



The United Methodist Church of Antioch

THE MESSENGER

“The mission of the United Methodist Church of Antioch is to grow in faith, worship God following the teachings of Jesus Christ, and be instruments of God’s love, through the Holy Spirit, as we reach out to our community and the world.”

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THE PASTOR PONDERERS ... *Now What Am I Going To Do After I Retire?*

Then you will call to me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. (Jeremiah 29: 12)

For many years, I’ve been living in two worlds – the world of my children, younger friends and relatives, District, Conference, and community committees and events, AND the world of many of the members of the churches I have served. In the first world, I’ve had to learn the rudimentary skills (rudimentary being the operative word) of logging onto and posting on **Facebook**, navigating websites, sharing documents, and **ZOOMing** meetings. Almost nothing happens via phone call or “snail mail” in that world. I’ve learned what a **Google** doc is and how to upload and create a photo album and then send it to my family members. I’ve learned to upload important documents to a supposedly secure file so I could purchase a house. And I’ve had to learn how to access the portal so I can get the results of medical tests, because the doctor’s office no longer wants to give out that info over the phone. Almost nothing in the **NIC** appears on paper any more. If it’s not digital, it doesn’t exist.

However, in the second world, I’ve learned that if I send an email blast, put something on **Facebook**, or send someone to a website, there are quite a few folks who will not have “gotten the memo.” If it is not on paper, or in a phone call, it will not work for them. They have no knowledge that anything is happening or that anything is required of them. Several of those folks like it that way and have vowed never to change. After all, “that’s why they retired.” Every day I am faced with straddling the line, to keep everyone, myself included, connected.

Suddenly, our world changed! A couple of days ago, I was **ZOOMing**, learning about how to set up electronic giving for our church since we can no longer be face-to-face in our building. Following the meeting, one of my friends sent me a

text which said, “Appreciate what Lonnie did today. This is a real challenge. Be glad you are retiring!” (Lonnie is the **NIC** Treasurer.)

Now, interestingly enough, I wasn’t planning to totally shut myself off from electronic/digital things once I retired. In fact, I was looking forward to learning how to make and edit videos, put together cute and witty memes, get some of my important paperwork in digital format so I didn’t have boxes of stuff stacked all over my house, research and record some family history, and all sorts of other things. BUT, I was planning to do this at my leisure, to take lots of time just enjoying figuring out this new technology. Instead, I find myself thrust into a world that is moving far faster than I want it to. I’m having to learn all those things without being able to savor that “aha!” moment when the learning happens. Sometimes it’s frustrating and exhausting.

And I know many of you are sharing these feelings.

Many of us are from a generation that was taught not to fail or to make a mistake; we couldn’t just delete or start over. It’s a totally new language – pictures and words. But WE ARE DOING IT! I AM PROUD AND FILLED WITH JOY at what we are accomplishing together. One generation is helping the next, and that’s a good thing. This situation will, eventually, get better, and we all will have learned some important new skills. In the meantime, believe it or not, we can still reach God in the old-fashioned way, on our knees in prayer.

Wishing you blessings during this time of sheltering and learning.

Pastor Char



HEALTH EMERGENCY OBSERVED

Per order of **Governor Pritzker** and **Bishop Sally Dick**, no church activities or events will be taking place in the church building through the month of April. Please watch our website, **Facebook** page, and email to stay up-to-date on worship, meetings, and other activities happening on line or by conference call.

<http://www.umcantioch.org>.



...“FOOD” FOR THOUGHT...

COVID-19 is affecting priorities and agendas worldwide as this is being written. This pandemic reminded me of something I heard on TV some time ago. It was about how all living things are predisposed or prewired. The show used the term “genetically programmed.” Examples included plants’ reproduction from seeds, animals’ behavior and instincts. Science has developed new plants and made food vegetation healthier and less prone to disease. Animals can be and have been trained/domesticated to alter their “wiring.” Only humans have this high a degree of self awareness. This also gives us a conscious awareness, or worldview, of others of our species. Despite efforts to prove otherwise, civilized humans innately know that we have to co-exist and share our planet.

That, and as Christians, our belief in God, our gift of the Holy Spirit, and our commitment to follow Christ, should be enough. Little of that has been observable in stores recently. Because of COVID19, every shopping cart overflowed with anything available, needed or not. What happened to genetic programming? What does “Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven” mean in a pandemic? Does “Give us this day our daily bread and deliver us from evil” no longer mean that we trust in God? Shouldn’t the worst bring out our best; just asking?



Mike DeBenedetto, Lay Servant

IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM FINANCE

While we are not meeting as a congregation during the “stay at home” order, our work as a church has not stopped. Our employees and congregants are hard at work producing an online worship service; volunteers have a calling tree to check on our elderly; **Telecare** continues to touch base with shut-ins; knitters and crocheters continue to make items for donation; mail is handled; calls are returned; and countless activities are taking place. We are blessed to continue some of our mission work during this unsettling time. Of course, the



church has financial obligations, whether people are here or not. We have insurance, payroll, utilities, etc., that need to be paid. Please continue your financial support by mailing in your pledge/contribution. We will be sure that the money is deposited and your giving statement credited.

We have so much to be grateful for, I am pleading with those who can, to increase their contribution, with a grateful heart, to help us meet our obligations.

Linda Hensgen

MISSIONS

In the midst of the coronavirus, there are still homeless people needing shelter and food. Many of the **PADS** site buildings are closed, but **PADS of Lake County** has found a couple of sites where homeless clients can shelter in place for the duration of the shelter at home order. The **Warren Township Senior Center** is closed to seniors but is currently housing 40 people, and **UMC of Antioch** is continuing to help with the lunch program. We are buying and delivering the lunch items to our **St Mark Lutheran** site and they are then taken to the senior center. A really ingenious solution to a hard problem.



Carol Cichonski

MORE FROM MISSIONS

The *Missions Committee* has canceled the April 16th *Potluck* with *Lowell and Claudia Wertz* until further notice. If it is rescheduled we will let the congregation know.

Becky Reckamp

PRAYER CARDS CONTINUE

Even though we are not meeting face-to-face, we will still lift friends and family in prayer, and prayer cards can be sent. Please send your requests to carleenandtoto2@att.net. Privacy will be maintained.



Carleen Wurster

OUR YOUTH

Confirmation Class WILL MEET via **ZOOM** Wednesdays, April 1st, 8th, 22nd, and 29th, 5:30-7:00 pm.

Pastor Char

The Best Preschool Under the Sun

It was a very interesting second half of February and beginning of March for the preschool. Some of the preschool classes took a tour of the *Antioch Police Station*. I was told by one of *Ms. Nicole's* students that "it is not a very nice place; they don't even give you a blanket." I was also told that if you don't want to be arrested that you need to act like *Jesus*.

A Bear Visits Preschool! Our new ***Monday/Wednesday Enrichment class*** was excited to have a visit by *Bear* (a police dog) and his partner *Officer Dan Ruth* of the *Gurnee Police Department*. *Officer Ruth* talked to the children about "*Stranger Danger*" and the importance of knowing their parents' names, their own last names, their addresses, and their phone numbers.



UMCA's very own *Melissa Smith* visited with the children and shared her musical skills and singing talents. The children said they really liked her and that they had a lot of fun.

The beginning of March brought with it the excitement of seeing or possibly catching a leprechaun. The older children made leprechaun traps at home with the help of their families. They brought them back in hopes of catching those pesky little guys/girls before they made a mess of the school. Even though we needed to close the preschool prematurely we can rest assured that the traps are in place and keeping things safe.

We can all be very proud of how dedicated the teachers are to the preschool mission of the church. Last week many of the teachers and I spent several hours cleaning their classrooms and disinfecting all the toys. I personally do not need to see another Lego or dinosaur for quite a while. This week I will be sending each of the children a thinking of you card with stickers to help brighten their day, and I know that some of the teachers have been using the *Class Dojo* app to reach out and record themselves reading to the kids.

Some of our wonderful parents have even left chalk messages on the teachers' driveways.

Last week I had an unexpected visit from a parent that heard about our program from a previous parent of a preschooler. I gave her a tour (at a social distance of six feet) and I was pleased to hear that she wanted to register her son for next fall. It is a wonderful feeling to know that even during a world pandemic, families still want to send their children to *UMCA Preschool*.

Kim Dodd, UMCA Preschool Director

CHRISTIAN WELLNESS MINISTRY

Walk to Jerusalem

All of us are likely in need of something to do during this time, so why not walk? We are still walking to Jerusalem even though we are not able collect steps or miles walked by depositing your diary in the basket in *Wesley Hall*. If you want to email your miles or steps, send them to: cfrazierx@comcast.net. Alternatively, the diaries will be collected when we are able to worship together at UMCA. Remember that we have a big goal of walking 6100 miles from Ash Wednesday through Easter Sunday. Keep on walking!



MORE FROM WELLNESS MINISTRY

Senior Wellness

Shortly after the COVID-19 cautions for self isolation in the home were announced, we felt a need to reach out to our seniors aged 60 and over. A telephone tree was formed with each volunteer caller allocated five to eight seniors to call once a week. The calls are done to verify current health, to check if transportation is needed for errands or doctors' visits, and just to chat for a few minutes. We are happy to report that we have not heard of any COVID-19 symptoms! If anyone is interested in providing transportation to obtain groceries, prescriptions or take one of our seniors to a doctor's visit, please let me know at 630/399-0089. God loves and takes care of all of us.



Carol Frazier

MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Psalm 150, always one of my favorite bible passages, often called the "musician's psalm," mentions by name several modes of delivering praise from dance to cymbals, which proves just how important music has been for many centuries to the worshiping faith life. And I am sure if this psalmist lived in 2020, **Zoom** and **YouTube** would have certainly made this list!

Here at UMCA, praising our Lord with music has always been an integral part of worship on Sunday morning. I'm thankful for the ability to use technology to bring music to you each week. My creative side has roared into overdrive to think of new ways to bring hymns and spiritual songs to you as we worship together in our homes in order to keep safe social distancing from this coronavirus. While we miss being together in our beautiful sanctuary, it is my prayer that the music, while sounding different, maybe occasionally glitchy in sound, is a blessing to each of you. To echo **Pastor Char**, we will never again take for granted sharing worship and fellowship together in our church home. I am very thankful for all of the teamwork behind the scenes which has resulted in bringing you this virtual worship service. As we are home for this extended time, take time to listen to worship music on **YouTube** or **Spotify**, sing a hymn, pray, and meditate with music. Turn off the TV; take a break from the news. In the words of the psalmist, take time to fill your spirit with the Holy Spirit and "Praise the Lord!"

Debbie Gillette, Director of Music

UMCA Theatre Ministry Reawakened

"A perfect chord. One perfect moment. That's all anyone has the right to ask for, and we had more than our share...We touched our dream."- **Frankie, Forever Plaid**.

The whole process of bringing live theater back to the **UMCA Wesley Hall** was full of perfect moments, harmony, and dedication. We are so thankful to our church family for their flexibility and enthusiasm as we transformed the hall into a theater. Many of us were involved, putting in late nights and long hours to bring back a sleeping ministry. I don't think the story of **Forever Plaid** could have been more fitting for our mission or current affairs in our world.

The characters in this show had dreams and aspirations that were snuffed out by a horrible accident. After over 50 years, they are brought back to fulfill what they thought was their life goal, only to find out they really had lived a wonderful life and had already lived their dream...It was the moments they had together that were more important than any goal, concert, or plaid tuxedo jacket.

Here we were, delivering this beautiful message to our congregation/audience as we were beginning to see our world locked down amidst the COVID-19 crisis...

many dreams being snuffed out...games cancelled, concerts cancelled, and even church services canceled. We were glad to give some escape to people at a terrifying time. I believe this was God's work. The laughter, smiles, and humming along was invigorating. I think the overall message we can take away from the **Plaids** is that each moment is a precious moment, and all the work is really the prize to be won. So...as we stay in place with our loved ones and distance ourselves from some of "our dreams"...think about all God has given us and know that His promises are true. Enjoy your time to reflect and reenergize...I believe we all have important work ahead! There is a plaid tuxedo out there for all of us!!!



Plaidly Yours,
Nicole Heyl,
Director,
Forever Plaid



FOREVER PLAID



CHURCH DIRECTORY

The church directory, like many other things in life, has been put on hold until the risk from the coronavirus has passed. *Lifetouch* is not working from their offices right now and cannot give the technical support needed to finish quite yet. I understand many of you have received your photos already and I hope you are happy with them. A few photos have been sent to the church, without names of participants on the outside, so if you have not yet received your photos, please call **Barb Cantrell** at 847/804-0361. We can make arrangements to get them to you.

Thank you to all who have participated in helping with the photographs. There were many people who volunteered their time to sit at the sign-up table and they were all wonderful! I hope you all are well and able to stay indoors until this passes. God bless!

Barbara Cantrell

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ARTICLE

Coronavirus.

Less than three months ago, the word, including references to its official name, COVID-19, was unknown to most of the world. That is not the case today. Amid global governments making unprecedented decisions, United Methodists are finding church services, including small groups and other gatherings, canceled.

Seemingly, there are more questions than answers. However, some information remains steadfast, including recommendations from the *World Health Organization (WHO)*. Social distancing tops the list of simple steps to take to limit risks and exposure to the disease. Above all, anyone feeling unwell should stay home and seek medical care.

Staying healthy is in our DNA

Discussing health in the church dates back to *John Wesley*, who wrote extensively about staying physically healthy, as well as spiritually healthy. *Bishop Elaine Stanovsky* reminds United Methodists that holding spiritual and social holiness together is a “mark of Methodist distinction.”

Additionally, she writes, “Part of our Wesleyan heritage as United Methodists is caring for one another, which means caring enough to prevent the spread of a terrible illness.”

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Like us on Facebook:

United Methodist Church of Antioch

Join us on Sunday:

Worship: 8:00, 10:30 am

Church School 9:15 am

Youth Choir 8:45 am

Chancel Choir 9:15 am

[Jesus said] “the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.”

John 14: 26

The Holy Spirit embodies the life force of the universe, the power of God, the animating energy present in all things and captured by none. Therefore we pray:

May the gifts of the Holy Spirit bring fire to the earth so that the presence of God may be seen in a new light, in new places, in new ways. May our own hearts burst into flame so that no obstacle, no matter how great, ever obstructs the message of God within each of us. May we come to trust the Word of God in our heart, to speak it with courage, to follow it faithfully and to fan it to flame in others. May the Jesus who filled [all kinds of people] with his Holy Spirit fill the world and the church with new respect for [all people’s value], power, and presence.

Give us, Great God, a sense of the Breath of Spirit within us as we pray for our church, our community, our Christian Education department, and ... *(State the goal in your own life at this time for which you are praying.)* —**Sister Joan Chittister**