



GRACE NOTES - May 2020

Panama United Methodist Church

Rev. Steven M, Taylor, Lead Pastor

From Pastor Steve's Desk...

(This is the final installment of an ongoing series of articles regarding what we believe, why we believe it, and why it matters. **In the United Methodist Church, there is change coming.** Within our global denomination, we have some serious divergent views on the authority of scripture, human sexuality, and what that means in the world and in our church. Next year, it's anticipated that the UMC will divide into two or more branches. One will be more progressive/liberal and the other more traditional/conservative. We aren't sure what the changes will look like, but we know that in order to respond to God's call to be the church in the 21st century, the anchor of our doctrinal identity, we need to know what that is. So, I invite you to join me on this journey for God's glory and to build up the church.)

...on doctrine... Part 25 - Of a Christian Man's Oath

As there are beginnings, there are also endings. It is with a good sense of having come on a journey that I write today this last reflection about the Articles of Religion in our Methodist heritage. These 25 articles have been a guiding force in the doctrine of the church and of the people called Methodist. For us today, they continue to give meaningful and grounding guidance to our lives, and our church - which oftentimes finds itself (at least on a national and global scale) without a tether to the Word of God, the central figure of Christ, and the sound doctrine to which the church owes all its evangelistic fervor. That being said, I give you my word: this is not where it ends, but only begins.

Speaking of giving my word, one of the problems that faced the early church was that it was fiercely independent from the government. Some even went so far as to reject any notion that we, as Christians, should testify under oath to the government or anyone else that wasn't God. Seems the believers were honorable and righteously trying to live life wholly devoted to God alone. Yet, John Wesley and the early church leaders knew that we lived *IN* the world, even though we are called to not live *OF* the world and its standards. So they shaped the church with Article of Religion 25.

Here's what Article of Religion 25 of the Methodist Church says: *As we confess that vain and rash swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ and James his apostle, so we judge that the Christian religion doth not prohibit, but that a man may swear when the magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and charity, so it be done according to the prophet's teaching, in justice, judgement and truth.* (From The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church - 2016. Copyright 2016 by The UM Publishing House.)

What have you pledged to do? Maybe lose weight or exercise more. Maybe you made some New Year's resolutions in January (the good old days). Oaths, pledges, promises, and contracts are part of our world. We promise to be good employees when we are hired to do a job. We pledge to uphold the church by our prayers, presence, gifts, talents, and witness. We promise to stay faithful to our spouses or to remain celibate in singleness. These are all fruit of the Christian life.

(Continued on next page)

Panama United Methodist Church Mission Statement

We seek to love the Lord God by introducing people to His Son, Jesus Christ, and helping these relationships to grow.

From Pastor Steve's Desk...(continued)

Sometimes, however, we are faced with opportunities to join forces with people and entities where it is less clear that God is calling us to promise, pledge, and contract ourselves with them. Jesus clearly states that we should not be yoked to non-believers. By that he meant, do not enter into binding agreements with anyone who is not a believer. If you are already in that situation, then you must remain and do everything in your power to be Christ to the other party. The bottom line is that we should honor God with our devotion to Him first and those who have the Holy Spirit living in them.

In everything, prayerfully ask God what His will is for your actions and decisions. You are free in Christ to make whatever decision you'd like, even to pledge your oath to something that is not of God. If it's the government and you are being asked to testify, do it to the best of your ability with integrity and allow God to guide your words. If it's to enter into an agreement that does not advance the Kingdom of God, then be ready for some serious consequences that may result. Whatever you do, seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit and then proceed in confidence that God is still working in, on, and through you.

The road ahead is unclear, but God is still in control of it all. Pray and seek His guidance and will. Love God and love your neighbors. We are confident that the anchor we have in Him and in the beliefs of the church will see us through it all.

Shalom,
Pastor Steve

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, our normal PUMC programming has been greatly curtailed. In trying to keep a sense of normalcy, it was decided to continue with Grace Notes, our monthly newsletter, for the month of May. It is not possible, at this time, to post upcoming events as no programming is happening in house. Most of our meetings are taking place as Zoom online gatherings. Our Sunday morning worship is taking place totally online. We are fortunate that we had previously begun having online worship running concurrent with in house worship.

A look ahead into May...

May 3 - Online Prayer Meeting @9am (<https://zoom.us/j/912650158>)

Online Worship (www.livestream.com/panamaum) @ 10:15am

May 4 - Finance Team ONLINE Zoom meeting @ 6pm

Online Prayer @7pm (ZOOM <https://zoom.us/j/227634053>)

May 5 - Ladies of Light & Band of Brothers Zoom meetings @ 7pm

May 6 - Long Story Short Online Bible Study @ 10am

May 7 - Long Story Short Online Bible Study @ 7pm

National Day of Prayer @ 7am via Livestream and Facebook

Fridays @ 6pm CHAT via ZOOM throughout this quarantine time.

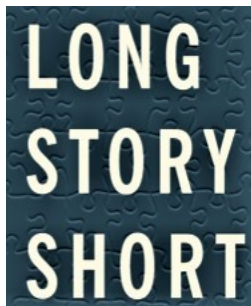
((((July 12 - Youth Fundraiser Pig Roast @ 11:30am))))))

.....NEW.....

Online Bible Study with Pastor Steve and Stacy

We're offering a new online Bible Study with our new sermon series called Long Story Short. We will be doing this via Zoom on your computer or phone. Dial in by phone is also available.

It's 6 weeks, 6 grand movements of the entire bible. Topics are Creation, The Fall, Israel, Jesus, the Church and New Creation. If you'd like to order the book or an e-book that goes along with the study, you can go to seedbed.com and search for Long Story Short. The book isn't required to participate in the study.



TIMES FOR THE STUDY WILL BE:

Wednesdays at 10am and
Thursdays at 7pm,
starting May 6 and 7, and finishing
on June 10 and 11.

Join as you can each week throughout the study.

I invite everyone to join in and enjoy some time studying the entire story of God's love, grace, and truth throughout all time everlasting. If you have questions, call Pastor Steve at the office (782-4031).

...JustOne4Others...

Last year brought love to others by collecting health and beauty items. Let's continue this love in 2020!

January - Body Soap

February - Shampoo

March - Conditioner

April - Q-tips

May - Cotton Balls

(During the pandemic, please keep your donation at home until the time we can collect them in Jody's office.)

June - Lotion

July - Hand Soap

August - Toothpaste

September - Toothbrushes

October - Mouthwash

November - Deodorant

December - Floss

Each month you are encouraged to purchase and donate "ONE" of the items listed above. These will be offered to our Food Pantry, Panama Central School, Love INC and Jamestown Missions.

Questions? See Jody, our Parish Nurse.



This sign is merely words but so full of love, support, and overwhelming gratitude from a grateful community for all that our first responders do, day in and day out.



PreK - 6th graders living in the Panama community received Activity Bags from the PUMC, utilizing a drive-thru pickup service during the Quarantine.

Learning - Alone and With Others

Carol Hay

A few years ago, a dear friend gave me a Christian Planner as a gift. She knows me so well - I love to write lists, organize my days, and journal events and feelings. This particular Planner ties all that together with scriptures and reminders to do things daily to stay healthy in mind and body.

During our COVID 19 imposed "stay at home" I have had the opportunity to spend more time reading and reflecting. One morning, I looked back at the first entries in my Planner, which include Goals for 2020. My number 1 is *Do a Personal Retreat*. (I won't go into numbers 2-10, which include goals of exercise, eating habits, and the use of filters between brain and mouth. I'm trying!)

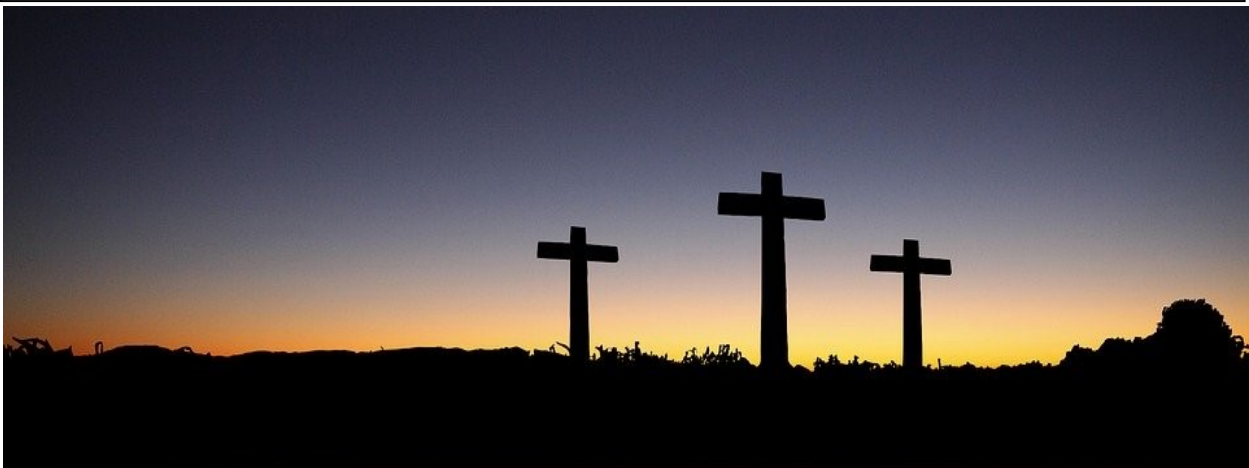
It would seem that our period of isolation is the perfect opportunity to do a "retreat" and so I did. I turned off my phone and computer, surrounded myself with desired reading materials - including my Bible, and focused on a time of renewal and centering my self in Christ. I was able to feel spiritually guided at times. I allowed tears to flow, laughter to accompany some thoughts, and to feel refreshed overall. Time well spent.

However, during my "retreat" I realized I was missing something. When I have attended retreats throughout my life - youth, young adult, and beyond, it was always with a leader and a group. Wise words and the opinions of others often help us dig deeper and experience growth. Reading material starts that same process, but when we don't hear the ideas and thoughts of others, we may miss another way of looking at the scripture or the author's words.

We have all missed worshipping together, seeing each other on Sunday mornings, and having that sense of community. Besides missing these people times, my retreat also helped me realize how much I miss learning from others. Listening to the ideas of others does not mean we need to agree, but it does give us another viewpoint and new thoughts to consider. We miss that when we study alone.

There are good reasons to have time alone for reading and reflecting - it is important for centering ourselves. There are also good reasons to study God's words together - it is important to listen, consider and learn from the ideas of others. We can always use that balance in our lives.

When we are on the other side of this COVID 19 "stay at home" decree, I know we will enjoy being together. I hope we'll find a balance as we utilize self-reflection and sharing with others to become better disciples of Christ.



He is risen...He is risen, indeed!



JULIA
.....and Our New Freezer!!

PUMC was blessed with a \$2000 grant from the Chautauqua Region Community Foundation. The grant along with proceeds from the Harvest Dinner and other donations enabled us to purchase the freezer. This will allow us to keep the frozen food here in our kitchen. We want to thank all who made this possible and a special thank you to those in the community who loaned us freezer space in the past!

THANK YOU!!!

UPDATE FROM PASTOR STEVE AND THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Dear Panama UMC friends,

Join us on Livestream at 10:15am on Sunday mornings (<https://livestream.com/panamaum>). Once you get to the Livestream landing page, simply look for the REFRAME graphic that is for the date you are watching. You can watch past worship services on this landing page as well. You DO NOT need to Log In or Go Live. This is a free service and open to all.

As you connect and prepare for worship, check in on the chat to let us know you're watching. Any prayer requests, praises, glory sightings, or greetings can be submitted through that Chat system as well.

Also, Online Giving is always available and now might be a great time to check that out. The link to online giving is on our webpage (www.panamaum.org). Do your best to maintain giving during this time, but know we certainly understand the financial implications of this situation.

Finally, know that we are holding the church, our community, our world, our leaders, and you in our prayers during this time. If you have a need or know of a need, please don't hesitate to call the office at 716/782-4031.

Grace Notes Birthday and Anniversary Calendar

If you are new to the PUMC (or for some reason we do not have your birthday or anniversary information), please leave Pam a note in the "Newsletter" mailbox in the workroom so we can add you to the list.

We would simply need your first and last name as well as your dates to be added.

MAY Birthdays and Anniversaries

- 5 Jon Cable
- 6 **Jason and Jolene Ayres**
- 8 Matthew Apthorpe, Brittany Lenart, Bryan Rupczyk
- 9 Sarah Osborne, Colin Cross
- 10 Jessica Komarek, **George & Trudy Anderson**
- 12 Mikaela Swineford, **David & Carrie Munsee**
- 14 Brynne Hinsdale
- 15 Kristy Catanese
- 16 **Joel & Jessica Keefer**
- 17 Yvonne Calcaterra, Anna Jo Irgang, **Carl & Susie Davis, Mike & Sara Beebe**
- 18 Grace Munsee
- 19 Isabella Anderson, Michael Butler
- 20 Molly Butler, **Tim & Connie Middleton**
- 22 Gabbi Calcaterra
- 23 Brad Osborne, Shelly Rupczyk, Don Wood
- 25 Cindy Furlow, **Doug & Cindy Weise**
- 26 Connor Tremblay
- 28 Cole Munson
- 29 **Nick & Katie Sard**
- 28 Jonathan Anderson
- 29 **Mike & Erin Miller**

A peek into June...

- 1 Kathy Foulk
- 2 **Ted & Sharon Passarelli, Eric & Jenn Scolton**
- 3 **Chuck & Judy Parkman**
- 5 Ryan Peck
- 7 Cindy Crouch



*Food
Pantry*

God's Groceries Food Pantry

can be accessed by using the Church Street entrance.

Look for signs.

If there is a need, please call the church office for additional information.
(782-4031)

Monday Morning: 9-10am

Monday Evening: 6-7pm

Thursday Evening: 5-7pm

Grace Visitation Team

Bill Peck and Debbie Erlandson, along with the members of the Grace Visitation Team, have been making calls to members in the congregation to check on their well being during this overwhelming Coronavirus Pandemic. We are also asking if they have any needs. If you need a phone number to call on your own, please get in touch with Bill, Debbie or leave a message in the church office.



SIGN UP FOR ONLINE GIVING

Now is the perfect time to make the shift to online giving to Panama UMC. It's secure and very easy to register and begin tithing online.

This is a difficult time, financially, for our nation and community. As you can, we are encouraging everyone to continue to do what you can to give to the church and other charities.

To sign up, go to the church website (www.panamaumc.org) and click on the Give Online button on the homepage. If you need help, please call the church office (716 - 782 - 4031) for assistance. Thanks!



ONE PAIR OF HANDS

One pair of hands formed the sea
One pair of hands made the sun and the moon
Every bird every flower every tree
One pair of hands formed the valleys
The ocean the rivers and the sand
Those hands are so strong

So when life goes wrong
Put your faith into one pair of hands

One pair of hands raised the dead
One pair of hands
Calmed the raging storm
And thousands of people were fed
One pair of hands said I love you
And those hands were nailed to a tree
Those hands are so strong

So when life goes wrong
Put your faith into one pair of hands

Those hands are so strong

So when life goes wrong
Put your faith into one pair of hands

Put your faith into one pair of hands

Lyrics and Music by Elvis Presley

((My faith is in that ONE pair of hands!!))



What a beautiful day for a (VIRTUAL) Walk To The Crosses...Easter 2020!
Thanks, Howie and Friends, for taking us on this journey.

QUARANTINE EXERCISE:

Can you find the names of sixteen (16) books of the Bible hidden in the paragraph below?

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible (merely by a fluke). It kept people looking so hard for the facts and for others it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the name of the books were not capitalized, but the truth finally struck home to numbers of readers. To others it was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. Yes, there will be some really easy ones to spot. Others may require judges to help them. I will quickly admit it usually takes a minister to find one of them, and there will be loud lamentations when it is found. A little lady says she brews a cup of tea so she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete. Relax now.

Parish Nurse Recipe

Breakfast Sausage Patties

1 pound raw lean (93%) ground turkey
1/4 c egg whites, approx. 2 eggs
3/4 tsp ground thyme
3/4 tsp salt
1/4 tsp pepper
1/8 ground nutmeg

In large bowl, combine all ingredients.
Evenly form into 8 patties, each about 1/4 inch thick.

Bring a grill pan sprayed with nonstick spray to medium high heat. Lay 4 patties in the pan. Cook for about 3 minutes per side, until golden brown and cooked through, using a spatula to flatten as they cook.

Remove pan from heat, clean if needed.
Repeat with remaining 4 patties.

1 patty: 85 calories; 4 g total fat; 277 mg salt; 0 fiber; 0 sugars; 12 g protein

.....**SAFETY REMINDERS** from Jody.....

Wash, wash, wash your hands!
Socially Distance.
Stay Home.
Wear your mask.
Stay 6 ft from others in public.
Avoid touching your face, nose and mouth.

STAY SAFE!!!!

We have White Gift funds available.

Please talk to Pastor Steve
if you know of a need.



NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

Thursday, May 7, 2020 - 7am

Please join us via Livestream (Panamaum.org) or Facebook on Thursday, May 7, at 7:00am, to pray for our nation. (Of course, you know that if you miss the 7am time, you can go onto Livestream and/or FB at any time to listen to our PUMC NDP event.)

(The NDP national coordinator is asking that we ALL, our entire nation, gather at noon on May 7 to pray together. But we at PUMC and the surrounding community desire to begin the day praying together at 7am that day - in an effort to prepare our hearts and minds for that national noon prayer.)

There will also be a Face Book Live National event airing at 8pm on Thursday, May 7.

Help Us, Please...

If you have had an address change in the last couple of years, please update the office so we can correct our information.

If you are fairly new in attending PUMC, please make sure we have your address.

These additions and /or corrections can me made by contacting the office.

THANKS!

Reverend Steven M. Taylor, Lead Pastor
steven.taylor@panamaum.org
Debbie Johnson, Ministry Coordinator/Admin. Asst.
debbie.johnson@panamaum.org
Julie Nagel, Music Director/Accompanist
Krista Odell, Accompanist
Jody Marsh, Parish Nurse
Jon Cable, Custodian

Pastor Steve's Office Hours
9:00am - Noon: M, W and Th

Church Phone (716) 782-4031
Church Fax # (716) 782-2326
Church E-mail – contact@panamaum.org
Church website - www.panamaum.org
www.facebook.com/panamaum

Please check the calendar
inside for weekly
online meetings
for the month of **May**.

Cornerstone District Office
Christ First UMC
663 Lakeview Ave.
Jamestown, NY 14701
(716) 665-2423



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