



THE OAKS



Riverton First United Methodist Church

FEBRUARY 1, 2009

WHY I BELIEVE IN SUNDAY SCHOOL

Part 1



For many who come to worship on Sunday, the Sunday school is an afterthought, an optional extra, not really necessary. I think that viewpoint is unfortunate. I hope we never give up on Christian Education, or decide it is passé or too much trouble. Several things have happened recently that have reminded me of the importance of providing this formative experience for people of all ages.

One of these experiences came to me in the form of a list of questions asked by the young folks of the Christianators class. The questions asked were as follows. Who or what is God? Why does everyone refer to God as "he"? Why did God create the world? Why so many different animals? Why did God give us free will? Why did God create things that are not good, like mean

people; or odd things like the duckbilled platypus? Does God love even the bad people? When Jesus was eight years old, did he know that he was God?

These are serious questions, and they deserve careful answers and discussion. They show that our youngsters are thinking, and open to instruction. That is an opportunity, and more than just an opportunity. It is a demand, an obligation, which we have upon us as a church, to form their minds and shape their hearts toward the gospel and Christian faith for another generation.

By the way, if you have any wisdom on these questions to share with me, please step up and help me out. We can have a theological discussion. I will have more to say about the matter of Christian Education next month, but this is food-for-thought enough for right now.

Pastor Jonathan Dixon

LENT AND ASH WEDNESDAY



Lent begins this month, with ash Wednesday February 25. On Ash Wednesday it has been a custom through centuries of Christianity for believers to have ashes smeared on their foreheads as a sign of repentance and humility. The Lenten season consists of forty days, plus Sundays, (Six and a half weeks total) leading up to Easter.

It has been customary for many Christians to undertake some act of self-denial or fasting during Lent. This disciplining of ourselves helps us appreciate the ultimate self-denial and sacrifice of Jesus Christ who gave his very life for us. In our Ash Wednesday service (7 PM Feb. 25) you will have an opportunity to make a commitment to God. We will symbolize our repentance and intention for Lenten discipline by privately writing our thoughts on a piece of paper and nailing the paper to a wooden cross. You can begin now to prepare for that event by prayerfully consideration of what God would ask you to do in self-denial or service during Lent.

SHROVE TUESDAY

The last day before Lent begins has come to be a time of celebration in many Christian lands. It was common practice in Europe to get all the fat and sweets out of the house (and do without them during Lent). What better way to be rid of them than a pancake feast and party. So the day became known as Fat Tuesday, Mardi Gras, in French. The English tradition calls it Shrove Tuesday. Some Mardi Gras celebrations have become so wild as to actually be unchristian. But we can keep the not-so-wild tradition by having a pancake feed. The United Methodist Men will do just that, on a donation basis, from 5:00 to 7:00 PM on February 24th, 2009 at the Riverton United Methodist Church, 429 Lincoln Street.





Family Valentine Dinner

Concert and Silent Auction



Saturday, February 7, 6:00 p.m. at Riverton United Methodist Church!

Bring your family and friends to the Riverton United Methodist Church on Saturday, February 7th at 6:00 p.m. for a three-course fundraising dinner and silent auction, with entertainment provided by gospel music quartet "4 His Glory" from Greenfield. This group sings gospel four-part harmony that will set your feet to tapping and hands to clapping!

RUMC holds this annual dinner as a fundraiser for its long-term planning purposes. The three-course dinner (great home-cooking by the members of the church) will be held in the accessible fellowship hall at the church.

Items that will be auctioned include: items autographed by celebrities including Mike Tisdale and Justin Allgaier, two \$50 gift certificates from Big R of Springfield, a \$35.99 gift certificate for an oil change donated by Brahler Tire and Auto Center, gift certificates for the Spaghetti Shop (\$15) and for Taco Bell (\$15), Fannie May candies, Pampered Chef items, Longaberger baskets, gift baskets with a Valentine theme, jewelry, perfume, books and toys for kids, and many more items!!

There is no ticket price for the dinner; donations are accepted. Please place your **reservation** with Melissa Pantier at 629-7248 or 741-8172 (or on the sign-up sheet at church) by Friday, January 30.

Chili and Soup Supper

A Chili and Vegetable Soup supper will be served from 3:00 to 7:00 PM, Saturday March 7, 2009, at the Riverton United Methodist Church, 429 Lincoln Street. The menu will consist of Chili, Vegetable Soup, Desert and a Drink.



A donation of \$6.50 will be accepted. Carry Outs will also be available. Hot Dog and Chicken Salad Sandwiches are extra. Proceeds will go toward the Church Parking Lot.

!!! Bring your family and your appetite !!!



United Methodist Men

Our Annual Meeting was conducted Monday January 19th, 2009. Twenty five people were in attendance. The Slate of officers was approved and is as follows:




- Ron Armentrout - President.
- J. T. Armbruster - Vice President
- Mel Allison - Treasurer
- George Skaggs - Secretary

The Calendar for 2009 was approved. Our Pancake Dinner was planned. Members volunteered for special events. The Chicken dinner was a success. Methodist men would like to thank Roberta Bernahal and Betsy Skaggs for proving homemade pies for desert.

Next meeting will be the second Saturday in February at 7:30 am and breakfast will be served.

February



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:30 AM Worship 6:30 PM Youth group	2 7:00 PM Trustees Meeting Groundhog Day 	3	4 7:00 PM Choir Practice	5	6	7 6:00 PM Church Family Valentine Dinner
8 9:30 AM Worship 6:30 PM Finance Comm. 7:15 PM Administrative Council	9 Pastor at Covenant Keepers Gathering in Belleville	10 Pastor at Covenant Keepers Gathering in Belleville 7:00 PM United Methodist Women	11 7:00 PM Choir Practice	12 Lincoln's Birthday 	13	14 7:30 AM United Methodist Men's breakfast meeting (Valentines Day)
15 9:30 AM Worship Coffee fellowship; Inner City mission; 6:30 PM Youth group; Newsletter Dead-	16 Presidents Day 	17	18 7:00 PM Choir Practice	19	20	21
22 9:30 AM Worship Transfiguration Sunday	23	24 Shrove Tuesday; 6:00 PM Pancake Supper	25 Ash Wednesday; 7:00 PM Service (Beginning of Lent)	26	27	28

The Conference wide 2009 Spiritual Growth Retreat for Ladies is coming: Friday, February 27th through Saturday, February 28th.

“I AM - JESUS INVITATION TO KNOW HIM”

is the name of the learning time with Barbara Wooldridge, facilitator.

6:30 PM is the time when it starts on Friday and it ends at 3:00 pm on Saturday; and since we live so close to the Conference Headquarters where we will meet, the cost is only \$20. Meals will be provided on Saturday and the materials for the study.

Registration goes to:

UMW IGRC SPIRITUAL GROWTH RETREAT
C/O FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF PAXTON
210 W.CENTER
PAXTON, IL 60957



Questions: contact Lois Winger lawinger@illnicom.net

This registration is due about as soon as you get this newsletter so either contact myself - Ellen Dixon or contact the above information.

This would be a beneficial time for anyone!

We can pool rides; BUT, please consider this time away at the Feet of Jesus to learn and grow.

Thank you Ellen Dixon, Communications officer for the Riverton UMW.



JOURNEY TO NEW HOPE

Tuesday, February 10,2009

Riverton Methodist Church, 429 E. Lincoln

Riverton, IL

7:00 PM, Fellowship Hall

United Methodist Women's Group

Presented by Angela Willis

Dou you have a dream? What do goals and dreams have in common?

Do you believe it is impossible to achieve your biggest dream?

How do you reach your dream reality?

You are invited to come hear a story that will tickle your ears and answer these questions and many more.

Come find your Journey To New Hope.



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THE OAKS

Deadline for next issue is
Sunday, **January 21, 2008**
E-mail articles to
newsletter@rivertonfirstumc.org



Looking Ahead

- February 24: Shrove Tuesday
- February 25: Ash Wednesday (Lent Begins)
- April 5: Palm Sunday
- April 10: Good Friday
- April 12 Easter Sunday
- March 7, Chili Supper
- March 8, Daylight Saving Time begins
- March 21 Men's Gathering at Springfield 1st UMC, Iron Shapes Iron
- March 29, 6 PM Community Sing (music and fellowship with all Riverton churches)
- April 5 Palm Sunday
- April 10 Good Friday service with Baptists, at our church
- April 12 Easter; Sunrise service, 7 AM at Baptist church
- April 25 Chicken Noodle Dinner
- May 6 Mother-Child Dinner
- May 10 Mothers Day
- May 25 Memorial day
- June 21 Fathers day
- October 24 Chili Supper
- October 31 Trunk-er Treat
- November 22 Community thanksgiving Service

