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May 12, 2024

Vol. 51 No. 19

Messenger

A PUBLICATION OF FIRST METHODIST CHURCH

505 S. 44th St. | Okla. City, MO 73104



In-carnation

The official flower of Mother's Day is the carnation, the favorite flower of the mom of the holiday's founder, Anna Jarvis. Over time, the custom arose of wearing a white carnation on Mother's Day if your mother has died and a red one if she's living.

In fact, many carnation colors have special meanings. Pink carries the richest Christian symbolism. According to legend, carnations first appeared on earth as Mary wept while watching Jesus carry his cross. Where her tears fell, there appeared pink carnations, symbolizing a mother's undying love.

According to one theory, the English word for carnation comes from *carnis*, Latin for flesh. From the same root comes *incarnation*, God's coming to earth in flesh. Thus, carnations remind us of our loving mothers as well as our loving Savior.

THE SUNDAY FUND

Each year on Mother's Day First Methodist Church, along with other Methodists across the state, receive contributions to **The Sunday Fund**. The Sunday Fund is the MOST critical part of the Senior Services' ministry. It is a benevolence fund designed to assist elders living on any of Senior Services' twelve campuses. Elders of all denominations, who have outlived their financial resources and can no longer afford the cost of housing and/or care, are eligible to receive Sunday Fund assistance. The Sunday Fund receives support from a variety of sources including individuals, churches, local businesses, as well as elders living on the campuses who have the means to support The Sunday Fund. However, over half of support comes directly from church families.



An insert for the 2024 Sunday Fund will be in this Sunday's bulletin. Please make your check to **First Methodist Church** and write **Sunday Fund in the memo line** and place it in the offering plate in the specific envelope included in the insert. There are additional inserts available. Let us continue to generously support this worthy ministry.



SUNDAY, MAY 12

- 9:00 a.m. Contemporary Service
- 9:50 a.m. Sunday School
- 11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship Service
- 11:00 a.m. Live Stream Worship

MONDAY, MAY 13

- 6:30 p.m. Prison Bible Study

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15

- 6:00 p.m. Chancel Choir

SATURDAY, MAY 18

- 9-12 noon Methodist Market



Birthdays &
Anniversaries
This Month!

- 12. Pam Hatfield, Joe Dearman
- 13. Timothy Newman
- 16. Sterling Allen
- 17. Jason Dees
- 18. Terri Goodman



Memorial
Gifts

Sharon Clark Byrd

Frank M. Patty, Jr.

Kairos Update

Thank you so very much for the financial contributions as well as for all the delicious cookies. We had 30 women whose lives were changed after meeting Jesus at Kairos #46.

Kairos is a continuing ministry. In addition to the two weekends that are held in the spring and fall, our team of volunteers returns to the prison on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month for “prayer and share”. We have two one-day retreats in January and June and in December we host a Christmas party and serve a complete Christmas meal.

The goal of Kairos is to share the Gospel with incarcerated men and women and then to disciple these individuals so that they are able to go and make disciples in both the prison and on the outside.

Please know that your investment of prayers, cookies and money were all used for the Glory of God.



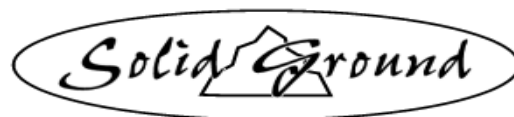
Last Sunday we began a new series, *A Time for Courage*. This week our lesson is "Trust in God." The story this week takes us to the book of Daniel and introduces us to three young men named Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

W.O.W. Wednesday

Our children's W.O.W. Wednesday Bible study has concluded and will resume after summer break. We will have monthly gatherings throughout the summer to stay connected with our church friends. I will be sending out an activity calendar through the messenger and group text. Hope you all have a wonderful and fun summer!!

Vacation Bible School

The end of school means summer break, beach trips and Vacation Bible School. Mark your calendars for Monday, June 24 - Thursday, June 27. We are currently working on our VBS. If you are willing to help, please contact the church office or Tera.



Youth Bible Study and Small Group

It is hard to believe school will be out in just a couple of weeks and Summer begins. Youth Bible study concluded this past week, but we will still have a few gatherings throughout the Summer to stay connected and socially engaged.

M28 CAMP

Camp dates are Friday, July 5- Tuesday, July 9. The total cost is \$350. A payment of \$75 must be made by Sunday, April 17. Each participant must have paid a total of \$150 by Sunday, May 5. Final payment must be made by June 1

Update on United Methodist Church General Conference 2024



While we are no longer part of the United Methodist Church, I did want to give us an update on some of the decisions made at the recent General Conference of the UMC.

On April 23-May 3, the long-awaited 2020 General Conference of the UMC convened in Charlotte, North Carolina. Here are a few of their key decisions:

Marriage Redefined: The previous definition of marriage as a covenant between one man and one woman was changed to the following definition:

“We affirm marriage as a sacred lifelong covenant that bring *two people of faith* (an adult man and woman of consenting age, or two adult persons of consenting age into union with one another).”

Restrictions on LGBTQ Clergy Removed: The UMC Discipline used to say: “The practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching. Therefore, self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in the United Methodist Church.”

This was removed from the Discipline by a vote of 523-161 (76%). LGBT clergy are now eligible for ordination and appointment as pastors in the UMC.

Same-Sex Weddings Permitted: Language that prohibited same-sex weddings from being held in UM sanctuaries was removed. UMC churches may now host same-sex weddings, and UMC clergy may preside over them.

Protections for Traditional UM Churches Removed: The 2019 General Conference had passed several safeguards to support traditional church teaching and to protect traditional churches and clergy. Most of those safeguards were removed as the majority of legislation from the 2019 General Conference Traditional Plan was repealed.

Regionalization Plan Approved: Constitutional Amendments were passed by a 2/3 majority to organize the UMC into Regions (U.S., Europe, Africa, etc.), which would allow each region adopt their own rules within the Discipline specific to each region.

If ratified by a 2/3 majority vote of annual conferences worldwide, this would prevent conservative global regions, like Africa, from affecting U.S.-based rules.

No New Path for Disaffiliation: While many UMC leaders had promised that a new path for disaffiliation would be approved at GC 2024, that did not happen. Paragraph 2553 on disaffiliation was formally removed from the Discipline, and no new path to exit the UMC was offered. Any churches wishing to leave will have to negotiate individually with their conference.

Abortion Stance Changed: All language encouraging against abortion and respecting the life of the unborn child was removed from the Discipline. In its place, the General Conference approved language affirming the right to abortion and moving in a decidedly Pro-Choice direction.

Divestment from Israel: The UMC General Conference voted to divest from Israel bonds and approved a petition calling for the U.S. government to end military aid to Israel.

General Church Budget Cut by 40%: Given the exit of over 7,600 churches by disaffiliation, plus many more by church closure, the UMC General Conference voted to cut the denominational budget from \$604 million (2016) to roughly \$373 to \$353 million, depending on certain giving percentages from the local church.

Conclusion:

The UMC General Conference moved in a decidedly more liberal direction, just as many of the bishops and political lobbyists had been projecting. This was also why we, along with over 7,600 churches, left the UMC by disaffiliation. We foresaw many of these changes and knew that we needed to position our congregation in such a way that we wouldn't be affected by them.

I invite you to please pray for our United Methodist friends in the coming days and weeks. While some are rejoicing over these changes, others are grieving and trying to discern where God is now leading them.

We also give thanks for the clear witness of the Global Methodist Church and its faithful witness to Scripture and the traditional Christian faith, and we look forward to our upcoming General Conference on September 20-26 in Costa Rica.

Sunday, May 12, 2024

Greeters	Donna Heidel/Linda & Bob Coker
Scripture	Luke 10:38-42
Sermon	“A Mary Heart in a Martha World”
Flowers	Dixie & Jim Roberts

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

MAY

12. 7th Sunday of Easter	John 14:23-29
13. A constant reminder	Numbers 15:37-41
14. Seeking wisdom to lead	1 Kings 3:5-15
15. Naked before God	Hebrews 4:12-16
16. Transformed by new faith	Acts 16:16-34
17. Shout praise to God	Psalms 47
18. With hearts enlightened	Ephesians 1:15-23