

# Bellringer

Sherman Avenue United Methodist Church

May, 2015

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## Our Mission

*Then he said, "Everything I told you while I was with you comes to this: All the things written about me in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets, and in the Psalms have to be fulfilled." He went on to open their understanding of the Word of God, showing them how to read their Bibles this way. He said, "You can see now how it is written that the Messiah suffers, rises from the dead on the third day, and then a total life-change through the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed in his name to all nations—starting from here, from Jerusalem! You're the first to hear and see it. You're the witnesses. What comes next is very important: I am sending what my Father promised to you, so stay here in the city until he arrives, until you're equipped with power from on high" Luke 24:44-49 (MSG).*

The context of this pericopa is the resurrected Christ appearing to his disciples, sharing a meal with them, and opening their minds to understand the Scriptures. This takes place during the time between the Resurrection and Pentecost Day! It was also the last time he appeared to them. Luke 24: 50-53 says: *"He then led them out of the city over to Bethany. Raising his hands, he blessed them, and while blessing them, took his leave, being carried up to heaven. And they were on their knees, worshiping him. They returned to Jerusalem bursting with joy. They spent all their time in the Temple praising God. Yes."* (MSG).

Jesus gives his disciples a new mission, entrusting them with the message of repentance and forgiveness. As I reflect on this pericopa, I meditate in our mission as faithful followers of the resurrected Christ and how we can fulfill it. As Jesus did with the first disciples he entrusts us with the same message. He told his disciples *"You are witnesses of these things."* Therefore, Jesus is calling us now, as well, to be his witnesses! However, this witnessing is only possible through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was a promise that Jesus had made to his disciples before, and the promise came upon them on the Day of Pentecost. According to Luke 24:49, Jesus told his disciples not to move until they receive the promise of the Holy Spirit!

While pondering our mission as a church of the resurrected Christ and how we can fulfill that mission, a story that I found in the Reader's Digest many years ago came to my mind:

*"A young boy asked his mother and grandmother to play with him in his new sandbox in the front yard. He equipped each of them with a shovel and pail, which they promptly put to use at his request. As the two women became involved in conversation, they began to notice that people passing by seemed very interested in what they were doing. It was then they realized that they had become so busy in talking, they had not noticed that the little boy had gone into the back yard to play—leaving them alone in the sandbox" (Reader's Digest, 9/86, p. 25).*

It's easy, as time goes by, to lose our focus on what we're doing and why we're doing it. However, if we forget what our purpose is, we can look awfully silly. It's not uncommon for churches to forget what their mission is and to get involved in all sorts of activities and programs that do not serve that mission. Thus we must be clear about our mission as a church of the resurrected Christ and how we are going to fulfill it.

On May 24, we'll celebrate the Day of Pentecost, to remind us that God is with us and that we have been empowered with the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Good News of God's love and be witnesses for Jesus Christ!

As friends and members of Sherman Avenue United Methodist Church, during this month of May, I invite you to focus on our mission to *proclaim repentance for forgiveness of sins in Christ's name to all the nations, in the power of the Spirit.*

Your Servant in Christ, Pastor Rafael.

## Spiritual Blossoms by Veronica Berry

*“As a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.” Isaiah 61:11*

In our life’s garden, we choose what seeds to plant. Our choices determine what thoughts and actions thrive. Before anything can be planted, we must ready the soil and the environment. We have to till the hardened soil, turning the dirt to see what is below the surface. We can choose to expose our fears and hidden insecurities so we can truly see what is holding us back. We have the ability to allow the softening rains of God’s love melt our harshness and anger so seeds of compassion and kindness have the proper conditions for growth.

Weeding out unwanted beliefs is hard work. Prejudices sown in our childhood need to be released, fear needs to be replaced with trust, and hopelessness and desperation need to be pulled and extracted so new dreams, gratitude, and joy can grow. These changes don’t come easily but it’s worth the pain and sweat we put into it. Prying open the closed doors of our tenderness allows God’s spirit to flow freely in our hearts and souls.

Through the power of our thoughts, we can alter our perception of our world. By intentionally looking for examples of love, we become more aware of the Holy Spirit that exists within each of us. As we focus on the gestures of kindness, words of encouragement, acts of love, unexpected generosity, and unbounded joy, our awareness of the goodness of life grows.

Faith is the powerful vitamin that enriches the soil for our consciousness to blossom. Through our faith, we find the courage to tackle the beginning of our transformation by letting go of the unnecessary dandelions filling our spiritual garden with negativity and mediocrity. Faith gives us the strength to pull the weeds, till the soil, water the seeds with God’s words, and sprinkle bits of his vitamins by knowing that he is always there.

By making the choice to alter our thoughts and change our lives, we can blossom into the spiritual beings God has called us to be.

*“If we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.” 1 John 4:12*

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### **News from the United Methodist Women**

The United Methodist Women focuses on missions and activities that support the needs of women, children, and youth. The S.A.U.M.C. UMW gives yearly donations to Church Women United, Bashford Food Pantry, Food for the Homeless Shelter, UMW District Pledge, church music, and also takes care of the pest control for our church. UMW meetings are usually the first Tuesday of the month at 6:00 PM.

The UMW Programs for 2015 are:

Tuesday, June 3 - Presentation on the Dominican Republic (Marianna Vargas)

Tuesday, July 7 - Movie - Firestone and the Warlord

Tuesday, Aug. 4 - Book Review - Patsy McDonald

Tuesday, Sept - TBD - Stress Management - Dr. Bob McGraff

Sept. TBD Nurturing Day

Tuesday, Oct. 6 - Discussion on the Book of Ruth with soup & dessert

Tuesday, Nov. 3 Something to Share - Jolieth McIntosh

Tuesday, Dec 8 Christmas Party - Kay & Walt Nelson's home



### God's Helpers

God could not be in every place  
With loving hands to help erase  
The teardrops from each baby's face,  
And so He thought of mother.

He could not send us here alone  
And leave us to a fate unknown;  
Without providing for His own,  
The outstretched arms of mother.

God could not watch us night and day  
And kneel beside our crib to pray,  
Or kiss our little aches away;  
And so He sent us mother.

And when our childhood days began,  
He simply could not take command.  
That's why He placed our tiny hand  
Securely into mother's.

The days of youth slipped quickly by,  
Life's sun rose higher in the sky.  
Full grown were we, yet ever nigh  
To love us still, was mother.

And when life's span of years shall end,  
I know that God will gladly send,  
To welcome home her child again,  
That ever-faithful mother.

George W. Wiseman



### Stephen Recognition In the spirit of the Book of Acts

*"Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, while we, for our part will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word." Act 6: 3-4*

### Sherman Avenue United Methodist Church Certificates of Appreciation Presented to Billy Thao

In recognition of your volunteer service to our church by being part of the Praise & Worship Team, helping as an usher, helping to serve meals at the homeless shelter and being the President of the Youth Group for 2015.

We hope this certificate will serve as a lasting memento of our appreciation for your continued and dedicated service.  
In the name of God, Thank You!



### Summer Musicians Wanted!

Many thanks to the Chancel Choir, Hmong Choir and the Youth Praise Band for providing music for our worship services.

The Chancel Choir will be taking a well-deserved break this summer. We'd like to offer a special \*Thank You\* to Barbara Zanoni for giving us another wonderful year of musical offerings.

We are looking for singers and instrumentalists to fill in from June through August. Please contact the church office if you are interested in sharing your music with us.

## **Connections by Craig Myrbo**

Wisconsin Annual Conference is scheduled for June 12-14 with a learning day on June 15.

Sign up for a meal for lunch if you register by May 12.

Workshops are free.

<https://www.signup4.net/public/ap.aspx?EID=20152429E&OID=160>

Wisconsin United Methodist Federation for Social Action WUMFSA will hold its Annual Conference gathering on June 12 5:45-7:00 at Asbury UMC 6101 University Avenue.

Simple supper (subs) free will offering

Presentation of Perry Saito award

In addition

Address by Peter Bakken (Wisconsin Council of Churches)

On the implications of the State budget for Faith Community Advocacy

RSVP by noon June 11

contact [frgaylor@charter.net](mailto:frgaylor@charter.net) until June 5

after June 5, please call 608 443 6361

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## **Join in Prayers for Recent Earthquakes**

Please join me in praying for the people of Nepal, India, and China, and all others affected by the recent earthquakes and avalanches. As we pray, we remember the families of those who have been killed or injured, and the many rescuers, relief workers, physicians, nurses, and other caregivers who are themselves risking their own safety to search for victims and to care for survivors.

In the midst of destruction and pain, we look for ways to provide the tangible assistance needed in these times of disaster. As is always the case, the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) will respond appropriately and work with other international organizations to provide help. To offer financial support, make out checks to your local church, write UMCOR Advance #982450 in the memo, and put in the offering plate.

Thank you for your prayers and for your faithful response to the needs of others with the love and compassion of Christ.

Your brother in Christ,  
Hee-Soo Jung, PhD  
Bishop

**May 2015**

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<b>Celebrate Leah Brown's Graduation Sunday, May 24th 1:30 pm Congratulations Leah!</b>					1 3:00 Hispano Committee	2 9:00 Hispano Committee 5:00 Men's Group
3 8:30 Sunday School 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 11:30 Worship 6:00 Self-defense 6:00 Ping Pong	4 6:15 Brownie Scouts 6:30 Cub Scouts	5 9:30 ELL 6:00 UMW	6 12:00 Staff Meeting 6:00 Band Practice	7 <b>National Day of Prayer</b> 6:30 Choir	8 6:00 Hmong Ministry 6:00 Youth Bible Study	9
10 8:30 Sunday School 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 11:30 Worship 6:00 Self-defense 6:00 Ping Pong	11 6:15 Jr Girl Scouts 6:30 Cub Scouts	12 9:00 ELL 6:30 Trustees 7:00 Laity Team Circuit 47	13 12:00 Staff Meeting 6:00 Band Practice	14 6:30 Choir	15	16
17 <b>Youth Breakfast</b> 8:30 Sunday School 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 11:30 Worship 6:00 Self-defense 6:00 Ping Pong	18 6:15 Daisy Scouts 6:15 Brownie Scouts	19 9:00 ELL 6:30 Admin Council	20 12:00 Staff Meeting 6:00 Band Practice 6:00 Craft Night	21 6:30 Choir	22 5:30 Cub Scouts Overnight 6:00 Hmong Ministry 6:00 Youth Bible Study	23
24 8:30 Sunday School 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 11:30 Worship 1:30 Leah's Party 6:00 Ping Pong	25 <b>Memorial Day</b>  <b>5:00 Newsletter Deadline</b>	26 9:00 ELL 6:30 O&M Meeting	27 12:00 Staff Meeting 6:00 Band Practice	28 8:00 Newsletter 4:30 Bible Study	29 6:00 Prayer Vigil	30
31 8:30 Sunday School 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 11:30 Worship 6:00 Ping Pong	<b>Need A Prayer?</b>  <b>Call</b> <b>Pat Bruccoleri (576-7331)</b> <b>Cyndy Hoffman (513 2280)</b>			<b>May Birthdays</b>  ED N 5/2 KANGSA T 5/4 KATIE M 5/6 BILLY T 5/7 EDDIE N 5/8 JESSICA M 5/9 NHA T 5/9 DEBBIE M 5/14 MAYNARD M 5/22		
<b>Please take a moment to remember our homebound members</b>  <b>Linda J</b> c/o Avalon Assisted Living 2875 Fish Hatchery Rd, Rm 11 Fitchburg, WI 53713-3177 608-274-4350  <b>Marvel M</b> 702 Jupiter Dr #276 Madison, WI 53718-2972 608-663-8783		<b>If you need to reserve space in the church you can check the Church Calendar at our web site</b> <a href="http://www.shermanavenueumc.org">www.shermanavenueumc.org</a>  <b>If your date and time are open, please contact the Church Secretary to finalize your reservation</b> <b>The secretary will post all events to the calendar</b>			<b>May Anniversaries</b>  DON & COLEEN H 5/15 BRAD & JANELL K 5/28 MARLENE & GAYLE T 5/30  <i>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</i>	