



# May 2026

*Ellettsville First United Methodist Church*

## *UWF Women's Retreat Recap*

United Women of Faith of Indiana recently held a Spiritual Growth Retreat entitled *Horizons of Hope* on March 27-28 at McCormick's Creek State Park. Seven women from EFUMC attended. Reverend Shannon Stringer presented a program that was both informative and inspirational. She skillfully engaged participants in raising our awareness to the following concepts:

- In the connection between **faith** and **hope**, *miracles* can happen!
- *Be a hopefully practicing people* –actively look for hope!
- **Hope** is the great equalizer which leads to the possibility of *joy*.
- Hope is both Spiritual and Devine...it comes from God, can dwell in your life forever.
- *You have a right to hope*...make it a tool in your toolbox of Life!

Rev. Stringer taught us about 'the science of hope,' referencing concepts from neuroscience regarding the many ways our behavior impacts our brain, and visa versa. Hope is a well-worn track in our brain, one that can be strengthened with intentional exercise. We can make HOPE a proactive cognitive process. She encouraged us to **teach Hope** and make doing so contagious!

Do you have hope? Hope for yourself, for others? What is the horizon of hope you want to work on now? Rev. Stringer emphasized the importance of personalizing hope, noting that hope has to be internalized before it can be authentically shared! She challenged us to **actively look for hope** using an interesting graphic depicting the cyclical nature and positive impact of a hope-focused life. **Hope** allows us to better identify **God sightings**<->which leads to a sense of **gratitude** for the ways God is present and working in our lives <-> which leads to a greater willingness to **share and witness** with others!

How do we become more sensitive and attuned to God at work in our lives? It's a question worth reflecting on both as individuals and as a church. Let's expand this discussion, shall we?



As I write, Mary Beth and I are in the process of packing up for our move to a new house in Ellettsville. As we do, we are repeatedly asking ourselves when we look at an item, “Do we really need this?” Over the years, we acquire so much “stuff” that we pack away, and in many cases, never see until the next time we move. This selection process reminds me of my preparation for a ten-day backpacking trip a few years back. My task was to get everything I would need for those ten days in my backpack, and for the load not to exceed twenty-five pounds. I realized that many of the things I thought were essential were things I really would not need after all.



When Jesus sent his disciples out on mission, he encouraged them to pack light. “Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals.” Whatever house they entered, they were to say, “Peace to this house!” Those early followers of Jesus were to rely on their sense of the hospitality offered to them to help them determine how long they were to stay in that place. So, while there were some useful items to pack, the great thing they were to take along was their “peace.” Their “shalom.”

As we at Ellettsville First United Methodist Church continue to live Christ’s vision, we do so in a world that struggles to find peace. Things can become so anxious and contentious that were we to allow our faith to wane, we might believe peace is out of reach. But the great gift we give each other and receive from each other is the gift of peace. As Mary Beth and I pack, we have found markers of that peace in pictures of dear ones, or in cards and letters from those with whom we have shared church community. They remind us that while we need a minimum of possessions, we cannot live well without the peace that passes understanding. And our joyful chaos at the beginning of worship when we pass the peace is, in effect, a prayer for God’s enduring peace to sustain us. So, from Mary Beth and me, “Peace be with you.” Back to packing. ☺



## **An Unusual Answer to a Mother’s Prayer**

Linda Jo Peters of Terre Haute, Indiana, felt her “worry button” get pushed when her daughter, Esther, called from college with an unexpected plan. Esther explained she wanted to go camping alone in a park in southern Illinois. She needed quiet time to think and asked her mother for Bible verses to read as she prayed about her future.

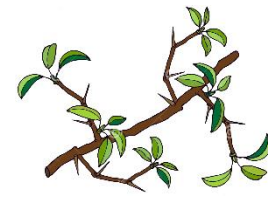
Linda knew Esther felt strongly about going, even if it made her uneasy. After the call ended, Linda dropped to her knees and began what she later called “a dialogue with God.” She closed her prayer with a simple surrender: “I guess you want me on my knees that weekend.” And that is exactly where she stayed.

The morning after Esther’s first night at camp, she called home. She was safe, she said, and no one had come near her tent. All night long, however, a skunk had wandered nearby, circling the campsite.

Later, Linda reflected on the moment with quiet confidence. “There was no way anyone with evil intent would have approached Esther’s tent,” she wrote, “while the power of prayer, in the form of a black-and-white critter, was circling it.”



# May 2026



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	
<b>April 2026</b> S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30				<b>June 2026</b> S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30		1	2
<b>3</b> 9:30a Communion Service 10:30a Fellowship 10:45a Adult Sunday School 10:45a UWF	<b>4</b> 6p Trustees 6:30p Scouts	<b>5</b> 6:30p Tigers 6:30p Wolves	<b>6</b> 6:30p Lions 7:30p Choir Practice	<b>7</b>  6p Mother's Day Banquet	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	
<b>10</b> 9:30a Family Worship Sunday Service 10:30a Fellowship 10:45a Adult Sunday School	<b>11</b> 6:30p Scouts	<b>12</b> 6:30p Pack Committee	<b>13</b> 6:30p Webelos 7:30p Choir Practice	<b>14</b>  Ascension	<b>15</b> Newsletter Deadline	<b>16</b> 8a-3p Sewing Group	
<b>17</b> 9:30a Worship Service 10:30a Fellowship 10:45a Adult Sunday School	<b>18</b> 6:30p Scouts	<b>19</b> 6:30p Tigers 6:30p Wolves	<b>20</b> 7:30p Choir Practice	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	
<b>24</b> 9:30a Worship Service 10:30a Fellowship 10:45a Adult Sunday School	<b>25</b> 6:30p Scouts	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 6:30p Webelos 7:30p Choir Practice	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	
<b>31</b> 9:30a Worship Service 10:30a Fellowship 10:45a Adult Sunday School							

## Church Finance Information

### Gold Can contributions:

February - Scouts \$351.00  
 March - Hannah House \$397.00  
 April - UMCOR  
 May - Backpack Blessings



**Star of David through 3/31/2026**  
 \$19,507

**Expenses through 3/31/2026**  
**Income vs. Budgeted**  
 \$37,409.00    \$37,331.17



*Ladies, have you made your reservation to attend the Mother's Day Dinner on May 7<sup>th</sup>? Contact Tracy Davis or Connie Frink today...you won't want to miss it!*



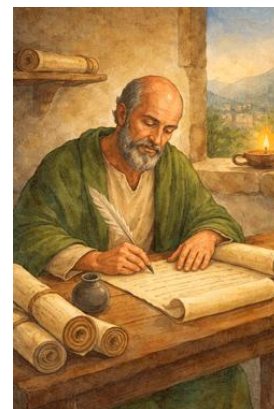
"Is this like the take-a-penny, leave-a-penny thing?"

## Special Dates

- National Day of Prayer, *May 7, 2026*
- Mother's Day, *May 10, 2026*
- Ascension of the Lord, *May 14, 2026*
- Armed Forces Day, *May 16, 2026*
- Victoria Day [Canada], *May 18, 2026*
- Day of Pentecost, *May 24, 2026*
- Memorial Day, *May 25, 2026*
- Trinity Sunday, *May 31, 2026*

## Bible Quiz

Although the apostle Paul is credited with writing the letter to the Romans, he dictated the message while another believer served as the scribe. Near the end of the letter, that writer briefly identifies himself. Who was it?



- A. Tertius
- B. Timothy
- C. Lucius
- D. Aquila

Answer: A (Romans 16:22)

# HOW TO CREATE A PRAYER GARDEN



## 1. SELECT YOUR SANCTUARY

Choose a peaceful, sun-dappled corner. Ensure privacy for reflection.

## 2. CULTIVATE WITH PURPOSE

Incorporate pathways, comfortable seating, and a central focal point like a water feature.



## 3. FLOURISH & ADORN

Plant fragrant herbs, blooming flowers, and add personal elements: stones, wind chimes, crosses.

## 4. REFLECT & RENEW

Your sacred space is ready. Find peace, inspiration, and connection in prayer.



## Greetings from United Women in Faith

The sewing group continues to sew quilts for Midwest Mission. A group of women from the church are planning a trip to Midwest Mission in July. They also had another movie night and watched the movie *I Can Only Imagine*, 13 women attended the movie, we all enjoyed the fellowship and are looking forward to another movie night in the near future. There was a group of 7 women that attended the Women's Retreat at McCormick's Creek State Park. They also are gearing up for the Annual Mother's Day Banquet. They also are going to give a shot at an auction this June, keep an eye out for more information. Plans are also being made to enter in the Fall Festival Parade.

Sincerely,  
Tracy, President



Stuffing Easter Eggs for the kids.



Women's Retreat at McCormick's Creek State Park

## Nurturing Thoughts

I'm having a hard time starting this month's article and Ideas. Then this popped into my head, "National Today" website. Two hours later and saying that one is not too bad to wow, not giving that one out. These are the categories: *Animals, Arts & Entertainment, Causes, Cultural, Federal, Food & Beverage, Fun, Health, Relationship, Religious, Special Interest.*

I'll start with Federal and common Holidays:

May 5	Cinco de Mayo	May 10	Mother's Day
May 16	Armed Forces Day	May 25	Memorial Day

Some of the days listed in Fun category: *May 1 – No Pants Day, May 8 – No Socks Day and my favorite, May 14 – Dance Like a Chicken Day, May 13 is National Fruit Cocktail Day, National Frog Jumping Day and Root Canal Appreciate Day, Jerusalem Day is May 15 with National Love a Tree Day on May 16. If that doesn't float your boat, then May 21 is Talk Like Yoda Day.*

But the one that caught my eye is on May 1<sup>st</sup> it is Blessing Day. It's not what you think. This day is to celebrate and appreciate those with the name Blessing. It means "divine gift" or "God's favor and protection." I do know someone who is named Blessing. He is a young man who works at the Highland Village Kroger as a cashier. I had the privilege of meeting him a year or two ago as I was going through his checkout line. If you have the opportunity to have him as your cashier, talk to him and tell him what you learned about his name. In the meantime, SMILE each day as you pass people, especially on May 31<sup>st</sup> which is National Smile Day.

*Love one another and May the Fourth Be With You!*  
-Marge Clark

## ***Christian Education Corner*** by Connie Frink

***How do we effectively teach our children about Jesus and help them understand what Easter is really all about?*** We have embraced that challenge in Sunday Church School, sharing Bible-based stories about Jesus's ministry and identifying the many ways he was beginning to be seen by those around him as being the son of God, the long-awaited Messiah. From a child's vantage point, it is often difficult to comprehend how, what seems just a few months ago, we were in the midst of joyfully celebrating Christmas and the birth of the Christ child, then just weeks after our last winter snow is gone, we are in Lent and about to hang our beloved savior on the cross. If explained in terms they can understand, it is amazing how much our children can process! Believe it or not, in the course of our lessons, we include information about the social, political, and economic conditions that existed in those days. We helped them understand that lots of things were different back then, for example, there were no newspapers, TV, or internet, the very things so many of us look to in gathering the news of today. The children now understand that most people could not read; they didn't have Bibles to refer to and learn the many lessons from scripture that we are so privileged to be able to read today. They seem to comprehend that even though we don't depend on the oral tradition in the same way they did back in Biblical times, it is still important to remember and learn to share Biblical truths and our growing faith with others.

All of the kids seem excited about coming to church and learning together! They are asking probing questions (why is the devil red?) and have good recall about the Bible-based stories they hear every week. Hopefully, in the process of listening to the exceptionally long Children's message during April's Family Worship, our church family could see our kids' enthusiasm as they were attentive and answered questions, proudly demonstrating some of what they learned over the weeks past.

By the way, several of the kids have expressed an interest in inviting their friends to come to church. I have assured them we will create that opportunity, make some special invitations which they can share, and have materials prepared to receive new children and their families. Not yet sure when this will happen, but we are working on it! Clearly, the Lord's hand is in the midst of all we do...Praise God for His guidance and inspiration as we continue to develop our Christian Ed offerings.

Thank you to Melinda Barnes, Linda Blackwell, and Sandy Kenney for their assistance and leadership. To those who have provided classroom materials, art supplies, Easter eggs, and candy, we appreciate your gift and your support. God bless our entire church family as we grow in faith and relationship with one another!



Kids showing off their painting on Family Sunday.



# The Communicator

Ellettsville First United Methodist Church, Inc.

803 W. Temperance St.  
P.O. Box 548  
Ellettsville, IN 47429

<b>Worship</b>	9:30am
<b>Fellowship</b>	10:30am
<b>Adult Sunday School</b>	10:45am
<b>Office Hours:</b>	M, W, F 9am-12pm
<b>Church Phone:</b>	812-876-4792
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:efumchurch@bluemarble.net">efumchurch@bluemarble.net</a>
<b>Webpage:</b>	<a href="http://www.efumchurch.org">http://www.efumchurch.org</a>

May 2026

