

Weekly Messenger

March 12, 2021

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"Monday's Act of Love"

This past Monday, at 9:45 am, I was scheduled to receive my first Covid vaccine. The process was so quick and efficient that I had received my vaccine one minute before my appointment time. I was very impressed with the organization and efficiency. From having folks out on the sidewalk to welcome and direct people to where they needed to go to a well-through-out flow inside the building, it was hospitality and efficiency on display!

I feel blessed to have not been infected with the virus over this past year. Our family has suffered loss because of the virus. I know of others both within and outside our church family who have experienced the same. I have been careful to take precautions, but our nephew, who died from the damage his body sustained due to Covid, took precautions, too.

The more I thought about the risk of contracting the virus, the more I became convinced I should take the vaccine. Then, I began to think of the people I interact with who I could pass the virus to while I was yet without symptoms, and I became convinced getting the vaccine would be an act of love.

I know there are many thoughts on whether to get the vaccine or not, but I encourage you to consider whether getting vaccinated could be your act of love.

Grace, Peace, and Love,

Rev. Don



THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Celebrate Recovery

Celebrate Recovery (CR) was launched at Utica United Methodist Church in January of 2019. During the first year an average of fifteen people regularly attended the weekly meetings. Beginning in 2020, and with the inclusion of Celebration Place, the average weekly attendance rose to twenty-eight. Then COVID struck. Throughout the “lockdown” a core group of about a dozen people held together weekly, through “on-line” meetings.

This “core group” is ready and will begin in-person Celebrate Recovery meetings on Thursday March 18 at 6:30 PM. Celebration Place will begin at a future date, yet to be determined.

Is CR for me?

Celebrate Recovery is a 12-step faith-based program that helps individuals heal from a variety of hurts, hang-ups and habits. We do it in an atmosphere of acceptance and without judgement. As adults, we all go through life collecting hurts. Some hurts are small and some are pretty large. Sometimes when we encounter a hurt, our heart and brain get together to create a strategy to protect us from similar future hurts. That strategy is what we call a hang-up. That hang-up overtime becomes a habit that continues to direct our behaviors. Much of that behavior can cause us to be less productive and lead to less fulfilling lives. Celebrate Recovery addresses the healing of the hurt and thereby breaks the chain of difficult behaviors.

Celebrate Recovery (CR) has helped heal men and women from a wide spectrum of hurts, habits, or hang-ups. Sometimes there is a misconception that CR is limited to those who struggle with only drug and alcohol addictions. This Christ-centered program offers a safe and confidential environment for anyone struggling with any life issues, such as childhood sexual abuse, grief, control issues, gambling addiction, depression, anxiety, pornography, eating disorders, suicidal thoughts, abortion recovery, anger, and much more.

For those who can honestly say, “Sure I had hurts, and habits, and I developed hang-ups, but that was in the past. I dealt with them and am over them.” I say “Great.” I also say, “If that is true, perhaps you don’t need CR.... but CR needs you. Who else is better suited to help others get through the things you’ve gotten through?”

We invite you to join us on the journey to find joy, freedom, and hope with Jesus Christ. There is a place for you here and we encourage you to attend Celebrate Recovery on Thursday nights! The evening begins with a time of worship, followed by a lesson or testimony, and then breaks into gender specific small groups. Hope to see you soon at **CELEBRATE RECOVERY**.

Bob & Patsy Clark



THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Covid-19 Vaccine Hotline

Individuals who do not have access to the internet or need further assistance navigating the website can contact the COVID-19 Hotline at 888-535-6136. Call specialists are available to help you find information about vaccination in your area and to schedule an appointment, if available.

We have some volunteers here at church who are willing to make phone calls to try to help get you a covid vaccine. If you are eligible for a covid vaccine and are having difficulties making an appointment, please contact the church office at 586-731-7667. We can connect you with those who are able to help call and get you set up with an appointment.

UMCOR Sunday

This Sunday, March 14th we will collect a special offering for UMCOR Sunday. UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) is the hands and feet of the Methodist Church during times of disaster. We collect a special offering once a year to help with the administrative costs of this program. Special envelopes will be used during our in-person worship to give directly to this group. If you would like to donate and are unable to attend in-person you can still mail in your normal giving envelope and just mark UMCOR on the line to designate that is where you want the money to go. We will collect donations for UMCOR through the end of March to give everyone a chance to donate if you so choose.



THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

U TURNS

Everyone has had to make u turns in their life. We discover we have missed our destination and must turn around and go back. We are on the wrong path. Remember when directional devises first came out, we would miss our turn and the voice would say, "Recalculating." The funniest cartoon ever was one that showed a car going over a cliff and a voice saying, "Recalculating." Sometimes in life we must make painful decisions, or we are just headed in the wrong direction and we need to make a U turn. I have made decisions because when I was younger, I did not like where a relationship was going, it was time to change course. As I was older, I often had to decide to do things differently whether it was quitting a job that wasn't allowing me enough time with my children; or stopping our spending because our debt was growing not exactly helped when I quit my job (I was grateful that everyone else in the family liked Tuna Noodle casserole), or even going back to church after an absence something that had been put off each Sunday. But the things that haunt me the most are those times when I did not go to see someone who needed uplifting, or the missions I never took, or the times I could have helped someone and did not, all the missed opportunities. Life gives us choices and there are paths that we follow. I am glad about most of my decisions but am haunted most by those that I did not act on, the things I wanted to do. We often do not regret the things we do but those we did not do, and our life choices affect others. Peter had been warned. Christ had told him he would fail, that he would deny him. But Peter was sure of himself and sure of his devotion to Jesus. He would not fail. But fail he did, not once, not twice, but three times. How haunted he must have been by his own actions, how miserable he must have felt, a failure. But then Christ comes back, resurrected and he forgives Peter and takes him back, not once, not twice but three times. God's mercies are forgiving and filled with multiple chances to get it right. What Christ did for Peter he will do for us. His mercies are new every morning.

Matthew 26:33-35 Peter replied, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will." "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "This very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times." Peter reinstated, John 21:15-17 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." Again, Jesus said, "Simon, son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep," The third time he said to him, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked the third time, "Do you love me?" "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep."

Lord, we thank you for the day, for the warmth of the sun and the promise of Spring and rebirth and resurrection. We ask your mercies on those who are suffering illness and grief. Be with those who are caregivers and are treading new ground, with a loved one but alone. Be with our Pastor, bless his ministry and be with his family, keep them safe. Be with our families, grant them wholeness and health. Be with those who are hungry and facing loss of shelter. Be with our church show us daily how to be the hands and feet of Christ, bless our ministries. Be with our Staff and Leaders, guide and protect them. Be with our country, may we be united and show our love and care for each other. We thank you for our blessings, for our food, our shelter, our families and especially for your love and forgiveness. In Jesus name, 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.

Sunday Worship Times:

In Person Worship

9am - Piano/Hymns in
Fellowship Hall

10:30am - Praise Team in
Fellowship Hall

Online Worship

A blended recorded service
will be available online on
Facebook, Website and
Youtube Sunday mornings at
9am.

Children's Message online on
YouTube, Facebook and
Website by 9am Sunday's.

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

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

Keeping Connected

Stay in touch with Utica United Methodist Church by checking our website (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.