God or convinced us to “drift” from God and God’s way. This broke God’s heart nearly immediately, human beings began to use it in ways that both opposed perfection of God’s love and in God’s presence forever.

In His creative, love it made sense that God could count on human beings loving everything that was made for them and that they would desire to live in the world.

This is what Christmas has to do with the New Year. And as you are thinking about Jesus coming as Christ is the embodiment of God’s resolve, and the Lord desired to show humanity the way to live the full life. God’s resolve was sincere.

First, humanity was blessed with the law. These 10 commandments written by the very finger of God were intended to show people a way that they could live in accordance with God’s wishes and thereby be at one with God. They were not designed to be a simple list of “do’s” and “don’ts,” but an invitation, a path on which we could change our lives to meld with God’s. Many took that path, millions ignored it.

Then God resolved to provide another way our world could be changed.

God sent the prophets, one after another, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Amos and the rest call the people back to the way of God. New life was here – in a life of enjoyment that heeded God’s voice and lived God’s law. Many repented and followed God, millions ignored and abused the prophetic word.

God’s resolve strengthened. The world still needed to be changed. No more messengers. God was going to come himself and show the way to better life. This took complete resolve.

God knew a part of the Holy Trinity needed to take on all the characteristics of human life. He knew the resolve this would take. This insertion into human life could not be cut short, it could not deviate from being fully human, it could not evade living in a world filled with sin and it would likely mean rejection, humiliation, suffering. Knowing all this, God’s resolve did not change.

The resolve of God was not an idea among ideas. The resolve of God was not a passing thought in the mind of holy consciousness. The resolve of God was not cheap. The resolve of God changed the world.

Jesus coming as Christ is the embodiment of God’s resolve. There was nothing in the disobedient, self-absorbed, sinful nature of humanity that could thwart God’s resolve to offer us a better way, show us a perfect example, invite us to the new and perfect life.

This is what Christmas has to do with the New Year. And as you are thinking about what resolution you should make, what thing you should do to change your life, consider this: God’s resolve has already provided you with new life, how about you resolve to live in it?

As thousands of years of human history has shown us – that will take some resolve!

Pastor Mike
Marion Methodist is Praying for:

Prayer is a powerful way of caring for each other in our Marion Methodist family. There are several avenues open to everyone – the prayer cards on Sunday morning and the prayer request link in the weekly email, are two that are used most often.

Prayers for a blessed holiday season and a bright and wonderful new year. Please keep those in prayer who are in need of a warm place to stay and enough food and clothing to stay well.

As you are doing your shopping in the next month, please consider purchasing a gift card or two, for any amount you choose, from one of these businesses. Place them in the offering plate any Sunday this month, or drop them off at the downtown church office. Your generosity will bless people in many ways throughout the year who are struggling to make ends meet.

Gift Card Giving

Part of our Advent tradition at Marion Methodist has included donating gift cards from Hy-Vee and Walmart to provide assistance to people in our church family and community throughout the year. The cards can be used to purchase food, clothing items, household items, or gas to get to work, look for work and go to appointments.

As 2019 closes, our final deposit will be made on Tuesday, December 31st at 10:00AM. For your donation to be included with your 2019 Giving Statement it must be received at the church office by that time. If you have any questions or special circumstances, please contact John Terry at 377-4856.

If a donation is received or postmarked in 2019, it is recorded as a 2019 offering. If the donation is received or postmarked in 2020, then it is recorded as a 2020 offering.

Thank you for your continued support of the ministries of First United Methodist Church. Everything that we do – all the lives that we impact – everything is possible because of your donations.

Thank you – Your Stewardship Committee

A Harvest Market Thank You

Saturday, October 26, was an exciting day with sunshine and many people chatting, eating and shopping in The Center for our first church bazaar, the Harvest Market, at 5050 REC Dr. It was a joyous celebration as people worked together to serve our Lord.

One of the goals of the United Methodist Women is to raise money for missions to support women, youth and children in need. The proceeds from the church bazaars have always been used to help those less fortunate than ourselves in the Marion area, Iowa, the United States, and world-wide. This year the UMW voted to donate our proceeds to two local organizations. The approximately $5,500 raised this year will be divided equally between the two organizations.

On behalf of the United Methodist Women, thank you for your donations, your assistance before, during and after the Harvest Market, and to you who supported our efforts by your attendance. It is certainly a team effort!

We could not be successful without the generous help of the Marion Methodist staff, United Methodist Men, our confirmation students, and the support of our wonderful church family.

God is good all the time!

Carolyn Munson, UMW President

2019 Harvest Market Committee:

Jill Ackerman  Tami Schlamp
Angela Stockert  Kate Goshon
Nicole Riley  Stacy Cannoy
Carolyn Munson

Year-End Donations for 2019

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Watch LIVE

at 10:15 AM

Go to our YouTube channel or online at MarionMethodist.org/watch-live

TV Broadcast

Marion Methodist worship services are typically rebroadcast on Mediacom or ImOn Channel 4 at 7:00 PM on Monday evenings. There is a multweek delay between when a sermon is preached and when it airs on TV.

Pathfinders Worship & Outreach (Preschool - 5th Grade): Focuses on praise and worship for kids. Children will also learn how they can make a difference for the people in our community.

4:12 Youth Group: Junior High Worship 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm (Sanctuary). High School Worship 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm (Sanctuary).

Adult Classes: Come for a midweek boost. Check out classes at www.marionmethodist.org

Nursery: Offered in the Nursery

Meal Schedule:

1/1 - NO MEAL
1/8 - Zio Johno’s

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1/1 - NO MEAL
1/8 - Zio Johno’s

Sundays at 9:20AM in Room W50 – Starting January 5
Led by Gregg and Becky Tallman

The Gospel of John is filled with profound truths and rich spiritual stories. Stories of Christ’s miracles that inspire His followers; stories of a death that redeems the lost; and stories of a resurrection that provides us with hope for eternal glory. Every miracle, teaching, and action of Jesus that John captures in his Gospel has one clear purpose: to prove that Jesus is the Word, the Messiah, and the Son of God. The dramatic milestones of Christ’s ministry, as portrayed by John, have invited millions of believers throughout the ages into a saving faith with Jesus Christ, and will lead you into a deeper understanding of the ultimate story of Jesus, the Son of God.

This Bible study is designed for someone who is anywhere between Engaging, Deepening, or Centered on the Discipleship pathway.

OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY

Sundays at 9:20AM in Room W10 – Starting January 5
Led by Virginia Jensen

We will be continuing our study of the Prophets of Israel and Judah. After completing our discussions on the Prophet Jonah we will begin our study of Amos.

The goal of this class is to read every verse of scripture in the Old Testament, and then, as a World History Class, discuss the events of their known world that shaped and influenced their lives at their particular time in history.

This class is open to everyone regardless of age or personal knowledge of the Old Testament.

This Bible study is designed for someone who is anywhere between Engaging, Deepening, or Centered on the Discipleship pathway.

FREEDOM: FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY

Sunday Mornings at 8:30AM – Starting January 5
Sunday evenings at 6:00PM – Starting January 5
in Room W40

Wednesday Evenings at 6:30PM – Starting January 8
in Room W20

Financial Peace University is a nine-lesson course, taught by America’s most trusted financial guru, Dave Ramsey, and his team of financial experts, Rachel Cruze and Chris Hogan. Financial Peace University provides practical instruction on budgeting, saving for emergencies, retiring with dignity, and giving generously. In addition to the nine-lesson course, Financial Peace University includes a library of additional tools and courses, plus access to a vibrant and growing community of like-minded people who want to never worry about money again.

We will begin this study the week of January 5th with an orientation. This will allow you to pick up your Financial Peace University kit and ask questions as we prepare to begin this journey of Financial FREEDOM.

This Bible study is designed for someone who is anywhere between Engaging, Deepening, or Centered on the Discipleship pathway.

BASIC BIBLE

Wednesdays at 6:30PM in Room W50 – Starting January 8
Led by Pastor Mike Morgan

Designed for beginners to the Bible, who have likely never taken a Bible study.

This January we will be studying Matthew. You are invited to get on and stay on for the whole ride, join at any time and/or move to a class at the next level at any time. Please join Pastor Mike for this study in room W50.

This will be a wonderful place to begin for those on the Discipleship Pathway in the Engaging category.

WHEN GOD SAYS GO

Wednesday Evenings at 6:30PM in Room W10 – Starting January 8
Led by Judy Schnittner

Go. One small word...so much power.

When God says, “Go,” we face one of life’s greatest decisions.

When God says, “Go,” we must face our fears...our excuses...and ourselves.

When God says, “Go,” it’s time to answer His call wherever it leads.

When God says, “Go,” what will you do?

Author Elizabeth Lang Thompson invites you to walk alongside people of the Bible who were called by God to fulfill His purposes. People like Moses, Esther, Abigail, Jeremiah, Mary, and others. These Bible heroes responded much like we do—with a jumbled-up inner storm of excitement and fear, insecurity and hope. Their stories and struggles will provide a roadmap for your own story, helping you face your very own doubts, regrets, and worries.

This Bible study is designed for someone who is anywhere between Engaging, Deepening, or Centered on the Discipleship pathway.

LEGACY JOURNEY

Wednesdays at 6:30 PM in room W30 – Starting January 8
Led by Jay and Carolyn Quimby

Dave Ramsey shares Biblical wisdom on the legacy we build with our wealth.

What does the Bible really say about money? About wealth? How much does God expect you to give to others? How does wealth affect your friendships, marriage, and children? How much is “enough”?

There’s a lot of bad information in our culture today about wealth – and the wealthy. Worse, there’s a growing backlash in America against our most successful neighbors, but why? To many, wealth is seen as the natural result of hard work and wise money management. To others, wealth is viewed as the ultimate, inexcusable sin. This has left a lot of godly men and women honestly confused about what to do with the resources God’s put in their hands. God’s ways of handling money caused them to build wealth, but then they’re left feeling guilty about it. Is this what God had in mind?

This Bible study is designed for someone who is anywhere between Engaging, Deepening, or Centered on the Discipleship pathway.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE MINISTRY

Wednesdays at 6:30 PM in room W40 – Starting January 8
Led by Vicki Standley

We have established a Care Ministry team to help serve our church and congregation. During this time, we have ongoing training for this ministry group. We are excited for this ministry to grow and we are ready to welcome you at any time. Please contact Vicki Standley at (319) 377-4856 or by email at vstandley@MarionMethodist.org.

This Bible study is designed for someone who is anywhere between Engaging, Deepening, or Centered on the Discipleship pathway.

THE COOKIES ON THE LOWER SHELF: PART III

Thursdays evenings at 6:00-7:30PM OR Friday mornings
9:30-11:00AM

In room W50

Starting Thursday January 9 OR Friday January 10
Led by Tina Southard

Cookies on the Lower Shelf Part 3 is an independent study and does not require prior study of Parts 1 or 2. You can study the entire New Testament this winter! In Part 3, you will dive into the New Testament adventure using Matthew and Acts as a roadmap to the rest of the landscape. Tarry in Galilee and Jerusalem with Jesus. Sail the Mediterranean Sea with Paul and his companions. Worship with John on the isle of Patmos. Meet the Son of David prophesied in the Old Testament and finally see Him enthroned over all! This is the study where the hard stuff is made easy...where the cookies are on the lower shelf for everyone to enjoy including small groups, students and families!

This Bible study is designed for someone who is anywhere between Engaging, Deepening, or Centered on the Discipleship pathway.
Friends at Marion Methodist as you will see in the next few paragraphs, the United Methodist Church has high visibility in the eyes of a person who is potentially seeking a relationship with God and a body to investigate that in. Our downtown location with its signage on “main street,” the Chapel at Carnegie and the various ministry groups AND our large sign, the stained glass windows, the cross that changes color every few seconds and our large property all visible from on Highway 13 position us perfectly to make the INVITE to a seeker.

Four in Ten Seekers Would Visit a UMC

Nashville, Tenn.: A new survey from United Methodist Communications found willingness to visit a United Methodist Church rose to 42 percent in 2019 among U.S. adults seeking more spirituality in their lives and who are aware of the denomination. That’s up from 28 percent in 2017.

About half of those who would be willing to visit a United Methodist Church said they would definitely or probably do so in the next three months. Millennials are more likely than GenXers to say they would probably visit. Among those unwilling to visit, about one in ten say they might attend if invited by someone they knew.

“The takeaway from this study is that The United Methodist Church garners positive perceptions among potential churchgoers despite ongoing conflict within the denomination,” said Dan Krause, chief executive of United Methodist Communications. “We believe it’s an indicator of the effectiveness of our advertising messages that willingness to visit increased, while our favorability ratings among the seeker population remain stable.”

When asked their impression of the denomination, 30 percent of those surveyed responded favorably, while 44 percent had no opinion. That’s compared to 28 percent who had a favorable impression in 2017. The sample is among all seekers.

Awareness of The United Methodist Church was widespread among respondents, with 95 percent of seekers having heard of the UMC. Fifty-eight percent recalled having seen the Cross and Flame logo. Awareness of the denomination’s tagline—“Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.”—rose significantly to 52 percent, up from 43 percent in 2017. Seventy-seven percent of all respondents found the tagline personally relevant. Ninety-seven percent of spiritual seekers with a favorable impression of The United Methodist Church found it appealing.

Additional survey findings include:

- Nearly half of seekers pray daily or weekly.
- The top motivation for considering attending a Christian church is spiritual development, followed closely by a wish to reconnect with one’s Christian roots. Others cited a desire for their children to grow spiritually or learn about God or a need for support during a difficult time.
- Among those who are open to visiting a church, the top reasons for considering a specific church were feeling they would fit in or hearing good things about it. More than one in three would visit if personally invited by someone.
- Feeling accepted and welcomed were the top factors that would motivate seekers to continue attending a church they had visited.

The Barna Group fielded this biennial study August 30 through September 11, 2019 using an online panel. The sample of 675 is nationally representative of U.S. adults aged 18-49 screened to make sure they met the definition of a “spiritual seeker” by identifying with at least five of nine statements.

Twenty-one percent of U.S. adults meet the definition of a spiritual seeker. Seekers are more likely to be younger than the average population and unmarried. They are also more likely to be Latino.

People are seeking a new start, a new relationship with God and in many ways a person or family to invite them. So, as 2020 comes, resolve to get your invite on. Invite someone you know to join you/us at Marion Methodist.

GET YOUR INVITE ON!