

# STEEPLETALK

News from Mentor United Methodist Church

April

2020

## From the Pastor

\*\*I wrote this article at the beginning of March ... and much has happened since then! However, as I re-read it I realize the Good News of Easter remains the same! So, I've opted to not alter it. My prayer is that we will experience God's victory! Always! These are difficult days, but we are Easter people! Prayers and Love,

*Pastor Sondra*

*"Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"* Mark 16:2 & 3

My childhood Easter celebrations began with Sunrise Service. We gathered at the crack of dawn to sing joyous songs, hear the resurrection proclamation – offered by sleepy-eyed youth – and then enjoy breakfast together. Holy Week was the only time the three churches of our 3-point charge worshiped together. So it was BIG! It was festive! It was obvious something extraordinary was underway.

On the first Easter morn, the women journeyed to Jesus' tomb full of grief and questions. They were unsure of what the future held ... but they were up at the crack of dawn and prepared to anoint Jesus' body. Unsure of how they would remove the barriers before them, they still went to the tomb. They were determined ... they were faithful... even in their uncertainty they did not delay. They were still trusting God even when they struggled to understand God.

And God showed up.  
God removed the stone.  
God raised Jesus from the dead.  
God changed mourning into joy.  
God offered life.

The Good News of Easter is the transforming power we all need in our lives. God's love revealed in Jesus conquers ALL: death ... hate ... fear ... doubt ... grief ...

What is it that you carry with you to Jesus' tomb?

If you only listen to news reports you will be overwhelmed by news of virus outbreaks, unstable financial markets, mistrust in the political arena, uncertainty about the church's future. Let's take it to Jesus' tomb. Faith calls us to journey to a garden where Jesus' body was laid. Bring along your questions and fears and uncertainties. God will remove the blockades of your life. God will reveal power and victory!

May we keep seeking and trusting and believing.  
I'm not sure how all the blockades of life will be removed. But there are joyous songs to sing and a resurrection proclamation to be heard – He Lives!

Thanks be to God for victory in Jesus Christ!

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## Through the Years

Last month I wrote about Bishop Charles McCabe who was quoted, "We are building more than one new Methodist Church a day and propose to make it two a day." This statement highlighted the tremendous growth of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The church that had begun with circuit riders in the eighteenth century had become the largest Protestant denomination in the nineteenth century. This growth posed a problem, how do you build new churches to keep pace with the growth? Also, how do you keep the cost as modest as possible for new congregations?

The answer came from the Methodist Episcopal Board of Church Extension. The Board issued a catalog starting in 1870 with plans for new church buildings. This catalog predated the famous Sears & Roebuck catalogs that displayed plans for building homes. The church hired Benjamin Price to draw up layouts for new churches. Price was a Philadelphia architect known for his church plans. He lived from 1845 to 1922. Over the years, Price designed 67 different layouts for Methodist Episcopal Churches.

The catalog laid out various types of plans for churches, depending upon the size and cost. The cost for these plans ranged from \$2.50 for a small church, \$3.50 for a medium church and \$4.50 for a large church. The layout included the seating arrangements, chancel and narthex designs, as well as other rooms in the church. Each plan purchased came with two slides showing existing churches built with that plan. One slide showed a wooden church, while the second slide showed a church made out of brick or stone. The cost to built churches using these plans ranged from \$300.00 to \$1,000.00 for a small church and upwards of \$20,000.00 for a large church. Plans for a parsonage could be purchased for \$3.00. The back of the catalog was filled with ads from companies who sold items such as pews, furnaces, bells and stained glass.

The result was a great number of new churches with similar designs. The building boom continued until around the year 1950. If you travel around the country, you can notice a similarity in the look of many Methodist churches. By 1968, the year of the merger of the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church, which created the United Methodist Church, there was at least one UM church in every county in the United States! This is a total of over 39,000 counties. The church certainly heeded the words of John Wesley who instructed to "save as many souls as you can."

Do you have any MUMC history you would like to share with the congregation? Please send it to: Don Humphrey, 7330 Holly Park Dr., Concord, Ohio 44060-6704 or e-mail to: [dhumphrey@ameritech.net](mailto:dhumphrey@ameritech.net)

### **Mentor UMC Scholarship for Post Secondary Education**

Deadline: April 10, 2020, 12 PM \*Please note the church office closes at noon as that is Good Friday.

The Scholarship Committee is pleased to offer Mentor UMC scholarships for both vocational and academic post-secondary pursuits. See our website or app for the online form at [www.mentorumc.org/post-secondary-scholarship](http://www.mentorumc.org/post-secondary-scholarship).

Questions? Please contact Tami White, MUMC Scholarship Chairperson at [Scholarship@mentorumc.org](mailto:Scholarship@mentorumc.org).

## Children and Family Ministries

Register for events through the app or at [www.mentorumc.org/children](http://www.mentorumc.org/children)  
[www.mentorumc.org/sunday-school](http://www.mentorumc.org/sunday-school)



WOW! Last Wednesday, March 11 was the day life as we know it changed forever. I was all upset when I was in a group text about postponing Cinderella, Riverside Theatre's spring musical. Well, now five days later, I am thinking that isn't so bad compared to where we are now.

Hopefully, everyone was able to access the Google Slide Presentation that I emailed to everyone for Sunday, March 15. I will be continuing this format for Sunday mornings. It may evolve over the next few weeks. We shall see....If you are not receiving these emails from me, please let me know. I try to keep my email address list up to date but do realize that I make mistakes.

By the time you are actually reading this, my goal is that we have made connecting with one another happen in whatever virtual way works the best. We have to do what we can to stay connected! Our MOPS & MOMSnext group took to moms doing Live videos. In my efforts to be transparent, my video was not pretty. I was ugly crying over the fact that my daughter, Eliana, will not be experiencing all of the end of the year/end of Senior year activities...at least that is how it is looking. Maybe prom will happen. Maybe senior projects will happen. Maybe graduation will happen. It is way too soon to tell.

I did come across something that really spoke to me during this out of control time. It is from [www.instagram.com/abeautifullyburdenedlife/](http://www.instagram.com/abeautifullyburdenedlife/)

**Society:** What about my plans?!

**God:** My plans for you are always better than your own. Don't worry. I'm going to work this all out for your good.

**Society:** We're not going to get anything done!

**God:** That's the point. You know how you keep spinning your wheels—always working, moving, doing—but never feeling satisfied? I've given you permission to stop. I've cleared your calendars for you! Your worth isn't tied to busyness or accomplishment. All you have to do is take care of each other.

**Society:** What does this all mean?

**God:** It means I'm in control. It means you are human and I am God. It means I've given you a wonderful opportunity to be the light in a dark world. It means you are going to learn to rely on me.

**Society:** What are we supposed to do when we can't leave our homes?

**God:** Rest. You are always so busy and overwhelmed, crying out to me weary and exhausted. Can't you use a break from your fast-paced and over-scheduled lives? Go ahead and rest. Pray. Love your families. Be still and spend time with me.

**Society:** You mean we're supposed to stay home with our kids all day, every day?

**God:** Yes. And you're going to be just fine. This time together is a rare gift. The rush of daily life has come to a halt. Play games. Bake cookies. Work on projects you've never had the time for. Teach them kindness and grace. Show them how to endure difficult circumstances and steer them toward me.

**Society:** We better start hoarding anything we can get our hands on!

**God:** Prevention, yes. Precaution, yes. Preparedness, yes. But after that, it's time to put the needs of others before your own. When you see someone in need, help them. Offer up what you have. Do not worry about tomorrow! Haven't I always taken care of you? Now, go take care of someone else.

**Society:** Why is this happening?

**God:** To remind you that I'm in control. To bring your attention back to me. I'm bringing you together as families and neighbors. I'm showing you patience and perseverance. I'm reminding you of your purpose and priorities. Now is the time to learn and teach your children what this life is really about.

**Society:** We don't know who to believe.

**God:** Believe in me. Trust me. Ask me for wisdom and I will surely give it.

**Society:** We're scared!

**God:** I've got this and I'm with you.

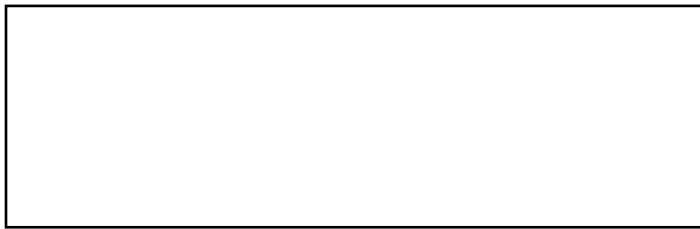
My prayer is that at the time you are reading this, things are on the upswing, and we have gotten through the worst of this pandemic. If that is not the case, I pray that the weather has permitted us to be outside and practice "social distancing" but still getting some vitamin D. I pray that we continue to lean in to our God. He is almighty and is guiding us through this time. And we will rest in the knowledge that the things that are happening now will not matter on the day we meet our Savior.

By HIS Grace and through HIS love,  
 Tammy

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While the coronavirus has disrupted many of our ministries, we continue to find ways to be the church! We appreciate your prayers and support. We encourage you to continue to be connected with us – by calling the office, emailing us, following us online, and connecting through our church app. The monthly newsletter is one way we communicate, yet due to the extraordinary times we live in, next month it may look different or be delayed.



We love you and will find ways to communicate with you. By God's grace, we will get through this season together! - Pastor Sondra

Holy Week Services will be on Facebook and our Home Page at [www.mentorumc.org](http://www.mentorumc.org)  
Palm Sunday, April 5, 9 & 11 AM, will include a link to a children's activity you can do at home  
Holy Thursday, April 9, 7:30 PM • Good Friday, April 10, 7:30 PM • Easter Sunday, April 12, 9 & 11 AM

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Livestream worship Sundays 9 AM and 11 AM until further notice  
Facebook and our website, [www.mentorumc.org](http://www.mentorumc.org)