

Weekly Messenger

August 5, 2022

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"FINANCIAL UPS AND DOWNS"

Almost every day we hear about financial ups and downs. Gas prices are up (although recently they have been coming down). Inflation is up (when will it turn around?). Social Security payments are up and will likely increase again this year (but have they kept pace with inflation?). The stock market is down (a far cry from last year when it consistently set new all-time highs).

The same is true for Utica UMC – we are experiencing financial ups and downs this year. But we continue to be blessed by all God provides us. And we are grateful for the faithful giving and stewardship of our congregation.

As you might expect, our expenses are up this year compared to last year. This is to be expected since we are more actively doing things – a blessing. Total Operating Fund Expenses through 6/30/2022 were \$210,110. Conversely, our giving has been less compared to this same period last year by about \$10,000. Total Operating Fund Income through 6/30/2022) was \$167,225. Another blessing – our congregation gives faithfully.

To offset the difference (income vs. expenses), we have had to dip into the \$60,000 Operating Fund “year-to-year savings” we had at the end of 2021. This “year-to-year savings” was the result of stable giving levels the past two years (during the COVID pandemic) while we had significantly lower spending. Approximately \$20,000 of our savings was used to stay current with our Conference Ministry Shares (apportionments) payments. Another \$20,000 was used for salaries, office expenses, utilities, and other necessary expenses.

In June, Finance Committee delayed making our \$4,000 payment for our Conference Ministry Shares (apportionments) to ensure we had sufficient cash flow for salaries, utilities, and other required expenses through the summer. We remain committed to paying 100% of our Ministry Shares by the end of the year.

We understand expenses are up for everyone and “money is tight”. We are doing everything we can to keep Operating Fund expenses down. Please ensure your commitment to Operating Fund is up to date. And, if possible, give a little extra to Operating Fund. Every extra dollar or two now will make a difference by the end of the year. We want to ensure we are able meet all our 2022 obligations and also have some remaining to “carry-forward” into 2023 for first quarter expenses.

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

A note from Together in Missions (T. I. M.)

School supplies and toiletries needed

Each year the Church Conference asks the Mission Committee to select state, interstate and international projects and ministries that we would choose to support. For the month of August, we will be highlighting The Methodist Children's Home in Redford Michigan, one of our state choices.

For over 100 years this site has provided a safe living environment for children. They house up to 70 boys and have added a site for boys aged 16-19 who are aging out of foster care. Recently, they began to offer specialized care for children and families who have been impacted by childhood trauma. See more about this vital ministry at mchsmi.org

We will be assisting their ministry with our donation of back to school supplies. This includes classroom supplies, backpacks, and young men's toiletries such as disposable razors, shaving cream and deodorant.

Please place all donated items in the bin in the narthex or back entryway. .



United Methodist Women Collection

We are still collecting paper towels, toilet paper and Kleenex for Turning Point now until September 4th. There is a grey tub outside the church office under the coat rack labeled UMW to place these items.



THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

GriefShare

The loss of a loved one is not easy. It may be hard for you to feel optimistic about the future right now. When you've lost a spouse, child, family member, or friend, you've probably found there are not many people who understand the deep hurt you feel.

This can be a confusing time when you feel isolated and have many questions about things you've never faced before.

“Going to GriefShare feels like having warm arms wrapped around you when you're shivering.”

GriefShare groups meet weekly to help you face these challenges and move toward rebuilding your life. Each of the 13 GriefShare sessions has three distinct elements:

- Video seminar with experts
- Support group discussion with focus
- Personal study and reflection

Who should come ... who should not?

GriefShare is for people grieving the death of a family member or friend. We understand that there are other losses in life that create feelings of grief. You might be experiencing a job loss, a divorce, estrangement from a child, or the loss of friends because of a move. This grief is real, but it is not the kind of grief discussed in GriefShare sessions.

When to join a GriefShare group

You are welcome to begin attending the GriefShare group at any session. Each is “self-contained,” so you do not have to attend in sequence. You will find encouragement and help whenever you begin.

Never been to a support group like this before. I don't know what to expect.”

Most people quickly feel comfortable and accepted in their GriefShare group. They discover there are others who have the same kind of feelings they do and who understand the hurt they feel and the loss they have experienced.

At GriefShare you'll discover hope for the future.

While things may look bleak now, you'll learn ways to restore your hope and rebuild your life. Many GriefShare alumni tell us the program helped them move from deep grief to peace and a sense of joy again.

**GriefShare will return to Utica United Methodist Church on:
Thursday, September 8th 2022 at 6:30 PM in Fellowship Hall**

LOSS OF A SPOUSE SEMINAR

The passing of your spouse affects every area of your life. The death of a spouse brings a unique kind of pain. People who are widowed haven't just lost a loved one—they've lost an entire lifestyle.

This 2-hour free seminar will help you understand your grief and find comfort and direction during this time of pain and uncertainty. Come hear advice from counselors and pastors, as well as stories of men and women who have been widowed but who have found help and encouragement. You'll also participate in a time of discussion with other seminar attendees and leaders through the use of a short workbook.

Join us on August 18, 2022 at 6:30 PM in Fellowship Hall.

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Random Acts of Kindness

I wrote a story for my Granddaughter's book that she is doing on my memories about them any kind acts of kindness I have experienced. There have been many acts from strangers, from the occasional free coffee in line at Starbucks to being picked up after falling in a parking lot by a very kind and concerned couple. The one that touched me the most was on Valentine's Day 2020. It was before the lockdown, and I felt the need to get out of the house. I needed some alone time. My husband had been having problems for several years, but things were definitely worsening at this time, and I needed a break. The caregiver was with him, so I left and decided to go out to eat. I went to Olga's. It was not busy; it was the slow time of day between the lunch people and the dinner people. I sat down and had a good table where I could see the whole restaurant. About two tables from me were a couple and they were having what appeared to be a pleasant lunch, after all it was Valentine's Day. I ordered my food and got out my kindle and continued to read my book. I was absorbed in a book and read while I had my meal. The couple and I exchanged glances and I smiled but we did not talk. As I had sat there, I had remembered all the Valentine's Days my husband and I had shared. There was usually candy, flowers, and always a card and dinner or lunch out. I was not morose but content with my memories and would later stop on the way home to buy him a box of candy which he would attempt to eat all at once. Eventually the faces changed in the restaurant, and I noticed the waitress had not brought the check. I had been absorbed in my kindle and thought she didn't want to disturb me. I called her over and gave her a gentle hint that I needed the check. She told me the couple sitting two tables away had paid for my meal and included the tip. I was shocked and told her why I was alone and how much their kind gesture meant to me. We were both teary. I walked to my car and thanked God for the strangers that touch our lives. Growing up the kindness of strangers seemed to be expected and accepted. I remember walking up to a house and asking to use their phone to call home because I was having car trouble. People did for each other what they could, and it was normal. Now we celebrate those random acts of kindness and wish for a safer and kinder world. I dated a man who would stop to pick up hitchhikers, especially if they were in uniform. I never felt frightened or threatened by this. He was in the army and would do for others what he wanted them to do for him and I always knew I was safe with him.

1Thessalonians 5:15-16 Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else. Be joyful always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus

Lord, we thank you for this day. May we seek and find ways to be kind to each other. Kindness need not be random but a part of who we are as your children. Be with our Pastor, bless his ministry. Bless him and Laura and their family, grant them good health and safety. Be with our church, may we be a blessing to you, to each other and to our community. Be with those who are ill and those who grieve. May we be hope and comfort to them. Be with our staff and leaders and grant them vision for our journey. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

Grace Epperson

Random
Acts of
Kindness

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.

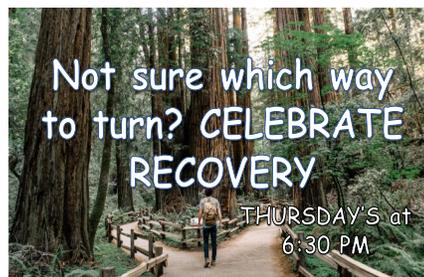
Messenger: Email to Rachelle Heldt
Prayer List: Email to Charlotte Ramsey
or call the church office.



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