

Weekly Messenger

NOVEMBER 22, 2019

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Methodist Church
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Sterling Heights, MI
(586) 731-7667
www.UticaUMC.org

WEEKLY MESSAGE FROM REV. DON GOTHAM

Thanksgiving Will Be Different...

Yesterday, our son-in-law called to let me know our three-month-old granddaughter's illness had become more involved, and he was taking her to her doctor for care. As the day progressed, her illness became more and more serious. How does a grandfather's heart not rise into their throat when a baby they hold dear is in the hospital and losing ground?

I began to pray, and I enlisted friends I knew would pray. Facebook can be such an essential tool for such an occasion. People I knew and many I did not (as the need to pray for Adaline was quickly picked up by churches across Michigan, and other states, and even national prayer chains) began to pray. I tried to focus on some of the work I needed to do, but I felt I was involved in a struggle I couldn't lay down.

Over this summer, Laura and I reconnected with friends we knew from way back when I was a seminary student. They happen to live in Savannah, where our granddaughter is in ICU. I reached out, and Jennifer was able to meet our daughter and granddaughter when they arrived by ambulance from the other hospital. It was a great comfort to have a friend be there when the distance didn't allow us to be with them.

This morning (Thursday), our daughter let us know Adaline had improved enough to be taken off the oxygen. I was and am so grateful! Still, they discovered she had a second virus, so she has even more to overcome. The medical staff estimate she will need to remain in the ICU for another couple of days. She is still a sick little girl, and we still covet prayers for her healing.

We will be with our daughter and her family for Thanksgiving. I can honestly say I am thankful for my family every Thanksgiving, and all of the year through. But how differently will I look upon this blessing this year? How grateful will I be for this church, and how folks here went to God in prayer on behalf of our Adaline? How about my thankfulness for friends who stand in the gap? How thankful will I find myself for our God who is the source of healing?

I pray every one of us finds a deep and profound spirit of thankfulness and can live from that perspective every day!

Grace and Peace,
Rev. Don

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Thanksgiving Pies for

BALDWIN CENTER

Feed, Clothe, Educate, Empower

Every year, Baldwin Center hosts a Thanksgiving meal at their Soup Kitchen. Our church has been the sole provider of pies for this meal for nearly 30 years!

Please help us continue this tradition by bringing in a pie (or 2) to the church on Saturday, November 23rd or Sunday, November 24th.

There is no refrigeration available, so please bring fruit or pumpkin pies - no cream pies.

Pies will be taken to the Soup Kitchen in the afternoon of November 24th.



Fresh Foods for Families in Need

On Sunday, November 24th, please consider bringing in fresh fruits and vegetables to donate to families in need for their Thanksgiving meals.

Suggested items are:

Onions

Celery

Potatoes

Squash

Cabbage

Lettuce

Carrots

Apples



Thank you in advance!

A Message from Together In Missions

Each year your Missions Committee selects mission projects and programs to focus on, to educate the congregation about, and to find ways to help them accomplish their goals of bringing health, wellness, food & clothing, the Word of and love of God to those who share this world with us.

We select programs/missions locally, within our state, our country and internationally.

Internationally, we have selected Mujalil Falls Agricultural Center Missions Project in Africa. WE offer you this information on how your Christmas donations will change the lives of so many:

“Mujali Falls Agricultural Center Missions Project works with the Lunda people of extreme North West Zambia. The Lunda have the highest infant mortality rates and lowest life expectancy of all tribes in Zambia. The greatest need is to improve protein, vitamin and mineral content in the local diet and help families to increase incomes so they can provide for schooling, medical care, clothing, additional foods, etc.

We are continuing to expand egg and milk production. We hope to have electricity soon, which will help with refrigeration, processing, and packaging of our products for better storage and longer shelf life. We have encouraged and are planting our own soybeans. Together with corn, we can produce concentrates that will permit hogs to grow from day old to

over 100 kg in only 5.5 months. Getting farmers to use better genetics, vaccinations, and balanced feeds will greatly increase animal production in the area. Animal manure is essential to higher yields of feed and food crops in the area. We do demonstration plots to show the efficacy of using animal manures efficiently to increase the productivity of fields.

The original goals and objectives of the project were to increase protein, minerals and vitamins in the diet to reduce the very high infant mortality and low life expectancy of the Lunda People. It was also to help the Lunda People to increase family incomes by becoming more effective and efficient farmers. Our long-term impact is to help to make the Lunda farmers and their families competitive in agricultural pursuits that are favored by the high rainfall and abundant land that is available here. These include milk production, fruit production, meat production, gardening, field crop production, etc.

The goal is to help farm families to increase their farm incomes and become less dependent upon scavenging for rats and mice for their survival. We hope to have them join the national economy and become full participants in their national livelihood. They have been ignored for too long and have suffered too much from the neglect.Keep reading on page 3.

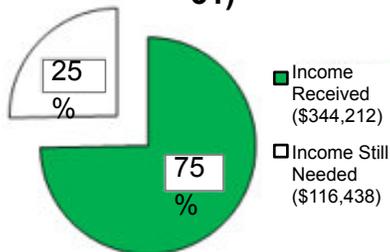


THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

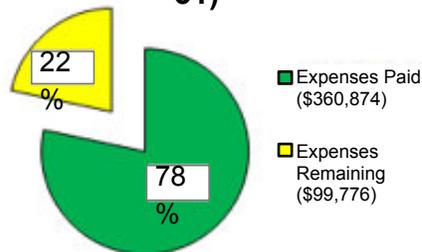
Year End Operation Fund Update 2019

HELP ENSURE OUR YEAR-END OBLIGATIONS ARE MET

Income (through October 31)



Expenses (through October 31)



- Through October 31 we have funded nearly 80% of our 2019 Operating Fund expenses. This is slightly behind where we should be at this point.
- We still require \$100,000 to meet our remaining obligations (salaries, utilities, conference Ministry Shares & Apportionments, and property upkeep (e.g., plowing the snow!).
- This amount is slightly more than our anticipated monthly giving for November and December.
- Please ensure your 2019 financial commitment is fulfilled before the end of the year.
- Please give extra, if you are able, to ensure we meet all our obligations for 2019. Simply mark "extra" on your offering envelope or include it on the Operating Fund line.

THANK YOU !

Together In Missions

Continued from page 2

Increased education requires that they can provide school fees, clothing, and books. We are seeing more solar panels and cell phones in surrounding villages, we are seeing more motorcycles and even a few automobiles. We are soon to have grid electrical power. All of these will require that people have sustainable incomes from the proper use of the land. This is what I would like to see.



Make It & Take It Holiday Gifts

Thursdays in Fellowship Hall

(Nov. 14th & 21st and Dec. 5th & 12th)

1:00pm-3:00pm

★ BRING YOUR OWN CRAFT ★

- ★ Wood Working ★
- ★ Knitting & Crocheting ★
- ★ Scrapbooking ★
- ★ Sewing ★

There will be people to assist you with your project; everyone (men, women, & children) are all welcome!!



Advent Study

With Teresa Winkler

This study will help you "discover a way of seeing that opens your eyes to ordinary amazing grace, a way of living that is fully alive, and a way of becoming present to God that brings you deep and lasting joy." - "One Thousand Gifts" by Ann Voskamp

Sundays at 9:30a
starting December 1st

Tuesdays at 11am
starting December 3rd

Classes will meet in the conference room.

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Grace's Weekly Devotional

"I Walked A Mile With Pleasure"



"I walked a mile with Pleasure;
She chatted all the way;
But left me none the wiser
For all she had to say.

I walked a mile with Sorrow;
And ne'er a word said she;
But, oh! The things I learned from her,
When Sorrow walked with me."

— Robert Browning Hamilton

Do we learn more from sorrow than we do from joy? I have had my share of sorrow, but I know others who have had more. I have not lost a child and my plan is I don't want that particular sorrow. It is not the natural way of things. When talking with someone recently who had lost a child and now was facing the serious illness of another, I could feel her pain but could not experience it the way she was experiencing it. What sorrow that must be to lose a part of yourself. Unimaginable. I think the above poem is true because we tend to take joy for granted. God put us here for joy but yet sorrow finds us. Sorrow touches us each so differently and so strongly. Some seem to handle things with ease but sometimes they are the ones who feel it the most. I was driving down the street and for some reason, became so overcome with grief for the things my brother had never had in his life that I had to pull off the road. He was only 17 and never experienced marriage or the birth of a child or being a Grandfather. He missed out on so much and had so little time. I have been without him for 72 years and yet still miss him. I can talk about him and tell the funny stories about him but most of all I have missed his guidance and how protective he was of me. When I was 6, a boy was picking on me at school, my brother held him, and I hit him with my little red purse. I was looking at a high school yearbook and was surprised to see this boys picture. I have no memory of him in Junior High or High School, other than he avoided me in Elementary School after that incident. My brother must have impressed him. What do we learn from sorrow? To treasure those moments with others, to enjoy our time here, to turn to God with a grateful heart for what we have today, and treasure that we have lost, although I would argue we haven't really lost it as long as we remember and can smile and treasure the memories. God gives us our memories as a gift.

Psalm 30:4-5 Sing to the Lord you saints of his; praise his holy name. For his anger lasts only for a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may remain for a night but rejoicing comes in the morning.

We thank you Lord that you walk with us and answer when we call your name. Be with those who grieve for what has been lost, for those who are dealing with sorrow and grief. Be with those who seek you, may they find you in our midst. Be with our Pastor and his family, be with those who are our leaders, and our staff. May they feel your guidance and love. Be with those who have strayed from your path, may they find their way back to you. We pray in Jesus name. Amen

Grace Epperson

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

This Week's Calendar

Sunday, November 24th

- 8:45am - Chancel Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary
- 9:00am - Fellowship Time - Parlor
- 9:30am - Traditional Worship Service - Sanctuary
- 9:30am - Youth/Teen Sunday School - Room 106
- 9:45am - Children's Sunday School - Rooms 304 & 305
- 10:30am - Fellowship & Coffee - Parlor
- 11:00am - Contemporary Worship Service - Fellowship Hall

Monday, November 25th

- 10:00am - Commit To Be Fit - Room 301
- 1:00pm - Prayer Quilting - Conference Room
- 5:00pm - Women's Emmaus 4th Day Meeting - Library
- 7:00pm - "Into The Word" Bible Study - Conference Room
- 7:45pm - Gosbells Rehearsal - Music Room

Tuesday, November 26th

- 7:30pm - Adult Children of Alcoholics - Room 104

Wednesday, November 27th

OFFICE CLOSING AT NOON

- 6:30pm - Men's Step Study - Library & Room 105
- 6:30pm - Women's Step Study - Library & Room 105

Thursday, November 28th

OFFICE CLOSED



Friday, November 29th

OFFICE CLOSED

Saturday, November 30th

- 9:00am - Ruth's Knit & Stitch - Conference Room

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Ministry Team:

Rev. Don Gotham
sprastor@uticaumc.org

Music Ministry

David Fox, Organist, Bell, & Chancel
Choirs Director
FoxDavidL@sbcglobal.net

Christopher Heldt, Contemporary
Worship Leader
chris.heldt@uticaumc.org

Youth Leader

Suzy Palmer
suzy.palmer@uticaumc.org

Communications Director

Beth Miller
bmiller@uticaumc.org

Secretary/Bookkeeper

Charlotte Ramsey
charlotte@uticaumc.org

Custodian

Rachelle Heldt

Child Care

Caitlyn Wilson

Sunday Worship Times:

9:30 AM

with Organ, Choir and
Handbells
in the Sanctuary

11:00 AM

with our Worship Band
in Fellowship Hall



Our Mission:

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

Our Vision:

To reach and nurture our community
with the love of Christ.

Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday

8:00am - 4:00pm

Friday

8:00am - 2:00pm

Phone: (586)731-7667

Like us on Facebook!

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Classes/Studies

Advent Study:

Sundays at 9:30am
(Beginning Dec. 1st)

Tuesdays at 11am
(Beginning Dec. 3rd)

Meetings will be held in the
Conference Room

This study will help you "discover a way of seeing that opens your eyes to ordinary amazing grace, a way of living that is fully alive, and a way of becoming present to God that brings you deep and lasting joy." - "One Thousand Gifts" by Ann Voskamp

Food For Body & Soul

Thursdays at 12:00pm
in the Conf. Room

Bring your lunch and study the word of the bible with others! The current focus will be the book of John.

Wednesday Night Study

Wednesdays at 6:30pm
in the Conf. Room

New book starting soon! See
Cookie Miller for info!

Thursday Night Study

Thursdays at 7:00pm
in Room 302

Join this class for a study of the book of Hebrews. Have some good fellowship, a bit of fun and a better understanding of Bible times and the teachings of our Lord. All are welcome regardless of bible knowledge!

"Into The Word" Bible Study

Mondays at 7:00pm
in the Conf. Room

This study will focus on the book of Isaiah. Contact Sharon Van Tuyl or the office for questions.

Commit To Be Fit

Mondays & Thursdays
10am-11am in room 301

Follow along to fitness videos with others. Includes variety of chair aerobics, strength training, and stretching.

Celebrate Recovery Step Studies

Wednesdays
6:30pm in room 104

This is a Celebrate Recovery class. Speak with Bob or Patsy Clark if you are interested.



Can't make it to church or just looking for a fast and easy way to give your? Donate online with a one time gift or set up automatic donations!

Visit our website to give now!

www.uticaumc.org/e-giving

If you need assistance, feel free to call the office!

Deadline Information:

Items for The Weekly Messenger, The Weekly Prayer List, or Announcements must be submitted by the **Sunday prior to posting**. Submit to bmiller@uticaumc.org, contact the office, or complete a form in the office.

The Giving Tree

Utica UMC is supporting 6 families for Christmas this year. **Please select a gift tag from the Giving Tree** in the Narthex (front of the church) with gift requests.

Place purchased gifts back under the tree *UNWRAPPED* with the original gift tag attached by Sunday, December 15th

"IT'S CHRISTMASTIME IN THE CITY"

**A HANDBELL AND PIPE ORGAN CONCERT
FEATURING THE GOSBELLS HANDBELL CHOIR**

Presented by: The Music Ministry of Utica UMC

**SUNDAY, DEC. 8TH
AT 4PM**



CONCERT ADMISSION IS FREE

**STAY FOR AN AFTERGLOW
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE
CONCERT.**



**2019
Cookie Walk**
Sunday, December 15th

After each service, you may purchase cookies with donations -all proceeds will support our church!

If you would like to provide cookies, sign-up outside of your worship space.
*Drop off will be Dec. 8th until the morning of Dec. 15th.

The graphic features a dark background with white snowflakes and various Christmas-themed icons including reindeer, gingerbread men, Santa Claus, teddy bears, and heart-shaped cookies.