

Bellringer

Sherman Avenue United Methodist Church

July 2017

From the Pastor's Desk

*"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come."
2 Corinthians 5:7*

Every person – every person has an identity. What is ours?

You could be a contractor, a doctor, or a lawyer. Or maybe your identity is in your marital status: married, single, divorced, or widowed.

All people are known by something that, in some way, identifies who they are. God's Word tells us that we can take on a new identity when we are compelled by the love of God that is found in Christ.

In other words, when our spiritual eyes are opened and we finally see how much God loves us, we can't help but respond to God's love and give our hearts and lives to Christ in faith.

Here's some really good news. Paul, who wrote these words in 2 Corinthians 5:17, had been a religious persecutor.

He was headed out to arrest, persecute and kill Christians when he encountered the Risen Christ. He repented (which means he changed what he thought of Jesus in a way that changed the focus of his life). He became a devoted follower of Christ.

From a religious persecutor to a Christian. How's that for a complete change of identity? If that can happen to him, I promise it can happen to any one of us.

Trusting Christ means believing with our minds what the Bible tells us who Jesus is. He's the Son of God. It involves believing that He died on the cross for our sins and rose from the dead.

Christian Education Opportunities Spring 2017

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.
- Sunday School for All at 10:45 is on Summer vacation. Classes will resume in September.
- 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 church 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.

Summer's Laughter by Veronica Berry

"Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy." Psalms 126:2

When summer arrives, I still feel like a child whose school year has just ended and I can't wait to get outside. Sunny days, warm weather, with a slight hint of a cool breeze, lifts my spirit and warms my soul. Lazy summer afternoons soothe me into a state of deep relaxation so all I want to do is laugh and play. I know it doesn't sound like the adult thing to do, but after worrying about everything from paying the bills to what's going to happen with the new health care bill, relaxing and laughing feels absolutely wonderful!

I often hear that laughter is the best medicine. It connects us with others in positive ways and has actually been proven to produce positive changes in mind, body, and emotions. When we laugh our whole mood improves. Our bodies begin to release the tension we have been holding onto and our minds shift from the negative pull of despair to the positive link of hope. Laughter creates a total body response that fills us with joy.

I sometimes wonder if God created the seasons of the world to coincide with the seasons in our daily lives. As adults we concentrate so hard on what we must or should do, that we hardly ever just be and thoroughly enjoy the magnificent beings we are. We seem to be more at home conquering the crisis and frustrations in our lives and in the world than playing a board game with our family or taking a walk in the park to mindfully acknowledge God's beautiful creations of nature. Most of us work hard, are concerned about the changes in our world, and strive to be better and make a difference. But so many of us feel guilty when we stop to take a moment to do absolutely nothing and just relax. How much of our time is spent on worrying and feeling overwhelmed or anxious compared to spending time enjoying our life and finding opportunities for laughter?

God has blest us with a bottomless well that never runs dry, a reservoir of happiness and peace that lies deep within us. We can tap into that well to refresh our spirits, relax our minds and soothe our anxious hearts. We are God's divine creatures, so a gladness of spirit is warranted. Our inner joy is our connection to God.

Laughter exudes a joyful covering and resonates in our lives. It fills us with unlimited potential and possibilities. When we recognize the possibilities in this very minute we can laugh and realize that we can create a lifetime of happy right now. We can decide to live a life filled with laughter and joy. Summer beckons us to take a moment to play. Summer urges us to, at least for one season, lay down our baggage, put away our misery and step out into the sun.

With laughter and joy we can open our eyes to see life differently and feel strong and capable of handling any situation. We can regulate our emotions and feel balanced and serene. Most importantly we can be appreciative of the life God has given us and realize that people who laugh, last.

Men's Group

The Men's Group will have a nature walk at Cherokee Marsh on July 8th.
We will meet at the church at 5:00 p.m. and go together.

Bottled water will be provided.

CONNECTIONS by Craig Myrbo

We connect by welcoming the stranger

"When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God."
Leviticus 19:33-34

"I was a stranger and you welcomed me." Matthew 25: 35

"Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it." Hebrews 13:2

Sherman Avenue UMC welcomes people from diverse areas of the world. Thank God for our fulfilling this mandate of the scriptures.

How can we further fulfill the scriptural guidance? The scripture does not distinguish between those who are authorized or legal by the policy of United States or the host country and those that are not.

Some possibilities for further action are supporting advanced special projects that are focused on immigration issues. These include advance funds that provide legal services, education and advocacy for refugees and immigrants throughout the country.

Here are some of the advance funds to support:

Wisconsin Conference Immigrant Assistance Fund (Advance #7795)

Just Neighbors Ministry (Advance #803002 Northern Virginia)

National Justice for Our Neighbors (Advance #901285 Albany NY)



A Fourth of July Prayer

We lift up our hearts, O God, on this day of celebration in gratitude for the gift of being Americans.

We rejoice with all those who share in the great dream of freedom and dignity for all.

With flags and feasting, with family and friends, we salute those who have sacrificed that we might have the opportunity to bring to fulfillment our many God-given gifts.

As we deny all prejudice a place in our hearts, may we also clearly declare our intention to work for the time when all people, regardless of race, religion or sex, will be granted equal dignity and worth.

Come, O gracious God, who led your children Israel from slavery, keep us free from all that might hold us in bondage.

Bless our country and join our simple celebration that we may praise you, our Source of freedom, the One in whom we place our trust. Amen.

Ed Hays

A Pilgrim's Almanac:

Reflections for Each Day of the Year, p. 111

United Methodist Women

The UMW is having a bake sale Saturday, July 15 in conjunction with a craft/vendor sale hosted by Cyndy H. Your contribution of homemade items will be greatly appreciated and will benefit the UMW. My thanks in advance for all of you who always seem to find time to bake or prepare something. Items may be dropped off Friday afternoon prior to the sale or that Saturday morning.

The UMW is taking the summer off so please note that there are no meetings scheduled for July or August. We will resume Tuesday, September 5th when we will be meeting at Oakwood East to enjoy some social time with the ladies from our church that live at Oakwood. If you would like to join us and need a ride please contact me, Carol, at 834-0282.

Update from The Administrative Council

Our Vision: To share God's love and nurture all people to be disciples/followers of Jesus Christ.

The Book of Discipline states the Administrative Council is called to provide for the planning and implementation of programs that nurture, outreach, and manage the resources of our church.

The Council has been working on developing and renewing existing programs that facilitate this calling. Creating a new Vision Statement was the first step in this process.

During a Saturday meeting with Dr. John Odom, we looked at the Mission Statement we had and realized it was actually a Vision Statement. A Vision Statement is a big picture idea. A Mission Statement is a road map telling us the steps we are going to take to fulfill our Vision. The team wanted a Vision Statement that displayed the values of Sherman Avenue United Methodist Church. The above Vision Statement is the result of many meetings and discussions regarding who we are as Christians and what we want people to know about us.

The team is currently working on the Mission Statement. There will be more information regarding our Mission in the future.

Thank you to all of the Administrative Council members who participated in these discussions.

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 Certificate of Appreciation Presented to

Mildred W.

In recognition of your volunteer service to our church by serving as a member of the Trustees Committee, for participating in the Spring/Fall clean-ups, for attending UMW Christmas parties, for being a sweet, kind Christian woman and for many other tasks of which few people are aware. 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!

Christmas in July Craft & Direct Sales Fair
Saturday, July 15, 2017
10 – 4 PM in Fellowship Hall

Questions contact Cyndy H.
@ 608-513-2280 or via e-mail: cyndy8756@gmail.com



JULY 2017

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2 8:30 Adult Sunday School 9:30 Worship 11:30 Worship 12:30 Hmong Men 1:00 Party	3	4	5 3:00 ELL 4:30 Bible Study 6:00 Band Practice 6:00 Prayer Group 6:00 Meditation TC	6	7	8 1:00 Stephens Ministry 5:00 Men's Group
9 8:30 Adult Sunday School 9:30 Worship 11:30 Worship 12:30 Hmong Women	10 6:00 SPRC	11 6:30 Trustees 6:45 Communications	12 3:00 ELL 4:30 Bible Study 6:00 Band Practice 6:00 Prayer Group 6:00 Meditation TC	13	14 6:00 Hmong Ministry & Youth Bible Study 6:00 Craft Setup	15 8:30 Craft Fair
16 8:30 Adult Sunday School 9:30 Worship 11:30 Worship	17	18 6:00 Admin Council	19 3:00 ELL 4:30 Bible Study 6:00 Craft Night 6:00 Band Practice 6:00 Prayer Group 6:00 Meditation TC	20	21 5:00 Wedding Rehearsal	22 9:30 Wedding 1:00 Stephens Ministry
23 8:30 Adult Sunday School 9:30 Worship 11:30 Worship	24 5:00 Newsletter Deadline	25 5:30 Discipleship Team 6:30 Outreach & Missions	26 3:00 ELL 4:30 Bible Study 6:00 Band Practice 6:00 Prayer Group 6:00 Meditation TC 6:30 Dinner With Rev David Bible Study	27 9:00 Copy & Fold	28 6:00 Hmong Ministry & Youth Bible Study	29 1:00 Stephens Ministry
30 8:30 Adult Sunday School 9:30 Worship 11:30 Worship	31	A special welcome to new members of the SAUMC family! Vicky Meyer Bill Hutchinson				

July Birthdays & Anniversaries

BIRTHDAYS

Virginia F.	7/3
Melissa M.	7/8
Kyle V.	7/10
Linda J.	7/11
Mildred W.	7/31

ANNIVERSARIES

Nancy & Brooks B.	7/4
Melissa & Chris M.	7/29

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 T.

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

Marvel M. (B-day 2/28)
 718 Jupiter Dr #202
 Madison, WI 53718-2950
 608-663-8783

Carol R. (B-day 2/1)
 1524 Wheeler Rd #B
 Madison, WI 53704-1443
 608-249-2638

Ginny S. (B-day 9/24)
 1601 Wheeler Rd #209
 Madison, WI 53704-7056
 608-244-9515