

A Look Ahead

☉ June 29-July 3: Vacation Bible School
9:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

☉ July 3: Church Office CLOSED.
(Independence Day observed.)

The United Methodist Men will meet for breakfast at Golden Corral Restaurant 1850 Zumbahl Rd. in St. Charles on Saturday, July 11, at 8:00 AM. A short business meeting will follow the meal. **All men are invited.**

Articles to be included in the July 8 *Spire* are due in the Church Office by Wednesday, July 1. You may also e-mail them to spire@fumcstcharles.org. Please put the word *Spire* in the subject line.

☉ Staff

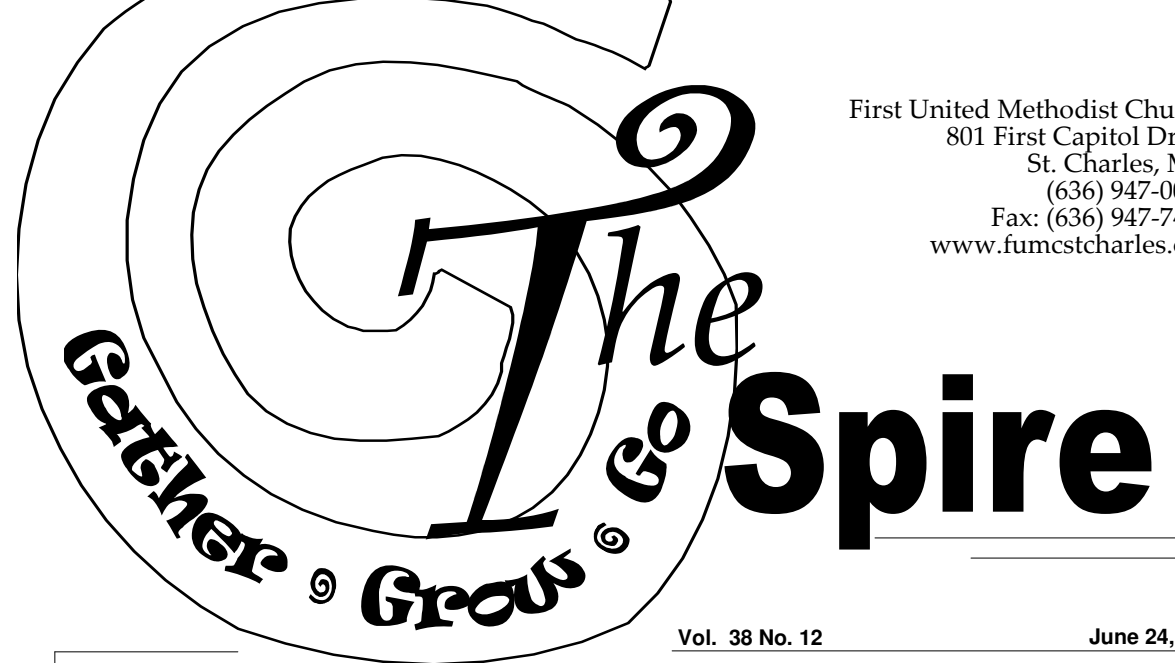
Rev. Robin Roderick
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Rev. Glen Lashley
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First United Methodist Church
801 First Capitol Dr.
St. Charles, MO 63301
www.fumcstcharles.org

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Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.
The people of The United Methodist Church.



First United Methodist Church
801 First Capitol Drive
St. Charles, MO
(636) 947-0066
Fax: (636) 947-7478
www.fumcstcharles.org

A Recurring Question

By Rev. Robin Roderick

On my second or third Sunday here, while processing to preach, a member tugged at my arm stopping me in mid-step. “Why isn’t there a flag in the Sanctuary?”

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UMM Meeting

My response was this, “I don’t know why this church doesn’t have an American Flag in the sanctuary. I can only tell you that many churches feel the sanctuary is the one place where all our attention is on God. Our symbol is not the flag of any nation state, but the Cross of Christ.”

It is not unusual that the “new pastor” hear concerns or opinions right off the bat. At that time, now almost five years ago, I did some research. The flags, U.S. and Christian, were removed during the tenure of Rev. Metcalf and McIntyre. That is going on 18 years ago at this point! They were removed because of “bickering about the flags” (my words not rev. McIntyre’s) which the pastors

deemed to be an idolatry.

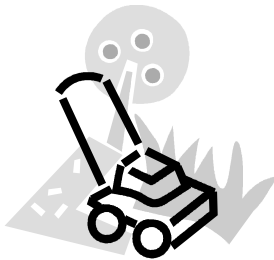
The Church Council, per my request, addressed the issue of the flags. During the discussion it was noted that there is much concern on both sides. It may be hard for either ‘side’ to recognize the other’s point of view, however there are just as many folks adamant about not having a

flag in the sanctuary as those who wish it were there every week. The council decided to maintain the policy of having the flags present on secular patriotic holidays and then removed. That remains the policy to this day.

So why this column? Because from time to time I get requests that range from the polite 'please put the flags back' to the more forceful stopping me in worship etc. demanding their return. Your council chair receives letters from a couple of folks repeatedly.

As I said, the elected church leaders in our council have reviewed this policy, even though it is technically a decision that the pastor has full authority to make. I have been asked about my personal

Neighborhood Action is a program that seeks to minister to people, primarily elderly or disabled, who live in the neighborhood (s) around the church and who need assistance with maintaining their homes or with small tasks for helping with daily life. We are looking to reach out and be

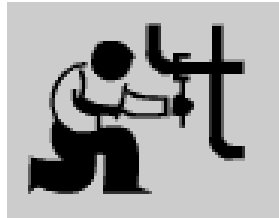


Neighborhood Action

of service to people who don't have anyone else to provide this help. This service may involve mowing a lawn, minor repairs to a home, painting, providing transportation to the doctor's office and other similar tasks.

We are looking for volunteers who may be willing to provide a few hours once a month for this type of service.

Neighborhood Action will meet at the church, Saturday morning, July 11th, at 9:00 a.m., to continue to organize and to



generate ideas and plans. Anyone interested in this type of mission is invited and encouraged to come. If you have a particular skill - carpentry, electrical, plumbing, masonry, furnace/ AC repair, etc., and are willing to be a volunteer, please come to the meeting, or call Paul Boughton, 947-1301.

opinion and it comes back to these questions: How have secular holidays so influenced the life of the church? The sanctuary is the place where we worship God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, so what symbols recognize His sovereignty and His alone? What

does the scripture say about any nation's reliance on the government rather than on God? And finally I look at the small glass globe on my desk on which is etched the outline of the continents with a cross inside. John 3:16 is inscribed on the base, ". . . for God

so loved the world" So if we were to display flags on a regular basis, which flags shall we display if we are to honor God's love of the whole world?

Summer Doldrums

It's no surprise that attendance at church drops off in the summer. People take vacations, have visitors, and find many other excuses for not attending. They take a break from the stress in their everyday lives, and take a vacation from their lives in Christ.

Why is it important to be faithful in attendance with the First United Methodist Church community during the summer?

The Bible tells us we need to attend church so we can worship God with others in our community of believers. We will only grow to spiritual maturity when we receive the assistance and encouragement of other believers.

You may think you will not be missed, but you ARE! Not only do we need to hear from others, they need to hear from us! There was someone at church last Sunday who missed hearing your welcoming words, someone who had something to say to you that could make a difference in your life.

With the stress we face daily from economic, employment, political and personal arenas, we all could use a Good Word. From the Pew Research

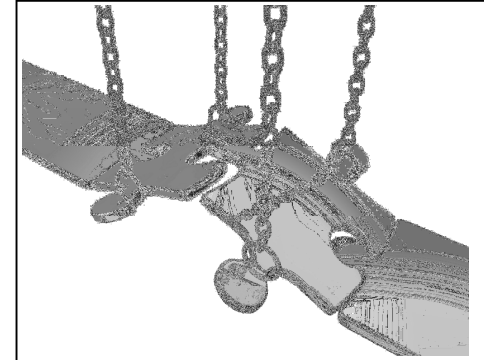
organization, we know that those who attend religious services weekly or more often are happier than those who attend less often. Wouldn't it be interesting to measure what happens to our blood pressure when we walk in the doors to First United Methodist Church!

With a nod to Grant MacDonald of Grant's Graceland (www.grantsgraceland.org), here are ten practical (?) ideas to help prop up sagging attendance:

- 1) Have the preacher preach from a dunk tank.
- 2) Offer free samples of "Hellfire and Brimstone" BBQ sauce to every new visitor.
- 3) Add a slide to the Atrium and advertise the church as an indoor amusement park.
- 4) Offer a free tank of gas for every five sermons heard.
- 5) Convert the parking lot into an RV campground.
- 6) Convert the sanctuary aisles into putting greens.
- 7) Replace the church sign with one that reads "Tourist Information."
- 8) Have the elders and deacons dress up in animal costumes and open a petting zoo on the front lawn.
- 9) Put up a sign advertising souvenirs and clean restrooms.

And, most important of all: 10) Be there yourself!

- Kathy White



STAYING connected

Lock Change

The locks to the church property are going to be changed in August. With the success of our code key system, we will change the locks on all of the doors and restrict key issuance to a few key church officials. If you require access to the building after hours, and you have been using a key, you will need to get a code for our handicap door prior to August 1.

Getting a code is simple. We have a form that you complete and turn in to the office. We will then contact you and give you your own unique code. Please contact the office at 947-0066 if you have any questions.

- Michael W. Waller, Office Manager

Our deepest sympathies are extended to the families of those who have died recently.

* Jean King, mother of Sharon Byers, passed away June 16, 2009.

* Katy Rowlett, stepmother of Rhonda (Randy) Dick and step-grandmother of Miranda, Sarah, Brian, and Nathan Dick, died on May 19, 2009.