



April 2019

The Goodnews Letter

St. Paul United Methodist Church

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Pastor Robert Reeves

From the Pastor's Desk

I must use the April Newsletter to address the days ahead for all Christians who identify with the United Methodist Church. You should know that the UMC finished its long planned world-wide General Conference in St. Louis some 5 weeks ago. The traditional plan was passed both to the agreement of the majority and the grave disappointment of those who wanted to further include ordination to same sex attraction United Methodist participants.

Since the conclusion of the General Conference, it is increasingly clear very challenging days are present and will increase for the UMC. The possibilities are endless as to what may come next. That can be discussed later but be certain changes have come and more changes will be necessary to find the center of GOD's peace in these challenges.

As your pastor, I share with you that I am both pleased with the decisions made in St. Louis and not surprised much by the reaction of the left to the traditional plan. I know some actions and things said seek no course but anger, attack, and vilification of someone on the other side of this issue. That said, as this letter was being written, the majority of the poor conduct has been the attacks and politicism of those who are pro-gay. Not everyone who favored their ordination has acted out but too many have. While it is possible some persons from the traditional perspective have behaved poorly, there are very few stories to substantiate such. Believe me the media would be on such stories quickly if they could find them. We are in a trial but GOD is in control and GOD is not surprised at all! Every Christian within the UMC can rest in that truth.

With such rancor and continued pockets of widening division, it is time to pray, honestly evaluate the situation, and stay close to GOD as nothing less will help the UMC in future days. I provide the following to help those who want to stay on track, get on track or wonder what is the UMC track?

For those who may need to hear it stated, the decisions made in St. Louis were in keeping with our Discipline Guidelines, Scripture, and our present positions, and faithful to our history of being a people of one book, the Bible. Let no one mislead you that the United Methodist Church now hates anyone. We offer Christ to all persons, love all persons and expect all persons to live into the commands of JESUS CHRIST to live repentant lives surrendered to the HOLY SPIRIT. Beloved that is Methodist no matter what anyone claims otherwise anywhere. That said, consider the following as a mission statement for any local UMC seeking to be faithful to GOD's call on our life together in local churches.

St. Paul United Methodist Church in New Ellenton has identified as "a community of Christians, saved by God's grace, who stand in the United Methodist and Wesleyan traditions. We believe in the Triune God-- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As commanded by Jesus Christ, we seek to be faithful witnesses to the Gospel in our communities and the world so that we may go and make disciples of all people".

What is a community?

At its heart, the word signifies a group of people united by something shared in common. In these days following General Conference, you have no doubt been reading and hearing a variety of reports from a number of perspectives. I thought it might be appropriate to take a moment to step back and look at those things that make us at St. Paul United Methodist Church, a community.

As a "community of Christians", we share a common faith in Jesus Christ. Through our baptism, we have made a common declaration that we "renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of our sin". We have "accepted the freedom and power God gives us to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves". We have "confessed Jesus Christ as our Savior, put our whole trust in his grace, and promised to serve him as our Lord, in union with the Church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nations, and races".

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We share a common testimony that we are "saved by God's grace", freely offered to all; showing us our need for salvation, freeing our wills to choose Christ, empowering us to live for His glory, and to "remain faithful members of Christ's holy Church and serve as Christ's representatives in the world".

As a community, we share a common heritage. We "stand in the United Methodist and Wesleyan traditions. We believe in the Triune God--Father, Son, and Holy Spirit". This reminds us that we share in the historic teachings and practices of our faith as contained in Scripture, the witness of the early church, and the Methodist movement. We affirm this heritage when we unite with a local United Methodist congregation, vowing to "strengthen its ministries" and to participate in those ministries with our "prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness". We are reminded that what God has said and done in the past has life in the present to shape the future. We are invited, along with the church at Ephesus, to remember these things, to repent where we have forgotten or neglected them, and to return to them (*Revelation 2:1-7*).

As a community, we share a common mission. "As commanded by Jesus Christ, we seek to be faithful witnesses to the Gospel in our communities and the world so that we may go and make disciples of all people". The gospel of Jesus Christ is for all people.

In every generation, the people of God are to call their world to repentance, faith, and holiness through the blood of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

In these critical days in the life of our church, may we choose to focus on these things that bind us together—that make us a community. May the fire of God's love continue to burn within us! May we seek out the lost, the least, the lonely. May we declare with John Wesley, "I look on all the world as my parish".

So let it Be, LORD JESUS!

-Pastor Robert

Flower Schedule

- 7.
- 14. Palm Sunday
- 21. Easter
- 28. Ann Akins

Church Nursery

- 7. Melinda Brinkley & Minnie G.
- 14. Sandy Webb & Toby James
- 21. Shelly James & Eirene Ferguson
- 28. Toby James & Christy Boatright

Acolytes

- 7. Zoey Hall
- 14. Nolan Akins
- 21. Eve Morrow
- 28. J. B. Morrow

Visitation

- 7. Pastor Robert
- 14. Sandy Webb
- 21. Minnie Goodman
- 28. Lynn Alexander

Ushers

- 7. Billy Watkins & Joe Eubanks
- 14. Randy Stowe & Charles G., Sr.
- 21. Doug Summer & Vince Maglio
- 28. Michael Thompson & Bo Herndon

Lay Assistant

- 7. Randy Stowe
- 14. Rick Crosby
- 21. Melinda Brinkley
- 28. Jimmy Brinkley

Offering Accountants

Charlie Wyont & Jennifer Akins

SS Assembly Refreshments

- 7. Children
- 14. SS Assembly Group
- 21. SS Assembly Group
- 28. SS Assembly Group

Communion Preparation

Toby James, April 18 (Maundy Thursday)



Thoughts about Resurrection

Can you assume for a moment that the Triune God created only one man of dust, breathed the spirit of life into him, making him a living soul? He then performed the first surgery and Adam's rib became Eve his wife. We now have 2 people who are body, soul/spirit. (Everyone who has ever lived are descendants of this couple.)

All have arrived as human babies, inheriting a speck of that original breath of life (spirit)/soul/body, each one with a slightly different dna. Even though each body is not formed of dust, it contains the elements of dust and the marvelous plan God made for our spirit/soul is different for each of us.

Everything was good until Satan put in an appearance and convinced Eve God was holding out on them. He claimed there was much more and they should try it, so evil became part of humanity and this original sin has been passed on to everyone.

When Jesus arrived, Mary passed on this human body/soul/spirit, making Him fully human but the Immaculate Conception made Him fully God.

He did not take advantage of that, but lived His human life on earth without sin and when He died, He presented to the Father a human soul/spirit WITHOUT SIN.

He then resumed His role as Fully God and (Ephesians 4) descended to hell, as we say in the Apostles Creed. He then reclaimed His human body, now transformed from its beaten, bruised state and bearing only the nail and spear marks, reunited with this human spirit/soul and spent time on earth reassuring His followers that all was well.

As a result, His appearances seem to show us how we will appear after we die.

Think that's a far fetched story? Have you looked at God's spectacular creation lately? If He can do one, He can certainly do the other.

Let's look at how human eyes saw Jesus after His resurrection.

He appeared to the two on the road to Emmaus, (Luke 24:13-35) as a human but was not recognized. He acted as a human, walked, talked, ate but it was His personal way of breaking bread and His sharing OT Scripture about Himself that made Him recognizable to them.

When He appeared in a closed room (John 20:19) to the disciples, they recognized Him. Thomas was invited to touch Him. He ate with them and there was conversation (quoted Scripture) which revealed more about Jesus. Doors and walls were not barriers and travel was instantaneous.

When He appeared to Mary, (John 20:11) thru her tears she did not recognize Him but He looked like a gardener. When He spoke, recognition was immediate. She was told not to "cling" to Him.

When He appeared to the women, they apparently recognized Him, they touched His feet and He spoke to them (Matthew 28:8-10).

When He met the disciples at the sea of Galilee, He was cooking a meal. It took a while for them to recognize Him (John 21).

All of this seems to indicate personality is the key to recognition and that we take that with us when we die. We need to cut the people then a little slack though, because they did not expect to see Jesus; to them He was dead.

However, His appearances and actions would seem to indicate we will look like we do here (without the scars and blemishes) and be able to do purposeful daily activities with some added attractions (maybe some subtractions) after we die.

One commentator has suggested we will not only recognize our loved ones but that we will know everyone and understand once and for all, that every thing our God has done is PERFECT.

-Betty F

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 <i>Rusty Summer</i> (B)	2	3 M & M Choir 5:30 Trustees Mtg. 6:30 FH	4	5 <i>Trevor Usry</i> (B)	6
7 Sunday Assembly 9 FH Sunday School 9:30 Sunday Worship 10:30 Nurture/Outreach Mtg 3 FH Friendship Circle 5 FH	8 <i>Zoey Hall</i> (B)	9 <i>Vince Maglio</i> (B)	10 Best Joy Cir 10 FH M & M Choir 5:30 <i>April Ramos</i> (B)	11	12 <i>Darlene Paradise</i> (B) <i>Charles & Irene</i> <i>Lengyel</i> (A)	13 <i>Karen Wyont</i> (B)
14 Sunday Assembly 9 FH Sunday School 9:30 Sunday Worship 10:30 Palm Sunday	15	16	17 <i>Rob Ferguson</i> (B) <i>Cinda & John</i> <i>Stamey</i> (A)	18 Maundy Thurs. Communion Service 7 pm FLC Reserved 8-4 <i>Deborah & Joe</i> <i>Eubanks</i> (A)	19  GOOD FRIDAY <i>Janice Watkins</i> (B)	20 Easter Party & Egg Hunt, Meal for Everyone 5 FLC 
21 Sunday Assembly 9 FH Sunday School 9:30 Sunday Worship 10:30 M & M's Sing Easter	22	23 <i>Mildred Akins</i> (B) <i>Janice & Billy</i> <i>Watkins</i> (A)	24	25	26 FLC reserved by <i>Ann Akins</i>	27 <i>Mildred Akins'</i> 90th Birthday Celebration, 2:30- 5 FLC <i>Virginia Richburg</i> (B)
28 Sunday Assembly 9 FH Sunday School 9:30 Sunday Worship 10:30 Finance Comm. Mtg 3 BCR	29	30				(A) = Anniversary (B) = Birthday