

Weekly Messenger

May 28, 2021

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Utica United
Methodist Church
8650 Canal Road,
Sterling Heights, MI
(586) 731-7667
www.UticaUMC.org

"Will you allow me to handle it?"

Last Sunday, we celebrated Pentecost. I preached on how the Holy Spirit is our source of strength, power, and guidance. If you were present, you know that I focused on how the Holy Spirit guides us. I write today to tell you sometimes the one the pastor is preaching to is themselves. At least one of the people impacted by the message has been the pastor.

I've been carrying a concern for a while now, and it was on my mind when I went to bed last night. I awoke in the night thinking about the concern. And, when I awoke this morning, the first thing I heard was a question in my head. It was the Holy Spirit asking me if I was willing to allow God to handle my concern. Immediately, I agreed. God can do so much more than I can, and I believe it will all turn out much better if I am not the one to try to fix things. I also felt led to confirm that I will play my part (whatever part the Spirit leads me to play).

Since the Holy Spirit broke through my angst to guide me, I've felt peace. My concern isn't yet resolved, but I have the peace of knowing who can and will resolve it. I pray you can find the courage to lay your concerns down when the Spirit asks if you are willing.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Don



THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

High School and College Graduates

On Sunday June 6th at 9am we will be recognizing our High School and College Graduates! If you have a graduate and have not been contacted by the church office, please call us with your graduate's information so they will be included in our service.



STARS/XCEL

We still have openings for children interested in being a part of the STARS program this year. If you know any children please pass along info about the summer program or have them call the church office to get more information. Registration forms available in the office or online in the Kidzone on the website.

STARS needs your support. Please consider the STARS program when you give to the church. Any extra that you can give to STARS will be helpful. Donate online by selecting STARS/XCEL or write STARS on the giving line of your envelope.

Snack donations are also welcome. We ask that all snacks be shelf stable, individually packaged and peanut free. You can bring in donations starting this week to either the office during normal office hours or look for a rolling cart or tub on Sunday mornings near the coat racks at the entrances.

8oz. water bottles

Juice boxes - apple or fruit punch

Kool-aid or Capri Sun pouches

Cheez-Its

Crackers

Cookies

Chips

Goldfish

Pretzels

Fruit Snacks

Applesauce or Fruit Cups

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

“Ministry With” – What is our Role?

When you think about missions, what thoughts come to mind? Do you find yourself confused by the many references to the mission field? What “missions” would Jesus support? What is God’s mission for us?

As we grow in our faith, our focus transitions from inward emphasis to outreach. We are called to share the Good News with others in response to the grace we have received from our Father God. Missions provide the opportunity to support others, sharing our faith through our gifts and service. Our culture has conditioned us to be generous in our giving and our servanthood, but how do we truly reach others with the love of our savior Jesus Christ?

Engage^{mi} is the mission engagement program for the Michigan Conference of the United Methodist Church. Engage^{mi} challenges Michigan Conference congregations to comprehensive missional learning, giving, and action with the goal of encouraging congregations to shift from transactional “ministry to” models to relational “ministry with” vulnerable people and communities.

“Ministry with” is the foundational concept for the Engage^{mi} program. Based on The United Methodist Church’s “Ministry with the Poor” Area of Focus, “ministry with” is grounded in Jesus’ practice of ministry, and our Wesleyan heritage. It is an invitation to move from models of “ministry to” into models of “ministry with.”

“Ministry to” is defined as mission and ministry programs that merely “give to” or “do for” people. These programs can be highly efficient in distributing materials and resources to address immediate basic needs of food, water, clothing, and shelter. However, they can also create a hierarchy of “givers” over “receivers,” foster systems and relationships of dependency, and treat “givers” as saviors having all the resources and answers and the “receivers” as objects of charity and problems to be fixed. In contrast, “ministry with” seeks not only to meet immediate needs, but, also, to foster mutual relationships where all participants are met with dignity, engaged in shared leadership, and growing together in God’s love. It is a challenge for all of us to prioritize people over programs, relationships over resources, and development of long-term solutions over quick fixes.

The Engage^{mi} mission and ministry projects, here in Michigan and around the world, are all seeking to respond to this invitation. The goal of Engage^{mi} is to encourage Utica UMC to partner with these projects and to meet the challenge of being in “ministry with” people in your congregation and your local community.

As we gradually return to “normal life” after a pandemic, we will be looking forward to a “new life” where God’s purpose for us becomes our passion. During this year, TIM will help Utica UMC to learn more about our mission partners and how we can “engage with” those who are in need. We ask for HIS guidance as we learn more about the community that we share. Let our hearts feel HIS love as we discover our purpose for serving HIS will.

Together-In-Mission (TIM)

UMW June Meeting

The United Methodist Women would like to invite all women of our church to attend the UMW meeting on Wednesday, June 9. Each lady should bring a bag lunch and drink to Fellowship Hall at noon.

Our program will be "**The Sacred Space of Prayer**" beginning at 1:00pm. We will be collecting a prayer offering to send to the National UMW Organization.

We also look forward to discussing plans for next fall. See you there!

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

CHANGES

If we live long enough, we will see changes in our lives. Whether it is children, retirement, a new job, a relocation, or loss. My husband of over 62 years passed away last year. This has been a year of firsts and changes for me. First time living alone, first time going to movies alone, although I did do that when he was alive and a caregiver was with him, first time cooking for one and not asking "What are you hungry for?" (I have decided it is impossible to make chili for one), first time going on a ride alone just to get out of the house, first time not thinking about what anyone else would like to watch on TV, first time sleeping alone since 1957 (this was really hard to adjust to at first, kept checking to see if he was okay.) First time going on a trip and flying alone, first time not having anyone to make remarks to about the news, first time not worrying about what time I get home because no one is waiting, first time not naming the old cars in the movies I watch, first time doing laundry for one, first time buying groceries for one. I am slowly adjusting to a life alone. I remember other changes, moving, retiring, children, then children grown and gone, job changes, Grandchildren, Cancer, but in all those changes I had someone beside me. I had a wonderful dream last night and woke up so happy with the remembrance. We were out for a ride in the 1957 Chevy convertible. It was a beautiful sunny day, and we had the top down and we were laughing and in love with life and each other. We decided to drive by a house we had rented early in our marriage. As we rode by the house, we were having so much fun just being together and riding around that it gave me such peace and joy. I think that dream was a gift from God to remind me of what we had and how happy we were. Alzheimer's took a lot from us, but it could not take the joy and love and the blessings of 2 children and the son-in-law and daughter in-law and the grandchildren that were the light of our lives, it could not take my memories of that time when there were two people in love.

1 Corinthians 13:13 And now these three remain, faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

As we face the changes in our lives, we have one constant as stated in Malachi 3:6, I the Lord, do not change.

Lord, be with us this day. We thank you for the day and for our blessings. The blessings we take for granted, our homes, our bounty, our comfort, our country. Be with those who are homeless, those who are hungry. Be with those who are ill and those who grieve. Be with those who are alone and seek your solace. We thank you for the gift of your presence in our lives. Be with our Pastor, bless his ministry and we thank you for the joy and gifts he brings to us with his service. Be with his family. Be with our church as we seek to be the hands and feet of Christ. Be with our staff and leaders, guide them and give them courage and wisdom. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

Grace Epperson



THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Ministry Team:

Senior Pastor
Reverend Don Gotham
srpastor@uticaumc.org

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

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

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. We are also allowing groups to meet inside once again. Please call the office to either set up a Zoom meeting or to schedule an in-person meeting.

Sunday Worship Times:

In Person Worship

9am -Organ/Hymns in
Sanctuary

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!