

August 2016

THE VOICE

ST. ANDREW UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



As brooding rain clouds gathered over the parsonage on Aberdeen Street, so did a half-dozen friendly souls from St. Andrew. The first to arrive were treated to a symphony of rain drops beating on the gazebo roof. But the storm passed over with alacrity and more guests arrived to "Gather with the Pastor." We enjoyed tasty finger-foods, great company, lively conversation, and organic, vegan s'mores over the camp fire. The date of the gathering was chosen to coincide with the local dog-walking group's presence in the park behind the parsonage, Woodborough Park. Yes, it was an opportunity for us to cherish each other, but also to practice the art of Visibility. Maybe ten dog walkers came out despite the rain. Trust me, they noticed our little group.

I've observed an increase in the community taking notice of St. Andrew and our ministries. The Bear Den #5 of Cub Scout Pack 304 is a new addition to our building use. Thirteen families see us in a way they never had before through this Boy Scouts of America-sponsored group. The Brookdale Senior Living Community's director of activities, Lori Barr, routinely asks for us to be a faith-based presence at their site. Tell her "Thank You," if you're part of that great community. Likewise, Waterford Estates Senior Living (where Sara Harrington resides) has welcomed us for a study in September. The new Bloom Township Food Pantry specifically reached out to your church to invite partnership. The V.F.W. cordially invited my participation in the Memorial Day Parade, where I led the marching Cub Scouts of Pack 304. The Cancer Support Center is eager to have our help at the Walk of Hope in October. The Homewood Park District reveled in our youth group's participation in their Ultimate Frisbee event (it would have been a dud without us) and promised to personally let me know of upcoming free events. At the Fourth of July Parade, where eighteen of our church

family staked out the corner of Ridge and Center, several marchers commented on our shirts and our group, pleased and encouraged by our presence.

This development thrills me. We are becoming relevant to the organizations making a positive impact in our neighborhood. We are on their radar, on their maps. They are beginning to say in their planning meetings, "Make sure the people at St. Andrew Methodist know about..." These groups see an association with your church as a strength. Our job is to continue this awareness-raising.

Since the St. Andrew UMC T-Shirts have arrived with the stylish new logo, it's time to step up our visibility efforts. Of course, simply wearing your T-shirt in public helps tremendously. Friendly, natural social interactions are the logical next step. For instance, my family enjoys garage sales, and we wear our St. Andrew UMC T-shirts when we go "sale-ing." The exchanges that spring up begin like most typical conversations. But, by the grace of God, some conversations go deeper into hopes, aspirations, hurts, and sometimes

(Continued on p. 3)

UPCOMING EVENTS

| | | |
|---------------------|--|------------------|
| August 1- 6 | Pastor Biel and Deacon Regina Bridges at Five-Day Academy for Spiritual Formation | |
| August 21 | Celebration, Blessing and Sending Forth Of Bishop Tracy S. Malone Gary United Methodist Church, Wheaton | 3:00 p.m. |
| August 22 | Hello Montessori Classes Begin | 9:00 a.m. |
| August 26-27 | PRHeSS Rummage Sale St. Andrew Parking Lot | 9:00 a.m. |
| September 11 | RALLY DAY! | |



(Pastor's Letter—Continued)

prayers. We discovered that the parsonage is a local landmark for being organic and for the North American Butterfly Association-certified butterfly garden we planted. While our invitations to worship are politely received or declined, our connection to our neighbors lasts. And these neighbors know to what church we belong.

Because we speak so highly of you, St. Andrew (the Bringer) UMC, waitstaff, librarians, the Mayor, cashiers, hygienists, secretaries, teachers, retired folks, local business owners want to know how things are going at your church. Even young adults I've met playing Ultimate Frisbee (always wearing our t-shirt) are giving me their ideas of where we can be seen in public for free. (May wonders never cease!)

As you read this newsletter, please be thinking about who in your life might enjoy one of the multiple "Entry Points" St. Andrew offers to get involved in the life of our church. It isn't only worship, you know. We offer crafting, scouting, drug/alcohol anonymous, singing, feeding, serving, study, coffee, fitness, youth activity...so much!! And tell someone, so that the love of God, the peace of Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit can grow in our village.

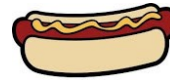
Deep Blessings,
Pastor Biel



Rally Day

Summer is passing quickly and September is just around the corner. St. Andrew Rally Day will be held on the second Sunday, September 11. Come and join us for church, the first day of Sunday School, and a fun hot dog picnic to wrap up the day. Hot dogs, buns, condiments, chips, water, and ice will be provided. We would love to have you bring a favorite picnic side dish/dessert to share and BYOB (bottle of drink if you would like a soda or lemonade instead of water).

Save the date—September 11—and come join your friends to start our Fall worship and Sunday School!



From the Youth Group

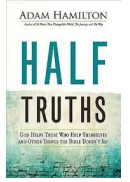
The St. Andrew Youth Group thanks all those who donated nuts and dried fruit for our mini fundraiser.

On July 26th, we held a playful planning session before packing the trail mixes for the 5-Day Academy of Spiritual Formation. We look forward to a year of fun, faith, and growth together. Beginning on September 11, our regular meetings will start promptly at 5:00 p.m. on Sunday evenings (No First Sundays).

If you know anyone in grades 6-12 who'd like to join us, tell Pastor Biel.



All-Church Study: **Half Truths,** **by Adam Hamilton**



Yes, it's back-to-school time for kids and adults, too, in the life of St. Andrew. We are pleased to offer the five-week sermon series and study based on the book, *Half Truths*.

They are simple phrases. They sound Christian, like something you might even find in the Bible: Everything happens for a reason; God helps those who help themselves; God won't give you more than you can handle; God said it, I believe it, that settles it; and Love the sinner, hate the sin. We've all heard these words. Maybe we've said them. They capture some element of truth, yet they also miss the point in very important ways. Join us as we search for the whole truth.

Participant books are \$15. DEADLINE: please pre-order by August 18th.

Upcoming study groups:

- ♦ Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m. at Waterford Estates, Hazel Crest, starts September 6.
- ♦ Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. at Brookdale Senior Living, Olympia Fields, starts TBA
- ♦ Sundays at 5:00 p.m. for Youth (and those who love youth) at St. Andrew UMC, starts September 11.

As in previous years, we are looking for people willing to host, to open their homes for evening study groups, as well as people to play the DVD and lead discussion.

"If you know how to press 'play' on your DVD player, you can lead a Bible Study in the 21st Century!"

With Rally Day Approaching, Let's Get in Full Swing

Before you know it the summer will be winding down; vacations will be over, kids will be returning to school, Labor Day picnics will be behind us, and it will be Rally Day here at St. Andrew (September 11 this year.) That means that all activities at St. Andrew will be in full swing. Now, as should be obvious, we can't all just SIT ON the swing. A whole bunch of us need to be there to do the pushing -- even better, we could all take turns at pushing the swing.

Since our spring Vision to Action luncheon and through the summer, the Church Council has been synthesizing the results of discussions our members had about the major work areas of the church. While we are still engaged in this process, we have already identified the following focused priorities for our church.

In the area of Church Growth and Outreach:

- ♦ Organize follow-up with church visitors and others expressing interest in St. Andrew. This includes providing a welcome gift to visitors and initiating member follow-up with thank-you notes, phone calls, and personal visits.
- ♦ Establish a church team for consistent and ongoing communication to the community about EVERY church event.
- ♦ Maintain a visible presence at community events (already begun this summer with the St. Andrew T-shirts and event attendance).

In the area of Finance and Physical Plant:

- ♦ Establish an ongoing St. Andrew "Development Team."

- ♦ Build upon previous successful fundraisers.
- ♦ Secure leaders and volunteers to serve on a Stewardship Campaign this fall.

In the area of Children and Youth Ministries:

- ♦ Expand the team of those willing to assist with Sunday School and other children's activities.
- ♦ Establish a leadership team for youth activities.
- ♦ Enlist a youth member to serve on Church Council.
- ♦ Provide opportunities for youth to attend UMC youth events.
- ♦ Provide more opportunities for children and youth to be participants in worship services.

In the area of Worship and Spiritual Growth:

- ♦ Develop a larger core of members willing to participate in worship as:
 - ♦ Liturgists
 - ♦ Communion Servers
 - ♦ Musicians
- ♦ Build upon possibilities for spiritual growth beyond the worship service, including small groups, classes, creative initiatives (your ideas here!)

We have great ideas here at St. Andrew and a common interest in not only sustaining our church, but growing it and expanding our impact in the community. Church Council meetings are generally attended by 8-12 members, representing a total committee membership of perhaps 25. But with St. Andrew's membership of around 120, and average worship attendance of 60 or more, we definitely need and should have more

folks "pushing the swing." There are many rewards to serving St. Andrew, not the least of which is a stronger sense of connection to a church we love.

So, please, as we enter a new school year I ask:

- ♦ What priority or area of service to St. Andrew appeals to YOU?
- ♦ Where do you think you might have time or talent to contribute?
- ♦ Is there an area you'd like to learn more about?
- ♦ Where would you like to grow as part of our Christ-centered faith community?

Get back to me (maryleeruss@aol.com), Pastor Biel (and the Nominating Committee), Karen, or any member of the Church Council, and let us know where you can/will serve in the coming year.

—Mary Lee



*Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying,
"Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"
And I said, "Here am I; send me!" Isaiah 6:8*

CPR Training at St. Andrew



Have you wanted to take a course in CPR but didn't know where to go? In late September, CPR training will come to St. Andrew! The cost is \$25.00 per person. At the end of the class you will get a certification card from the American Heart Association that will be valid for two years.

A sign-up sheet will soon be available in the narthex. Date and time of the class are yet to be determined, so if you have a preference, let us know when you sign up.

Then—spread the word! Tell your friends and neighbors about this valuable training. It just could, one day, save a life.

July 26 Walk-Through

Church Partners Re-Imagining (formerly Community Partners for the Common Good) conducted a walk-through of St. Andrew's physical plant on July 26. The purpose was to assess our space and energy use and our infrastructure. We look forward to their recommendations.



ALL ARE INVITED!

There will be a celebration, blessing, and sending forth of Bishop Tracy S. Malone on Sunday, August 21, at 3:00 p.m. at Gary United Methodist Church, 224 N. Main Street, Wheaton. All are invited!

Prayer Bookmarks

Please help us update our prayer card by sending additions, deletions, or changes to Mary Lee at maryleeruss@aol.com or to Karen at standrew@ameritech.net. If you write a prayer request on the back of your attendance sheet that you would like to have added to the prayer card, please mark that option to let us know.



Congrats, Eagle Scouts!

Congratulations go to Luke Logan and Alex Fuentes for achieving the highest award that Scouting offers to Scouts. Both received their Eagle awards in a Court of Honor ceremony at St. Andrew on July 17. A lot of effort and study went into this award, culminating in a special service project. Luke's Eagle service project was the construction of a 420-foot rustic wood fence and Alex's project was the rehabilitation of a vernal pond, both at the Homewood Izaak Walton Preserve. We are extremely proud of the achievement of these two fine young men!

Bishop's Task Force on Inter-Cultural Competency Training for Community Organizing

Engaging one another in conversation...

How well do we know our diverse neighbors? How do people with different experiences from ours experience this community? What do they value about it? What do they hope for; what do they fear; what concerns them?

Before we can develop an effective multicultural ministry, we must know how to build relationships. We must be sensitive to racial and cultural differences in communication styles. We must respect different perspectives, based, as they are, on different experiences.

On Saturday, September 24, between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., a group from St. Andrew will attend a pilot training session uniting intercultural competency with community organizing skills. This session is designed to equip church members to deepen relationships with neighbors in the community. So far the contingent from St. Andrew includes Jessie, Jerryelyn, Rev. Regina Davis-Bridges, and Pastor Biel. If this effort, with an eye toward eventually developing some multicultural ministry, sounds like something you could be passionate about, there is room for one more. Please let Pastor Biel know you are interested.

August Mission Project

Those collection boxes in the narthex? They're for our August mission project, a "Special Needs" collection for Respond Now. As you probably know, the government SNAP ("food stamps") program helps only with food items. Non-food items cannot be purchased with the SNAP card. Therefore, we are collecting things like toothbrushes, toothpaste, toilet tissue, deodorant, razors, soap, shampoo, lotion, sanitary napkins for women, laundry detergent, dish detergent, baby wipes, and diapers (sizes 5 and 6 only, please; they have plenty of diapers in the smaller sizes). Thanks for your generous donations!

Please Call Governor Rauner

Ask Governor Rauner to sign Senate Bill 2038, an emergency funding bill for human service programs in Illinois, including those that serve seniors, children, and persons with disabilities. Agencies such as Respond Now, PADS, and Catholic Charities are all affected by the lack of a state budget and can't provide many needed services. So far the Governor has vetoed this bill, which passed the General Assembly with nearly unanimous bipartisan support. The number to call is 217-782-0244.

Respond Now Food Collection

As always, any non-perishable food items are accepted and appreciated at Respond Now. Possibilities: canned beef ravioli, canned baked beans, canned kidney beans, canned vegetables, crackers. The food wagon collection is the first Sunday of the month, but you can place your donations in the shopping cart by the front door at any time.

Thank You for Your Generosity

We have surpassed our goal of 800 blue and black ball-point pens for the Respond Now "Back-to-School Party." Respond Now will be distributing about 400 backpacks filled with school supplies to children in kindergarten through 8th grade at the party, which will be held at Calvary Baptist Church in Glenwood on August 6. Our pens have been delivered to Respond Now, so if you have purchased pens, perhaps you can hold on to them for next year's collection.



June 22, 2016

Dear St. Andrew Congregants,

Your faithful support is invaluable to Respond Now and allows us to continue helping families become stable by providing food, emergency prescriptions, and homelessness prevention services. We focus on long-term solutions to break the cycle of poverty.

Thank you for your thoughtful donation of \$304.56. I appreciate your demonstrated commitment to our work.

As Respond Now celebrates its 45th year of service, I am excited about the work our organization has done in the effort towards ending hunger and struggles with poverty in the south suburbs. I would greatly appreciate your help in spreading the word about the work we do here to help our neighbors.

We never underestimate the importance of our donors to the Respond Now team, and we look forward to a lasting partnership with you in working together on the many problems facing those living in poverty.

Sincerely,

Carl J. Wolf

*Executive Director,
Respond Now*

CROP Hunger Walk Report



The 2016 CROP Hunger Walk netted \$22,976.39. This is better than last year, but not nearly as good as the 2014 Walk when we got \$30,000. The church which raised the most was Trinity Lutheran Church of Park Forest with \$4,091 (16 walkers). Second was Emmaus Community Church of Chicago Heights with \$3,326 (21 walkers). Third was Salem Lutheran of Homewood with \$2,047 (24 walkers). St. Andrew had 5 walkers and raised \$1,379. Thank you to our walkers and thank you to our donors!

This was the 70th anniversary of CROP, and on the CWS website, the Methodist Church is one of the denominations recognized for being involved in CROP Hunger Walks since the very beginning.



Rummage Sale

Come and join the PRHeSS family fun sale! Beginning at 9:00 a.m. on Friday and Saturday, August 26th and 27th, PRHeSS (Pan African Rural Health & Social Services) will hold a rummage sale in St. Andrew's south parking lot. If you have items you would like to donate, you can bring them to the south classroom (the "Boat Room") the week before the sale. If you would like to help, there is something for everyone to do. And don't forget to check out the bargains you'll surely find there! Call 708-668-6020 if you have any questions.

We can surely all find a way to support Dr. Kormoi's efforts to help bring health and education to rural Africans in Sierra Leone.

Become a Member of the Grande Prairie Singers

The Grande Prairie Singers will hold auditions for all new singers on Saturday, September 10, from 10:00 a.m. to noon at Grace United Protestant Church, 266 Somonauk, Park Forest. This year's gala 40th anniversary season includes concerts in December, March, and May, along with guest performances with both the Illinois Philharmonic and Southwest Suburban Symphony orchestras.

Prospective singers can contact the Grande Prairie Singers office at 708-481-8684 or by e-mail at gpcasbcglobal.net for more information and to schedule an audition time.

Grande Prairie Children's Choir



Come Sing With Us!! New singers are always welcome.

Tuesdays, 4:30—5:30, at 2640 Park Drive, Flossmoor.

Joining the Grande Prairie Children's Choir offers:

- ♦ Outstanding vocal training for students
 - ♦ Treble Singers (1st—3rd Graders)
 - ♦ Concert Choir (4th—8th Graders)
- ♦ Affordable Tuition
- ♦ Weekly rehearsals in Flossmoor, beginning August 23, 2016
- ♦ Performance Opportunities

Call 708-557-0472 or visit www.grandeprairiechoral.org.

Mini-Camp for Singers in 1st—8th Grade

Includes *Singing*Moving*Acting*Games!

9:30 a.m. to noon, August 8—10

2640 Park Drive, Flossmoor

(St. John's, across from Leavitt Park)

Tuition is \$30.00. To register, call

708-557-0472, or visit

www.grandeprairiechoral.org

COMING SOON!

Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser



Mark your calendar! Our spaghetti dinner fundraiser has been scheduled for Friday, October 14. Please try to be available to attend and to help with this event. We'll also need the congregation to sell tickets, which will be available after Labor Day.



Christmas Cookie Walk/Bazaar:

We still need co-chairs for this important fundraiser, which will probably be held on the second Saturday of December. Please consider whether you could serve in this way. We'll need lots of helpers and donations of homemade cookies, candy and bazaar items. Contact Lucy if you can step up and co-chair this event.

Caring Crafters



Crocheters and knitters are welcome, and so are other crafters. We'd love to have you come and share your projects and ideas with the group. We are making prayer shawls as well as other handcrafted items. Caring Crafters meets in the narthex on Tuesdays from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Come, join us!

TOPS



TOPS invites you to check out the local chapter that meets here in the Wesley Room every Thursday morning between 9:30 and 11:00. Take Off Pounds Sensibly!



Chair Yoga Classes



Yoga is a great way to reduce stress, increase endurance, and feel better overall. Even better, participating in yoga can help you burn calories, increase core strength, and improve posture and balance.

A gentle form of yoga in which students do not get onto the floor is offered in Fellowship Hall on Monday and Wednesday afternoons at 2:30. The class is taught by Jeffrey Lip-pert, certified instructor. It is free for Silver Sneakers members and available at a nominal fee to others. So come, join the fun!



August 2016

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|--|-----------|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH | 2 | 3 9:00 am-Men's Coffee 1:30 pm-Caring Crafters 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH | 4 9:30 am-TOPS | 5 | 6 |
| 7 10:00 am-Summer- Sing Rehearsal 10:30 am-Worship Holy Communion Food Wagon | 8 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH | 9 | 10 1:30 pm-Caring Crafters 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH | 11 9:30 am-TOPS 2:00 pm-Finance | 12 | 13 |
| 14 10:00 am-Summer- Sing Rehearsal 10:30 am-Worship | 15 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH 7:00 pm-SPRC | 16 | 17 9:00 am- Men's Coffee 1:30 pm-Caring Crafters 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH 7:00 pm-Christian Education | 18 9:30 am-TOPS | 19 | 20 |
| 21 10:00 am-Summer- Sing Rehearsal 10:30 am-Worship Loose Change 3:00 pm-Bishop Malone Celebration GaryUMC Wheaton | 22 9:00 am-Hello Montessori Begins 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH | 23 | 24 1:30 pm-Caring Crafters 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH | 25 9:30 am-TOPS | 26 9:00 am-PRHeSS Rummage Sale | 27 9:00 am-PRHeSS Rummage Sale |
| 28 10:00 am-Summer- Sing Rehearsal 10:30 am-Worship | 29 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH | 30 | 31 1:30 pm-Caring Crafters 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH | FH = Fellowship Hall LF = Lower Fellowship SC = South Classroom | |  |

the Voice
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Methodist Church**
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Mission Statement

St. Andrew seeks to be
a community of faith
that is
Christ-centered
compassionate
and inclusive
sharing gifts and resources
while spreading the gospel
and serving others
locally and globally

Worship with us at 10:30 am
Child care provided

Welcoming Statement

***Jesus said, “This is My commandment,
that you love one another, just as I
have loved you.” John 15:12***

St Andrew UMC prayerfully strives to be a faith community of open hearts, open minds and open doors. We believe all people are of sacred worth and dignity as part of God’s creation and as demonstrated by the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. As God’s love extends to all, we therefore welcome everyone into participation and membership regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender, family structure, socio-economic status, marital status, educational background, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental ability, faith history, or life experience. We acknowledge that no two of us are alike, except in God’s love for us. We believe that our differences make us a stronger community of faith as we worship together and as we grow in our relationship with God and one another.

***Jesus said, “Whoever welcomes you
welcomes me, and whoever welcomes
me welcomes the one who sent me.”***

—Matthew 10:40

