



# Weekly Messenger

August 21, 2020

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## "I'm a Flexible Servant of the Lord"

I recall asking the congregation to write down the name of a town in China, which was early this year, the epicenter of the outbreak of the Coronavirus. "Please grab something and write it down, Wuhan," I said. In my spirit, I knew we needed to invest in the arrest of the virus. I hadn't imagined the havoc it would wreak on the world, but I knew we needed to quickly end its spread before it became exponentially more dangerous.

In many ways, it feels like a lifetime has passed since I shared it with you. We have adjusted in the ways we bring the good news of Jesus numerous times. I write to share again of another planned adjustment we are making.

Beginning on October 4<sup>th</sup>, we will offer worship in two locations simultaneously. I will lead worship from our drive-in service location near the garage. Folks who want to worship with the worship band style of music will be gathering in our current drive-in location. Those who wish to gather in the sanctuary will hear the music of a more traditional sound. Those who gather in the sanctuary will see and hear the sermon and other parts of the service, which I personally lead via a video link. I will come and consecrate the communion elements with the group gathered in the sanctuary on October 4<sup>th</sup> and will consecrate them later in the service for the group gathered outside.

Some might wonder why can't the pastor preach from inside the sanctuary, and project the video link outside. The truth of the matter is we simply cannot overcome the ambient light outdoors to allow those gathered outdoors to have a quality image, and with some folks coming to worship in their vehicles, they would completely miss any video offered.

Our plan is to offer this simultaneous worship (still at 9 am) for the month of October. We all know plans change these days, so I encourage you to keep your "I'm a flexible servant of the Lord" hat on your head.

While our prayers at the beginning of the year didn't keep the virus from spreading, the concern I had of it becoming exponentially more dangerous was well-founded. The adjustments we have made and the ones we will undoubtedly have to make in the future will continue being done with the safety of our congregation in mind.

In purpose, peace, and joy,

Rev. Don

Utica United  
Methodist Church

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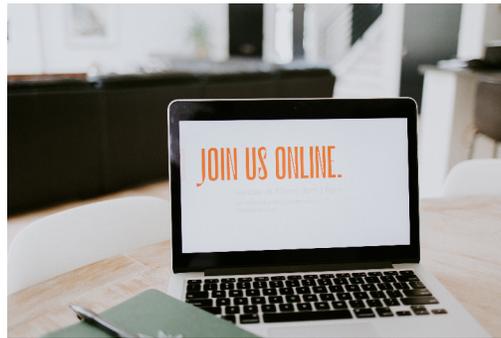
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# THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

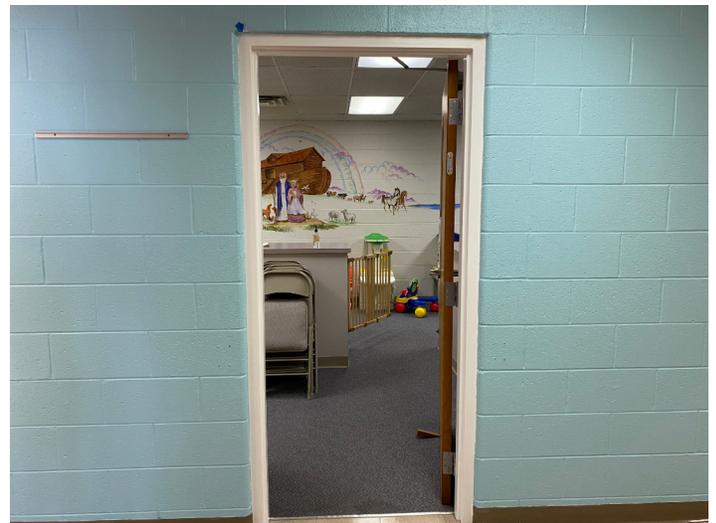
## Computer Help Needed

We are working on live streaming our services on Sunday morning. Currently we are recording both an audio and video file and are putting them together to produce a video of the service. To be able to live stream the service we need volunteers to learn how to use the streaming program, set it up on Sunday morning and run the live stream. We are looking for someone with some computer knowledge especially if you are familiar with Apple products. Please contact me at [rachelle@uticaumc.org](mailto:rachelle@uticaumc.org) or call the church office 586-731-7667 if you are interested.



## Hallway

The hallway at church has a new coat of paint. We are in our last stages of painting before we can put the hallway back together again. Thank you to all of our painters that took on this "PPP" project.



# THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

## Blood Drive



**American  
Red Cross**

*Together, we can save a life*

We are scheduled to host a blood drive here at Utica UMC in our Fellowship Hall on Tuesday, September 8, 2020 from 12:00-6:00pm. You have to make an appointment to give blood.

Go to [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) and search for September 8 and our church to schedule your appointment.

**NO WALK-INS WILL BE TAKEN!**

A behind the scenes look at our worship team during the rain storm from Sunday August 16, 2020 worship. Thank you for all you do each week to make service a success.



# THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

## Methodist Children's Home – Personal Hygiene Drive

In early March of this year, our world suddenly changed. As everything ground to a halt in an attempt to reduce the spread of the virus, many of the ministries that we typically support were paused. As we have begun to resume some activities (while taking precautions) and we continue to evaluate opportunities for ministry, we look back to the previous pandemic and find the same opportunity to support children in need. The Methodist Children's Home Society was formed as the result of a pandemic and continues to fulfill its purpose.

We know that over 100 years ago God put it on the hearts of Methodist women to create what is now known as the Methodist Children's Home Society (MCHS). It was during the 1918 Spanish Flu Pandemic that many children lost parents to this deadly disease and became orphans. The needs of these children were heard by these Christian women and the result has been over 100 years of care for thousands of children here in southeast Michigan.

For many years we at Utica UMC have supported this ministry. This year the Together-In-Mission (TIM) group is again asking for your help in providing personal hygiene items for the resident children at the Methodist Children's Home. A list of "Wish list Items" posted on the MCHS website included a need for personal hygiene items so that each boy could have his own kit. Each personal hygiene kit will contain both consumable and non-consumable items. Please review the attached list of suggested items and participate in our collection drive to be held on Sunday, August 30<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, September 6<sup>th</sup>.

The Personal Hygiene Collection Drive will consist of donated items selected from the MCHS "Wish List" or financial contributions that will be used by TIM to purchase the needed items. We plan to have collection tubs located at the Canal Street entrance both weeks for your donations. Our goal is to provide each of the 50 resident children with his own personal hygiene kit during early September. Your assistance in making this collection drive a success will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

Utica UMC – Together In Mission (TIM)

# THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

*Methodist Children's Home Society*

## **“Wish List” of Personal Hygiene Items**

### **Consumable Items:**



1. Body wash (sensitive skin brand)
2. Shampoo & conditioner (2 in 1)
3. Bar soap
4. Hand sanitizer
5. Lotion
6. Toothbrush & tooth paste



### **Re-Usable Items:**

7. Towels
8. Wash cloths
9. Loofa scrubs
10. Toiletry bags
11. Bathroom / shower mats
12. Laundry bags (net or canvas with drawstring)



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*Financial donations also welcome*

# THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

## LOOKING IN THE MIRROR

The other day when I had just started my day, I looked in the mirror. The thought occurred to me as I looked at my reflection that here was a child of God. I did not focus on the wrinkles, the white hair, the puffy eyes, or the fading freckles. I saw a child of God and that sight empowered me for the day. Have you ever saw yourself for what you really are? You are a child of God, no matter your age, your money, your good looks or your plain looks, your physical health or your limitations, your scars, your anger, your joy, your sorrow, your sins, you are a child of God. What joy and power that brings to our lives no matter our age or circumstances. We need to remind ourselves of that and then we could start our day being kinder and more giving and forgiving, especially to ourselves because that angst with ourselves is reflected in how we treat others. I need a sign on my mirror that reflects not just an image but a truth, that God loves us and forgives us, and we start each day new, with new possibilities, and new hope for the day. Maybe every time we see ourselves in the reflection of others, we should remind ourselves of who we are. We are all a child of God.

1 John 3:1-3 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope purifies themselves, just as he is pure.

Lord we know you are with us but sometimes we feel alone. Fill us with your spirit, may we feel you close to us. Be with those who are suffering from illness and grief, those who feel alone and lost, those who are in pain. Be with our Leaders Lord so they can lead us through this Pandemic, be with those who suffer financially, be with those who are hurting in their quest for equal justice; help us to find our way through all that divides us and may we cling to that which unites us. Help us to be a better people. Be with our Pastor, bless his Ministry, be with his family, comfort them and protect them. Be with our church, help us to be patient as we yearn for "normal." Be with all who enter our services, may they find comfort in the word offered and the music provided. Be with our Staff and leaders, guide them and strengthen them. Help us to be the hands and feel of Christ.

Grace Epperson

