



The Messenger
Nelson Memorial United Methodist Church
407 East Spring Street, Boonville, MO 65233
July 2023



“Everyone Has A Story”

Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught. Luke 1:1-4

The other night at the leadership development team we were discussing faith stories and the idea of sharing our testimonies. The discussion turned (as it often does) to “boring” testimonies. We’ve all heard those amazing testimonies of the guy who was high on cocaine and drinking a bottle of whisky every night until one night he “saw the light” of the Lord, turned his life around, and now is a model of faith for everyone he meets. Okay, this story might be a little sensationalized, but we’ve heard very impressive stories similar to the Apostle Paul’s conversion on the road to Damascus. These stories are powerful, dramatic, and compelling. If God can turn around someone like that, wow...anything is possible.

As we were discussing our less than dramatic stories, and talking about those significant moments in our faith, we came to the understanding that even if our stories wouldn’t make for a great movie, they are still important. We don’t have to have gone from rock bottom to faith All-Stars. Even those of us who have been raised in the church, gone to church our whole lives, and felt like we were never really “lost,” have a story.

The Gospel of Luke begins with an introduction from the writer about his motivation for preserving his account and sharing those stories that had been passed along to him. He wanted to tell these stories because of the impact they had on him and their potential to impact others. That is exactly the same reason we are to share our stories – because of the impact they have had on us and what they could do for others. Even our “boring” stories can be used by God to move the hearts of others who also have “boring” stories.

Every week (other than Communion Sundays) we include the “By These Signs” moment in our service as a way to share our stories. How have you seen God at work in your life this week? Did God show up in a meaningful or unexpected way? Did someone reach out to you and you just knew it was because of the Holy Spirit? Share those stories. You never know how it might help someone else.

As I was writing this, Sara called me to share a “God moment” she had as a result of a conversation with a friend and through her morning devotional. When we share these moments, we help others to recognize the “God moments” in their lives. These aren’t boring, these are how we encounter the Holy.

Friends, we all have a story to tell. I encourage you to consider not just how you encounter God in your everyday life, but also to share those encounters with others.

Blessings, Chris

Thoughts from Annual Missouri United Methodist Conference

I write this a few weeks after the conference due to extended time spent in CO and helping with our grandchildren:) This was my 6th year as a lay delegate and our first year at the convention center in hospitable St. Charles, MO. Rob and I became Methodists at the same point in time when our daughter (Kailey) was baptized as an infant, nearly 42 years ago. Through these years, I have enjoyed my relationship with the denomination and the wide-ranging mission and reach of our church. Thank you for allowing me to serve as your delegate.

As a long-time member I feel our denomination has a solid foundation based upon the holy scripture and the teachings of John Wesley, primarily outlined in the Book of Discipline. In recent years much discussion has occurred around the topic of homosexuality and how it should be handled within the church. Votes have been taken and arguments have taken place, both at the state and General Conference level. I would be remiss if I did not tell you that fractures are occurring. Some United Methodist churches are pulling away from our inter-connected status and joining an entity called the Global Methodist Church, while others are choosing to be independent.

In Missouri, we have talked about the disagreements, Bishop Farr has guided us, prayed with us, and made many forum presentations to answer questions and give us as much information as possible. Change moves slowly in the United Methodist denomination, but change is occurring across the US and in Missouri. This year 17 churches closed due to lack of membership, and 75 churches disaffiliated primarily because of the topic mentioned previously. While these seem like large numbers, many states lost even more membership in the past year. Over the last few years, MO has lost 240 churches and we are 26% smaller in membership. We have gone from 9 districts to 5 and our state budget and general apportionments have dropped accordingly. I am not trying to present a negative picture, but to make all aware of what is happening. We have 672 active churches to date. It was disheartening to hear Bishop Farr say that this was his most difficult year as Bishop and to weep openly in front of the attendees. We prayed for the brothers and sisters in Christ who have disaffiliated. This information, however, along with two non-binding resolutions (both related to the treatment of the LGBTQ community) dominated the Saturday meetings. Pastor Chris or I can give you further details regarding the resolutions and voting should you so desire.

Sunday, however, had a completely different feel than the previous day. We began with a study session led by Dr. Candace Lewis, focusing on Peter's denial of Christ and Christ's subsequent forgiveness of Peter from John 21, proving that Jesus wanted to be reconciled with Peter. This stands out as a turning point in Peter's ministry because Peter let Christ down not once, but at least three times. Amazingly, by God's grace, fickle Peter leaned in to his calling and became the "rock" that Jesus mentioned in scripture and he went on to have a great ministry and to spread Christ's love to so many.

Later Sunday morning was the Commissioning and Ordination Ceremony, which was beautiful, as were the wonderful performances by the Salem UMC choir and orchestra. Both were perfection! Bishop Leonard Fairley from the Louisville, KY area (and a dear friend of Bishop Farr's) brought the morning sermon. He was a powerful speaker, and talked about all of us (both pastors and lay members) being called to be "God bearers" and gave numerous examples of those from the Bible who answered the call (Isaiah, Samuel, Esther, Mary, Peter). He says we should define ourselves as DRPs (designated religious persons) as he has and to depend on God day and night. We should let God define our ministry by being aware of our calling and purpose. With each of us, laity included, Jesus is still asking us and calling, "Do you love me more than these?" Our "these" can be people, things, travel, entertainment, sports, etc. We are called by God to feel, care and nurture others in Christ, to love God (and others) more than "these," whatever our these may be. He challenged us to be grace-filled, to reclaim our core values, and to spread the love of Jesus and his teachings. Finally, Bishop Fairley encouraged us to invite others to join us at church on our journey and exploration since most people will come if they are asked.

By following the advice of these gifted speakers, our Methodist church will continue to be a vital, strong, vibrant church that reaches out to those who are different from ourselves. As Bishop Farr has reminded us in the past, keeping our focus on the cross that offers forgiveness and redemption (and not becoming distracted by other things) allows us to become the Christ-followers and servant leaders we strive to be. My final thought is that ultimately our church is meant to be a hospital for sinners, not a mausoleum for saints! Amen.

Linda Gordon

Summer 2023 Vacation Bible School - July 5th-7th, 9am - 11:30 am



It's not too late to let us share our love for the Lord with your kiddos! Through fun activities, engaging lessons, crafts, and God's Word, memorable experience that will allow children in our community to grow their faith as they understand how they can follow Jesus here, there, and everywhere. The program will inspire kids to: Do what He says, Believe who He is, Love who He loves, Share what He did, and Go where He leads. His love has a strong ripple effect that can change the world. There are sign-up sheets located throughout the sanctuary. You can also sign-up on line, too!

Thank You



A big thank you to everyone who helped get the cooling station set up, Sam and Katy Giroux, Jessica Caszatt, and Tim VonEngeln. It was a great opportunity to offer some relief on a hot summer day during Heritage Days!

Ice Cream Freeze Off!



What's better than a nice bowl of ice cream on a hot summer day? How about a whole bunch of flavors of homemade ice cream and fellowship with friends? If this sounds good to you, then make plans to join us July 16 at 4:00 pm for our Annual Ice Cream Freeze Off. As always, this event is open to everyone who would like to enter their favorite home-made ice cream - the more exotic the flavor, the better! If you're not an Ice Cream chef, we'd love to have you come and be one of our judges. Stay tuned for more information and start getting your recipes ready now.

Prayer List



Prayer is one of the foundations upon which a church, and a life of faith, is built. We thank you all for your faithfulness in praying over the names on our prayer list printed in the bulletin each week. We are currently going through that list and looking to make sure it is as up to date as possible. If you know of any names on the prayer list that no longer need to be on there, please let Pastor Chris or Debra know. Our hope is to have a list that reflects the current prayer requests and needs for our congregation and community. Moving forward, we will keep names on the "Health and other issues" prayer list for 4 weeks, unless requested to do otherwise. Thank you for your help in this endeavor and for your prayers.

Church Library News



We have many authors in our library. Did you know that we have four of our very own great authors? For the month of July, we will feature Sara Snyder. The title of her book is Confessions of the Pastor's Wife. It is a three-way conversation between the author, the reader, and God. Containing fifty-two devotionals, one for each week of the year. Not only are the devotionals short, sweet, and to the point, they come with a weekly prayer and Scripture Bytes that you can take with you to chew on through the week. Her book will be on display in the library for the month of July. If you are interested in purchasing this book check with Sara.

HVAC Update: Each month we will provide you an update on our progress toward paying off the HVAC loan.

Loan Amount	Amount Pledged	Amount Received To Date
\$115, 217.00	\$116,200.00	\$53,685.00

When writing a check please remember to write in the memo line how much you would like to go towards the HVAC. Thank you for your generous support of Nelson Memorial, UMC.

July Birthdays.....

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|----|---|----|--|
| 1 | Ben Caszatt, Lauren Huff | 16 | Norm Richert |
| 2 | Gary Francis, Linda Phillips, Bentley Fehling | 18 | Daylynn Baker, Bruce Davis |
| 3 | Haley Homan | 19 | Greg Gettings, Dorothy Whitten |
| 5 | Patsy Meyer | 20 | Cathy Schnell |
| 6 | Lucy Wooldridge | 21 | David Simmons, Lilliana Thomas
Kylie McCreery |
| 7 | Karma Haller, Ashley Belstle | 22 | Jessica Caszatt |
| 9 | Bonnie Riley | 23 | Bonne Fehling |
| 10 | Rosalie Kleinsorge | 24 | Heather Neff |
| 11 | John Kleinsorge | 25 | Diedra McGruder |
| 12 | Luke Haller, Tom Wood | 28 | Kim Phelps, Aaron VonEngeln |
| 13 | Melissa Baker, Richard Bell IV, Marilyn Gann | 29 | Helen Taylor |
| 14 | Elena Johnson | | |

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 9:00 am TOPS 8:00 pm - AI Anon Meeting, F.H.	4 Office Closed	5 9:00 am - 11:30 am VBS 12:00 Noon - AI Anon Meeting, F.H.	6 9:00 am - 11:30 am VBS 6:00 pm - Praise Band Rehearsal	7 9:00 am - 11:30 am VBS 8:00 pm - AI Anon Meeting, F.H.	8 8:30 am -UMM Meeting, Lounge
9	10 9:00 am TOPS 8:00 pm – AI Anon Meeting, F.H. Pastor Chris Continued Education July 10 - 12	11	12 10:15 am - Women’s Bible Study 12:00 Noon - AI Anon Meeting, F.H.	13 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm - Baby Grace Size and Sort	14	15
16 4:00 pm - Ice Cream Freeze Off, Fellowship Hall	17 9:00 am TOPS 6:00 pm - Outreach Meeting 8:00 pm - AI- Anon Meeting,	18	19 10:15 am - Women’s Bible Study 12:00 Noon - AI Anon Meeting, F.H.	20 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm Baby Grace Distribution 6:00 pm - Praise Band Rehearsal	21	22
23	24 9:00 am TOPS 8:00 pm - AI Anon Meeting, F.H. 6:00 pm - Leadership Development Meeting, Lounge	25 6:00 pm - Administrative Board Meeting, F.H.	26 10:15 am - Women’s Bible Study 12:00 Noon - AI Anon Meeting, F.H.	27	28	29
30	31 9:00 am TOPS 8:00 pm – AI Anon Meeting, F.H.					

