



Weekly Messenger

July 30, 2021

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"Have you been rooting?"

Once every four years, or five as is the case this time, the summer Olympics come along. The talk around the water cooler shifts from politics or whatever is happening in the places we work to the latest triumph or heartbreak of the athletes for whom we've been rooting. It is so exciting to see the efforts of these athletes training through the years come to the climax of competing against others who've given the same devotion.

Last week, my sermon dealt with the feeding of the five thousand. I talked about how the crowd had grown to such a size that Jesus was concerned about how they would get enough bread to feed them all. Many commentators suggest the number of five thousand only accounted for the number of males present. With the women and children present, the number fed that day was likely to be closer to fifteen thousand people.

A miracle of turning five loaves and two fish into enough to feed so many would have only caused Jesus' fame to increase. People were already talking about Jesus before this particular miracle. Can you imagine how deeply affected you would have been if you'd eaten your fill along the Sea of Galilee that day? Can you imagine how many people you would have shared the story with?

In the sermon, I didn't have time to mention the mosaic I viewed in Israel in 2006. It is one of the oldest depictions in Israel of Jesus' ministry. It depicts the two fish and five barley loaves. The feeding of the five thousand so profoundly impacted the people that they felt compelled to put it into an art form so that its message would endure.

The Olympics will soon come to a close. People will turn their water cooler conversations to other topics. I would love for people to find us so excited for Jesus that they begin to talk about our savior and grow a curiosity to delve more into who this is and what his message might mean in their lives. Let us be found rooting!

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Don

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THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

BEYOND THE HORIZON VISION

By 2027, Utica United Methodist Church will transform itself into a church that purposefully grows disciples of Jesus Christ by passionately loving and serving the garden we call our community. As we lavishly sow Christ's love, we will gain a deeper understanding of what true discipleship means and we will grow and blossom into maturing followers of Christ.

Our community, like a garden, requires nurturing. We choose to be the "gardeners" God has called us to be, producing a vibrant garden which will continue to bloom for years to come.

Working together, with the garden that is our community, we will cultivate new growth and fertilize our garden by educating, coaching, honing skills, and sharing heartfelt support in areas such as relationship restoration, conflict management, and emotional healing. We will weed out uncertainty, disillusionment, pain, loneliness, and stress. We will prune self-doubts and bad habits.

Through careful tending our garden will grow and flourish. The fruit of our labor will be a bountiful harvest of disciples who share the Good News and lead others to discover the purpose, peace, and joy Jesus offers for everyone.



August Theme Days



- August 1st (HAT Day)
- August 8th (Hawaiian Theme)
- August 15th (MI Sports Team Day)
- August 22nd (Western Theme)
- August 29th (Stars and/or Stripes Day)

Starting in August we are encouraging you to join the fun of special dress days. The above Sundays show the suggested theme for each week. If you have something to wear for each theme please wear it to church that day.

I encourage you to take photos during these Sundays and submit them to rachelle@uticaumc.org to be included in the messenger for the following week to share the fun with everyone.

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Book Sale!

The book sale is back once again, set up outside the main office. The sale will run Sunday, July 25th and Sunday, August 1st. This is a free will donation sale, money can be left in the basket on the book sale table. Proceeds for this sale will go to our kids programs.



UMW Collection

The United Methodist Women are collecting diapers size 6 and baby wipes now through September 5th for Abigayle Ministries. There is a collection tub in the Narthex with UMW sign on it. Please place diapers and wipes in the tub. This is a wonderful ministry to support.

Goodbye, campers!

This summer we had six weeks worth of devotionals, Bible stories, Bible verses, crafts, activities, and lots and lots of snacks! We learned about the life and ancestry of Jesus through six topics: The Old Testament, Women of the Bible, The Disciples, The Birth of Christ, Jesus' Life, and the Death/Resurrection/Ascension of Jesus. We had a meet and greet, Zoom meeting, and three wonderful virtual field trips! We hope everyone had fun, learned a lot, and feel closer to God. We all hope you had fun this summer, and we look forward to hopefully seeing you in person next year! Enjoy the rest of your summer, good luck with school next year, and may God bless you all!

Thank you to Jennifer Palazzolo for running another year of our STARS camp as the director. Thank you Interns Natalie, Sam and Casey for your work and enthusiasm this year as we did another virtual camp. Jennifer and our Interns also took the time to help straighten up classrooms both upstairs and downstairs, created a fun hallway upstairs for when we return to in-person children's programs and set up our book sale.

The interns created several YouTube videos this summer for our kids. They are available under the STARS playlist on our Utica umc YouTube channel. Feel free to take a look.

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Reach for Me

When I had surgery for cancer, there had been arm involvement with the loss of Lymph Nodes and the severing of the nerves. This became an issue after surgery with strength loss and discomfort. I had to give up bowling, at least until healing and strength returned. This was not a big deal as I was a dreadful bowler. My daughter filled in for me and the ball was grateful, and the team did not suffer but had a rise in averages. But I needed to regain the strength in that arm. To do this I had to do an exercise called "Climbing the Walls." This was a stretching out of the arm while you climbed the walls with your fingertips. It was painful. The Doctor was on me because I wasn't doing well with this exercise. My sense of humor did not help the situation. I asked him if I would be able to do laps in the pool and he said, "Yes, definitely." I said, "That's great because I can't swim." He laughed told me firmly to get out of his office and that my arm had better be improved by my next visit. He did not want me to lose the use of that arm. I tried but it hurt. Finally, one day I was reduced to tears and as I kept trying and praying that God would help me, I imagined Christ's hands reaching down and the words came to me, "Reach for me." I reached and stretched for those hands. I found it to be my answer. All this time I had been relying on my own strength when there was one with greater strength waiting for me to come to him for what I needed. I reached for those hands every day after that and gradually the pain subsided, and the muscles stopped resisting and I could do the stretch.

Ephesians 3:16-19 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you being rooted and established in love may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Lord, we thank you for all the blessings that you have given us, for your healing power, for your constant and abiding love. Be with those who suffer, those who are ill, those who are grieving may they feel your comfort and love. Help us Lord to nurture one another, to answer the call of the needy, may we see the needs of our community and respond in ways that honor and serve you, may we be your hands and feet in this place, may we always, in all things, reach for you. Be with our Pastor, bless his Ministry, and be with his family. Grant them safe travels. Be with our Staff and Leaders, give them wisdom and guidance. We pray in the name of Jesus, Amen

Grace Epperson



THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Ministry Team:

Senior Pastor
Reverend Don Gotham
srpastor@uticaumc.org

Contemporary Worship Leader

Mer Renne
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Music Ministry

David Fox
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Secretary/Bookkeeper

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

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!

