



THE GLAD TIDER

Stevensville United Methodist Church

October 2020

Looking Back to Look Forward

Big yellow sticky notes still hang on my wall from last October when we shared in a strategic meeting with Rev. Eric Strader. Yes, I have other decorative art, but these sticky notes gives me focus. They remind me of where we've been together and where we might go. Looking back can have that inspiring affect because one sees the progress alongside the ongoing commitment to this work of "getting in the boat," following Christ.

Once last fall someone asked if everything had to be about achievement, progress, growth. I've carried that question as something to give me focus as well. These two ideas, looking back and looking forward, must somehow find a balance, rhythm, coexistence for the wholeness of an individual, community, and cosmic experience of relationship.

Looking back to the sticky note, I see many goals set for that day on October tied to emotional intensity. For that reason, they couldn't be ignored or dismissed; they needed appropriate consideration and follow up commitment for the wholeness of the persons expressing them and the community at large. As we reflected together, we identified some boulders where we felt stuck such as finances, communication, administrative processes, exclusion, and fear of change.

Looking back, I see a big to do list, a ton of potential for growth, and an incredible gift of commitment to find health and wholeness as a community. I'm amazed at what all the people of SUMC have done to discern God's mission, address anxieties, and seek a better way forward. Together we have named where we were and where we want to go.

As of today, we've turned hopes into these realities:

Named, claimed and live into a mission & value statement that gives direction

Voted to create a early learning center for children, providing community connection, addressing some building issues, & caring for future generations

Built up communication with Town Halls, Glad Tider, weekly emails, and conversations

People in leadership focused on and continue to build healthy church with transparency, conversation, direct communication

Created forums that consider social, civic, and challenging subjects



So what are your hopes for today? For yourself, for this church, for this community, for the world? You have a baseline again by looking back. Now we look forward, again. Dream big because by God's grace we can be and do so much.

Journeying with Christ and you,
Pastor Sarah



Celebration Sunday – October 25, 2020

Our church's Celebration Sunday will look a bit different this year.

In the time of Covid, our annual congregational gathering, commitment, and celebration potluck is not possible. So we are changing things up!

Celebration Sunday is the day we commit a portion of our financial resources to God's work through our church for the coming year. We do this in an prayerful, joyful, and intentional manner. God has blessed each of us with abundance in our lives, and God desires for us to share of that abundance. This gives us an opportunity to think about what we want our church to accomplish this next year, and how we can share in the mission opportunities of our church.

Pastor Sarah invites us to consider Stewardship in her messages on October 18th and 25th. The Stewardship and Finance Committee and Pastor Sarah will send a stewardship letter and commitment card the first part of October, and we will have an opportunity to dedicate the commitment card during the service on Celebration Sunday, October 25th. We will celebrate after service on the 25th with "To Go" cake for your Sunday dessert! The S/F committee thanks you for your generous support this past year, and for your thanks giving in 2020.

Missional Goals for 2021

- Serve community with space: AA, Alanon, WIC, Blood Drive, Scouts
- Worship: Continue 2 services with zoom and YouTube recordings
- Care for families and kids: Sapphire ELC, classes, safe place
- Studies: Wednesday Morning Bible Study, bereavement group, Fearless Conversation, Racial Justice Conversations, Financial Peace University
- Care for members and people in need
- Reroof the historic building
- Finish construction on new fellowship hall and SELC
- Uplift traditional and create new rituals of meaning
- Build mentoring program for all ages
- Cultivate spiritual depth through worship, spiritual practices, and prayer
- Weave contemplation and action together for social justice resulting in mentoring, scholarships, and other connections
- **Financial Goal for 2020: \$154,000. Financial Goal for 2021: \$160,000.**



October 2020 Worship Worship Everywhere and Always

Worship can be the very place where our hearts connect with God's heart. That's why it can happen in a sanctuary, on the mountain, or when peeling potatoes. Recognizing the presence of God and communing is worship. So it's no wonder that we must ponder all the ways and situations that happen, in moments of community celebration, saying goodbye, enduring fear and anxiety, facing desperate people, claiming what matters, and fully participating in generous, joy-filled, activating expressions to honor God and future generations. Our hearts cry out in worship, in connection in moments of deep depression. Our spirits soar when called to a vision. Our daily lives of spending money and caring for can show devotion. This month discover the daily activities and experiences, even those that seem unfit or ugly or too broken, and allow them to be your "call to worship."

October 4, 2020: Love & Worship:

Harmony of Community

Worship, holding reverence for God, is an act that can happen anytime and everywhere because God is not limited to Sunday in the sanctuary. Love is also an act that can happen anytime and everywhere, and likely has as many iterations as worship can. So it is no wonder that this World Communion Sunday linked with Paul's letter about Christ-like love invite us to acknowledge and live into worship and love in genuine, robust, and diverse ways. Why? Because such love exists beyond borders in communion and reverence for God extends to our treatment of neighbors and enemies alike. Worship and love will not be contained in particular definitions or corners which in turn allows the common good to be made

possible in the church and community. "Genuine love has a moral orientation toward the good. When we show love toward someone, we are moving them toward God's goodness," wrote Prof. Mark Reasoner. Sounds like a beautiful harmony.

Scripture: Romans 12:3-21

Prayer: God of Love and Mystery, You have imbued us with a heart that longs to be known and filled by your essence. You have given us the example and wisdom to extend such qualities to all around us. Encourage us in our worship and love that they be genuine, diverse, and robust on a daily basis. Amen.

Consider how love and worship are made tangible: pray for drivers you pass, take deep breaths as you get ready in the morning, ask God what God sees as you walk or play with kids.





October 11, 2020: Fear is Not Your Identity

"Do not fear!" God and his messengers repeat this line over and over throughout the Bible, throughout history. Despite circumstance, despite history, despite what other people say, do not fear. And so much easier said than done. The circumstances, history, and other people aren't going away, so what is the response to the outside world? And even more pressing, what is the response to my body and mind when it functions in a constant state of fear, anxiety, and depression? We take the God's next statement to heart- "I am with you." This is not a quick fix or "Pollyanna" worldview. This is a promise that God suffers with you even while strengthening you. God

reminds you of your true identity in Christ. God will not let you be lost to yourself but instead will show God's self in and through you. It might sound so theoretical...until you look at pot whose cracks are the only way for light to shine.

Scripture: John 14: 25-27, Phil 4:6-7

Prayer: God who abides with me in all my fears and anxieties, help me see as you see. Help me breathe with peace and you breathe. Help me feel as fully as you feel. Help me be whole, as you want me to be whole. Flood my everything with your peace. Amen. *Look for places that are cracked or with voids- what might live in them anyway?*

October 18, 2020: Testify to Love & Reap a Harvest (Stewardship Sunday)

Apostle Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus is extraordinary as told in Acts 9. A light stopped in his tracks, Jesus spoke and directed him a different direction, and blindness (literally and spiritually) dropped from Paul's eyes like scales. What's even more fascinating is that Paul told this story countless times, at least 3 more times are captured in later in the book of Acts. This encounter with Jesus Christ shook in such a way that he discovered the core essence of life and began telling everyone. By engaging from that fertile soil of God's message in his life, Paul helped the church blossom and be fruitful with such an abundant harvest. When we know,

share and live from God's message and mission on our hearts as individuals and as a community, the very way of life changes. We buy and sow seeds, nurture and groom crops, and harvest and share for God's delight and abundance to be made real.

Scripture: Acts 28:24-31, 2 Cor. 8: 1-9

Prayer: Gracious God, Thank you for intersecting our stories to write one that flies off the page. Give us courage to recognize and respond to your voice. Enliven us to share the ways you are calling to serve and give so that the fruit can come from your abundance. Amen. *Reread in the Stewardship News the list of fruitful ministries made real in and through SUMC during 2020. How has God's mission empowered love to be realized this year?*

October 25, 2020: Testify to Love & Live (Stewardship Consecration Sunday)

Mary Magdalena walked with Jesus for much of his ministry serving as a follower and support to this leader. She took on a responsibility to give to what was good in order that it might be known by so many more. Jesus Christ endorsed this role by revealing his resurrected existence on that first Eastern morning. "Go, and tell my family," he implored her, making her the first evangelist to the Risen Christ. She did so, testifying to what is good and discovering new ways to engage with it through action, joy, and generosity. Mary wasn't about to sit still; she told her story,

which activated hearts for God and God's purpose for generations.

Scripture: John 20: 1-18

Prayer: O God, you surprise us! You show up in a garden and call us by name. You reveal what is good and important so much so that we can't help but tell others. You trust us enough to infuse us with purpose and power to make your love known here and now. Give us the heart of Mary Magdalena to say, "Yes Lord, I go for you!" Amen.

Reread in the Stewardship News the Missional goals at SUMC for 2021. How will we love for and in the future?



Worship Service Updates

Details for worship experiences through 2020.

Sunday, 9:00am: Service of Worship with reflective prayer, message and music (30-45 min) (In-person. Zoom & inside sanctuary when temp dips below 50 degrees.)

Sunday, 10:30am: Service of Worship with music, children's time, scripture & message, special music and prayer (45-60 min) (In-person and zoom.)

Special Worship Experiences

Communion, 1st Sunday of each month

Oct. 25: Commitment Sunday for Stewardship

Nov. 22: Thanksgiving Service and Thank Offering, annual donation to support local & global ministries

Nov. 29: Advent begins

Thursday, Dec. 10 at 7pm: Blue Christmas Service for those who are grieving

Dec. 13: Hanging of the Greens- A worship service of musical gift and traditional holiday fun.

Thursday, Dec. 24: Christmas Eve, Services at 4pm (outside) and 7pm (inside)

Single Accountable Leadership Board- "The Unified Board"

The Ad Board and Pastor Sarah are exploring a new structure for the administrative committees in the church. Considering this structure in an entire congregation decision with many benefits even while being change. Your questions and comments matter, so please email Paul Ludington or Pastor Sarah.

The **Town Hall Meeting on Oct 11 at 9:45** will give everyone another chance to discuss this further.

Why consider this structure?

Missional: Congregation works together aligned toward mission. ALL people are in ministry with Christ, not just pastor or leadership team and this engagement with Christ makes a real difference in the community.

Accountability: Accountability builds trust, communication, and action throughout the congregation by being willing to accept responsibility and authority. This structure should call for congregation-wide accountability to hold each other to Missional fruitfulness.

Efficiency: This creates a permission-giving culture with less meetings and more ministry! Decisions can be made quickly, and goals of ministries can be adjusted as needed, encouraging experimentation.

Alignment: This creates unity moving in one direction, knowing what others are doing while it reduces/ eliminates competition for power. The congregation is empowered the congregation to connect with the larger UMC from its mission.

What does The Unified Board look like?

An executive board that fulfills all the *Disciplinary* roles of trustees, SPR, finance, and Ad Board by holding the governance responsibilities of fiduciary work (goal assessment, financial and facility oversight, and legal responsibilities), generative work (creativity, teambuilding, new questions), and strategic work (creating plans for the future) take priority in the lay leadership team's work.

Ministry teams will engage with direction from this executive board.

How is this implemented?

Discern as a strategic team, have two-way conversations with the congregation, write guidelines for the executive board, discuss structure change with DS, nominate leaders to the team, vote on structure, guidelines and nomination list at a Charge Conference where all members vote. The vote will take place after ample discussion time, potentially by the end of 2020.



Montana Cleaning Bucket Drive

The Montana Cleaning Bucket Drive is a project which provides supplies in a five-gallon bucket to help folks recover from natural disasters like hurricanes and floods. The Warehouse in Salt Lake City is currently low on these supplies.

You can pack your own bucket with supplies or contribute items needed to fill the buckets.

Here is a list of the needed supplies to fill the buckets:

We are raising money and supplies for UMCOR Cleaning Buckets (Flood Buckets) along with other churches in Montana. These buckets are tools sent to help people recover from natural disasters like hurricanes and floods. UMCOR West is currently low on



these supplies. To help out you can bring the following supplies to our church or pack your own bucket. Please deliver supplies by Sunday, October 25, 2020.

<https://www.umcmision.org/umcor/serve/relief-supply-network/cleaning-kit>

- One five-gallon round bucket with lid (14.35" h x 12.19" w x 12.19" d)
- One 32–64 oz. bottle liquid laundry detergent ·
- One 16–40 oz. bottle liquid concentrate household cleaner ·
- One 16–34 oz. bottle liquid dish soap ·
- One 4–8 oz. pump spray air freshener ·
- One 6–14 oz. pump spray insect repellent (pack of 10–20 wipes also acceptable)
- One scrub brush ·
- 18 re-usable cleaning wipes ·
- Five scouring pads ·
- 36–50 clothespins ·
- One 50–100 ft. clothesline (cotton or plastic line) ·
- 24 roll of heavy-duty trash bags (33–45 gallon sizes) ·
- Five N95 particulate respirator dust masks (1–3 mm thickness)





Small Group Connections

Wednesday Morning Bible Study 10am

Throughout October and November the study group will explore an "Alternative Orthodoxy" from the Franciscan theology rooted in practice and Biblical study. Fr. Richard Rohr will guide us via movie and book through a "faith journey simultaneously ancient and modern." Come discuss the rich ideas of Atonement Theory, Eco-Spirituality, The Cosmic Christ, Orthodoxy vs. Orthopraxy, and Mysticism over Moralism.



Bereavement Group begins 9/22

If you have recently lost someone dear or would like to have a community with which to share your stories and journey of grief, **you are welcome.**

The Bereavement Group will meet on Tuesdays at 2pm beginning Sept. 22 and through Oct. 13 Each time will be one hour long and stand alone in case you can't attend each week.

Please confirm with Pastor Sarah your desire to participate.



Let's Celebrate BIRTHDAYS

October 1—Erin Bartlett
October 9—Chevy Grandjean
October 10—Molly Hackett
October 13—Spencer Merchant
October 14—Dave Lockman
October 17—Mitch Edgar
October 27—Lila Youtsey

ANNIVERSARIES

October 9—Don & Mary Nelson
October 20—Carole & Don Koval



Outreach is holding Trunk or Treat again this year on Halloween, Thursday, 31 October.

We hope lots of you will decorate your vehicles – and yourselves! – and join us giving out candy and treats. We're asking for donations of candy, which can be dropped off at the church or call Joey Diers at 406-396-7618 to have donations picked up at your home. If you would like to help or want more information



Celebrating Ministry in the Fellowship Hall

On Sunday, October 4 at 9:45, the whole congregation is invited to a service to celebrate and remember the ministry lived out in the beautiful Fellowship Hall. Let's honor the space, remember the good times, acknowledge the current changes and anxiety, and pray for the transition during construction of a new building. We will also get to be the first ones to put a shovel in the ground, ushering in the next phase.



We will gather stories, offer up prayers, and share in communion together as a community invested in each other and ministry with God.

The service will be outside weather permitting with opportunities to move through the space in small groups. The service will be filmed.





Fruitful Ministries of 2020

- Wednesday Bible Study: 6-15 people on a weekly basis, covered minor prophets, psalms, Franciscan legacy, nature of God
- Vacation Bible School: 5 days, 10 kids, 13 volunteers
- Blood Drive: 3 drives, 25 people/dive
- Loaves and Fishes: Given away \$ 1,822, Gathered \$980 to date and started with \$1,968
- Town Hall: 6 meetings, average participation: 25 people
- Sanitized hymnals and pews: 15 hymnals, 22 pews for 18 weeks
- Zoom meetings: countless
- Scout gatherings- 22 meetings
- Shingles to remember & celebrate ministry in Fellowship Hall- 225
- Worship throughout the year
- ✓ Communion from home 4 drive by communions (30 people)
- ✓ Communion on Zoom 6 weeks
- ✓ In-persons 2 services & Zoom for 18 weeks
- ✓ YouTube Videos: 116 since March
- WIC- Invited clients to in-person meetings through March
- Confirmation- 2 participants, 1 new members
- Easter Baskets- 110 delivered in snow
- Back to School Bags- 110 delivered to each home
- Masks made for congregation and community- 100

Thank You

Thank you for providing your feedback about worship experiences this summer. The fall and winter will continue to take shape with beautiful awkwardness (we'll keep experimenting and finding ways to be accessible to the most people), intentional routine (communion, lighting prayer candles, and showing up each week will ground us), and sacred connection to God and community (gathering online & in-person, hearing and sharing God's word, and praying with and for each other).



Faces of Faith: Hazel Smith

After 67 years of gifting congregations throughout the world with her skills on piano and organ, Hazel Smith is calling it quits. About 25 of those years have been spent playing at Stevensville United Methodist Church. Hazel expresses having "felt joy in every note." Likewise the congregation has been enriched and blessed by her talent, commitment, and her "special touch on the keys," and are forever grateful.

Hazel was born in San Francisco. Her faith foundation was deeply influenced by her grandmother and her great aunt, with whom she walked three miles to church every Sunday. Her grandmother taught her to play hymns on the piano from the age of five. She met her husband, Les, while attending Chico State College. They married in 1958. Les was a career Army man, and together they raised three children, lived in 18 states and visited 13 countries.



Later in her life Hazel earned a Masters Degree in counseling from the University of Alabama. She has worked as a teacher, a counselor, and taught piano. Other hobbies include gardening and reading. Through hard times, her deep faith strengthened her. Through it all she and Les have given generously and humbly to many through their friendship and support.



Hazel's favorite hymns are "This Is My Father's World", which she sang on her grandmother's porch, and "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind." Her favorite Bible verses are Jeremiah 29:11-13 and Isaiah 43:1-4. She has been influenced in her spiritual walk by Silence Camp at Flathead Lake, Walk to Emmaus, many Bible studies, and the Christian example of fellow church members. We who have been graced by her music, her spirit, and her kindness wish Hazel the very best in her retirement and forever. Thank you Hazel!



Town Hall

Sanctuary: The Trustees team took out the middle pews to add chairs and accommodate the various groups needed larger meeting space. This configuration will remain through construction. Considerations about the media and sound equipment are ongoing as the various technologies age and new needs are identified. Beyond moving chairs, there are no plans to change anything currently.

Worship Services: Two services will continue through 2020 at 9am (outside till extra cold) and 10:30 inside. Zoom will be available at 10:30 and 9 when it's inside.

Single Accountability Leadership Board: Paul Ludington explained the way a single board, focused on administration and visioning, can enhance the mission and ministry capabilities and opportunities. This type of board helps the church row the boat in a focused direction guided by God's mission for SUMC. There are many UM churches that use this model. To be effective on the board, a person doesn't have to be good at finance and trustees and connecting with personnel. The team works together and in task groups to fulfill specific jobs, again guided by the vision of mission.

Next Town Hall: Oct. 11 at 9:45 with Jan Witman, District Superintendent. She will bring a word of hope and offer space to voice questions or concerns about the local or larger UMC.



UMW

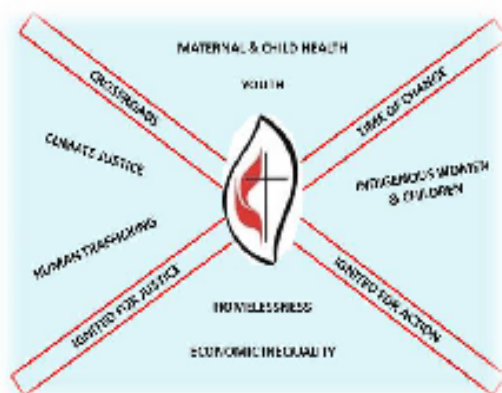
First, a reminder, the membership voted in August **NOT** to have a Bazaar, on-line or in person, this year due to Covid 19 concerns. There will be no fall fundraiser this year.

Second, on Saturday, September 12th, we had a terrific District Annual Meeting via Zoom. We had 33 people in attendance from our Western Mountains District. After the business meeting, There were break-out sessions that included what other chapters have been doing during the pandemic and quarantine. The unit in Helena had a Garage Sale in July with the blessings of the health department complete with social distancing, spray disinfectant and masks. It was fairly successful. Bozeman has been making disinfectant and cleanliness kits for the Salvation Army and local homeless shelters that included masks, spray hand disinfectant, soap, disinfectant wipes and disposable clothes for wash cloths. Another Unit has been making and selling masks as a fundraiser.

Third, the Mountain Sky UMW Conference annual virtual meeting is October 23-24th on Zoom. You do need to register. Registration information, go to umwmtsky.com. There are half hour classes on the 23rd you can pick from to attend including Finding Leaders, Mission Fundraising, Beginning Zoom meeting skills and many more. Saturday is a Zoom worship service and conference business meeting and Officer Elections in the morning and program presentation in the afternoon.

Finally, it's time for our own officer elections. These elections will be held by email in October or November. If you are interested in running for an office, please contact Lisa Menery, Nominations Committee.

Julie Weindel, President



Mountain Sky Conference
United Methodist Women
Virtual Annual Gathering
Oct. 23-24th, 2020

Gathering at The Crossroads: Ignited in Action

Registration

Name: _____
District: _____
Church: _____
Mailing Address: _____
Email Address: _____
I will be joining by computer and zoom ____yes
I will be joining by cellphone # _____ landline # _____
I will be joining with another woman by computer ____yes Who? _____

Check all boxes that apply to you

Friday October 23, 2020

☐ I will attend Annual gathering from 2:00 pm to 8:30 pm -1 hr. Break

Please select one class for each of the Friday Afternoon Breakout Sessions.

1. 2:30 pm to 3:05 pm—Session 1: Choose 1

- ☐ UMW 101- Purposeful Living as a United Methodist Woman
- ☐ The Roads Beyond Mountain Sky
- ☐ Preparing for Take Off - Beginning Zoom Meeting Skills
- ☐ Zoomy Zoom Zoom – Beyond the basics
- ☐ Finding and Mentoring Leaders
- ☐ Maneuvering Membership Vitality
- ☐ Mission \$ Journey
- ☐ Diving into an Ocean of Resources



THE GLAD TIDER

Stevensville United Methodist Church

October 2020



Ways to Contact Us

Office phone: 406-777-5443

Office email: steviumc@gmail.com

Pastor Sarah's email: revsarahmerchant@gmail.com

Church website: steviumc.org

Add office hours



~ CHANGES OF ADDRESS ~
Bulk-rate mail is not forwarded.
If your address changes, if we have it wrong,
or if you no longer want to receive this newsletter,
please let us know.

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

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Stevensville MT 59870

The Glad Tider

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