

Berea Friendship UMC News
 Church Office: 864-246-4311
 Internet Homepage:
 www.bereafriendshipumc.com
 CHURCH OFFICE HOURS
 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday,
 9:00 AM—1:00 PM
 Friday—Closed

Davon Harrelson, Pastor
 864-979-6870
 Email: davonharrelson07@gmail.com
 864-246-4311—Office
 Debbie Capps, Administrative Assistant
 Pat Teat, Financial Secretary
 Debbie Gissendanner, Treasurer
 Joan Kotrady, Choir Director
 And Organist



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Berea Friendship United
 Methodist Church
 8001 White Horse Road
 Greenville, SC 29617

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July 2020 Berea Friendship UMC Newsletter

Brothers and Sisters In Christ,

I don't think any of us would have imagined 2020 unfolding as it has. New Year celebrations quickly turned to concern and uncertainty in the face of a new virus. That was followed by a financial down turn, and huge losses in the stock market. Suddenly there was racial tension and social unrest exploding across the nation. I hope the second half of 2020 takes a turn for the positive!

Jesus moved through this world unshaken by circumstances around him. His focus was fulfilling God's word with each step he took. He was passionate about talking to his Father Abba. He was passionate about eternal matters. His Father's will was always his priority. Indeed the only time we see Jesus seemingly anxious was in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus understood He would have to bear the weight of all mankind's sin in His body, apart from his Father. Yet, faced with receiving the cup that was his alone, Jesus said to His Father, "not my will but your will be done." It was His choice to lay down His life. Now we know the full expression of God's love for us, there is nothing He will not do to make relationship with mankind possible. He is our Father in heaven! Our work is to believe in the One He sent in all circumstances.

Obviously we do not move through this world unshaken. How do we navigate all the uncertainties we face and still be as faithful to God as possible? We all fall short of the best God has in mind for us. Our perspectives are clouded by sin and self-centeredness. Jesus' perspectives were sinless and God-centered. The Holy Spirit poured through Him, and God's kingdom came where He was. Only as we are God-centered do the things of this world lose their power and hold on us. So as we face these times as a church, we must be God-centered. God is always where we start; that is how Jesus always operated, and so should we.

The apostle Paul had a prescription for anxiety and worry, "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I say, rejoice." It sounds too simple, but in reality it is truly the answer. What we believe will invariably dictate our behavior. In the face of decreasing control, anxiety increases. God is our answer today, tomorrow, and forever, in all circumstances.

We should rejoice in God's sovereignty. A proper understanding of God's sovereignty is essential; He reigns supreme over every detail of the earth. There is no wisdom, insight, or plan that can succeed against him. He sustains all things. He names stars and knows sparrows. He is the creator who is blessed forever. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. His years will never end. The whole earth is full of His glory. It is God who works in you both to will and do His good pleasure. We live beneath the shadow of his wings. And the verse we all know and quote, "In everything God works for the good of those who love Him. Bottom line - our minds can't be full of fear and full of God at the same time. Others see problems of this world and wring their hands. Christians see the problems of this world and bend their knees.

We should rejoice in God's mercy. In the garden, Adam and Eve failed and didn't know what to do with their failure, so they hid. We've gotten very sophisticated about dealing with our guilt. We suppress our failures in a tangled web of substance abuse, hard work, denial, blame, low expectations, fear, self pity, etc., etc. The burden of unresolved guilt will make one's existence weary, angry, stressful, and fretful. David, a man after God's own heart, had such a season after his Bathsheba affair. Psalm 32:3 says, "While I kept silence, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long." We all have regret, things done, things undone, much that needs to be earnestly surrendered to Jesus. Paul said, I am not all I should be; but I do this one thing. Forgetting what lies behind, I strain forward to what lies ahead. Bottom line - the grace of God is infinitely greater than all our failures. God wants to forgive, wants to forget, wants to set free; we must surrender our failures to Him, and move forward with Him. There is a reason the windshield is bigger than the rearview mirror. Our future matters more than our past.

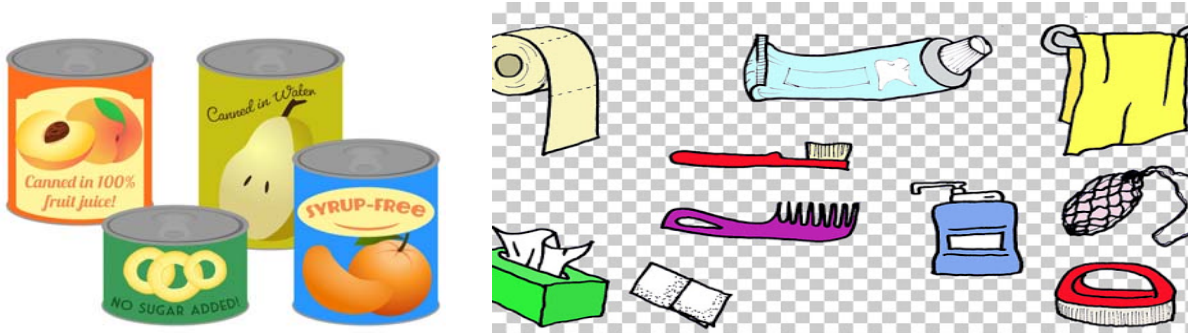
In scripture Paul says, "rejoice always." Rejoice always is the third thing we should do! I think most people find the text very challenging. I know I do! Those persons that have lived out the text in my presence have had the most profound effects on my faith. Paul hit the nail on the head when he said, it matters not what a person's motivation is; Jesus is preached and proven true regardless. The story of Joseph enslaved in Egypt is a perfect example of how God works all things together for good, and is invariably proven true by all involved. Joseph could have dwelt on his failure, but instead he was God-centered. Joseph found ways to rejoice in God always, ultimately having a profound effect on everyone around him. We can wear our hurt or we can wear our hope. We can outfit ourselves in misfortune, or we can outfit ourselves in God's providence. We can cave into the pandemonium of life, or we can lean into the perfect plan of God. We can believe in the promises of Romans 8:28; and as we do – it is well with our souls Berea Friendship.

In our present uncertainties, in uncertainties yet to come, rejoice in God's sovereignty, rejoice in God's mercy, rejoice always. I give credit to Max Lucado for many of the above thoughts. His book *Anxious For Nothing*, is a simple joyful read.

In Christ,
 Pastor Davon

Monthly mission collections for 2020

During this Covid 19 crisis, we will be collecting any nonperishable food/cleaning/hygiene products. We will be taking our donations to the North Greenville Crisis Ministries Pantry. The food pantries are being hit hard during this pandemic. Thank you to Margaret Rawson for delivering the items to them. If you would like to assist with delivery, please let Vickie Failor or Margaret Rawson know.



United Methodist Women

July 2020
Newsletter article

The Friendship Circle will not meet during the month of July. The Shalom Circle will meet on Saturday, July 18, 2020 at the home of Vickie Failor.

Prayer Focus

Our prayer focus for July is on the Red Bird Mission in Beverly, Kentucky. It was founded in 1921 to provide education and Christian evangelism ministries to residents of the area. It was started by the Evangelical Church and today is supported by the UMC and UMW.

The story of the Red Bird Mission is one of deep faith in God. Red Bird Mission was born in answer to prayer. It is a story of gracious outpouring of prayers by the church.

Their ministry programs include - Education with a Christian school for grades K-12 and a licensed child care center Community outreach with programs for senior citizens and families Red Bird Clinic offering screenings, home visits, and dental care Work Camp that provides home repair for low income citizens year round Economic Opportunities including community store and craft marketing program

Birthday cards will be sent to Jana Marie Whitten in New Hampshire and Mary Winslow in Tennessee.

Please check the Website, www.bereafriendshipumc.org and our Facebook page for regular updates on services and information going on in the church. If you have news that you would like to be put on either one, please contact, Vickie Failor.



Women Taking the Lead

Women leaders from across the country gather at Leadership Development Days to ensure women's voices are heard in The United Methodist Church.

by Tara Barnes

Leadership development is a pillar of United Methodist Women, equipping women and girls around the world to be leaders in communities, agencies, workplaces, governments and churches.

In February 2020 United Methodist Women invited organization leaders and women General and Jurisdictional Conference delegates to St. Louis for its annual Leadership Development Days. The time together focused on raising awareness of oppression and privilege as women leaders within the church and working together to dismantle both, beginning with General Conference, then scheduled to meet in May 2020.

The United Methodist General Conference, the top policymaking body for the denomination, rescheduled because of the COVID-19 global health crisis, will take place sometime in 2021. There, 862 delegates from around the world will set denominational policy, revise church law, approve budgets for churchwide programs and adopt resolutions on current moral, social, public policy and economic issues. This will be followed by Jurisdictional Conferences, where the five jurisdictions in the United States traditionally assign and elect bishops and boards of directors of agencies of the church.

"We are committed to developing women leaders in The United Methodist Church," said Mollie James-Vickery, director of mobilization and advocacy for United Methodist Women. "Our members are leaders across the church and their communities. We have worked hard this year to encourage women to run for leadership, to make their voices heard and to carry the purpose of United Methodist Women with them."

Women in the church

In 2016 and at the special session in 2019, only 36 percent of voting delegates at General Conference were women—in a church where women are more than 58 percent of the membership. In 2016, according to Commission on the Status and Role of Women, only 7 conferences had more women district superintendents than men, 5 had equal numbers, and the rest out of 56 had majority male district superintendents. The denomination actually employs more women than men, but the majority of the women serve in support positions. The majority of the leadership positions—directors, managers, professionals—are held by men. Clergymen are disproportionately represented in top leadership.

The Rev. Effie McAvoy, of the New England Conference, who attended the event, pointed out that it is women who fund the mission and ministry of the church.

"On a huge scale, if it were not for women working in the church things would not get done. From the financial support of mission and ministry to the hands and feet in the world—women make ministry happen and render the much-needed support of prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness."

Only 27 percent of the church's clergy are women, and 28 percent of its bishops. Women organized for mission have made great advancements, but the work for equity clearly must continue. Advancements happen when women work together says the North Texas Conference's Shandon Klein.

"There is power in community. One voice may be small, but it is magnified when we are together," she said. "When one of us feels weak or discouraged, another can come alongside to remind us of the joy that goes before us. We need to work together for the future generations. We need to work together for the mission of making God known throughout all the world. The world will seek to divide us and separate us in whatever way possible, but if we hold fast to our love of Christ and one another, we can invite the world into the resurrection story of humanity."

Privilege and power

The February gathering began with an exploration of Acts 16:16-24, the story of Paul and Silas in prison. The focus of this passage is often on the earthquake that sets Paul and Silas free. The focus for the women gathered, however, was on why Paul and Silas were imprisoned—the official story and the real story—as well as on the enslaved girl and the power she had (or didn't have) in the community. How did Paul react to her? Did he consider the impact of his actions on her? This biblical story provided a lens to examine power and privilege and how they operate within systems of oppression.

Oppression is a system that maintains advantage and disadvantage based on social group memberships, and it operates, intentionally and unintentionally, on individual, institutional and cultural levels. The other side of oppression is privilege. Antiracism educator Peggy McIntosh describes privilege to be "what exists when one group has something of value (resources, access) that is denied to others simply because of the groups they belong to rather than because of anything they've done or failed to do."

The decision-making of the church can't happen without acknowledging oppression and privilege, not in a church that wants to lift the marginalized.

"We want to ensure diverse women's voices are heard at the General Conference decision-making arena," said Sung-ok Lee, connectional officer for United Methodist Women. "It is about making sure our leadership strengths are in force and ready to go when we arrive at General Conference. Often those who take the helm of leadership at General Conference are not fully inclusive of all and fail to examine decisions through lenses of gender, race and other marginalized voices."

The February leadership event gave United Methodist women leaders the chance to be together, build relationships, discuss barriers and work together to dismantle those barriers.

One of the women attending was Carmen Vianese from the Upper New York Conference, a two-term former United Methodist Women Board member and current conference president. She is also the head of her General Conference delegation.

"I still get called 'honey' or 'dear' by clergyman with whom I sit around the same table," she said, even after years of proven leadership. "It's still assumed that I lack certain knowledge or skills needed for the task at hand."

Now a veteran General Conference delegate, Vianese notes that women at General Conference need "a safe place to debrief, to share conversations and pray or relax a moment—and to find support to be bold, a full sisterhood support."

In addition to its exhibit space, United Methodist Women has planned to host a women's delegate lounge for central conference women delegates to gather throughout the conference as well as a central conference women delegates' orientation and an all-women's orientation when the next General Conference takes place. The delegates who attended Leadership Development Days had the time and space there to build relationships before they are back together again at General Conference.

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Cornerstones of faith

United Methodist Women invited women from each U.S. annual conference to attend Leadership Development Days: Conference United Methodist Women presidents, treasurers and nominations chairs along with General and Jurisdiction Conference delegates. Around 260 women including staff attended, about 75 of whom were delegates. Usually a laywomen's event, this year's event invited clergywomen into the space as well, bringing together a mix of women from various leadership experiences in the church.

Attendees explored privilege and oppression deeper within jurisdiction breakouts, working to recognize the different identities they hold and the social power (or lack of social power) associated with them, such as age, ability, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, citizenship status, religion and class.

"I feel called to serve as a delegate to General Conference because the discussion around the table will be about me and people like me," said McAvoy. "After decades folk are aware of and care about the harm that has been done to LGBTQ persons in the church. As a Black woman, I also know that the church has much more work to do in regard to racism and colonialism. And though I cannot speak for all Queer persons or all Black persons, I can and will represent with voice and vote those issues that will benefit persons of color and the LGBTQ communities."

United Methodist Women exists to empower all women and to ensure that marginalized voices of women, children and youth are not silenced within or by the church. United Methodist Women members hold multiple identities but know that as members they have a community in which they can dialogue, learn and grow in creative, supportive—and sometimes challenging—ways.

Women at the event also spent time looking at General Conference legislation from the point of view of different marginalized groups within the church: laywomen, clergywomen, racial ethnic caucuses, central conferences, LGBTQIA United Methodists, and others, and strategizing how to get more women in leadership at all levels of the church.

"Women, biblically, have been cornerstones of our faith tradition, instrumental in the Gospel and to ministry," said Deaconess Kelly Tazuko Marciales, from the Alaska Conference. "Simultaneously, women have been underrepresented in the leadership of our church, often not having voice at the highest levels of decision-making. It is an imperative for me, as a woman and mother of four children, that women's leadership continues to assert itself into all levels of leadership for the equitable co-Creation of the Kingdom come."

Marciales believes the church is at a pivotal time, especially in its global connection.

"How the Global North has related to our siblings in the Global South is marred by colonialism. As the Church in the North stalls its growth, the South flourishes. I hope that The United Methodist Church will restructure itself post-General Conference in a way that creates equitable sharing of resources, theology and praxes for a revival of our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world," she said.

Supporting women leaders

Every United Methodist Women member is a faith leader and has a role to play in supporting women as faith leaders, especially as the church is making important decisions about its future. Use your sphere of influence to support women's leadership. Continue to be present in the church and build relationships, wearing your United Methodist Women hat—or glasses that help you see where women need to be uplifted. Become a voting lay equalization member at your annual conference, serve on conference committees, make United Methodist Women a part of clergy training, attend and invite others to Mission u, partner with other church and community groups. There are many ways you can be present to ensure women's voices are heard.

In this time of uncertainty, be a mentor.

"You don't know how ready I was to give up on any hope that The United Methodist Church could be an institution that I felt comfortable participating in," said Tiffany French-Goffe of the New York Conference after Leadership Development Days. "I wish there were more spaces like that in the Church. United Methodist Women really seems to be doing the tough and necessary work. The intentional intersectionality there was unlike anything I've witnessed in the denomination. They are talking about real global issues and doing real justice work. I see it now. And I really left there feeling energized and motivated to do more and to speak louder. It was awesome."



July Birthdays

- 10 Troy Clements
- 14 Gloria Moore
- 15 Haleigh Philpot
- 17 Eugene Bondurant
- 19 Vickie Failor
- 20 Ronnie Argo
- 20 Ivy Danielle Evans
- 21 Rhonda T. Hovious
- 24 Andrea Dunn
Mary Penland
- 27 Betty Bridges
- 29 Justin Harrelson
- 30 Martha Oxley
- 31 Shain Stewart



July Anniversaries

- 03 Renee' & Allen Zorn
- 20 Brandon & Lindsey Hester
- 24 Cindy & Steve Hester
Heather & Joe Philpot
- 27 Don & Susan Baird
- 30 Shannon & Bob Newbill
- 31 Rebecca & Daniel Surett



COLLECTING JEWELRY FOR THE 2020 BAZAAR.

We are still collecting your unwanted jewelry for the 2020 Bazaar to resale. You may bring it to the church and place it under the table in the back of the sanctuary.

PLEASE HELP UPDATE THE PRAYER LIST

We are only listing those who we know are in nursing/Assisted living homes, the home-bound, those who are hospitalized at present, and those who are at present under going medical procedures such as chemo, etc. We do not want to leave anyone out so if you want your name or loved ones name listed, please notify the church office. We will up-date this list every 30 days—please help us with this important endeavor.

- Dunn family and Presnell family
- Mildred Pollard
- Blanche Creswell
- Laura Childs
- Robert Moler, Linda Crouch's brother
- Mary Penland
- John Disher
- Joe Philpot
- Lemons Family
- Nichols Family
- Farr Family
- Bobbie Bogan's brother
Jim Philpot
- Bill Teat's sister Carolyn Knight
- Allen Zorn
- Alex Stone
- Janet Stone
- Elmo Mann
- Molene McDuffie
- Mildred Bray
- Mary Childs
- Troy Clements
- Millie Dunn
- Shirley Dickson
- Jane-Hunt Grady
- Kathleen Griffin



Sympathy

The Pastor and congregation express their deepest sympathy to Bob & Millie Dunn upon the death of Bob's sister-in-law Esther Dunn. The funeral was held on Thursday in Ringgold. We extended our sympathy to Carol Presnell and her family upon the death of her aunt.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Samcie Joe Philpot and Carson Barrett who were married on Saturday, June 20, 2020 at Daniel Chapel (Furman University). The reception was held at Green Valley Country Club. Samcie Joe Philpot Barrett is the daughter of Irv and Paula Philpot and the granddaughter of Henry & Becky Philpot. We wish them the best in their new life together.

