

Circuit *Writer*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | ERLANGER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
MAY 2017 – MOTHER'S DAY



PASTOR'S PEN

There has been a lot of upheaval in the “not-so-United Methodist Church” these days about the issue of homosexuality. I said in my sermon 2 Sundays ago that the Judicial Council (our denominational “Supreme Court”) would be ruling on the election of a homosexual woman to the office of Bishop. This happened in the western United States, and for the past few months Karen Oliveto has been serving in the Mountain Sky Episcopal Area (Colorado, Utah, Nevada, Montana and one church in Idaho).

The Judicial Council did in fact rule on this, and said that it is clearly against church law for this to be a valid election. They also said that since there has been no formal charges filed against her, that she will remain in her capacity until charges are filed, there is a church trial and that a jury of her peers has a chance to complete the “due process” to which all pastors are entitled. This might take some time, but this process inevitably will take place.

It is very difficult for all of us to balance the issues of law and love. It is very difficult for all of us to keep contemporary issues in a perspective of Christian love and Godly living. Some of these issues (like homosexuality) have been issues for many, many years and it is still difficult to figure out what a Godly perspective is. It is also very easy to resist the call to open troubling topics to discussion when it is easier just to say, “I already know how I feel about that.”

God's Word is pretty clear that homosexuality is not the original design for humanity. But God's Word is also pretty clear that we need to love people of all places and stations in life. God's Word is pretty clear that we are all sinners who stand in the need of God's grace. And God's Word challenges us to be compassionate and caring to everyone.

That's hard. How on earth do we do all that? We need to understand that everyone will not ever agree on issues like this. But we need to also understand that we can love each other and respect each other no matter how serious the disagreement. That is possible as we see each other as

children of God, no matter how much they might disagree with us or with God. It is possible as we are willing to really listen to each other, not just blow off any opinion that is different than ours. And that is possible as we pray for God to lead us and guide us through the troubled waters of whatever the focus of the dissention might be.

We have to rise above the pettiness of “my way or the highway.” We have to shed the dead skin of feeling like we have all the answers. We don’t have to let go of our values, but we should make sure that what we value is really something from God and not just conditioning from our culture or parenting. Many, many times we become very entrenched in “values” that are really not rooted in Scripture, or maybe in misunderstandings of Scripture.

Many times we say we want to cling to big words like “literal, infallible and inerrant” when referring to Scripture because they sound very holy and emphatic, but when discover the meaning and broader implications of words like that, we may need to back down. (After all, not many of us are walking around with no hands or no eyes....) And we want the Bible to be holy and emphatic when talking about OTHER PEOPLE’S sins, but when it steps on our toes (like forgiving people who hurt us and tithing or fornication or adultery), then we can look the other way.

We have struggled through many issues as a church. Racism and feminism are just a couple of examples of recent history, but there is no shortage of troubled waters that the church has had to face. Martin Luther is famous because he made the church look at the issue of selling indulgences and how grace works. Baptism has been a long standing issue of controversy in the church. John Wesley was even considered a trouble maker by the established Anglican Church with many of his newfangled ideas.

Keeping the faith strong and relevant in our day is a very difficult thing. It requires a lot of struggle with issues that are not all that pleasant. It means we have to think about what we believe and we must think about what we say, too. Society changes quickly, and while faith and values need to stay consistent, we need to apply those values appropriately for the times in which we live.

Above all the commandments and admonitions of Scripture, Jesus said, is the commandment to love God and love our neighbors as ourselves. **LOVING AND CARING FOR EACH OTHER IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN AGREEING WITH EACH OTHER.** It is more important than race, more important than gender identity, more important than sexual orientation, more important than ANYTHING.

These are hard days with complicated issues. Life is no longer black and white. There are no simple issues anymore. We grieve over that a lot, and rightfully so. But in all the changes of the world, God’s love remains consistent and steadfast. God has always been faithful to lead us in the past, and God will not let us down now. God will still speak. God will still love. God will still dig us out of the messes we make. God will continue to be our God, as long as we keep our hearts and minds stayed on him.

The ordination service of the UMC says, “Brothers and sisters the church is of God and will be preserved until the end of time.” I believe that. And I believe God will see us through this issue and any other issue that comes our way. I hope you believe that too.

Pastor Mark

IDA SPENCE "TAKE HOME" MEAL



The beginnings of 30 gallons of chili!! It's a LOT of chili to serve at Ida Spence Mission, thanks to caring, mission minded people at Erlanger UMC.

We had 16 volunteers, gave out 430 meals, and 155 bottles of Laundry detergent.



April Tithes and Offering

Tithes	\$19,419.00
Sunday School	\$83.00
Loose Plate	\$205.35
GECDC	\$18,297.06
Upper Room	\$24.50

GENERAL FUND

TOTAL \$38,028.91

Emmaus Emergency	\$49.00
Emmaus Various Proj.	\$62.00
Emmaus Zimmerman	\$66.00
Flowers	\$60.00
Good Samaritan Fund	\$21.00
Henderson Settlement	\$42.00
Holiday Offering	\$1,824.00
Ida Spence	\$126.00
Manna Mission	\$50.00
Methodist Men	\$320.00
Methodist Home	\$210.00
Miscellaneous	\$4,608.00
Reimbursements	\$445.00
UMCOR	\$76.80
UCV	\$20.00
Women in Mission	\$320.00
Youth	\$440.00
Building Fund	\$2,033.00

SPECIAL GIFTS

TOTAL \$10,772.80

GRAND TOTAL \$48,801.71

Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, FOR GOD LOVES A CHEERFUL GIVER.

2 Corinthians 9:7



WOMEN IN MISSION

By the time this newsletter is published, the Ida Spence "take home meal" on Saturday April 29th, will be history. Thanks to all the volunteers and for all the donations and supplies to make this event a success.

The additional equipment and supplies for the fellowship hall kitchen is complete. We are grateful for the donations of items and funds to purchase items. The stock pots are wonderful.

This coming Thursday, May 4th is our next scheduled meeting. The business meeting starts at 10:30 am. Our guest speaker, Renee Jennings, the NKU Campus Pastor for Vines and Branches (Wesley Foundation) will join us at 11:00 am. We welcome others from our church to join us as we learn more about this campus ministry.

May is Flip - Flop Month!

We are collecting flip-flops for the children at Ida Spence; we need all sizes for both girls and boys. Place in green tub in the Home Street Vestibule. Thank you.

KY ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The KY Annual Conference is held in June. There is a workshop session each year where Health Care Kits are assembled for Sager - Brown Depot. The assigned items for Northern KY District are "combs". There are specific restrictions on the type of comb. It will be more efficient if we order the appropriate comb. Anyone from the congregation who wished to help by placing a dollar or two in an envelope marked "combs" would be most appreciated.



EASTER FUN





Family Promise[®] of Northern Kentucky

Building community, strengthening lives.

Email received from Family Promise

"I just wanted to spread some sunshine on this gloomy day! The Perry Family is moving TODAY! Linda has enrolled in college and will be living with her three children at the Lincoln Grant Scholar House to finish her degree. The children have been smiling from ear to ear since they found out they will each have their own bed! I wanted to share this testimony written by Linda (Mother) on our Facebook Page, it truly encompasses the impact this program has made on her family:

"This is an excellent program. If you are at a place in your life where you just want to die cause you just lost your home with 3 children, you feel like a failure. You lose all hope. You feel as though you have no one. Alone, frighten, and scared. Then I find out about this Program. It was a blessing. I was ready to just give up. I felt like I did not have anymore fight in me. I received a call from a lady named Amber. She set an appointment for me to come in. Once I got to Family Promises I immediately felt welcomed. Amber had the prettiest smile and spoke softly. It was like walking into your Church. You know how you feel when you first enter your Church, like any worries you had were all lifted off your shoulders. A moment of peace sits upon your heart..Well that was exactly how I felt when I arrived here at Family Promises. Not only did they welcomed me, but my children as well. This Program is a Amazing. You get the opportunity to better your life. They help you in every way possible. I never thought in my life that I would be back in school. Family Promises made that happen. I can not explain how I feel inside. Knowing I am getting a huge chance to better my life as well as my children's. I may be moving into a brand new apartment as well. This all is capable of happening because of this program "Family Promises"

So to the families that feel as if there is no where or no one to turn to. I highly recommend that you should reach out to the staff here. It has given me so much hope. I can go on and on about how great of a Program this is when you can just come and find out for yourself.

I want to give thank to all the staff members here. I want you to know what you all do changes our lives. Knowing that you all are responsible for all the greatness that has happened to me and my children... Gratitude and prayers to each staff member here at Family Promises..."

We wish them all the BEST :)

Amanda Speier, MSW, LSW"

From the Erlanger United Methodist Men

Hi Folks.

Mark your calendars. The Ice Cream Social will be Sunday, June 25, 2017 after the church service. Tickets will be available soon. Thank you.



The “Annual Car Show” will be Saturday, August 19, 2017. More details later.



Canned goods update for the United Christian Volunteers. Thru April 22, 2017, 2,198 food items have been delivered. Emphasis in May 2017 is on peanut butter & crackers. Our goal for 2017 is 7,000 food items. There are many folks in the local area that can't afford enough food for their families. Your support has gone a long way in helping this cause. Thank you. Whatever you bring will be greatly appreciated.

We would like to invite all men to join the Erlanger United Methodist Men. Our next meeting is May 6, 2017, Saturday, 9:00 am at Erlanger UMC in the Asbury Room.

Thank you and GOD Bless you all.

THE MISSION OF THE GENERAL COMMISSION ON UNITED METHODIST MEN IS TO ASSIST MEN TO KNOW JESUS CHRIST, TO SERVE HIM, TO GROW SPIRITUALLY AND SEEK DAILY TO DO HIS WILL.

MAY

Mon 1	7:00p	SPRC
Tue 2	7:00p	Bible Study
Wed 3	12:00p 7:00p	Caring Team Choir Practice
Thu 4	11:00a	WIM
Fri 5	Grace Edgett Zoo Day	
Sat 6	8:15a 9:00a	Umm Devotional Lesson Umm Meeting
Sun 7	9:00a 9:15a 10:30a 4:30p 5:30p	Communion/Chapel Sunday School Worship Devotions Young Adult Ministry - Youth



Mon 8	6:15p 7:00p	Finance Committee Administrative Board
Tue 9	7:00p	Bible Study
Wed 10	10:30a 5:45p 7:00p	Children's Chapel Worship Meeting Choir Practice
Thu 11	6:00p	Prayer Group
Sat 13	Children / Youth Garden Of Hope	
Sun 14	Mother's Day 9:00a Communion/Chapel 9:15a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 5:30p Young Adult Ministry - Youth	
Mon 15	6:30p	Trustee
Tue 16	7:00p	Bible Study
Wed 17	7:00p	Choir Practice
Fri 19	7:00p	Grace Edgett - Graduation
Sun 21	Graduation Recognition Day 9:00a Communion/Chapel 9:15a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 4:30p Devotions 5:30p Young Adult Ministry - Youth	
Mon 22	Men's Fundraiser	
Tue 23	7:00p	Bible Study
Wed 24	10:30a 7:00p	Children's Chapel Choir Practice
Sat 27	5:00p	Manna Mission Meal
Sun 28	9:00a 9:15a 10:30a 4:30p 5:30p	Communion/Chapel Sunday School Worship Devotions Young Adult Ministry - Youth
Mon 29	Memorial Day -Church Office Closed	
Tue 30	7:00p	Bible Study
Wed 31	7:00p	Choir Practice



Easter Balloons

The church office received a call from a gentleman named Chris Dalambakis. He said he found one of our balloons at the Kenwood Country Club, 6501 Kenwood Road, in Cincinnati, OH (21 miles away). He was thankful for the message and had a prayer request. Sarah Amend is a UC student, she has cystic fibrosis and had a lung transplant at the Cleveland Clinic, and she is not doing well, and he was asking for prayer for her.

MAY

BIRTHDAYS

Sharon Pollard	05/05
Vanessa Schneider	05/08
Betty Duncan	05/14
JoAnne Gillespie	05/15
Scott Abney	05/16
Bill Shumate	05/20
Claire Lusk	05/23
Avery Love	05/23

ANNIVERSARIES

Dennis & Connie Hoffrogge	05/07
Arthur & Tina Honican	05/08
Carl & Karen Neumeister	05/13
Patrick & Cherri McMahan	05/18
Bill & Donna McCarty	05/19
John Martin & Amy Sullivan	05/30



GRADUATE RECOGNITION SUNDAY

Graduate Recognition Sunday is scheduled for May 21, 2017, at the 10:30 a.m. worship service. If you are a member of Erlanger United Methodist Church and graduating from high school, vocational school, or getting a college degree, please let us know about it as soon as possible. You may call Sue Lambert 525-1525 or Suzanna in the office 727-2136 by Sunday, May 7, with the name and contact number for the graduate. Sue will get in touch with you for more information.



May 1, 2017

Dear Friends and Associates of Owen Dolin:

By now, all of you have heard that our beloved District Superintendent, Owen Dolin, is retiring.

As Chair of The District Superintendency Team, I want to tell you that our committee has been trying to figure out how to celebrate Owen's life and ministry, but in typical "Owen" style, his response is: "You don't need to do anything." Well, we know better. **The District Annual Conference will be held at Alexandria UMC on Sunday, May 21st, from 3-4:30 PM.** Following the business meeting, the District is hosting a Retirement Reception for Owen and Ann in the Fellowship Hall at Alexandria UMC.

You and your church can honor him by (1) attending, (2) by bringing a retirement card or letter expressing your love and support, and (3) by making a donation for his retirement gift. I am collecting funds for the retirement gift as has been the custom in the past for his Christmas gift.

Please send any gift donation to Immanuel UMC, 2551 Dixie Highway Lakeside Park, KY 41017 and mark it "DS GIFT" to my attention. I will write one check to present to Owen on May 21st.

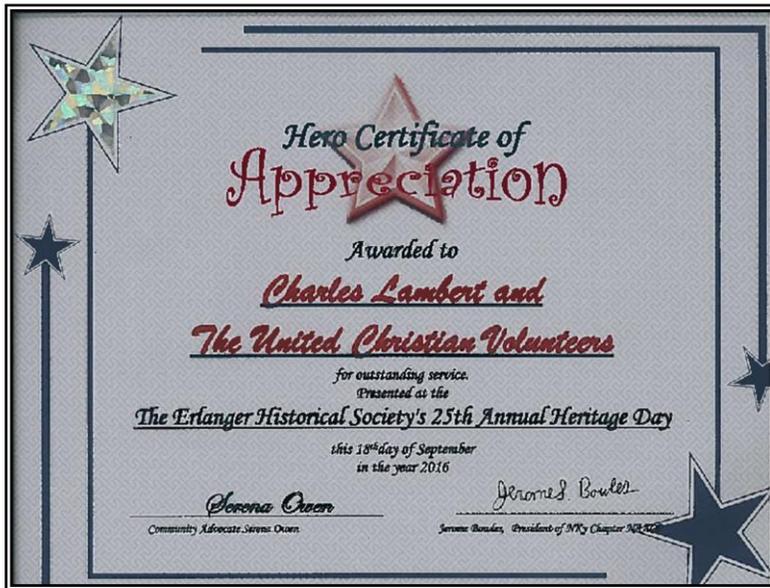
Our prayer and hope is that all of you will show your love to Owen and Ann in a tangible way. We thank God for their ministry among us these past several years and we want to send them off in style. Thanks so much for your help and support.

Your Brother in Christ,


Jim Fant

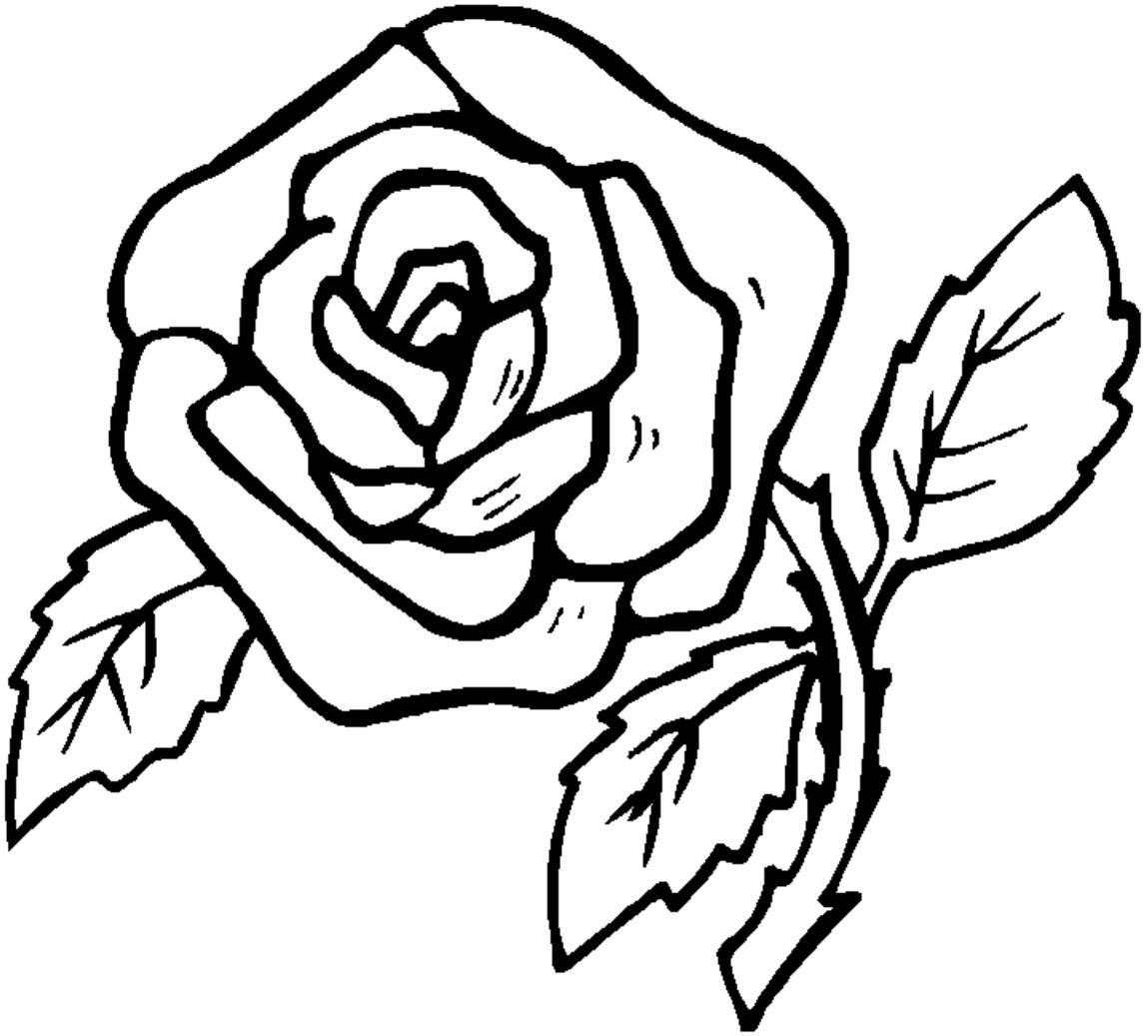
Congratulations United Christian Volunteers

UCV were recognizes as Community Hero's. Thank you to all who give of their time and donations to help UCV serve our community.



OUR UPDATED
COMMONWEALTH
VESTIBULE!





Happy
Mother's Day!

Hello everyone,

It is spring and we have started collecting for Pastor Mark's Cake to help Ida Spence. Every week until Nov, I (Joy) will be carrying the jug around on Sundays to collect a donation of any amount you would like to give.

Last year's total was great, \$2,225. 00 (wow) if we could do as well this year that would be wonderful, but no matter any amount is a blessing.

Our fall community craft, bake and yard sale will be Sept 30, set up time 7:00 am, sale 8:00 to 3:00. Booth rental \$15.00 for a 2 car space, you will need you own table and chairs; the Youth will be selling food and drink all day.

Hope you will make plans to join us as a vendor or a guest. It's going to be a great day. This is a fundraiser for UCV. We need lots of baked goods, crafts and yard sale items

God Bless, keep smiling
Joy Hamilton, Adult Ministry

IDA SPENCE CAKE AUCTION AND SPAGHETTI DINNER

NOVEMBER 4, 2017

Using Change for Change, We are collecting money for our Pastor's cake. (See Joy Hamilton) The Ida Spence director along with volunteer's minister to children, Mon Wed Fri 4-5:30 feeding them a meal, offering homework assistance, playing learning games through our After School Program. They have a summer fun with VBS, and other programs. They have 3 youth groups, they send the youth to summer camps, and Adult Bible Studies. They strive to enriching the lives of underserved children in the City Heights community by providing nutrition, education, and mentoring in a Christian environment, and during this fundraiser we get to help fund all this.