



Weekly Booster

CHURCH STAFF

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David B. Clark

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Pianist

Terry Stafford

Bells & Choir Directors

Dan & Linnea Shook

Multimedia & Website

Jeff Hiser

Sunday Media Booth

Alan Hutchison

Jeff Hiser

Sunday Facebook Host

Craig Harris,

Facebook Contributors

Pastor David B. Clark,

Barb Cunningham,

Craig Harris, Jeff Hiser

Sunday Praise Team

Terry Stafford, Linda Haldane,

Margaret Brady, Deb Finlay,

Jeff Hiser, Drew Morelock,

Pastor David



Who Were the Very First Christians

Following Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension, thousands of Jews became believers. The period from roughly A.D. 30 to 100 saw the glory of the first Pentecost, the struggle of the church to organize for the mission, the conversion of Saul (Paul), the mission to the Gentiles, and the spread of the faith to Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch, the three greatest cities of the Roman Empire.

The day of Pentecost came 50 days after the offering of the first grain ([Leviticus 23:10, 15, 16](#)) at the Passover observances. It was a celebration of the wheat harvest, with pilgrims gathering from various nations of the Roman world. The crowd included Jews living outside of the Holy Land, as well as Gentiles who had accepted the Jewish faith. Luke lists their homelands beginning in the East, then in Asia Minor, and on to other Mediterranean areas—North Africa, Rome, and Crete ([Acts 2:9-11](#)).

The Pentecost was quickly followed by the birth of the church, as distinct from a mere Jewish sect. The Good News also spread beyond Jerusalem with believers meeting in the temple courts, Jewish synagogues, and private homes.

Continued page 2.

“Never let the fear of striking out keep you from playing the game.”
Babe Ruth

Reminders

April 17th

Bible Study – 11:00 a.m.
Praise Team - 5:00 p.m.
Choir – 5:30 p.m.
Bell Choir – 6:30 p.m.

April 18th

T.O.P.S.

April 21st

Men’s Breakfast – 8:00 a.m.

April 23rd

Ad Board Meeting – 6:30 p.m.

April 27th

Church Workday – A.M.
More information to come

****No Men’s Saturday Bible Study Until Spring - TBA**

****Worship Assistants are needed for April 21 & 28**

**** Fellowship Volunteers needed sign-up in Fellowship Hall**



Two Volunteers Needed each Thursday to Deliver Meals
Sign-Up Sheet is on the Welcome Center Counter

First Christians - Continued from page 1.

Philip and the Samaritan

The Samaritans were the first non-Jews to be evangelized by the early church. Philip “proclaimed the Messiah” to the Samaritans ([Acts 8:5](#)) and their reception of Philip’s message about the kingdom of God and Jesus Christ was a significant step in the spread of the gospel. Samaritans were considered heretics by orthodox Jews, and they were receiving the gospel. Perhaps the Samaritans accepted the gospel more readily than the Jews because they did not have to unlearn previous misconceptions about the coming Messiah. As the apostles continued to preach in many villages of Samaria, Samaritans became an accepted part of the church ([Acts 8:25](#)).

Kandake’s Ethiopian Eunuch Believes

Luke gives us much information about the person that Philip evangelized and eventually baptized. The man was from Ethiopia, was a eunuch, served a queen as her treasurer, and had gone to worship in Jerusalem ([Acts 8:27](#)). This new convert’s background makes his conversion to Christianity significant.

God himself made it clear that Gentiles should be included in his church. Ethiopia was an area south of Egypt. Because Ethiopia (Cush) and Egypt were so close geographically, they are often mentioned together in Scripture (see [Psalm 68:31](#); [Ezekiel 30:4](#); [Nahum 3:9](#)). But Ethiopia is not close to Jerusalem, so Kandake’s eunuch had traveled from a distant location.

Kandake is not a personal name but a title, like pharaoh. As the pharaoh was king of Egypt, the Kandake was queen of Meroe, a kingdom on the Nile River south of Egypt. From Acts 8:27 it appears that “Kandake” could be used as a name for Meroe’s queens just as “Pharaoh” was used as a name for Egypt’s kings. The eunuch worked for someone of high authority.

His position added to his status since as the queen’s treasurer he exercised great authority. It was common in Eastern countries for eunuchs to hold positions of high authority in a queen’s court. This eunuch was an important person.

Continued page 6

Volunteers Needed



**LAST PERSON LEAVING
PLEASE TURN OUT LIGHTS
AND LOCK DOORS**

First United Methodist Church
**Please wear your
name tag on
Sunday mornings**



Church Ad Board Members

- Michelle Morelock - Chair*
- Mary Peterson - Secretary*
- Margaret Brady - Vice Chair & Trustee*
- Gary Milstead - Trustee*
- Roger Jones - SPRC*
- Robin Hensen - Finance*
- Dave Lashier - Treasurer*
- Craig Harris - Lay Member to Annual Conference*
- Connie Anderson - Memorials*
- Linda Haldane - Membership*
- David Clark - Pastor*

Church Office Hours

**** Children & Jr.-Sr. High
Sunday School – PK-6
during service, Jr/Sr High
at 10:30 a.m.**

****Choir – Wednesdays,
5:30 p.m. Sunday 8:30 a.m.
**Bell Choir –
Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m.**

The front door to the church
will be unlocked during
office hours and closed only
for errands and lunch.

Monday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00
Tuesday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00
Wednesday
CLOSED
Thursday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00
Friday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00

Please continue to call in
advance if you need in the
church to make sure
someone is in the office. If
you reach the answering
machine please leave
your name, number, and
a brief message and your
call will be returned. Calls
after 2:00 p.m. may be
returned the next
business day.



Who cured the crippled
man in Lystra?

- a) Peter
- b) Paul
- c) Stephen
- d) Jesus

Who became Abraham's wife
after Sara died?

- a) Leah
- b) Hagar
- c) Keturah
- d) Rebekah

Joseph, Reuben, Isaac, and
Levi. Who is the odd one out?

- a) Joseph
- b) Reuben
- c) Isaac
- d) Levi

**Check page 4 for answers from
the previous week.**



14th – Michelle Blank
18th – Jeff Hale, Mary Thompson

****See a wrong birthday or anniversary, or need one added, please call the
office, or send an email to office@shen.church**

**Shenandoah First United
Methodist Church**

200 Church St.
Shenandoah, IA 51601

Phone 712-246-2081

Church E-mail
office@shen.church

Same address – a new look at
<https://shen.church>



<https://shenchurch.onechurchsoftware.com/>



United Methodist Church,
Shenandoah, IA

<https://www.facebook.com/methodist.church.shenandoah>



Services are now on our YouTube
channel only.

<https://www.youtube.com/@shen.church8192/streams>

***Prelude/Postlude/Accompanist: Terry Stafford**

Call to Worship

Leader: Children of God, rejoice!

People: Alleluia!

L: For the one who was promised, the Messiah of God,

P: has been raised in new life for us.

L: Children of God, rejoice!

P: Alleluia!

“Times of Refreshing”

Scripture Reading: Acts 3:12-20

Songs

Great Is Thy Faithfulness #140

Open the Eyes of My Heart #3008

Precious Lord, Take My Hand #474

Last Week’s Attendance

In-Person Worship – 66

On-Line Worship – 19

Our Mission:

“Know & Serve God by Sharing Christ’s Love.”

Our Vision:

“We will grow in holiness, our community will thrive, & we will make a difference in our world.”

Answers for April 7th are b) Paul c) Keturah c) Isaac

Quiz hints – Q1) Acts Q2) Genesis Q3)



Supporting the local pantry

April 2024

Pasta (any kind), Jell, Ketchup & Mustard, Pickle Relish, Spices, Green Beans & Corn, Mandarin Oranges, Cinnamon Applesauce, Chicken Noodle Soup, Soda Crackers, Canned Tuna or Chicken, Bar Soap, Shampoo & Conditioner, Toothbrushes, Toothpaste.

There are times when people who use the Food Pantry come to the pantry on foot. They are then forced to walk home carrying, pushing, or pulling several pounds of food. Southwest Iowa Transit, for a very reasonable fee of \$5.00, will take individuals with their food items home. If you are interested in helping pay for these fees, simply seal your cash (whatever you would like to give) in a plain envelope and add it to your donated food items.

Bring Your Change to Make a Change

*Collected each Sunday after
the children's message*



"Each of you should GIVE what you have decided in YOUR HEART to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for GOD LOVES a cheerful GIVER." (2 Corinthians 9:7)

The Noisy Offering is one more way to do ministry for those in need and also teach your children the importance of giving and serving. Each Sunday a new opportunity for mission giving will take place after the Children's Message. Sunday School students will walk around the congregation, collecting your loose coins and currency in their colorful metal pails. This would be a good time to clean out the loose change from your pockets or purse. The money donated in March & April will go to the **Heifer International Organization**.



First Christians - Continued from page 2

Nevertheless, he was a eunuch, and eunuchs were excluded from religious service in Israel ([Deuteronomy 23:1](#)). The law prohibited them from serving as priests, who were required to have a whole body, free from blemishes ([Leviticus 21:17–20](#)). The eunuch could worship in Jerusalem and read the sacred Scriptures ([Acts 8:28](#)) but could not be a full member of the Jewish religion.

This eunuch represents a significant conversion to Christianity. With him, the Christian faith reached out to a distant land, to someone in the service of a queen, to someone who himself had a high position. More importantly, it reached out to one who previously was an “outsider” to Israel’s religion.

The God-Fearing Cornelius

Caesarea Maritima, the home of Cornelius, served as the capital for the province of Judea. The city contained the residence for the Roman governor of Judea, as well as a regular Roman garrison ([Acts 10:1](#)). A legion of the Roman army was comprised of ten cohorts; five cohorts of about 600 soldiers each were stationed at Caesarea, while another cohort remained garrisoned on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

Centurions like Cornelius commanded units, called centuries, that generally averaged 80 men. In contrast to high-class Romans who aspired to higher offices, centurions usually began as regular soldiers and worked their way up through the ranks. Army service for males usually began around age 17, and roughly half of the enlistees who survived the required 20 years of service were highly rewarded.

The devout Cornelius ([Acts 10:2](#)) was a member of the “God-fearers,” a class of religious people named in many ancient Jewish sources. God-fearers, while not full converts to Judaism, did respect Israel’s God and his teachings. Inscriptions reveal that many soldiers were interested in foreign religions like Judaism.

Roman custom expected members of a household (whether wives and children or servants) to follow the religion of the head of the household. It was thus natural for Cornelius to have spread his faith to “all his family” ([Acts 10:2](#)).

It’s not exactly clear who was part of Cornelius’s household since Roman regulations prohibited soldiers from marrying. Officials usually looked the other way while soldiers stationed in various places held illegal concubines, but centurions, who were moved more frequently, probably developed fewer relationships even with concubines. Unless Cornelius was retired or, as often happened, was breaking official rules, his household may have consisted primarily of servants ([Acts 10:7](#)).

Peter’s ministry to the Gentile household of Cornelius was accepted by the Jerusalem church only after Peter convinced them that the Gentiles had become believers in the same sense as had Jesus’ followers, who were filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost ([Acts 11:1–18](#)).

The First Gentile Church

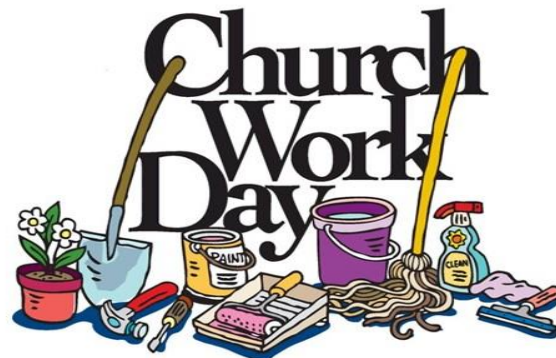
The first church to include Gentile Christians was the church at Antioch ([Acts 11:26](#)). More innovative than the Jerusalem church, Antioch became the center of missionary outreach to Gentiles, yet still maintained close ties with Jerusalem. Eventually, the Jerusalem church acknowledged acceptance of Gentiles ([Acts 11:18](#)), and Antioch became a center of the Gentile church.

It was in Antioch that the disciples were identified with the term “Christian,” ([Acts 11:22-24](#)), a term appearing only twice elsewhere in Scripture ([Acts 26:28](#); [1 Peter 4:16](#)). The term “Christian” likely originated with the Gentile population in Antioch, rather than with the followers of Christ themselves. The Gentiles, being unfamiliar with the Jewish religion, could have thought “Christ” was a name, rather than recognizing it as a title for the Messiah. Thus, by about A.D. 46, the Antiochan Gentiles had distinguished the “Christians” from both Jews and pagans.

Adapted from study notes in the NIV Chronological Study Bible. HarperCollins Christian Publishing. NIV Weekly Blog, All Rights Reserved 501 Nelson Place, Nashville, TN 37214, USA, April 8, 2024.

Villisca United Methodist Church
is hosting a
SPRING Women's Conference
on **Saturday, April 13**
from **9am to 3pm.**

Everyone is invited!
To secure your spot, please call the
church office at 712-826-3132
Cost is \$30 per person
which includes a light breakfast and lunch



Saturday, April 27th



Next Sunday, April 21st
Fellowship Hall
8:00 a.m.
All men are welcome

**Administrative
Board
Meeting
Tuesday
April 23rd
6:30 PM**



Embracing God's Story for Your Life

Tim Keller said, "We are God's priority. To each of us, he says, 'What in my life is more important than you?'"

These are the words we spend our energy reaching to hear. Behind our incessant drive for others to receive us, to win at the tasks in front of us, to be noticed in some measure and be included, to be enfolded in the family is a drive to be someone's priority. To find a forever home in someone we trust. And much of our adult lives are God hedging us so that we might finally see only one someone, only one family that will not disappoint, only one forever safe home.



Our limits are purposed, not accidental. We push past them to find what we're craving, but God can develop in us a much smaller push for more significant things, a push that starts with our eyes.

Watchfulness. It enables us to enter the story, whether fielding our losses, letting ourselves grieve them, or breathing the sigh of surrender that says, "Your story, God, not mine."

Watchfulness—on the back end of the cycle of loss, grief, and surrender we inevitably work our way through dozens of times in our lives—can be full of wonder. Watchfulness can make us children again, finding the treasure of home.

Once on my Saturday morning drive home from the gym, I decided to turn off the music—no voice memos to friends or podcasts, either. I'd been choosing to sit in silence a bit more often, noticing that my body, mind, and heart were more tired than I had assessed.

On this Saturday, my heart felt expectant. I was becoming more comfortable choosing watchfulness over vigilance regarding the details of my life. So I turned off the noise from my phone and rolled down the windows to absorb the sounds and colors outside my car.

Within a minute, I saw two flitting monarchs move from one end of my windshield to the other. I could barely enjoy these two before I saw another, and another, then two more. If they had been higher up in the sky, I would have imagined them to be twos and threes of distant birds. But they were monarchs, more of them. And still more. I stopped counting at thirty.

Cars raced around me on this four-lane road, focused drivers headed to Lowe's or their sons' soccer games or a Saturday runners meet-up at the park. Their music was loud and their eyes were glazed, like mine often are—not in the *selah* of the moment but already mentally in the next. Had it been yesterday, I wouldn't have noticed a butterfly. Perhaps they *were* there yesterday and I missed them on this familiar

road, mind bent toward task and calendar item. No one around me appeared to notice the parade of monarchs on display.

This was watchfulness. God was teaching me. It's a seventeen-minute drive to my gym, and many days I don't know what happened during those seventeen minutes. Seventeen minutes of ruminating about my life or planning the next task or frozen in a mental loop that tires me. But this day, He was teaching me watchfulness: within my reach is a world full of beauty and story and whispers of God, waiting to make this day rich and different from the last and different from the next. The monotony of morning rhythms and teaching littles their letters and big kids to drive and serving meal after meal after meal is continuously interrupted by a wonder He is offering me. But when my eyes are locked on what I can't have, on what this season isn't, on where I am not, on what may come that might hinder me, I have no room for watchfulness.

Paul encourages us: "I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh" ([Galatians 5:16](#)). This concept can feel big and ethereal, out of reach. But His Spirit helps us when we can't get our minds around what it might mean to walk by the Spirit. He meets us where we are and in small ways. With a whisper—like the butterfly—saying, *Find me here. Home is here, where I am.*

Adapted from *The Gift of Limitations: Finding Beauty in Your Boundaries* by Sara Hagerty.



In a couple of weeks, the General Conference of The United Methodist Church will begin in Charlotte, NC. This is the highest legislative body of our global denomination. Several major pieces of legislation have the potential to shape the future of The UMC such as regionalization, a large reduction in the general church budget, the expansion of bishops in Africa, revised Social Principles, and amending the language concerning homosexuality in the Book of Discipline. In the coming weeks, we will continue providing resources in the booster, in print at the church, and on Facebook to help us

better understand the changes coming at the General Conference. To begin we will provide a summary of some FAQs that are posted in full on the UM News website (<https://www.umnews.org/en/news/a-beginners-guide-to-general-conference>).

What does General Conference do?

General Conference is the denomination's highest legislative body. As such, it has the authority to make revisions to the denomination's Book of Discipline and Book of Resolutions.

The Discipline is the denomination's governing document that contains its doctrine, constitution, church law, rules of organization, and procedures. The Book of Resolutions contains the denomination's positions on current social issues. Resolutions expire after eight years unless General Conference readopts them.

General Conference approves the four-year budget allocating apportionments — shares of church giving — for denomination-wide ministries around the globe.

Who votes at General Conference?

The coming General Conference plans to have 862 voting delegates — half clergy and half lay.

Of the elected delegates, 55.9% are from the U.S., 32% from Africa, 6% from the Philippines, 4.6% from Europe (including Russia), and the remainder from concordat churches that have close ties to The United Methodist Church.

How are the delegates chosen?

Annual conferences — the denomination's regional bodies consisting of lay and clergy voters from multiple churches — each elect an allotment of delegates. The United Methodist Church's constitution requires that laity elect the lay delegates, and clergy elect their fellow clergy.

How does legislation become church law?

The first stop for legislation under consideration at the coming General Conference is one of 14 legislative committees or the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters. The standing committee is a permanent General Conference committee that deals with matters pertaining to church regions in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines.

Petitions approved by committee then move on to the full body of delegates for possible further revision and a vote.

What percentage of votes does legislation need to pass?

Most legislation requires only a simple majority of General Conference delegates to pass.

Amendments to the denomination's constitution require a two-thirds vote of the General Conference followed by a two-thirds aggregate vote of the lay and clergy members present and voting in the annual conferences.

Changes to the denomination's doctrinal standards, which include basic Christian tenets such as belief in Christ's resurrection and the Trinity, require at least a two-thirds vote of the General Conference followed by three-fourths aggregate vote of the lay and clergy members present and voting in the annual conferences.

The United Methodist Church has never altered its doctrinal standards before, and no proposals before the coming General Conference seek to alter them.

When does newly passed legislation take effect?

Legislation approved by the coming General Conference will become effective Jan. 1 next year, unless otherwise specified.

However, amendments to the denomination's constitution only take effect after the Council of Bishops certifies their ratification. In practice, that means any new amendment will not take effect until the bishops meet in spring 2026.

Pastor David Clark