



Latimer's Voice

The Newsletter of Latimer Memorial United Methodist Church

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Editor's Comments:

Please use my e-mail address to submit stories, events, happenings, or other information that you would like in the newsletter. If you do not have a computer, please give it to me in person or mail it to me. The deadline for all news items to be submitted is the 20th of each month. That will give me time to have it compiled and printed for distribution on the last Sunday of the month.

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Pastor's Ponderings:



Shoot for the Stars

When I was in grade school, I loved following the race to put a man on the moon. I remember listening to the Apollo 8 crew read from Genesis as they orbited the moon in December 1968. I built a model of the lunar module "Eagle," the landing craft used to put Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin on the moon in July 1969. I watched the blast-off of the powerful Saturn V rocket which propelled Apollo 11 to the moon. I remember that night I watched Neil Armstrong step off onto the moon and change history forever.

I am now excited about the plans to send a manned mission to Mars in the 2030s. The touchdown of the rover "Perseverance" on February 18 has me thinking of space travel again. The rover will spend 10 years

collecting information in preparation for a future landing. Many challenges lay ahead. Will the resources be available for the vision to go to Mars? Can a spacecraft be developed which will be able to safely take and bring back a crew for a 14 month long round-trip? Can resources be developed from Mars itself which will make trips to Mars realistic? Can we actually develop colonies on Mars?

The church faces its own challenges. We are at a crossroads. Dwindling interest in the church, divisions over doctrine, and the continuing effect of COVID-19 and its variants threaten the existence of the church. How will we deal with demands for social justice? In today's world, will we be able to develop and implement

the necessary vision to make disciples of all nations as Jesus commissions us in Matthew 28? Will we have the resources to do Jesus' work on earth? Can we adapt and change as needed to function as a viable church in the 21st century? Will we learn from our mistakes?

I reflect on what the apostle Paul tells us in Ephesians 6. We need to be strong in the Lord. The Lord gives us mighty powers. The Holy Spirit is in us to empower us and guide us. Paul reminds us that our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the authorities, the rulers, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realm. Paul tells us to put on the full armor of God. Stand firm with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet filled with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. We take up the shield of faith, with

which we can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. In this spiritual battle, we protect ourselves with the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Those in the American space program could have given up but they kept the faith and persevered onward. The crew of Apollo 1 was killed in a fire during a training exercise. Some would have quit. But those in NASA learned from their mistakes, made changes, and still met President Kennedy's goal of landing a man on the moon and bringing him back safely by the end of the 1960s.

We in the church need to keep the faith and move forward. In Ephesians 6 Paul outlines those resources available to us. He ends his exhortation to the Ephesians by telling them to pray in the Spirit on all occasions, with all kinds of prayers and requests. Let us remember his words as we move forward to do

the work of Jesus as we face the challenges of today.

- Rev. Wally Culp

Wally on Vacation:

Rev. Culp will be on vacation from May 1-8. Ron Walfield will preach the sermon on May 2. If you have any emergencies while Rev. Culp is on vacation, please contact Andy Bullions or Ron Walfield.

From the Nurture Team:

"Easter people, raise your voices. Christ the Lord is risen, Alleluia, Christ is risen indeed!"

Our Easter service was so special. Several items occurred to help us celebrate and worship our risen Lord. Glenda and Misty both provided beautiful music. The Hymnals and Holy Bible were placed back in the pews. Pastor gave an Alleluia message "God's Wonderful Surprise", Our Living Cross was adorned with flowers, Holy Communion was served, there were two children in the nursery.

Remembering God's blessings as we continue to worship together and still remain vigilant in our Healthy church protocols.

Updated BEST PRACTICES from SC UMC have been released. Keeping in consideration that many people have now been vaccinated and will be vaccinated in the coming weeks.

- We continue to wear face coverings
- Continue to social distance
- Continue to use hand sanitizer

Small choir ensembles, solos, duets will be permitted if everyone has been fully vaccinated. We have installed a plexiglass pane in front of the choir loft.

Printed weekly bulletins are available.

An outside social gathering is being planned for later this spring. Other activities are still under consideration.

If you know of Graduating students this spring, please let Wally know.

On May 9 we will recognize all the women of the church for Mother's Day celebration. Also, May 9 is the Annual Mother's Day Epworth Children's Home offering. Did you know that in the last year Epworth Children's Home gave over **196** children a safe and loving place to call home? Each had this opportunity because people and churches like us embrace and provide for this wonderful ministry for the children and families in SC. Let us rejoice in celebrating 125 years.

"Let not your heart be troubled, let not your soul be sad. Easter is a time of joy when all hearts should be glad."
Helen Steiner Rice.

- Sandy Sorrow

From the Outreach Team:

I am sorry that we do not have many new reports of Outreach activity to share. Several of our

missions that we usually participate in are on hold until the virus is under control.

We did take several gently used items of clothing to Patrick B. Harris. We can always use shoes and socks as well as other items of men's and women's clothing. We had some items they will use as Bingo prizes. We also had some books for their library and some items for the craft room. I pray for God's blessings on these items to help make the lives of the patients and workers a little better and help them to know that there are people that care about them.

Along with the United Methodist Women we met with representatives of Epworth Children's Home, Melanie Cannon and Kathy James to learn about the new program Epworth is starting.

If you know of or can think of a mission project that we can help with, please share it with a member of the Outreach Team. Please remember we have an Outreach Team (Judith

DuBose, Gloria Eaves, Kent Millwood, and Pat Wilson) but our entire congregation is also involved with our outreach missions.

“In the same way, you should be a light for other people. Live so that they will see the good things that you do and will praise your Father in heaven.”

Matthew 5:16

- Pat Wilson

From the Witness Team:

We are updating phone numbers, email and mailing addresses. There will be a printed list of this information on the table where the Upper Room and May's newsletter are found. Please take time to look and see if the information we have is correct and if there haven't been any changes put a check mark next to your name if there are any changes please correct.

If anyone is interested in becoming a Lay Speaker or Lay Servant, please let us know so we can get information to you.

I rather be safe than sorry so we are still on the holding pattern and will re-evaluate future activities such as Saturday Bible School (SBS) and scheduling quarterly activities with them in the fall.

Hymns are interpretations based on scripture which is the reason I love singing hymns. This month in celebration of Mother's Day. I found this song it is not a hymn but I love the lyrics which was written in 1915 by Howard Johnson and Theodore Morse, recorded by Eddy Arnold.

M-O-T-H-E-R

M- is for the million things she gave me

O- means only that she's growing old

T- is for the tears she shed to save me

H- is for her heart of purest gold

E- is for her eyes with love-light shining

R - means right and right she'll always be

Put them all together they spell mother. A word that means the world to me.

- Jane Barton

Mother's Day:

On Sunday, May 9, 2021, we will have a special Mother's Day recognition;

On Sunday, May 9, 2021, we will take up our Epworth Children's Home Mother's Day offering. We, as United Methodists, offer children at Epworth safety and security by surrounding them with love. Epworth does not receive apportionments from the United Methodist Conference, so this is our opportunity to support this ministry.

United Methodist Women:

Melanie Cannon, Upstate Family Engagement Coordinator, at Epworth Children's Home and Kathy James, Director of Church Relations, at Epworth Children's Home were the guest speakers for the April meeting of the UMW.

Epworth is expanding their ministry to support families who are struggling with parenting before they reach a crisis situation. Melanie explained the Circle of Parenting Program. Circle of Parents is the place where parents talk about what their children need to grow healthy brains and bodies. Parents and caregivers meet regularly to share ideas, celebrate successes and discuss healthy child development. Parents lead the group and choose relevant topics with the help of a trained facilitator. Teresa Phillips from Anderson School District #2 offered the information that an underserved group in Anderson School District #2 is grandparents or great grandparents raising their grandchildren. Latimer United Methodist Women will be exploring the possibilities of offering the ministry of Circle of Parents.

The Special Emphasis Mission for the month of April was Columbia

Bethlehem Community Center. All women of the church are welcome to join the UMW in mission. The UMW meets the first Monday of each month at 3:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Even if you would like to join us just every once in a while, you are always welcome. Pat Wilson will present the program in May. The UMW will have further discussions about the Circle of Parenting Ministry.

- Gloria Eaves

Our Home Bound:

Frank Clark
Bessie Clark
Jackie Manning

Our Prayer Concerns:

Dr. Tom Barnett, Sarah Blackwell, Ben Brogden, Hilda Bruce, The Family of Dr. Thomas Burris, Juanita Butler, Scott Campbell, Kendall Chandler, Bessie and Frank Clark, Jocelyn Collins, Glenda Conley, Katie Coward, Tim Culp, Carl DuBose, Kate DuBose, Gloria Eaves, Rev. Tommy Edwards, Tony Ellett, Eric Emhof,

Linda Emhof, Dick Finney, Cory Foubert, Jim Grubbs, Carolyn Haggard's family, Jane Jackson, Amy and Jim Lane, Susan Long, Jerry Manning, Sara McDowell, Nancy Nagel, Eric Ni, Racine Owings, Brenda Parfitt, Colleen Pinson, Keith Ridgeway, Melissa Scott, Kandice Shirley, Norma Timms, Frank Woods, Carl and Ellen Yates

Church Council Meeting:

The next Church Council meeting will be on Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. This meeting will be by Zoom.

Treasurer's Report:

The duties of the Treasurer have been changed. The Rental account will no longer be managed by the Treasurer. The Rental account will be managed by the trustees. Because of this change the money in the Trustees escrow, \$32,644.00, has been transferred from the General account to the Rental account.

As of April 21, 2021, the balance of the General account was \$31,098.15, of which \$4,527.88 is escrow. These two numbers are much less than last month because the Trustees escrow was transferred from the General account to the Rental account. This still leaves the General account with a healthy operating balance of \$26,570.27.

The housing allowance balance is \$1,971,69; deposits continue to be made to this account from the Martha Manry endowment.

Apportionments paid so far have totaled \$2,589.00 of a budgeted \$4,012.00.

Although, we have not yet returned to “normal”, our members have continued to support the church not only spiritually and emotionally but also financially without interruption. A big thank you is due them.

- Tommy Howell

Bishop's Corner:

Simple Blessings

By Bishop L. Jonathan Holston

*“So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today.”
Matthew 6:34 (NLT)*

Worry and anxiety take a tremendous toll. Our mental and physical energies are squandered as we become saddled with tons and tons of problems. In an age that consciously and subconsciously stresses the material, we cry for more, only to discover that real happiness does not come from the outside, but from within.

In this season of celebrating our risen Savior, many are experiencing the holiest of days as the loneliest of days. In the midst of a global pandemic, racial unrest and political division, where can we find genuine happiness?

Each of us knows that person who is always in a good mood and has something positive to say. Their glass is perpetually “half-full,”

and seemingly nothing ever gets them down. When we fall into the trap of comparison, it might seem as if their life must be without challenges. Upon closer observation, however, it becomes clear that maintaining a positive mindset requires making the choice to do so every day.

I believe that when we awake each morning, we can choose to be in a good mood ...or a bad mood. When faced with adversity, we can choose to be the victim or to learn from the experience. When others begin complaining, we can let their negativity drag us down, or we can choose the positive.

If we are honest with ourselves, we have all experienced days where we stand with our dreams in shambles around our feet; agonizing when our children go astray; wondering about employment and housing; or when the test that comes back from the lab tells us something we don't want to hear. This happens to the best of us and to

those of us who are struggling as well. It is in these times when we're tempted to give up or give in; believing God is not ever going to do anything to help us; believing that it's easier to just pull the covers over our heads and give up. It is easy to believe when life is good, but when it turns sour, our inclination is to feel rejected and guilty.

Jesus' call for us not to worry about the future is a bold claim. The good news of the Gospel is just that—GOOD news. So when Jesus tells us not to worry, he is not leaving us high and dry. Jesus is calling us to put our trust in him. To trust that he will provide for our every need—the big stuff and the little stuff. All of it.

When things get tough, and they will, we must choose to recommit ourselves to trusting that God has not abandoned us. Especially when there is too much grief, too much pain and too much doubt, and the tendency is to give in to one's fear and anxiety.

Each of us personally must make the choice once more to prepare the way for God. No one can choose for us, and Christ will not come unless preparation is made.

A great deal of life is lived in the middle of trouble. Max Lucado says it this way, "It is said that everyone is either entering, in the middle of or just exiting a trial."

Easter reminds us that even in our most difficult situations, God is working on our behalf. Not only is Jesus raised from the tomb, but God's character of light and love is revealed in Jesus. When we are surrounded by uncertainty and anxiety in our circumstances, keep moving. With Jesus, anticipation supplants anxiety. Gladness shatters the ceiling of gloom. Hope replaces helplessness.

The message of Jesus casts out darkness. Friends, in our deepest moments of worry and anxiety, Jesus shows up.

When we have given up on our hopes, and abandoned our dreams, as well as cast aside our visions of better days, Jesus arrives on the scene.

May we remember anew that the one in whom we place our trust has achieved the ultimate victory, over death itself.

Christ is risen. He is risen indeed! Hallelujah!