



Weekly Messenger

March 22, 2024

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"Parades Can Start Things"

As a kid, I remember going to Memorial Day parades. I remember seeing an aunt by marriage marching in the parade. She was dressed in what looked to young kids as a military uniform. I remember my oldest brother asking our mom if she was in the military, and Mom replied that she wasn't.

I have to tell you, this was not a favorite aunt. What happened after was a trashing of her character by my older brothers and our cousins. I remember comments about how it was wrong for her to pretend to be in the military. One cousin even proclaimed she should have never been allowed to march in the parade.

Just after that comment had been made, his mother happened by and explained she was in that uniform and marching in the parade to honor her late husband, who had died while serving in the military. Her uniform (a VFW Women's Auxiliary uniform) and place in the parade were not something to mock or be angry about but something we should respect and revere.

As we approach Palm Sunday, we should remember that there were those who were excited to see Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and those who were angry over it. Some who were excited didn't understand the real reason Jesus came. Those who were angry suspected Jesus was going to take away their positions and power.

Jesus was able to experience the adulation of the crowd and still stay focused on what he had come to do. He wasn't swayed and swelled by those waving branches and shouting Hosanna.

As we approach Palm Sunday and experience the events of Holy Week, let's reflect on the calm, stable, non-anxious presence Jesus was through it all. Perhaps we can draw strength from what we see in how Jesus responds and find the capacity to come to the parades of our lives with the focus we need to not be baited to deviate from our better paths.

Look deep this week. I know you'll be blessed,

Rev. Don

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Methodist Church
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(586) 731-7667
www.UticaUMC.org

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Updates from the Mini Pantry

Thank you to all who continue to support this wonderful extension of the mission work of our church. I have personally witnessed folks from our area drive up and remove some of the food items. I am humbled when I witness the elderly drive up, struggle to get out of their vehicle and methodically look over the selection of food we have provided. We are truly "up 2 something good" as the love of Christ shines brightly through our Mini Pantry. Thanks to a "less harsh winter" we are now placing canned goods back in the Mini Pantry.

Our current needs are as follows:

- Cans of Tuna Fish and/or Chicken
- Pancake Mixes and Syrup
- Small Jars of Peanut Butter and Small Jars of Jelly
- Small bags of Flour and Sugar

We prefer all items to be in plastic or metal containers if at all possible. Please reach out to the office or to the Mini Pantry Team if you have special needs and/or know of someone in our congregation or your neighborhood who is dealing with food insecurities.

We want to be a blessing to all.
Serving Up in the Name of Jesus.
Jim, Liza, Melanie, Ron and Martha

Easter Baskets for Sale

The Emmaus Group will be making and selling Easter baskets starting this Sunday, March 17th. This is a fundraiser for this group to help support those who wish to attend an Emmaus walk along with the missional work this group does. Stop by the table and pick out an Easter basket to give as a gift to someone you know. Make someone's Easter a little brighter. New this week – adult themed Easter Baskets!



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MCREST Update

Hello Church Family – UUMC will be hosting MCREST the week of April 21 – April 28 offsite again this year. We will be commuting each day to the women's shelter in Mt. Clemens and also providing meals to the group of 30 men who will be housed in a hotel.

At this time, we would like to ask for your help in donating the following items:

- Sweet and salty pre-packaged snacks
- Bottled water
- Peanut butter
- Jelly
- Juice boxes
- Fruit cups/pudding cups
- Cereal
- Instant oatmeal
- Granola bars
- Pop tarts

Paper products:

- Heavy duty paper plates
- Paper towels
- Napkins
- Plastic ware (forks, knives, spoons)
- Zipper close sandwich bags
- Large brown paper lunch bags

We will be collecting these items starting Sunday, March 24th thru the week of April 14th. Please place the donated items on the cart located by the coat rack. Also, there will be sign-up sheets coming soon for volunteers needed to help make lunches as well as helping at the shelter.

If you would like to make a monetary donation, it would be greatly appreciated. You can submit your donation to the office with the 'memo' marked MCREST.

Any questions, please contact Linda Baker at 248-515-1977 or lbaker@sirco-associates.com

As always, the MCREST team thanks you and appreciates all your help!

God Bless,

MCREST Leadership Team

Special Giving Sunday's In March

We have had a couple of special Sunday's here in March. March 10th was UMCOR Sunday. We collect money along with all other United Methodist Church's to fund the day-to-day cost of running UMCOR. This ensures that when a need arises, and money comes in for that need 100% of that money goes directly to that cause. If you would still like to donate to UMCOR Sunday, it is not too late. Use the special giving envelope of your own envelope and write UMCOR Sunday on the other giving line.

By now you should have received your Easter letter in the mail. There is now an option on the e-giving website to give to Easter. If you would prefer to donate through online means, please use the Easter option to give to Easter offering. Otherwise please use the Easter envelope provided in the letter, and there are some Easter envelopes available in the pews on Sunday morning. The Easter offering is going to support the missionaries Randy Hildebrant and Temba Nkomozepi.

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER



God's Country Community Ministries

At this time we have 12 team members that will be joining the Utica UMC mission trip to the Upper Peninsula. More are welcome. Come join us for a week of serving our Lord and sharing our faith. If you are interested, please notify Barry Croteau at 586-275-8122 or the church office. We welcome Utica UMC members, family and friends.

The application for the mission trip to GCCM was mailed on March 4th to request a week in June. As soon as our week is confirmed, we will schedule a meeting with all team members to discuss available details on transportation, meals and dietary restrictions, costs, equipment needs, and other topics as they are identified. We hope for this mission trip to be an extension of the entire body of Utica UMC, so please watch for needs of the mission team and opportunities to help us prepare for this trip. Our mission is to bring glory to God! Let our church be the entire body of Christ!

May God's guidance and blessings be with the Utica United Methodist Church as we seek to serve Him.

Together In Missions

Hands With Detroit

Consider how you can "get up to something" and think about helping support Hands with Detroit. See the flyer on page 5 for more information. There are ways you can help support by either volunteering your time and sign up to go and serve in Detroit on that day, or by purchasing a needed item from their amazon list and having it sent directly to Cass Community services.

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Together In Missions

Each month, T.I.M. will highlight a ministry that Utica UMC is supporting. For the month of April, we will again be highlighting the Methodist Children's Home in Redford. In the past, our support has included Easter Baskets, hygiene products and sporting goods products also Christmas gifts and stocking stuffers.

The following is the opening of their history:

MCHS Family of Services, originally named Methodist Child Care and then Methodist Children's Home Society, was founded in 1917, a year in which Detroit factories were busy turning out war material for the conflict in Europe. When a disastrous epidemic of influenza hit the city, children whose parents died were often left without friends or relatives to care for them. Such was the plight of numerous children discovered by members of the order of deaconesses of the Methodist Church, when making their rounds in the residential sections of Detroit industrial areas.

To hear more about this ministry, join us for a tour of the facility on May 7th. We will be leaving our parking lot at 10 AM and should return around 1pm.

Please sign up on the sheets in the parlor or in the Fellowship Hall so we can be sure we have adequate transportation arranged.

Another way to help continue our longtime support of the 70 children and youth of this ministry is by donating personal hygiene supplies for boys. Items to consider include brush, comb, hair picks, soap, deodorant, razors, shaving cream. Please drop the items in the boxes provided in the narthex or near the back entrance. Items will be delivered during our tour on May 7th.

Youth Cooking Class with Chef Josh

On the 2nd Saturday of each month the youth are invited to a cooking class with Chef Josh. This is open to all Junior high and Senior high youth grades 7th-12th. The class runs from 9am - Noon. Please contact Peggy Miller by phone or text at 586-557-0208 with any questions and to reserve your spot so that enough food can be purchased on that Saturday to cover all in attendance. Next class is on Saturday, April 13th. Please let Peggy know if you will be in attendance.

Office Closures

The church office will be closed on Good Friday, March 29th and on Easter Monday, April 1st. Please make sure all business items with the office are taken care of before Good Friday, or they will be addressed upon arrival on Tuesday, April 2nd.

Just a reminder that all articles for the messenger or updates to the prayer list are due to the office by Wednesday at noon of that week. You can email Rachelle at rachelle@uticaumc.org or the office at office@uticaumc.org or call the office at 586-731-7667. Any articles or prayer list items received after noon on Wednesday will be put into the messenger or prayer list the following week.

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

**March 28th @ 7:00pm -
Sanctuary**

MAUNDY THURSDAY
A HOLY WEEK CELEBRATION

Communion Service

**March 29th @ 7:00pm
Sanctuary**

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GOOD FRIDAY

HE DIED FOR OUR SINS

Holy Week

Holy Week begins this Sunday, March 24th with Palm Sunday. Please join us at either worship services as we celebrate the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem.

We will have a Maundy Thursday Communion service on March 28th at 7pm in the Sanctuary. This is not a long service but a time to reflect on the Last Supper of Jesus and his disciples.

Good Friday will be a service of readings and music at 7pm in the Sanctuary on March 29th. All roads lead to the cross, there he died for our sins. But all is not lost - Easter is coming.

Easter Sunday is March 31st! Join us at either the 9:30am or 10:30am service! Jesus is risen! He is alive, forever, Amen! Hallelujah!

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All Are Welcome

As we prepared to receive communion last week, the Pastor said as he always does, "In the United Methodist Church all are welcome at the table. It doesn't matter if you are a member of this church, or any church, communion is open to all." I like that about our church! New to faith, or long-time believer, you are welcome. We all have had that moment when we walked into a church and felt like this could be the church where we found salvation, peace, knowledge, friends in faith, belonging, purpose, mission, strength to change our lives, forgiveness, renewal of our faith, and whatever we were seeking. I did it at 15 because I wanted to know about a God that would take my brother that I adored, and He would leave me alone. Many of my friends have been believers all their life, some were seekers later in life for whatever reason. They are all welcome at the table. I am proud to be a member of a place that means so much to so many. In my lifetime things have changed in churches, membership is not what it once was. When I was young (that phrase is the phrase of the elderly and I embrace it) Sunday was church day. We never went but it was the day the stores were closed, movies still ran but started in the afternoon, there was no shopping, and it was family time starting in the morning with church. Some churches had morning and evening services. It was a "God centered nation." When I started going to church, within a brief time my family joined me. They returned to the denomination of their youth. I did not know my parents had both been raised in the Methodist Church until later. They never mentioned that they had a foundation that began in infancy. I didn't learn this until they were older. Their children, me included, were baptized in the Methodist Church, my brother's funeral was led by a Methodist Pastor. I never asked my parents why they stopped going to church but I think I know, and it was their story to tell, not mine. I do know that for the rest of their days they never missed church without good reason. My Father did show me the Methodist Church that he attended as a youth in Allenton, Michigan, and the cemetery next door where his grandfather and others were buried. My Mother told me of an uncle in Pennsylvania that was a founding member of the Methodist church in his town. That first Sunday I decided to go to church dressed in my clothes I had made in Home Economics in High School; I passed 2 other churches but knew I belonged at the Methodist Church because I was baptized in a Methodist Church. I was welcomed to the church, to membership, to service, and to Communion.

Matthew 16:15-18 But what about you? Who do you say I am? Simon Peter answered. "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus replied, "Blessed are you Simon, son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and, on this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not overcome it.

Lord, we thank you for this day and for our blessings. Lord, we ask that you be with our church, may it be your church in all things. May we respond when we see need in others. Be with our Pastor bless him in his life and in his work and bless his family. Be with those who are ill and those who grieve, may we seek to comfort them. Be with our staff and leaders, guide and lead them. May we be the hands and feet of Jesus the Christ in this time and in this place. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

Grace Epperson



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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!