

# Weekly Messenger

April 5, 2024

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## "April Prayer Focus - Billboards"

I was sitting, humming one of the common songs from our 10:30am service and began to think about what Jesus did in his ministry prior to the cross. I focused upon HEALING. Jesus' healing miracles were incredible. I asked myself, why heal? His words, His message, was far more important. He wanted his words to pierce into the hearts and thoughts of people. So why heal? I considered that this maybe a drawing card, that people would come to Him to be healed or curiosity to watch Him heal. After all, He would not force people to come hear him preach. I can imagine that people of that time became mesmerized when seeing someone become healed; like how some of us get mesmerized when we see a magician saw a box in half with a woman inside.

I believe that every word and action in the bible has these surface meanings, and some deeper second and third meanings or purposes. I guess that means I am supposed to think about, not just simply gloss over the words. So, I considered what happens when Jesus departs that small town and travels to the next. All of the disciples go with him. None were left behind to continue the gospel message. Suppose that now those healed become a walking billboard advertisement. In a small town, everyone knows everyone. Those who were healed by Jesus would be known by the change Jesus made in their lives. The whispers, the gasps, "there goes the man healed by Jesus," would persist. They ask him questions, buy him lunch, and just maybe, discuss the words preached by Jesus. I can imagine each healed person wearing a sign draped over their neck: "Jesus saved me", or "He is the One", or "Listen to His message." If Jesus never returned to that town, those healed would still be there, and their notoriety would cause people to discuss what Jesus did. Then it hit me, I'm required to be a walking advertisement for Jesus. I'm supposed to be carrying a sign, "Jesus died for us", "He is the way and the life", "Repent and worship Him". "Come, and know the Son of God who loved me before I ever loved myself."

My prayer is this: Lord, please let me wear each day whatever sign You wish me to wear, and that my words and actions make others see the words of that sign around my neck and BELIEVE!!!

Written by: Bob Mackool

# THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

## 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 24<sup>th</sup> thru the week of April 14<sup>th</sup>. 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](mailto: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 14<sup>th</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> service, or you can write Native American Sunday on the other line of your main offering envelope.

# THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

## God's Country Community Ministries

### GOD'S COUNTRY MISSION TRIP - BAKE SALE

This coming June, a group of church members, family members and friends will be traveling to Michigan's Upper Peninsula to serve God on a mission trip. This group will be representing the Utica United Methodist Church by bringing our services to those in need of home repairs and other project work in an effort to glorify God in this community of harsh winter conditions. We will need the support of our entire church family to enable a successful mission trip.



On Sunday, April 14<sup>th</sup> between services, we will be conducting a Bake Sale in an effort to help those who will be participating in the mission trip with expenses. We need your favorite baked goods for this special event. Please bring in your baked goods to church on Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup> between 1pm and 2pm at the front doors of the church. The Bake Sale will be requesting a "Free-Will Donation" that will be applied to support the God's Country Mission Team. If you have questions, please contact Colleen Croteau at 240-750-3354.

# 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 7<sup>th</sup>.

## Youth Cooking Class with Chef Josh

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>. 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.

## United Women in Faith

All women are invited to the monthly meeting on Wednesday, April 10th beginning with a potluck luncheon at noon in Fellowship Hall. Please bring a dish to share and your own place setting. Drinks are provided.

Our program will be on Prayer and Self Denial beginning at 1:00pm.

Hope to see you there.

# THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

## Words

I have always loved poetry or words that have strengthened me. It has been something that has brought me comfort, helped me question life, brought me identification with the author many times. It has been with me through the times of sorrow and joy, through depression and times of peace. The Bible is an excellent source of words that strengthen our faith and words that bring us peace and joy. I love Isaiah and find much comfort in the words found there. Like Isaiah 40:31 But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles, they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. Or in Isaiah 41:10 Do not fear for I am with you; do not be dismayed; for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. When I went into Nurse's Training, I had no confidence but knew I wanted to be a Nurse. I needed to leave a home that was unhappy and a job which was not bad but not what I wanted for a lifetime. I had wanted to be a nurse since I was small. Recently my granddaughter was going through a tough time. Her life had suffered a deep hurt. I had a plastic bubble on a chain in which was incased a Mustard seed. It was something small but meaningful to me and I truly believed God had helped me with that tiny mustard seed. I sent it to her with a note. When I next saw her, she was wearing it and it had helped her get through an extremely hard time. Matthew 17:20 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible to you." Another of my favorite life strengthening quotes comes from Longfellow. A Psalm of Life, "Tell me not in mournful numbers life is but an empty dream, for the soul is dead that slumbers and things are not what they seem. Life is real, life is earnest, and the grave is not it's goal, dust thou art to dust returnest was not spoken of the soul." Words can inspire, words can comfort, words can hurt and kill a soul, words can defeat a child, words used wisely can move a mountain. Franklin D. Roosevelt's words and Winston Churchill's words inspired people to resist and overcome, Hitler's words inspired people to hate and to kill and turned brother against brother. Let us use our words to lift others up, not to make us a doormat but to encourage and inspire others and especially those we love and those who serve us especially our pastors, our doctors and nurses, our teachers, our children's teachers and coaches, especially all those in our children's and grandchildren's lives who touch them with love and learning whether it's good sportsmanship or the Gettysburg address (do they still have to memorize this?). The end of the school year will be coming soon, remember to thank those who have touched your children's and grandchildren's lives even a neighbor. I remember an elderly neighbor who took my son fishing. My son loved that man, he was the grandfather he had lost, the one he needed. He is gone now but I know that he was there for my son, and I thank God for the love he showed him. Keep them all in your prayers.

Lord, hear our prayer. We thank you for the day, for the warmth of our houses, for the food on our tables, for our clothes and for all we take for granted. Be with us each day and may all our days honor you. Be with our Pastor and his family, bless them and keep them safe. Be with our staff and leaders, grant them vision and hope for our church and keep them safe. Be with our church, may it be your church and may all we do, be done in your name. Our world is in turmoil, and we need you to be with us in our kindness to each other, in our interactions with each other, in our service to those who need help. May those at war find peace. May those who hunger whether for food or for you find sustenance and peace and you in their lives. May we be your hands and feet in this time, in this place. Thank you, Lord, for the neighbors and teachers who touch our children's lives. In Jesus name 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 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](http://www.uticaumc.org)**

If you need assistance, call the church office.

**Celebrate Recovery, Thursday, 6:30pm**

