UMCTO Connect
Friday, August 30, 2019
The Weekly Eblast of News & Newsmakers from UMCTO

PASTOR'S CORNER
Since this coming Sunday is Communion Sunday and the scene for our scripture reading from Luke(14:1,7-14) is at the table, we are going to talk about “Table Manners.” Meals are important in the Bible, especially in the Gospel of Luke. I recommend you thumb through Luke’s gospel and see how many times Jesus is at a meal. The Jesus of Luke’s Gospel is often preoccupied with eating, which is something we Methodists like to do also; Methodists like to gather around a table a lot. Can I get an Amen? And so I think it would be wise for us to consider what Jesus said around the table this Sunday in Luke’s Gospel.

One day, when Jesus was at a fancy dinner party, he started talking about table manners. No, it wasn’t about the basic table setting rules and guidelines: Utensils are placed in the order of use; that is, from the outside in. A second rule, with only a few exceptions, is: Forks go to the left of the plate, and knives and spoons go to the right. And finally, only set the table with utensils you will use. No soup; no soup spoon…

No. it wasn’t about that. This is what Jesus said: “When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor….But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place.” Here Jesus, watching some people scramble for seats of honor, advises them to choose the lowest place first, way down from the head table because as he said, “all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted…” He then said to the one who had invited him, “When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid….but invite the poor, the crippled ….and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

How do your Table Manners line up with the Kingdom Etiquette? Let’s talk about our Table Manners this Sunday.

See you at church,
Pastor John

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**WHAT IS WORSHIP?**

by Jordan Duke, Director of Worship Arts

Dear UMCTO Family,

Merriam-Webster.com defines the word *worship* in this way:

- To honor or show reverence for a divine being or supernatural power.
- To regard with great or extravagant respect, honor, or devotion.

In the Christian world, the word *worship* is often used to describe an event we will attend or the music part of a church service. We may use this word to explain what kind of song we are listening to or the type of pastoral role one holds on a church staff. It’s not that those are incorrect; they just don’t represent the whole picture. Worship is not about music, instruments or an event. It’s not about a type of song or a job description. It’s so much more than that. Worship is a heart posture.

In the simplest of terms, worship is ascribing unspeakable value and displaying
substantial love to something. That thing may be a deity, an ancient artifact, a material possession or a human being. Regardless of what the thing is that we are worshiping, we are all worshipers.

So, what are we worshiping?

On any given day, we direct our adoration and devotion to something or to someone. It could be our careers, our spouses, a hobby, or a drive to learn more. It might even be our favorite sports team. There are things that hold a top position in our hearts. Before we can eradicate any thing that is receiving misplaced honor and adoration, first we have to be aware of what it is.

As we embark on the road ahead to learn more about a lifestyle of worship, begin each day with a heart attitude that wants to learn and grow. We typically worship what is high on our priority list. Let’s ask God to give us eyes to see where we’re placing our affection and respect. Let’s tell Him that we want to understand what it means to truly worship Him with our lives. And let’s be confident that He will show us.

Reflect:

- Read through Psalm 100 and declare it to your God as you do.
- As you go about your day, pay attention to the things that you “show honor and reverence” to. When you become aware of something that’s taking God’s place in your heart, simply repent and ask God to help you place Him in His rightful place in your life.
- Write down any revelation that God speaks to you through today’s Bible reading or devotional.

Scripture Readings:

- Psalms 71:1-8
- Psalms 100

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SAVE-THE-DATES

**September 15th** - UMCTO Fall Ministry Fair on the patio
The Ministry Fair’s date has been changed to correspond with Back to School Sunday!

**October 5** - UMW Fall Luncheon (see below)

**October 20th** - Fall Festival

UMW - CELEBRATING OUR LEGACY
Celebrating UMW’s 150th Anniversary
To raise funds for UMW’s $100,000 “Because We Care Campaign” to benefit the Methodist Hospital Rehab Unit

Eight members of our UMW unit attended the Cal-Pac Conference UMW’s high tea and fashion show August 24th at Glendale First UMC. The event raised money for the Methodist Hospital Rehabilitation Unit in Arcadia. Each unit decorated a table and had selected at least one person as their “Woman of Distinction”.

Among those so honored were three women; one woman who was 105 years old, another 100 years old, and another who was 99 years and 11 months old! Lois Sheen was surprised and delighted that our unit had named her their “Woman of Distinction”. In the photo at the left, our unit’s president, Liz Hoskinson and Lois pose with UMW Conference President Diane Gin. In the photo on the right, standing next to our unit’s table are (left to right) Barbara Marshall, Lois Sheen, Liz Hoskinson, Donna Mullennix, and Susan Ruwhiu. Seated in front of them are Rose Cole, Shirley Hamilton, and Marge Mayfield.

AND UPCOMING...
We have two weeks left of summer kids church and then we will begin our new fall program! I am very excited for our 4th, 5th, and 6th graders as they embark on a Bible adventure with Heidi Kane. Our preschoolers through 3rd graders will dig back into learning how to become disciples of Jesus! This Sunday Pastor John will be preaching from Luke 14: 1, 7-14...table manners. When I was a child, my parents would put ten poker chips at our place at the table. Each time we made an error (table manners) we had to give one back. At the end of dinner, we got 1 cent for every chip we had left. My brother and I really competed to have the most left at the end of the meal! The "reward"...
for table manners in this scripture is better than 10 cents. "For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." Exalted is described as high-ranking, elevated, prominent, superior, lofty, grand, noble, dignified, eminent, prestigious, illustrious, distinguished, and esteemed. Pretty high reward for learning how to be humble and gracious! This is a fun lesson to teach to the kids as they line up for something good and we go to the last person first.

We have two birthdays to celebrate this week, Devynn Patrick and Parker Barwick which means.....treats!

This is also Communion Sunday which is always a joy to see families receiving communion together!

See you at church!
Amy

Speaking of Good Table Manners...

HELP WANTED!!

Would you like to help in passing on to the next generation a legacy beyond good table manners? How about helping them learn wisdom, love, joy, peace, self-control, kindness - to name a few.

Our Children's Ministry needs volunteers as you know. But, what you didn't know is that we have 10 committed people and 4 who can substitute when needed. My ideal plan is to have 24 people who are willing to serve just one Sunday a month!

That's only 10 more!

As it stands now, our existing 10 people will serve every other Sunday, unfortunately allowing them very little time in church and fellowship.

So, there's the challenge...10 more people to say YES to 45 minutes in Kids Church once a month to help pass on our legacy!

Contact Amy at amy.eads@umcto.org or 805/410-2027!!

Upcoming dates to remember:

September 15: Cruise through our Ministry Fair in Dickerson Hall! After church come see who we are and what we do!

September 15: Kids Church returns!

September 19: Club 56 meets at 6pm in the youth room

Contact Amy at amy.eads@umcto.org or 805/410-2027!!
NOW, ABOUT YOUTH

Last week, we presented to the congregation our Sr. High youth who went on Sierra Service Project. From late Spring to mid Summer, many of our young people attended a variety of camps and leadership training, as well!

Here are photos from Spanglish, Lazy W Elementary, Jr High and Sr. High Camp, and Noah's Hispanic Leadership trip to Wesley Seminary! Those pictured are: Sebastian and Isabella Johnson, Noah Hernandez, Josh and Cam Fotsch, Isai Pacheco, Patty Cogles, Lailaney Guemez, Ximena Ortega, Sandy Gomez, Kailey Duarte, Reina Grijalva, Jesus Orozco.

Cam having a blast at camp!

Josh family group camp.

Noah at Church & Society Building.

Isai and Patty.

Sebastian running.
LISTENING POSTS OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Our first "Way Forward" discussion was great. Thank you to Patty Cogles for doing an excellent job on presentation. Thank you to Pastor John and Liz Hoskinson, for setting the tone for having an honest and healthy dialogue.

The goal of this discussion series is to help our Church understand what is happening at the denominational level, and just as importantly, to allow space for our Church to pray for and discern God's will for our local Church, as well as our entire denomination. Your presence at these meetings is so important! After receiving input from these sessions and an upcoming survey, our leaders will then create a summary statement that best represents UMCTO's vision for our "Way Forward". This will be shared at our November MA6 Charge Conference. Next, all will be welcome to attend a "listening post" hosted by Cal Pac Conference to take place before December. All input will then be traveling with our delegates to General Conference, May, 2020. At that time, we expect that decisions will be made that will effect our future denomination. Once decisions are made at the denominational level, our local Church will probably have decisions to consider as well. So, please pray for our Church, and participate in as much dialogue as possible! DS Jim has suggested this site in order to stay informed: westernjurisdictionumc.org

Here are the upcoming UMCTO discussions, and alternative options if you cannot attend!

Sunday, Sept. 1: Bishop Grant Hagiya's Annual Conference Sermon, "I See A New Church": We will meet in Wesley room, right after Worship. Bring Snacks. We will have child care, if needed. We will view part of this sermon, and then have a discussion based on questions that both Bishop Hagiya and DS Jim Powell have prepared for our Churches. If there are any individuals or small groups/Bible Studies who would like to view this on your own, the questions will be available in the Church office by Friday, or Dori can email them to you. https://vimeo.com/channels/1470976/342132433. Feel free to watch the entire video, or just view from 32:50 to 53:27. Please put your responses to the questions in the Church office. We are hoping to receive most by September 15.

Sunday, Sept 15: Donna Howland, Lay Leader from Riviera UMC: She will
speak AFTER the Ministry Fair in Wesley Room. Donna grew up at UMCTO. She is Jacqueline Pontius' daughter. She will share how her Church reacted to the Vote at the Special Session, and steps they have taken to prepare for what our future Church will be like. At the end of her presentation, we will be giving participants a confidential survey to help UMCTO leaders understand where our community of faith stands on issues of human sexuality, as well as other important issues. It will also be made available online for those who are not in attendance, as well as extra copies will be in the office.

**Thursday, Sept. 19, 7 PM: Rev. Denyse Barnes, Conference LGBTQI task force:** She will present what is going on with the denomination and more specifically what is happening in our Cal Pac Conference. (The date of our discussion is the day after all proposals to General Conference have to be submitted.) Stay tuned for more information....

If you have questions, please feel free to call/text either of us!
Conversaton Coordinators:
Liz Hoskinson @ 805-795-4881
Dori Fotsch @ 805-402-2100

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**NEW STUDY UPCOMING**

The Thursday night book and Bible study group, *Faith Journey*, is reading and discussing a new book beginning in September.

Details: "What Made Jesus Mad" by Tim Harlow

Dates: 6 Thursday nights starting on September 19

Time: 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Where: Wesley Room

Contact: Lisa Rabens

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**AT THE TOP**

The photo at the top was provided by Phyllis & Bruce Borner and shows the Leyman Caves in Great Basin National Park, Nevada. Thanks to the Borners for this amazing view of a truly unique location!