



Weekly Messenger

April 2, 2021

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"It Never Gets Old"

Earlier today I offered a message at the funeral of one of our members. He was ninety-four years old, and he lived a pretty amazing life. We celebrated his accomplishments, the love he had for his family. We recalled the things he accomplished during his life and the fun things he did. All of those parts of the service were important, yet still, more than anything, I called to the attention of the people who gathered the love Jesus came to show to all of humanity and the promise of eternal life.

This coming Sunday, we will celebrate the resurrection. We will celebrate that the grave of Jesus is empty because he defeated death. We will celebrate that the next funeral we attend of someone we love is not just an exercise in remembering an earthly life. Rather, when we have come to Jesus in faith, asking that our sins would be forgiven, we find in Jesus forgiveness and the promise of eternal life.

I was asked today if the story ever gets old for me if talking about heaven and the promise of eternal life ever gets old. With a broad smile, I said, no! It never gets old. The fact that God upended hopelessness and replaced it with eternal hope never gets old.

Some folks seem to coast past Easter. They take in the dyed eggs, the candy and look forward to coming to church to hear the music and take the opportunity to dress up. Some folks don't ponder the incredible news that Jesus defeated death until it is time for them to show up to the funeral of a friend or loved one. I hope that isn't you.

I look forward to celebrating the most amazing, eternal gift any of us could ever receive on Sunday. It never gets old!

With gusto let us proclaim, "He Is Risen!"

Rev. Don

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(586) 731-7667
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THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

UMW

All women of Utica Methodist are invited to attend the United Methodist Women's Meeting on Wednesday, April 7 in Fellowship Hall. It will begin at noon with each person bringing their own lunch and drink and we will socialize with one another with all covid protocols in place.

Our program will begin at 1:00 with our speaker being Sunhwa Hopgood, our Intern at Utica. She will share her life story as God has brought her to come here to be at our church. Let us get to know her on a more personal basis.

Thanks,

Kathy Weaver

Children's Ministry

The Children's Ministry Team is working to create take home bags for Holy Week.

Easter Sunday we will have goodie bags available after each in-person service for the children to take home. You may also pick one up to take to your grandchildren. Any extra bags left after the service will be made available outside the front door under the portico.

We are making a limited number of bags so when they are gone they are gone.

Holiday Office Closure

The church office will be closed on Good Friday, April 2nd and Easter Monday, April 5th.

STARS/XCEL

We will once again be having our summer STARS and XCEL program at Utica United Methodist Church. Due to COVID it will be a [Virtual](#) program this year. The program runs for 6 weeks from June 14-July 22. Bags will be delivered to those within 7 miles of the church with the rest of the bags to be picked up by 3pm on Mondays. These bags will have informational materials, snacks, craft supplies and maybe some other surprise for the week. They will have an optional zoom meeting time and will have some YouTube videos for the kids. Flyers will be mailed out in the next couple of weeks. Registration will be available in the flyer as well as on our website.

For the STARS program, children must be 7 years old by June 14th to be part of the program. If you have children or grandchildren who might be interested in attending, you can always call the office to make sure they get put on the mailing list to receive the flyer.

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

The Tomb is Empty

I wrote a long time ago about my Great Grandmother and her home in Brookville, PA. I was worried about straying too far from her house and not being able to find my way back. She told me to stand in front of the Woolworth's and look up the hill. There I would see her house. She was such a dear soul. I have heartwarming letters that she wrote to my Mother after the birth of my oldest Brother in 1927. My Mother was a young Mother and my Great Grandmother's letters were reassuring about my Mother's abilities. My Mother had been the oldest daughter in a family of 11 and had to quit school at the age of 10 to help at home, so my Mother had been around children her whole life. When my Great Grandmother told me to look up the hill, I felt assured that I could wander into the small town. When we were in Israel, we walked through the streets of Jerusalem and at the end of the street we came out to a huge area and ahead was the hill called Golgotha. I looked up that hill and saw the place where the crosses had stood. Jesus had died on that Cross. We went to the garden and saw a tomb carved out of the rock. When we went in the tomb there was a sign, "He is not here, he is risen." On Good Friday Jesus had died on a cross and he was wrapped in cloths and placed in a tomb. On Sunday we again celebrate that the tomb was empty when the women went to prepare the body. Christ arose. This week we will again observe Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. It will be different because we are still in the middle of a Pandemic. But on Easter Sunday we will return to our Sanctuary and once again the organ will peal out the hymns that celebrate the Risen Christ. How blessed we are! We will return to the sanctuary with gratitude for our gifts, with sorrow for our loss, and always knowing we are loved by God. As my Great Grandmother gave me a path to follow home to her house, so God has given us a path to follow to him. He loved us so much he gave his only Son for our everlasting life. Praise God.

Luke 24:1-3 On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

Lord, thank you for the risen Christ. Thank you for the empty tomb. Be with us this day, bless us as we look to Easter Sunday and to the resurrection. Be with those who are ill and those who grieve may they be comforted. Be with our Pastor and his family, bless them and bless his ministry. Be with our leaders and Staff, guide them, protect them, and give them your guidance and strength. We thank you for our days and for our Church. In the name of Jesus, the risen Christ, we pray. Amen

Grace Epperson

Prayer Shawls

Do to Covid we have not been able to distribute our Prayer Shawls to people in need of them. If you are or you know someone that is going through a rough time or who has suffered a loss and could benefit from the comfort of a Prayer Shawl or lap robe please contact myself or the church office and leave a message for me. I will make sure that one is received.. Thank you, Grace Epperson (586-992-9945)

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Ministry Team:

Senior Pastor
Reverend Don Gotham
srpastor@uticaumc.org

Ministry Leader Intern
Sunwha Hopgood

Contemporary Worship Leader

Mer Renne
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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.