It's funny; when I first started to preach, I had a hard time finding enough material. My sermons lasted all of ten minutes. One of my seminary professors told me that my people would probably appreciate that more often than not! (Thanks a lot, right?!) But, he did tell me later that as I grew in sermon preparation and preaching, adding more substance would come naturally. I found that to be true. On the other hand, I've always worried about having too much material and maybe preaching too long, losing people in the process. Someone once said that if you have something to say, you should say it. And once you've said it, shut up and sit down! In other words, "Keep it short and sweet."

One of the nice things about having a church newsletter is that I have an avenue to "say" things that I didn't get to in one or more of my sermons. In an attempt to "keep it short and sweet," I cut out the following story a few Sundays ago. The more I thought about the story, the more I wished I would have shared it. So here it is!

Birds got into our house on several occasions in our last parsonage. Before that, two Parsonage's ago, we had bats! As you might imagine, that didn't sit too well with a particular member of the family! After much effort, the last little bat wore himself out, and I was able to net him and release him to his normal habitat. I did a little study on bats after that. Here is what I found.

Bats fly by "echo-location." They produce a high pitch sound from their mouths and measure the speed in which those sounds bounce off of objects and make their way back to their little ears. Scientists have tried to interfere with these high-pitched sounds by producing other sounds that are 2000 times louder than the sounds the bats make. By God's great design, those bats can still pick out their own echoes in the midst of all that noise and still stay on course.

There are so many loud voices vying for our attention in our culture today. Perhaps we need to train our ears so that we can hear the right sounds to stay on course. Each prayer, devotion and song directed to God echoes back to our hearts and minds. Are we listening for those echoes? If a bat knows better than to be distracted from the real echoes, can we not do the same, spiritually speaking?

Stay on course! Listen for echoes of God's constant presence. Then fly with the freedom of one who is right on track!

Yours in Christ,
Brian

Director of Christian Education
Kary Kramer

PROGRAM UPDATES

This month in Sunday School and Children's Church, our character focus word is ***trust***. When you trust people, you believe that they say. You can expect that they will take care of people and things in a way that is helpful. People who can be relied on are often called "trustworthy." We will hear stories about trust from the lift and ministry of Paul. Take some time to become familiar with these stories so that you may talk about them together at home.

April 8 – Paul Changes (Acts 9:1-19) – Paul is not someone the followers of Jesus can trust. Then everything changes.

April 15 – Paul Escapes (Acts 9:20-25) – Paul's heart is changed, but he has a lot of work to do to show he is trustworthy.

April 22 – The Church Grows (Acts 9:26-31) – Barnabas trusts Paul and helps others know they can trust Paul, too.

April 29 – Timothy Is Chosen (Acts 16:1-5; 2 Timothy 3:14-15) – Paul and Timothy trust each other.

AFTER PROM PARTY – Saturday, April 21st

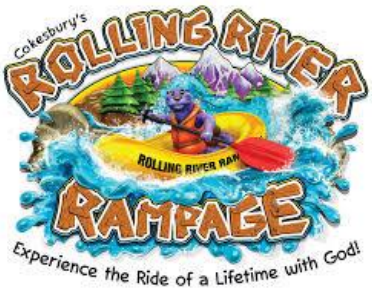
Our church will once again be hosting an After Prom Party lock-in for Elkins High School Students! We are in the midst of working with the school and local businesses to make this event safe and successful. Monetary donations would be appreciated and will be used to purchase door prizes, rent arcade-style games, and provide food.

CHURCH FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT – Sunday, May 6th

Everyone is invited to join us in the Family Life Center for a family friendly movie and snacks on Sunday, May 6th from 5:00 to 7:00. Movie choice to be announced!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2018

Sunday, July 22nd – Thursday, July 26th
5:30 – 8:00
Rolling River Rampage
"experience the ride of a lifetime with God"



Our next Vacation Bible School meeting will be held on Sunday, April 29th at 12:15 in the Parlor. Everyone is welcome to attend VBS meetings! If you are not able to attend the meetings and would like to know how you can help, please contact Kary Kramer in the church office.

MUSIC NOTES

Gale Poe

As I write, I am looking at 8-10” of snow on a rehearsal Wednesday, with the promise of more snowfall during the day. The Chancel Choir has already moved their evening rehearsal to tomorrow. Since we are ten days from Easter, missing a rehearsal has angst attached to it. So we have rearranged. ConwayRingers rearranged one other week in March as well. I appreciate their flexibility so much.

ConwayRingers has been present in worship for three consecutive weeks. We are grateful for the ringers who are substituting for folks who are gone for various reasons.

One of the things you may not know is that traditionally, handbell folks stand for an entire rehearsal, ninety minutes usually. A few weeks ago Denise Kramer found a light-weight stool that we decided would be a fine addition to the handbell equipment. It gives folks the opportunity to sit when they choose. The chairs arrived the third week in March, and a photo is below.

A word of gratitude to those of you who faithfully give designated offerings to the music ministry here at the church. Through your generosity we have been able to fund these chairs, providing more overall comfort for folks.

Sam Urban offered his percussion skills on Maundy Thursday with the Chancel Choir. Vicki Fisher sang for the Holy Week noon services at Woodford Memorial UMC.

The photos that are included are from our warm-up rehearsal on March 18. You may notice that Don Wetsch is sporting a strand of pearls. It is a silly thing that came up when we purchased the handbell jackets in 2016. Don doesn’t wear a jacket, but he does wear a tie and complementary shirt. Denise Kramer made the tie, and we kid about Don’s not wearing the pearls so as not to *over-fashion* the women. You will never see them during worship, but the warm-up rehearsals are another thing. I love the joy that these folks bring to my life, and the life of the congregation. The music ministry continues to be blessed to be a blessing.

Easter blessings from the music ministry.

UNITED METHODIST MEN

On Sunday, February 25th, the United Methodist Men hosted a congregational luncheon in honor of the Davis and Elkins Concert Choir. The choir, under the direction of Liz McVean, performed at the 11:00 service. Chris Wood, president of Davis and Elkins College, delivered the sermon.

The United Methodist Men prepared and served pancakes and sausage on Saturday, March 10th, for their 73rd Annual Pancake and Sausage Feed. This successful event was made possible by the hard work, service, and fellowship of many men of our church.

United Methodist Women

NEWS FROM THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

CIRCLE 1 MEETING

The majority of our circles meet monthly for fellowship, devotional time and UMW business. Circle 1 met on Tuesday, March 13 at the home of Penny Friddle. Devotions were led by Shannon Bennett Campbell. Shannon reminded those in attendance that on March 23, 2019 United Methodist Women will be celebrating their 150th birthday. Shannon asked members to reflect on what they remembered of the UMW in their respective churches and the impact this group had on their lives. Then she reminded us that now we are the present and future of UMW and we need to be aware of the legacy we leave. In addition to the business meeting the members contributed to a basket for an Easter baby to be born at Davis Medical Center. The basket was full of books, clothing, hygiene needs, stuffed animals and everything that a new baby and family could use.

Babies and families from our community are showered with gift baskets and layettes of clothing and basic needs from our circles. It is a privilege to welcome these little ones to our community.

KIROS MINISTRY

Mr. Cecil Lanham from Kiros Ministry arrived at the church on Thursday, March 15 to transport freshly baked pies and cakes from circle members. Mr. Lanham expressed his sincere appreciation for the baked goods that are shared with inmates and their families during their Christian ministry activities at Huttonsville Correctional Center. It is reported that inmates that attend this ministry have a more successful reentry into society.

HOLY WEEK

FUMW will be providing lunch for Monday, March 26 the first day of of Holy Week services which will be held at Woodford Memorial United Methodist Church.

FALL RETREAT

At a recent executive meeting it was determined, due to the success of last year's retreat, we would consider revisiting this activity and are looking at Saturday, September 15 as a prospective date. Some highly recommended speakers have been contacted. Any suggestions or assistance with this project would be appreciated. Please contact Mary Durham, president, (304-636-0632), anyone on the executive committee or attend one of the executive meetings with your ideas. Executive meetings usually occur on the last Monday of the month at 1 pm in the church parlor. It was a wonderful event last year and we are hoping the same for September 2018.

SPRING BAZAAR AND COUNTRY STORE

It is time for the spring event with the luncheon and related events on Thursday, May 3 with the country store remaining open until noon on Friday, May 4. See further information on the included flier.

The UMW wish everyone a blessed Lenten season and a rebirth that comes with spring. Hope to see you at the spring bazaar.

First United Methodist Church
Women's Spring Bazaar
315 Kerens Avenue Downtown Elkins
Thursday, May 3rd
Luncheon 10:30 - 1:00
Luncheon Menu
Pulled Pork Sandwiches $2.00 each
Hot Dogs ...Pepperoni Rolls $1.00 each
Baked Beans $1.00 each
Cole Slaw $1.00 each
Tossed Salad w/Dressings $2.00 each
Pies or Fruit Salad $1.00 each
Complimentary Drinks
Country Store and Baked Goods
Country Store Hours:
Thursday May 3rd 9:00-3:00
Friday May 4th 9:00-12:00

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

1	Cindy Huffman
1	Dylan Basil
2	Catherine Wenzell
2	Lisa Stalnaker
2	Madison Basil
2	Walt King
3	George Cook
3	Alex Tomblyn
4	Lorrayne Corley
4	Bill Hartman
4	Janet Stalnaker
4	Shannon Straley
4	Emily Conrad
5	Andy Montgomery
5	Scott Harris
6	Mary Jo McClure
6	Dave Davis
6	Kendra Schwartzmiller
6	Erin Quint
6	Josh Lambert
8	Nora Benavides
8	Patty McCloud
8	Leon Mallow
9	Tabitha Richardson
9	Rebecca Earl
10	Sandi Golden
10	Jerry Jerow
10	Markia Hepler
10	Garrett Stalnaker
11	Dick Marstiller
11	Jamie Mergenthaler
11	Braxton Kenney
12	Ruth Schoonover
12	Jon Basil
12	Ann Urban
12	Ava Barger
13	Robert Oldaker
14	Bronwen Hamilton
14	Bill Patterson
14	Pam Douglas-Isner
15	Lois Kessler
15	Austen Westfall
16	Denise Kramer
16	Mike Jones
16	Hunter Poe
17	James Davis
17	Jason Reed
17	Ingrid Heinke
17	Megan Sponaugle
18	Sean Conklin
19	Mark Tomblyn
19	Eli Higgins
21	Laura Ferguson
21	Vic Simmons
21	Leia Herron
21	Josie Biller
22	Clifton Hyre
22	Heather Barkley
22	Kayla Harris
23	Sarah White
23	Jim Sayres Jr.
23	Jan Lang
25	Dick Hamrick
25	Stephanie White
25	Jonathon Compton
25	Nate Marstiller
25	Sadie Marstiller
26	Clair Carowick Sr.
26	Barbara Mergenthaler
26	Craig Hyre
26	Todd Cotgreave
26	David Davis
27	Ashley Sitton
28	Trisha Kelly
29	Lee Connolly
29	Jim Teter
29	Ellen Spears
29	Doris Wirth
29	Robbie Morris Jr.
29	Tristan Croson
30	William Umbright
30	Dana Carpenter
30	Kelly Lang
30	Cortney Crosston

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

4	Chuck & Pam Keller
5	Mike & Vicki Fisher
6	Don & Carrie Wetsch
11	Lloyd & Sharon Teter
16	Casey & Denise Wallace
23	Phil & Karen Tomblyn
25	P.J. & Terry Harmon
26	Robert & Cathy Jones
28	Jim & Patty McCloud

Christian Sympathy *to the families of* Jeff Broschart, Rosie Burcaw, Harry Henderson and Harriet Woods.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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The Circuit Rider

April 2018

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Thursday 8:30 AM – 3 PM / Friday 8:30 AM – 12-noon PH: 304-636-0660

Pastor: Brian Seders (304-636-0406 Home)
blseders@gmail.com

Office Manager/Treasurer: Rhonda Elmer
rhonda@fumcelkinswv.com

Director of Church School of Ministries: Kary Kramer

kary@fumcelkinswv.com

Financial Secretary: Danielle Taylor

danielle@fumcelkinswv.com

Music Director: Gale Poe

Pastor Emeritus: Basil Hensley

Nursery Worker: Jennifer Wanless

Custodian: Angela Kisner

Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.
The people of The United Methodist Church™