

THE MESSENGER

Main Street United Methodist Church

MAKING DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE WORLD
by reaching out with a warm heart and making a difference

THE MARY'S STORY: THE OUTSIDE-INSIDE STORY



Warm Advent greetings to you in the name of our Lord and coming Savior, Jesus Christ.

Last month we shared three important and crucial *faith pillars* that our Methodist founder, John Wesley believed were essential and crucial in our walk with Christ. We focused on pillar one, the Scriptures. Wesley believed,

preached, and taught those early Methodists that the Word of God was Spirit-breathed. Now, I want us to take one step further: How should we and how do we actually receive the Word of God?

For us United Methodists, the Advent (the promised coming) of Christ and his Nativity (his birth) are central to our faith and our life in God. For most of us, Luke's account of Mary's story is quite familiar. Think with me again about this innocent young girl. Perhaps she has something to teach us about the Word of God. There she is, perhaps fifteen years old, a Jewish girl in a little town called Nazareth with a population less than Peru, Indiana. At her young age, Mary is already engaged to a man named Joseph. Very importantly, Luke notes that Mary was a virgin. Of all the young Jewish girls in all the small towns in Galilee, God saw and chose Mary. The Eternal God of Creation chose to send the Living Word *to Mary* and *through Mary* to us who desperately need a Savior. Two important points leap out here. First, God will send his Word to any receptive heart, regardless of our location. Second, as it was with Mary, God's Word is received in two ways, externally and internally. Mary's story is an Outside-Inside story.

Luke states that God *sent the angel Gabriel* to a specific place, Nazareth, and to a specific person, Mary.

Gabriel spoke: "*Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.*" Gabriel then delivers the greatest short sermon ever preached: "*You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.*" Did you get the point here? Mary received the Word of God, first by hearing it! She received it *externally*. Hearing God speak is absolutely vital to our knowing God. Few of us, if any, will ever come to know the

Savior of the world until we first hear His word to us. How do you and I receive the Word of God? Somewhere, somehow, through some person, we must first hear God's Word. We do many important things here at Main Street UMC. But, the main thing at Main Street is the Word of God that warms our hearts and helps us make a difference wherever we go. Mary heard the Word of God. I pray that you will faithfully hear the Word of God.

Mary heard the Word, but that was not all. Mary also believed Gabriel and she received the Word. She received the Word *internally*. Listen to Luke's report (Luke 1:38), "*Then Mary said, 'Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.'*" For the nine months that followed her reception of the external Word, Mary carried the eternal, living Word in her womb. The Apostle John said it clearly, "*In the beginning was the Word (Christ) and the Word was with God (the Triune Godhead), and the Word was God. The Word became flesh (in Mary's womb) and made his dwelling among us, and we beheld His glory*" (John 1:1, 14). An awesome truth cries out here: Mary conceived the Word in her womb, the Incarnation. In that action of in-fleshness, incarnation, God entered our space, our time zone. Jesus came to us; God dwelt among us. It is true, you and I will never birth the Savior. But Mary's personal experience of *internalizing of the Word* does have a parallel in our lives. Hearing the Word is important, but not enough. Receiving the Word is vital.

So, what might Mary's *internal and external reception of the Word* teach us today? First, Mary was not immune to strange news, surprises, troubling statements, and difficult questions. Second, in all of this, she surrendered; she heard the Word and she received the Word. Beloved, regardless of the many challenges before you, my prayer is that like Mary, you too will hear the Word and will then receive the Word. I offer you this call to action: Like Mary, surrender yourself to the voice of God when He speaks to you. Listen, externally. Receive Him into your heart and life, internally.

Your fellow disciple in Christ,

Reverend Samuel



STAFF @ Main Street UMC

DR. SAMUEL A. ODUBENA
Pastor

MILES STRALY
Lay Leader

NANCY HUSKEY
Director, Music Ministry

DON KRUG
Organist

KAY WEIDEMAN
Pianist, Worship Leader

DEBBIE DAILEY
Interim Administrative Assistant

MELANIE GIEK
Youth Director

MICHAEL MCMINN
Custodian

SARAH JAMES
Nursery Attendant

PRESCHOOL STAFF
CAMI WALTERS
Director

RHONDA BUTZIN
KOLEEN MURPHY



Follow us on social media at:
Main Street United Methodist
Church, Peru

Office Hours

9 am. – 3 pm., Mon.-Fri.

Phone: 765-472-3323

Our phone and internet system has been revamped and missed calls (those made outside of office hours or when we are already on a call) go straight to our email, making you call easier to access.

MISSIONS *update*



This holiday season countless members of our church and our community pulled resources to fill almost 1,400 boxes for Project Christmas Child. Reverend Samuel prayed over each and every box before they were mailed.



A great example of Main Street UMC working with the community is this annual project. Pictured to the left is the delivery of 30 filled boxes from Ginny Barker of Bunker Hill. Ginny hosted an event that raised funds to fill the boxes for Operation Christmas Child! Congrats, Ginny and thank you for your support.

MUSIC *ministry*

Jubilation Bells has a vacancy; one of our members has moved. Would you like to try handbells? It is fun and fulfilling. We'll teach you what you need to know. Just contact Nancy Huskey at 765-438-6435 or nbsphr01@comcast.net.

UNITED METHODIST *women update*

MAIN STREET UNITED METHODIST WOMEN'S ANNUAL CHICKEN & NOODLE DINNER REPORT

The United Methodist Women would like to thank everyone who contributed to the success of the Drive-thru Chicken Noodle Dinner.

We sold 255 pre-sale tickets and 130 at-the-door tickets. Sadly, we had to turn numerous people away. We had a wonderful turnout of congregation families who helped make this new adventure so successful by contributing time and financial contributions. We deposited over \$4,000.00 in profit. This was truly a time of fellowship and mission for our congregation.

Thank you again to the entire congregation for your support of this huge project.

Anna Jo McKaig and Susan Jordan
Co-chairmen

+ 255 PRE-SOLD TICKETS
+ 130 SALES AT THE DOOR
+ 4 DOZEN-PLUS VOLUNTEERS
+ 2 AWESOME CO-CHAIRS
\$4,000+ NET PROFIT



Youth @MAIN STREET



DEC. 6 - SHOP FOR AN ANGEL

DEC. 16 YOUTH GROUP CHRISTMAS PARTY

DEC. 20 YOUTH GROUP CHRISTMAS PROGRAM DURING CHURCH SERVICE

NOTE: THESE ARE ALL TENTATIVE DATES. PLEASE WATCH EMAIL AND MAIN STREET UMC FACEBOOK FOR THE LATEST UPDATES



We are so blessed at Main Street United Methodist Church to have such an engaged Youth Group. A lot of the credit goes to Melanie Giek who has been involved in the youth activities at Main Street as a volunteer since 2006 when her oldest son joined. In 2015 she became Youth Director.

Youth Sunday is a perfect example of Melanie's outstanding leadership. Her creativity and vision gave the kids the tools needed to deliver a very solid, biblical message. Youth Sunday also gave the kids an opportunity to develop many skills, including public speaking, self-confidence, teamwork, active listening, and most important, a more clear understanding of God's Word.

Thank you to the parents who encourage their children to be involved in this group.

Thank you, Melanie, for your commitment and love for the youth at Main Street.

VOLUNTEER

If you are interested in volunteering with youth activities, please contact Melanie at 765-244-9595.



PRESCHOOL *at Main Street*

We are so grateful to be in the classroom during a pandemic. We are taking extreme measures to keep our preschoolers safe. We are wiping down toys, doing temperature checks and hand washing.

We are looking forward to celebrating the birth of our savior Jesus Christ during December. Please continue to pray for our preschool families.

Thank you.

Cami Walters



Mike McMinn

MEMBER *spotlight*

Ever wonder why we have the cleanest church in town? It's because of Mike McMinn. You probably know him as Nancy's husband of 47 years and Michael's grandfather but here is the rest of the story.

Mike was born in Logansport and joined the Air Force after graduating from high school. Mike served in the Strategic Air Command (SAC) and was stationed in upstate New York. When Mike completed his time in the Air Force, he obtained a bachelor's degree in accounting and business and his entire career was spent in this field. When he retired, he decided to take on the job of taking care of the church building with the same attention he would give to his own home. Mike and Nancy have two children and seven grandchildren.

Mike likes many things about his job, including starting his day early, but most of all he likes working with the other staff and the congregation. There is only one thing he doesn't like about his job and that is having to move the big rock in the parking lot back into place when someone hits it with their car. Thanks for all you do, Mike.



BIBLE *study*

Bible Study will meet virtually from 6 pm-7:15 every Tuesday. We eagerly welcome you to join us as we dig deeply into Scripture. Have your Bible and your questions ready. This will be a ZOOM meeting and everyone in the congregation will receive a ZOOM link as our church now has the capacity to have as many as 99 people on at one time. Please be sure to join us. Guests are welcome and encouraged! If you are not a member of our congregation, please contact the office so we can send the link to you. Phone 765-472-3323.



PRAYER *ministry team*

Prayer is the breath of the Christian life. We are committed to frequently practice the presence of Jesus and stand in the gap for others in prayer. Please send your prayer requests to mainstprayers@gmail.com or contact Laura Hochstedler at 765-244-7031.

PRAYER *list*

The Scripture admonishes us to pray and intercede for one another. Please remember the following member and friends in your prayers:

Julie Carroll
Jack Butts
Valerie Ann
Doug Overmeyer
Rhoda Ellers and
family
Erin Savage
Roger Powers
Steve Butler
Terry Smith
Ashley Wright
Bob Dillman
Dan Conner
Rev. Mark Beeson
Dana Harp
Will Pierce

Kaitlin Frick
Gabby
Bernita Goble
Julie Bunnell
Aaron Logsdon
Phyllis Jeffers
Barb Keyes
Beth Wright
Scott Straly
Glenn Householder
Alen Burkhardt
Diana Perry
John Powell
Gary Loe.
Melissa Dillman
DJ Smith

Judy Cain
Larry Yoder
Kirk Thomas
Keaton Worland
Angela Dean
Jessica Shutter
Mary Courtney
Scotty Fisher
Family of Rhea Hoppes
Del Fawcett
Anna Marie Slone
Joe Slone Belinda
Melanie Giek
Family of Al Hudson
We pray for all those suffering from
COVID and those who care for them.



KUDOS *Abby Jordan*

Cross Country stand-out Abby Jordan advanced to State Finals this fall placing 50th out of more than 200 participants! Abby is dedicated to her sport and works hard to keep a healthy body and mind. She is a freshman, competing at the Varsity level at Maconaquah High School. Up next: Swim Team.

Beyond athletics, Abby is an active member of Main Street United Methodist Youth Group and 4-H.

Congratulations, Abby, on your outstanding performance!



DECEMBER *birthdays*

Izaiah Kaufman	12/03	Jim Bond	12/17
Glenn Hill	12/07	Beth Wright	12/19
Gabriel Butzin	12/09	Barbara Savage	12/20
Isaiah Butzin	12/09	Dakota Krug	12/26
Rick Brown	12/11	Christianah Odubena	12/27
Christopher Collie	12/12	Emilie Hubbard	12/29
Nathan Hochstedler	12/12	Zan Tumison	12/31
Peter Rice	12/16		

JANUARY *birthdays*

Eli Walters	01/05	Tom Hubbard	01/09
Debra Dailey	01/05	Tom McKaig	01/10
Mary Cunningham	01/06	William Burks	01/18
Park Cutler	01/06	Susan Neher	01/22
Tim Spahr	01/06	Linda Gornto	01/27
Alicia Harrell	01/06		



Christmas Eve service at 7pm

We have no way of knowing at this time whether it will be virtual or in person, but there will be a service on Christmas Eve celebrating the birth of our Saviour.

This is such a wonderful time in the life of the church as we begin this very special season of Advent. Rev. Samuel has conceived a wonderful plan for us to share the special Christmas moments in our lives with our church family. Here is the project that he has planned for us to enjoy:

We ask that each household submit two pictures of a special Christmas moment in their lives. This could be a favorite one from a Christmas past or one from this year such as a family picture taken in front of the Courthouse display or two friends, standing next to a nativity scene. If you have adult children who live out of town, invite them to also submit two pictures for this project. Remember, submitting pictures that are meaningful to you will make them special to all of us.

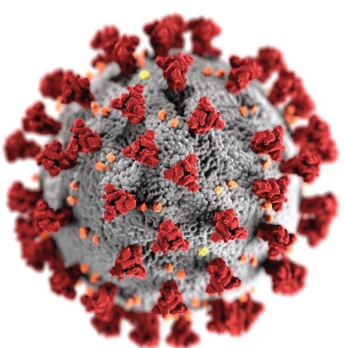
Please submit your pictures to the church office **no later than Dec. 15.**

You may submit your photos to the church office via email to: mail@perumainstreet.com, or you may bring them to the office and we will scan them for you. Please include identification for the two photos you submitted such as "The Odubena family in front of the Courthouse Tree" or "Rebecca Smith placing the Nativity set under the Smith Family tree, 2020" or "Beth Wright and Barb Savage writing Christmas cards." These are pictures of special memories during the season of Advent.

Prepare for a surprise as we share in the blessing you have given your church family - the gift of your Christmas photo memories.

We'll be making a list and checking and checking it twice to make certain that all of you have been able to submit your photos. If technology is an issue or you have no way to get printed photographs to us, just call the office and we'll find a way to safely pick them up from you.

Each person in our church family is precious and is a special gift to this congregation. Please share the gift of your memories with us.



COVID - 19

It came out of nowhere, a dark, sullen thief.
With sickness and pain, it filled us with grief.
It challenged our faith. It made us ask why:
"Why did so many people suffer and die?"
Our eldest and weakest were the first to get ill.
The silent killer challenged our will.
It was no respecter of sex, creed, or race.
It lurked 'round the corner in every dark place.
The pleasures of life then came to an end.
No hugs and no handshakes with all of our friends.
No meals in a restaurant, no trips to the mall,
No school, no church, no games of baseball.
And yet, when it seemed that our "normal" was done
We learned we could make it by trusting the Son.
Yes, God will be with us no matter our fears
Jesus will hold us and dry up our tears.
This pandemic will soon be a thing of the past.
With God's help and faith we know it won't last.

Miles Straly, August 2020