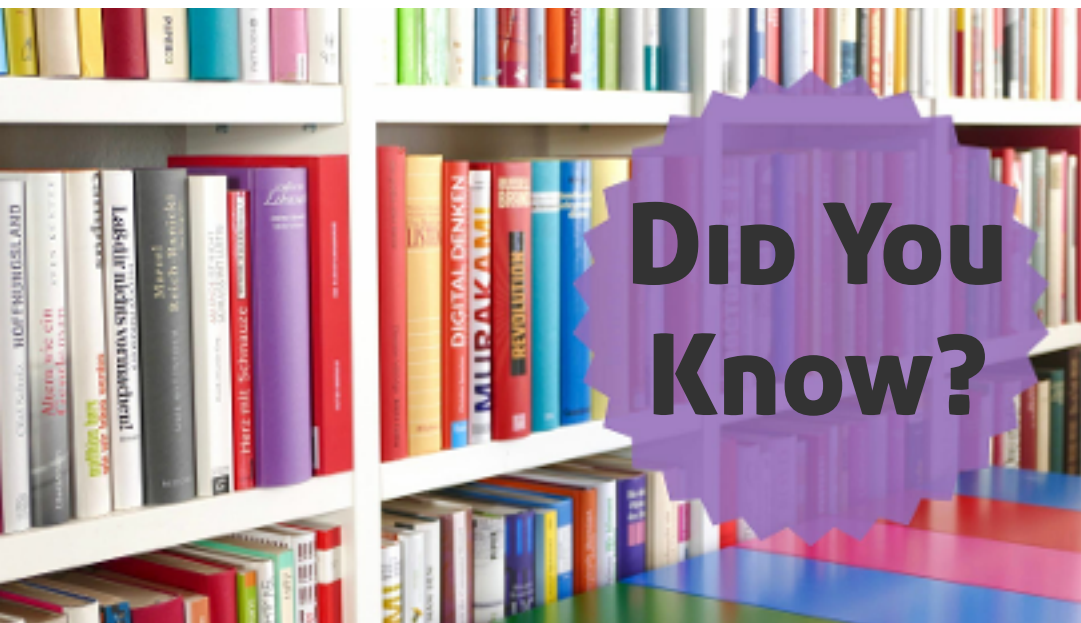


# the **HERALD**

PEORIA FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH | MAY, JUNE, JULY 2023





## Did You Know?

by Lori Herold  
Church Librarian

- Our church library has multiple resources for research, teaching, growing deeper in your knowledge of the Bible, and faith-based fiction for reading pleasure.
- The library has many different translations of the Bible.
- You can use your electronic devices to search on the library's online catalog by title, author, or topic.
- There are many group DVD studies. When you find your desired study in the catalog, the "local notes" will tell you the number of sessions and length of sessions.
- There is a shelf of group study participant books that can be used by study groups FREE. See "local notes" in the catalog or ask the librarian.
- You can ask me to order materials for the library.
- You can ask me to have materials checked out and ready for you to pick up.
- The library has books for sale.
- You don't have to be a member to check out materials if your contact information is on file.
- If you go to the right of the Cafe in the Gathering Space and then left into the hallway, you will find the library on the right.

The church library is one of the best resources in our building. Have you stopped in lately? I'd like to help you and/or your study group find something that will enrich your journey with Christ.

## LIBRARY HOURS

Sunday Morning: 8AM - Noon

Tuesday Mornings: by Appointment Only

Call the office for a Tuesday appointment.

# the HERALD

VOLUME 90, NUMBER 2  
MAY, JUNE, JULY 2023

### **Publisher**

*First United Methodist Church of Peoria*

### **Editor**

*Julie Bell*

### **Directing Pastor**

*Tim Ozment*

### **Associate Pastors**

*Adrian Garcia*

*Miguel Rios*

### **Copy Editing**

*Sandi Fell*

### **Other Contributors**

*Cathy Clark*

*Lily Garcia*

*Lori Herold*

*Christina Koepfel*

*Eugene Maison*

*Rodney Nelson*

*Dan Philips*

*Julie Rolffs*

### **Contact**

*116 NE Perry Ave.*

*Peoria, IL 61603*

*309.673.3641*

*info@fumcpeoria.org*

*www.peoria1.com*

DISCLAIMER: The information represented here is for the purpose of informing the FUMC-Peoria congregation of the change of events for a quarter. They are however subject to change. For more up-to-date information, refer to us online at [www.peoria1.com](http://www.peoria1.com), via social media platforms (@fumcpeoria), or via our weekly email newsletter, eHighlights.

DEADLINES: Contact Julie Bell at

[jbelle@fumcpeoria.org](mailto:jbelle@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.



## Discernment Survey Results

After a lengthy period of discernment about the future denominational ties of the Peoria First church, our survey results have been tallied. There were 378 valid surveys submitted. 59% of the surveys indicated stay United Methodist and 41% of the surveys indicated a desire to leave the United Methodist denomination. Our Church Council had predetermined a threshold of at least 60% to begin the process of disaffiliation. That threshold, however, was not reached. Therefore, we are a United Methodist congregation and will remain a United Methodist congregation.

Sometimes not knowing, uncertainty, and waiting are the hardest things we have to endure. Many of us know all too well the agony of waiting for test results from a physician. Uncertainty brings anxiety. That season for our church has thankfully ended. Now, we know. Now, we are responsible for how we move forward. The work that needs to be done, the ministries that need to be empowered, the evangelism that reaches into our neighborhoods, the missions' partnerships that impact our world, must become the focus of our prayer and participation. Thankfully, God is not finished with us. Let us put our hands to the work that we've been called to do on and from the corner of Main and Perry.

Thank you to the Discernment Team for fairly presenting both sides of the issues and providing an informative set of meetings, FAQs, and documentation for the decisions that needed to be made. To those members of the team who presented a position or offered information, well done and thank you.

Thank you to the congregation for how well you have treated one another in this process where the potential for conflict, high emotions, and differing opinions could have boiled over. Instead, you have remained in love with God, and in love with your neighbor. Our prayer is that this spirit of grace and mercy will continue as we move forward together.



THE MOST **IMPORTANT INGREDIENT** IN  
HELPING PEOPLE FEEL WELCOME IS  
**YOU**, THOSE ALREADY CONNECTED TO  
OUR CHURCH.



**PASTOR TIM OZMENT**

*Directing Pastor,  
Peoria First United Methodist Church*



**WELCOME!**  
**BIENVENIDO!**  
**YŌKOSO!**  
**SALUT!**  
**WILLKOMMEN!**

by Pastor Tim Ozment

Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. (1 Peter 4: 8-9)

One of the marks of a healthy church is its ability to welcome people into the life of the congregation. This actually begins before someone even gets to our front door. Advertisements, a social media presence, our online worship services, and podcasts go a long way in making someone feel welcomed and help them to begin to connect to who we are as a congregation. However, the most important ingredient in helping people feel welcome is you, those already connected to our church. Your smile, warm handshake, and friendly conversation can either make a person's experience with the church great or unremarkable.

On Sunday mornings we need everyone doing their best to welcome the stranger in appropriate ways. We learned during the pandemic that people have a variety of comfort levels with social distancing – masked or unmasked, 6 ft apart or toe-to-toe, fist bumps or hugs. While most of us would prefer some social distancing and space to breathe, particularly when we're in a new place, we all want to be accepted and welcomed.

A great place to connect with new people is in the Gathering Space over a doughnut and a cup of coffee or hot tea. This space was intentionally designed to allow all our worship attenders and Sunday school class members a space to catch up with one another even if they worship and study in different rooms. We encourage you to not only welcome newcomers

into the worship spaces but invite them to the Gathering Space for a bite to eat and an opportunity to get to know one another.

As you have noticed, the Gathering Space is also a hangout for our guests coming in from downtown. Some have come because they want to worship with us. Some because there are doughnuts and coffee. Regardless of what brought them, we believe God has sent them our way for a purpose. Welcome them warmly with a cheerful "Good morning." If the moment presents itself pause to chat for a while. Invite them to your Sunday school class, or to sit with you in worship.

We all know what a great addition the Gathering Space is for welcoming strangers and fellowship with old friends. This ministry space is often full of laughter, conversations, occasionally tears, and sometimes prayer. It may seem like a simple ministry, but without servants behind the counter of the Café the Gathering Space may grow quiet. So, we're inviting you to serve with our morning hospitality team to offer coffee and doughnuts to fuel fellowship and conversations. If you can welcome everyone with a pleasant smile and greeting, know how to pour a cup of coffee, and can put a doughnut on a napkin – you're qualified! Our hope is to get enough volunteers, so they only need to serve just once a month for a few hours on Sunday. It may seem like a small thing, but in God's economy small things often become life changing – just ask the boy with the 2 fish and 5 barley loaves.



# THE NEXT CHAPTER

by Christina Koepfel  
Director, Youth Ministries and AV

At the time of writing, none of us know whether we are continuing the disaffiliation process or not, but as we look to the future no matter the decision, we are heading into a new chapter of existence as the church at the corner of Main and Perry. Incidentally, my senior high school yearbook also had the title, “The Next Chapter.”

Recently, I’ve been looking through my high school yearbook. As I look into the eyes of those young people, I see promise, hope, and excitement for the future. Since those days, several people within the pages have passed away. People, who at the time, were looking forward to adulthood, college, parenting, and for some retirement. Because it was my senior yearbook, there were only 3 signatures – all adults. One in particular stands out, my soccer coach and counselor, Randy Sleeth. Mr. Sleeth was a listening ear, a guiding voice, an advocate, and at times a second dad. He encouraged me, redirected me, reassured me, comforted me, and taught me life lessons both on and off the field. He also challenged me in my faith, not in a way that caused me to question it, but in ways

that caused me to think more deeply about what it meant to follow Christ. When I would see him after graduation, Mr. Sleeth lit up and continued to talk about the “big C” – Confidence. He never left his role as a coach, confidant, or mentor.

In Matthew 28:16-20, we find the great commission, in which Jesus tells the disciples / us to go make disciples, baptize, and teach them. I want to really hone in on verse 20, “Then disciple them. Form them in the practices and postures that I have taught you and show them how to follow the commands I have laid down for you.” (from The Voice). When I think of someone outside of my family discipling me in this way, I think of Mr. Sleeth.

In education and youth ministry circles, it is known that young people do better in life when they experience a strong network of healthy adult relationships. Seeing how just one healthy relationship with Mr. Sleeth made an impact in my life, I completely agree. He disciplined me without calling it discipleship. He did exactly what Jesus wanted his followers to do – he showed me how to follow Jesus in real life.

So, what does this have to do with our next chapter as a church? I’m glad you asked. We have challenges ahead of us. One of them is volunteering in our children and youth programs. I’ve heard many times that we treasure younger people and families, but our actions show a different story. The main reason someone says they can’t volunteer with the youth - they are too old. Folks, you’re never too old to disciple. You don’t have to be wild and crazy to be in the life of a young person. But you must show up, not just physically, but spiritually and mentally as well. Ask questions. Listen to the answers. Be present. Share your life with them and let them share their life with you. Be in relationship.

Let’s get wild and crazy now. What would it look like if we shook things up a little? What would it look like if we had cross generational Sunday school classes? (How many classes are learning the same topics as “the speaker” has availability?) What would it look like if older classes mentored younger classes? What if you knew the names of every young person in our congregation? What if every young person knew you? What if we changed the way we understand ‘church’?

I would love to talk with people who want to shake things up and help make the transition to a church filled with cross-generational/racial/socioeconomic/ideological relationships.





# DO I HEAR \$100?!

by Julie Rolffs

Chairperson, Missions Team

*"Ok, let's start the bidding at \$75. We have a frozen, homemade peanut butter pie ... We're starting at \$75 ... \$75, anyone? This pie looks delicious and could easily be kept frozen to share at your Thanksgiving gathering! How about \$50?" And from the back of the room, an enthusiastic bidder yells, "\$100!! I bid \$100!!"*

Such was the fun and fellowship of the 1st Annual Pie Auction for Liberian Scholarships held last November 19, 2022. So fun that the 2nd Annual Pie Auction is already scheduled!

Over 50 items, primarily pies, were donated, some by local businesses, and many by members of our church, including five made by Pastor Tim and one by 11th grader Mariam. We also had "delicioso" Hispanic sweet novelties and 11 pies and cakes made by a generous friend from Washington, IL, State Fair Blue Ribbon winner Diana Wara.

Each pie sold for over \$300 (the cost of a 1-year scholarship) gave one of the high schoolers a chance to "pie a pastor" with whipped cream ... a guaranteed way to drive the bids up a bit! Pastor Tim thinks we need to bump that up to \$500 next time! Ha-ha! We'll see ...

Carolyn Prusak and her team did an amazing job organizing this fun evening while auctioneer Dan Philips kept us

laughing with his quick jokes, backward bids, and straight-up humor. Quick paddles and generous bidding made the auction move along, and donations given to the Youth table allowed them to bid and enjoy their spoils. And some "friendly fire" counterbidding by friends all made the evening a wonderful time of fun and fellowship at our first big gathering since before 2020's fun-canceling pandemic. We were reminded that coming together as a congregation to celebrate and give from our hearts while enjoying yummy desserts with our tongues makes for a wonderful evening together!

What a tremendous success we had with this first-ever Pie Auction, raising over \$11,000 for scholarships at the Korsen United Methodist School in Liberia - a school built with funds given by our church! The scholarships will support students' \$300/year tuition at the school, which in turn allows the teachers and

administrators to be paid. In addition, a portion of the funds will help the school's principal earn his bachelor's degree and further equip him to lead this K-9 school about 90 minutes from the nearest paved road in Ganta, Liberia.

We're grateful to all who baked, donated, and attended, and encourage you to mark your calendars for our 2nd Annual Pie Auction for Liberian Scholarships on **November 11, 2023!!** Don't forget your forks!



# Fine Arts

by Eugene  
Director, Fine Arts

## Foster Gallery

Mark your calendars for the first Friday of every month as we invite you to join us in fostering the vibrant Peoria art community. Experience the Foster Gallery's captivating exhibitions and connect with talented artists, their guests, and fellow art enthusiasts from the Peoria community. Don't miss these exhibition reception dates: June 2, July 7, August 4, September 1, October 6, and November 3. Come and be part of our growing presence in Peoria's thriving art scene!



### Upcoming Exhibitions

*In a New Light*, by Doug & Eileen Leunig with special guest artist Mike McGarvey  
Reception: Friday, June 2, 5–8 PM / Show Dates: May 30 — June 25

Whether focusing on the most essential element of life—water—or the beauty of the living environment that surrounds us, we are inspired to create. We use high-frame-rate video to capture the beauty and movement of water in a way that is impossible with the naked eye. We use single-shot slow shutter speeds to capture the energy of trees, and we create digital photo collages to personify Mother Nature. The methods may be diverse, but the message is the same—love, respect, and appreciation of our natural world.

We are also pleased to exhibit, *Sanctuary*, a video by Mike McGarvey. This video of amazing pollinators was shot entirely on location in Mike's backyard garden.

**Brenda Pagan:** *A Study on Fantastical World Building* shares glimpses into my journey of building a fantasy world to house my philosophies and imagination.

**Michael Jermaine Adams:** *AL Meinei: Contextual Layering*. Layering with acrylic paint promotes a certain strategy and philosophy that is calming to my mind. These recent works are structured towards the sublime and the suggestive.



Reception: Friday, July 7, 5 - 8PM / Show Dates: June 29 - July 23

## Art Enrichment with Sandi Fell

Sandi offered expert instruction on design techniques and shared various methods for crafting exquisite paper flowers. Please keep watch for future events.



The Fine Arts Ministry is made possible by the generous support of the First United Methodist Church Foundation through the Foster Endowment.





**Arts Camp**  
6W2P

**JUNE 26-29**  
**8:30AM-4:45PM**  
**3rd - 6th grades**

6W2P SCAN TO REGISTER

6W2P SCAN TO VOLUNTEER

Registration also available in eHighlights

6 Ways 2 Praise encompasses black lights performance, culinary art, dance, photography, vocal music, and instrumental music.

Cost for 6W2P: \$40.00 for the first child in a family; for additional children in the same family, \$30.00 each. All-day students should bring lunch.

**Registration for both camps is open.**

**Registration deadline June 18.**

**Register soon, as space is limited!**

**Volunteers are needed and appreciated for all Fine Art events. Contact Eugene Maison at 309.673.3641 or [emaizon@fumcpeoria.org](mailto:emaizon@fumcpeoria.org).**

## Coming Soon . . . Summer ART Camps

**JUNE 26-29**  
**1 - 4:45PM**  
**7TH - 12TH GRADES**



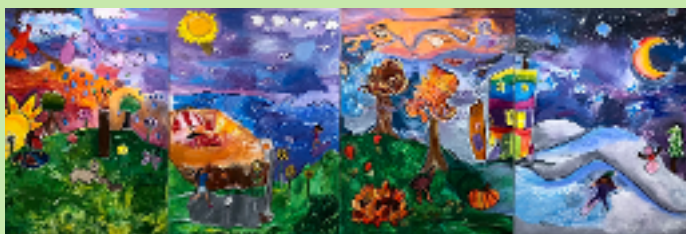
SCAN TO REGISTER

Registration also available in eHighlights

Puppetry allows the participants to work as a team, learn new skills, hone what they have already learned, and, above all, have fun, all while glorifying God.

Cost for Puppet Camp: \$30.00 for the first student in a family. For additional students in the same family, \$20.00

## Lincoln K-8 School After School Arts and Choir



Thank you to all our Volunteers. We extend our warmest gratitude to all our volunteers for their devotion to the Fine Arts Ministry. Your selflessness, enthusiasm, and generosity continue to inspire us all. Thank you again for all that you do. We look forward to continuing to work together to impact our community positively. God Bless! Please continue to lift the Fine Arts Ministry in prayer.



# *God With-ness*

by Julie Bell

Director of Communications

When you pray, do you find that everything you have to do comes to mind and you feel like you just can't stop and really hear God's voice? Well, that can be me more often than not. Is it you?

Let eight simple words in Psalm 46 be your guide. These 8 words are powerful and transforming. They bring comfort and peace. And they bring hope. Eight simple but powerful words . . . "Be still and know that I am God."

It's simple, right? For some, yes. For others like me, not so simple. 'Still' means to put an end to a state or activity, a deep silence and calmness. Instead of rushing into the day, what if I choose to relax in the presence of God before I start my day? Not start my day and then invite God into my rushing, my to-do list, my busyness. Sometimes busyness can be a badge of honor. I am guilty as charged. I do not sit well. And when I sit, I need to have a purpose to sit. Sometimes when I sit to watch television, I also have a book in my hand. Am I really giving either one the attention it deserves?

Be still and know . . . it is a shift in attention, a shift in intention, and it takes practice.

Be still and know what? That God is God. I am not; and you are not. I am not in control of a denomination or a church, but God is in control. God, I don't know how my kids are going to respond, and it seems like they're making bad decisions. God meets them where they are. God is in control and will provide. It takes stillness and practice to recognize that when I cease my activity, I can recognize God's activity.

In Philippians chapter four Paul says, "don't be anxious about anything, but with prayer and petition, present your request to God. And then it says . . . and the peace of God will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." God's peace is not passive, it's proactive. When we are still, His peace guards our heart and mind. Be still and know that I'm God.

I challenge you to practice stillness. Find a place and a time to be still with God. It may start as a moment with God. It may start as 20 minutes. As with anything the more we practice being still with God, the easier it will get and the more we will desire and want for that time. Stillness is hard. Silence is hard. Thanks be to God that He meets us where we are.

This goes back to our understanding of God as Father, that He just loves spending time with us. He loves hearing our voice and He's so very patient with us. Doug and I have two adult boys who live hours away. There is nothing better than when they call and just want to talk to tell me about their day, their struggles, their successes – I honestly don't care why they called me – I just treasure the time to hear their voices. And just maybe some advice I give, some encouragement I may offer, and celebrating with them may bring them comfort and peace. I can only imagine how God feels when I show up to talk with Him, to really be with Him.

Be still and know that I am God. Be with God. . . God with-ness.



# Living Each Season

*Permit me to share a story with you. Once a lady in her 40s went to visit a retiree. They both spent a full day together. They sat on the porch to chat, enjoying a delicious, iced tea in the mid-morning heat. The elderly lady seemed to be enjoying every sip of tea more than chatting, so the visitor decided to give her that space. After a light meal, they sat in the living room where the host showed her a photo album. Each memory shared seemed so vivid. At the end of the day, as the guest returned home, she began to reflect on her experience that day. She asked herself, "When was the last time I've truly enjoyed each detail in what I do, or every moment with the people I love?, or evenings in the backyard?"*

This story makes me think about how we tend to spend our busy lives daily worrying about a tomorrow that does not yet exist. We easily forget how God gifts us with a lifetime meant to enjoy his company and his many daily blessings.

I was born in the city of Monterrey, Mexico. The city experiences only two cold months a year, January and February, the rest are hot. July and August highs reach 104-110 F, for sure.

It is said to be the industrial capital of Mexico, rich with banks, businesses, factories, and manufacturing plants of all kinds. There are countless banners everywhere wanting workers. It is a sleepless city.

One of the consequences of living under such weather and accelerated pace, is failing to recognize the seasons. Everything seems the same with not enough time to enjoy the moments. When my family moved to Illinois, we discovered the gift of each season. Here nature acquaints you with the changes so that you may adapt.

It helps you appreciate every important moment in life. I have become aware of each disciple's journey, season of flourishing, and maturity. I can recognize each challenge faced and even the smallest victory granted by God.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 says, "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens."

Taking time to enjoy each season that God gives, is a blessing from Him. We must not try to prolong a season, for in doing so we would alter His plan for us. Instead, let us savor every detail, so that we can grow and learn from God's perfect timing.

May God guide us and help us to see his love and power in every season in the life of our church, our families, and our own personal lives. Let us live with gratitude.

by Pastor Adrian Garcia



**PASTOR ADRIAN GARCIA**

Pastor of Latino & Outreach Ministries at  
Peoria First United Methodist Church

# MONKEYS, CRAZIES, AND MISSIONS . . . OH MY

by Ruth Lilly Garcia

Director, Children and Family Ministries

God continues to amaze us as we grow:

**Higher:** In Worship. With the leadership of Ms. Jill Foster, at 11:15AM on Sundays, the 4OurKing team has offered worship in several services. The team has grown so much in numbers and age groups that I am believing God will call more people to serve alongside Ms. Jill starting in August (after a summer pause June- August to refresh).

**Deeper:** In the Word. We finished the *Eat this Book Bible* reading challenge during our Wednesday Bilingual Bible Study. I am so grateful for all the families that worked together to encourage their children to fall in love with God's Word. Congratulations to all the children that memorized Ephesians 4:25-32.

**Prayer Room:** Children are placing more prayer requests on our prayer walls and praying for each other. I can't wait to hear more answered prayers. Thank you for using the prayer calendars.

**Wider:** Creating a culture of invitation. Kids brought friends to our Good Friday / Easter Events, Sunday School and KIX Club. This summer let's receive the families and friends of our kids. Please sit

with them and invite them to go out for ice cream. Don't be shy to share your faith. Jesus is real and relational.

**Missions.** Children are praying and working together to bless our children in Honduras. We are open and looking for ways to bless our community.

**Closer:** This year the children's ministry has opted for *Summerama* day events instead of a traditional VBS. We are investing our God given strength, current resources (human & economic), and goals in equipping our children thru classic onsite and new summer offsite events.

**Classic:** Support 6W2P, June 26-30. Minister to children playing soccer at Morton Square Park every Tuesday evening June 6 - July 18.

**New:** Monkeying Around @ the Zoo is our 1<sup>st</sup> *Summerama* event. Children K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade will bring God's presence to our community as we learn to see God's fingerprints in creation. June 30.

*Loud, Messy, and Crazy* is our 2<sup>nd</sup> event where our 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> graders will experience being crazy about Jesus at East Bay Camp in Bloomington. I believe God will show up and inspire this generation to bring His Kingdom to their generation. June 21 and 22.

Oh My! What can you do?

- We need people that will answer a call to teach a small group for 30 minutes on a Sunday once or twice a month or bimonthly.
- A person or two to oversee the walls and bulletin board decorations once a month.
- A person to manage the children's prayer room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor (no experience required): gather prayer concerns, decorate, restock, and follows the Lord's prayer focus prompts.
- Chaperones to various events.
- Prayer warriors for our children, our awesome volunteers, and staff.
- For the *creation* of a special needs space.

**THE GOAL OF THE CHILDREN'S MINISTRY IS TO MAKE DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST IN THIS GENERATION BY CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN TO GROWN IN THEIR WALK WITH CHRIST AND TO REACH THIS BROKEN WORLD WITH THE LOVE, PRESENCE, AND POWER OF OUR KING.**



# Knowing Christ

by Cathy Clark  
Director, Adult Discipleship

"You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life." - John 5:39-40

I love Bible Study. I love to participate in Bible Studies, and I love to teach Bible Studies. Every time I teach a Bible Study I learn from the participants. However . . .

Bible Study will not give you or me eternal life. We could memorize the entire Bible and be able to discuss minute issues of biblical scholarship and yet fail to experience the truths found in its pages. It is a subtle temptation to prefer the book to the author. A book will not confront you about your sin, the author will. Books can be ignored; it is much harder to avoid the author when He is seeking a relationship with you.

The Pharisees in Jesus' day thought God would be pleased with their knowledge of His Word. They could quote long, complicated passages of scripture. They loved to recite and study God's law for hours on end. Yet Jesus condemned them because, although they knew the scriptures, they did not know God. They were proud of their Bible knowledge, but they rejected the invitation to know God's Son.

Can you imagine yourself knowing all that God has promised to do in your life but then turning to something else instead? We are tempted every day to turn to substitutes. These substitutes are not necessarily bad things. They might include serving in the church, doing good deeds, or reading Christian books. No amount of Christian activity will ever replace your relationship with Jesus. The apostle Paul stated, "But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things, I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith." Philippians 3:7-9







# *Save the Date*

Sunday, June 25 @ 11AM

**1 Outdoor Worship Service  
and Picnic**

details coming soon



# ***let's play soccer!***

by Dan Philips

Director, Community Ministries

The grass is growing in Morton Square Park and kids at Lincoln K8 School are looking forward to summer break.

For the past 25+ years, First United Methodist Church has been a positive part of summer break, with a free summer soccer program for kids ages 5 -12 at Morton Square Park.

From June 6 through mid-July, with the cooperation of the Peoria Park District, Peoria First UMC brings God's love, grace, and recreation to nearly 200 kids and their families each Tuesday night. Over the years, the Park District has maintained the fields, provided referees, and provided equipment when needed.

What a joy it is to see the eager faces on all the kids as they get ready for another year of fun in the park. It is also a joy to welcome back coaches, volunteers, and families that have been a part of this ministry for years.

Morton Square Soccer is also an active positive connection with our Buddy, Fine Arts, and other school year programs and ministries at Lincoln K8. This weekly connection keeps and strengthens the positive loving Christian relationships formed at Lincoln K8 throughout the school year.

It all starts with registration in the Worship Center at Peoria First UMC on Tuesday May 23 and Tuesday May 30, from 5-7PM. On those nights, volunteers

register players and their families, and put together teams in three age groups, 5-7, 8-9-, and 10-12-year-olds. There are 6 teams in each age group and games usually last for about 45 minutes. Forms are filled out and information given to the families about the program.

The best news of all is that it is easy to be a part of this ministry and no experience is necessary to coach or help. We play a low or no impact game of soccer that lets all participants play at all times and a coach's role is to be there as a positive caring influence, and to cheer on your players. We would like to have at least 2 coaches for each team so that if a coach must miss a night, then the needs will still be covered. Other volunteer needs are helpers on registration nights and during game time in the park. Needs in the park include helpers for reading and learning weekly bible verses and to help with treats and refreshments. Bi-lingual helpers are also needed to include our Spanish speaking church members, neighbors, and families.

Please be a part of a church that cares and shares the gifts God has given us all by volunteering for Morton Square Soccer 2023.

To be a part, or find out more, please contact Julie Bell at 309.673.3641



# peoria1.com



Scan here to visit  
the peoria1 website.

## The Church with a Heart in the Heart of the City

Your tithes and offerings are very important to the future of our ministry work.

3 Ways to Give:

peoria1.com

peoria1 App

Text

1.888.364.GIVE (4483)

Type 1 in message  
block

Scan below for  
online giving



New User



Returning User

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



**First United Methodist Church**

**150 YEARS OF SERVICE**

**Celebrate God's Love... with us**

**First United Methodist Church**  
Perry Avenue at Main Street and Hamilton Boulevard  
Peoria, Illinois 61603, 309-673-3645

**THE CHURCH WITH A HEART IN THE HEART OF THE CITY**

The church is a member of the First United Methodist Church in Peoria, Illinois. The church is a member of the First United Methodist Church in Peoria, Illinois.

**SUNDAY SCHOOLS**  
8:15 A.M.  
9:00 A.M.  
SUNDAY SCHOOL  
9:00 A.M.  
10:00 A.M.  
11:00 A.M.  
12:00 P.M.  
1:00 P.M.  
2:00 P.M.  
3:00 P.M.  
4:00 P.M.  
5:00 P.M.  
6:00 P.M.  
7:00 P.M.  
8:00 P.M.  
9:00 P.M.  
10:00 P.M.  
11:00 P.M.  
12:00 A.M.

**A COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE**

**COME JOIN US FOR THE DEDICATION OF OUR SESQUICENTENIAL PARK**  
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, AT 9:00 A.M.

**A CHALLENGE TO THE FUTURE**

**Sesquicentennial Park**

by Rod Nelson  
Church Historian

While working at the front desk, on a Sunday morning, I happened on this wonderful piece of history from 40 years ago that was published in our very own Peoria Journal Star. This full-page ad celebrated the 150th Anniversary of Peoria First United Methodist Church. 1983 does not sound so very long ago, but guess it is—40 years ago! Just think, in 10 very short years we will be celebrating our 200th Anniversary!