September 1st marks the 3rd anniversary of my taking the role of interim pastor of First Pres. Three years have come and gone with lightning speed from my perspective. It has been, and continues to be, a great gift to me to serve alongside you and as part of our greater Muncie community. You are a gift to me and to my wife, Laura. We are delighted to be a part of all that God is doing in and through our congregation.

The first lead article I wrote for The Columns for the October issue of that year includes an assessment I still believe accurately describes us three years later.

It is my conviction that God has drawn us together at just this point and time for a story that God is writing one page at a time. This interim chapter is about life in between our past and our future and between who we have been and who we will be. We have been placed in a story where trust in God and in one another is paramount. It’s a time to build our life and witness in fresh ways as we affirm the good and faithful foundation of the past. These few years are a very significant time for us as Jesus’ disciples.

The phrase “who we have been and who we will be” is a dynamic one. It assumes we are changing and moving forward. Both of these have been true for us and still are. We have no way to know at this writing how much longer this interim time will continue since so much hinges on the timing of the search for, and anticipated arrival of, our next installed pastor. For each day we have together, we get to continue this trek into all that God has in store. Thank you for the ways you embrace this way of traveling, one that places its full trust in God, finds us connected to one another and aware of all that God might want to show us. It’s a great adventure!

You read in last month’s Columns about several things related to Sunday, September 8th. I remind you that this will be:

Our first Sunday back in worship together at our 10:00 hour—The summer Garden Service has provided us a wonderful additional option for worship. I so appreciate all that Asher, Peter, our Deacons and our vocal artists did to make sure we were able to fully engage in worship all summer at 8:30, rain or shine. It will be great to worship together as one again!

Our first Sunday of our 9:00 a.m. Spiritual Formations Class—We’ll get things started as we delve into how Jesus and his fellow Jews of the 1st Century understood the teaching of their Scriptures, our Old Testament. It will transform our understanding in our own 21st Century context. I promise it will stretch you (and me). Class starts at 8:45 a.m., with refreshments and fellowship and our teaching time runs from 9:00-9:45 a.m.

Our first Sunday in our Fall sermon series that guides our worship time. “Apprentices Unlike Any Others” drops us into critical teaching of Jesus that reveals what he’s all about and wants us to be all about two thousand years later as his disciples.

Read on in the pages for other timely reminders about all that is happening in and through us at this time. I can’t wait to see us invest in all we can with God’s help to God’s glory as we start into year 4 together! Up some travel tips for our journeys. Let’s pack our bags, load up and head out for a summer of discovery.

The Rev. Pat Smith
First Pres Church will be closed on Monday, September 2, 2019, in observance of the Labor Day Holiday. We will return to our regular business hours on Tuesday, September 3, 2019.

**Fall Spiritual Formation Class: “Reading the Bible Like Jesus”**

There is a fascinatingly marvelous account in Luke’s gospel about an unexpected conversation between Jesus and two of his followers. This particular conversation is remarkable because it is the first lengthy interaction Jesus has with anyone after his resurrection. An interesting note is that these disciples don’t realize who he is at the time.

As the three of them talk, Jesus takes his customary role as rabbi/teacher. He doesn’t walk them back through some of the inside scoop of his last hours before his death or reveal all that happened while his body was in the grave. (These are all things we might want to know, right?) Instead, he takes them back to their Scriptures (our Old Testament) and shows them everything they say about him and his mission.

These were Jewish men discussing Jewish Scripture, words they knew by heart and had both been taught and talked about almost every day of their lives. Even with all this, they still didn’t understand them. 2,000 years later, we too, can read them and not understand them. Part of what hampers us that did not hamper them is that most of us are not Jewish and we come to the Scriptures as people schooled in Western thought.

Starting Sunday September 8th, our 9:00 a.m. Spiritual Formation Class will give us an opportunity to have our understanding expanded and transformed so we can more fully grasp what the Scriptures and Jesus’ teaching meant to their original audience in an Eastern context. What we discover will allow us to read and understand the Bible with greater depth and insight for life in 21st Century Mid-America.

Please join us in Fellowship Hall at 8:45 a.m. for refreshments and visiting. We’ll get the guided conversation underway right at 9:00 a.m., and it will last until 9:45. Our primary resource will be Lois Tverberg’s book, “Reading the Bible with Rabbi Jesus”, and we will provide those books (for free!) starting on the 8th during class. There’s no need to read anything before our first class.

We believe this class will open up our understanding and our lives in deeply meaningful ways. We look forward to seeing you this Fall.

**JOIN THE FUN & HELP THE HOMELESS**

Please remember the Project Stepping Stone dessert auction to be held Sunday, September 15, 2019 from 12 noon into the afternoon at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 900 W. White River Blvd. You can help raise money for this housing program for homeless working poor families by bringing bake goods to be sold at the auction.

The desserts should be in the following sizes:

1 dozen brownies, bars or cupcakes, 2 dozen cookies, a cake, a pie. Store bought desserts are not welcome. Please put a simple description on the top of each container.

Use containers that do not need to be returned.

First Presbyterian is committed to providing 20 desserts, so bake up a storm. Please bring your dessert contribution to the back lobby by 10:30 a.m. on Sunday morning, September 15.

If you have any questions, call Roger Sherwood at 765-284-5260
**TAKE HOME A HYMNAL**

We will start using our new hymnals in our worship service on Sunday, September 8. That means we will need to dispose of the 1990 hymnals we are currently using.

If you would like to have one or two of our 1990 hymnals, please feel free to take them from the pews between now and September 8, and from the table(s) in the hallway outside the Lounge where they will be stacked for a couple of weeks beginning September 8.

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**The FPC Chancel Choir rehearsals will resume on Thursday, September 5th., at 7:30 p.m. in the choir room.**

Do you have choral experience? Are you interested in joining the choir? Please contact Kerry Glann at kglann@bsu.edu for more information.

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**Hosting for Sursa American Organ Competition**

Ball State University is hosting the Sursa American Organ Competition on September 6–8 and is seeking host families for 3 female Korean candidates.

Stephen Price, Lecturer of Organ at BSU and competition coordinator, gives the following details: one competitor per home so that they can have their separate spaces, hosting competitor at your home Tuesday, September 3 through Monday, September 9, hosts are not expected to provide meals for the competitor they are hosting, and hosts are invited to the Jury Concert - Saturday, September 7, at 7:30pm in Sursa Hall, followed by a private reception at the Honors College.

If you are interested in hosting one of these competitors, please contact Peter Douglas by email, pdouglas.organist@gmail.com or phone, 330-749-1624, as soon as possible.

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**NEW GRACE VILLAGE T-SHIRTS!**

**PRE-ORDER YOURS NOW!**

Your price is $20 each and provides a free t-shirt to students for each one sold!

You may order shirts by emailing Amy at gracevillagebsu@gmail.com or calling First Pres office at 765-289-4431. Shirts are available in sizes XS, S, M, L, XL and XXL. Please provide your full name, quantity, and shirt size(s).

Full payment is due with your order (cash, or checks made out to Grace Village with “t-shirt” on memo line). Payment may be delivered at the church office during weekdays or on Sundays in the Youth Hall before or after Grace Village worship service at 4:00 pm.

Orders due no later than Sunday, Sept. 8, shirts will be available at the church office by Sunday, Sept. 24.
Planning Your LEGACY

We rarely come across a person who regrets having been truly generous. However, many of us wonder how to gift cash, securities, life insurance or even real estate when we do not know if our family will need these assets in the future. One solution among many is to make a gift through a bequest – a gift in your will.

Some advantages of a bequest is that it is...

- **Easy.** A few sentences in your will accomplishes the gift.
- **Versatile.** You can bequeath a specific amount, a specific item or a percentage of your estate.
- **Revocable.** Until your will takes effect, your wishes can be changed.
- **Tax Favored.** Your estate is granted an unlimited charitable deduction for charitable gifts.

Please watch for planned giving learning opportunities coming this fall from the Generosity Committee.

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**Fall Bible Study Opportunity**

The NT book of Philippians contains some of the most memorable phrases in all of Scripture. Here are just a few of those:

* "For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain." * "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again, Rejoice!"
* "I can do everything through Christ who gives me strength."

Though often taken out of context, these truths are closely tied to the historical reality of Paul's situation and that of the people to whom he was writing. This eight-week study, using a guide by N.T. Wright, will help us to explore Philippians in its context as we apply its truths to our lives today. We will meet every Wednesday for eight weeks, starting on September 25, from 4:00-5:00 pm, in the Brides Room.

Contact Laura Smith by email, call, or text at knappkin76@gmail.com, 317-873-2678, with questions or to order a study guide.

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**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

Ministry Guild will resume on Monday, September 9, at 5:00 pm in the church lounge. Don’t forget!

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**PHOTOS NEEDED FOR THE CHURCH DIRECTORY!**

Take a selfie and send it electronically to the church office.
Or look through your photo collection and bring a picture of yourself to the office to be scanned.
The more photos that are included in the new Church Directory, the more useful it will be. We are still accepting your pictures!
First Presbyterian Pre-Kindergarten News

Preschool is back in session and what a joy to have over 130 children participating in our various programs!

Parents enjoyed an orientation on Sunday, August 18, in Fellowship Hall, followed by meet the teacher days and first days of school. As we begin a new school year, please pray for our teachers, children and parents as we love and nurture one another.

We still have room in PDO if anyone is interested!
We have spots in Monday, Thursday, and Friday available.
The Friday class is potty trained only kids.
Check out the preschool website for more information or contact Sharon Rogers at 765-751-7960 or sharon@firstpresmuncie.org.

Dee Dah Day
Women’s Book Study & Prayer Group

It’s that time again!! Dee Dah Day

will start its Fall calendar on Friday, September 13, at 9:00 a.m. in the Church Lounge.
After some coffee and a "nutritious" snack, we will review our "Summer 2019 Happenings" and then look at the Fall calendar meeting times. (September 13 and 27; October 11 and 25; November 1 and 15; December 6 and 20.)

The paperback, "The Gift of Years--Growing Older Gracefully"* by Joan Chittister will be continued this Fall.

(NOTE: For any of you interested in Dee Dah Day for the first time, we can have this purposeful book in your hands within a few days!)
If you have any questions about this Women's Book Study & Prayer Group, please contact Barbara Ottinger at 765-289-4080 or lkbaott59@comcast.net.

*"This is a book not meant to be read in one sitting, or even in order. Like the older years themselves, it is meant to be taken more slowly, more reflectively, more seriously. One topic at a time. It is meant to be read over and over again, if for no other reason than to take the pulse of life as we go on from one issue, one decade, to another."
SAVE THE DATE AND SAVE YOUR STUFF!

FPC Mission Committee is sponsoring a bake sale and rummage sale on Saturday, September 28, from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm to benefit Avondale neighborhood ministries.

Items for the bake sale may be dropped off in the Fellowship Hall kitchen on Friday, September 27.

Rummage items can be brought to the Fellowship Hall from Monday, September 23, to Thursday, September 26.

To avoid preschool arrival and dismissal times, please come between 9:30-11:00am, 12:30-2:00pm and anytime after 3:00pm. If you have large items, please call the church office to put your name on a list for pick up.

Volunteers are needed to pick up large items, mark items, and help during the sale.

Contact Julia Wadsworth to add your name to the list of volunteers.

Help spread the word about the sale! Invite your friends to donate items and shop for a great cause!

WORSHIP

Sundays at 4pm in Youth Hall

We gather for worship every Sunday during the BSU school year. Come as you are for informal worship & discussion, with weekly communion.

BIBLE STUDY

Wednesdays at 4pm in Youth Hall

Join us as we study & discuss scripture texts and seek to further explore our faith.

GRAB & GO BREAKFASTS

Weds & Thurs 7:30-10am in back parking lot

Stop by for a free breakfast to Grab and Go on your way to class. Fresh fruit & protein bars, tea & muffins, coffee & donuts, something for everyone to start your day off right for morning class.
UPDATE FROM THE COMMUNITY MINISTRY GRANT TEAM:
NEW BEGINNINGS

WE GOT IT!: The Center for Congregations approved our grant proposal for full funding: $29,958 from them with a matching amount from our church. We should have the money by the time you read this article. Our project includes 18 separate initiatives which we will implement between Sept. 1, 2019 and Aug. 31, 2020.

THANK YOUS: To God for letting us be part of the Holy Spirit’s plan for the southside of Muncie

- To my “Scouting Team” of Marty Kendrick, Cathy Alexander, and Myron Earhart who spent almost 18 months researching our community and discerning our grant focus to be the teachers of South View

- To our congregation for their encouragement and support. You made us proud to be part of First Pres where the members actively seek to be the “hands and feet” of God in Muncie!

SEPTEMBER PROJECTS: After meeting with Principal Williams to discuss priorities, we developed a list of projects for September: (Remember that all of our projects are meant to foster teacher morale, our grant focus.)

- Volunteer training on childhood trauma by Angela Stefanski, BSU Liaison to South View

- Begin birthday celebrations: Nancy Barefoot will send cards made by Marsha Gobble and Sharon Stephen to each employee on their birthday. Included will be a choice of $20 Panera gift card or equivalent one for teachers pay teachers, a teacher resource sharing website.

- Begin monthly “care packages”: The Hospitality Team will provide snacks at the faculty meeting and the first “stress buster” activity. On the August 1 teacher work day, the team provided lunch and an encouragement box to teachers.

- First “Stress Buster”: a series of monthly after school activities designed to reduce stress. This month, Jenni Flanagan of BSU Employee Wellness and Lisa Beck will have a hands-on, participatory presentation about relaxation and mindfulness.

- New chair for Preschool teacher who has back problems

- Start Teachers’ Lounge renovation: paint, order new furniture etc.

NEW VOLUNTEERS: Besides the birthday team mentioned above,

- Breakfast monitors: Don Fields and Lance Scholtes joined the Breakfast team.

- Grant ordering and accounting: Lance Scholtes will join Bill McCune to cover this function.

- Sue Whitaker and others to be named will help evaluate the effectiveness of our project.

STILL NEEDED: (background check required)

- 1 more breakfast helper (7:40-8:40 on Weds. or Thurs.)

- Office help for Secretary Barb Neff: once a week 8:30-10:30 or 10:30-12:30 to help with lunch count, tardy slips, copying and misc. Call Laura Smith if interested.

- Evaluation team to work with Sue Whitaker

Proud to be part of First Pres, Jan McCune
Greetings from our brothers and sisters in the Dominican Republic! I was blessed to travel there in July (16-18) with Barry Sumner (Zionsville PC) for a strategy meeting.

Here are noteworthy items from the trip:

**Our goals:**
- Deliver the remaining 4 Dorcas baskets
- Strategize our focus on the South region (which includes Mella), the poorest and least served by outside groups
- Come alongside the priorities of the IED church.

**Our items for discussion:** Dorcas baskets, youth camp(s), solar oven ministry, water ministry, Community Health Evangelism (CHE) update, leadership training, and music camp

**Participants from the Iglesia Evangelical Dominicana included:**
- Rev. Cancu: general secretary of the IED church
- Pastora Betania: Christian Education director for the IED church
- Pastor Erasme: director of the Solar Oven Ministry; pastor of two churches in Santo Domingo
- Pastora Maria: IED national director of Social Action which includes solar oven ministry, water ministry, and CHE. A designated “peacemaker” by the PCUSA, Pastora Alfreda: pastor of the church in Jacquimeyes, she represented the South; serves as secretary of the South’s pastors group.

NOTE: Jo Ella Holman, PCUSA mission co-worker, was unable to attend. We were also sorry that Gordy and Ardell Graner, UMC mission workers involved with curriculum writing, solar oven ministry and water ministry were unable to join.

**OUTCOMES:**

**Dorcas baskets**

**2020 Dorcas baskets:** We plan to bring all 12 Dorcas baskets (curriculum and craft supplies for 120 children) to the DR in February-March, 2020 (coincide with the leadership training).

**2021 Dorcas baskets:** The lessons will be written by IED writers and we will provide craft materials. Rev Cancu would like to have 5 VBS lessons for Dorcas baskets developed by the IED from the topics suggested by the church leaders in Mella.
Leadership Training
Leadership training using The Disciple-Making Church by Glenn McDonald will take place in February-March, 2020 (dates tbd) in Barahona. The training will be for South pastors, IED seminary students, and other IED national staff.

South Youth Camp
An anti-violence camp for youth, ages 11-17, will be offered in the Barahona, June 11-13, 2020 for 50-60 youth from the South.

Solar Oven Ministry
Everyone seems open to Presbyterians joining this Methodist effort! This ministry is focusing on the South, especially along the Haitian border.

Personal Observations
This was a quick trip but a powerful one! I was so pleased with our warm reception and how much we accomplished. There is a wonderful atmosphere of trust and caring that allows us to greet each other warmly and then get down to business!

I must confess when I am packing Dorcas baskets that I secretly hope they tell us we don’t need to bring them anymore! However, that is not the case! The Dorcas baskets, full of stuff we take for granted (!), are so valued there! Over the past five years, we have supplied the curriculum (in Spanish) and all craft supplies for 120 children to 12 churches! After next year, our DR friends will write the curriculum (on topics suggested by our Mella friends) and we will supply the craft items. I believe this is a sign of great partnership!

As many of you know, youth are “near and dear” to my heart, so I am so pleased to have “lovingly pushed” for a youth camp in the South. (The IED has a youth camp every summer but youth from “our region” are unable to attend because of transportation and other costs). The topic for this camp is anti-violence, which is so needed in this country. Ardell Graner, Methodist missionary, will facilitate the camp. Dan and I will attend as “back stage helpers” (washing dishes, etc.) so we can observe and tell the story back home!

A trip in 2020 to build solar ovens is in the works. If you are interested, please let me know. This trip will involve travel to the border where we will work side-by-side with our new Dominican friends to build the ovens, prepare a meal, share a meal, and distribute the ovens.

Your prayers for all these efforts are so appreciated! Pray also for our friends in Mella and the country, as a whole. The recent bad publicity has resulted in 75% reduction in tourism and the whole country is feeling the effects.

¡Dios es bueno! ¡Todo el tiempo!

Cathy Alexander
Can We Go Back to the Future?

This was a key question that was answered in the affirmative in the movie franchise Back to the Future. In real life, going back isn’t possible with or without a DeLorean or the required 1.21 gigawatts required to power a flux capacitor. The key to the future is what is real in the present, and what we do moving forward, not going back.

We've been challenged, encouraged, blessed and stirred by teachings regarding these realities and our response to them at First Pres for the last few years. In 2017, Rev. Dr. Ray Jones was our guest presenter in our Bearing Fruit Weekend when he helped us begin to explore cultural and gospel dynamics. The next year, a weekend with Rev. Deb Mitchell helped us to take stock of our assets as a congregation so we might understand how our gifts and passions might best match our community’s needs in the name of Jesus.

This year, an opportunity to keep building on these themes has been presented to us and other congregations to spend a day with Presbyterian (PCUSA) pastor, author and seminary professor, Rev. Dr. Tod Bolsinger. Dr. Bolsinger will be in Terre Haute on Friday, October 18, from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, to teach and lead an extended conversation related to his book, Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory.

Tod writes, “Church leaders continue to be focused on a world which no longer exists. We are entering a new day, a new terrain, and a new adventure. We are heading into uncharted territory and must [move] into a future which is nothing like the past. How can we do that?” He likens this moment to that which Lewis & Clark and the Corps of Discovery faced over two hundred years ago in their journey west to the Pacific. “Technical skills only took them so far. They had to develop adaptive skills as they faced challenges they never thought they would face.”

In this one-day event, Tod will talk about how pastors and church leaders have to take wise risks, learn to lead on the map before they can lead off the map, how to prepare for the unknown, how to become resilient leaders, and how to follow the Holy Spirit into places for which we feel completely unprepared.

Some of our staff and board members of both Session and Deacons will participate in this conversation. We will be glad for others in the congregation to join in as we are stretched, challenged and encouraged to consider fresh ways to follow God into the future as a congregation. Our Christian Education Committee has made funds available to cover registration and lunch for this event. Please contact Pat Smith directly (rpatsmith@firstpresmuncie.org) or call the church office (289.4431) to indicate you’d like to be part of this special opportunity. We’d like to hear from you by September 10.
Join our team of Volunteer Bus Drivers

We have a volunteer opportunity providing Sunday morning transportation for our Westminster Village members.

The church bus doesn’t require a special license and is easy to drive.
The bus leaves the parking lot at 9:15 a.m. to arrive at Westminster around 9:30 a.m.

The group is in the main lobby waiting for the bus (pull under the overhang). After the service, you bring the van to the circle to pick up the group. If you have any questions, ask one of our current drivers: Cathy Alexander, Tim Koontz, Jonathan Schmidt, and Bob Wadsworth.

If you would be willing to drive, please contact the church office. A reminder email with the schedule will be sent out weekly.

We Need Liturgists

If you would like to serve as a Scripture reader for our 10 a.m. service, please sign up on the bulletin board, call 765-289-4431, or email office@firstpresmuncie.org

Readings for the week will be emailed to you by Friday prior to the scheduled Sunday, or/a copy will be available to be picked up at the office.

Thank you!

Salvation Army Pantry Item for September

Personal Hygiene Products

Please place your donation(s) in the cart in the coat closet in Fellowship Hall.

First Presbyterian Church
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Muncie IN 47303

Phone: 765-289-4431
Fax: 765-289-4486
www.firstpresmuncie.org
office@firstpresmuncie.org

SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES:
10:00 am One Unified Service
11:30 am International Congregation Service
4:00 pm University/Young Adult Worship

The Rev. Dr. Pat Smith, Interim Pastor
rpatsmith@firstpresmuncie.org

The Rev. Dr. Myungku Lee, Associate Pastor
9brights@firstpresmuncie.org

Carrie Jo Miller, Commissioned Ruling Elder
cjmiller3501@comcast.net

Sharon Rogers, Director of Pre-Kindergarten
sharon@firstpresmuncie.org

Lisa Ulrich, Business Administrator
lisa@firstpresmuncie.org

Gabriela Burciaga, Administrative Assistant
office@firstpresmuncie.org

Asher John, Building Superintendent
ashersw@yahoo.com

Weekly Weeders

Need Your Help!

Find us around the church every Wednesday morning at 9:00 a.m.

Come and be part of this awesome group that works hard and makes sure our grounds are always groomed and looking beautiful for us and visitors.
Some of us may be fans of the long-running “reality” show, The Apprentice. I am not. With apologies for all who love to watch this show, it only took me as long as the thirty seconds of one of the early commercials to know this was not my cup of tea. Competition, meanness, the goal to come out on top no matter what it takes, autocratic decisions of who’s still in—it all left me immediately cold. I remember declaring to my television, “That’s not apprenticeship!”

We know there are other apprentices in our world. These are real life opportunities to learn a trade. A person signs on under the supervision and tutelage of a master craftsman in whatever chosen profession. The goal is to learn everything that person can teach about how to successfully accomplish the work. A good apprentice is attentive, committed to learning and capable of successfully completing the apprenticeship so he or she can proceed on into a career. A good master carefully nurtures his or her learners so they achieve that goal.

In Jesus’ day, rabbis were already taking on what they called “disciples” to learn their take on the Jewish Scriptures and Jewish life based on those words. These disciples, actually the same word as the word apprentices, listened carefully and watched the rabbi carefully. Once they were ready, they were able to stand on their own as they sought to live Godly lives and teach others.

At the end of Jesus’ ministry, he told his apprentices, “Wherever you go, apprentice others as I have apprenticed you.” What a simple and profound instruction! What does this life look like? Of what does it consist? What are we supposed to do and be? This Fall we’ll explore what it means to live as Jesus’ disciples, “Apprentices Unlike Any Others.”

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Scripture</th>
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<tr>
<td>September 8</td>
<td>The Cost</td>
<td>Luke 14:25–33</td>
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<td>September 15</td>
<td>Everyone is Invited</td>
<td>Luke 15:1–10</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 22</td>
<td>Title: The Control Switch</td>
<td>Luke 16:1–13</td>
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