

the HERALD

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF PEORIA | MAY, JUNE, JULY 2021

How our youth
ministry grew
deeper despite
COVID
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Summer Sunshine

*VBS, Camps, Mission Trips:
What lies ahead as we emerge?*

Renuevo Celebrates Ten

MARIACHI RETURNS

By Rev. Adrian Garcia

Renuevo celebrated ten years of ministry with Mariachi Christian music on Sunday, May 2.

Ten years ago, on a Saturday night, we officially began a new journey, worshipping our God in a bilingual format (Spanish and English), with the desire to offer the Hispanic community the opportunity to come to Jesus, worship Him, and follow His steps.



Our first bilingual worship service took place on May 5, 2011, in 700 Main; that date coincided with a popular Latino celebration, Cinco de Mayo.

A group of seven families, the Rubi, Rivera, Lopez, McFall, Velazquez, Vega, and Garcias, opened the way for many in the years to come. Those families first came to our contemporary worship service, and then asked us for a bilingual worship service. The rest is history. When my family and I arrived on July 1, 2010, the Rubi family was already part of our church, serving in various areas.

We are grateful for those members in our church who have walked with us through the years, and for the many families who heard God's voice calling them to come to Him. Through their repentance and confession of sin, they found this amazing grace we share. To God be the glory.

the HERALD

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DISCLAIMER: The information represented here is for the purpose of informing the FUMC-Peoria congregation of the change of events for a month. They are however subject to change. For more up-to-date information, refer to us online at www.fumcpeoria.org, via social media platforms (@fumcpeoria), or via our weekly email newsletter, eHighlights.

ON THE COVER:

There are smiles behind those masks as our beautiful children anticipate the coming summer activities.

Photo by Greg Fish

DEADLINES:

Contact Greg Fish at gfish@fumcpeoria.org for information on upcoming deadlines and publication dates. In the subject line of your email submission, type, "HERALD." All submissions are subject to editing and style standards, and their use is solely at the discretion of the editor. Picture submissions are encouraged to accompany your submission. Focus on individuals and smaller numbers of people who help tell the story.

DIGITAL MEDIA SUITE OPENS NEW DOORS

The pandemic has taught us that we can reach hundreds of people outside of our normal scope with the Good News of Jesus.

To better serve the ever-growing group of people we are connecting with online, we have constructed a Digital Media Suite. By the time you read this, we anticipate that it will be completed.



Still under construction at the taking of these pictures, the Digital Media Suite will soon be put in action. Photos by Greg Fish

The Digital Media Suite is made up of two sections, the Livestream Pod, and the Production Pod.

The Livestream Pod is the master control area for the online distribution of any live event (including worship services) that we broadcast online. It will allow us to present a sound and look online that is consistent with the high quality we constantly strive for in our live gatherings.

The Production Pod will serve as a studio for recording of video and audio. It will house all of our podcasts, as well as serve as a sound and lighting controlled environment allowing us to produce high quality video and audio for digital distribution.

Not only will the Digital Media Suite enhance our present

ministry work while serving our existing congregation, it will also help us to connect with new people in our community and beyond. In the Bible, we're told that Jesus called out for Peter to fish from the other side of his boat. When Peter obeyed, the catch was so great, his nets could not contain it. This is similar to what is happening in digital ministries today. As we began to send out the Good News in directions we had never previously been able to, we are connecting with more people than ever before. The suite is made possible through a grant from the FUMC Peoria Foundation.

If you have questions about the Digital Media Suite, or would like a tour, please contact Greg Fish (gfish@fumcpeoria.org).

THE *Garden* WE GROW

By the Rev. Dr. Timothy Ozment

Spring and summer are always joyful times of the year. There is the hope of new life, growth, and plenty of sunshine.

My granny would get a seed catalog sometime in February with photos of pumpkins, ears of corn, flowers, and a multitude of familiar and peculiar plants. We would pour over that catalog and see what we might want to order and plant once the threat of the last possible hard frost had passed.



I remember tilling the soil to plant mounds of potatoes. We fixed five-foot poles together in a teepee shape to provide a structure for the green bean vines. We dropped corn kernels every eight to twelve inches with at least three rows across. We would transplant the six-inch-tall tomato plants she had purchased into the garden, placing them about two feet apart. These came in a variety of slicing tomatoes like Better Boy, Early Girl, and an assortment of various red or yellow tomatoes. There were also small cherry tomatoes that were a favorite of all the grandkids.

This garden took planning, perseverance, and continual care. Grandmother was out in the garden almost every day tending to her plants by weeding, watering, or harvesting. She understood that unless you put in the work necessary to remove pests and keep the weeds from choking out her fruit and vegetables, there would be no mid-summer or end of the season harvesting.

You know, there are a lot of similarities between disciples and gardens. Both require planning, perseverance, and continual care if you want to reap a harvest. Many people think, “If I just plant a tomato vine in the ground, I can return in a few months and have a sweet savory tomato for a salad.” But, chances are that something will eat the plant, weeds will choke it out, or it just won’t have the nutrients or water to produce something worth eating.

Equally, some believe, “If I simply become a disciple of Christ, everything will all take care of itself.” Some mistakenly think Jesus will simply give them what they need to be a follower while they simply stand by and let God do all the work. However, I’ve found that while God does have a plan for where things should be planted in the garden of my life, He also hands me a pair of gloves and shovel.

Jesus said, “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” (Matt. 11:29)

A yoke is a wooden harness placed on the neck of two oxen or horses to pull items like plows, carts, or wagons. Jesus is telling us that we are tethered to God and there is work to be done. Jesus doesn’t demand that we pull all the weight, but he does expect that we’ll pull the weight we’ve been given. When the day is long, and the load is heavy, God will pull along with us; so much so, there will be moments of rest for our souls.

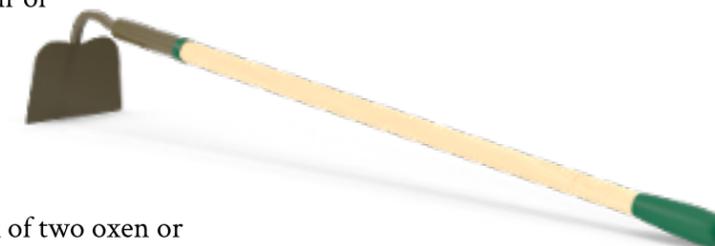
There are also a lot of similarities between gardening and raising children. Our church is in the ministry of raising our children and youth to be faithful disciples of Jesus. That work takes planning, perseverance, and continual care. Pray for our youth and children, their ministries, and for the leaders and volunteers. Pray that we continue to find ways to work the soil of their young life and plant seeds of God’s grace and mercy. Pray that we continue to be diligent in helping to remove the weeds and vines that would so easily distract them from faith in Jesus. And, pray that we’re consistent in watering their life with Jesus’ words of hope and grace.



PASTOR TIM OZMENT

is the Directing Pastor of First United Methodist Church - Peoria.

THERE ARE A LOT OF SIMILARITIES BETWEEN GARDENING AND RAISING CHILDREN. OUR CHURCH IS IN THE MINISTRY OF RAISING OUR CHILDREN AND YOUTH TO BE FAITHFUL DISCIPLES OF JESUS. THAT WORK TAKES PLANNING, PERSEVERANCE, AND CONTINUAL CARE.



BECAUSE SOMEONE CARED

How our youth ministry grew deeper despite COVID

By Christina Koepfel

One of my greatest joys as the Director of Youth Ministry is supporting our youth on their home turf.

In the past, I've gone to plays, musicals, showcases, games, meets, competitions, tournaments, art shows, and places of employment, basically anything and everything to show our youth that they are loved and supported.

As you can imagine, with the loss of extracurriculars, sports seasons, and life as we knew it, connecting with youth in the wild has been tricky. Yes, we have continued to meet as much as possible through online or outdoor means, but it's just not the same. Hearing some crazy lady in the crowd cheer for you and quite possibly embarrass you (with a cow bell of course) is quite special. At least I'd like to think so. There is something about that smirk/side glance given from the youth to the youth director that shows real connection. Oh, the embarrassment!

But, there's a special feeling knowing that someone who doesn't

have to care, cares anyway.

Although ministry doesn't look the same as it did, the connections of those involved have become deeper. I have been thankful for each game of Among Us we have played, each text conversation we have had, each prayer we have shared, each time we have read God's word, and every inch closer to God and each other we have become. Our faith family really has some amazing youth.

As I look forward to the time we can put all of this behind us and come together to celebrate, I am excited to see how God will move through our youth.

Will you join me in praying for our youth? They have experienced so many anxiety producing events in their young lives. Will you pray for our faith family to grow closer? We all have experienced so many anxiety producing events these past few years. Will you pray that all of us realize we need each other as buoys in our faith? We all need a cheering section that we can smirk and side glance to, knowing that we are loved and supported. And if you are willing, pray about how you too can be an influence in the lives of our youth. We really have some fabulous young people.

Here Comes Summer. Now what?

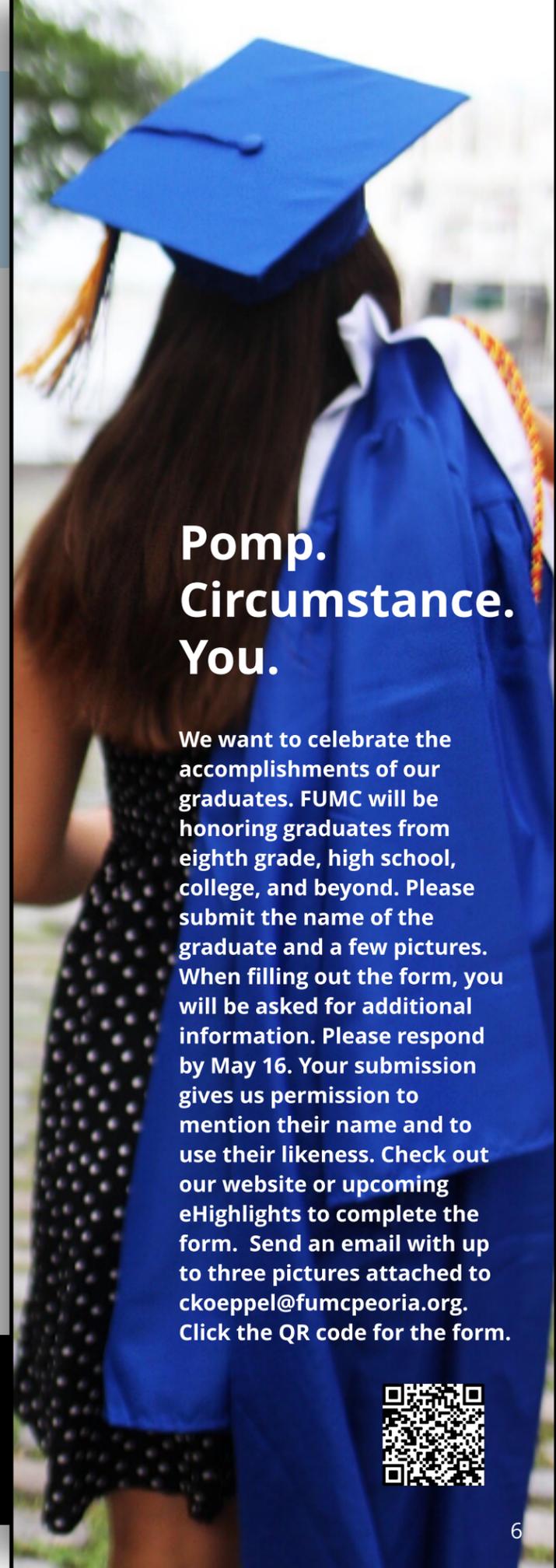
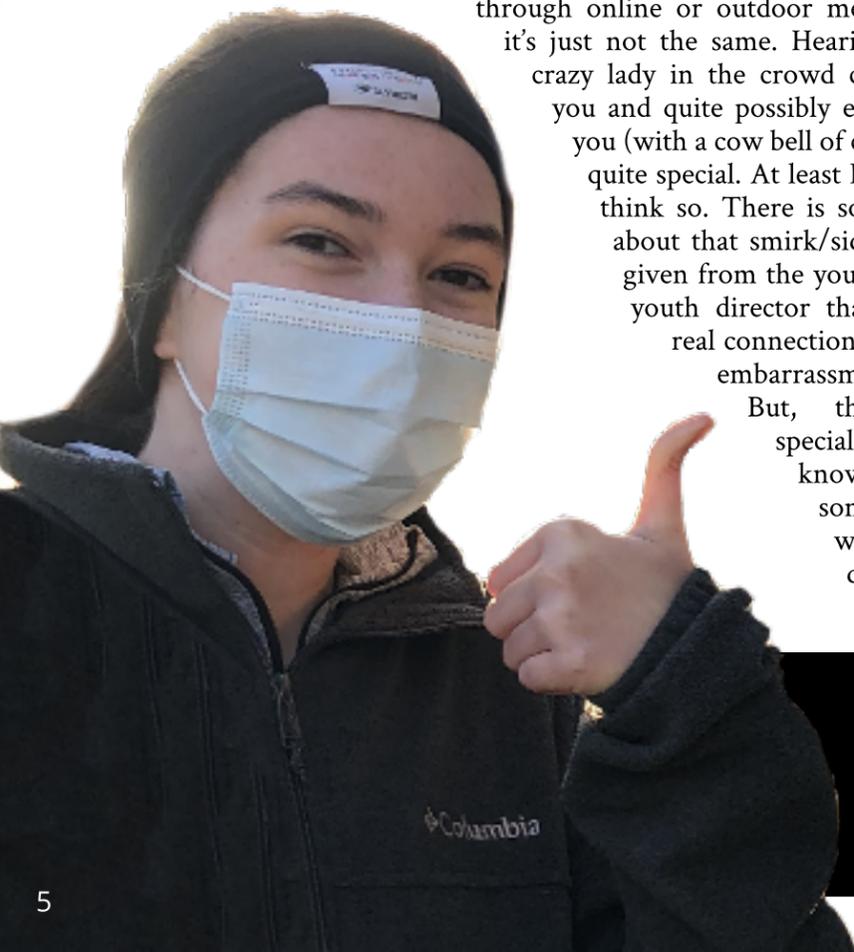
I could list all of the summer events that are still in question or have been changed or cancelled for 2021, but I don't want to sadden you with all of the experiences we won't have again this year. I do know that we will do something this summer. My plan, although more like plasma than bone, is to have out-of-the-ordinary experiences. Dates are not set, but it will look something like this:

- ▶ Morning devotion at church or a place in the community
- ▶ Lunch out
- ▶ Activities such as mini-golf, swimming, frisbee golf, life size candy land, service project etc.
- ▶ Afternoon lessons

More information is forthcoming. If you don't currently get the youth email and would like to, please let me know. I would love to add you on the list. Email: ckoeppel@fumcpeoria.org

If you are an adult and would like to join the adventure during our flexible summer, I would love to hear from you. Contact me to volunteer today. A background check will be required.

WILL YOU JOIN ME IN PRAYING FOR OUR YOUTH? THEY HAVE EXPERIENCED SO MANY ANXIETY PRODUCING EVENTS IN THEIR YOUNG LIVES



**Pomp.
Circumstance.
You.**

We want to celebrate the accomplishments of our graduates. FUMC will be honoring graduates from eighth grade, high school, college, and beyond. Please submit the name of the graduate and a few pictures. When filling out the form, you will be asked for additional information. Please respond by May 16. Your submission gives us permission to mention their name and to use their likeness. Check out our website or upcoming eHighlights to complete the form. Send an email with up to three pictures attached to ckoeppel@fumcpeoria.org. Click the QR code for the form.



for ALL THE CHILDREN of the world



By the Rev. Tanya Edwards-Evans

I grew up hearing the idea that children should be seen but not heard. I believe this concept has caused our children not to use the voices God has given them.

I also grew up singing, Jesus Loves the Little Children, in which we're told that all children matter regardless of gender, color of skin, spoken language, what side of town they're from, or economic status. They are all precious in His sight. It is

amazing to me that God tells us that children are gifts given to us.

What are these gifts? These little people, when born, bring excitement, anxiety, hope, uncertainty, and purpose. Who would have thought that a child could change the direction of our lives? As they grow, day by day, children bring two things that help us develop God's character - hope and heritage.

WE MUST SHOW OUR CHILDREN THAT THE ITEMS WE RECEIVE IN OUR LIVES ARE GIFTS FROM GOD TO BE USED FOR HIS GLORY AND OUR WELFARE

First, let's think about how our children bring hope for a better future. A child can help us envision a better world than the one we currently live in. Parents try to create a better world for their children. Hope, by definition, is a feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen. As a child grows, we start planning a future that will be different from what we experienced. The birth of this child brings a spark of hope in the eye of the parent.

Our children are given to us so they can teach us as we teach them. Scripture tells us to teach them during every junction of their lives; Deuteronomy 6:7 says, "Impress (the commandments) on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."

The second thing our children bring to us is a heritage. Children are given to us for a season, and it is up to us to leave them an inheritance of both the material and spiritual. It is our responsibility to put aside an inheritance for our children's future. The scripture tells us that "Children are a heritage from the LORD, offspring a reward from him." (Psalm 127:3)

As we nurture and lead the children in this post-pandemic environment, let us demonstrate our trust and faith in God so that when they are fully grown, they will know that God is not an imaginary friend but a real friend that will be with us until the end. We must show our children that the items we receive in our lives are gifts from God to be used for His Glory and our welfare. Children are gifts that we parents unwrap every day to help us mirror our belief in God. We as parents are to teach, to discipline, to reward, to encourage, and to live as Godly people in front of them.



PASTOR TANYA EDWARDS-EVANS
is an Associate Pastor at First United Methodist Church - Peoria

A FAREWELL GREETING FROM PASTOR TANYA EDWARDS-EVANS

As I prepare to leave FUMC, I want to say thank you for allowing me to be part of your lives for the past two years. I hope that you have learned from me how to be God's servant even in the midst of the recent storms, such as the race riots and COVID-19 that occurred in 2020. I hope you have learned from my teaching and preaching moments. As I prepare to go, I leave you with these words. I pray for each of you and leave these instructions:

- be **FAITHFUL** to God in your daily walk
- be **INVITING** to all who enter the building... because, they belong to God
- be **RESPECTFUL** of all humanity regardless of neighborhood, income, race, and ethnicity
- be **SPIRIT-FILLED** so that you can hear God's voice and follow his instructions
- be **THOUGHTFUL** so you can speak for God at any moment
- seek **UNDERSTANDING** in all conversations
- be **MERCIFUL** at all times
- be **CHRIST-like** in all places.

Read and remember these scriptures: Genesis 1:27; John 3:16; 2 Timothy 2:14-16 and 2 Timothy 3:14-16.

COMING... THIS JULY...



HEY KIDS: COME AND PARTICIPATE IN INDOOR AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES... GAMES... CRAFTS... MUSIC... AND SO MUCH MORE!

Here are the details you'll need:

- ▶ All day VBS takes place the week of July 19
- ▶ You can register for one of two possible groups; Monday and Wednesday, or Tuesday and Thursday.
- ▶ Both groups and their families will be invited to a family celebration evening on Friday, July 23.

VBS GETS LOUD THIS SUMMER

We're turning up the Vacation Bible School (VBS) volume this summer. Every child will be encouraged to know that because of Jesus, they can have the confidence that:

- They are known.
- They belong.
- They are forgiven.
- They can change.
- They can make a difference.

This week of VBS is about pressing the pause button on all the noise going on in the life of a child. It's about blocking out the mixed messages they're receiving when it comes to their identity, belonging, and purpose. And it's about pressing play on the message of Truth. Something remarkable can happen when a child starts learning to see themselves the way God sees them.

This year's memory verse will be John 15:12: "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you." (NIV)



DEEP AND WIDE: THE RETURN OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

By Kara Bushong

2021 has been a year of wading slowly back into the waters of children's ministry.

It hasn't been the crystal clear pool water where you can see to the bottom and are fairly confident that there isn't anything dangerous in front of you. It has been more like stepping into the ocean. You can't see the bottom and you have no idea what the next wave is going to bring in, or when the lifeguard is going to tell you to get out of the water because there is a shark sighting.

It's fun and exhilarating and freeing, but at the same time, you have to exercise some caution for safety reasons. I anticipate it being quite a while before we get to freely cannonball into the deep end of the crystal clear pool, but wading slowly into the ocean has been fun and lifegiving all the same.

We have continued with our online presence, but have been able to return to seeing kids in small groups through our Books of the Bible study and by opening back up for Sunday School. We have also been able to reach church members and the community through our Easter Scavenger Hunt, where we had 26 volunteers spread out around downtown Peoria sharing the Good News of Jesus and giving out candy.

The next big step is hosting an in-person VBS, and I can't wait to see and hear the joy that comes from kids having fun and growing closer to Jesus!

Photos by Kara Bushong

Missions: COVID Makes Its Czech Mark

Moving Mountains to Thrive

The following article comes to us from Paul Till, an FUMC supported missionary and engaging teacher at Beskydy Mountain Academy (BMA) in the Czech Republic. BMA is a Christian high school that uses excellent English language instruction and strong academics to introduce the Gospel to students. We help support missionaries from BMA, and we have also supported their expansion to reach more students in the Frydlant area. Paul Till will be in Peoria at the end of July.

By Paul Till

Excerpts from one student's emails to her teacher:

"...I wanted to tell you that I have some mental problems lately and I'm trying to get out of it... I hope I didn't upset you too much when I didn't show up to your class though. ...I honestly miss my classmates, you and other BMA teachers..."

"...I think that the situation in our house is very similar to yours when you were my age. But I am glad to tell that in my family it's slowly getting better. So THANK YOU. I believe that it might be thanks to your prayers. Thank you a lot for caring."

The Czech Republic is in the middle of its third COVID lockdown. Beskydy Mountain Academy is online. Teachers are moving mountains to make classes vital and creative.

We have experimented with new kinds of tests, games,

videos, and discussion groups. It is great to work in an environment where innovation is encouraged. Reaching the kids personally is valued over checking a list of vocabulary words that have to be covered to complete a curriculum.

But, what is happening to our kids personally? Where are they spiritually? As we reach out to them through Google Meet Bible groups, one-on-one chats, Facebook, and emails, we recognize that there are more and more troubled kids. They have lost family members to COVID. They have lost the traditions that bring students together as a family. They are worried about their current ability to learn and about their futures.

We have Jesus to share with them. He knows what they need. In a world where teenagers value authenticity, it's hard to authentically share Jesus, or anything else, through our screens. Please pray for us to be His communicators, breaking barriers so that He can shine through.

Even in hard times, we praise God for the way he is continuing his work in the hearts of our students. We have recently witnessed a student surrender her life to Jesus. She realized she no longer wanted to be just a fan of Jesus, waving at him from a distance. Rather, she decided to repent from sin and enter into a personal relationship with God. She has since been growing and soaking in this precious phase of her newly found faith. Please, join us in prayer for her so that her roots will grow deep and that her faith will not be shaken.

MORTON SQUARE SOCCER RETURNS

By Dan Philips

Spring is in the air and that means Morton Square Soccer isn't far behind.

We're looking forward to a fun season of soccer at Morton Square Park this year after missing the 2020 season due to the pandemic.

For over two decades, Morton Square Park has been the site for family fun and recreation every Tuesday night from late spring to mid-summer. We offer a free soccer program for kids ages five through twelve, providing coaches, volunteers, clean shirts, shin guards, snacks, and other equipment needed for play.

The Peoria Park District maintains the fields, provides referees, and portable restrooms.

There is no cost to kids or families, however all must pre-register in order to play. (Registration at the church: Tuesday May 18 and 25, 6-8 PM, in the Worship Center.)

It is important to provide safe recreational opportunities for children in our neighborhood for many reasons. It connects us to our community, and builds the positive relationships established through our Lincoln K8 ministries and programs, Loaves and Fish, and VBS. It is also a wonderful opportunity to show love and grace to our friends and neighbors.

This year's season will be slightly shorter and a little different than in the past. We are working with the Peoria County Health Department and the CDC to use and follow all recommendations to play safely, and to minimize the chance for the spread of COVID.

This year's season runs six weeks instead of the usual eight, beginning June 1 and running through July 13. We will play three sets of three games each Tuesday evening, with five to seven year old kids playing at 5:45, eight to ten year old kids at 6:30, and eleven to twelve year old kids from 7:15 to 8. We will

have an end of year celebration on Wednesday July 14 where we invite all players and their families to a cookout and picnic.

Morton Square Soccer is kind of like going to church. No experience is necessary, it is free, and all are welcome to participate. And like going to church, being a part of this ministry can make a difference in your life and the lives of those around you. Plus, it's fun.

Volunteers are needed to serve as coaches, as well as for



Photo by Jeanette Kosier

registration, the Bible verse table, refreshment and candy table, as well as general helpers. We will assign three coaches to each team so that coaches can take a week off.

More info available through the church office, in eHighlights, or email Dan Philips: dphilips@fumcpeoria.org.

FUMC STAFF CHANGES

GOODBYES & HELLOS

Sue Heytman Retires

After 20+ years of service, Sue Heytman has retired from her position as Executive Assistant to the Directing Pastor at FUMC.

Though Sue had worked on staff for a brief period of time, she took a 19 year leave while her sons were growing up. After graduating with an Associate's Degree in Applied Science - Office Professional in 2000, she saw an ad in The Herald for a secretary job at the church. "The announcement said the contact was Sig Bjorklund," she recently told us.



"I happened to run into him the following Sunday morning. I never ran into Sig on Sunday mornings! I told him I might be interested in the job."

Her first day happened right in the middle of Lent, and between copier issues and problems producing an Easter bulletin, she describes the time as a whirlwind. "And then everything came together and all the services came together for the glory of God. It was so exciting for me to see how everyone's gifts, talents and abilities were used that day to bless God," she exclaimed. "I have always had peace and felt God called me to work at FUMC. I've learned a lot from all of the people I have worked with over the years and have so much joy and appreciation for being able to work here."

Farrell Davies Assumes Role of Executive Assistant to the Directing Pastor

Farrell Davies was born and raised in Kankakee, Illinois where she grew up in the First United Methodist Church. She has lived and worked in the Peoria area since 1969. She holds a bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's degree in public administration from the University of Illinois. Her career path of over 40 years includes work at EPIC (then

called PARC), Children's Home, Crittenton Centers, and Heartland Health Services. She has been a member of FUMC since 2010. She has a son, John; and a daughter, Laura, who lives with her husband and four children in Tennessee. Farrell enjoys gardening, reading, cooking, and hiking.



We are pleased to welcome Farrell into this new role on our staff.

Julie Bell Joins Staff as Director of Connectional Ministries

Julie and her husband Doug have been members of FUMC Peoria since 1993. Their boys, Tyler and Nikolas, grew up in this church and for several years there were four generations attending worship in one pew. Julie has served on the Children's Ministry team, Trustees, Church Council and SPRC.

As Director of Connectional Ministries, Julie will expand the pool of leaders, organize teams to greet new people, and create systems that connect first-time guests into the life of the church and existing participants into deeper community and servanthood. She will lead efforts to offer support for each person to realize their place in the church family and experience intentional spiritual growth in our church community through worship, outreach, missions, fellowship, spiritual formation, and group study.



When Julie is not working at FUMC, she is working at their family agriculture business.

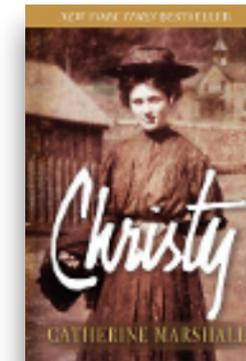
In their free time, Doug and Julie spend their time following their boys and their careers by attending IndyCar races and baseball games.

Please help us also welcome Julie to the FUMC staff.

In 2019, I culled many old books from the church library for a large book sale. Recently, I was at it again.

Books that are outdated or that don't fall within our mission are the primary ones I cull. Our fiction shelves are full and I was able to eliminate a few, but held back three that I wasn't ready for the library to part with. I've had the pleasure of reading them in the last couple of months.

Two are by Catherine Marshall, Christy and Julie.



Christy, somewhat based on Marshall's mother's life, is the classic tale of a 19-year-old girl going into the Tennessee mountains to teach school children. Christy had a comfortable life before going into the mountains and was unprepared for the poverty of a culture that seemed like a page out of the past. She learns to care deeply for the mountain people even as her fledgling faith grows with the challenge of winning their trust. Among her trials are a common eye ailment among the school children,

overwhelming body odor, helping without offending the great pride of the people, and even an epidemic. Meanwhile, her affections are torn between two men. If you read this book years ago, it's worth another read.

Julie, loosely based on Marshall's life as a young woman, takes place in a small Pennsylvania town caught in the grip of tension between a steel mill company's leadership and its low-wage employees crying to unionize. Julie, 17, joins her dad as a writer for the newspaper he bought when they moved to the flood-prone town. As battle lines are drawn between company and workers, Julie investigates the vulnerability of an earthen dam built to hold back a large man-made lake from flooding the town below. Through the eyes of Julie, Marshall propels the reader to the inevitable disaster that parallels the 1889 Johnstown flood.



The third novel depicts our nation at a time when it was greatly polarized and racism cast its ugly net. No, it's not a contemporary novel. A clearer picture of the Lincoln administration and domestic life is brought to light through Mrs. Lincoln's Dressmaker by Jennifer Chiaverini. If you have been to the Lincoln Museum in Springfield, you likely saw the wax figure of Mary Lincoln getting dressed by Elizabeth Keckley, her "modiste." The book tells of the extraordinary and intimate friendship of the two women through the eyes of Keckley, chronicling the time of Mary's entrance to the White House as First Lady, through the Civil War years and the assassination, and beyond.

These and other titles can be found in our library online catalog. Do a search on your favorite title, author and/or topic and check out materials for your enjoyment and spiritual growth.

CHRISTY AND JULIE ARE AT OUR LIBRARY

By Lori Herold
Church Librarian

Beautiful Music: Bach's Faith

On Friday, June 11, at 12:05 PM, Dr. John Orfe's solo piano recital, *Bach and the Language of Lament*, will be virtually streamed as part of the all-virtual 2021 Peoria Bach Festival at Trinity Lutheran Church in Peoria. Admission is free. For more information, please visit peoriabachfestival.org.



By Dr. John Orfe

West of the Forest Park museum campus in St. Louis lies Concordia Seminary (Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod). Within its library's rare book archives resides the Bible that belonged to composer Johann Sebastian Bach. This is the three-volume annotated *Deutsche Bibel* (German Bible) published in 1681-1682, and edited by Abraham Calov who integrated Scriptural passages with commentary by Martin Luther and himself.

The Calov Bible provides a window into Bach's personal faith and how he understood his vocation as sacred musician. Bach underlined many of its passages in black and red ink, sometimes scrawling his own notes in the margins. For example, 1 Chronicles 25 lists ancient Israelite worship leaders appointed to "prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals." In the margin, Bach writes, "NB (Nota bene, which translates, 'note well') This chapter is the true foundation of all God-pleasing church music."

2 Chronicles 5:11-15 describes how the Glory of the Lord appeared after beautiful music. Here Bach underlines, "Beautiful music," and adds: "NB. Where there is devotional music, God with his grace is always present." In these and other instances, Bach reveals his innermost self wholly committed to the Source of his musical calling.

Calov abbreviates both verses of Mark 10:29-30, but Bach writes them out in full: "Jesus said, Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father and mother or wife and children and lands, for my sake and

WHERE THERE IS
DEVOTIONAL MUSIC,
GOD WITH HIS GRACE IS
ALWAYS PRESENT

the Gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life." (Bach's additions appear underlined).

Robin A. Leaver, writing in *J. S. Bach and Scripture: Glosses from the Calov Commentary*, argues that these verses, with their assurance of compensations in this life and the next on account of trial and adversity, sustained Bach through the relentless disappointments, indignities, squabbles, and frustrations he endured throughout his career. At the very least, these annotations indicate Bach looked to the Bible for guidance in daily living.

In early February, I set up an appointment to examine the Calov Bible in person. My initial objective was to supplement preparations for a forthcoming recital centered on themes of loss and consolation in Bach's cantatas and keyboard music. The visit itself came to feel like a pilgrimage. Not in the sense of receiving spiritual energy from a relic or location but rather in contemplation of spiritual heritage – of generations of kindred and historical saints whose Christian faith sustained them through all manner of uncertainty, hardship, tumult, and circumstance.

May all who come behind us find us faithful.

Pictured on opposite page: Bach's handwritten note to 2 Chronicles 5:13 reads: "NB. Where there is devotional music, God is always present with His grace."

Images of Bach's Calov Bible Commentary courtesy of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

What Have I Done? FAQ

A Behind-the-Scenes Look at Our Holy Week Drama



Photos by Greg Fish. Pictured, left to right, Douglas Grogan, Julie Peters, Adrian Garcia, Tim Ozment, Peter Brown, Melinda Huisenga, Lloyd Overcash, Diana Sheets

By Douglas Grogan

Prior to each night's presentation of our Holy Week drama, *What Have I Done?*, our prayer was that we offer our best to God's glory and that those watching would be moved by the Holy Spirit. Based on responses given, this prayer was answered. Here are some questions I received.

Who wrote *What Have I Done?*

The drama was written by pulling from the Gospels, along with scholarly research. We collectively edited the monologues. The Owner of the Upper Room was written by Pastor Tim Ozment and Douglas Grogan. Mary Magdalene's part was written by Julie Peters. Peter's part was written by Pastor Tim. Judas' part was written by Carol McPherson. Pontius Pilot's part was written by Douglas Grogan.

Who were the actors and musicians?

Actors: Adrian Garcia - Owner of the Upper Room. Julie Peters - Mary Magdalene. Pastor Tim Ozment - Peter. Peter Brown - Judas. Douglas

Grogan - Pontius Pilot.

Vocalists: Melinda Huisenga, Behold the Lamb. Diana Sheets, Broken and Spilled Out. Lloyd Overcash, Were You There. Father, Forgive Them was recorded by the Sanctuary Choir.

Instrumentalists: John Orfe, piano. Courtney Silver, first violin. Molly Wilson-Nogaj, second violin. Sharon Chung, viola. Felix Yang, cello.

Who worked behind the scenes for the lighting, sound, and recording?

Sound: Peyton Boyle, Jay Foster, and Jason Schick. **Theatrical lighting:** Steve Cordle and Matt Nitch from Eastlight Theatre in East Peoria. **Cameras:** Valeria Rios. **Screen operation:** Mindy LaHood.

Tell us about the additional theatrical lighting.

The use of theatrical lighting focuses your eyes to different places on stage and will capture the viewer in the moment. Additional lighting was provided by Steve Cordle, Executive Director of Eastlight Theatre. This was made possible from a grant by the FUMC Foundation.

Who created the set design?

The set-design began with a conversation between Julie Peters and Douglas Grogan. As the pieces arrived (almost everything came from in-house), we collaborated with others for the placement and best use of space, mood, lighting, and balance. The lighting crew were also very helpful with their expertise and for offering a couple of stage props.

What was the most impactful moment for you as you played Pontius Pilot?

At the beginning of Pilot's monologue I said, "I love my

job most days. I have money, privilege, and power." Then, near the end of the dialogue I stated, "...That crowd was getting out of control and I needed to keep my power and privilege." Those moments reminded me that yes, I want to have financial resources available at my disposal. Yes, I want the privilege to do things I please without negatively impacting others. Yes, I want to have power so I can be a decision maker. This forced me to face the reality that we all have some Pilot in us.

Will we see more dramatic works in the future?

I would love to include more dramas in the future. To continue presenting work that is of the level witnessed during Holy Week, theatrical lighting packages are needed but are expensive additions. Another reality is the amount of time that is requested from volunteers to pull off such a production which usually involves multiple nights in a row. We must balance the stewardship of human and time resources, and financial resources. If people will commit, I am happy to lead!



Scan here to visit the FUMC website.

Despite the shutdown, significant expenses have continued. Your tithes and offerings are very important to the future of our ministry work. You can scan below to give online, or text "FUMCTXT" to 73256.

(Standard text messaging rates may apply. You will be prompted for information when using for the first time.)



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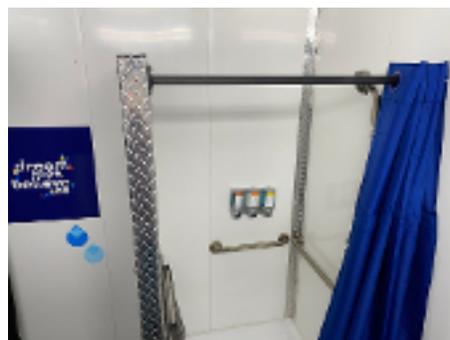


Returning user



HOWIE DOIN'?

FUMC Director of Community Ministries & Mission, Dan Philips, recently gave our staff a tour of the brand new HOWIE truck. Our parking lot was the first ever stop for this wonderful new initiative. Howie stands for, "Hygiene On Wheels. Independence. Empowered." It is a completely self-contained truck offering free showers and laundry to the homeless and severely disadvantaged of our community. The HOWIE truck will be on the move to various locations throughout our region, a service of the Heart of Illinois United Way Home for All Continuum of Care. *Photos by Greg Fish*



Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of Peoria and the World.