



Utica United
Methodist Church

Weekly Messenger

March 3, 2023

IN THIS ISSUE:

Happy
Birthday
Events

Taco and Trivia
Night

UWIF

Celebrate
Recovery

Devotional

"Lookin' For
Love"

Back Page
Info

March Prayer Focus

It always seemed that the disciples didn't display enough awe and joy in the miracles Jesus performed. Consider the Sermon on the Mount, the feeding of the 5000 with a small amount of fish and bread. At what point did Peter realize the basket should have been empty, yet it contained an endless supply of food?

That was just one of Jesus' many miracles and just one of the countless times in which the disciples were witnessing the Messiah, the Son of God in all his glory as he walked among them.

Was their reaction understated? Were they confused and still doubting that Jesus was the savior? How would **you** describe their nature...dull, unenthusiastic, immature in their faith?

As we begin the Lenten journey together let us re-examine our faith, our discipleship, our witness and most importantly how we will honor Jesus Christ as we serve our Risen Savior here on earth.

Isaiah 30:15 This is what the Sovereign Lord, the Holy One of Israel, says: "In repentance and rest is your salvation."

Holy Spirit,

Bless me with a mind and heart that desires to walk a righteous path as a loving and living disciple. Help me to always remain focused on the cross and your gracious sacrifice for all. Let me honor you this day and in all days as you offer me redemption and salvation through your death and resurrection. Lord, I humbly ask that you provide me with the peace and patience needed as I look to you with longing in my heart striving to be worthy of your love and praise. Teach me Lord to be an effective disciple for you, growing through prayer and worship. Open my eyes and my soul so that I will see the needs in my neighborhood and community, responding with a passionate and willing spirit proclaiming...Here I am Lord, send me, use me, mold me and make me into the disciple you call me to be.

Written by Bob Mackool

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THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Celebrate Recovery is a program designed to help those struggling with Hurts, Habits and Hang-ups.

Celebrate Recovery is a life recovery program that offers a supportive group environment where hope and acceptance join with God's desire to heal us of our greatest wounds in life. We believe all are in recovery, recovery from sin. Simply put, a hurt, habit or hang up is anything that hinders your relationship with God and with others. Anger, fear, perfectionism, alcohol, overeating, gambling, abuse, divorce, people pleasing— anything that controls you and keeps you from experiencing God's love, grace and true freedom in life is a hurt, habit or hang up. You can choose to live in bondage to these problems and approach them as stumbling blocks or as stepping stones to personal and spiritual growth.

Many people think "recovery" refers only to people struggling with alcohol or drug addiction, but that's just not true. In physical health, recovery is the process of moving from illness to wellness. Our hurts, habits and hang-ups are like an illness that can damage our relationship with others and especially with God. The Bible teaches us that no person is perfect. We've all blown it and we've all made mistakes. We've hurt ourselves, we've hurt other people and others have hurt us.

But there is hope, no matter in what situation you find yourself. Whether your problem is emotional, financial, relational, spiritual, physical, whatever—God wants to help you. Celebrate Recovery offers you the opportunity to be in a safe place to participate in group fellowship where love and hope combine with God's purpose to heal your life.

Is Celebrate Recovery for You?

- Are there things in your life that you do, which cause hurt to others?
- Have others caused you pain or hurt of which you can't let go?
- Is there something you would like to live without or stop doing?
- Is it time to face denial and admit you're not in control of a hurt, habit or hang-up?
- Do you have a painful habit or hang-up from which you need to be freed?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, we encourage you to attend a Celebrate Recovery meeting to explore your possibilities for healing, wellness and spiritual growth.



THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

United Women In Faith

All women are invited to attend the UWIF meeting in Fellowship Hall on Wednesday, March 8. The potluck Luncheon will begin at noon. Please bring a dish to share and your own place setting. Drinks will be provided.

The Program featuring **Prayer and Self Denial** will begin at 1:00pm.

Happy 200th Birthday Utica UMC!

Utica United Methodist Church is 200 years old this year. We have many things planned to celebrate this wonderful milestone. Currently there are polo shirts on sale on Sunday mornings. Cost of the shirts are \$30.00. We do have order forms available in the church office, you can stop in and place an order or call the office. A historical display is going to be going up on the wall in the Parlor in the next couple of weeks.

Please mark your calendars as we look ahead....

March - We will have a Taco and Trivia night on March 11th. See Below for details.....

April 23rd is our big kick-off celebration. Bishop Bard will be in to preach this morning. A meal is also in the planning process. Mark you calendars as you will not want to miss this Sunday of church.

May - Historic Driving Tours and Utica Cemetery Tours are being planned. Let's take a look at our roots and visit the graves of founding members of Utica church.

June - The Car Show will happen again this year on June 3rd. We are also looking at attending a Jimmy John's baseball game on June 23rd.

This year is going to be exciting and full of many different types of events. Start marking your calendars now.



Taco and Trivia Night

Taco and Trivia Night is one of our first kick-off events celebrating our 200 years at Utica. Join us on **Saturday, March 11th** at 5:30pm in Fellowship Hall. There you will enjoy a yummy taco bar along with fun games and trivia. Brush up on your church history as there could be questions regarding this church's past. We are asking for a donation of \$5.00 per person. Kids 5 and younger are free. This money will help offset the cost of this event. Sign up sheets will be out on Sunday. Sign up and invite your friends. This is a great setting to introduce someone to our church.

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Broken

Have you ever been broken? Was there a time in your life that you realized that you could not do it alone? A time when God challenged you to do something that in that time and in that moment seemed impossible? We have all faced challenges. Times when we grew weary of the way our life was going. Time when we realized things had to change. Times when life and our burdens just seemed too heavy. Those times can come in challenges with our jobs, our marriages, our relationships, or personal challenges. We can be broken.

I woke up this morning thinking of Peter. Now we know that Peter faced the challenge of following Christ. How could he follow him when he had first went against his teaching when he pulled out his sword in the garden and then denied him three times. He had been broken. But those were not the times I was thinking of this morning. I was thinking of when Peter wanted to walk on water to Jesus. Peter was doing it! He took steps towards Jesus. Peter had this, but then he faltered, he grew frightened, he looked at Jesus, but his fear became greater than his trust and Jesus had to save him. Jesus and Peter went to the boat. He didn't get it! He was safer in that water with Jesus than he would ever be in that boat without Jesus. Remember the book, "If You Want To Walk On Water, You Have To Get Out Of The Boat?" Peter would learn this as he became the rock on which Jesus would build his church.

I have had times in my life when my faith faltered. When I was young and had no concept of faith and the one person in my life who I loved without doubt was gone, I prayed for death and was becoming weary of a God who would take so much and not give me this one thing I wanted. I doubted his very existence. I was broken. But then during my illness with polio I realized that as a voice whispered to me, "God wants you to live." God had passed me by for some reason and so I had to live as best I could and so with denial came my road to faith. I started with nothing and gained everything.

Peter had been a witness to the miracles performed by Jesus, to the faith expressed and lived by Christ and still he doubted that the same water on which Jesus walked would hold him up even with Jesus's hands reaching for him. What is God calling you to? How can I help? What is God calling Utica United Methodist Church to? What can we do to answer that call?

Matthew 14:25-31 During the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When they saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost" they said and cried out in fear. But Jesus immediately said to them, "Take courage, It is I. Don't be afraid." Peter said, Lord, if it's you" tell me to come to you on the water." "Come." Jesus said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water, and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink, and cried out "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him, "You of little faith" he said, "Why did you doubt."

Lord Jesus, we thank you for this day, may we be worthy of it. Fill us Lord with kindness, love, and mercy in abundance as we go through our day and our lives every day. Be with those who are ill and those who grieve, may they feel your loving arms enfolding them. Be with our Pastor and bless his ministry, be with his family, grant them your loving hand in their lives. Give him your strength and love for each day. Be with our staff and leaders, may they feel your guidance and mercy. Be with those who are suffering the ravages of war in Ukraine, be with those in Haiti as they suffer the problems of no leadership and lawlessness. Be with those in Turkey and Syria who suffer the ravages of earthquakes. Be with those at Michigan State as they recover from the latest School shooting and be with the families of the victims, comfort them as they suffer a loss that can never be forgotten. Be with our country, may we be a kinder people who care for each other. Keep our schools and communities safe from those who would use weapons against others. May we be a country that helps each other, that sees kindness, that values people that feeds the hungry and clothes those without clothes, the place that welcomes the stranger, that sees the good in all people, that offers a hand up to those less fortunate. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

Grace Epperson

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Join us every Sunday in Lent to learn how we are "Lookin' For Love."

March 5 - "Look For The Helper"

March 12 - "Look For The Thirst-Quencher"

March 19 - "Look For The Shepherd"

March 26 - "Look For The Liberator"

Looking ahead to Holy Week....

Palm Sunday - April 2, 2023 - "Look For The Unexpected"

Good Friday Service - April 7, 2023 at 7pm in the Sanctuary -

"Love Looks For Us"

Easter Sunday - April 9, 2023 - "Love Wins"



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 3:00pm 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, Thursday, 6:30pm

