

First Connection

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

JULY WEDNESDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

- July 3** No worship Service
- July 10** Fellowship Hall
6:30 Worship
7:15 Bowling (@ Bowling & Billiards)
- July 17** Meet at McGraw Park for Worship
(3202 Cornelius Dr.)
6:30 Worship outdoors (bring lawn chairs)
7:15 Fun at the Park, splash pads
(bring towels)
- July 24** Meet at Funks Grove Chapel parking lot
Or meet at the church parking lot at
5:00 to carpool or ride the bus
Bring a picnic supper, lawn chairs,
outdoor games
6:30 Worship at the outside chapel
7:15 Enjoy the beauty of Funks Grove
- July 31** Meet at Rollingbrook Park
(1002 S. Hershey)
6:30 Worship outdoors (bring lawn chairs)
7:15 Stay to play or watch or learn pickleball –
bring rackets

First Fest 2019

What a wonderful event First Fest was on June 2. The weather cooperated for well over 100 people to enjoy food, fellowship, and games. There were train rides for all; a chance for newer members of the congregation to get acquainted with others; some friendly competition in the Light Action Arena; and of course great food. Three families were introduced to Normal First at the event and brought their children to Vacation Bible School the following night! Thank you to the Congressional Care Committee which organized this event.



ILLINOIS SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

Saturday, August 3, 8pm

Group tickets are available for a church outing at the Illinois Shakespeare Festival for a performance of the comedy *As You Like It*. Tickets are \$28 each for the 8 pm performance in the Theatre on the grounds of Ewing Cultural Center. Sign up at the Welcome Center. There are a limited number of tickets, and must be paid for when requested. For additional information please contact btodd@normalfirst.org.

THOUGHTS FROM THE PASTOR

With the Special Olympics State Games here in town, our family went to Normal West to watch our cousin Ben compete in the 4x25 swim relay. The school was filled with athletes, coaches, families and friends cheering on the swimmers.

It was great to see the smiles on the athletes' faces when they finished their competitions. Win or lose, it didn't matter; the joy came in the opportunity to compete, to be with friends, and to reach for a goal.

All of the athletes have some type of disability. And that disability, along with their many other qualities, make them who they uniquely are. One of the gifts of the Special Olympics is creating a space where no one has to hide or be ashamed of who they are, but rather each person is celebrated as a uniquely talented and valuable person.

A few weeks ago, Clarence Page, syndicated columnist for the Chicago Tribune, wrote about the birth of baby Archie, the son of Prince Harry and Meghan. Page found that people's attempt "not to see race" *not only* caused them to make great social gaffes, *but also* limited them from seeing the qualities that make each person unique.

I think his insight can also be applied to people with disabilities. He warns that the downside of trying "not to see color" [*or disabilities*] is that we may unintentionally cause harm.

Page writes, "That's a well-meaning impulse when it leads us to treat others fairly, regardless of their race or ethnicity. But attempts to impose a false invisibility on important issues like race, gender and ethnicity can *blind* us to aspects of other people that we should be *trying* to see." (Chicago Tribune, May 10, 2019)

Borrowing from Page, I would say the

same could be said about persons with disabilities: "attempts to impose a false invisibility on important issues like *disabilities* can blind us to aspects of other people that we should be trying to see."

When we don't see the qualities that make each person unique, we miss a lot of who they are. Rather than working hard to "not see a disability" so we avoid discriminating, perhaps we should be sharpening our vision and looking to see who that person truly is. When we do that, we open ourselves up to discovering what makes them truly unique and special.

There's a small team forming here at the church to help us think about how we can expand and improve our ministries with persons who are disabled. The recently-installed hearing loop in the sanctuary has already provided much better hearing to so many. If you want to know more about it or need assistance using the loop, please contact us.

Our small team is exploring how we can invite more people to assist with leading worship, serving as an usher or greeter, offering their skills in graphic design or art or writing. We're exploring the idea of having a *Disability Awareness Service*. And we're asking what barriers there are, both visible and invisible, that make it difficult for a person with a disability to fully participate in the life of the church.

As always, I appreciate your thoughts and ideas. And if you're interested in serving with our team to improve these ministries, please let me know.

It was very inspiring that weekend in June to drive by the Special Olympics office and see so many athletes and their families standing by the wall, taking photos of those powerful words: *Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt.*"

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

COMING IN JULY

July 7 @ 10:30am—Blood Pressure screening-in library

Wednesdays @ 9am—FIT, Room 53

July 14 @ 5:30pm Second Sunday Out (SSO)-Panera in Normal

ALL ARE WELCOME TO JOIN SSO FOR A DUTCH TREAT TIME OF FELLOWSHIP AND FUN!

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Thank you needleworkers! All projects were blessed in church services on June 8 & 9. There were 17 shawls, 11 lap robes and 3 baby blankets. Continue projects at home and we will meet again in the fall.



NEW MEMBERS TO THE CONGREGATION

Sabrina Pilant and Anthony Dates joined Normal First on Easter Sunday. It was a great day for their family, as their son, Angelo, was baptized



as well! Angelo was definitely the star of the worship service Bri is a dental assistant and Anthony works in food service. They both love animals and are very family oriented. They are members of a four-generation family in our church. Angelo's grandmother is Shelly Pilant and great grandparents are John and Linda Pilant.

INVITATION TO THE HOLY LAND

Rev. Dr. Donald Allston Fishburne returned from a Holy Land pilgrimage and wrote these words: "There is nothing like walking where David and Solomon walked and imagining the lives of Abraham and Sarah, Moses and Elijah. Walking where the Holy Family lived, struggled, walked and rejoiced. And walking the way Jesus walked in life, and to his cross. Standing at the site of the Temple, and hearing his teaching with new ears. Being on mountaintops, at the sea, in the villages and towns where he was born, grew up, taught, healed, and cared for God's people. There's nothing like it. There is no substitute for the experiences of being among the people of the land, in the Holy Land, journeying where Jesus and his disciples journeyed, where the apostles gathered and ministered, where Saul became Paul and changed the world.

I'm still trying to understand how the people of that region get along – and don't get along. We know the descendants of Abraham struggled to live together in ancient times. And how they try to do so in our own day – fishermen, merchants, Arab Bedouin nomads in the Negev and the Galilee – and these days – employees of the world's high tech industries living and working in the international cities of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem."

Christian pilgrims from North America and elsewhere ... can help build bridges of understanding – and can help support Christians in the Holy Land. It is worth the effort. — Join me (Pastor Kent) in January 2019.

The Ministry of Lay Visitors

Some time ago, Joan and I were asked to provide some outreach/liaison to a couple living in a senior retirement community and no longer physically able to attend Church.

Our experience has been wonderful, and we cherish our visits. Our new friends may have physical challenges but are extremely bright people who relish being informed about the growth of our Church. They have expressed keen interest in the human sexuality issue and have been doing extensive research.

We have come to share special moments such as birthdays and anniversaries and swap grandchildren and great grandchildren progress reports. In short, we have been blessed with a new friendship, and quite frankly we are at a loss to know who enjoys our get togethers more.

Warmly, Steve and Joan Beattie

CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRIES



Save the Date—July 27

Need a night out? Drop your pre-k-5th graders off at Normal First for an evening of pizza, crafts, games, and much more! 5-8pm RSVP to Jill at jmcniff@normalfirst.org

YOUTH AT NORMAL FIRST

Jr. High Mission Trip

Thank you for your prayers and support as 6 youth and 2 adults spent time serving in Madison, WI. It was an incredible week and we were able to see many ways God is at work in that community. During the week, we helped with a kindergarten celebration and organized a coat/clothing closet at Midvale Elementary. We also did yard work and clean up at temporary homes for people experiencing homelessness. We hoed cabbages and planted onions in a food pantry garden. We also moved cases of canned goods from one location to another for the Salvation Army food pantry. Each day, we met for devotions in the morning and worship at night. Come hear more stories of our trip at the youth-led worship services on August 10 (5pm) and 11 (9:30 & 11am)!



Sr. High Mission Trip

16 high school students and 4 adults will travel to Kansas City, MO to attend Youth 2019.

Youth 2019 is a conference for United Methodist youth from all across the country. We'll have the chance to attend workshops, Bible study, and worship; to meet with other youth from our jurisdiction; and to meet with bishops from across the US. We will also have time to serve the community of Lenexa, KS. Please be praying for Abby, Natalie, Elise, Gavin, Alex, Austin, Keaton, Logan, Graham, Emily, Makayla, Gavin, Tristan, Lydia, Tori, Audrey, Kathy, Kim, Jimmy, and Aaron as we travel July 7 -14, and that our eyes will be open to seeing God in new ways.



DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR JULY

Conveniently the book of Proverbs has 31 chapters, packed full with thoughts on Wisdom. Many people have selected a month with 31 days and read a chapter a day from Proverbs.

For the month of July, I want to offer this in a modified form. The chapter for each day will coincide with the date. But the suggested daily readings will be a few verses from that particular chapter. I hope you'll benefit from the timeless wisdom in these verses.

The list of readings is included in this newsletter, at the Welcome Center, or by contacting tgarrett@normafirst.org.

Please note that the writer personifies *Wisdom*. So in most of the verses where you read the first person pronouns (I, me, my), it's likely referring to *Wisdom* as the one speaking or making the proclamation. Think of this as a chance to spend a month looking at life through the lenses of wisdom.

My thanks go out to Mary Foster who researched and selected the scriptures for our daily reading.

May the words of wisdom form and shape us in unexpected ways.

Pastor Kathy

"Jesus used these invitational and provocative forms of speech – aphorisms and parables – to subvert conventional ways of seeing and living, and to invite his hearers to an alternative way of life. As a teacher of wisdom, Jesus was not primarily a teacher of information (what to believe) or morals (how to behave), but a teacher of a way or path of transformation. A way of transformation from what to what? From a life in the world of conventional wisdom to a life centered in God." Marcus Borg

FINANCE CORNER

2019 Stewardship Campaign - The theme for this year's financial stewardship campaign to be held in October is "Enough; Discovering Joy through Simplicity & Generosity"

Video testimonials from church members will again be used. If you are interested in giving a testimonial, please notify Pastor Kent, Leta Buhrmann or Rich Beal. Thank you for your continued support of Normal First ministries.

JULY MISSIONS

It's time to collect school supplies for Fairview School so they can be distributed in early August. The following is a list of helpful items that would be appreciated:

****Wide ruled spiral notebooks (8 x 10 1/2")**

****3 Hole punches, wide-lined notebook paper**

*****Crayola crayons**

*****Washable glue**

*****Washable markers**

*****Pencils; pencil grips**

****2 1/2" pencil eraser**

****Scissors-Fiskars round or sharp tipped**

****Pocket Folders-without prongs**

****Kleenex tissues**

****Disinfectant wipes**

Monetary gifts are appreciated too. Label money or checks given to 1st United Methodist Church for Fairview School.

All items may be brought to the mission center in the lounge.

Thank you to everyone who gave items for the McLean County Nursing Home in May. The Home was very appreciative.

Financial Report

General Fund

May	Monthly	YTD
Income	\$66,070.13	\$380,006.56
Expenses	\$72,659.40	\$351,702.18

Attendance

Date	Attendance
May 4 & 5	403
May 11 & 12	301
May 18 & 19	309
May 25 & 26	234

Music Ministries

you belong here

Summer Singers is rockin' our way through some great music! Come join this laid-back, low-commitment choir! On the Sunday dates, we'll gather at 8:30am; on Saturday dates, we'll gather at 4:20pm. We'll learn an anthem and will participate in 9:30am or 5pm worship, respectively.

Sat., August 3 and Sun., July 14, August 18 & 25

We are so grateful & so blessed

Normal First is blessed with quite a number of excellent musicians! We are very grateful for the ways you share your gifts with your church family. Thank you for your faithful participation in worship during the summer months.

Fall Plans are coming together!

Do you know what FOMO* is? You will want to connect with Music Ministries this fall. Watch church communications in August for the complete line-up of musical opportunities here at Normal First!

*FOMO = Fear of Missing Out

Contact Janna Peterson (jpeterson@normalfirst.org) for more Music Ministries info!

Vegetarian Potluck Dinner and a Movie

Friday, August 16 at 6:00 pm,
Fellowship Hall



What a bounty of fresh vegetables and fruits we are enjoying from our gardens and local farmers! You probably have a wonderful recipe using these fresh foods. Please prepare that dish and join us for a meal to celebrate these food gifts.

After dinner we will show the documentary film, *Cowspiracy: The Sustainability Secret*. This documentary explores the impact of large-scale factory farming on our planet, and offers a path to global sustainability for a growing population.

HEARING INDUCTION LOOP

A hearing induction loop has been installed in the seating area of the sanctuary. The hearing induction loop allows any hearing aid equipped with a telecoil to listen directly to our sound system. Many hearing aids already have telecoils and simply need to be activated by your hearing care professional. If you don't have a hearing aid, receivers are available from ushers to check out during worship services.



While we might not be inside the Bowling and Billiards Center for Preview this year, we're setting up outside it! Merge is determined to be a bright and sunny face to the incoming freshman, even if it means getting up at the crack of dawn to be here early enough. We've set up our tent on the corner of the lot where we can greet students with a fresh cup of coffee and some information about our ministry. The summer staff at Merge has been having a great time talking to freshman about upcoming events that Merge has planned, like the cookout in August and Hot Dog Days during Welcome Week. The first semester is usually when students are trying to figure out what

they want to be involved with, and Merge is going to be popping up all over campus, either with our Equally Loved shirts, buttons, stickers, or pens, so it'll be hard to ignore. Preview is one of our first steps in getting Merge's name out and visible to

students. College can be terrifying and we want to provide a safe space for students to be themselves, to find new friends, and to experience God in a new way. We hope that by setting up camp outside the church, we can better advertise all that we have to offer, so if you see us out there bright and early, come say hello!



**A COMMUNITY OF WOMEN
WHOSE PURPOSE IS:**

- to know God
- to experience freedom as whole persons through **Jesus Christ**
- to develop a creative, supportive fellowship
- to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church



Back by popular demand....Attic Sale's Tea Room/Bake Sale!!! Your great pies, cakes, cookies, breads, breakfast rolls, etc. have made the Tea Room such a success in the past years. We want to be certain to have those delicious favorites available for our guests and church members this year too. So start those ovens and enjoy baking so we have a good supply to sell. We will be accepting items the morning of Thursday, July 25th. For more details or questions contact Sara Knight at smknight07@gmail.com.



2019 UMW ATTIC SALE
JULY 26, 8-3PM



Donations will be accepted **beginning 2 pm** on Sunday, July 14th.

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

VESPER CIRCLE
June 16 @ 12pm
Lunch Out @ Avanti's

Take a break from Attic Sale sorting and join us for lunch.
All women are welcome to join us.


ATTIC SALE
FURNITURE PICK-UP IN B/N AREA!



TWO MEN AND A TRUCK
"Movers Who Care."

Please call Ralph Morgan at 452-3127 by Sunday, July 14th to reserve space for your large item.
We appreciate your contribution!
A special thank you to Two Men and a Truck for donating their service!

CALLING ALL BAKERS!!



Church Bake Sale

The UMW will have a bake sale booth at the Downs Village Market on August 7th this year.
The hours are 4:00pm – 6:00pm.

Our wonderful bakers will be needed once again!!! Since this sale is outside, several guidelines must be followed. Please avoid cream- filled, custard, or frosting made with cream, sour cream, cream cheese or eggs. Also, package and label your goodies. Please mark special ingredients such as nuts, no nuts, gluten free, or peanut butter. Home-made pies are especially desirable and sell very well. Delivery of baked goods can be anytime Tuesday, August 6th or before noon on Wednesday, August 7th to the Church Lounge.

UMW LEARNING OPPORTUNITY-
2019 MISSION u

July 19 - 21 or July 21 - 24
Northfield Inn & Suites, Springfield, IL

Spiritual Growth Study - Radical Discipleship, based on the book of Mark Choice:
Women United for Change: 150 Years in Mission or: What About our Money? A Faith Response

Deadline for a discounted registration is: July 4. Registration forms are on the bulletin board by the Chapel

Questions: contact Karleen Dude at 452-3838

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Worship Times

Saturdays:

5:00 pm Worship-casual

Sundays:

9:30 am Worship-traditional

9:30 am Sunday School

11:00 am Worship-informal

11:00 am Sunday School for adults

First United Methodist Church of Normal Staff & Information

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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.

Proverbs Daily Readings

July 1	Proverbs 1:1-7 Wisdom & the Wise
July 2	Proverbs 2:1-15 Seeking Wisdom
July 3	Proverbs 3:5-6 Wisdom's Trust
July 4	Proverbs 4:20-24 Wisdom's Heart
July 5	Proverbs 5:1-2 Wisdom's Prudence
July 6	Proverbs 6:6-11 Wisdom's Perseverance
July 7	Proverbs 7:1-3 Wisdom's Obedience
July 8	Proverbs 8:22-34 Wisdom's Creation
July 9	Proverbs 9:11-12 Wisdom's Rewards
July 10	Proverbs 10:12-14 Wisdom's Love
July 11	Proverbs 11:1-6,13-14 Wisdom's Integrity
July 12	Proverbs 12:17-20 Wisdom's Truths
July 13	Proverbs 13:3 Wisdom's Mouth
July 14	Proverbs 14:22 Wisdom's Love
July 15	Proverbs 15:1-4 Wisdom's Words

July 16	Proverbs 16:3,9 Wisdom's Faith
July 17	Proverbs 17:1,9,27-28 Wisdom's Peace
July 18	Proverbs 18:15 Wisdom's Discernment
July 19	Proverbs 19:11 Wisdom's Patience
July 20	Proverbs 20:7 Wisdom's Legacy
July 21	Proverbs 21:21 Wisdom's Blessings
July 22	Proverbs 22:6 Wisdom's Child
July 23	Proverbs 23:15-19 Wisdom's Heart
July 24	Proverbs 24:3-4 Wisdom's Relationships
July 25	Proverbs 25:21 Wisdom's Kindness
July 26	Proverbs 26:12 Wisdom's Humility
July 27	Proverbs 27:23-27 Wisdom's Harvest
July 28	Proverbs 28:5 Wisdom's Justice
July 29	Proverbs 29:11 Wisdom's Self-Control
July 30	Proverbs 30:24-28 Wisdom's Creatures
July 31	Proverbs 31:8-9 Wisdom's Compassion