

April 2017



"Be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." – Romans 12:2

Have you heard the story of the tree cutter who learns that taking time to sharpen one's saw or axe makes all the difference in performance? For instance, President Abraham Lincoln is credited with saying that if he had six hours to fell a large tree, he'd spend the first four hours sharpening his axe. Most woodcutter tales start out with someone achieving impressive results. But, as time goes on, the woodcutter works harder and harder with less to show for it.

In the end, the overworked yet underperforming woodcutter learns the moral of these kinds of tales, which is, take time to sharpen your saw and your axe if you want them to perform efficiently. Apply this to our spiritual life. Inefficient and neglected tools waste energy. Attention to our disciplines helps us acknowledge God's activity in our lives and know God's will.

Are you aware of spiritual hunger? Are you the type of person who would like to live a life that is joyfully fulfilled? Would you like to grow closer to God using the gifts God has given you, your heart and mind? If so, then it is crucial to "sharpen the saw" (Habit 7 of Highly Effective People, according to Steven Covey). This means we must take care of our physical, social, emotional, and spiritual needs.

I'd like to offer that it is a worthwhile use of time to find out which tools work best for you to encounter God, to be receptive to God's Spirit. At the same time, I'd remind you that you don't have to get anything "right" in your prayer practice. I, for one, am tempted to judge myself by my performance. But, know this, God wants you, your heart. In the words of Dom John Chapman, "The best way to pray is the way you pray best."

The renewal of our minds helps us make changes that are necessary and good. As we renew our connections with others, our diet and exercise and resting regimen, our learning, reading, and writing, we create growth and change in our lives. Sharpening the saw spiritually means that we spend time in practices

that allow us to yield to God, who both refreshes us and challenges us. Our well-being is made more vibrant by prayer, time in nature, service, music, art, and meditation. These disciplines keep God central so that we can face each day as a new creation where God is working for good.

Finally, expect resistance! We are creatures of habit. Even a practice that revitalizes us at first may seem like a chore in short time. Persons in your life who have been models of faithfulness will be sources of resistance to the change Jesus is working in you. The only source of fidelity and hope I've found during difficult seasons of prayer practice is in the Holy Spirit, who teaches us to pray, sometimes in sighs too deep for words.

As we approach Easter, may you recognize God's voice, Jesus' love, and the Spirit's leading in your practice. "Be with God. Enjoy your company, God's company," (John Ackerman, *Spiritual Awakening*.)



Peace,

Pastor Biel

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 4	Final <i>John</i> Study session at Waterford	10:00 a.m.
April 4	Final Service of 2017 Lenten Luncheon Series First Presbyterian Church, Homewood	12:10 p.m.
April 5	Final <i>John</i> Study session at St. Andrew	7:00 p.m.
April 6	Final <i>John</i> Study session at Brookdale	6:00 p.m.
April 9	Palm Sunday Service	10:30 a.m.
April 13	Living Last Supper and Communion	7:30 p.m.
April 14	Good Friday Service	7:30 p.m.
April 16	EASTER SUNDAY SERVICE	10:30 a.m.



Living Last Supper, 2016

Living Last Supper **Returns this Holy Week**



The St. Andrew Players are happy to announce that the worship service which includes the Living Last Supper will return this Maundy Thursday, April 13, at 7:30 p.m. The service includes a dramatization based on Leonardo da Vinci's iconic painting, *The Last Supper*, in which each Apostle steps out of the painting to speak of his journey with Christ. The disciples' monologues are interspersed with choral music. Holy Communion concludes the service with an invitation to reflect on our own personal walks with Jesus.

The Living Last Supper has been an extremely popular event with the wider community. We hope you will plan ahead to be present and invite friends and neighbors to join you as well.



Easter Plants



We invite you to remember your loved ones and friends by purchasing an Easter plant. Pink tulips, purple hyacinths, and, of course, yellow daffodils are available for \$10 per plant. This is a meaningful, visible sign of our love for those we remember and honor and a way of adding beauty to our sanctuary on Easter. An order form is included in your bulletin. This Sunday, April 2, is the last day for ordering.

South Suburban **Diversity Dinner**



On April 22, 2017, the South Suburban Diversity Dinners will observe their twentieth year at Rich South High School in Richton Park with a very special celebration. The event will include dinner and a stimulating play performance and discussion led by author and activist Michael Fosberg.

To commemorate the twenty years that the Diversity Dinners have brought diverse groups of individuals from our communities together to celebrate their differences and their similarities, we, our neighbors, friends, and families, are all invited to this special occasion.

Social Hour & Appetizers: 5:30 p.m.
Buffet Dinner & Program: 6:15 p.m.
Play Performance with Q&A: 8:00 p.m.

Seats are limited, and we must **register by April 7th.**

South Suburban CROP Hunger **Walk – Sunday, May 7, 2017**

Calling all Walkers! This fundraiser helps fight hunger around the world (through Church World Service) and also here at home (through six local food-providing agencies). The walk will start and end at Salem Lutheran in Homewood. Registration begins at 1:00 p.m., with opening ceremonies at 1:30 and step-off at 2:00 p.m. The long walk has been shortened to four-plus miles and the short walk to just under two miles.

See Jessie if you can be a walker. If you can't be a walker, you can sponsor a walker with your donation. You can also "walk online" by registering on the South Suburban CROP Hunger Walk site and soliciting donations from your online friends and relatives. Our grandchildren do this all the time for school and sports team fundraisers. Anyone who raises \$150 or more online will receive a free CROP Hunger Walk T-shirt. To register to walk online, go to www.crophungerwalk.org/homewoodil



Munch & Learn



Sunday, April 30, immediately after worship, we are all invited to participate in a Munch and Learn with Sue Hogan from Exodus World Service. A light lunch (sloppy joes with a vegan option) will first be served. There will be a free will offering to defray expenses, with all excess going to Exodus. A member of our congregation, Emily, has been a volunteer with the organization for over three years.

Sue Hogan is the Education and Outreach coordinator of Exodus, which works to mobilize the Christian community to welcome refugees. Exodus anchors its ministry in Biblical teachings and principles. Exodus works cooperatively with the Christian church, seeking to strengthen and enhance its ministries of service and evangelism. Exodus is committed to raising, spending and accounting for funds with the highest degree of integrity and stewardship.

Exodus World Service has welcomed to the U. S. refugees fleeing terror and persecution in Afghanistan, Albania, Armenia, Bhutan, Bosnia, Burma, Burundi, Cameroon, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Kosovo, Liberia, Macedonia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Russia, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leon, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Togo, Ukraine, Vietnam, Yemen, and

Yugoslavia. Exodus has equipped leaders in countries around the world, including Australia, Austria, Canada, England, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, Spain, Uganda, South Africa and Sri Lanka to work with refugees.



Salad Luncheon/Fashion Show

Saturday, May 6, at noon

Homemade salads and cookies/bars

Fashions by Dress Barn of Homewood

Tickets drawn at the end for the door prizes

Tickets: \$16

This event is a fundraiser for the United Methodist Women to enable them to pay their pledge to missions (\$1500) for 2017. Any profit over the \$1500 will be given to St. Andrew's general fund. Last year that was \$400. If we can sell more tickets this year, we can increase that amount.

Unfortunately, our United Methodist Women's group is very small, so each year we must ask for help with this event from the general congregation. **We are asking those who can to donate 2 identical salads that would feed about 12 persons. A signup sheet for salads will be on the table in the narthex starting on Sunday, March 26.**

Tickets are available in the church office or from United Methodist Women members. Tickets will be sold in the narthex after church beginning on Sunday, April 2. Ann is our ticket/reservation chair. She needs the names of all attendees in order to arrange for the reserved seating. Our theme this year is *Butterflies, Harbingers of Spring*. You can get tickets from Ann to sell and turn in names and money to Ann.

We are still looking for models. Jessie is model chair. See her if you would be willing to be a model. Dress Barn would like "ordinary" women of all sizes and shapes and ages to be models. You don't have to be a "model" type.



PADS Ministry



Our PADS Ministry continues as we faithfully house women and children on Wednesday nights. We will be concluding the 2016-2017 shelter season at the end of April. We still struggle a little to fill our volunteer slots, but thanks to some people doing "double duty" some months, we have managed to continue this ministry without interruption. We can still use more volunteers for the difficult nighttime shifts (11:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. and 3:00 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. and the breakfast shift from 5:00 a.m. to 7:30 a.m.).



Respond Now Food Collection

As always, any nonperishable food items are accepted and appreciated at *Respond Now*. Possibilities: canned salmon, canned baked beans, grapefruit juice, cold cereal, cake mix, cookies. 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.

Personal Care Kits

Travel-size shampoo, conditioner, soap, and lotion needed

The DebEst Circle of United Methodist Women will be filling 30 hand-crocheted bags (made by the "Caring Crafters" circle) at their April 18 meeting at 1:30 p.m. at the Church (hosted this month by Donna). Anyone who picks up the small soaps, shampoos, etc. when traveling can donate them for the bags by leaving them in the narthex in a bag marked "for Personal Care Kits." Circle members donate other items needed to fill these bags, which will be given to The Crisis Center of South Suburbia for abused women who are housed at their transitional residence facility in Tinley Park.

All women of the church are always invited to be a part of our Circle meetings as well as the program meetings that we sponsor to which the entire congregation is invited.



Safe Drug Disposal



Flossmoor is offering the Prescription (and nonprescription) Drug Take-Back Program in partnership with the Cook County Sheriff's Office Department and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD). The countywide program officially started on Jan. 23. The collection box at the main entrance to the Flossmoor Village Hall was installed in mid-February as part of the comprehensive pharmaceutical drug collection and disposal program. The goal of the program is to get unused drugs into a safe place for disposal and also prevent harmful chemicals from entering the environment. When drugs are flushed down the toilet, those chemicals can enter local waterways. Unused prescription drugs thrown into the trash can be retrieved and abused or illegally sold as well as eventually entering our soil and waterways.

Book Review

Be a Changemaker: How to Start Something that Matters, by Laurie Ann Thompson (Juvenile Nonfiction)

Do you wish you could make a difference in your community or even the world? Are you one of the millions of high school teens with a service-learning requirement? Either way, *Be a Changemaker* will empower you with the confidence and knowledge you need to effect real change. You'll find all the tools you need right here—through engaging youth profiles, step-by-step exercises, and practical tips, you can start making a difference today.

This inspiring guide will teach you how to research ideas, build a team, recruit supportive adults, fundraise, host events, work the media, and, most importantly, create lasting positive change. Apply lessons from the business world to problems that need solving and become a savvy activist with valuable skills that will benefit you for a lifetime!



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!

**I GIVE YOU A NEW
COMMANDMENT,
THAT YOU LOVE ONE
ANOTHER. JUST AS I
HAVE LOVED YOU,
YOU ALSO SHOULD
LOVE ONE ANOTHER.**

—JOHN 13:34 (NRSV)



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!



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!

April 2017

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2 10:00 am-Choir 10:30 am-Worship Holy Communion Food Wagon	3 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH 7:30 pm-Boy Scouts, FH	4 10:00 am- Waterford Study 12:10 pm-Lenten Lunches	5 9:00 am-Men’s Coffee, Panera Homewood 1:30 pm-C Crafters 2:30 pm-Worship 6:00 pm-PADS 7:00 pm- <i>John</i> Study	6 9:30 am-TOPS 3:00 pm-Brookdale Bible Study 6:00 pm-Cub Scouts 6:30 pm-Bell Choir 7:30 pm-Chancel Choir	7	1 8
9 PALM SUNDAY 10:00 am-Choir 10:30 am-Worship Children’s Sunday School 5:00 pm-Youth	10 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH 7:30 pm-Boy Scouts, FH	11	12 1:30 pm-Caring Crafters 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH 6:00 pm-PADS	13 9:30 am-TOPS 2:00 pm-Finance 7:30 pm-Living Last Supper and Communion	14 7:30 pm-Good Friday Service	15 10:00 am-Book Club, Wesley Room
16 EASTER SUNDAY 10:00 am-Choir 10:30 am-Worship Loose Change 	17 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH 7:30 pm-Boy Scouts, FH <i>Voice</i> Deadline	18 7:00 pm-Church Council	19 9:00 am-Men’s Coffee, H Panera 1:30 pm-C Crafters 2:30 pm-Yoga, FH 6:00 pm-PADS	20 9:30 am-TOPS 6:30 pm-Bell Choir 7:30 pm-Chancel Choir	21	22
23 10:00 am-Choir 10:30 am-Worship Children’s Sunday School 5:00 pm-Youth	24 2:30 pm-Chair Yoga, FH 7:30 pm-Boy Scouts, FH	25	26 1:30 pm-Caring Crafters 2:30 pm– Chair Yoga, FH 6:00 pm-PADS	27 9:30 am-TOPS 6:30 pm-Bell Choir 7:30 pm-Chancel Choir	28	29 8am-12:30pm-Chgo South Dist UMW Day of Spiritual Renewal Breakfast and Program, St. Andrew UMC
30 10:00 am-Choir 10:30 am-Worship Children’s Sunday School 5:00 pm-Youth	<div>FH = Fellowship Hall LF = Lower Fellowship SC = South Classroom</div> 					

the Voice

Is published monthly by

St. Andrew United

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



RECONCILING MINISTRIES NETWORK