

BAKER MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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The deadline for submitting items to the *The Carillon* is the 20th of the month.

Photo (left) by Debby Hudson on Unsplash



PASTOR MARY'S MESSAGE

These Are Anxious Times

“Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you.” —1 Peter 5:7-10

I recently went to the CDC website to look something up and couldn't help but notice a subtitle in an article called, "Coping with Stress." The subtitle announced the obvious, "Pandemics Can be Stressful." What a strange sequence of words! Should it say "can be" or simply "are" stressful? Also, how many pandemics have we experienced on this scale? Is there another one to compare this one to?

Perhaps a better title would be something like, "This Pandemic is Stressful."

Indeed, that appears to be the factual truth. The CDC published a report on August 14, 2020 that summarized the results of a survey conducted with 5,400 adults in the United States in the last week of June. Almost 41% of the people reported experiencing at least one adverse mental or behavioral health condition. That's a much higher incidence than normal. Maybe as much three to four times higher than a year ago. And while statistics are notoriously challenging, it seems to be highest among adults under the age of 30.

The Bible passage quoted above sounds eerily like 2020; especially that part about your brothers and sisters in all the world undergoing the same kinds of suffering. Chances are good that some of the people you talk to regularly are experiencing anxiety but don't feel comfortable telling others how serious it is. Chances are good that you may be experiencing anxiety and haven't admitted that to anyone, perhaps even yourself.



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PASTOR MARY'S MESSAGE

Continued from page 1.

How can Christians love our neighbors and ourselves during this stressful time? One way is to ensure that we make space in our conversations for others to be able to talk about the anxiety and stress they are experiencing without us trying to give simple solutions to make it go away. As the passage says, “the suffering will last for a little while.” If we are humble we will realize that we cannot solve the other person’s problems with our advice. What we can do is let people know they are not alone. We can ensure that they know that mental health challenges do not need to be hidden. We can help them find professional help if they need it. We can be ready to pray with others and bless them with Christ’s love.

We need to open the door to talking about anxiety. Why, because Christ stands ready to help, after all he cares for us. Why, because living with unaddressed anxiety is dangerous. The scripture refers to the “devil prowling around looking for someone to devour.” People hold a wide variety of understandings about who or what that word “devil” refers to but I hope we can agree that it is referring to something that takes life rather than gives it. Unaddressed anxiety can harm us physically, emotionally, relationally, and spiritually. Temptation to escape the anxiety through substance abuse, or physical harm lurks around us these days. The tendency to cast our anxiety on others through angry words, or uncharitable actions is a classic response. The thought that “no one cares”, or “I’m all alone” can become an inner mantra that causes people to withdraw from life. As Christians who love God, our neighbor, and ourselves, we need to be ready to listen in love.

You may wonder how to introduce this topic so others can talk. You might start by mentioning this study from the CDC. It is very recent, it is available on-line, and it is a natural conversation starter.

You may wonder how to pray for someone experiencing anxiety. I suggest starting with something simple. Perhaps something like the prayer below.

Lord, we ask you to draw especially near in this time of anxiety. Grant us assurance that you love us and that the challenges of these days will eventually end. Grant us strength to pursue the help we need to avoid falling prey to the temptation that draws us away from you and others. Amen.

In Christ.

Pastor Mary

Liturgists Are Needed For Worship

Do you like to read Scripture out loud? Do you want to play a role in the worship service? If you answer yes, please consider signing up to be a liturgist. We are currently signing people up for both on-Line services and in-person services. If you sign up for on-line worship you will be sent the scripture by email and asked to record yourself reading it using a smartphone or other device. These videos need to be completed and sent by Wednesday evening. If you sign up for in-person worship you will also be sent the scripture by email, and will need to abide by our safety protocol At this point the time of the service has not been set. It will almost certainly be between 9 and 11am on Sundays and is expected to last approximately 30 minutes. There is also the change that in-person services will be cancelled with short notice, if necessary, to contain spread of Covid-19.

To sign up, go to tinyurl.com/Bakerliturgists.

A Blessing of the Devices

Digital devices have replaced books and cameras and have become a familiar tool of daily life. The Coronavirus has moved our church services, school days and family gatherings online. Elizabeth Drescher shares this blessing for our tablets, phones and computers.

Prayer:

God, you call us to share your Good News of love, justice and peace with a world in need...

You have gifted us with rich resources from scripture, tradition, reason and experience...

Which have allowed people to develop new ways of listening to the voices of many others, attending to their interests and concerns, connecting with diverse peoples and groups, and engaging them as a people of faith...

We ask your blessing on our digitally-integrated ministries and on the many devices we use to love and serve our neighbors in a changing world.

May they never become distractions from relationships or idols in our hands. May we always remember that your Son, Jesus Christ, is the one true mediator of your love and grace in the wired world. Amen.

Source: umc.org/en/content/a-blessing-of-the-devices

Children & Family Ministry

FOCUS: SUNDAY MORNINGS & PRAYER BUDDIES

► **Family Bible Verse:** *Instead of each person watching out for their own good, watch out for what is better for others.*
—Philippians 2:4 CEB

Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

Sunday Mornings, I Miss You!

My friends, my church family I'm feeling a little blue.

From Tom's wafting aroma coffee smells,

To Mark's magnificent pipe organ masterpieces and the church bells.

Hearing the laughter in the halls,

From the running children playing & their calls.

I miss the choir's musical ensemble of singing,

And their beautiful melodies from the bell choir's ringing.

Let's chat soon!

How about Sunday's at 10am through Zoom?

Come one, come all, but please come to join us for the Zoom Fellowship on Sunday mornings at 10am. It's a fun way to see each other in their homes and sometimes even cats drop in to say a quick meow. We break out in different rooms too. I am hoping y'all join us, or as the Hawaiians would say, "Let's Talk Story."

Sunday school will continue to be all on-line. Be on the lookout for the upcoming BakerKid's weekly email from me. This will be the place to go for the weekly updates for your children from ages 3-12 years. Do you remember last summer? Almost seems like a life time ago. Well, believe it or not, we all shared a pizza dinner then went to the movies at the church. We discussed God moments in each movie. This year, we are doing it with books. So, please contact me at if you'd like to read a short book with me. It will be recorded and available to watch for one week through my weekly emails. (See the list of books that need readers on the right.) On Sunday's during Zoom, I'd love to discuss the book with you.

I still need a few more Prayer Buddies. It's our newest Children & Family program! This year we are going to start our own Church Mouse program for our Sunday school children called Prayer Buddy. What does this entail? You will be paired with a Sunday school child to pray over and be given printed cards to mail periodically. Note that your Prayer Buddy will know your name. It's not a secret, like



the Church Mouse program for college students. In April, we hope to celebrate with a tea party during fellowship in the Children's Center. Prayer Buddy is a wonderful way to help support a child's faith journey and especially with the uncertainty of an unchartered school year.

Blessings,

Shelly Stienbarger

Director, Children & Family Ministry

PRAYER REQUEST:

Continue to pray for the students, families, teachers, janitors, bus drivers, volunteers, coaches, counselors and every person who has a hand or foot involved with school to protect, guide, & bless them all through this unchartered school year scenarios. And our Pastors too. Thank you Pastor Mary for being our heart of Baker Memorial Church. Amen!

BOOKS THAT NEED READERS:



The Cool Bean, The Magic of Me: My Magical Choices, Unplugged Ninja, Compassionate Ninja, Goodnight Ark, The Berenstain Bears' and the Golden Rule, The Joy of Giving, and Bedtime Battle, Firenze's Light, An Elephant & Piggie Book Waiting Is Not Easy! and The Thank You Book, When I Pray for

You, Click, Clack, Moo Cows That Type, Humphrey's First Christmas, Mortimer's Christmas Manger, The Lorax, God Gave Us You, and God Gave Us Thankful Hearts.

Youth Ministry

BACK TO SCHOOL

Most of our young people have already begun the new school year, and from the first day pictures it looks like things are off to a great start. We hope to have a similarly frictionless opening to our first weeks of confirmation and Sunday school online. Let the learning begin again, and let's keep it engaging by mixing in a little fun.

If you are a parent or adult reading this, now is the time to begin thinking about our church-wide goal of in-person services by October. Though we do not intend to have in-person Sunday School until the beginning of January, it is always important for young people to have teaching from multiple perspectives and adult examples. We need adult teachers who can do in-person teaching for our youth program when we reopen in January, but also who are willing to teach online right now, so take a prayerful moment and consider whether you could lead a small group or oversee games in a classroom setting. By October we will need all of the help we can get.

YOUTH AND RACISM

Just a few nights ago, a white 17 year old young man got in a vehicle, armed with a rifle. He met up with other men and teens with the goal of menacing and threatening protesters assembled in the wake of yet another series of police shootings. During the course of the night, some of his group met up with police officers after curfew and were given water, and words of thanks and encouragement. This series of endorsements emboldened him to wade into the crowd of protesters and shoot and kill one. Subsequent to murdering a person, he was chased by a crowd of people seeking to disarm him so that he would not kill again. Instead of relinquishing his firearm, he killed another person, and was permitted to walk past police brandishing his rifle, while cries rang out behind him. "He just shot someone!" was the most repeated refrain. Then, he left the scene and went home.

During my time as youth pastor and young adult director at Baker Memorial United Methodist Church, I have witnessed firsthand the radicalizing nature of the internet—specifically websites like YouTube, Reddit, 4chan, 8kun (now rebranded from 8chan) and Facebook groups. Kind, impressionable young people turning into hardened, unreachable scoffs has happened more than once in my ministry here and as I reflect on the experience, I am



Photo by Priscilla Gyamfi on Unsplash

reminded of the mother who drove her son across state lines with a firearm to meet up with armed gangs. Seemingly innocuous forums and sharing sites, like the ones listed above, are anything but neutral and parents of teens have a huge role to play in educating their children that, as the Northern Illinois Conference website states, "Racism is evil. Racism is an injustice. Racism is oppressive. To remain faithful to our vows to God, we must resist racism."

What are you teaching your young person about racism? From my experience and the research, most white parents are silent on the issue at the bedrock of America's founding. And this silence leaves black and brown people vulnerable in just about every way.

"Though advocates believe true equality will not be achieved until all Americans are willing to grapple with racism, the survey showed that just 36% of those polled said they had taken concrete action to better understand racial issues after George Floyd's killing... White people were the least likely to have done so, at just 30%."

Source: [ipsos.com/en-us/news-polls/npr-racial-inequality-issues](https://www.ipsos.com/en-us/news-polls/npr-racial-inequality-issues)

Many people, after just three months of engagement, have stated their exhaustion with hearing about racism and police killings. Meanwhile the public lynchings continue and young people are getting involved in the spectacle. It remains incumbent upon us to live out our baptism and membership vows, now more than ever, to "resist evil, injustice, and oppression." As umcnic.org puts it, "Our resistance to the evils of racism must be as life-changing as the radical love of Jesus that has changed and transformed us all. Resisting evil—resisting racism is a way in which we can experience the grace of God and live out that grace in our world." One thing is for sure—our young people are watching.

Peace,

Carl King
Director of Youth Ministry

MISSIONS CORNER

Serving here, near and far away

GIVE BLOOD AT VERSITI IF YOU ARE ABLE!

Sadly, we had to cancel our October blood drive. However, the need for blood is greater than ever! It is easy, the location is convenient and takes about an hour. Here is the information, if you can give.

- Call Versiti Blood Center of Illinois at 630-208-8105 to schedule an appointment.
- Give them Baker Memorial's sponsor number (100997) on the phone. At check in tell them you are from Baker Memorial Church.
- The center is located at 2000 W State Street Unit 1E in Geneva (next to Walgreens).
- The center follows all COVID-19 guidelines for the safety of all.

Thank you, in advance, for giving! In the past 15 plus years, we have donated in excess of 675 pints at the satellite blood centers.

MASK MINISTRY CONTINUES

The team of three is still making and sending masks to the Midwest Distribution Center every week to be distributed in the U.S. and all over world. We could use a few more



seamstresses to make 10 masks or so a week. This is an ongoing ministry until COVID is controlled. So, if you can sew masks it would be of great help. Contact Chris at 630-709-7761 or cstumpf0308@gmail.com.

CASA KANE COUNTY COLLECTIONS

CASA picked up over 25 bags to distribute now. When we are able to gather again in our church building, we will resume our collection for the CASA Kids that are affected every day by uncertainty in their lives. If you have already purchased gift cards, suitcases or backpacks, please hold on to them awhile longer. If you have not yet made a donation and want to help contact Chris at cstumpf0308@gmail.com.

AN INVITATION TO GET INVOLVED

Looking forward to resuming Baker Memorial ministries in the Fall? We are too! Reach out to the contacts listed to be involved. We are praying that all these ministries can take place, but will continue to update. So, here is what we have in store for the next few months...

TUESDAYS (year round) | **Meals On Wheels** delivery
Contact Marge Meanger at marjorieme@att.net

09.08 | **Lazarus Cooking** | This month we're cooking grilled chicken for 60 and making 50 sack lunches. We cook and make lunches the second Tuesday each month. Contact Chris at cstumpf0308@gmail.com to get involved.

09.21 | **Northern Illinois Food Bank** | 9am-noon
A group volunteers on third Mondays each month. Contact Betty Erickson at N9FYC@aol.com

10.25 | **Stuff the Turkey** begins | Contact Loretta Wilson at redtop55@att.net

11.01 | **Salvation Army Bell Ringing** begins | Contact Rick Carlson at carlson.rc@sbcglobal.net

11.08 | **Angel Tree** begins | Contact Loretta Wilson at redtop55@att.net

11.08 | **Christmas Tree Sale** begins | Contact Dave Wilson at davexpress@att.net

12.13 | **Gift Wrapping Fundraiser** for our Cambodia missionary Clara Biswas

TBD | **Sanctuary offering for Clara** | Contact Chris Stumpf at cstumpf0308@gmail.com

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01.19 | Baker packs food at **Northern Illinois Food Bank**
Contact Jennifer Cervan at paddeaux@att.net

01.20 | **Blood Drive** | Wiley Hall | Contact Pete Holmes at peteholmes177@gmail.com

MARCH OR APRIL | **Trip to Midwest Distribution Center**
Contact Betty Erickson at n9yfc@aol.com for more details

Roofing Project Update

Our roofing project is now completely finished! The total cost of this almost two-year massive roof restoration and rebuild was \$510,000, and our insurance covered all but \$4,400 of that cost. This all began when we had the roof inspected because of a recurring leak over the east side of our sanctuary. Major hail damage affecting the entire roof, including gutters, was discovered during that inspection. An investigation by our insurer's adjustor determined that the hail damage had occurred during a storm in May, 2018, and our insurer agreed to fund the needed repairs.

Like everything else in our building, the original slate roof was constructed using first-rate materials that have lasted remarkably well for over 65 years. Only 299 of the original slate tiles had to be replaced, at a cost of \$47 each! Some decking had to be replaced to address the original leak, but overall, the underlayment was still sound for the majority of the roof. All of the original copper flashing was removed, recycled, and replaced with newly-created copper forms. Each piece had to be hand-crafted on site to match the variety of contours across our building. The copper flashing is uncoated, so it is brightly visible as you look at the building. It will darken as it ages and will eventually lose its copper color.

All of the original gutters and downspouts were recycled and replaced with new copper gutters and downspouts. As an added improvement, the downspouts along the Cedar Avenue side of the building now allow runoff to drain into the new sewer line we recently installed. This should eliminate the hazards that were created when the old



downspouts drained onto our sidewalks during the winter months and allowed ice patches to form on the walkways and our handicapped parking spots. The copper gutters and downspouts are coated with zinc to prevent staining. Because of this, they already have an aged look, even though they are brand-new.

We are thankful to God for providing us with the patience, resources, and expertise that allowed this project to reach a successful conclusion. Major participants included our insurer, Travelers; the Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church; Baney Construction and Restoration; and Renaissance Roofing of Rockford, Illinois. Our trustees already have a plan to annually inspect and address any future roofing issues. There is no reason to doubt that our original roof, with these recent upgrades and proper ongoing maintenance, will continue to protect our beautiful building for another 65 years, and beyond. Thanks be to God!

A Gentle Word About Giving



The work of God continues at and through Baker Memorial UMC in these difficult times. Our staff is hard at work seeking to check-in with the whole congregation on a regular basis. Our work with our Day Guests continues.

We are learning how to do worship on-line. As you are able, please seek to keep up with your giving during this time, or even accelerate it so we can continue to meet our payroll and bills. We understand that some people will not be able to do this and are working to manage spending accordingly. All of you are in our prayers.

Day Guest Donation Needs

Our Day Guest program continues to distribute bagged lunches on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Please consider

signing up to donate lunches at <https://www.mealtrain.com/trains/z9dyzd>. Make it a team effort and do it with a friend or two!

In addition to the lunches, we have food in a plastic tote at the Cedar Street entrance for those in need. We can use pop-top cans of baked beans/chicken/beef stew/pasta/fruit, individually wrapped cheese, small bags of chips, small packages of cookies, Gatorade, small boxes of cereal and protein milk (available at Costco). Please drop off donated items between 11am and 1pm on Tuesdays or Thursdays. We appreciate your continued support!

UMW September Leadership Meeting

The UMW Leadership Team will meet via Zoom on Wednesday, September 2 at 9am. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss plans for the year. Those unable to attend should contact Pam Stare at starep@comcast.net.

Immerse: Prophets Sign Up Has Started

It's not a Bible study, it's more like a book club. *Immerse: Prophets* is the fourth of the six session Immerse program. The reader journeys through the Bible without chapter or verse breaks. The result is a Bible developed for the purpose of being read and understood, not referred to. We will read about the First Testament prophets in groupings that generally represent four historical periods: the prophets who spoke before the fall of Israel's northern kingdom, before the fall of the southern kingdom, around the time of Jerusalem's destruction, and after the return from exile.

- Most groups will begin meeting the week of September 20 with a 16-week schedule and will last about 40 minutes.
- The goal is simple; to talk about your reactions to the week's reading.
- You can read or listen to the book on podcasts. Copies of *Prophets* will be available from the host with a suggested \$10 donation. A Kindle version is available from Amazon.
- There are a variety of group locations and times, to make it convenient to participate. At this time, most groups will meet via Zoom online. Check out the options at tinyurl.com/bakerchurch and find your group!

Ask The UMC-FAQs

What does the Bible mean by "peace"?

The Hebrew word we translate as peace is "shalom." The way "shalom" is used does not mean to feel calm nor the absence of conflict. Instead shalom, peace, is the result of right relationships with God, one another, and with creation. The concept of peace is wholeness in all of life.

The United Methodist Council of Bishops, in their 1986 statement "In Defense of Creation," described the biblical foundation of peace:

"At the heart of the Old Testament is the testimony to shalom, that marvelous Hebrew word that means peace. But the peace that is shalom is not negative or one-dimensional. It is much more than the absence of war. Shalom is positive peace: harmony, wholeness, health, and well-being in all human relationships. It is the natural state of humanity as birthed by God. It is harmony between humanity and all of God's good creation. All of creation is interrelated. Every creature, every element, every force of nature participates in the whole of creation. If any person is denied shalom, all are thereby diminished." (Peace with Justice Sunday and Special Offering, 2016 Book of Resolutions)

In the New Testament, Paul begins his letters, "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." The bishops explained, "Paul's letters announce that Jesus Christ is "our peace." It is Christ who "broke down the barrier of hatred that divided us," creating one humanity, overcoming enmity, so making peace (Ephesians 2:14-19)."

United Methodists recognize that "God's earth is aching for peace. Domestic strife, interpersonal violence and abuse, civil conflict, ethnic and racial clashes, religious schism and interfaith rivalry, terrorist attacks, wars between nations, and threatened use of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons—all of these prevent us from achieving God's shalom."

"The Bible makes justice the inseparable companion of

peace (Isaiah 32:17; James 3:18). Both point to right and sustainable relationships in human society, the vitality of our connections with the earth, the well-being and integrity of creation. To conceive peace apart from justice is to compromise the hope that justice and peace shall embrace (Psalm 85:10)."

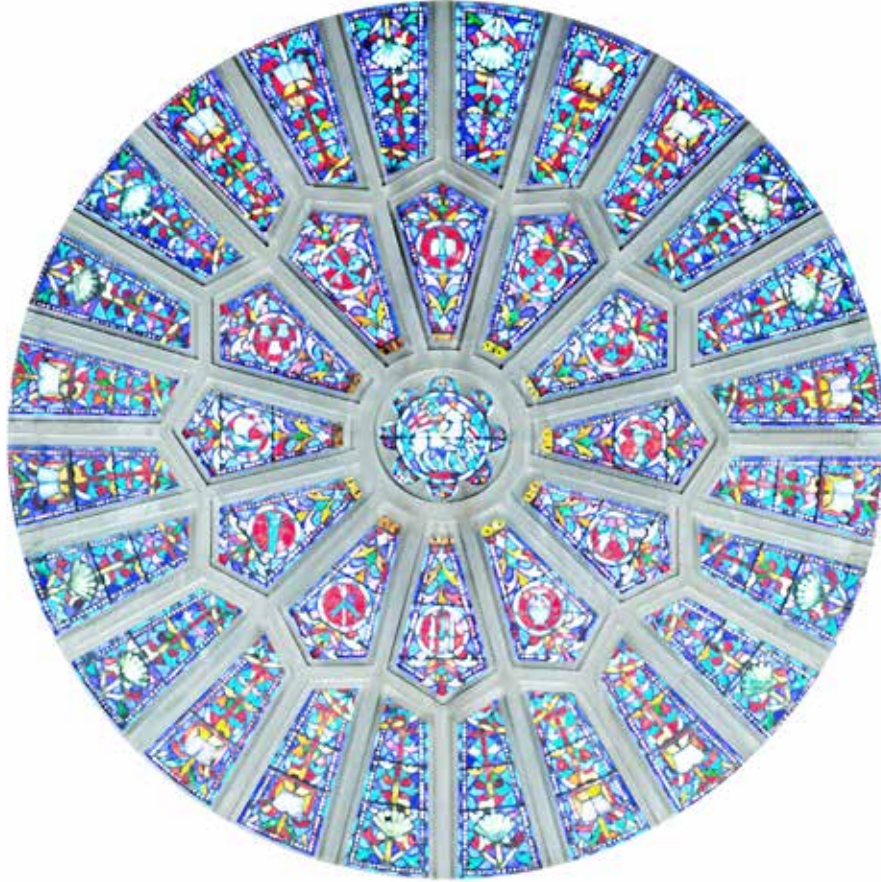
What will peace look like? When there is peace, no one goes hungry. When there is peace, no one is abandoned to fend for themselves. When there is peace, we support each other's thriving. When there is peace, differences are celebrated as gifts for the good of all. When there is peace, no external threats (though there may be some) prevent us from living the fullest lives we can. When there is peace, there is also every ground for joy.

When we pray for peace and offer one another the peace of Christ, we become channels of God's never-ending peace that reorders the world toward wholeness.

When we act in the spirit of Christ, we can "sow love where there is hatred, can dispense pardon where there is injury, can cast light where there is darkness. As instruments of peace and justice, we can seek to replace discord with harmony and to repair the brokenness that shatters the wholeness of shalom."

Paul's letters offer assurance that peace is not something we have to wait for in some yet to be determined future. Peace is being poured out on us by God right now. The bishops remind us, "No matter how bad things are, God's creative work continues. Christ's resurrection assures us that death and destruction do not have the last word. Paul taught that through Jesus Christ, God offers redemption to all of creation and reconciles all things, 'whether on earth or in heaven' (Colossians 1:20). God's Spirit is always and everywhere at work in the world fighting poverty, restoring health, renewing creation, and reconciling peoples."

Content was produced by Ask The UMC, a ministry of United Methodist Communications.



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