



Utica United
Methodist Church

Weekly Messenger

July 15, 2022

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“News that Thrilled Me...”

This morning news was shared with me that thrilled me. People have been invited to attend worship, and they have accepted the invitation! This past Sunday, I shared that we will have our annual pulled pork fundraiser for our STARS & XCEL programs. The families of the children enrolled in the program have been invited to worship with us and support the program as they also purchase the yummy take-outs.

I can't think that most of us haven't been wishing the number of people in worship would increase. The effects of the Covid pandemic have caused a struggle in terms of the number of people attending worship in person. Well, here we have the opportunity for which we have been longing. People who aren't usually here will be with us in worship on July 24th. We need to do all we can to make their experience here at our church all it can be.

Please join me in praying God helps us put our best foot forward. From offering a smile to asking someone if they would like to sit with you in the pew or at the same table to seeing in their eyes that what they need most is to know where the bathrooms are located are simple and helpful ways of making guests feel welcomed.

Six weeks of sharing the love of Christ with children and teens can make a lifelong difference. Let's be sure to cap the experience we've given the children and teens with a warm welcoming of their families.

Grace and Peace,
Rev. Don



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THE WEEKLY MESSENGER



Week 4 Pre-Bowling Warm-ups



THE WEEKLY MESSENGER



Week 4
Bowling Fun!



THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Celebrate Recovery

Last November, as part of the “umbrella ministry” of Celebrate Recovery here at Utica United Methodist Church, a one evening seminar called Surviving the Holidays was offered. This class was designed to help people who lost a loved one get through the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s period.

That seminar was followed up in January with a 13 week GriefShare Seminar and support group. We also offered this seminar at Town Village Senior Village.

We are pleased to announce a new, one evening seminar, on August 18, 2022 called:

LOSS OF A SPOUSE™

Here’s a bit of information about the class.

Widowed? Help is here and hope is possible

Do you dread the lonely days and nights? Feel like your brain is in a fog? Unsure of how you’ll go on? Wonder what to do with your spouse’s belongings?

At a Loss of a Spouse seminar you’ll discover:

- Other people understand and have found ways to make it through.
- Why it won’t always hurt so much.
- Reasons for hope.
- Practical tips for coping with the death of a spouse.

A Loss of a Spouse seminar lasts about two hours. Here’s what to expect:

- **Video seminar:** You’ll view a 35-minute video with encouraging, practical advice from counselors, pastors, and widowed men and women.
- **Sharing time:** Then you’ll get to talk with other widowed people about what you learned from the video. (There’s no pressure to share!)
- **A guide to bring home:** Everyone receives a booklet with more than 30 short readings on how to live with grief and eventually rebuild your life.

If this is something that you or someone you know may benefit from, please let us know. You can call the church, contact Bob or Patsy Clark, or Ray Lake.

The ministry email address is: celebrate.recovery@uticaumc.org

Beginning September 8, 2022 we will once again offer the full 13 week GriefShare support group.

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

The Ebenezer Stone

The Israelites had been on a long journey, full of trials. They had come to the end of the journey and Samuel gathered a stone. He put it up and designated it the "Ebenezer Stone," which means "stone of help." They had endured many trials but each time they had trials God saved them. Samuel wanted them to see the Ebenezer stone and to realize all the times God had lifted them up and helped them. It was placed as their journey came to an end. They would look at the Ebenezer stone and see their trials and their own missteps and remember that God had been with them on the journey. I can look back and see the times God gave me strength and hope for the journey. He lifted me up, reassured me and opened my heart. Life is not easy sometimes. We have all suffered loss. God put people in my path that encouraged me, inspired my faith, loved me. When I had fallen from a top student to one failing and really did not care about any of it, a teacher said to me, "What do you want to do with your life." A teacher who had been a hinderance to me turned out to be the one who would motivate me and show me I had choices. The problems in my life did not define me and I could overcome them. And I did that. I became an A student and found friends. Teachers began to have me tutor others and show me I had worth. People and Pastors at church encouraged me and counseled me. I graduated and left home and began a career in Nursing and married. I began to see how God was in my life. He led me through my wilderness. Then when I was 50, I found a lump. I faced Breast Cancer and my faith grew. Then another problem was in my path as it was found the cancer had spread to the lymph nodes and required 9 months of chemo. I only asked God for one thing, that if it was his will, that I see my children settled with someone they loved and who saw what I saw in them and loved them in return. God gave me that. Then my daughter was pregnant, and I wanted to hold that precious granddaughter. I did that and God then gave me two more to love as my daughter had another daughter and my son had a son. Everyone as precious as the first. Now two of my three precious grandchildren have given me three Great Grandchildren to love and adore. Then my husband of 63 years had developed Alzheimer's, another problem. God once again put people in my path who helped and encouraged me. God walked with me and got me out of bed on days when I felt that I could not face another day and he sent friends to give me hope and purpose. He gave me friends in church who helped my husband while I prayed with others. People who helped him in and out of the car, who retrieved the car for me, who hugged him and talked to him. He sent helpers when he passed out, a record I'm sure, 4 times. Then would come my guardian angels from the pews, from the narthex and from the sound booth to help us. Before I could ask, an ambulance had been called, his pulse checked, and I was comforted. God has given me an Ebenezer Stone to show how far I have come and with that sure knowledge I know God will be with me always.

1 Samuel 7:12 Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying "Thus far has the Lord helped us."

Lord, we thank you for your presence in our lives, for all the times we lean on you and you do not disappoint. We ask Lord that you be with those who are ill and those who are grieving. May they feel you with them and be comforted. Be with those in our world suffering through war and devastation, we pray Lord that they are saved from the horror they are going through. Be with our country Lord, heal us and help us to feel safe in our stores, our theaters, our churches, our streets, our homes. Be with our church Lord, may we honor you with our actions. Be with our Pastor, bless his ministry and grant him safety. Be with our Staff and Leaders, give them wisdom and perseverance. May we as a church truly be the hands and feet of Christ. In Jesus name we pray, Amen

Grace Epperson

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER



Pulled Pork Fundraiser



On Sunday, July 24th we will be having our pulled pork fundraiser to support the STARS Intern program. The money we raise each year helps to continue the program next year. This is a free will donation fundraiser. Pulled pork sandwiches and sides will be available to take home after both services.

Stephen Ministry



I have had very interesting experiences as both a Stephen Minister and a Leader. When I first came to Utica UMC, I started learning about Stephen Ministry and was really drawn to it. I realized there were times in my life that I could have benefited from having a Stephen Minister. A Stephen Minister would have been very helpful when grieving my parents' tragic deaths ten months apart. I came to realize that I would like to be there for others going through difficult situations. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 is what helped me understand why I had gone through such a troubled time. "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God." It was a true blessing being able to walk alongside a very broken person and seeing them come back to wholeness.

As a Stephen Minister I never thought I wanted to be a leader – too much of a commitment. Stephen Ministry has been part of Utica UMC off and on for about 30 years. We were in a dormant period when then Pastor Donahue asked me if I would help revive Stephen Ministry. I found myself saying "I'd be glad to, then wondering what I had gotten myself into. But being a leader has been another wonderful experience that I am still passionate about. It's been a true blessing to interact with the Stephen Ministers and Care Receivers.

If you have compassion for reaching out to those in need, please consider becoming a Stephen Minister.

Office Closure

Charlotte will be out of the office on Thursday, July 21 and Friday, July 22. Please make sure any business you have with the office is complete by Wednesday, July 20 or it will be taken care of on Monday, July 25. The office will be closed on Friday July 22nd.

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

SUNDAY WORSHIP TIMES:

9:30AM

with Organ, Choir and Handbells
in the Sanctuary

10:30AM

with our Worship Band
in Fellowship Hall

Online Worship

A recorded service will be
available online on
Facebook, our church website and
on YouTube beginning at
9:00am each Sunday.

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday - Thursday

8:00am-4:00pm

Friday 8:00am- 2:00pm

Food Pantry

Our food pantry is
available to those in need
by calling the church office
and making an
appointment.

This institution is an equal
opportunity provider.

Keep Connected

If you are not signed up for our
Weekly Messenger email, you
can do so on our website by
clicking on the "More" tab, then
"Weekly Messenger"; on that
page you will find a place to
register for our weekly email!



*"Like" us
on
Facebook!*

Our Mission

Inviting people to rely
on Jesus to find
unexpected purpose,
peace and joy.

Ministry Team

Rev. Don Gotham

srpastor@uticaumc.org

Music Ministry

David Fox, Organist, Bell, & Chancel Choirs
Director

FoxDavidL@sbcglobal.net

Mer Renne, Contemporary
Worship Leader

mer@uticaumc.org

Communications Director

Rachelle Heldt

rachelle@uticaumc.org

Secretary/Bookkeeper

Charlotte Ramsey

charlotte@uticaumc.org

Deadline Information

Articles for advertising/
announcements must be submitted to
the office by 4:00pm on
Wednesday of each week.

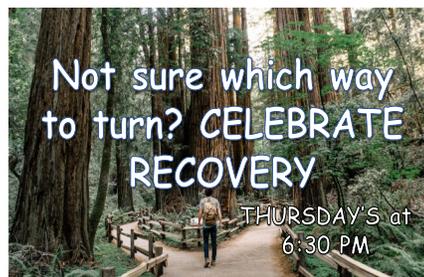
Messenger: Email to Rachelle Heldt
Prayer List: Email to Charlotte Ramsey
or call the church office.



Going on vacation; can't make it to church?

How about using E-giving so you can still give your offering for
those times when you can't be here **The E-giving tab is on our
church website: www.uticaumc.org**
If you need assistance, call the church office.

Celebrate Recovery



**Celebration
Place**

The Celebrate Recovery Children's Ministry
Thursday evening beginning at 6:30pm
in Room 305