

April 2016

THE VOICE

ST. ANDREW UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



The Easter stories, in worship, will turn to conversion stories. The disciples will experience a conversion so that they are no longer spectators but are the church, through which God's saving work will reach multitudes. Peter will experience conversion in his understanding of who is acceptable to God. Gentiles will experience conversion by having the resurrection explained to them by witnesses. Saul will experience the conversion on the Road to Damascus that leads him to abandon his persecution of Christians and become a follower of Jesus Christ.

What conversion is needed in our world? On one hand, individual conversion is an ongoing affair. My own faith and my trust in God is still a work in progress. "Could do better," is stamped all over me. I'm so glad I am not alone in my work towards improvement. I have

the church to help me. I also have Jesus's Holy Spirit. Each time we take communion I am reminded of Jesus's strong and continuing desire to eat and share with us.

Just as individuals need to keep growing in faith, the church is always under construction, or conversion, as well. We have the tasks of freeing people from social evils, forgiveness, proclamation, and teaching interpretation of current events. This looks different today than it did in the past.

If we choose to follow the Holy Spirit, I believe we will find the gospel alive in whatever setting we are led to. The good news can be manifest in every circumstance. Our daily lives are where the scars are visible, where someone's name spoken in love can be truly heard, where our witness makes a difference. Jesus shows up in those moments with grace, healing, mercy, and a call to do better.

Now that Easter has entered our lives once again, I'd like to see us take seriously the conversion of making our everyday lives an offering to God. I'd like to see the law of love realized in our words and actions. I'd like to see God's justice evidenced in our relationship to people and the planet.

This kind of conversion will not be possible with our own resources. Pray for the strength that comes from God to make the necessary changes; to set these bones dancing and melt these stone hearts. Pray that the people of St. Andrew, "The Bringer," church choose to follow the Way, trusting that we are named and blessed. Pray that we, too, may experience a conversion that leads us into deeper trust and an understanding of the world God wants us to build.

Commit yourselves to God and to one another.

Your Brother in Christ,

Pastor Biel

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 10	<i>Fruits of the Spirit Bible Study Begins</i>	9:15 a.m.
April 17	<i>Vision to Action Potluck Luncheon</i>	After Worship
April 18-23	Pastor Biel on Vacation	
April 24	Crop Walk, Salem Lutheran	1:00 p.m.
April 30	Salad Luncheon and Fashion Show	12:00 noon
May 1	Confirmation Sunday, Dr. Malone Preaching	10:30 a.m.
May 3	Potluck Supper, Jessie Cunningham Speaking	6:00 p.m.



Pastor Biel on Vacation

Pastor Biel will be on vacation with his family April 18 through April 23. If you need ministerial care while he is away, please call Rev. Dr. Regina Davis-Bridges at 708-543-1994 through Thursday, April 21. On Friday and Saturday, April 22 and 23, Rev. Fritz Bartels of Crete United Methodist Church will be available. You can call him at 815-600-3989.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

April 5	Michael Weber
April 6	Howard Horton
April 6	Jane Strother
April 8	Ashley Mitchell
April 10	Margaret Netherton
April 14	Jane Baugher
April 14	Kay Paul
April 15	Cherryl Groves
April 16	Beverly Lowell
April 18	Chloe Remson
April 19	Chuck Jordan
April 20	Jane Sawatzki
April 20	Daniel Weber
April 25	Kyah Bridges
April 25	Barbara Dantzler
April 25	Rachel West
April 26	Sara Harrington
April 28	Muriel Jones

Vision to Action

Potluck Luncheon for

St Andrew: Sunday, April 17

After our first all-church visioning retreat in 2014, we worked together to develop our current Mission Statement for St. Andrew:

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.

At our March 2016 visioning retreat, we clarified our Core Values as a witness to:

Inclusiveness, Diversity, Community of Faith, Community at Large, Christ's Love, Service

At the beginning of this month, we formally adopted our Welcome Statement as a Reconciling Congregation. (See *the article on the next page.*)

Now it is time to build on our Mission Statement, Core Values, and Welcome as we determine how to move forward into ACTION. **In order to accomplish this, the Church Council and Pastor Biel invite all members to a potluck luncheon on Sunday, April 17, immediately following the service, at which we will look toward the future through concrete planning.**

We hope all members will plan to attend! There will be a sign-up sheet in the narthex on Sunday, April 10.

(Vision to Action Potluck—cont.)

Please bring a dish to feed 12 or more. But most important, bring your ideas on how you would like to see our church focus our energies and resources, starting now. Also think of ways you, personally, would be willing to be a part of “the action” here at St Andrew.

Special note: THERE WILL BE UNUSUAL DOOR PRIZES FOR THOSE WHO ATTEND.



Prayer Bookmarks

Please help us update our prayer card by sending additions, deletions, or changes to Mary Lee Hoganson at maryleeruss@aol.com or to Karen Patterson 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.

Confirmation Sunday

On Sunday, May 1, four of our youth will be confirmed and one will be baptized. Ashley Malone, Adia McCastle, Victoria Ogunniyi, and Darren Whorton will be received into membership at St. Andrew. Rev. Dr. Tracy Smith Malone, our District Superintendent, will deliver the sermon. A reception will follow the service so we can acknowledge the hard work of these dedicated and dynamic young people. Well done!

Bible Study

You are invited to a six-week study of the *Fruits of the Spirit* on Sundays, April 10 through May 22, at 9:15 a.m. Bring your favorite Scripture passage related to love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, or self-control (from Galatians 5:22-23).

Bibles for Our Youth

We have not presented Bibles to our youth for several years, so now, during two worship services in May, about a dozen of St. Andrew's young people will be presented with Bibles.

You can help fund this ministry, if you like, by designating your donation, “Bibles.”

Outcome of St. Andrew Reconciling Discernment Process

Since August of 2015, St. Andrew has been engaged in a discernment process to determine whether our church would adopt a Welcome Statement that would set the foundation for formally becoming a Reconciling Congregation of the United Methodist Church. The St. Andrew Reconciling Task Force led this process. During this time, a significant number of the members and friends of St. Andrew participated in informational opportunities and focused discussion groups, provided by the Task Force, in order to understand what it means to be a Reconciling Congregation.

This process culminated in a congregational vote, which took place over three Sundays in March 2016. 59 members of St. Andrew voted in person or through the mail. The ballots were counted this past week. A 95% majority of votes cast were in favor of adopting the Welcome Statement. As a result, St. Andrew will take the next step of adding our name to the list of Reconciling United Methodist churches that are a part of the Reconciling Ministries Network.

(Reconciling Discernment Outcome— cont.)

The Task Force wants to thank everyone who took the time to give this decision such thoughtful consideration. It is clear to us that all members of St. Andrew have a deep affection, love, and care for this church and want to witness the love of Jesus Christ throughout our community. This church has reaffirmed in one more concrete way that ours is a faith community in which everyone can be welcome and where all can experience God's amazing grace and love.

If anyone has further questions about what it means to be a Reconciling United Methodist Church or about our next steps, please feel free to speak with any member of the Task Force or Pastor Biel.

St. Andrew Reconciling Task Force: Kyah Bridges, Lorena Campbell, Jessie Cunningham, Tom Dascento, Rev. Regina Davis-Bridges, Carolyn Funk, Mary Lee Hoganson, Russell Hoganson, Juanita Jarard, Jennie Lowell, Waneta Martin, Karen Patterson



The Welcome Statement of St. Andrew United Methodist Church, Homewood, IL

Adopted April, 2016

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***

United Methodist Women DebEst Circle

The joint circle meeting (the DebEst Circle—formerly Deborah and Esther circles) will meet at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 19, at the church (in the narthex). Donna Attinello is hostess. Devotions will be given by Dee Calkins. The program will be assembling 30 personal care kits for the South Suburban Crisis Center.

Travel-Sized Personal Hygiene Items Needed

The congregation is invited to bring to church (before April 19) any travel-sized personal hygiene items: small soaps, shampoos, conditioners, and lotions.

On April 19 the DebEst Circle will be assembling 30 personal care kits (in crocheted bags made by the Caring Crafters) to be given to the South Suburban Crisis Center in Tinley Park, which provides temporary housing for abused women and their children. Some of the circle members purchase special items, but we rely on help from the congregation to get plenty of small soaps, shampoos, conditioners, and lotions. Some have already been given to us, but if anyone has more, we can use them. Any extras we receive can always be used by our PADS guests.

Salad Luncheon, April 30

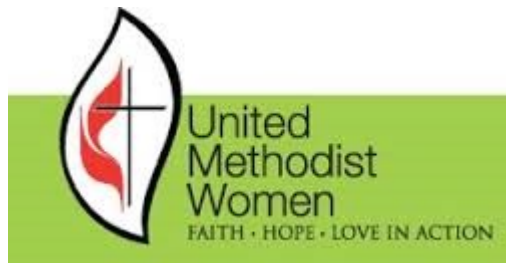
The United Methodist Women's Salad Luncheon and Fashion Show will be held at St. Andrew on Saturday, April 30, at noon. Featuring the theme, "The World Is a Rainbow," the luncheon will offer homemade salads and desserts. Fashions are from Dress Barn in Homewood. There will also be door prizes.

Tickets are \$16.00, reserved seating only. Purchase tickets by Thursday, April 28 at the church office or from members of the church. You can also phone the church office at 708-798-8904 or call Lucy at 708-799-7953.

Salads Needed for Saturday, April 30

Please sign up in the narthex to bring two identical salads for this, the only major fundraiser of the UMW, so they can pay their mission pledge. Each salad should be about 12 servings.

THANK YOU for helping the UMW support programs that help especially women, children, and youth.



Potluck Supper Tuesday, May 3, 6:00 p.m.

The Whole Congregation Is Invited

Jessie Cunningham will speak about her experience as a delegate to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women.

Our United Methodist Women will sponsor this Potluck Supper and program on Tuesday, May 3. If you can't make it to the potluck, you are still welcome to come to the program at 7:15. There will be no UMW business meeting as that will take place at the May joint circle meeting. Hostesses for the event are all DebEst Circle members.

UMW Southern District Day of Spiritual Renewal

This year's Day of Spiritual Renewal will be held on Saturday, April 16, from 8:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at First United Methodist Church of Evergreen Park. We can meet at church and go in one car. Breakfast and registration are from 8:45 to 9:30, followed by the program, *Created for Happiness*, led by Rev. Julie Bunt. Cost for the breakfast is \$3.00. So far, Lucy and Waneta are planning to attend. Call Lucy (799-7953) if you wish to be added to the registration.

Vital Congregations Conversation Series **Healthy Discipleship Systems**

April 16, 8:30 a.m.

Crowne Plaza Hotel

2875 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Northbrook, IL



Junius B. Dotson

A series of teaching and training opportunities is presented by the Office of Congregational Development. The seminars are intended to empower laity, pastors, church staff, conference staff, and others in the area of discipleship.

The seminars will be led by Pastor Junius B. Dotson, lead pastor of Saint Mark UMC in Wichita, KS, who is known for creating teams that “get things done.”

The registration fee is \$30, due before April 8. To pay by credit card, register online on the UMCNIC website. Click on the News & Events tab, then the calendar, then the event listed on April 16. To register by email, contact Judith Siaba, jsiaba@umcnic.org, or call 312-346-9766 Ext. 724.

Five-Day Academy **for Spiritual Formation**

Your Spirit Calls!

August 1-6, 2016

Bellarmino Jesuit Retreat House
420 W. County Line Road, Barrington, IL

The Five-Day Academy for Spiritual Formation is a program of Upper Room Ministries, providing an opportunity for clergy and laity to deepen their relationship with God through a daily rhythm of prayer, worship, learning, and reflection.

The teaching faculty are Daniel Wolpert (*“Creating a Life With God: The Call of Ancient Prayer Practices”*) and Jane Patterson (*Keeping the Feast: Metaphors of Sacrifice*).

The Five-Day Academy is sponsored and supported financially by the Spiritual Formation Committee of the Northern Illinois Conference and in partnership with the Upper Room. Both Pastor Biel and our former pastor Lora Zink are on the leadership team.

The registration fee is \$700, due before June 20, 2016. There are limited funds available for scholarships. Please contact Judy Pohlman, Registrar, at pohlman.j@com-cast.net for the application. More information is available on the brochure on the kiosk.



Annual Conference - Walk by Faith

The 177th Northern Illinois Annual Conference will be held June 5-7, 2016, at Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles, Ill.

This year our Mission Challenge is to collect school kit items for the Midwest Mission Distribution Center, which is our United Methodist disaster relief supply center just south of Springfield, IL. Our district has been asked to provide erasers and pencil sharpeners, about 50 per church. (Pencil sharpeners can be bought in bags online at a much cheaper rate than individually in stores.) Let's help make ALL schools a place to learn and thrive.



60 Days of Prayer

A daily prayer book, *60 Days of Prayer*, is available to help guide your prayers through May 29, which includes the 40 days prior to General Conference, the 11 days in session, and the nine days following the event.

By using the prayer guide, United Methodists will connect through the same scripture, meditation, and prayer for each day. *60 Days of Prayer* is available free as a PDF download, a daily email service, or at the website, 60daysofprayer.org.

South Suburban CROP Hunger Walk Sunday, April 24, 2016

Mark your calendars for this big event. This fund-raiser helps fight hunger around the world (through Church World Service) and also here at home (through six local food-providing agencies). Our church will be the first rest stop for the walk this year, which will start and end at Salem Lutheran Church, 18324 Ashland Avenue, Homewood.

Registration will be at 1:00 p.m. at Salem Lutheran. Opening ceremonies will begin at 1:35 and step-off at 2:00 p.m. See Jessie Cunningham if you can be a walker. If you can't walk, please sponsor a walker with your donation.



Respond Now Food Collection

This month's food collection for Respond Now emphasizes cold cereal, peanut butter, jelly, pasta, and rice—but any non-perishable food items are much appreciated. You can leave your donations in the cart near the front door at any time.

PADS Ministry

Our PADS Ministry continues as we faithfully house women and children on Wednesday nights. We have been managing to keep it staffed with our volunteers, but we do have need for a few more. We need a man to come in at 5:15 am on the Thursday morning after the 2nd Wednesday to help with clean-up. This involves sweeping and wet-mopping the entire area—Fellowship Hall, kitchen and bathrooms, so a little strength and stamina are prerequisites for this job. We also need a couple of volunteers for the 3:00 am shift and a volunteer for the breakfast shift. And we could use a couple of subs for any shift.

Collection of Bottle Caps Resumes

The Western Springs United Methodist Church is now saving bottle caps to acquire a bench, so we can collect them here again. There is a container on the table in the narthex. Lucy will take what we collect to Kathleen when she sees her at Mission U in July, so we have up until then to collect. Plastic caps such as those from milk, juice, water, detergent, and medicine bottles and peanut butter and mayonnaise jars can be used.

Living Last Supper

A moving Maundy Thursday service was observed on April 24 with the re-enactment of the Living Last Supper.



Living Last Supper, 2016

SWIFT



Seven people from St. Andrew attended the SWIFT (SouthWest Interfaith Team) spring Speakers' Forum at St. Francis Woods in Frankfort on Sunday, March 20. They were treated to a very thoughtful and thought-provoking discussion among representatives of the Christian, Jewish and Muslim faiths on the topic, *Abraham: A Common Thread in Our Faiths*.



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 Lippert, certified instructor. It is free for Silver Sneakers members and available at a nominal fee to others. So come, join the fun!




International Folk Dancers

The South Suburban International Folk Dance Group meets downstairs on Monday nights from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. The group does ethnic dances from around the world, mostly line and circle dances, so a partner is not required. If there are new dancers, the group will do beginner dances during the first hour and then advanced dances during the second hour. Newcomers are welcome. The fee is \$3. For more information, please see Lucy Kokal.



April 2016

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 <p>FH = Fellowship Hall LF = Lower Fellowship SC = South Classroom</p>					1	2
3 10:30 am-Worship Holy Communion Food Wagon Sunday School After Worship- Memorial Com. 5:30 pm- Confirmation	4 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH 7:00 p.m.-SPRC 7:30 pm-Boy Scouts, FH 7:30pm-Int'l Folk Dance, LF	5	6 9:00 am-Men's Coffee 1:30 pm-Caring Crafters 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH 6:00 pm-PADS	7 9:30 am-TOPS 6:00 pm-Cub Scouts, SC 6:30 pm-Bell Choir 7:30 pm-Chancel Choir	8	9
10 9:15 am-Bible Study 10:30 am-Worship Sunday School 1:30 pm-Montessori Open House 5:30 pm- Confirmation	11 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH 7:30 pm-Boy Scouts, FH 7:30pm-Int'l Folk Dance, LF	12	13 1:30 pm-Caring Crafters 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH 6:00 pm-PADS	14 9:30 am-TOPS 2:00 pm-Finance 6:00 pm-Cub Scouts, SC 6:30 pm-Bell Choir 7:30 pm-Chancel Choir	15	16
17 10:30 am-Worship Loose Change Sunday School After Worship- Vision to Action Potluck Luncheon 5:30 pm- Confirmation	18 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH 7:30 pm-Boy Scouts, FH 7:30pm-Int'l Folk Dance, LF Pastor _____	19 _____Biel_____	20 9:00 am-Men's Coffee 1:30 pm-Caring Crafters 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH 6:00 pm-PADS _____on_____	21 9:30 am-TOPS 6:30 pm-Bell Choir 7:30 pm-Chancel Choir _____Vacation_____	22 _____	23 _____
24 10:30 am-Worship Sunday School 1:00 p.m.- Crop Walk 5:30 pm- Confirmation	25 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH 7:30 pm-Boy Scouts, FH 7:30pm-Int'l Folk Dance, LF	26 7:00 p.m.-Church Council	27 1:30 pm-Caring Crafters 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH 6:00 pm-PADS	28 9:30 am-TOPS 6:30 pm-Bell Choir 7:30 pm-Chancel Choir	29	30 12:00 Noon- Salad Luncheon

the Voice
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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