

Bellringer

Sherman Avenue United Methodist Church

November, 2015

From the Pastor's Desk:

“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.”

1 Corinthians 12:12-13

This year our 2015 Stewardship campaign “Fulfilling God’s Purpose!” has three components: Buildings Relationships, Witnessing for Jesus and Living as Servants. Each one of these themes invites us to live in covenant as one body, with the same missional purpose: Make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

One of the blessings of Annual Conferences in the United Methodist Church is the covenant with local congregations in regard to the appointment of Clergy. The clergy are appointed by the Bishop for missional reasons to local congregations that are in ministry in their communities. In this process, open itinerancy plays a very important role.

Open itinerancy means appointments are made without regard to race, ethnic origin, gender, color, disability, marital status, or age. In other words, you can have a pastor of a different ethnic background from that of the majority of the congregation. This is the case for Sherman UMC, where I am entering into my second year of being in ministry with you. Praise the Lord for this!

For me, this is a gift that affirms that, in Christ, we are one body, as the Apostle Paul says to the community of Corinth in 1Corinthians 12:12-13. As we continue together serving the Lord in this cross cultural-racial appointment, I invite you in the love of Christ to continue engaging in ministry with me in a spirit of mutuality. According to the dictionary, mutuality is a reciprocal relationship between interdependent entities, but I believe that mutuality is an attitude.

In the book, *Mutuality in Mission* by Gloria and Jacob Dharmaraj, it is stated with the powerful statement that, “Mutuality does not form on its own; it evolves when the partners realize that there is love, trust and acceptance. Mutuality enables people to change their view of those who are different. Mutuality means understanding, acknowledging and respecting cultural and racial differences.”

God has given you all kinds of gifts and graces for ministry, and when they work together with my gifts and graces in a mutual relationship, we can be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ ready to reach out and make disciples for the transformation of the world.

I pray to the Lord of the Harvest that we can continue being stronger in our work together building God’s kingdom in our midst. At the same time in this month of November, when we prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving Day, I invite you to reflect with me in the discipline of the power of counting! Yes, the power of counting our blessings! Based in Psalm 118, verses 1-5 “Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever! Let Israel say, “His steadfast love endures forever.” Let the house of Aaron say, “His steadfast love endures forever.” Let those who fear the Lord say, “His steadfast love endures forever.” Out of my distress I called on the Lord; the Lord answered me and set me free.”

Be grateful! Happy Thanksgiving!!

Your servant in Christ, Pastor Rafael.



One Moment with God by Veronica Berry

“Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving.” Colossians 4:2

As the holiday season approaches, our schedules can become bogged down with the season’s celebrations and appointments. We search for the proper ingredients to make the perfect meal for our friends and families. We squeeze in time to clean every nook and cranny in our homes that we have purposely neglected the months before, so everything will be sparkling clean. We shop, we cook, we travel, we visit, we decorate, and we work. We rush our lives into a frenzied mess, until we are so exhausted that we fall into a fitful sleep, only to repeat this process over again the next day.

I wonder how many of us take the time to look at our schedules and realize out of all those appointments, we failed to take one moment with God. In every season, prayer and meditation are the most important activities on our calendars. These spiritual appointments are reminders for us to walk away from the rush of our preconceived frenzy of what we should be doing. So we can take a moment to quiet our minds and enter a peaceful state of being. In the silence we remember to connect with God, pray, and listen for his guidance.

Creating a daily habit for prayer and meditation stills our anxious thoughts, opens the door to wisdom and love, and inspires us to put our spiritual path first. Connecting with that spirit brings an awareness and recognition of all the blessings in our lives. Appreciation for these blessings grows when we take time to give thanks for all we have.

God has blest us with the gift of choice. We can consciously choose to set aside distracting thoughts in a time of quiet reflection and become still. In that stillness we can become an outlet for God to express his infinite love and creativity. We can relax and allow his divine energy restore our spirit. We can let go and feel the warmth of his love comfort our soul.

The holiday season is his time and we are simply his ambassadors sent here to share his message and demonstrate his love. It is essential for us to take one moment with God every day to fortify our spiritual foundation, express our gratitude to him for all our blessings, and interact with others in a kind and loving way.

Creating the perfect meal in the cleanest house on the shiniest table is nice but it doesn’t necessarily make it the best celebration. The best celebration is filled with love, understanding, kindness, laughter, thankfulness, and love. The best celebration honors family, friends, and above all God. Take time this season to schedule one moment with him every day to confirm your faith, follow his guidance, and be receptive to his voice.

“Come near to God and he will come near to you.” James 4:8

A Prayer for The Grieving By Tiffany Stuart

Father God, thank You for the gift of being able to pray to You for others. Lord, so many people are grieving right now. This life is hard and sometimes even cruel. We don’t understand. We get mad. We feel abandoned, forgotten, and alone. Sometimes You allow sorrow and loss to break our hearts and we want to know why. We need reasons. We need hope. But we believe we can trust You when our “why” goes unanswered. Often this life makes no sense.

You are good. You are God, sovereign over all. You know what we don’t know. Your ways are not our ways. Your thoughts and plans are higher. We see dimly through eyes of pain. We hurt because we once loved. And now we’ve lost that love.

Almighty, all powerful God, we are asking for You to hold those who are grieving close to Your heart today. Love them in a way they have never known. Let them feel Your amazing love. May Your love be more than enough during this time. Wipe their tears. Cuddle them. Rock them to sleep. Let them know they are never truly alone. Let them know You are always there. And when everything in this world is lost, Your love remains. Today, forever, always.

Thank You, Lord. In Jesus’ powerful and healing name we pray, Amen.



United Methodist Women

The next UMW meeting is Tuesday, Nov. 3 at 6:00 PM. Patsy McDonald will be leading the discussion on the book, *Brain on Fire* by Susannah Cahalan. Anyone interested is invited to attend.

The December UMW meeting is Tuesday, Dec. 8 at 6:00 PM at the home of Walt and Kay Nelson. It will be a Christmas Party. Women and gentlemen are invited. If possible, please bring cookies or an appetizer. If you are in need of transportation, please contact Veronica Berry. See you there! Call the office for more information 244-0868.

The UMW is getting ready for the annual Christmas cookie sale. Please bring your cookie donations to the church on Saturday, December 12th at 10:00 AM. We will package them for sale after church on Sunday, December 13th.

SAUMC - Hmong Women By: Chienyann Khang

This year has gone by very fast for the Hmong Women's Group with bimonthly song practices, quarterly family gatherings, and an annual revival and two retreats held by the Hmong United Methodist Women Association (HUMWA).

Our year started with a spring retreat (HUMWA) led by Reverend Im Jung where we learned what our spiritual gifts are and how to use them. Rev. Im compared us to pottery and talked about how we were each individually molded like vases. Then, we had our first family gathering where we watched and discussed the movie "Fireproof". This gave couples an opportunity to reflect on their marriage and learn about the effectiveness of communication and letting God be the lead in our marriages. In May, we attended the annual HUMWA revival held at the Heartland Conference Center and Retreat in Trego, WI. The theme was "The Wedding Feast". We attended 5 services where we learned about how God has graciously invited all of us to join Him for a banquet. In the summer, we planned a family camping weekend for Father's Day. We went to Lake Kegonsa in Stoughton. In the fall, a couple of women attended the HUMWA fall retreat in Wausau, WI with the theme of "Happily Ever" in continuation to the revival theme. As the year is coming to an end, we are hoping to have a Christmas gathering with fellowship, games, and dinner.

Over and over again, God has blessed us through another year. As individuals, we each have personal issues, but God has brought us all together to love and support each other.

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 Veronica Berry

In recognition of your volunteer service to our church as originator of Multicultural Day, President of UMW; writing beautiful articles for the Bellringer; preaching from the pulpit; heading up funeral receptions; making delicious cheesecakes, and many other tasks in 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!

CONNECTIONS by Craig Myrbo - How I Decide

Matthew 22:36-40 Common English Bible (CEB)

36 "Teacher, what is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

37 He replied, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being,[a] and with all your mind. 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: You must love your neighbor as you love yourself. [b] 40 All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commands."

Footnotes:

Matthew 22:37 Deut 6:5

Matthew 22:39 Lev 19:18

Pretty simple, huh?
Simple but not easy.

I have tried to use the above criteria
to live my life as a Christian.

"Love your neighbor as yourself"

What is love?
See 1 Corinthians 13

Who is my neighbor?
Jesus answers that question with a story.
It is called the good Samaritan.

Luke 10:25-37 Common English Bible (CEB)

29 But the legal expert wanted to prove that he was right, so he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

30 Jesus replied, "A man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. He encountered thieves, who stripped him naked, beat him up, and left him near death. 31 Now it just so happened that a priest was also going down the same road. When he saw the injured man, he crossed over to the other side of the road and went on his way. 32 Likewise, a Levite

came by that spot, saw the injured man, and crossed over to the other side of the road and went on his way. 33 A Samaritan, who was on a journey, came to where the man was. But when he saw him, he was moved with compassion. 34 The Samaritan went to him and bandaged his wounds, tending them with oil and wine. Then he placed the wounded man on his own donkey, took him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 The next day, he took two full days' worth of wages and gave them to the innkeeper. He said, 'Take care of him, and when I return, I will pay you back for any additional costs.' 36 What do you think? Which one of these three was a neighbor to the man who encountered thieves?"

37 Then the legal expert said, "The one who demonstrated mercy toward him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise,"

The Samaritan sees a need and goes out of his way
to help address that need.

How do I go and do likewise in 21st century
Madison, Wisconsin?

There are institutional ways of going and doing
likewise in 21st-century Wisconsin.

These are the areas I highlight in this column.

How do we connect?
How are we going to do likewise?
What kind of society do we want?

I have become convinced that
loving your neighbor as yourself involves
public policy in 21st-century Wisconsin .

That is how I decide what to put
in this column each month.

Go and do likewise.

November 2015

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 8:30 Sunday School 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 11:30 Worship 6:00 Self-defense	2 6:15 Brownie Scouts 6:30 Cub Scouts	3 6:00 UMW	4 4:30 Bible Study 6:00 Band Practice 6:30 The Story Bible Study	5 6:30 Choir	6 6:00 Hmong Ministry 6:00 Youth Bible Study	7 5:00 Men's Group
8 8:30 Sunday School 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 11:30 Worship 6:00 Self-defense	9 6:15 Communication 6:30 Cub Scouts	10 6:30 Trustees	11 4:30 Bible Study 6:00 Band Practice 6:30 The Story Bible Study	12 6:30 Choir	13	14 8:00 Youth Ministry
15 8:30 Sunday School 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 11:30 Worship 3:00 Scouts 6:00 Self-defense	16 6:15 Brownie Scouts 6:30 Cub Scouts	17 6:00 Admin Council	18 4:30 Bible Study 6:00 Craft Night 6:00 Band Practice 6:30 The Story Bible Study	19 6:30 Choir	20 6:00 Hmong Ministry 6:00 Youth Bible Study	21 9:00 Sobiab
22 8:30 Sunday School 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 11:30 Worship 6:00 Self-defense	23 5:00 Newsletter Deadline	24 6:30 Outreach & Missions	25 4:30 Bible Study 6:00 Band Practice 6:30 The Story Bible Study	26 Thanksgiving	27 8:00 Copy & Fold	28
29 8:30 Sunday School 9:30 Worship 10:30 Blood Pressure Clinic 10:45 Sunday School 11:30 Worship 6:00 Self-defense	30 6:30 Cub Scouts	Need A Prayer? Call Pat Bruccoleri (576-7331) or Cyndy Hoffman (513-2280)				

**Please take a moment
to remember our
homebound members
Contact Lisa in the office for
current addresses and phone
numbers: 244-0868**

Linda Jungbluth

Marvel Mapes

Jean & Justin Kramer

November Birthdays

Frances F	11/5
Linda L	11/5
Steve L	11/9
Helen J	11/10
Gayle T	11/11
Joan S	11/12
Mailao L	11/15
Vincent W	11/21
Aron V	11/29

November Anniversaries

Chuck & Okwha L	11/12
Cyndy & Ron H	11/25

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

