



Weekly Messenger

JUNE 5, 2020

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"A COUPLE OF THINGS" FROM REV. DON GOTHAM

I haven't watched the video. I may be one of the few people in our country who can say that right now. I've seen still pictures, and they were chilling. I've never been a police officer. I've never faced the same stresses and strains they have. I have been in a place where someone has told me they couldn't breathe, and that was enough to make me instantly reach out for help.

I have not walked in the shoes of a black person. I don't know what it is to have "the talk" with my child explaining how if they were to be pulled over by the police, they have to keep their hands on the steering wheel of the car for fear their movements could result in them being shot.

I do understand I have white privilege. I do understand the scales are not balanced, and they are tipped in my favor. I know this tipping of the scale amounts to systemic racism, and it is wrong. I understand how outraged I would be if my loved one were shot, and the shooting was caught on camera, and no arrests were made.

We can do better. We must do better. Christ calls us to do better. Christ calls us to carry the burdens of our sisters and our brothers. It is time the church stood against racism, wholly, completely, and without exception. Now on to the second thing.

The United Methodist Church is founded on three basic principles: (1) Do no harm, avoiding evil of all kinds; (2) Do good, of every possible sort, and as far as possible, to all; and (3) Practice "the ordinances of God," engaging in individual and communal spiritual practices such as prayer, Bible reading, worship, and the Lord's Supper.

Paragraph 4 of the Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church states, "The United Methodist Church acknowledges that all persons are of sacred worth.

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THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

"A Couple of Things" - *Continued from front page.*

All persons without regard to race, color, national origin, status, or economic condition, shall be eligible to attend its worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments, upon baptism be admitted as baptized members, and upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith, become professing members in any local church in the connection. Our Book of Discipline also says that "homosexual persons no less than heterosexual persons are individuals of sacred worth."

I recall a friend in high school who came out to me regarding his sexuality. He told me how he had come out to his parents the weekend before he told me. He shared with me how his parents reacted. His mother told him she didn't understand why he would choose that life but assured him she loved him. His father told him where to find his gun and where to find the bullets.

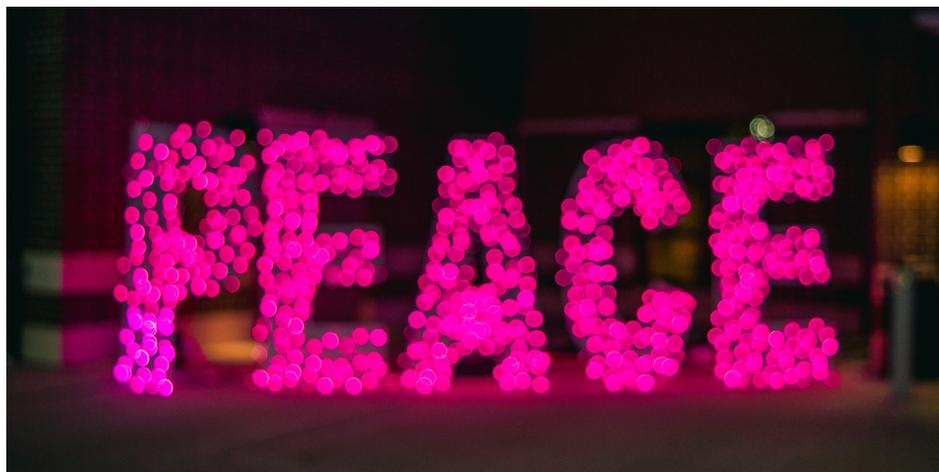
I don't think the full impact of how his father responded came into focus for me until I became a parent. The love I have for my daughter runs so deep within me that I know I could never give the advice that would push her toward harming herself. I lost track of my friend after high school. I don't know how his life has played out. I do know that young people who identify as LGBTQ are 120 times more likely to experience homelessness than those who don't. I know those who identify as LGBTQ are three times more likely to attempt suicide than those who don't.

Unfortunately, we have not always lived up to our call to see everyone as being of sacred worth. To see everyone as being of sacred worth is to see people as God sees them. To see everyone as being of sacred worth is to value the giftedness and talents God has placed within them. To see everyone as being of sacred worth is to understand why it is wrong to accept a system that makes any of the people God has created as being less worthy of living a peaceful, productive life.

My in-depth experiences with people who are different than me have taught me while our differences are real, the hopes and dreams we have for our children are really quite similar. For the most part, we want our children to be happy, productive members of society who love God, and treat each other with kindness and respect. We want our children to feel safe. We want our children to feel valued not because they have the same skin color as others, or because of who they love, but because of the content of their character.

God is walking with us in these days. God is calling us to value all of the lives of all of the people God created. Let's take this walk with God, asking God to help us see the person who is different from us, and celebrate how deeply God loves them.

Grace and Peace,
Rev. Don



THE WEEKLY MESSENGER



Liam O'Connor

Liam is graduating from Henry Ford II High School and will attend Michigan State University in the Fall to study Neuroscience.

Bethany Stamat

Beth is graduating from Liberty University with a Masters of Theology and is planning to enroll in the Doctor of Ministry Program.

Emily Ruthann Earle

Emily is graduating from Chippewa Valley High School. Her future plan is to pursue a degree in Engineering.

David Kies

David is an Eagle Scout from Troop 80; he is graduating from Stevenson High School and will be attending Kettering University for Chemical Engineering.

Jacob Hodges

Jacob is a scout brother and is Graduating from Stevenson High School. He will be attending Macomb Community College for pre-req's so he can figure out what he'd like to focus on in the future.

Grace Velthoven

Grace is graduating from Mercy High School in Farmington Hills and will be attending Michigan State University in the fall.

Paul Merritt

Paul is a high school graduate and will be attending Michigan State University this fall.

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

STARS and XCEL is Back!!

STARS

For kids
7 years old -
5th grade

**Must be 7 years old by June 30th.*

XCEL

For preteens
grades 6 - 8

Register Online!

www.uticaumc.org/kidzone

Both Programs Feature:

- ★ Zoom meetings twice per week
June 30th - August 6th
- ★ Weekly delivery -to your home- of snacks, plan for the week, and any materials needed. (**Delivery of materials is available for those within a 7 mile radius from UUMC; if you live further than 7 miles, you can pick up your packet/snacks at the church.*)
- ★ Possibility of **Virtual Field Trips** (as opportunities arise)
- ★ Six weeks of age-appropriate lessons, devotionals, activities and more!
- ★ **FREE to ALL participants**, thanks to the generosity of the people of the United Methodist Church
- ★ **Trained and certified staff and volunteers** through United Methodist Church Safe Sanctuary Program, trained to work with children and teens.
- ★ All events are planned to help develop your child mentally, artistically & spiritually
- ★ **Registration is limited!!**

SAVE YOUR RETURNABLES!!

There is a Bottle & Can Drive in the works!

Please save your returnables and we will have more information coming soon!



Donate to the
Michigan Flood Relief Fund
www.uticaumc.org/e-giving

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

GRACE'S DEVOTIONAL:

"IS IT 1967?"

In 1967 we were getting ready for our summer vacation. Riots had broken out in Detroit. The city was burning. I had lived for 3 years in a Student Nurse Home at Henry Ford Hospital 10 years before and the area that I had walked in, went to restaurants in, attended a church in, shopped in, was burning. I was sickened by this, I had seen the poverty, I had seen the segregation even in a hospital, I had witnessed the needs, but this was for me, a safe neighborhood. As we headed up North to the cottage, we had rented in the Upper Peninsula we could see the National Guard headed South. Truck after truck with men and equipment went by and I silently shed tears for what was happening and for the lives lost and those that would be impacted by these riots. The enormity of what was happening was witnessed in the sheer number of trucks headed towards Detroit. Last night I watched the news as once again, riots were breaking out across the country and I hoped that Detroit was quiet. I turned on the local news and saw that crowds were refusing to be dispersed and the Police were pushing back. I was grateful that no one had been seriously injured because of the protests, and although there were arrests there wasn't any reported unjustified force used. One person had been killed in a drive-by shooting thought to be unrelated to the protest. I thought how long must people wait for justice, for equal rights, for fair treatment. We have come a long way from the 60's, a long way from fire hoses and police dogs, but not far enough. A man died a needless death at the hands of the very person we were all, as children, told to trust. Protests that turn into violence frighten me. I support protests having learned many years ago to carry a sign and walk in a circle to garner the attention needed to accomplish a goal. Jesus gave us a simple commandment; he calls us to love one another, there were no caveats, no special conditions just three simple words, "Love one another."



(Photo: Kelly Jordan, Kelly Jordan, Detroit Free Press)

John 13:34-35 *A new command I give you: Love One another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples if you love one another.*

Lord, our world is in turmoil, we are fighting a pandemic and protests and riots are erupting. Be with our country, heal us Lord. Be with those who mourn the 100,000 and more who have died in this viral assault, be with those who have lost loved ones to violence and injustice, be with the sick and those who grieve. Bless our Pastor and his ministry, be with his family, be with our staff, bless them and give them your inspiration and guidance. Be with us as we seek to be the church, may we remember that you are our God and we are your people. It is in the name of Jesus we pray. Amen

Grace Epperson

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Ministry Team:

Reverend Don Gotham
srpastor@uticaumc.org

Contemporary Worship Leader

Christopher Heldt
chris.heldt@uticaumc.org

Music Ministry

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

Communications Director

Beth Miller
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Secretary/Bookkeeper

Charlotte Ramsey
charlotte@uticaumc.org

Youth Leader

Suzy Palmer
suzy.palmer@uticaumc.org

Child Care

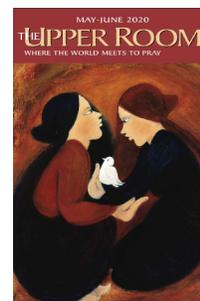
Caitlyn Wilson

Custodian

Rachelle Heldt

Sunday Worship Times:

Our Sunday Worship will be available in video form on our website (www.uticaumc.org) and Facebook page on Sunday morning.



The Upper Room daily devotional May/June Issue Available Free outside the front doors of the church.

This issue is also available as a Downloadable PDF.

Visit: <https://www.upperroom.org/special-editions>
or contact the office for assistance.

Current
Worship Series:
Heart of
the Matter

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:

Please call before coming in to the office.

Phone: (586)731-7667

Our food pantry is still available by appointment only.

Like us on Facebook!

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Keeping ~Connected~

While all activities and gatherings are on pause, please stay in touch by following our Facebook page, checking our website (www.uticaumc.org), and following the Weekly Messenger.

If you are not signed up for the Weekly Messenger email, you can do so on our website by clicking the "More" tab and going to "Weekly Messenger".

In addition, we have set up an account with Webex for groups to meet via telephone and video calls. We will continue to do our best to keep everyone connected during our time apart.



You can 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.