

First Connection

First United Methodist Church of Normal
Connecting All People With Jesus Christ

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY BELOVED COMMUNITY BUILD

May 19th from 8-12

We will kick-off our Beloved Community Build with a Wall Build in the parking lot of Calvary UMC. In the space of just 4 hours, volunteers from all the partner churches (Wesley, Calvary, First, Hudson, and Morningstar) will put together the 40 walls for our house! This summer, Normal First will be responsible for the first Saturday of each month for our build.

**Take the
pledge.**

Help build the #BelovedCommunity

Habitat for Humanity

Our partner family is Kia Griffin and her 8 year old daughter, Georgia. Kia is originally from Bloomington, moved away for a short time and has been back for 18 years. They are very excited about the build and working on their home. They are especially excited to meet all of the volunteers who will partner with them!

What is the Beloved Community? Marking the 50th anniversaries of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s tragic death and the passage of the Fair Housing Act, Habitat for Humanity is engaging nationwide in the Beloved Community initiative throughout the year. Building on King's vision, the Beloved Community allows access, equality and opportunity for all. The Beloved Community is fair, just and built on the love of God operating in the human heart.

**Every single one
of us deserves a
decent life.**

Help build the #BelovedCommunity

Bloomington is joining Habitat communities in Atlanta; Austin; Charlotte, NC; Chicago; Denver; Los Angeles; Memphis.; Minneapolis/St. Paul; New York City; Oakland, CA; Portland, OR.; and Raleigh, NC who have already committed to undertaking Beloved Community projects. More are expected to be announced throughout the year.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

June 10-13, 6-8pm

Rolling River Rampage: Experience the Ride of a Lifetime with God
Ages Preschool to 5th grade

Register/Volunteer online <https://rrr.cokesburyvbs.com/normalfirst/>

Contact Jill at jmcniff@normalfirst.org

with any questions.



HOLY COMMUNION FOR MAY

We will observe
Communion on May 5
& 6 at all services.

THOUGHTS FROM THE PASTOR

Our small group just concluded reading A Spirituality for the 21st Century: The Rule of Benedict by Joan Chittister. I think every time we met, we commented on the common themes that Benedict wove throughout *The Rule* - community, humility, and prayer.

We also reflected on the detail that Benedict included in regards to the ordinary moments of our lives. Even the ordinary, daily routines are under the care of God and are not times for "vacations from our best selves."

Chittister writes, "The point is a clear one: being religious is a full-time identity; being business people does not give us the right to do during the week what we tell ourselves on Sunday that we shun. . . No Christian ever has the right to be less than the Gospels demand of them wherever they are" (P. 224).

These words reminded me of a story that Scott King shared with me after worship a few months ago. Scott works at Kroger and is a consistent, friendly worker to all of us customers.

A customer approached me with a paper gift certificate in hand. I imagined he had a question on how to redeem it at the check-out. Much to my surprise the following conversation unfolded.

He stated that he had been gifted this \$30.00 gift certificate over the holiday season that we had just gotten through. He wanted to in-turn give it to someone in need. He asked if I might be able to help him out with that.

I said that I see people in need every day and would be glad to help him out with that. He then said, "Then I entrust this to you, that you might find the right family to give it to."

I didn't recognize him as a regular customer but he acted as if he knew me. I must have waited on him in the past,

treated him kindly, and he knew that I would carry out his request in honesty.

The day proceeded on, and I did not think I would find a customer that day to bestow his gift upon. But, close to the end of my shift, a perfect opportunity presented itself. It almost seemed like divine intervention.

A young couple in their 20s came through and seemed to be having problems at the end of their order. I went over to see if anything was wrong. The girl stated that she had only \$20.00 and that she was going to have to take a few things off to be able to afford their order.

I glanced down and saw that their total was right at \$30.00 and knew this was my chance. I told her that she was going to be able to keep her money, that an anonymous gentleman was going to pay for her order, and she wouldn't have to put anything back.

The tears began to come to her eyes as she thanked me. Her boyfriend was thrilled to get the free groceries. You could see it in his face. I cashed out the order and sent them on their way.

I don't recall ever seeing them in the store before, but I think I was more excited to be able to do that for them than they were as benefactors of that oh-so generous man.

Random acts of kindness like that restore your faith in humanity. God working his way through us.

Feel free to use this story in hopes that it inspires people to live in a kinder, more gentle world.

We never really know when opportunities will come our way to be the hands and feet of Christ. May all of us seek to live in kinder, more-gentle ways.

Blessings,

Pastor Kathy

CONGREGATIONAL CARE NEWS

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING

Saturday, May 5,
4:30pm
and Sunday, May 6,
9 & 10:30am: Library



FIT Wed @ 9am

The sum total of our FIT class is good friends, good exercise, and good food. Join the group on Wednesdays 9:15 am in Room 53.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

May 8th at 1:30 p.m. in the Youth Lounge. This will be the last gathering of the group before the spring blessing. All of the new lap robes, shawls, baby afghans and infant hats will be blessed at all three services the weekend of May 12th and 13th. New members are always welcome at the meetings. We are so pleased to have the congregation take part in this blessing.

MAY POTLUCK

May 20, 12pm, Lounge

Join us as you can. Take some time to meet someone new. Bring a dish if you can. All are welcome.

SSO

Second Sunday Out will be on May 13th at 5:30 pm. Meet at Panera's in Normal. All are welcome to join for this Dutch-treat, order-off-the-menu fellowship time.

NEW SSO

Second Saturday Out will meet May 12 following the 5 pm worship service at Denny's in Normal. If you have questions, please contact Jane Whitman (whitman1707@gmail.com, 454-8770)

ALL CHURCH FIRST FEST

Sunday, June 3, 2018

4:00 – 6:30

Underwood Park

Fun, Food, Family and Friends

Fun

Games, Bounce House, Mike's Little Train, Light Action Arena

Food

Hot dogs and drinks will be provided.
You are invited to bring your favorite dish to share.

Family and Friends

Bring a lawn chair and relax with family and friends.
Bring a kite if you'd like to engage in that timeless enjoyment.

Help Make It Happen – Volunteers are needed to monitor games as well as for set up and clean up.

Sign Up - All signup sheets will be available at the Information Center beginning May 5th.

Looking forward to seeing you there!



MEMORIALS

During the first quarter of 2018, Memorial contributions were received in memory of the following:

Michael Macesich
Lorene Sorey
Edwin Wooley
Gustaf Ziebarth

NEXT NOISY OFFERING

May 26 & 27

Please bring your coins to help Habitat for Humanity. Our current total to date is \$4,572.00. The goal is \$5,000.00. We're almost there!

WONDERFUL WEDNESDAY

Our last and only meal in May will be May 16th @ 5:15pm. We will be back in September. Look for info in August for our All Church kick-off.

Music Ministries—Together We Can **BE CHRIST'S HANDS AND FEET**



Children's Choirs are coming to a close for the season. Though we do not have rehearsals on May 2 or 9, we will have our awesome Bowling Party on May 16! (Wear or bring socks, please) Woo-hoo!! Watch your email for further details.

Sincere thanks to all who have made the 2017-2018 Music Ministry year so much fun! Your faithful participation in our ensembles enhance our worship experiences, draw our larger community in, and bring glory to our God. Not to even begin mentioning the fun and laughter we share. Thank you for connecting in Music Ministries!

Shout out to: Tyler DeVault, Dennis Gotkowski, Gaylen Bourland, and Jim Potter, our additional Music Ministry Staff. Thank you!!

Summer Instrumentalists needed – guitarists, drummers, woodwinds players, brass players, string players. Please contact Janna Peterson (jpeterson@normalfirst.org)

YOUTH AT NORMAL FIRST

The Youth are getting ready for a very exciting summer, and we'd love to have your help!

The sr. high youth will be traveling to Tennessee to work with Mountain T.O.P. (Tennessee Outreach Project). We are taking 14 youth and 6 adults in 3 vans. (More about the jr. high trip next time.)

How can you help?

First, you can pray for us.

Second, the youth will be selling stocks for \$25 per share each weekend in May. By purchasing stocks, you are sharing interest in our trip. Shareholders are invited to a special meal in August to hear more of the stories and see the pictures from both the senior high and junior high trips. If we have email access during the trip, we'll send email updates to our shareholders during the trip.

Third, we need a tool bucket for each van. If you are able to contribute supplies for our buckets, please contact Kim! Items that are not consumable can be returned to you, if labeled clearly. Listed below are the supplies needed:

3 Bottles 2-cycle oil mixture	15 Paint Scrapers - Wide & thin
3 Bottles Baby Oil	9 Paint Trays
3 Box End Wrench Sets	3 Pliers
3 Bug Repellents	3 Post-Levels (Optional)
3 Carpenter's Squares	30 Clean Rags
3 Chalk Lines With chalk	6 Rope/Ratchet straps
3 Coolers-Ice Chest 48 qt	6 Safety Goggles
3 Drills-cordless With driver & bit set	3 Saws - Circular With extra blade(s)
3 Drills-corded With driver & bit set	3 Saws - Hack
6 Drop Cloths	3 Saws - Hand
6 Electric Adapters (2 prong to 3 prong)	6 Screwdrivers - Flat
6 Extension Cords - 40' +	6 Screwdrivers - Phillips
15 Hammers - 16 oz +	9 Scrub Brushes
3 Hand Sanitizer - Medium sized bottle	3 Socket Wrench Sets
3 Hand Wipes	6 Speed Squares
3 Levels - 4ft	6 Sunscreen (Bottle/Can)
9 Measuring Tapes - 16' +	3 Trash Bags (box)
12 Paint Brushes - Wide	3 Tin Snips
9 Paint Brushes - Thin	3 Utility Knives
9 Paint Rollers	6 Wasp/Bee Spray
18 Paint Roller Pads	3 Wood Chisel Sets (Optional)
6 Wrecking Bars	21 Work Gloves

THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!!

The Missions Committee is so appreciative of the fabulous response of new clothing for Advocate BroMenn's Compassion Closet during the month of March. There were quite a few articles donated.

A special note of gratitude goes to Jill McNiff who assisted with sprucing up the Missions Corner with new signage and suggestions

ISU WESLEY MERGE

Dear Normal First,
Thank you so much for your donation for my mission trip. I am so thrilled that I have had this opportunity to help!

Breanna Patten

Normal FUMC,
Thank you for sponsoring this trip! I have had an Amazing time growing in my faith & growing closer to others! I look forward to sharing with you!

Emily Lewis

New Members

Marlene and Larry Dietz joined FUMC on Sunday, April 8. Larry was born in DeSoto, IL, the son of a dairy farmer. He was an elementary school teacher, but has worked in higher education the majority of his career. He currently serves as the President of Illinois State University. In addition to serving as Larry's teammate at ISU, Marlene is very involved in our community including serving on the Baby Fold Board. She previously owned a company that provided leadership development. Larry and Marlene have two children and four grandchildren. Since they all live in the Kansas City area, they are thrilled that their oldest granddaughter, Mia, will be attending ISU in the fall as a member of the gymnastics team.



May Mission Emphasis:

NEVILLE HOUSE - COUNTERING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Mid Central Community Action, Inc.

They provide free and confidential services to victims of domestic violence including: 24-hour Hotline, 24-hour emergency shelter, individual counseling for adults, support groups for both adults and children, criminal justice advocacy, legal advocacy, safety planning, community education and professional training.

Items to be collected:

Laundry soap	Twin size comforters
Paper towels	Garbage bags
Dish soap	Clorox wipes
Dishwasher detergent	Bus passes
Cleaning spray	Gas cards

Also need a new VCR and a new toy box - contact Mary Stanton (309-808-0102) to pick up.

Call 309-828-8913 re: donations and 24-hour Hotline 309-827-7070.

Drop offs by members who want to donate at other times of the year may take donations to Mid Central Community Action, Inc. - 1301 West Washington, Bloomington

Financial Report

General Fund

March	Monthly	YTD
Income	\$80,864.55	\$217,311.10
Expenses	\$66,424.52	\$197,802.47

Attendance

Date	Attendance
March 3 & 4	265
March 10 & 11	300
March 17 & 18	299
March 24 & 25	271
March 31 & April 1	479

FINANCE CORNER

2018 has brought tax reform. However, whether you itemize or not, IRA rollovers (if you are 70 ½ or older) allow individuals to make gifts annually from their IRA directly to qualified charities, including our church. These gifts are not considered taxable income, but they do fulfill the minimum distribution requirement. Check with your IRA administrator or tax advisor for more information.

CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRIES



Summer Children's Ministry Volunteers Needed!

Do you have a heart for children? Do you want to make a difference in the lives of a few? Don't want a huge time commitment? This opportunity is for you! Contact Jill McNiff at jmcniff@normalfirst.org to find out more.



Last Wonderful Wednesday
April 25th

Family Fun Bowling Party: May 16, 5-7pm

ISU Bowling & Billiards
Pizza, Bowling, Fun!

RSVP to Jill at jmcniff@normalfirst.org



Summer Fun in the Sun Park Series

Join other Normal First Families for a few hours of summer spray park fun! Refreshments provided. Bring friends!

June 27	McGraw Spray Park	6-7:30
July 25	Miller Spray Park	6-7:30

FOOD PANTRY AT THE CHURCH

Several ISU students representing Student Government and the School of Social Work presented to Trustees & Church Council the need for a food pantry for ISU students. Our church is well-located to provide space for this pantry.

With Trustees & Church Council approval, the Food Council Advisory Board has set an opening date for Fall of 2018. More information will be coming. Questions? Contact Pastor Kathy or Kathy Gossard.



FROM THE GREEN TEAM

- Did you know that it takes a gallon of water to make five paper cups?
- Did you know 20 million trees are cut down each year to make paper cups in the United States?
- Did you know 58 billion cups are thrown away in the United States every year?
- Did you know the cups we use at our church cannot be recycled?
- Did you know our landfill in rural Bloomington is projected to close in 2018?

Little changes and choices that we make can have a positive impact:

If you save 1 paper cup each day for 40 years, you save 24 trees.

If you save 1 paper cup each day of the year, you save over \$29.00.

If you save 1 paper cup each day of the year, you save 23 pounds of waste from our landfill.



United Methodist Women



UMW
Circles

Sonrise Circle

1st & 3rd
Wednesday
6:30 am

Time's Past Inn

Ruth Circle

Quarterly

7 pm Church lounge

Vesper Circle

3rd Tuesday of month
1:30 pm Church lounge

Mercy Circle

3rd Wednesday of month
9:30 am Church lounge

New Hope Circle

4th Monday of month
7 pm Church lounge

VESPER CIRCLE

Date: May 15, 1:30pm, Church lounge
Program: Painting rocks with Janet Auer
Hostesses: Linda Aeilts, Leslie Wagner,
Gwen Heite, Diane Boeck
Devotions: Linda Aeilts

MERCY CIRCLE

Date: May 16, 9:30am,
Church lounge
Program: The Peace Corps
today and ISU
Speaker: Katie Raynor,
Program Coordinator for
Community & Economic
Development, ISU
Hostesses: Deb Pitcher,
Janice Yeager
Devotions: Becky Goeckner

RUTH CIRCLE

Date: May 7, 7pm, Library
Program: Mary Ryder, our UMW Secretary of
Program Resources for 2018. Mary will give a
brief overview of the UMW Reading program,
how to get started, how to get the books, and
how to complete the paperwork. Contact Ja-
net Lammey at jclammey@gmail.com with
questions!

2018 UMW ATTIC SALE Friday, July 20, 2018



Donations will be accepted
beginning 2 pm on Sunday, July 8th.

For questions or to volunteer your time,
please call Carol Morgan 452-3127,
Mary Foster 452-2479, or Linda Park
452-7052.

REMINDER: There will be a meeting for
all department chairs on Saturday, May
5 @ 9:30 in the church lounge.

6TH ANNUAL DAUGHTERS ALL BANQUET

It's Picnic Time!!!

May 15th, 5:30pm

Remember the fun of those family picnics where
the children would jump rope, play "bags", and
enjoy the laughter. Mark your calendar and plan to
attend the "picnic setting" of Fellowship Hall. There
will be activities for the younger generation, a
chicken dinner and a local Barbershop Quartet to
entertain us that evening. Be sure to get your tick-
ets, starting April 28th.

OUR CONFERENCE, OUR KIDS

As we assist the agencies around our conference to be the hands of Jesus for our
children to meet their physical and emotional needs, we also need to nurture their
faith. The endowment fund Our Conference, Our Kids will ensure this happens. Our
Conference is raising \$2.5 M while we at Normal First are raising \$25,000 of this.
So far, we have neared \$10,000 and want to quickly reach our goal. Please get your
check or pledge to the offering plate or to Leta in the near future.

Published Monthly (USPS 414120)
First United Methodist Church
Periodicals Postage Paid at Normal, IL
POSTMASTER send address change:
First Connection, 211 N. School St., Normal, IL 61761

Periodicals
U.S. Postage
PAID
Normal, IL

First Connection is a monthly publication of First United Methodist Church of Normal.

Editor: secretary@normalfirst.org.

All submissions subject to editing.

Submission Deadline: 2nd Sunday of each month.

Publication Date: 3rd Sunday of each month.

Worship Times

Saturdays:

5:00 pm Worship-casual

Sundays:

9:30 am Worship-traditional

9:30 am Sunday School

11:00 am Worship-blended

11:00 am Sunday School for adults

First United Methodist Church of Normal Staff & Information

Co-Pastor

Rev. Kent King-Nobles
pastorkent@normalfirst.org

Co-Pastor

Rev. Kathy King-Nobles
pastorkathy@normalfirst.org

Director of Student Ministries

Rev. Kim Burke
kburke@normalfirst.org

Finance Manager

Leta Buhrmann
business@normalfirst.org

Administrative Assistant

Theresa Garrett
secretary@normalfirst.org

Director of Music

Janna Peterson
jpeterson@normalfirst.org

Dir. of Children & Family Ministries

Jill McNiff
children@normalfirst.org

Dir. Buildings/Grounds

Mike Sweeney

Congregational Care Coordinator

Barb Todd
btodd@normalfirst.org

Organist

Dr. Dennis Gotkowski

Contact Information

211 N. School St.
Normal, IL. 61761
Phone: 309-452-2096
Fax: 309-452-1327

Office Hours
8-12 pm
1-4 pm
Monday-Friday

Website: <http://normalfumc.org/>

Wi-Fi Network: FUMC-Guest
Password: normal1st



We commit ourselves to be in ministry for and with all persons.

(Social Principles of The United Methodist Church)

First United Methodist Church in Normal has committed itself to provide a Christian community and ministry without reference to any boundaries including age, race, ethnicity, culture, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, economic condition, physical or mental ability. We strive to be an open and accepting community in line with our understanding of what the Gospel of Jesus Christ expects of us.