

February 1, 2014

The Oaks



Riverton First United Methodist Church, (217) 629-9721

SCRATCHINGS FROM THE DIXON PENCIL

Water Psalm 63 begins with the words “O God, you are my God, I seek you, my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.”

These words are on my mind because we lack water in this land we call First United Methodist Church of Riverton. As I sit to write this column for the newsletter the pipes are frozen. We have already cancelled several events, including Sunday worship, because we have no water in the restrooms. I hope that by the time you are reading this the problem will have been resolved. But meanwhile, as I write, I don't know when things will get back to normal. (Yes, I do have water in the parsonage; thanks for asking.)

There's a lesson here to be learned. Water is a blessing. But we take it for granted too easily. Many people in the world do not have hot and cold running water or flush toilets, let alone laundry facilities and dishwashers. We are so blessed. Yet it takes a little deprivation to remind us of our advantages.

I think of the many passages of scripture that speak of water both literally and symbolically. Psalm 1 speaks of how happy or blessed are those who take delight in the law, meaning the word of God. It says they will be like trees planted by springs of water. They prosper. Their leaves don't wither. They produce fruit in season. The water is their source of life, as it is ours. The metaphor here encourages us to draw from the life-giving source, the water of God's word.

Psalm 42 uses the symbolism water in a similar way. “As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God.” The deer is thirsty and needs to drink, but it has to find the stream and has to be sure no predators are lurking before it can enjoy the refreshing drink. We humans are built that way too. Something in our nature longs for God, even before we consciously realize it. The great theologian of the early church, St. Augustine, said that is as if we had a vacuum inside us that only God can fill.

The scriptures begin and end with water imagery. The very second verse of Genesis speaks of the Spirit of God moving over the waters. And the near the very end of Revelation, the Spirit says “Come. Let everyone who is thirsty come. Let everyone who wishes take the water of life as a gift” (22:16).

We are missing water at the church on this particular day, but the refreshing, cleansing, life-sustaining water of the Holy Spirit is still abundantly available. May we thirst for God's presence like we long for water. And may we drink heartily of the waters of life and salvation in Christ.

Pastor Jonathan Dixon

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MISSION STATEMENT: *Our mission is to draw people into relationship with Christ and the church and to lovingly challenge them to spiritual growth.*

OUR VISION: *A warm fellowship of Christians in the Riverton area, growing in numbers and spiritual nurture, with facilities and programs to do ministry in the name of Jesus Christ for generations to come.*

RFUMC Calendar – March 2014

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 4-6:30 PM Chili/Vegetable Soup Supper
2 Transfiguration Sunday 9:30 AM Worship; 10:30 AM Coffee Fellowship; 10:35 AM Adult Bible Class	3	4 Shrove Tues- day 6:00 PM Pancake Supper; 7:00 PM Trustees	5 Ash Wednesday 9:00 AM Quilt- ing; 9 – 12 CLM at Church; 7:00 PM Service with Ashes	6	7	8
9 First Sunday of Lent; Daylight Time Begins 9:30 AM Worship; 10:30 AM Adult Bible Study; 6:30 PM Fi- nance and Administra- tion Meeting	10	11 7:00 PM United Methodist Women	12 9:00 AM Quilt- ing; 9 – 12 CLM at Church; 12:00 PM Membership Committee; 7:00 PM Choir Prac- tice	13	14	15
16 Second Sunday of Lent 9:30 AM Worship; 10:30 AM Adult Bible Class	17	18 6:00 PM United Methodist Men’s Annu- al Meeting	19 9:00 AM Quilt- ing; 9 – 12 CLM at Church; 7:00 PM Choir Prac- tice	20	21	22
23 Third Sunday of Lent 9:30 AM Worship; 10:30 AM Adult Bible Class	24	25	26 9:00 AM Quilt- ing; 9 – 12 AM CLM at Church; 7:00 PM Choir Practice	27	28	29
30 Fourth Sunday of Lent; One Great Hour of Sharing 9:30 Worship; 10:30 Adult Bible Class	31					

Looking Ahead...

April 13, Palm/Passion Sunday
 April 18, Good Friday Service here with First Baptist Church
 April 20, Easter 7:00 AM Sunrise Service w/ First Baptist Church; 9:30 Worship
 May 7, Mother – Child Banquet
 May 11, Mother’s Day
 June 4 – 7 Annual Conference in Peoria
 June 15, Father’s Day
 July 8, UMW Picnic



*NEXT NEWSLETTER
 DEADLINE: MARCH 16*

News from your Certified Lay Minister

I have accepted a part time paid position with the Kumler United Methodist Church to coordinate the Tuesday Evening meal they do for the homeless etc. at the Church on Carpenter and 5th. The evening meal time is called Hospitality House. It goes from 5-6:45 each Tuesday Evening.

This does not change my status with you, my home church. I will continue to be at the church Wednesday in the morning from 9-12 and can be contacted by phone at 217-691-7676. If you would like to talk with me --call or stop by. I am up in the parlor room. Often the front door is locked for safety but I will gladly let you in if you call.

We are enjoying the *God Is Not Mad at You* Bible Study and may continue this into March if that is the desire of the group. If you wish to come, you can start at any time as the discussion is unique each week. It meets Wednesdays at 1 and 6 for an hour in the Parlor room.

The church is working on gathering old bicycles and sewing machines to be taken to the Midwest Mission Distribution Center, where they are fixed and sent overseas to village industries and the bikes are used for transportation in terrain that is not conducive to cars/in places where cars are limited. You will hear more about this when it gets closer to the collection day and delivery. These can be functioning bikes or not so functioning bikes. The sewing machines can be treadle or electric. The wider tires are desirable for the rough terrain that the bikes maneuver.

We are also looking for trucks and vehicles along with drivers to take these sewing machines and bikes down to MMDC (Chatham) in April sometime. The snow may be gone by then LOL☺

Ash Wednesday

Lent is right around the corner, beginning on March 5th at 7 PM with Ash Wednesday. The worship committee has planned some special happenings for that night. It will be family oriented with the typical nailing of the sins to the cross and several interactive stations to build awareness of Lent. These are geared to educate and let us think about our own receptivity to God in our lives. These will be hands on and manageable for all ages. Communion is part of this service also.

March Birthdays

Arthur Gowin	3/2/1936
Carol Wells	3/4/1939
Mary Dial	3/11/1965
Richard Carr	3/14/1947
Jeff Koger	3/19/1960
Liam Byers	3/20/2008
Bill Kleban	3/21/1925
Jerry McCullough	3/25/1939
Craig Thomas	3/26
Tom Stroisch	3/30/1949

March Anniversaries

David and Cheryl Beckner 3/1
James and Mary Dial 3/10/1960

The United Methodist Women

WILL MEET : TUESDAY, MARCH 11, AT 7:00 P.M.

PROGRAM: BETTY PEEL

HOSTESSES: KIM & HARRIET BECKEY

**We welcome all the ladies of the Church.
Come see us in the fellowship hall.**

**REMEMBER THE CHILI/SOUP SUPPER ON
MARCH 1st., 4:00-6:30**

Riverton First United Methodist
429 East Lincoln
Riverton, IL 62561



Address Correction Requested

RFUMC PHONE: (217) 629-9721
E-MAIL: rvrtnumc@sbcglobal.net
WEBSITE: www.rivertonfirstumc.org

Thanks

Many thanks to all who have:

1. Helped with the Children's Church
2. Sung with the Choir
3. Stitched with the Quilters
4. Communicated to others about the needs of the church-
-especially when we were lacking water
5. Sewed those school bags and took the tour.
6. Shoveled and shoveled and shoveled during our winter
without end. Yes, even shoveling the yard to find the
water meter.
7. Changed the church sign
8. Filled in for someone when they were unable to do the
task themselves
9. Cared for the many that have been ill.
10. Prayed for those who needed it and rejoiced with the answers to prayer.
11. And most of all encouraged someone in your life.

