



# Weekly Messenger

November 5, 2020

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## Recognizing Courage

I shared with the congregation on Sunday that I would be working at a voting precinct on Tuesday. I shared how in reflecting on the older folks I've counted on for years to work at the precincts I've voted at, and given the toll Covid-19 has taken on older folks, I ought to step up.

I was assigned to a precinct with a large population of voters for whom English is a second language. Many of the voters who came on Tuesday to the precinct I was assigned to didn't speak much English at all. We even had some who could not read the ballot and could not find the candidates' names they wanted to support.

As you might imagine, a lack of language skills on the part of numerous voters at that precinct slowed down the process. The precinct I worked at had a wait time of 1.5 hours all day long. Our last voter finished with their ballot at 8:45 pm.

Before anyone had voted, I asked the co-chair of the precinct how many voters we should expect. He told me, based on the last six times he had worked this precinct, we should probably expect about 300 voters. We processed 876 successful ballots.

It was a long day, and I hardly got a break, but the thing that speaks to me now is the courage it took for those voters who had a limited ability to speak English to come out and vote! Some couldn't read the ballot at all, but they knew who they wanted to vote for, and that gave them the courage to put themselves in a public place where their lack of what comes easy to many of us would be exposed.

Do we have the same passion when it comes to our faith? Are we willing to put ourselves in places where others might look down on us because we are different? Do we hide from the areas where our voices need to be heard because we don't want to have our true selves exposed?

Our church's mission is to invite people to rely on Jesus to find unexpected purpose, peace, and joy. If we are going to achieve our mission, we are going to have to find real courage.

Counting on Christ,

Rev. Don

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# THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

## UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

All women of the church are invited to attend the UMW Meeting in Fellowship Hall on Wednesday, November 11. [We will gather to have lunch at noon.](#) Bring YOUR OWN LUNCH and plan to socially visit with one another. At

1:00pm

two volunteers from Grace Center of Hope in Pontiac will explain their program. Please wear your mask and bring items

for the Food Pantry of our church.

[Executive Board will meet in Fellowship Hall at 11:00am.](#)

## Celebration Place

Celebration Place is being put on hold until after the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year. Watch the Messenger for start up dates.



## 2021 Pledge Cards

Have your turned in your pledge for 2021?

If not, extra cards are on the table in the Main Hallway or in the office.

Put the card in the offering, mail your card or drop it off at the office.

Thank You!



## Motown Soup News

**Motown Soup is a 501(c)3 based in Utica, Michigan. We work in a State Department of Agriculture licensed kitchen.**

**We produce delicious mixes that include soups, dips, breads and desserts.**

**Your support of Motown Soup and our products truly makes a difference in the lives of the hungry, homeless and hurting and free clinics throughout the State of Michigan.**

**This year due to Covid and indoor restrictions all craft and vendor fairs have been cancelled.**

**Also our Open House held at Trinity Lutheran Church.**

**We are offering a 2 week virtual event from November 14th through November 28th.**

**We will offer specials during this time.**

**Motown Soup has supported McRest and the Warming Center in previous years.**

**Please check us out at [www.motownsoup.com](http://www.motownsoup.com). Also follow us on Facebook or contact Martha Powers at (586)703-1668.**

# THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

## Thanksgiving Pies for Baldwin Center

Every year, Baldwin Center hosts a Thanksgiving meal at their Soup Kitchen. Our church has been providing the dessert for the Thanksgiving meal for almost thirty years.

Please help us continue this tradition by bringing in a pie (or 2) to the church on Sunday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>.

### DUE TO COVID-19, BALDWIN CAN ONLY ACCEPT "STORE BOUGHT" PIES THIS YEAR.

- \*There is no refrigeration available, so please bring fruit or pumpkin pies -no cream pies.
- \*They also do not bake pies on site – please provide fresh, ready to eat pies (not frozen).

Pies will be taken to the Soup Kitchen in the afternoon of November 22<sup>nd</sup>.  
We thank you very much! Together In Missions Team



### N95 Face Masks

The church office has recently acquired some N95 face masks in both Adult and Child sizes. The Child size lists the age range from 3-14 years old as the fit size. These masks are available for purchase from the office for \$2.00 a mask. If you need a N95 mask please stop in during business hours, call the office (586-731-7667) or e-mail Charlotte at [charlotte@uticaumc.org](mailto:charlotte@uticaumc.org).



# THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

## Collateral Damage

Have you ever been alone, I mean totally alone? This can happen even in a crowd, where we feel isolated and forsaken. It can be when we are fighting a cancer or drug addiction or anything that makes us feel we are lost and there is no one who can help us. Imagine now you are elderly, you or your loved ones have put you into a home, assisted living, memory care, or Nursing home, it does not matter. They come frequently to see you but then suddenly the visits stop, they are nowhere to be seen. You do not hear from them; they call on the phone, but you do not hear well, and conversations are difficult. Time passes you wonder why you have been abandoned, where are they, you do not know these people who pop in to bring your meals. There is no one to talk to, to keep you grounded, to help you remember who you are, Mother, Father, Wife, Husband, Aunt, Friend. There is no one who knows you and you start to wonder who you are; do you have a wife or husband; do you have a son or daughter? The days blend, and you forget more and more. Your appetite fades, the food all tastes the same, you have no energy, and it does not take much anyway to wander this one room prison. You sleep more and more and do less and less. Soon you are bedridden, unable to take care of yourself, you fade off into oblivion. This is called Failure to Thrive. The death Certificate reads Failure to Thrive but is that what it is or is it the rules brought about by a Pandemic to help people survive. But the disease kills them one way or another. My husband was only hospitalized for 4 days and 3 nights, yet he came home unable to recognize me or his surroundings. His Alzheimer's had advanced in just that short a time. How much harder is it for the elderly that are denied the care and connection of a family member for a long period of time. Some people have qualified as "Essential Care Givers" so they can come into the homes and take care of loved ones to help them remember who they are and who they belong to. I applaud those that can do this. There is a reason that solitary confinement was used in prisons for years, it is the harshest of punishments. Jesus was in the desert for 40 days. Paul and Silas were alone in prison. Through it all, God is there, he is in the Nursing Homes, The Assisted Living, The Prisons, and in the Desert. We all need and crave human contact. We have started Church inside now for a few weeks. I like being back in the Sanctuary, seeing people, connecting, and talking with those who have gone through a hard time during these periods of isolation. I miss the hugging, the shaking of hands, even the fist bumps but I know that will come back eventually but it might be a period of time. There are those I know are hurting and I yearn to hug or to stand at the Altar and pray with them, but I will try to be patient. This pandemic has taken much from us, but it has also given us much. People are more caring, more outgoing, more loving, more appreciative of what we had taken for granted. We have come to a point where we realize that gathering our family together is a gift, going to the grocery store and being able to buy groceries from fully stocked shelves is a gift. For some, paying the rent is a gift, sending the children to school is a gift, going to church and supporting each other is a gift, hearing the Chancel Choir and the Bell Choir is a gift, receiving communion is a gift, going to a movie is a gift even going for a ride to get out of the house and seeing the beautiful Fall colors is a gift and something we took for granted just 12 short months ago. Maybe when this is over, we will look at each day and not take it for granted but offer up a prayer of thanks to God.

Psalm 100 Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness, come before him with joyful songs. Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.

Lord we thank you for the blessings you give us. We thank you for being with us through all our times. We ask that you be with those who suffer from this pandemic both those with the virus and those who suffer from isolation and loneliness. Be with our Pastor and his family, bless his ministry. Be with those who are ill and those who grieve. Be with those who are hungry for daily sustenance and those that hunger for your word. May we be the hands and feet of Christ to those around us and those far away. Be with our Staff and leaders, guide them and may they feel your presence and encouragement. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

Grace Epperson

# THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

## Ministry Team:

Senior Pastor  
**Reverend Don Gotham**  
srpastor@uticaumc.org

Ministry Leader Intern  
**Sunwha Hopgood**

Contemporary Worship Leader  
**Mer Renne**  
mer@uticaumc.org

Music Ministry  
**David Fox**  
Organist, Hand Bell & Chancel  
Choir Director  
FoxDavidL@sbcglobal.net

Communications Director  
**Rachelle Heldt**  
rachelle@uticaumc.org

Secretary/Bookkeeper  
**Charlotte Ramsey**  
charlottte@uticaumc.org

Youth Leader  
**Suzy Palmer**  
suzy.palmer@uticaumc.org

Sunday Morning Child Care  
**Caitlyn Wilson**

## Office Hours:

Mon - Thurs 8am-4pm  
Friday 8am-2pm

**Phone: 586-731-7667**

Food Pantry available  
by appointment only.

## Deadline Information:

Items for The Weekly  
Messenger, The Weekly  
Prayer List, or  
Announcements should  
be submitted by  
Wednesday each week.  
Submit to  
charlotte@uticaumc.org  
for announcements and  
prayer list and to  
rachelle@uticaumc.org  
for the Messenger and  
Electronic Sign  
or call the office.

## Our Mission:

Inviting people to rely  
on Jesus to find  
unexpected purpose,  
peace and joy.

## Keeping Connected

## Sunday Worship Times:

This is the last Sunday for  
outdoor Drive-In Worship at  
9am. You can also come  
inside at 9am to have a more  
traditional service masks must  
be worn at all times inside the  
building. The service is also  
being live streamed to our  
YouTube channel each  
Sunday at 9am. Tune in at  
home to join us for worship.

*Stay Tuned as service times  
and options are changing in  
November!*

## Donate Online:

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](http://www.uticaumc.org/e-giving)**

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

Stay in touch with Utica United Methodist Church by checking our website  
([www.uticaumc.org](http://www.uticaumc.org)), following us on Facebook (Utica United Methodist Church) or  
subscribe to our YouTube Channel (Utica Umc).

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

We have an account with both Webex and also with Zoom for groups to meet via  
telephone and video calls.

As we begin to open back up please be responsible. Stay home if you are ill. Masks  
are required in the building at all times. Child Care and Sunday School are not  
available.