

The Pylon



Woodmar United Methodist Church
Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Pastor Pete Ward

March 2023

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

Dear Woodmar family and friends,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul includes that phrase in almost all of his letters that we have in the new Testament. When I read those letters, and that particular phrase, it reminds me that no matter what is going on, God is in control and that we can find peace in that knowledge.

Greetings to all of you. My name is Pete Ward and I am honored to be appointed by the Bishop to serve as your Pastor. My wife is Lora and she serves as the District President of Women of Faith. We have two daughters, Carrie and Sarah, who live in Munster and attend First United Methodist Church in Hammond.

Many of you may remember me as I have had the privilege of giving the message at Woodmar United Methodist Church several times over the years. Or you may remember me from the days when we had our Church softball league. Those were the days weren't they.

But many things have changed and churches across the country find themselves in difficult times, including our church. I serve on the Board of Ordained Ministry on their Executive committee and have the privilege of interviewing candidates for ministry. The words from one candidate struck a nerve. Hear these words. "One of the biggest challenges for the Church today is that we can become fixated on keeping "insiders" happy and maintaining methods and traditions than no longer create the welcoming space we are called to be. We overly focus on nurturing the committed and forget about the mission of loving those who are not. WE hold on tightly to programs and events that have worked in the past even if they are no longer connecting us to new people."

There is a lot to unpack in those words. I believe that the churches in Hammond, and particularly Woodmar United Methodist Church, have a lot of offer to this community and working together we can make a difference. The District has a motto, "Stronger Together". I look forward to meeting all of you and, together, begin to once again make a difference in this community.

See you in Church.

Blessings

Pete

Dear Woodmar Family and Friends,

Rev. Marti Lundy, our North District Superintendent, attended our monthly Church Council on February 16. We learned that First United Methodist Church in Hammond (on Hohman Avenue) is looking into merging with our church. They are selling their parsonage and the newly merged church would be in our building. Our preschool/daycare would continue as usual, as would many of our other programs/events.

First Church, like us, is undergoing a shrinking congregation and serious financial difficulties. If we were to merge, our combined congregations would be supporting one building, one set of utilities, one parsonage, one pastor with his/her insurance and pension benefits. Together we could expand existing ministries and start new ones. We could make an even bigger difference in our community! Rev. Lundy said she is excited about this possible merger. Paul Arnold (Assistant District Superintendent) would also be assisting us. She asked the council if we wanted to officially begin the process to **explore** this merger. All twelve members that were present voted an enthusiastic "yes."

Rev. Lundy explained the procedure to us. Our new pastor (Pete Ward) and three members from our church will meet with their pastor (Jim Denton) and three members from First Church to explore details of the merger. There will be plenty of opportunities for everyone in both churches to learn what is happening and voice concerns. There is no time table for this process. When we are ready, each church will have an all-church vote. Both churches will have to vote "yes" for the merger to happen.

The Church Council choose our three church representatives for the exploration meetings. They are Nancy Craig, Cyndi Slaboski, and Mary Zaikis. Other council members will provide information/advice when needed. Feel free to talk with our three representatives or Pastor Pete any time you have questions or concerns.

Jim Denton, current pastor at Hammond First, would probably become the pastor of our newly merged church. Pete Ward, who came out of retirement to pastor us, would go back into retirement. Jim's wife, Sheri, is also a United Methodist pastor at Hobart Trinity and Michigan Avenue United Methodist Churches. They have a home in Hobart. Rev. Lundy didn't know if they would choose to live in our parsonage or stay in Hobart. Either way, she suggested that we keep the parsonage because the next pastor may need it.

Change is often difficult and there will probably be some anxiety as we go through the process. The congregation at First Church will, of course, be going through much bigger changes and we need to be sensitive to this. Often the biggest sticking point in a merger is what building to use. We are grateful that First Church made this difficult decision before they even approached us.

We are in the beginning stages, so there are many things that we don't know yet. At this point, both churches are exploring how this might work. As we learn more, we will make sure this information is passed on to you. Meanwhile, one thing we can all do is pray about it and seek God's will!

Nancy Jarmula would like to thank everyone for their phone calls, cards, and visits. She is "getting there!"



Please keep the family of Madelyn Kocon, who joined our heavenly father on February 18, 2023, in your prayers. She will be missed.

COMMUNITY GARDEN

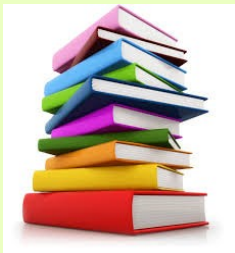
Spring in the Garden! The Woodmar Community Garden began in 2019. Our mission through the Community Garden is to “Nourish Body, Mind, and Soul.” Our vision is to foster community relationships through providing gardening, nutrition education and creativity. We are a free pick garden that encourages community investment in the preparation, maintenance and harvesting of the garden. We will develop community partners with the YMCA, the Hammond Public Library, Community Preschool and Childcare, Brianna’s Hope, First United Methodist Church and the neighbors of Woodmar UMC.

Community Preschool and Childcare children will soon begin germinating seeds. **Soil preparation and planting day is scheduled for May 13 or 20, depending upon the weather.**

Throughout the summer, we hope to host events in coordination with our community partners that will take place near the Community Garden. Possibilities include garden art, yoga class, meditation/prayer, reading in the garden, cooking demonstrations and a Harvest Festival.

All are welcome to plan, plant, maintain and celebrate with this opportunity for rebirth in Spring and Summer! If you would like to know more, contact Cyndi Slaboski at cslaboski@gmail.com.

Woodmar Book Club



Book club will meet via Zoom on Monday, March 20, at 1PM.

WOODMAR BOOK CLUB

The book for March is *Along Came A Spider* by James Patterson. This is the first book of the Alex Cross series. The goodreads.com review says the following:

What have we got? A missing little girl named Maggie Rose . . . a family of three brutally murdered in the projects of Washington, D.C. . . . the thrill-killing of a beautiful elementary school teacher . . . a psychopathic serial kidnapper/murderer who is so terrifying that the FBI, the Secret Service, and the police cannot outsmart him - even after he's been captured.

Gary Soneji wants to commit the crime of the century. Alex Cross is the brilliant homicide detective pitted against him. Jezzie Flanagan is the first female supervisor of the Secret Service. They complete one of the most unusual suspense triangles in any thriller you have ever read.

Alex and Jezzie are about to have a forbidden love affair—at the worst possible time for both of them. Because Gary Soneji is playing at the top of his game. The latest of the unspeakable crimes happens in Alex Cross's precinct and it happens under the nose of Jezzie and her men.

Alex faces the ultimate test: how do you outmaneuver a brilliant psychopath?

COMMUNITY PRESCHOOL & CHILDCARE



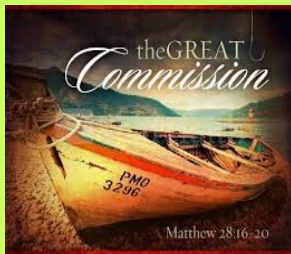
COMMUNITY
Preschool & Childcare

PLEASE PRAY THIS PRAYER EVERY DAY:

Holy Spirit, fill me and empower me for the work to which you have called me. Holy Spirit, fill Woodmar United Methodist Church and empower us for the work to which you have called us through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

PEOPLE OF WOODMAR, WHO ARE YOU?

I am a beloved child of God, called and sent to make a difference in the world.



Our Mission:

To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Our Vision:

Go. Teach. Love.

Have you met Karianne Padilla? Karianne first came to Community Preschool and Childcare as a practicum student completing her Associate's Degree in Early Childhood. As a mature and dynamic practicum student, Karianne stood out as someone we hoped to keep on our staff. Four years ago, Cyndi Slaboski expressed the need to bring on an assistant director that would move into the director role. Karianne was hired as assistant director and has been taking on the increasing responsibilities of a director. In addition, Karianne began an accelerated Bachelor's degree program in Early Childhood administration at Indiana Wesleyan College. This week, Karianne completed the requirements for her Bachelor's degree!

Congratulations Karianne for your perseverance and excellence in completing your bachelor's degree while working full time, being a mom to Ariele and wife to Roy. Over the past four years, Karianne has navigated our program through COVID, assisted with the NAEYC accreditation, taken on the responsibility of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (a federal program) and manages the increased enrollment of children receiving financial assistance from Indiana's CCDF and On My Way Pre-K. Karianne is an advocate for our staff and is masterful at arranging staff schedules to meet the many regulations of child care. Throughout each day, Karianne moves through the classrooms to assist with challenging behaviors and to positively encourage each child and teacher. Karianne greets each parent and engages each one with a heartfelt sense of trust and belonging in Christian love.

Now, the director transition can be completed. The policies for Community Preschool and Childcare, and the standards for our accreditation from NAEYC or National Association for the Education of Young Children, determine that the director should have a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a related field. By summer, an assistant director will come onboard to manage some of the administrative tasks and Cyndi will move to an "as needed" role of guidance. God's hand has been evident throughout this process. It has been a journey of peaks, valleys and level ground. I am grateful for the solid foundation that Community Preschool and Childcare provides for our community. To God be the Glory!

With gratitude,

Cyndi Slaboski

INTENTIONAL FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Racial Equity continues on Tuesday mornings at 10AM via ZOOM.

The Imago Dei (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) Lenten Bible Study will begin at Woodmar on Tuesday, February 28th. The five-week study from the United Methodist Church is written in the style of Lectio Divina. In this form of Bible study all participants are equal, all insights are of equal value, and there are no wrong answers to correct.

This format is built upon prayerful listening to the Holy Spirit and to each other. We will seek to share with one another the image of God, celebrating our diversity, our equity, and our inclusion. We hope that the use of this model will help us to live in the image of God and to perceive that same sacred image in others.

This Bible study will be held via Zoom on Tuesday mornings at 10:00 a.m. If you miss the first session you can join us at any other session. All are welcome; just contact Nancy Tatum in the church office or Mary Jo Shea at marjoshea@gmail.com to learn more and receive a link to the meeting. If this time is not convenient, please let us know and we might be able to add a session at another time.

INFO FOR EVENING PRAYERS

Woodmar is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Evening Prayers

Time: 08:00 PM Central Time Every week on Wed, Mon, Tue, Thu, until May 2, 2023,

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86501693653?pwd=U3prS0FHOURPZi95Sjk4R1V3NWZsUT09>

Meeting ID: 865 0169 3653 Passcode: 028855

One tap mobile

+19294362866,,86501693653#,,,,*028855# US (New York)

+13017158592,,86501693653#,,,,*028855# US (Washington DC)

Dial by your location

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 865 0169 3653 Passcode: 028855

BIRTHDAYS

3/01 Robert Solon
Sue Fusner

3/04 Carol Wagner

3/06 Steve Strains

3/08 Mary Jo shea

3/16 Bong Yohl Kim



3/18 Debbie Austin

Shirley Lopatkiewicz

3/20 Andrea Fukuda

3/24 Donna Wilkinson

3/29 Vincent Romero

RISK-TAKING MISSION AND SERVICE



The March mission is Habitat for Humanity. Habitat reaches out to a variety of communities. It is a global non-profit.

Besides donating to our mission for the month, visit the ReStore Shop!

Or...consider volunteering! For more information on all that they do, please visit the website at <https://www.habitat.org>.

Greetings from Congregational Care Corp!

We would like to invite you to plan to stay after the service for special refreshments on March 5 in honor of Pastor Pete Ward's first Sunday with us. Let's give Pete and his wife, Lora, an extra special Woodmar Welcome!

Also, let us honor the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ by bringing your favorite dessert to share on Easter Morning!!!

Looking forward to our new beginnings together as we continue to serve our Lord.

In Christ's Love,
Nancy Craig, CCC Chair



Our Caregivers will continue to meet at the Wheel at noon on the 3rd Tuesday each month. We welcome any additional people who would like to share, or just attend, and hear what others have to say. It is an hour of relaxation in Christian fellowship.

A Caregiver can be a grandparent raising grandchildren or someone caring for an ill relative or friend. It is important to learn to take time for yourself. Please feel free to join in.

WHAT'S UP, WOODMAR?

Sonrise Seniors, darts, and pool are meeting in the church and welcome everyone to join in the fun! Call the church office for days and times (219)844-3030.

Paws for Peace hopes to resume meeting at Hartsfield Village. If you have a well behaved furry family member that would like to go to uplift the residents at Hartsfield, please contact Sue Wasmund at wazzysport@att.net.

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Contact information	Office email: office@woodmarumc.org Web: www.woodmarumc.org Phone 219-844-3030
Normal Sunday Schedule	Children's Sunday School-9AM Worship-10AM, Children's Church 10:15 Coffee fellowship following



Brianna's Hope meets on Wednesdays at 6PM. Each meeting starts with a light meal. Various churches and groups prepare the meals.



United Women in Faith

United Women in Faith met in February and made plans for the Agape meal which will be on Tuesday, April 4th at the church. All church members and friends are invited to attend. We are also continuing to provide food for Brianna's Hope on the third

Wednesday of each month. If anyone in the church would like to help us provide this food please contact Yvonne Jackson or Donna Benirschke.

We are still collecting items for Phil's Friends which will distribute them to local cancer patients. The collection box is in the Narthex, along with a list of the items which are needed. The council of United Women in Faith continues to meet monthly, and the next meeting of Mary's Circle will be on Wednesday, March 15th at 2:00PM both in person and on Zoom.

Remember Scrip for Spring Shopping!



When you purchase Scrip cards through the church, you are donating to the church's current expenses! It does not cost you anything additional to purchase one. They are as simple to use as a gift card. There is a wide variety of cards that we can order for you and we have many on hand. Please Contact Nancy Tatum in the church office (219)844-3030 or on Sunday mornings.

FINANCES

We began a new year on a positive note! Our January financials show a positive income over expenses of \$16,592.68. Our Cash in Bank is \$34,304.67. Of course, there is always a "but" at the end of the sentence! BUT, we had a number of members send in their yearly giving in one lump sum. We will take the good news and hopefully build on it! Remember the CAPITAL CAMPAIGN runs through the end of March for those that still have pledges due.

JANUARY 2023 FINANCIALS

<u>Income for budgeted expenses</u>		<u>Budgeted expenses</u>		<u>Unbudgeted Income, Special Funds</u>	
Donations	32,643	Program expenses	2,153	Missions	162
Rental income	3,445	Building related	4,523	Memorial Fund	225
Initial offering	122	Office related	624	Property Maintenance	1,785
Foundation		Staff expenses	13,181	Capital Campaign	515
Scrip	(63)	Apportionments	862	Altar Flowers /Communion	88
Preschool-church exp	1,765	Finance & Fees	82	Other spec. donations	100
Preschool-custodian	350	Total Expenses	21,425	Brianna's Hope/Rehab	47
Income for budgeted	38,262			Camp	
				<u>Unbudgeted</u>	
income to expense	16,593			Total	2,922

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

News to share?
The deadline for the
April Pylon
is March 20.

Each year, Easter Lilies and Tulips are purchased in memory, honor or celebration of a loved one and serve as decoration for our sanctuary on Easter Sunday . The gifts are acknowledged in a special bulletin. If you would like to purchase a flower, please fill out the form below and return it to the church office/offering plate, along with cash or check for **\$12.00 per plant**. Or call the church office. (Checks should be made payable to WUMC (Woodmar United Methodist Church).

Another option is to provide a lasting memorial by changing a life. You can make donations of any amount in honor or memory of your loved one toward “Camperships.” These are scholarships that will be provided to our children and youth to allow them to attend a summer camp or mission trip.

Please complete this form, **using a separate section for each flower or each campership that you are giving.** Please use additional forms if necessary.

You may submit one check for your total order, made payable to WUMC.

All orders must be received in the church office no later than MONDAY, March 20, 2022.

Easter Flowers & Camperships

1. Please circle which gift you are giving (choose one): **Easter Flowers** **Campership**

2. If Easter Flowers are selected, please circle the type of flower you prefer (choose one):

Lily **Tulip**

3. Please circle whether in memory or honor (choose one): **In Memory of:** **In Honor of:**

4. **Name/s** _____

5. **Given by** _____