

Bellringer

Sherman Avenue United Methodist Church December 2018

From the Pastor's Desk

*May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
2 Corinthians 13:14*

The Apostle Paul ended many of his epistles with the sign-off, “Grace be with you.” It’s interesting that Paul used this particular phrase because he was probably one of the least likely candidates to accept God’s grace.

As a staunch religious leader, Paul’s “first” career was terrorizing Jesus’ followers. He literally persecuted the church and killed first century Christians. That was his mission – until Christ appeared to him, saved him, and forgave him. Perhaps that’s why Paul, more than most, focused on Christ’s incredible grace, because he knew just how much he didn’t deserve to be chosen as a child of God. And you know what? None of us do! None of us deserve to have the God of the universe go to a cross and pay that penalty for us, so that we might be forgiven and have eternal life.

Paul’s salutation reminds us that a thriving church will focus on the grace of God that’s found in what Jesus did for us on the cross. A healthy church will emphasize the grace of God, by remembering the price Jesus paid in giving us something that no one deserves—forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life. Have you experienced God’s grace in your life?



**Christmas Eve Service
December 24th
7:00 p.m.**

**Please invite your family
and friends
to join us for our
Candlelight Service**

Hope to see you there!

Greetings from Suni Caylor

It has been quite a while since we have shared a conversation so let me fix that today.

Last Spring and Summer were very busy trying to get the house into condition for inviting buyers in and preparing to move our stuff out, whew, really tiring. During that time Chuck Caylor, whom you might remember came to help me recover from knee and hip surgery back about '12 and '13, and I began to talk about being alone and the stresses of that. Since I've always thought of him as my dear friend and he's felt the same about me, we thought to make an experiment of sharing his house in Pullman, WA. We decided to vacation together in September after the house was sold and to visit his children to see if they felt ok about me being with their father. If it worked out well, we would bring a few things from Madison to Pullman to get me through the winter and see if a longer time together still seemed good. If so, we would bring the rest of my household to Pullman in the spring and I would change my address permanently. Chuck's two boys think I'm better than ok, and Jordan has been in favor of the plan, he has worried about me living alone when he is so far away, and he liked Chuck when he met him. So we are now in phase two of this plan.

I am living on the eastern border of Washington State, the address is 725 SE Taylor (I think that's funny!) Pullman, WA 99163. I'll be here till about May, depending on the weather next Spring. We are being careful not to jump to any conclusions now about how the future will be and it's a little stressful to not know but it is much wiser to keep that door open until we've had some time to work together and see how things develop. With Christmas coming there will be so much to do, it should be a fair trial.

Washington State University is in Pullman and 8 miles away is Moscow, Idaho and the University of Idaho so there are things of interest to do in the towns. The Cascade Mountains are a couple hours west of us and the hills that lead up to the Rockies are less than two hours east. There are hot springs not too far away and we are surrounded by the Palouse, rolling dune-like hills where lentils and wheat are grown. It is beautiful yet totally different from WI.

Thank you for the tolerance you have always blessed me with. Sherman Ave. has always felt like home and every one of you feels like family, I wish everyone in the world had such security. I pray for blessings to shower over each person in our whole congregation and blessings to rise up from the work of our church. God loves us all, isn't that amazing? And I thank God for you, Suni



Annual Church Rummage Sale February 15 - 16

Rummage sale donations are welcome any time.
You can place them in the entryway
and they will disappear into storage.

If you need items picked up,
please contact Chuck Litweiler 244-3845.

Connections by Craig Myrbo

Habakkuk complains to the Lord: *LORD, how long will I call for help and you not listen? I cry out to you, "Violence!" but you don't deliver us.* Habakkuk 1:2

The Lord responds: *Write the vision. Make it plain, so a runner can read it.* Habakkuk 2:2

I have recently learned through personal experience that there are a large number and variety of social services available when they are needed - Meals on Wheels, nursing care, physical therapy, occupational therapy, community paramedics.

To paraphrase a theme from a popular film "Who you going to call?" Call 211. Help is out there.

Jesse Tree 2018

This year we will be collecting items for Mendota Community School. The Jesse Tree will have cards with suggested gifts. Take a card from the tree or pick something from the list below. Cash donations are also accepted. Please return your unwrapped donations by December 31st. We will be giving the donations to MCS when the school calendar begins in January.

Mendota is a diverse elementary school, serving 336 K-5 students on Madison's north side. About 76% of students live in poverty and they currently have 6 home languages represented in the student population.

They welcome a variety of monetary and new or gently used item donations to our school. Many teachers and staff spend their limited personal funds on things their students need. We realize it takes a village to support our Scholars success. They deeply appreciate any contribution you can make to the school community!

Here are some of requested donations:

- School supplies such as batteries, Purell wipes, pencils, markers, electric pencil sharpeners, facial tissue, glue sticks, hand sanitizer, post-it notes, scissors, and earbuds for laptop computers.
- Clothing for all kid sizes including small adults for both boys and girls, such as gym short/pants, socks, sweatshirts, T-shirts and underwear.
- Food such as daily snacks (see [MMSD Healthy Snack List](#)), gum and non-perishable items for the Mendota Food Pantry
- Hygiene items such as dental floss, deodorant, feminine hygiene products, toothpaste and toothbrushes
- Laundry items such as detergent and dryer sheets
- Playground equipment such as hula hoops, jump ropes and tetherballs.
- Winter gear for all kid sizes such as boots, glove, hats, jackets and scarves

There is so much need in our Northside community. Please consider how you can help.

A Little Piece of Heaven by Veronica Berry

“The kingdom of God is among you.” Luke 17:21

This time of year can be extremely hectic. As we prepare for the holidays, we want our homes to be immaculate, our meals to be fantastic, and our attitudes to be loving and cheerful. As our to do lists grow longer and our energy wanes, the dust in the corners can seem insurmountable, the recipes begin to look like something from Mars, and overnight our attitudes turn into grumpy Grinch. We wonder if all the extra work and effort is worth it while we long for a quiet place to rest our tired bodies and over stressed minds.

I am very familiar with all of this because I work very hard to totally clean my home, no dust allowed, prepare a delicious meal – the turkey must be so tender that the meat falls off the bone, and try to remain cheerful. The next day, I pull out all the decorations, and decorate the tree and house for three days to make it festive. By the time I go back to work, I’m exhausted and sore from using muscles that have been dormant all year.

There are moments when I wonder if the extra work and effort are worth it, but then I see the joy and wonder in my family’s eyes when they look at the tree and see all the ornaments from years past sparking memories of previous holidays. I cherish the gratitude and appreciation given when family and friends enjoy the meal and take time to express what they are thankful for. It warms my heart to hear them say, how much they appreciate how inviting and comfortable our home is.

When I look around the table and see the love in their eyes, I know that God is in the midst of us. I recognize the blessings that surround us and the sum of all the good washes away the aches and pains, stress, and minor annoyances. Where there is an abundance of peace, love, and health there can be no disorder, hate, fear, or lack. For me, this little peace of heaven fuels my soul to do whatever I can to instill joy and happiness in their lives and thank God for the strength and energy to keep moving on.

Life is a perpetual process of giving and receiving. Every time we share time, attention, and love it radiates waves of energy back into our environment. In order to be truly present, we do need to remember to take a moment to center ourselves in the awareness of Christ presence within us. We can take this time to release the unwanted stress and tension in our lives, focus on him and ask for healing and a renewed spirit, so we can be examples of his divine love, gratitude, and peace. These are gifts that are ours to claim and make a conscious choice to share with everyone we meet.

Yes, this time of year can be stressful and hectic; but it also can show you the little piece of heaven that exists in your life through your family, friends, and loved ones. God is everywhere, and the presence of Christ is within you to share. With a little bit of effort and time we can all work together to be kind and gracious to one another, understanding and forgiving, and caring and compassionate. Please take time to look around and find your little piece of heaven and be grateful for what you have.

Happy Holidays!

“The measure you give will be the measure you get back.” Luke 6:38

December 2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
2 10:00 am 65th Church Anniversary	3 6:00 Cub Scouts 6:00 Boy Scouts 6:30 Speak Up!	4 6:30 United Methodist Women	5 4:30 Bible Study 6:00 Band Practice 6:00 Prayer Group 6:00 Meditation TC 6:30 Book Club	6 6:30 Choir	7	8 5:00 Hmong Bible Study
9 8:30 Adult Sunday School 9:30 Worship 10:30 State of the Church 10:45 Sunday School 11:30 Worship 12:30 Hmong Women	10 6:00 Stephen Ministry 6:00 Cub Scouts 6:00 Boy Scouts	11 6:30 Trustees 6:45 Communications	12 4:30 Bible Study 6:00 Band Practice 6:00 Prayer Group 6:00 Meditation TC 6:00 Boy Scout District	13 6:30 Choir	14 6:00 Hmong Ministry & Youth Bible Study	15
16 8:30 Adult Sunday School 9:30 Worship 10:30 Fellowship Breakfast 10:45 Sunday School 11:30 Worship	17 6:00 Boy Scouts 6:00 Cub Scouts	18 6:30 Admin Council	19 4:30 Bible Study 6:00 Band Practice 6:00 Prayer Group 6:00 Meditation TC 6:00 Craft Night	20 6:30 Choir	21	22 4:00 Homeless Shelter Meal 5:00 Hmong Women Song Practice
23 Homeless Shelter Meal 8:30 Adult Sunday School 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 11:30 Worship	24 Christmas Eve 7:00 Christmas Eve Service	25 Christmas Day Merry Christmas	26 4:30 Bible Study 6:00 Band Practice 6:00 Prayer Group 6:00 Meditation TC	27 6:30 Choir	28 6:00 Hmong Ministry & Youth Bible Study	29
30 8:30 Adult Sunday School 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 11:30 Worship	31 New Years Eve					

December Birthdays

Jean W.	12/4
Georgette W.	12/11
Justin K.	12/13
Dan .M.	12/17
Ed M.	12/27
Dorothy A.	12/27
Don H.	12/31



These are the dates that are in the database. If you find that your name is not included with the Birthdays or Anniversaries, please call Matt Treadaway.

Please take a moment to remember our homebound members

Linda J. (B-day 7/11)
c/o Avalon Assisted Living
2875 Fish Hatchery Rd, Rm 11
Fitchburg, WI 53713-3177
608-274-4350

Justin K. (B-day 12/13)
1601 Wheeler Rd #208
Madison, WI 53704-7056
608-416-5343

Ralph S. (B-day 8/6)
4218 Green Ave
Madison, WI 53704-1124
608-244-6172

Christian Education Opportunities

Anyone interested in learning about God's love is invited to join any of these classes at any time.

Early Adult Sunday School meets on Sundays at 8:30 in the Youth Room.

Sunday School for All at 10:45 The Adult Class meets in the Choir Room. The Children's Class meets in the Youth Room.

Wednesday Bible Study begins at 4:30. This is an ongoing study of the Old and New Testament.

The Youth Group meets Wednesday and Friday. Please check the Bellringer and Bulletin for activities, topics and times.

Dinner with Rev. David will continue on the fourth Wednesday of each month at 6:30 in the Parsonage.

Mid-Week Meditation The call in number is 1-641-715-3836. The access code is 486727.