



Weekly Messenger

April 12, 2024

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"Doubting Thomas"

The sermon this week took me back to a sad time in my life. Unlike Thomas who could not believe Jesus had rose from the dead I and so many like me could not believe a loved one was gone. We thought their presence would never be felt again. Like Thomas we were both wrong. Thomas could not believe that Jesus was risen, sometimes we cannot believe a loved one is gone. Feeling they are in another place without pain can bring us comfort but what about those who we cannot bear to part with? How do we cope with the loss. Thomas had joyful news but what of us that will never feel the comfort and love that the other person would have brought to our lives. How do we survive? For me it was knowing my brother was not far from me, I could feel him in my decisions, in my daily life. I mourned him like no one before or since. He was only 17 and had so much living to do. I was 12. This Sunday my son and I went to the cemetery. I mentioned before that I wanted to show him where his relatives on my side of the family were buried. He said he knew from when my mother and oldest brother and my Father were buried. But I felt the need to go as I sometimes do and so he took me. I looked at my brother's tombstone and felt the sadness I had been feeling lately well up inside me and my tears overflowed. It's been 76 years and yet I still miss him. He gave so much of himself to me. He counseled me and reprimanded me, and truly loved me in so many ways. When I ran away, (about once a week and more often in Summer) he was always the one who came after me and talked to me on the way home. I always knew he would come after me. He was my strength and shield from a life that seemed so hard. After the news of his death, I received a telegram, I was up north at a friend of the family's. My parents had sent me there. There was no love to you in the message just the time of the funeral arrangements. My brother was in the Army when he died and stationed in the Panama Canal, and it took almost a month for his body to come home. I was sure I would look at the body and prove to everyone that it was not him. Unlike Thomas I was sure my brother was not dead. Even a revengeful God would not do that to him or to me. Thomas saw Jesus and realized he was alive. I will one day see my brother and embrace him once again. I thought of the many times I had to call a doctor in to pronounce a patient deceased. Most of the time the family were sitting there and the looks on their faces told me that the patient had died so quietly that they did not realize what had happened and there would be an unbelieving, stunned look on their faces. Sometimes they knew but hoped that a stethoscope would prove them wrong. Letting go is hard and sometimes so quick that it is unbelievable. My husband and I were alone when he took his last breath. He simply stopped breathing. I called his name, but he was gone. He left my life as quietly as he had entered it as a young boy who asked if he could carry my books and walk me to my next class.

John 20:29 Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed, blessed art those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Lord, we thank you for all our days and for those who have loved us. We thank you for Jesus and the love and sacrifice he has shown us. Be with us in our daily lives so that others see Jesus in us, in the way we treat others, and in our giving of ourselves and in the way we accept the good and the bad, the gains and the loss, and the ups and downs of our lives... May we live our days in your service and to your honor. Be with those who are sick and those who grieve, comfort them. Be with our Pastor, keep him and his family safe. Help us to honor him for everything he does and for his caring heart. Be with his family, keep them safe and well. Be with our leaders and workers, may all we do be in your name and honor you. May Jesus be with us in this time and in this place. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

Grace Epperson

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THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Upcoming Events

April

- April 14th – Bake Sale between and after services to support mission trip to UP
- April 14th – Native American Ministries Sunday – donations accepted through end of April
- April 21–28 – MCREST Week
- April 28th – Sugar Cookie Kit Orders Due (Support Mission trip to UP)
- April 28th and May 5th – Jigsaw Puzzle Exchange

May

- May 10th – Used Book Sale 9am–2pm
- May 11th – Used Book Sale 10am–Noon
- May 11th – Plant Swap 10am–Noon
- May 12th – Happy Mother's Day

June

- June 1st – Car Show 9am–3pm
- June 10th – STARS/XCEL begins 9am–2pm
- June 16th – Send off of Mission Trip to the UP

Spring Themed Sugar Cookie Kit

For a limited time we are offering a Spring Themed Sugar Cookie Decorating Kit.

These kits include the following and will be packaged together for pick-up at the church on Sunday, May, 5th:

- 1 dozen spring themed baked sugar cookies
- Buttercream Frosting
- Sprinkles
- Sanding Sugars in a variety of Spring colors

All Sugar Cookie Decorating Kit orders are due no later than April 28th. The cost of each kit is \$20.00 payment collected at time of kit pick-up. Please contact Martha Powers at 586-703-1668 (cell phone) or email at ron_martha@att.net to place your order. There will only be 24 kits available so please don't wait – order today!

Jigsaw Puzzle Exchange

The jigsaw puzzle exchange back in January was a success and we would like to hold another puzzle exchange on April 28th and May 5th. Please bring in your used puzzles and we will set out tables for everyone to browse and pick up some new puzzles to do. You do not have to donate a puzzle to take a puzzle. Puzzles can be brought in anytime during the week between 8am–2pm and left with the office, or can be dropped off under the coat rack on Sunday morning.

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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
- Granola bars
- Pop tarts

Paper products:

- Heavy duty paper plates
- Paper towels
- Napkins
- Zipper close sandwich bags
- Large brown paper lunch bags

We will be collecting these items thru the week of April 14th. Please place the donated items on the tub located by the coat rack. If you forget to bring your items on Sunday, please deliver to the church office during office hours M_F 8am-2pm.

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**

Native American Ministries Sunday

Sunday, April 14th is Native American Ministries Sunday. This Special Sunday is a denomination wide celebration designed to raise awareness and remind United Methodists of the gifts and contributions made by Native Americans to our society. A gap in knowledge exists in The United Methodist Church, in congregations and other United Methodist entities, relative to comprehending concepts of Native American life, cultures, languages, spirit, values, contemporary issues, and such. We affirm the sacredness of indigenous people, their languages, cultures, and gifts to the church and the world. We will be taking a special collection for this ministry. There will be envelopes available in the bulletin and at 2nd service, or you can write Native American Sunday on the other line of your main offering envelope. We will collect for this ministry until the end of April.

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.

Used Book Sale

The church will be hosting a community used book sale on Friday, May 10th from 9am-2pm and again on Saturday, May 11th from 10am-Noon. Start cleaning up those book shelves and bring in your used books to donate for the sale. The used book bins will be back out by the entryway at the front door and also by the entryway near Fellowship Hall. If you have a large quantity of books, please e-mail the office at office@uticaumc.org or call the office at 586-731-7667 to let us know how many books you are bringing and if you need help unloading them from your car.

Plant Swap

We will be having a Perennial Plant Swap on Saturday, May 11th from 10am-2pm. Please bring transplants or plant seeds in individual containers and labeled to swap. If you have plant books, please bring them in for the used book sale and we can highlight a table for plant books! This will be a fun event where you can come and swap your plants outside and head inside and purchase some used books. Make sure to tell your friends and neighbors.

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Mini Food Pantry Update

We survived our first winter with the Mini Pantry....what a blessing to be able to still meet the needs of those with food insecurities. For the next month we will focus on prepackaged side dishes.

- Au Gratin Potatoes
- Scalloped Potatoes
- Cans of Whole White Potatoes
- Cans of Gravy
- Bags of Dressing
- Condiments
- Fruit Juice (half gallon)

Your continued support has allowed UUMC to ministry to the needs of those families in our neighborhood. In doing so we have been blessed by random cards and notes of encouragement from those who pass by our church.

A friend loves at all times.
Proverbs 17:17

STARS/XCEL Summer Program

We are gearing up for our Summer Camp STARS and XCEL program which runs for 6 weeks starting June 10th - July 18th. Jennifer will be back as our site director. It sounds like 2 of our previous interns will be returning for another summer with us. We do need 2 more interns. If you know of anyone who is 18 years or older and is looking for a summer job, please put them in contact with the church office and we can get them directed to the application process or answer any questions.

Exciting news is our courageous van drivers have agreed to drive again for us this summer and Debbie Pelton has agreed to head up the kitchen. If you are interested in helping with the kitchen this summer, please reach out to Debbie.

Do you have a fun or unique hobby? Do you like to share your hobby with others? We would love to provide our summer campers the opportunity to learn new hobbies and experiences. Some examples have been button/pin collection, coin collections, wooden craft painting, card making, and an introduction to a leader dog. We will have sign up sheets out soon for you to volunteer. It will be helpful when you sign up to indicate which day of the week might work best for you to come in and also whether mornings or afternoons are better for you.

Registration is now open for our campers. You can find a link to the online registration on our website under the Kidzone for STARS and Youth for XCEL or you can scan the QR code below.



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 canned
meat, pancake mixes and
syrup, small peanut butter
and jelly, boxes of
crackers.**

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

Announcement Loop/Vertical TVs—

End of day on Tuesday each week
Messenger Articles and Prayer List by

Noon on Wednesday each week.

Announcement made during service
by 1pm Friday

E-mail rachelle@uticaumc.org or
office@uticaumc.org

E-Giving

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

