



**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”*

# Backpack 2 School

On Wednesday, August 11<sup>th</sup>, we will be host our 7<sup>th</sup> annual Backpack 2 School event. This is one of the biggest missions of this committee and we **need** your help that night! In the past, we have had over 400 children receive a new backpack, free hair cuts and a night of fun before returning to another school year. If you are able to help please contact Kim at 618-292-0901 or email mail at nanfor4@yahoo.com. Thank You for your generous donation of Undees, Socks, Anti-bacterial wipes and tissues!

## Pastor’s Bible Study—The Book of Revelation

Join me on Tuesdays at 6:30pm or Wednesdays at 2:00pm for a study of Revelation. Bring your own Bible. A helpful background book is Dr. James Efirid’s “Revelation for Today”, available at many booksellers. The study starts August 10/11. Absolutely appropriate for “Bible Beginners”!



## Church Staff

Pastor: Tom Goodell: vandaliaumcpastor@gmail.com  
 Administrative Assistant: Casey Kistler: vandaliafumc@outlook.com  
 Secretary: Sue Miller (Tues. & Fri.)  
 Director of Music: Louise Weiss: gctheorygal@hotmail.com  
 Director of Young Children’s Ministries: Amanda Milam  
 Preschool Director: Cindy Laramee  
 Custodians: Mike & Sharon Hagy  
 Assistant Custodian: Andy Sidwell



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### Contact us

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BE ALERT  
 AND ALWAYS  
 KEEP ON PRAYING  
 FOR ALL THE  
 LORD’S PEOPLE.

EPHESIANS 6:18, NIV

**Nursing Home Residents & Shut-ins:**

Brookstone (1607 W. Fillmore)  
Diane Adams (Apt.15); Carlos Biellier (Apt. 2);  
Margaret Carroll (Apt. 10);  
Arlene Hoffman (Apt.4); Iris Rademacher  
(Apt. 36), Mary Ann Rhoades (Apt. 41),  
Frank Roeder (Apt. 25)

FCH/Long Term Care (650 West Taylor)  
Audrey Fink (Rm. 408)  
Marian Miller (Rm. 507)

Dolan Memory Care Homes

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

Willowbrook

(1124 Sunset Dr., Vandalia)  
Deb Endres  
Larry & Sandy Peyton  
Norman Rhoades

Shut-Ins:

Mike Beckett, 2625 W. Jefferson St., Vandalia



**Patti Bohner** (Diane Adams' daughter,  
mobility issues)

**Roger Clark** (surgery)

**Gary Doolen** (cancer)

**Margie Dowell** (Amanda Milam's  
grandmother; health concerns)

**Mona Durbin** (friend of Sue Miller and Jaime  
Warren; breast cancer; chemotherapy)

**Shona Edwards** (Bill Warner's niece; cancer)

**Mason Feltner** (Kelly Clark's nephew;  
chemotherapy for A.L.L. leukemia)

**Mike Fulton** (recuperating from surgery; home)

**Richard Kruenegel** (Recovering from a stroke;  
FCH)

**Carson LaDage** (Sharon and Bill's grandson;  
brain stem tumor remains stable, as he  
remains in a clinical trial at St. Jude)

**Mary Miller** (treatment for lung cancer)

**Heather Overlin** (Larry Osborne's daughter;  
health concerns)

**Norman Rhoades** (Parkinson's Disease)

**Susann Schumacher** (pulmonary fibrosis)

**Udo Sines** (issues with transplant rejection)

**Devotion submitted by Andy Sidwell:**

The Greatest of These

*But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. (1 Corinthians 13:13)*

*Love, like young seedlings in a garden, must be cultivated with care. And love, like every other thing in our universe, begins with God. God's love for you is deeper and more profound than you can fathom. And now, precisely because you are a wondrous creation treasured by God, a question presents itself: What will you do in response to God's love? Will you ignore it or embrace it? Will you return it or neglect it? The decision, of course, is yours and yours alone. When you embrace God's love, you are forever changed. When you embrace God's love, you feel differently about yourself, your family, your friends, and your world. When you embrace God's love, you share His message and you obey His commandments. When you accept the Father's grace and share His love, you are blessed here on earth and throughout all eternity. Accept His love today...and share it always. The cross symbolizes a cosmic as well as a historic truth. Love conquers the world, but its victory is not an easy one. —Reinhold Neibuhr*

## Our Caring Continues and **BLESSINGS ABOUND**

Each month, I am amazed at the amount of work people are putting forth to make this ministry successful! It takes all of us to reach the children around the world.

**Deb Durbin** continues to make doll blankets to go in the sponsored doll boxes even though she is very busy with community volunteering and other church activities. Deb, your work does not go unnoticed and you are appreciated! Thank you for all you do!

**Dennette Guyer** continues to make purses, hair accessories, and pencil pouches. She donated 2 boxes of items this month and her items are bright and colorful! Thanks Dennette for your dedication to this ministry and for making the girls feel special!

**Mike and Sharon Hagy** go above and beyond their normal job description. It's not uncommon for Mike to offer to help unload OCC items and take them upstairs. Both Sharon and Mike clean the OCC room when needed. If they see that someone has left items for OCC across from the office, they will take them upstairs. Sharon moved the OCC sponsored boxes back into the narthex when the table was free. Their willingness to help is touching! Our church is truly blessed to have them!

**Melody Staff** - Melody crocheted 11 beautiful doll blankets for our "extra boxes." Thank you Melody for joining with others to bless the children. Not only will they make perfect doll blankets but they may also serve as a "snuggly" for a little girl. I'm sure the little girls will love the vibrant colors!

**Kim Warner** continues to make many items for OCC - slippers, purses, hair accessories, prayer squares, etc. She dropped off 2 full bags of items. Kim is one of those people who is very involved in many things, yet she continues to make things for OCC. Thanks Kim for your dedication!

**Pam Yates (friend of Deb Durbin)** made dishcloths for the older girls. Pam, like Deb and Kim, is involved with community things yet makes things for OCC. If you see Pam out in the community, let her know that we appreciate all that she is doing.



## Youth Group News

What did you do this summer? Many kids are asked that at the start of a new school year and for fourteen senior highs and thirteen junior highs the answer will be "I served others by..." Our senior high youth worked at Love Packages in Butler, Illinois. They sorted Christian literature, packaged materials for Ghana, and bundled Sunday School material that was on its way to Thailand. It was a great trip capped off by a day at Knight's Action Park. Special thanks to our chaperones John and Tina Kaiser, Eric and Sue Miller, and Pastor Tom.



Our Junior Highs served five, volunteer hours in the community (many at the animal shelter) in order to qualify for their day trip also to Knight's Action Park. Thanks to Pat and Katie Myers and Pastor Tom for chaperoning this trip.

"Go and make disciples of all nations." Matthew 28

I recently had the privilege of traveling to Kansas to officiate at my aunt's memorial service. Most of my family are native Kansans (father's side Topeka, mother's side Winfield). I spent many glorious summers in Winfield with my grandparents. My grandpa taught me to fish, throw a curveball and how to be a gentleman. I still get the shivers when I see the sign "Welcome to Kansas"; though when I have brought Sherry and our sons to the state, they do not experience the same euphoria; I get it!

How do I describe memories associated with a place to someone who only sees the place? I can tell my family how cool it is to pass by the Bender ranch and know that the spring was cool on a hot summer's afternoon and if you knew where the moccasin's nested and stayed clear it was safe? Why would anyone want to go swimming in a Kansas creek? How can I describe to my family how amazing it was to climb the fort at Cherry Park? Lots of parks and playgrounds have forts. How can I relate the thrill of getting ice cream at Braum's Dairy when it is just an ice cream cone to them?

My understanding of the magic of a place is wrapped up in my memories, my experiences, my vantage as a child growing up in that place. My family has none of this. They can only, vicariously, live through my experience. It cannot be theirs. I think this is some of the trouble we face when speaking about our church to others. We experience church through our lens, our friendships, our experiences, and that can be difficult to relate to others. I get that. Perhaps our connecting point has to be in relating our experience to something they have experienced as well.

After all, we live in a culture that is no longer steeped in church and church language. People outside the church are mystified by some of our practices (communion, confession, singing hymns). They may be intimidated by our reputation ("do I have to wear a suit/dress to your church?"). They may be anxious about being judged. They may not know what to expect. These things are "old hat" to us and so we do not think much about them when we share about our church and invite others. We have a peculiar (and wonderful) experience of church.

For example, when I ask my wife where she got ice cream as a little girl (Carlinville Dairy Queen) she can relate the emotions, the sensation of something cold on a hot day, the security of coins in her pocket as she walked to the DQ. We can share this experience even if it was not experienced together. The same with the playgrounds she grew up on, the creeks ("cricks" we say) she waded into.

As we speak of our church and invite others, let us seek to relate the feelings, the blessings, the security in a language others can understand. I see this approach in the mission of Paul who went where the people were and engaged in their language and culture. He did not tell Greek speaking Ephesians about the Jewish Scriptures, they would never have understood. He related what it meant to have a relationship with God in a language and culture they understood. Of course, he did not "sacrifice" the essentials in doing this.

So how might you, inviting others to experience the blessings of our church, relate? We have a great church centered on Jesus Christ and our faith His message for our lives. How can we speak of this in a way the world understands?

My wife will tell you she will never get the same thrill I do when I see that sign "You are now in Kansas". But she appreciates my passion. Let our passion for the sign "Welcome to First United Methodist Church" be contagious to those we meet.

Grace and Peace,  
Pastor Tom

## Prison Ministry Mission Project

Joseph Wilson was one of the faithful members of the Tuesday afternoon Bible study at Vandalia Correctional Center, which is sponsored by our church.

Joseph was also a part of the "Reach for Recovery" Program sponsored by the Christ Tabernacle Church of Herrick. After Joseph left VCC he continued to stay in touch with the "Reach for Recovery" leaders, attending retreats held by the Herrick church. As a result, Joseph embraced these people and they embraced him and he has chosen to make a home for his family in Herrick and has a full time job in Effingham.

Joseph and other volunteers are in the process of renovating a house he is buying. Our church members have become a part of this "project" by buying and donating furniture, appliances, household items and money in order for Joseph and his family to set up housekeeping.

A big thank you to all of you, who have been a part of this mission, which has allowed us to come up with just about all the needs with money left over for a gift card—to be used by the family to purchase other needed items. Thanks to Steve & Sandy Stombaugh and Bill Warner, who moved the first "load" to Herrick. Also, a **BIG** thank you to Bill & Annette Martin of Herrick, who have allowed Joseph, his wife Shena, and four children to live with them while the house is being readied for occupancy—such giving and love on their part.

Joseph and Shena grew up in Chicago. When asked if they were adjusting to rural living compared to city living, their answer was, "We are loving it and adjusting very well."

**Norman and Mary Ann Rhoades will celebrate their 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on Sunday, August 1<sup>st</sup>. There will be a reception in Wesley Hall following morning worship. The couple requests no gifts, but cards are most welcome. Be sure to stop by for some cake and punch and celebrate their anniversary!**

**If you're not able to attend, feel free to mail a card to:  
Norman & Mary Ann Rhoades  
c/o Kathy Taylor  
3406 Burg Road  
Fillmore, IL 62032**



## United Methodist Men

**Next Meeting** .. Following our yearly custom, the United Methodist Men did not meet in July. Our next meeting is **Monday, August 2** at 6 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. The meal will be provided by Jeff Endres and Bill LaDage. The devotional will be given by Bill LaDage. All men are invited to join us.

**Men's Cookout Scheduled** ... On **Monday, September 13** the UMM will host a cookout for all men in the church. No meeting on this date; just food and fellowship. Thanks to J D Vieregge and Max Durbin for handling the food duties. More information forthcoming as the date nears. Men, mark your calendars.

**Eagle Scout Plaque** ... For many years our church has sponsored the local Boy Scout Troop. The men recently purchased a plaque to display the names of all of Vandalia area **Eagle Scouts**, the highest honor in scouting. As soon as all names are compiled the plaque will be displayed in Fellowship Hall.

Submitted by James Hejl



It's amazing that August is here already! The music this month will be a bit different, but it will still be all about praising God! August 1, I will be taking a vacation day and Blanche Dugan will be taking over for me. August 8 we will be hearing from Mackville, a bluegrass group from Decatur IL. August 15 will be the Produce Chapter, gospel group consisting of Layne Mayfield, Russ Rench, Tammy Rench, and Louise Weiss. Sarah Vu will be joining our music team August 22, and we look forward to her return for this year.

Handbell and choir rehearsals will resume after Labor Day; more details to come. We look forward to having Dr. Grace Denton from Greenville University come for a workshop to work with our vocalists sometime in October.

Praise God for talented musicians in our church and community that contribute to the musical life of our church!

In Christ's service,

Louise

*"We would like to sincerely thank you for your kindness shown to us during Dan's recent illness and passing. Special thanks to the N.O.W. Committee for the basket; the Prayer Shawl Committee for the beautiful shawl, and to Pastor Tom for the phone calls and text messages to keep up to date on Dan. Everything you did is greatly appreciated and will not be forgotten."*

—Debbie, Justin, & Daryl Brantley & Families