God heard Israel's complaint, and met it. That should be the end of the story. But, like the town in the movie, people began to be greedy. They wanted variety in their food, and they began to hoard it. However, anything more than what was their share spoiled. God kept these restrictions in place on purpose, so that Israel would learn to rely on God.

We are just like Israel! We are a stiff-necked people. Society today has taught us to want what we want, when we want it, and how we want it. Fast food slogans, for decades, have reminded us to “have it your way.” And we adults want it this way too; it is not just the cry of spoiled children. We have become a backward-looking people. Where we’ve been is always better, most likely because we know where we’ve been, but not where we’re going

Here’s the deal: God didn’t lead the Israelites to the wilderness to abandon them there. God led them there to something better, and even though it was difficult, God saw them through it to the Promised Land. What was better couldn’t be seen, but Israel had to learn, time and time again, to trust in God’s promises. When we’re in a tough place, we have a choice - we can look back, long for what was (even if it was terrible) and complain about our present circumstances - or we can eagerly expect that God has something greater in store for us. How often I have wanted to say that during this pandemic! We long for what was - overcrowded schedules, our children shipped off to schools without masks, overinvolved in every activity available to them; we don’t know what will come, but we do know how it used to be. And unfortunately, even if we long for what was, we don’t actually **know** that it was better.

What we do know is this; if God has seen us through a challenge before, God will do it again. And God is leading us someplace better, even if it’s different, than where we have been.

We don’t know what the future holds - the next month, or six, or years. We can long for what has been, and be a people of complaint. Or, we can look to the future with hope. After all, the forecast looks to be a little cloudy...with a chance of quail and manna. Who knows what God has in store, but don’t you want to find out?

Grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jay Regan", enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Pastor Jay



## **NOW**

NOW volunteers are bagging every Thursday in September at 4:00 pm. If you would like to sign up to bag meals please use the link, <https://signup.com/go/QFTppWB>. When you volunteer, you bring hope to children in our community.

The Just - One Item for October will be a toothbrush, for adults and/or children! If you would like to make a donation please drop it off in the box in front of the church office!

## **Trunk or Treat**

With the rising cases in Crawford County and our concern for the health and safety of the kiddos, we have decided to cancel Trunk or Treat this year. We did not make this decision easily and we are very sad, but we will be back bigger and better than ever in 2021! We want to thank everyone that has donated candy to us, because we have a big Halloween surprise for all the kids in our congregation! Thank you for your understanding! Stay healthy and spooky!

Happy Halloween,  
Jennifer & Kirbie

## **Trustee Update**

We know that our church has not had much activity these past six months, but the trustees have been very active! Currently, we have secured and accepted bids for new flooring in the parsonage basement due to August flooding, as well as some carpentry work for the basement kitchenette. At the church, you'll soon be seeing the garage moved back onto its new foundation, and the additional parking going into place on the south side of the building. Soon, we'll also begin work on the parking lots on the north side of the church. God's at work, and we're excited about these new changes and updates that will welcome us when we return face-to-face at First UMC.

## **Worship Update**

As the weather changes to cooler temperatures, and the sun begins setting sooner, the 6:00 pm service will be moving inside. At 5:50 pm, we'll open the north and south doors of the narthex for people to enter the sanctuary. If you need to visit with people, we ask that you do so outside the building. The 6:00 pm service will be a spoken-word service only (no singing or responsive readings). Because we still have to operate under 25% capacity (69 persons, including worship leaders and tech staff), we will be having an online sign-up, using this link: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfXmn2Gc6Oj0\\_0AshMPGkCg9v72n12zLA-J5FX6b2-J\\_zFzLQ/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&flr=0&gxids=7628](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfXmn2Gc6Oj0_0AshMPGkCg9v72n12zLA-J5FX6b2-J_zFzLQ/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&flr=0&gxids=7628) Please plan to wear a mask when you are on church property.

Sunday, November 1 is All Saints' Sunday. To help us plan for worship, we would like for you to share with us the names of family members or friends that have died in the last year. Please e-mail those names to [robinsonfumcpastor@gmail.com](mailto:robinsonfumcpastor@gmail.com) by Monday, October 26.

## **Stewardship Update**

Thank you to all who have made financial commitments to First UMC for 2021! As of this writing, we have received the largest amount of pledges in FUMC history. We're so grateful to all those who wish to financially support this church and its ministries. If you have not yet had a chance to fill out an estimate of giving card, please feel free to send it back to the church, or call the church office to request another one! We look forward to 2021 with great hope and anticipation for what God will do through this church!



## Care News from Stephen Ministry

Marcia Schmidlin

*“Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”*

- Lamentations 3:22-24

As the season changes from summer to fall, we recall the many seasons of our lives and our years as: children, young adults, parents, and grandparents. We reflect on our years in school and working in our careers. We treasure the memories of weddings, births, celebrations, vacations, and time spent with family and friends. We hold dear the many opportunities we have had to gather and worship together.

And this year? We have encountered change. We have had to be resilient and adapt to the many adjustments necessary to carry on during a pandemic. One way we have adapted is the implementation of creative technology so our many programs may continue. Through it all we hold onto hope.

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

- Romans 15:13

The Stephen Leaders and Ministers met in September for supervision and continuing education. Stephen Ministers with Care Receivers met regularly to provide Christian care. Stephen Leaders and Ministers continue to reach out to the members of our church to provide compassion and encouragement during this most unusual time in our lives. During the month of October, you will learn more about FUMC Stephen Ministry by watching the testimonial videos on the church’s YouTube Channel. We have Stephen Ministers available and welcome the opportunity to offer one to anyone who is walking through one of life’s challenges. Please refer anyone you think would benefit from a Stephen Minister to Pastor Jay, our Referrals Coordinator.

*Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand.*

-Psalm 73:23



**Stephen Ministry**

***“Christ Caring for People through People”***

## 2020 IGRC Annual Conference Report

by Susan Inboden

The 2020 Illinois Great Rivers Annual Conference was held via Zoom on Saturday, August 15th. The theme for this year's annual conference was "Let's Get Fired Up On Holy Ground." Bishop Beard shared these thoughts with us:

"Traditional holy sites have been shut down, or access to them limited, due to the COVID-19 outbreak. In the Bible, Exodus 3 records the story of Moses' experience when he saw a bush on the side of Mt. Sinai that appeared to be on fire but it didn't burn up. Moses turned aside to see this unusual site & had a divine encounter with God. During this encounter, Moses was told that he was standing on 'holy ground.'"

In an ancient symbol that reflected respect and reverence, Moses was instructed to take off his shoes. The ground was not holy because he took off his shoes, the ground was holy because of the presence of God.

Holy ground and holy moments are joined together for our edification and education, as God equips us to assist in the work of the emancipation of those trapped in spiritual darkness. This season of the COVID-19 virus has forced us to look for God in new and unfamiliar places. We have discovered that Holy Ground is not limited to previously known holy sites. God is calling us into new territories with new opportunities to discover new ways of encountering Him. He wants us to remember that we are standing on holy ground and that there are angels all around. "Let us praise Jesus now because we are standing in God's presence on holy ground."

Even though we were not able to gather together physically for this year's annual conference, we were standing on "holy ground" as we met online. We were able to worship, pray, receive conference agency updates, and vote on legislative items. When the virtual meeting of the IGRC ended, I sat in amazement as I thought about what we were able to accomplish---even though we'd never done it this way before!

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your lay delegate to the 2020 IGRC Annual Conference. I assure you that our conference is alive & doing well & is committed to sharing the love of Jesus Christ while we stand strong on "holy ground". I encourage you to visit the IGRC website, [www.igrc.org](http://www.igrc.org), so that you can learn more about how God is working in our conference. In closing, I ask you to please claim the words of Ephesians 6:13, "Put on all of God's armor. Evil days will come. But you will be able to STAND up to anything. And after you have done everything you can, you will still be STANDING."



## October Birthdays

10/1 Ka Su Kelly, Julia Roberson  
10/2 Harper Weck  
10/4 Sabra Adams, Maezie Fearday  
10/6 Robert Quick  
10/7 Rich Johnson  
10/10 Evelyn Blanchard  
10/12 Greg Markello  
10/13 Leavone Johnson,  
Victoria McMillan  
10/16 Jason Hartke  
10/18 Gianna Ippolito  
10/19 Colby McGahey, Calvin Turner  
10/21 Allen Lowry  
10/23 Ethan Dhom  
10/25 Shirley Wakefield, Kevin Ippolito,  
Mason Weck  
10/27 Sydney Harmon  
10/30 Julie Wilson

## October Anniversaries

10/2 Gary & Susan Rodgers  
10/7 Bill & Kaye Damron,  
10/10 Ryan & Kaitlyn Kubiak  
10/16 Janet & Charley Clark,  
Billy & Connie Calvert  
10/21 Jack & Edna Frakes  
10/27 John & Marcia Schmidlin

## Prayer Requests

Jeremy and Greg Markello; Carol Wolf; Carl and Helen Blanton; Michael Brady; Patty Steele; Cathy Thomas; Judson Richardson; Julie Zhang; Bill Thompson; Michael Keene; John Larrabee; Nicole Young; Evan Prah; Margie Moore McNamara; Richard Youngs; Kay Young; Nancy & Charlie Young; Fred White; Vonnetta Shipman; Becky Goodwin; Caius Bell; Ray & Nelda Dotson; Kim Collins; Claudette Mejean; Ava Seaney; Demmie Long; Emma Bodine; Charles Hough; Sheltyn James Henry; Norris Adams; Rick Pritchard; Laurie Vaughn; Bill Jones; Kay Bonnell; Wally Leggit; Joe Schmidlin; Cathy Frakes, Judy Eckert; Bernice Kibler; Lisa Schaefer; Shirley Wakefield; Matthew Williams; Debbie Houser; Bob Callier; Larry Potts; Patricia Hodgson; Pamela Hart; June Watson; Maria Reis; Paul Davis; Kathy Kennedy; Roger Pethel; Tina Klender; Paul Clinton; Duane Parker; Ruth Fiscus; Max & Debbie Tedford; Charlie & Janet Clark; Jan Riker; Alan & Joan Summers; Kathy & Estell Keys; Carolyn Leggett; Dustin Ikemire; Sherill Oxford; Jim Krouse; Robin Bray; Jay Holtzhouser; Greg Faylor; Susan Rodgers; Doug & Monica Moeckel; Mary Etta Whitmer; Melinda Ashby; Elwin Falor



Since October is Pastor Appreciation Month, Staff Parish would like to recognize Pastor Jay as Employee of the Month!

# October 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 <b>8:30 am</b> - Invitations to Psalms (Zoom) <b>4:00 pm</b> - NOW Weekend Meal Bagging	2	3
4 <b>World Communion Day</b> <b>9:00 am</b> - Worship (Live Stream, YouTube and Radio) <b>10:30 am</b> - Adult Sunday School (Zoom) <b>11:00 am</b> - Stephen Leaders (Zoom) <b>6:00 pm</b> - Evening Service	5	6 <b>6:30 am</b> - High School Refresh Breakfast & Bible Study <b>6:30 pm</b> - Invitations to Psalms (Zoom)	7	8 <b>6:30 am</b> - Middle School Refresh Breakfast & Bible Study <b>8:30 am</b> - Invitations to Psalms (Zoom) <b>4:00 pm</b> - NOW Weekend Meal Bagging	9	10
11 <b>9:00 am</b> - Worship (Live Stream, YouTube and Radio) <b>10:30 am</b> - Adult Sunday School (Zoom) <b>6:00 pm</b> - Evening Service	12	13 <b>6:30 am</b> - High School Refresh Breakfast & Bible Study <b>6:30 pm</b> - Invitations to Psalms (Zoom)	14 <b>6:30 pm</b> - Stephen Ministry Supervision (Zoom)	15 <b>6:30 am</b> - Middle School Refresh Breakfast & Bible Study <b>8:30 am</b> - Invitations to Psalms (Zoom) <b>4:00 pm</b> - NOW Weekend Meal Bagging	16	17
18 <b>9:00 am</b> - Worship (Live Stream, YouTube and Radio) <b>10:30 am</b> - Adult Sunday School (Zoom) <b>6:00 pm</b> - Outdoor Worship	19 <b>4:00 pm</b> - NOW Weekend Meal Bagging	20 <b>6:30 am</b> - High School Refresh Breakfast & Bible Study <b>6:30 pm</b> - Invitations to Psalms (Zoom)	21 <b>6:00 pm</b> - Committee Meetings (Zoom) <b>7:00 pm</b> - Church Council Meeting (Zoom)	22 <b>6:30 am</b> - Middle School Refresh Breakfast & Bible Study <b>8:30 am</b> - Invitations to Psalms (Zoom)	23	24
25 <b>9:00 am</b> - Worship (Live Stream, YouTube and Radio) <b>10:30 am</b> - Adult Sunday School (Zoom) <b>6:00 pm</b> - Outdoor Worship	26 <b>6:30 pm</b> Virtual Charge Conference	27 <b>6:30 am</b> - High School Refresh Breakfast & Bible Study <b>6:30 pm</b> - Invitations to Psalms (Zoom)	28 <b>6:30 pm</b> - Stephen Ministry Supervision (Zoom)	29 <b>6:30 am</b> - Middle School Refresh Breakfast & Bible Study <b>8:30 am</b> - Invitations to Psalms (Zoom) <b>4:00 pm</b> - NOW Weekend Meal Bagging	30	31



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