



Weekly Messenger

January 12, 2024

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"We See You..."

Have you ever wondered if the efforts you put in at church are noticed? A friend helped to compile this list, and it is just a sample of the fuller efforts that are noticed, indeed. I know we don't volunteer to gain recognition, but I want you to know the things you do are noticed and appreciated. Do you have something to give? Do you have a heart to help your church meet the needs of each other or our community? Consider volunteering. It is a great way to bring excitement and joy to your new year.

The laypeople who conceived of, built, and set up the cupboard to feed those who need food

The layperson gives key leadership of the God Dreams Group

The lay people who faithfully cut the grass

The leaders of the Men's club who put on the car show and sponsor the oil change ministry

The layperson who comes in the Summer Time and pulls weeds

The laypeople who lead TIM

The layperson who sets up and provides us with communion

The laypeople who run the sound and video elements in both services

The laypeople who sing in the choir and play and sing in the worship band

The laypeople who serve as ushers on Sundays and at special services

The laywoman who does whatever she is asked to do

The laypeople who come in early to brew coffee and the ones who set up the treats each week

The group of laypeople who faithfully visit shut-ins twice a year

I'm looking forward to recognizing the many more ways the folks around here volunteer. It just might be the blessing you have been hoping to find.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Don

Utica United
Methodist Church

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Sterling Heights, MI

(586) 731-7667

www.UticaUMC.org

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Mini Pantry Update

As our Mini Pantry enters a new year we have learned much in a very short period of time. We believe the folks frequenting the pantry are not necessarily homeless but those suffering from “food insecurities” for various reasons. We have determined that the microwaveable food items, convenient food items and snack items are going rather quickly, while the foods that provide a meal and/or side dish for a family meal are all too often left behind.

So...where do we go from here?

January, February, March and early April will continue to provide challenges due to the potential severe weather which limits the food that we can use to stock the pantry. We cannot place items that will freeze and potentially explode. Signage has been placed inside the Mini Pantry to inform our donors of the concerns going into the long winter months. There is still much we can do, we just need to “think outside the box”. We are asking for donations of food staples that will not be compromised in severe temperatures.

A “communications board” will be placed next to the **Wagon of Hope** with updated needs for the Mini Pantry. We are moving towards a system that will allow us better and more accurate monitoring of the food items donated and utilized by those seeking our help. We believe this has been a wonderful outreach ministry for UUMC. The congregation has richly blessed the success of this outreach and for that we are truly grateful. Our community has provided both financial and food assistance as so many have learned of this incredible outreach.

Please watch for updates via the Communications Board, The Messenger, UUMC Facebook and occasional announcements from the pulpit.

If you have questions and/or concerns please feel free to contact:

Melanie Kuzia
Jim and Liza Young
Ron and Martha Powers.

End of Year Giving Statements/Stewardship Commitment Letter

The end of year giving statements are ready to be picked up. During the 3rd quarter I ran into trouble with trying to e-mail statements. It was decided that I would just print all statements and you could pick up at your convenience. I was also able to complete the commitment letters. If you turned in a stewardship pledge card, you will receive a letter along with your statement confirming your pledge for the year. If you had marked giving weekly, your weekly pledge was multiplied by number of weeks in the year to get an annual giving total amount. If you marked monthly, then that amount was multiplied by 12 months to get an annual total. If you have questions concerning this letter and the amount please e-mail the office at office@uticaumc.org or call 586-731-7667, or stop in to chat during office hours 8am-2pm Monday-Friday.

Please stop by the table outside the church office and pick up your envelope. Some statements have already gone out in the mail to those who do not attend on a regular basis. If you are somewhere warm for the winter and would like your statement mailed to you at that location - please verify we have your address here in the office and I can mail the letter to you.

Thank you,
Rachelle

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Congregation, Celebrate the love of Jesus!

Happy New Year (2024) from the Endowment Committee,

We hope that this letter finds you and your family in good health and ready for the challenges and joys of the New Year. What a wonderful year it was, celebrating 200 years of church life in the community. Just think of how many hearts were touched by the love of Jesus Christ over all those years.

Al Manning: for the past 16 years I have been the Chairman of the Endowment Committee, and during that time the Fund has shown continuous growth and has been able to provide additional support to many ministries. We have certainly been blessed, and I want to thank all of you that have made this happen, with both your support and donations over the years. This year will be my last year as Chair of the Endowment Committee. I feel it is time for new leadership, with some fresh ideas.

2023 was a good year. Compared to 2022, the Fund account grew by about 13%. We ended 2022 with a balance of \$230,711. The balance for 2023 was \$261,367. Just as a reminder, the Endowment Fund is managed by the United Methodist Foundation of Michigan; they have done a wonderful job with our investments over the years. Last year, 2023, we disbursed \$7,240, listed below is where the money was used:

\$4,500 - church 200 year anniversary celebrations	
\$1,000 - STARS/EXCEL Programs	\$240 - Stephen Ministry Conference
\$1,000 - MCREST	\$500 - Methodist Children's Home

Please consider the Endowment Fund in your estate planning or weekly giving (beyond your regular pledge). If you have any questions about the Endowment Fund, please contact one of the members listed below. The purpose of an Endowment Fund is to provide income on a long-term basis to the many ministries that make our church a vibrant church, a church in which people will find the love and fellowship that only God can provide. You can now send money to the Endowment Fund through the E-giving feature on the church website. We feel this is your Fund and we want the money to be used to support the ministries of our church.

"I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow." 1 Corinthians 3:6.

Endowment Committee: Al Manning (Chair) David Clark, Tim and Barb Fisher, Bob Mowers, Martha Dolenga. We would like to wish you and your family a safe and prosperous New Year.

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER



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 will return to Utica United Methodist Church on:
Thursday, January 18th 2024 at 6:30 PM in Fellowship Hall

If you or anyone you know could benefit from attending GriefShare contact:

Bob or Patsy Clark

or

Register at: www.griefshare.org/findagroup



It's hard to believe we've had an active Celebrate Recovery Group at Utica United Methodist Church for a full four years. This Christ centered ministry has changed so many lives, offered so many opportunities to help others get over the things that they need to get over.

Celebrate Recovery is a safe place, a place where it's OK not to be OK. We have a saying at Celebrate Recovery **"No perfect people allowed. All others are welcome."**

Join us on January 4, 2024 as we enter year five. We meet each Thursday at 6:30 PM in Fellowship Hall.

Let the healing begin!

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Pulling An Albert

When I was growing up my father had a good friend named Albert. Albert and my father had worked together and often enjoyed fishing vacations up north. When my father was out in the boat fishing and he would find a good spot where there were fish, Albert would then move his boat over and “steal” my father’s fish. In other words, he was catching the fish in my father’s spot that my father had found. This became known as, “pulling an Albert.” Albert and my father never let their disputes about fishing spots spoil their friendship nor did it deter Albert from joining in at the fishing spot. Their friendship was strong, and they were there for each other through the death of my brother and through the death of Albert’s daughter killed in an automobile accident. Albert was out fishing when the State Police came to tell him of his daughter’s death and the task of telling him fell to my father. Their differences were minor compared to what united them. True friends are not forgotten. Albert’s wife had rules she followed. Such as “It is okay to pull in front of trucks because they are required by law to have good brakes.” I still find humor in that one. Evidently the rule did not apply to her because she rear-ended a rubbish truck. I remember a friend from our church showing up upon my return home from the hospital after breast cancer surgery with an English Tea because I had been invited to attend the tea for the volunteers for the Blood Drive at church but was hospitalized. I told her that I had been paid to be there and therefore did not qualify as a volunteer, but she had found out that I had requested to be there. I sat on the couch in the living room in my pajamas and bathrobe and was served tea from a beautiful tea pot with China cups and scones and other goodies. I have never forgotten that kind gesture and although she moved away years ago, we still communicate with each other. Another dear friend recently passed away and I remember her getting me involved with a Women’s Circle and what joy she brought to my life with her joy of living and her deep faith. These friends teach us that being together for the things that change our lives helps us to be in community for all the day-to-day things. Jesus calls us to be in community with each other.

1 Corinthians 13-4-7 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud, it is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Lord, we thank you for this day and all our days. We ask your forgiveness when we are less than you want us to be. Be with us so we may show others the love and forgiveness you have given us. Be with those who are ill, those who are grieving, those who are hurting, those who are in hurtful relationships. Give them all your strength and peace. Be with our church, may we be a warm and welcoming place for all people who come seeking you. Be with our Pastor, bless his ministry and be with him as he travels, grant him safety, guidance for his days and rest for his nights and bring him back safely to us. Be with our staff and leaders, give them assurance and lead them in all they do. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen

Grace Epperson

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 - Friday
8:00am-2:00pm

Mini Pantry

Food and Monetary
Donations are being
accepted.

Suggested foods are eat
and go items (tuna packs;
cracker items; granola
bars; fruit cups; salty
snacks

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/Bookkeeper

Rachelle Heldt

rachelle@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 Rachelle Heldt

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



CELEBRATE RECOVERY
God Never Wastes a Hurt!