



# Weekly Messenger

October 8, 2021

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## "Been there, done that?"

Thomas Jefferson could truly say, "Been there, done that, now what?" He was Ambassador to France, the first Secretary of State, a Vice President, the President of the United States, founder of a major university, author of the greatest political document in history, a multi-faceted inventor, architect, author, farmer, and scholar. He was perhaps the most brilliant man ever to occupy the White House. He was present at the signing of the Declaration of Independence; he attended the second Continental Congress; he oversaw the purchase of over one-third of America.

But of all the things that Thomas Jefferson had done, of all the places he had seen, and of all the people he had met, he made this statement: "The happiest moments of my life have been the few which I have passed at home in the bosom of my family."

One of the by-products of growing older and having one's family expand seems to be the challenge of gathering all of the family for the holidays. I'm experiencing this challenge again this year. I became concerned enough about the matter that I began to coordinate the gathering myself. Last year, we decided that too many of us would be traveling from too many places, and without a vaccine for Covid, we wouldn't risk our health. All who are old enough have been vaccinated, and I am not ready to let this gathering of my family go.

I began to think of the challenges put before our church because of the pandemic. We've adjusted, and adjusted, and scrapped it all to change again. We made all of the adjustments so we could keep you, our church family, healthy.

You might be interested to know that we have come through thus far better than many other churches from the conversations I've had with my colleagues. And, while I am grateful for the comparative ease with which we've been affected, I still long for the days when we would all be together. I still long to be together with all of our church family.

I want you to know; I've not grown too weary of dreaming of our future together. You mean too much to me to risk us not striving to fulfill the great plans God has for us! Like Jefferson, I too can say the happiest moments of my life have been those I have passed in the bosom of my family. I count you, my church family, to be just as important. Let's do all we can to strengthen our work, to continue to resolve to treasure the audacious places God intends to take us. Let's all plan to gather together every chance we get.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Don

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

# THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

## Is Celebrate Recovery 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 everyone 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.

**Celebrate Recovery meets every Thursday, 6:30 PM in Fellowship Hall**

### **United Methodist Women**

The United Methodist Women's group will meet in on Wednesday, October 13 in Fellowship Hall. We will begin with lunch and visitation at noon. We ask that you bring your own lunch because of the current Covid standards. Water, coffee and tea will be provided to drink. At 1:00 pm our speaker will be Stephen Payne from Smart Bus Services. He will explain the various Transportation Services that are available to Seniors and all community members in our area. All women are welcome to attend.

Remember to bring your pop can tabs and food for the food pantry.

### **POP TAB BATTLE**

What can you do with your pop can tabs?

You can help by collecting the tabs for the Ronald McDonald House in Ann Arbor, Michigan and win over the collectors for the Ronald McDonald House in Columbus, Ohio. This is a competition between the two colleges that will be decided at the Michigan/ Ohio State game on Saturday, November 27. The UMW will be collecting the pop tabs from now until November 14. Ask your family, friends, and neighbors to also collect the tabs.

Collecting pop tabs is a great way to teach others about philanthropy and the importance of recycling while raising money to help sick children and their families at the hospital.

Place the pop tabs on the coat racks at either entrance.

# THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

This Sunday, October 10<sup>th</sup> is the first Sunday of our program **Fulfilling God's Purpose**. Our theme for this week is "Building Relationships."

Only through Christ can we live abundantly. Jesus said, *"Apart from me you can do nothing. I have come that [you] might have life, and have it to the full"* (John 15:5; 10:10). You see, God created us for a relationship with him, to be loved by him and to love him and others, to be served by him, and to serve him by serving those around us. That relationship was destroyed by our sin. Sin brings darkness to our souls; it brings regret; it brings guilt; it brings shame. It hurts us and gets in the way of our relationships with God and with one another. Our thinking becomes distorted; it's self-centered rather than God-centered. Our actions are contrary to serving God and serving one another. We're so filled with ourselves there is no room for God in our lives.

Into this world of darkness and regret, guilt and shame, God sent his son. He bridged the gap between sinful people and our holy God. He makes it possible for us to have a relationship with him ... intimacy with him once and for all. Now we have it all. We have been created with a purpose: to have a relationship, to love him, and to serve him and enjoy fellowship with him.

We hope to see you in worship this Sunday as focus on the theme "Building Relationships."

**Prayer:** Dear heavenly Father, we pray that you will strengthen and nurture our relationship with you. Help us always to depend on your wisdom and strength rather than on our own. Use us as your instruments to share your love, grace, and mercy with others. In your precious name we pray. **Amen.**



## **Blessings on your journey as a steward!**

### **It's Apple Pie Time!**

It is time once again to put in your order for the yummy apple pies that the UMW makes each year. Please order your apple pies in advance so they can purchase enough apples and supplies to make the pies.

All sanitary precautions will be taken when making your pies.

These delicious, unbaked, freshly made frozen pies sell for \$10.00 each for regular and \$5.00 for small size.

Please get a form at the church on Sundays to fill out and turn in to the church office or during offering or give to a UMW member. Payment may be made at time of pickup. Checks should be made out to Utica UMC Women.

## **Coming Soon!**

**Boy Scout Popcorn Sale** - Sunday, October 10th and 17th stop by the boy scout table and purchase your popcorn.

**Drug Take Back Day** - Saturday, October 23, 2021 from 10am-2pm. Stop by the church under the portico and drop off your unwanted or expired medications. They will be disposed of in a proper manner.

# THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

## Blessings and Scars

Not all our scars show, some just lay hidden on our hearts. Three weeks ago, I started to feel quite sick, and my right side ached constantly. I was trying to write the weekly devotional. I was so close to having it finished but the pain was not going away. Still, I only had to do a Bible verse and a finishing prayer. I looked at the Bible, the page was marked, and I could almost see the verse. But I could not type because my body was shaking with chills and my vision was blurring. I called 911. My neighbor came over as soon as she saw the ambulance and offered to call my son at work. I had appendicitis. I complained to everyone that this was a problem for a 16- year-old, not an 86-year-old. A 16-year-old can manage it better. But then my mind went back to years ago when I was working at a hospital. It was a Sunday, and I was home enjoying my day off when the hospital called. A young boy, 16 years old, had an Appendectomy the evening before and they wanted me to come in and be with him as he was not expected to live. The Surgeon had nicked the bowel and the young boy had bled internally, lapsed into a coma, and was now dying. A tragic event. I went in and stayed with him as he worsened and approached death. As I was griping about being eighty-six with a young person's problem I thought of that young man and his parents who were waiting to visit with him. He had his life taken so needlessly. I have had 86 years and it has been over 50 years since he died, and I think of all he missed. He never finished High School, or fell in love, or had children or even found out who he wanted to be as an adult. His parents were never able to see all his milestones, all the big moments in his life. I mourned that boy once again as I did back then and felt so blessed that I had been able to be with him that day. I do not know the plans God had for him or what his life would have been, but I know it ended before he had a chance to find his way. His death left a scar on my heart. When I count my blessings I count the surgeon that came in and did my surgery, the nurses that cared for me, the hospital that had their emergency room open, the swift diagnosis, and especially my Son who was by my side right away, my daughter who came, my neighbor who came over right away, and especially my Pastor who offered up prayers for me and my church that sent prayers, cards, and phone calls and those who took me to appointments when I was unable to drive and for my God who takes all these journeys with me, I am blessed beyond measure

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Lord, you are with us always, through the good days and the bad days. You bless us with your presence in our lives. Be with those who seek you, may they find you waiting. May we be your blessing to the hungry, the homeless, those who are troubled and the oppressed. Be with our Pastor, bless his ministry and watch over him and his family. Be with our staff and leaders, guide them and bless them. Be with our country, heal our division. In Jesus name we pray, Amen

Grace Epperson

### HELP WANTED

GriefShare Facilitator/Coach (2)

GriefShare is a biblical, Christ-centered support group ministry. Like Celebrate Recovery, GriefShare is a worldwide ministry. More than 17,000 churches across the globe have been equipped with the GriefShare program. We all know, it hurts to lose someone. GriefShare is a friendly, caring group of people who will walk alongside you through one of life's most difficult experiences. You don't have to go through the grieving process alone. **Training provided.** Contact Bob or Patsy Clark

# 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

## 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!

## 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](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. 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

9:30am -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.

### Thursday Nights

**Celebrate Recovery** at  
6:30pm in Fellowship Hall

Celebrate Recovery is both a  
worship service and a 12 step  
God based program to help  
with life's hurts, habits and  
hang-ups.

