

MAPLEWOOD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

MESSENGER

JUNE 2016



Summer camp opportunities still available - and CAN be life-changing

There is still time to register for summer church camp through the Missouri United Methodist Conference.. The Missouri Conference summer camp options can be found at <http://nextgenumc.org>.

There also are a number of summer camp opportunities at Camp Jo-Ota which is being operated by a consortium of United Methodist Congregations in the northern part of Missouri. You can find more information about these opportunities at: <http://www.campjo-ota.org/>

The scholarships for summer camp are readily available through the Maplewood UMC Budget. Please let Pastor Kim know if your child(ren) are planning to attend summer camp so that arrangements for church scholarships can be made!

how will answer the question, "What did you do this summer?"

Short term mission opportunity in the Saint Louis area is available

During the week of June 13-17 folks from Webster UMC will be working on homes in the Eureka area which recently were damaged by flood waters. If you are interest in taking a "day off" to help with this, contact Shay Blackwell (shaybwell@sbcglobal.net or 314-822-4719).

Here's hoping several of us will be able to be involved in this opportunity. The arms working for Mercy and Justice can embrace the folks at home AND the people far away.



thought you would want to know:

our seminary student graduated!

Craig Stevenson, Associate director of the Mozambique Initiative, sent his thanks to the congregation for Maplewood UMC for supporting a seminary student in Mozambique. Her name is Madalena Wilson and she graduated from the Gondola Training Center Sunday, May 1, 2016.

The Gondola Training Center is in the northern part of Mozambique ...it is "in the bush" and their means of electricity is via solar panels. They do not have access to high speed internet or regular computer access with a printer that makes this very easy. All of this information typically has the flow through the GTC director. Many of the GTC students serve in rural churches that are thatch and don't have electricity access. The North is fairly significantly less developed than the southern part of the Country, which is why the Methodist Church wanted to put GTC in the North – to try to combat this problem.

Have you heard about Kwashi-Kids?

Not yet? Then allow me to introduce you! This is the name for the school that our own Karen Raborn started in Zambia. Dreamed of to educate a *small number of girls*, there were 189 students (both boys & girls) on the first day of school. No one was turned away ... and the story continues from there. You will be hearing more about Kwashi-Kids and how it is working in the weeks ahead but right now, we want to share with you an opportunity for you to participate in an August fundraiser for Karen's school.

The Monday Club of Webster Groves will sponsor a flea market of **Treasure Tables on August 27, 8 am – noon**. Of course they will be delighted for all of us to come and make purchases BUT RIGHT NOW, Peg Chulick (Karen's "adopted" mom would like to ask us to search our homes, finding "treasures" we can donate for the Treasure Table she will be putting together for Kwashi-Kids in August.

Summer Sin Cinema ...
featuring
"the 7 Deadly Sins"

Coming to the Maplewood United Methodist Church sanctuary near you on Sunday, June 19, 2016! Each week we will use movie clips (very carefully) to help us understand more about the Seven Deadly Sins - Pride, Envy, Anger, Sloth, Greed, Gluttony and Lust – and how they impact our lives in a "deadly way. We'll also talk about life-giving alternatives!

Be sure to mark your calendar at home and reserve your pew at MUMC NOW



8	William Housewright
11	Phyllis Hughes
14	Erin McDonough
15	Johnny Kampis
17	Bonnie Jent
21	Dennis Collins
24	Renee McDonough
25	Gary Holt
28	Nancy Collins
29	Emily Baskett
29	Patti Carr



6/1	– Julia & David Schaffner
6/8/64	- Donna & Skip Reynolds
6/9/01	- Jason & Colleen Watkins
6/18	- Brent and Cari Ford
6/21/80	– Kim & Steve Shirar
6/22/96	- Mike & Juanita O'Laughlin
6/29/57	– Liston & Bonnie Jent

FROM
PASTOR
KIM



Dear Friends,

Most of you probably know that as a United Methodist congregation we are part of a connectional system. Each local congregation is part of a district in their geographical area. (Ours is the Gateway Central District.)

Districts connect to form a conference. (Ours is the Missouri Annual Conference. Each Annual Conference is led by a Bishop. Bishops lead and guide but do not have the authority to create policy as it is presented in *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church.*)

Conferences connect to form jurisdictions. (The Missouri Annual Conference is part of the Southwest Jurisdiction.)

Jurisdictions from all around the world connect to form the General Conference of the United Methodist Church. The General Conference meets every four years and is composed of both lay and clergy delegates from each Annual Conference. The General Conference is the only group which can change the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church. They are the policy-making body for the United Methodist Church.

General Conference met in May with a number of important and controversial issues including whether or not the United Methodist Church would change its stance on same-sex marriage and the ordination of homosexuals. There were and, as I understand it, still are, concerns that our international denomination would divide

over these issues. Of course, all of the information about General Conference can be found online. When Colette and I are at Annual Conference this weekend we will also have the chance to listen carefully to reports from the MO delegates who attended Annual conference. When we return I will pass on what I have learned.

With regard to decisions about human sexuality, General Conference voted (428 – 405) to accept a proposal from the Council of Bishops which is printed below in its entirety. Three main points found in this proposal are: All decisions regarding human sexuality were deferred. The subject will be referred to a special commission to be named by the Council of Bishops. There is a possibility that the General Conference will reconvene in a special called session prior to 2020 to attend the the decisions made by the Commission. In addition, the Council of Bishops will work together to find alternatives to complaints and trials in order to avoid unnecessary harm.

I look forward to learning more about what happened at General Conference and passing on the information to you when we return. In the meantime, the ministry at Maplewood United Methodist Church will continue as it has, welcoming all people regardless of sexual orientation and inviting and encouraging all people to grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ as they participate in the life and ministry of this congregation.

Grace and peace, *Pastor Kim*

Continued on next page.....

Below is the complete proposal, "An Offering for a Way Forward", which was submitted by the Council of Bishops which was approved by a General Conference vote of 428-405.

AN OFFERING FOR A WAY FORWARD

25 *But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a custodian. 26 You are all God's children through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 All of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor free; nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 Now if you belong to Christ, then indeed you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to the promise. (Galatians 3:25-29 (NRSV))*

Your bishops were honored to receive the request of General Conference to help lead our United Methodist Church forward during this time of both great crisis and great opportunity. As far as we can discover, this is the first time that a General Conference has ever made such a request of the Council of Bishops, and we accept this request with humility.

We share with you a deep commitment to the unity of the church in Christ our Lord. Yesterday, our president shared the deep pain we feel. We have all prayed for months and continue to do so. We seek, in this kairos moment, a way forward for profound unity on human sexuality and other matters. This deep unity allows for a variety of expressions to co-exist in one church. Within the Church, we are called to work and pray for more Christ-like unity with each other rather than separation from one another. This is the prayer of Jesus in John 17:21-23.

UNITY We believe that our unity is found in Jesus Christ; it is not something we achieve but something we receive as a gift from God. We understand that part of our role as bishops is to lead the church toward new behaviors, a new way of being and new forms and structures which allow a unity of our mission of "making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world" while allowing for differing

expressions as a global church. Developing such new forms will require a concerted effort by all of us, and we your bishops commit ourselves to lead this effort. We ask you, as a General Conference, to affirm your own commitment to maintaining and strengthening the unity of the church. We will coordinate this work with the various efforts already underway to develop global structures and a new General Book of Discipline for our church. Strengthening the unity of the church is a responsibility for all of us.

PRAYER We accept our role as spiritual leaders to lead the UMC in a "pause for prayer" - to step back from attempts at legislative solutions and to intentionally seek God's will for the future. As a Council of Bishops, we will lead the church in every part of the world in times of worship, study, discernment, confession and prayer for God's guidance. We ask you, as a General Conference, to join us in this effort, beginning this week. We were moved by the sight of delegates praying around the table, and we hope these efforts will continue. As your bishops we are ready to join you and to lead you in these times of prayer.

PROCESSES We have discussed in depth the processes which might help our church heal and move forward - up to and including the possibility of a called General Conference in 2018 or 2019. We have not finalized our plans for such processes, but we will keep working on options we have heard from many of you, and we will keep reporting to this General Conference and to the whole church.

NEXT STEPS We recommend that the General Conference defer all votes on human sexuality and refer this entire subject to a special Commission, named by the Council of Bishops, to develop a complete examination and possible revision of every paragraph in our Book of Discipline regarding human sexuality. We continue to hear from

Continued on next page.....

**AN OFFERING FOR A WAY FORWARD
continued from previous page...**

many people on the debate over sexuality that our current Discipline contains language which is contradictory, unnecessarily hurtful, and inadequate for the variety of local, regional and global contexts. We will name such a Commission to include persons from every region of our UMC, and will include representation from differing perspectives on the debate. We commit to maintain an on-going dialogue with this Commission as they do their work, including clear objectives and outcomes. Should they complete their work in time for a called General Conference, then we will call a two- to three-day gathering before the 2020 General Conference. (We will consult with GCFA regarding cost-effective ways to hold that gathering.)

CONTINUING DISCUSSIONS We will continue to explore options to help the church live in grace with one another -- including ways to avoid further complaints, trials and harm while we uphold the Discipline. We will continue our conversation on this matter and report our progress to you and to the whole church.

Today, as a way of beginning to find our way forward, we suggest that in place of the allotted legislative time we spend 1-2 hours of plenary time in prayer, confession and exploration of a creative way forward. The bishops are prepared to provide questions to guide your conversations. Your conversations will be the first step to a way forward.



Blast from the past....Vacation Bible School the summer of 2011. Do you recognize these kids?

Person to Person

Dave Phelps

In 2012, Korean born Southern Baptist missionary Kenneth Bae was arrested by North Korea for attempting to overthrow the government, and sentenced to fifteen years of hard labor. Bae's "crime" was that he prayed and taught North Koreans to pray. He worked ten hours a day, six days a week in the labor camp, doing farm labor, carrying rock and shoveling coal. After a time, Bae's health began to fail. He was finally pardoned by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un after more than two years in prison.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of Bae's case is that he recalled in an interview, "They said, 'You attempted to overthrow the government through prayer and worship' and they really took prayer as a weapon against them." They thought he had come to pray for the demise of North Korea, "so that we come crumbling down." After a year in prison, Bae began talking to his captors about life in America. In turn, they began coming to him with marriage and parenting problems. He said, "I was just there to love the people, let people know that God cares about them . . ." And of his captors, he said, "I consider some of them as friends."

The North Korean government is right about one thing: Prayer is powerful. Paul told the Ephesians to "Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication." (6:18a NRSV). That passage is the conclusion of Paul's description of "the whole armor of God" (vs. 11-17). In it, he says "For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places." (vs. 12 NRSV). We aren't fighting a physical battle and we can't use physical weapons.

When Paul and Silas were in jail in Philippi, "About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them." (Acts 16:25 NRSV). Their prayers and their response to their circumstances—being in jail on trumped up charges—made an impression on the other prisoners. And on their jailer (vs. 29-34).

James wrote that "The prayer of the righteous is

is powerful and effective." (Jas. 5:16b NRSV). He went on to tell the story of Elijah: "Elijah was a human being like us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain and the earth yielded its harvest." (Jas. 5:17-18 NRSV). You can find Elijah's story in 1 Kings 17-18. But prayer isn't just for prophets, it's for all believers. The late Corrie ten Boom wrote, "A man is powerful on his knees."

Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, "pray without ceasing," (1 Thes. 5:17 NRSV). We're to pray in the same way that we breathe—constantly. Life for Christians should be a constant attitude of prayer. It opens doors (Matt. 7:7), moves mountains (Matt. 17:20), drives out evil (Mark 9:29), raises the dead (Acts 9:40), cures illness (Jas. 5:15-16), and more. Paul also wrote to the Christians in Corinth, "we do not wage war according to human standards; for the weapons of our warfare are not merely human, but they have divine power to destroy strongholds." (2 Cor. 10:3b-4a NRSV). Throughout the centuries, men and women of faith have accomplished great things through the power of prayer. We stand at the end of a long line of spiritual warriors. Our prayers can accomplish great things—"destroy strongholds"—perhaps even defeat countries and regimes.

If we use the weapon of prayer instead of harsh words, we can make a positive impression on those around us. Solomon wrote, "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." (Prov. 15:1 NRSV). A soft answer—or a soft prayer—can have more power than any other response we might be tempted to make.

"Now I know that the Lord will help his anointed;
he will answer him from his holy heaven
with mighty victories by his right hand.
Some take pride in chariots, and some in horses,
but our pride is in the name of the Lord
our God.
They will collapse and fall, but we shall rise and
stand upright.
Give victory to the king, O Lord; answer us when

THE
POWER
OF PRAYER



Say “thank you” and feel blessed

Thank you to ...

... Amy Cordeal and the chancel choir who have served so faithfully from last fall until this spring! The choir will take a well-deserved summer break after singing on the first Sunday in June.

... Peg Chulick, Donna Reynolds and Bonnie Jent for decorating the sanctuary during for “Spirit Month” in May and for providing the scarves and balloons for Pentecost Sunday.

... Maplewood United Methodist Church - Thank you for your recent donation of yarn* to the program here at Potosi Correctional Center. We truly appreciate your generosity.

Sincerely, Stan Payne,
Deputy Warden of
Operations

** Folks at Potosi Correctional Center carry out knitting projects and donate what they create to places like MUMC who then distribute where needed. Last Christmas Rita Hanley took about 40 knitted lap robes to people in the nursing home where she works ... hats have been their most recent gifts.*



Sunday, June 19th

Summer Sunday school schedule set

From Sunday, July 3 through Sunday, August 7 the pre-school and elementary Sunday school classes will be on break. During this time the trustees are planning for new ceilings to be installed in the Sunday school classrooms. Pre-school and elementary Sunday school classes will resume on Sunday, August 14! The nursery will be available as usual during Sunday school time and during worship.

We will miss the time together but are looking forward to gazing at new ceilings in the classrooms when we return after this break!

In the meantime, the Children’s Sunday school ministry has places for folks to serve as small group leaders for pre-school and elementary-aged children. After the children gather during Sunday school for a large group learning time they divide according to age/grade level into smaller learning groups. In these groups the children have the opportunity to continue to process the day’s lesson while strengthening relationships with their age mates and one or more adult leaders. If you feel led to serve as a small group leader once a month or more frequently, please contact Rachel Ward (rachel.kuneward@gmail.com) or Kyle Kranes (kraneskyle@gmail.com). You are welcome to assist in June prior to the summer Sunday school break so that you can see how much fun it is to be part of the lives of our children!

(At our most recent Ad Council meeting, Kyle Kranes reported that MUMC is averaging 20-25 children per week!)

Kim Shirar, Pastor
Pastor's Office Hours:
Tuesday: 9 a.m. - 2:45 p.m.
Thursday: 9 a.m. - 2:45 p.m.
Cell Phone: (314) 651-9999
E-Mail: pastor@maplewoodumc.org

Sally Noel, Secretary
Secretary will be in the office:
Tuesday: 12 noon to 2 p.m.
Thursday: 9a.m. - 2 p.m.
Maplewood UMC phone:
(314)781-5902
Maplewood UMC Official Website:
maplewoodumc.org

Mission Statement of Maplewood UMC is:

Gather as God's people
Grow in faith, love and service
Go into the world to do God's work.

THE FAMILY CIRCUS by Jeff and Bill Keane



“Aren't there
any superheroes
that get along
with everyone?”

from Joyful Noiseletter
.com. Reprinted with
permission of
Bill Keane



MAPLEWOOD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

7409 Flora Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63143



Every Sunday
9:45 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Worship