



The Chimes



Centenary United Methodist Church

April 2016

Upcoming Events!

BIKER BLESSING **Sunday, April 17th, 2016** **FOLLOWING THE 10:30 A.M. PRAISE SERVICE** **AT CENTENARY UMC**

WORSHIP AT
CENTENARY UMC
DURING THE 10:30 A.M.
PRAISE SERVICE
LOCATED AT 226 W.
CHURCH ST.
SHULSBURG, WI.
LOTS OF PARKING
AROUND BADGER PARK.



DRIVE UP TO THE MAIN
ENTRANCE AT THE TOP
OF THE HILL AFTER THE
SERVICE AND PASTOR
JEFF WILL ANOINT YOUR
BIKE WITH OIL AND
PRAY FOR PROTECTION
FOR YOU AND YOUR
BIKE THIS SUMMER.

Pasty Bake



April 9

See page 5



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New Heights with Pastor Jeff

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

So the other major church holiday in addition to Christmas, Easter or Resurrection Day, the holiest day of the year for the church and Christianity has come and gone. The question that now remains is the impact that the Holy Season of Lent, the special services of Holy Week and the celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ had on us as individual Christians and as a church, as Centenary UMC. Have we all just gone back to our normal routines and packed what we learned and experienced away along with the Easter baskets until next year...or has the Resurrection of Jesus Christ actually become more relevant to us?

Are we now beginning or ending each day by reading the scripture and praying (both talking and listening) to God? Have we made it a priority to take one day off a week as a Sabbath for God and for our family? Have we prayed to God and answered His call through a relationship with Him to give of our time, gifts and money to the church according to His will and not our own? The answer to all of these questions will eventually reveal to us and to God just how relevant the Resurrection is now to all of us and whether we now live our life as His sons and daughters and as His church in order to reveal the relevance of it and the hope it offers to the world.

By the way, there is another major church holiday coming up. It is Pentecost, the celebration of God, who had already given us His Son, bestowing us with His Holy Spirit on May 15. It is about celebrating the fact that by turning to God and accepting Him and His son Jesus Christ and all He has done for us, the Holy Spirit will come into us and help us with everything we have discussed above.

You see, brothers and sisters, if Easter or Resurrection Sunday truly has become relevant, than God, the grace of His Son Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit have also come become relevant to us, not just on holy days or holidays, but every day! In fact, our life becomes centered and prioritized around our spiritual relationship with Him no matter what time of year it is, no matter what is going on in our lives, in our church or in our community; God becomes relevant in our life because the true beauty of everything Christ had done for us, including the Resurrection, is that death has been defeated and that we have the opportunity to live forever. If you logically play that out, than life is only relevant when it is about God.

In Christ,

PJ



Open Hearts Open Minds Open Doors

We are the people of the United Methodist Church!

Centenary UMC At A Glance

March Statistics

Total Offering:		Attendance:		Weekly
(Regular Offering, not earmarks)		(Sat 7, Sun 9 & 10:30, Wed 6:30)		Totals
Mar 5, 6 & 9	\$4,025	Mar 5, 6 & 9	0, 20, 64, 41	127
Mar 12, 13 & 16	2,415	Mar 12, 13 & 16	10, 18, 53, 52	133
Mar 19, 20 & 23	2,039	Mar 19, 20 & 23	12, 19, 71, 66	168
Mar 26, 27, & 30	2,851	Mar 26, 27, & 30	10, 32, 100, 65	207
Holy Week Mar 24 & 25	597	Holy Week Mar 24 & 25	17, 31	48

Finance News

Dear members & friends of CUMC,

Our church council approved the 2016 church budget in the amount of \$151,068. To meet our budget, CUMC needs an average of \$2,905 in general giving every week.

March giving, including Easter weekend was \$11,199, an average of \$2,800 each week. We are almost there!! If we continue at this level of giving, we will pay our bills, support our missions, and pay our staff and our apportionments. Thank you to everyone for your support of CUMC.

Finance committee meets monthly on the 2nd Monday at 6 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend finance meetings. Anyone interested in learning more about lifelong stewardship should attend a finance meeting or talk with myself or Pastor Jeff.

Tina Cruse, Finance Chair



As we start the New Year... Remember the Convenience of Electronic Giving



The Finance Committee would like to remind you that we offer Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) as a way to automate your regular weekly offering. Not only is electronic giving from a checking or savings account convenient for individuals, but it also provides much-needed donation consistency for our church. As you contemplate future contributions, please consider electronic giving. Authorization forms and additional information are available from the church office.

Upcoming Events



*Celebration of Pentecost
May 15th
At Centenary UMC*

There is another major church holiday to celebrate coming up on May 15! It is Pentecost, the celebration of God, who had already given us His Son, bestowing us with His Holy Spirit. It takes place in the second chapter of Acts right after Jesus Christ ascended to heaven after His resurrection. Jesus had promised this would happen and it did to the apostles in the upper room when they were distressed about what to do next...and the Holy Spirit came upon them and showed them the way...and God can and will do the same for us! Come be a part of the Celebration of Pentecost!

Holy Communion & Potluck April 3

In the interest of creating more opportunities for members and friends of Centenary UMC to build and grow in relationships with each other, we have a potluck lunch the **first Sunday of every month after the 10:30 a.m. worship service**. The next monthly potluck will be Sunday, April 3. Each family is asked to bring a dish to pass and their own table settings (plates, cups, napkins, silverware).



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Meetings and News

April Administrative Meetings

Monday, April 11

6:00 – Finance

7:00 – Church Council

All committee chairs should plan to attend or send someone from their committee to report. **Please make sure that you email the office with your report update by the Thursday prior to the meeting (April 7).**

Confirmation Class



Confirmation Class is at 7:00 p.m. every Sunday night.

Fellowship Group News

Pasty Bake is set for Saturday, April 9. Place your **order with the church office**, and don't forget to come help at 6:30 a.m.! Many hands make light work!

We will be spring cleaning the kitchen on Saturday, April 23 from 8:00 until noon or whenever we finish. Bring your elbow grease, and come and have fun sprucing up our kitchen!

Spring shout-out for supplies for our kitchen! We are in need of paper products (plates, cups, napkins, paper towels), 50-gallon trash bags, dish soap, hand soap, and cleaning supplies. Anything would be greatly appreciated.



Thank you to all who donated food and came and helped in any way with the funeral luncheon for William Nethery. The family was very thankful.

Happy Spring!

Pam Harker, Fellowship Group

Retired & Re-Fired Small Group

Our first birthday and anniversary celebration was a great success. We honored our group members and "Card Connection" friends who had March birthdays and anniversaries. Those with April birthdays and anniversaries will be honored at our April 11 meeting. In addition to the good food, lots of good conversation and fellowship, we signed our Easter cards and got them in the mail.

We meet on the second and fourth Mondays of the month at noon in the Serenity Room. Due to the addition of our birthday and anniversary celebration, food will be provided at our first meeting of the month (April 11). Bring your lunch to the second meeting of the month (April 25). Coffee and tea will be provided. The weather is getting warmer, so it's time to get out and join us!

Contact me at 965-3283 with any questions or if you need a ride.

Betty Gleason, Retired & Re-fired Small Group Leader

Sunday School News

Happy Spring! We had two wonderful performances for Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday with the Sunday School Children. They did an amazing job! We will continue with our curriculum through May 15. We will be planning an end of the year celebration, so look for that in the next newsletter and in a note sent home. As the year comes to a close I encourage you to pray to see if Children's Ministry is an area you can help out with. We are in need of volunteers for next year. There are many opportunities including teacher, assistant teacher, music leader, snack helper, activity planner, technology helper, and cleaners. If the school year is busy for you, we have summer opportunities creating bulletin boards, classroom organization, and event planning. If Sundays don't work for you, we are also in need for volunteers for our Wednesday night children's programming. Our children are our future, and there is a huge need for volunteers. Feel free to talk to me or call the church if you feel called to help.

God Bless,

Sarah Santiago, Sunday School Coordinator

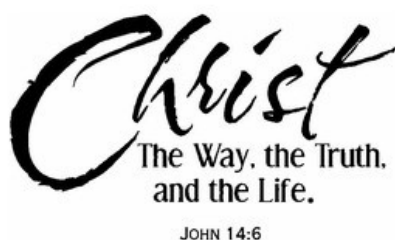




Outreach News

College / Military Outreach Ministry for H.S. Grads and Young Adults!

To stay connected with our young adults so they stay connected with their church and God, the Outreach Committee is in the process of forming and implementing a ministry that would reach out to young adults in college and in the military. We want them to know we, as their church, still care and pray about them, even though they may not be near. If you have a college-age child in school or in the military, please contact the church office with their name and mailing address so we can send them blessings a few times each year. Also, please contact the church office or Pastor Jeff if you are interested in being part of this ministry. This is a great opportunity to get involved with our church and community without a large time commitment.



JOHN 14:6

Youth Group News

For the 14th consecutive year, the CUMC Youth Group will be participating in a mission trip this summer. They will once again be joining Sidekick Missions.

This year's destination is Knoxville, Tennessee, and is scheduled for June 18 - 26. Sidekick Missions Board of Servants is comprised of leaders from 6 Methodist Churches in southern Wisconsin. Participants on recent trips have numbered more than 150, and from nearly a dozen churches.



Participants need to have completed 8th grade before joining on the mission trip. Participants will travel by air-conditioned coach buses. Lodging in Knoxville, and while traveling to Tennessee, will be provided by local churches. The return from Knoxville is being planned for one day, with relief bus drivers.

Eugene Vehling, Youth Group Coordinator

Trustees News

On Tuesday, March 15, an early spring severe storm with lightning and strong winds damaged a number of low-voltage electric components at Centenary UMC. The lightning strike damaged the upstairs sound system, a wireless microphone, a modem, a recently-installed twin furnace adapter, and a number of other items. The final tally of items and the repair and/or replacement costs is still being compiled. The Trustees have responded quickly to get assessments completed and reach out to necessary contractors and insurance providers. In the investigation following the storm, it was learned that we have some major issues with our furnaces. With the transition from winter to spring, one furnace has already been replaced. More information on these topics will be shared with CUMC members as soon as possible. Thank you in advance for your prayers as we take necessary steps to get our church back to fully-operational condition.

Eugene Vehling, Trustees Chair

Church Trustees



Wednesday Night Ministry: It Keeps Growing!

Wednesday evenings continue to be a blessing! In February we averaged 60 people for dinner and had meals of soup and sandwiches, turkey and gravy and the fixings, and soups with grilled cheese and hot dogs. Many thanks to Jacklyn Wood and Linda Dillon for all of their work with the children for Children's Church. Attendance at Wednesday worship services has averaged 53 people. If you are out of town on the weekend and can't make it to church, Wednesday nights are a great option. Dinner is at 5:30 p.m. followed by worship at 6:30, along with Children's Church.



So many thanks to everyone who makes Wednesday nights at CUMC possible.

JoAnn Meyer



UNITED METHODISTS BELIEVE

*United Methodists affirm the historic Christian faith
as summarized in the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed.*

WE BELIEVE in the Triune God, the Trinity — Father, Son and Holy Spirit

- God the Father/Creator, who brings creation into existence, upholds and reveals the ways of life that make for peace and wholeness, and ever works to heal and transform life through the power of love.
- God the Son, Jesus Christ, the firstborn of a new creation, who through his life, death and Resurrection saves us and all creation from the power of sin and death.
- God the Holy Spirit, who comforts, sustains, guides and empowers us to participate in God's life and mission in the world.

WE BELIEVE every person is a beloved child of God

- Whom God created in God's divine image, with inherent worth and dignity.
- Who confronts and suffers the distorting and destructive effects of sin in this life.
- Whom God has reconciled in the life, death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, defeating the powers of sin and death.
- Whom God seeks to make holy and whole, through the presence of the Holy Spirit, transforming us into Christ-likeness.

WE BELIEVE in the Church as the community called to be instruments of God's presence and coming reign in Jesus Christ

- Where people worship God joyfully, proclaim God's Word faithfully and share the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion.
- Where all people are welcomed and nurtured as God's sons and daughters.

- Where people are initiated into Christ's body and nurtured toward Christian maturity through worship, prayer, study, fellowship and service.
- Where the light of God's love, justice and peace exposes and overrules evil, injustice and sin.
- Where we participate in God's mission of inviting, preparing and enlisting disciples of Jesus Christ to transform the world and to follow the risen Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, into the hurting places of the world and among the outcasts and the forgotten.

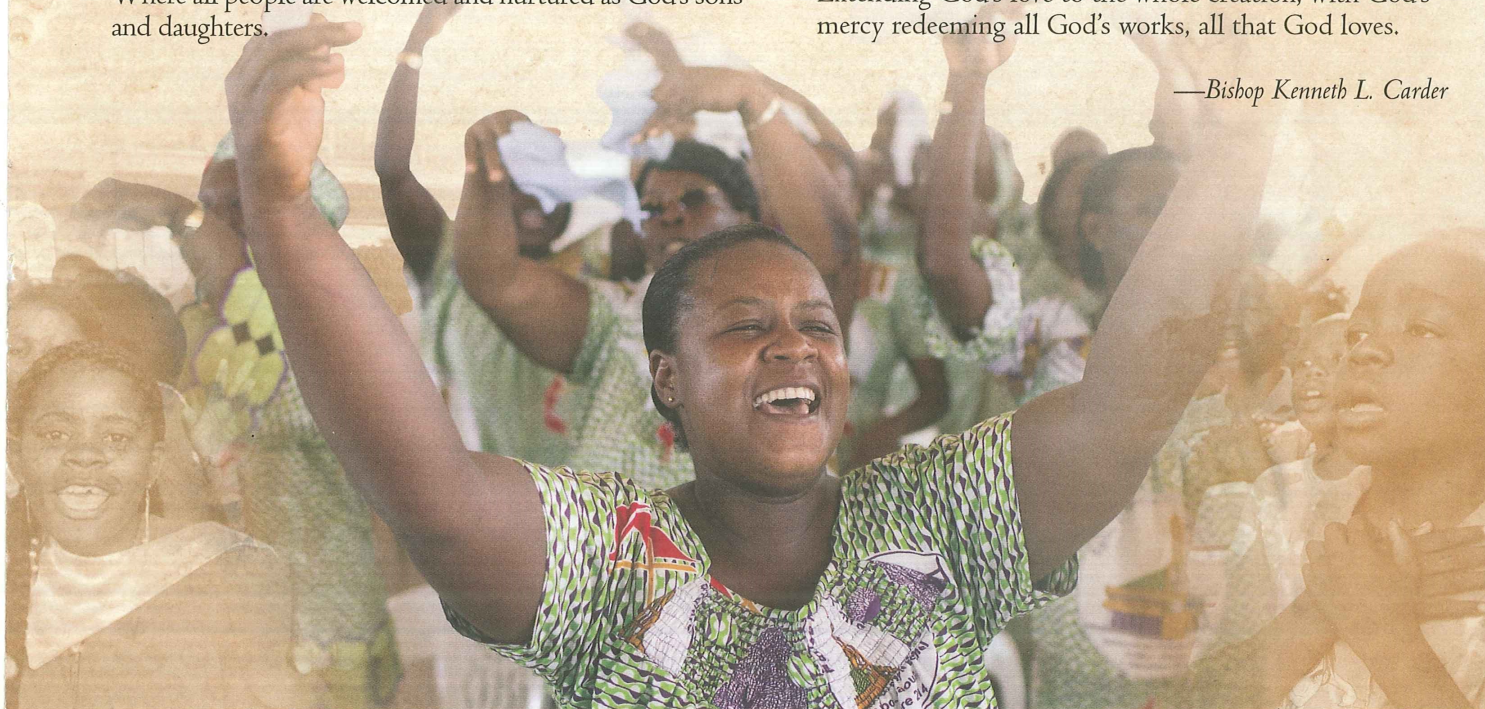
WE BELIEVE the Bible reveals the Word of God

- Authoritative in matters of faith and practice.
- Containing the story of God's mighty acts of salvation in creation, in faithful engagement with people through the ages and supremely in Jesus Christ.
- The primary source for understanding the nature and purposes of God.
- Interpreted in the power of the Holy Spirit present in the community of faith.

WE BELIEVE in the final triumph of God's reign of compassion, justice, generosity and peace

- Anticipating the firstfruits made possible today through the power of the Spirit and the reign of Christ.
- Discovering a renewed creation where sin, suffering and death are overcome and God's victory is complete.
- Celebrating with all the faithful who are raised to live eternally in God's loving presence.
- Extending God's love to the whole creation, with God's mercy redeeming all God's works, all that God loves.

—Bishop Kenneth L. Carder





ROOTED IN C

*Our United Methodist heritage is rooted in a d
This incredible grace flows f*

Grace can be defined as the love and mercy God gives us because God wants us to have it, not because of anything we have done to earn it. We read in Ephesians 2:8-9 (NRSV), "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God — not the result of works, so that no one may boast."

In *Living Our Beliefs: The United Methodist Way* by Bishop Kenneth L. Carder, we read, "Grace is God's presence and power to create, heal, forgive, reconcile, and transform persons, communities, nations, and the entire cosmos. Where God is present there is grace, God's power to renew and transform." John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, described God's grace as threefold: prevenient, justifying and sanctifying.

The Book of Discipline (Paragraph 102) states, "Although Wesley shared with many other Christians a belief in grace, justification, assurance, and sanctification, he combined them in a powerful manner to create distinctive emphases for living the full Christian life."

PREVENIENT GRACE

Wesley understood grace as God's active presence in our lives — God going before us to prepare us for "wholeness and healing," a life of love of God and neighbor. This presence does not depend on human actions or human response. It is a gift that is always available, but that can be refused.

God's grace stirs within us a desire to know God and empowers us to respond to God's invitation to be in relationship with God. God's grace enables us to discern differences between good and evil and makes it possible for us to choose good.

"Prevenient grace," Carder wrote, "is the 'prodigal son' in Luke's Gospel becoming aware of his lost identity. Longing for home, awareness of betrayal, prompting to repent — these are manifestations of grace preparing us for a new future."

God takes the initiative in relating to humanity. We do not have to beg and plead for God's love and grace. God actively seeks us!

JUSTIFYING GRACE

Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, "In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us" (2 Corinthians 5:19b, NRSV). In his letter to the Roman Christians, Paul wrote: "But God shows love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8, *An Inclusive-Language Lectionary*). These verses demonstrate God's justifying grace. They point to reconciliation, pardon and restoration. Through God's work in Christ, our sins are forgiven, and our relationship with God is restored.

Sources: "Teachers as Spiritual Leaders and Theologians." General Board of Discipleship. Used by permission.

GOD'S GRACE

*Deep and profound understanding of God's grace.
From God's great love for us.*

According to Wesley, the image of God — which sin distorts — is renewed within us through Christ's death. In justifying grace, the Christian acknowledges his or her human situation, makes a conscious decision to turn toward God and takes appropriate responsibility in shaping a life of discipleship. Again, this dimension of God's grace is a gift. God's grace alone brings us into relationship with God. We need not jump through any hoops in order to please God and to be loved by God. God has acted in Jesus Christ. We need only to respond in faith.

This process of salvation involves a change in us that we call "conversion." Conversion is a change of belief, spiritual outlook and manner of life. It may be sudden and dramatic, or gradual and cumulative. In any case, it marks a new beginning. Following Jesus' words to Nicodemus, "You must be born anew" (John 3:7b, CEB), we speak of this conversion as rebirth, new life in Christ or regeneration.

Following the apostle Paul and Protestant Reformation leader Martin Luther, Wesley called this process "justification." Justification is what happens when Christians abandon all those vain attempts to justify themselves before God, to be seen as "just" in God's eyes through religious and moral practices. It is a time when God's "justifying grace" is experienced and accepted, a time of pardon and forgiveness, of new peace and joy and love. Indeed, we are justified by God's grace through faith.

Justification is also a time of repentance — turning away from behaviors rooted in sin and toward actions that express God's love. In this conversion, we can expect to receive assurance of our present salvation through the Holy Spirit "bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Romans 8:16b, NRSV).

SANCTIFYING GRACE

Salvation is not a static, one-time event in our lives. It is the ongoing experience of God's gracious presence transforming us into whom God intends us to be. Wesley described this dimension of God's grace as "sanctification," or "holiness."

Through God's sanctifying grace, we grow and mature in our ability to live as Jesus lived. As we pray, study the Scriptures, fast, worship and share in fellowship with other Christians, we deepen our knowledge of and love for God. As we respond with compassion to human need and work for justice in our communities, we strengthen our capacity to love neighbor. Our inner thoughts and motives, as well as our outer actions and behavior, are aligned with God's will and testify to our union with God.

In *Who Are We?: Doctrine, Ministry and the Mission of The United Methodist Church*, Bishop Carder notes that we are to press on, with God's help, in the path of sanctification toward perfection. By perfection, Wesley did not mean that we would not make mistakes or have weaknesses. Rather, he understood it to be a continual process of being made perfect in our love of God and each other and of removing our desire to sin.

