



From Pastor Steve's Desk...

(This is the next 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. 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 7 - Of Original or Birth Sin

Welcome to the next stage of our look into the doctrine of the United Methodist Church. This month, we will find out about original sin and the role sin plays in the life of the church. Now, many of us are familiar with sin. In fact, I'm going to stick my neck out and say that we ALL are very aware of sin - ours, yours, mine, his, hers and theirs. But from where did all this sin come and how do we deal with sin in our lives and in the world? The answer lies with God and God's plan for the world.

When God created, everything was as it was supposed to be - perfect, eternal, sinless, and all to the glory of God, the Creator. We read in Genesis 3, however, that at some point after God created man and woman, there was an incident that led to the Fall of Man...and sin entered the world. Now, hear me when I say that all the sin of the world is *NOT* the fault of Adam and Eve, but is simply a continued failure to acknowledge that God is God and we humans are not. Eve was tempted to want to know what God knows - to be in control. We are as well.

Here's what Article of Religion 7 says about this: *Original sin stands not in the following of Adam, but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually.*

The key points here are that we are decedents of the original man and woman, as created by God, have continued the path away from original right standing with God, and will be inclined to sin more in the future. Now, that's depressing! Yet, there is hope!

When we are born, God creates life from life at conception. That small child, although not sinful in action or thought, has all the potential from then on to be sinful, following the pattern of all humans. God does not hold that child accountable for the sin in his/her life at the point, but nurtures the child by grace and calls the child to Himself over time. Incidentally, our Wesleyan heritage affirms that before a child reaches an age of being able to understand the consequence of sin and the need for a Savior, God is grace-filled and merciful. After a child can understand sin and judgment, the child must choose Christ as Lord and Savior or be accountable for the sin in his/her life. All this, because sin came into the world so long ago.

(Continued on the following page)

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

And there's been some confusion in the United Methodist Church regarding what constitutes sin and what does not. Well, that's been a question that has been debated for a very long time. A simplistic answer to that question is that anything that rejects God's good plan for our lives is sin. Sin invades many areas of our lives and all sin is on an equal footing. Different sins have different consequences, but sin is sin. Whether it's a breakdown of relationships, sexual sin, greed, pride, lust, or any other category, sin separates us from God. We don't get to define it to meet our needs. We have the opportunity to allow God to transform us away from it through repentance and forgiveness. That's where the Hope comes in.

The Hope, my friends, comes from God's plan of salvation in Jesus Christ! The sin that invades our lives both by our choices and the choices of others, can *only* be washed away by the blood that Jesus shed on the cross. It was the only way that God could allow us to be reconciled because of the sin in our lives. God and sin can never exist together. Because God's plan is for us to live eternally, our sin is nailed to the cross of Jesus as we face judgment before God for our sin.

The first humans may have set the stage for sin and wickedness, but we have followed right along. We give glory and praise to God for loving us so completely that a sacrifice of God's only Son, Jesus, was the way God chose to be with us forever.

Shalom,
Pastor Steve

Part 8 - Of Free Will

Coming the Advent: The Christmas Door!

This December, the Panama UM faith community will be engaging in a four-week experience called The Christmas Door! Daily devotionals, small group study materials, and more will be available near the end of November. Pastor Steve and Stacy are offering a bible study in their home on Monday evenings at 6:30pm starting November 26th. All are welcome (sign-up sheet is on the Welcome Table in the Lobby). More information will be coming soon! Let's celebrate!

Blue Christmas Worship

On Sunday, December 9th, at 6pm, you're invited to a special worship service that will help all who are struggling with finding and maintaining JOY in the Christmas season.

The message of hope in the coming of Christ will invite us to come to the manger and see Jesus. As we do, we will be filled with the love of God in Christ Jesus. All are invited to come to this special worship experience.

Christmas Eve Worship Announcement

This Christmas Eve, we will worship at 4pm and 11 pm.

At 4pm, we will gather to praise the Lord and experience the Christmas Story in an upbeat celebration worship experience. We are planning this worship service for everyone to attend, but especially invite those who can't come out late at night, those with children who will be tucked in by 11pm, or anyone who wants an additional chance to worship on that special day.

At our 11pm Candlelight worship, we'll reflect on the love poured out on the world through Jesus coming as the incarnation of God! See you there!

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.

SUNDAY Morning Team - DECEMBER

Ushers

Ted and Sharon Passarelli
Don and Tabby Butler

Nursery Helpers

December 2

Birth-2: Amanda Kolstee and Andrew Lescynski

December 9

Birth-2: Kathy Foulk and Gracie Cable

December 16

Birth-2: Lisa Waller and Riley Seekings

December 23

Birth-2: Kim Bajdo and Madie Pearson

December 30

Birth-2: Ken and Katie Braun

Thank you for volunteering to take care of our little ones during the worship service. We appreciate you! Currently, we are scheduling people to serve in one nursery only. During this time, if and when it becomes apparent that we need an older nursery, too, we will be asking for additional help on that Sunday morning. If something comes up and you cannot serve, please trade with someone or find a replacement. You may call Debbie in the Church office (M-TH) by calling 782-4031.

A CONNECTIONS Opportunity for YOU!

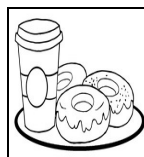
The Connections team is looking for volunteers to come to the Connections after school program and spend some time with the kids.

Do you have a craft you'd like to share? A story? A new game to play?

Please contact Stacy Taylor if you would be willing to share your time with the beautiful children who come to our church every day after school.

FREE Blood Pressures and Fasting Blood Sugars (fast 4 hours prior) are offered at PUMC, the first Sunday of every month in Pastor's office.

Please enter the Pastor's office via the hallway door.



Sunday Morning Coffee Hour

Coffee and tea, as well as light snacks, is available on Sunday mornings, from 8:30 until 10:15am.

This time of year tends to find you in your kitchen baking for the holidays. We are asking for some donations for the freezer in the "kitchen"...breads, cookies, coffee braids ...or whatever you might be making that would freeze well. They can be brought in at any time. If you put them in the freezer during the week, please label them as "Hospitality". We will be sure to put them to good use some Sunday morning. We thank you in advance!

The Hospitality Team is getting excited about the "café" area just inside the entrance of our new building. We are not sure of our needs at this point but we know for sure that we will be looking for more Sunday morning helpers. We are hopeful that YOU will want to be a part of it!

Youth COOKIE SALES

**The Youth Group will be taking
cookie orders until Sunday,
December 16.
Delivery will be on Sunday,
December 23.**

Please support their efforts!

DUE TO COMPUTER ISSUES.....

November Construction pictures are unavailable at print time.

We hope these issues are corrected within the month and look forward to updating with pictures in the January issue of Grace Notes.

If you are interested, and would like to make a contribution to the CenterPoint project, there are further financial needs beyond the construction budget. Please call the office for further information on how you can help financially.

CENTERPOINT UPDATE

**We received \$12,524.84 during the month of October.
That makes a total contribution to date of \$527,209.67.**

This total is 58% of our new goal of \$904,347.07.

We thank you for your continued support of the CenterPoint campaign. If you have questions about your commitment, feel free to contact me at any time.

Cindy Cartwright

MEMORIAL TEAM

Eloise Smith reported that the Memorial Team has voted to transfer undesignated funds to our CenterPoint fund for the purpose of purchasing tables and chairs for our new fellowship space.

W.A.M. Women and Missions

If you aren't busy on Monday, December 10th, W.A.M. will be meeting at NOON at PUMC. Please bring your own lunch and any ideas on how to be the hands and feet of Jesus. Join us for this time of fellowship.

We are still collecting soup labels and box tops, postage stamps and change. If you know of anyone who has been in the hospital or may need some help with meals, please let Kathy Foulk know and we will arrange for some meals to be taken in.



God's Groceries Food Pantry (at the 4 corners of Panama)

Monday Morning: 9-10am
Monday Evening: 6-7pm
Thursday Evening: 5-7pm

Questions? See Tina Swineford

...Missions and Outreach...

The Missions Team is once again encouraging us to support a local "business"...the PUMC post office, which will be open for the month of December. Please bring your Christmas mailings on Sunday mornings, pay the postmaster (\$.25/ card), and have your Christmas greetings delivered for "in church" individual pick-up.



Postage supports the various missions projects of the PUMC, local and around the world.

We thank you for your support.

DECEMBER Birthdays and Anniversaries

- 1 Bert Anderson, Brianna Marsh
- 2 Arianna Seekings
- 3 Judy Parkman
- 4 Earl Foulk
- 5 Rob Peck, Paige Weise, **Dennis/Cindy Furlow**
- 6 Eloise Smith
- 7 Roger Kester, Evan VandeVelde
- 8 Andrea Gleason
- 11 Ann Schnars, **Larry/Gay Ostrander**
- 12 Warren Crouch, **Scotty/Cam James**
- 14 Rebecca Dominey, Debbie Loveless
- 15 Alyssa Jaeger
- 16 **Howie/Jan Wheeler, Mike/Kelly Range**
- 18 Olivia Nagel
- 20 **Steve/Krista Odell**
- 22 Bruce Scolton
- 23 Jamie Halpainy
- 25 Joyce Dole, Peg Naetzker
- 26 Marie Dole, Becky Cable, David Munsee
- 29 Rachel Steffan, Jessica Keefer, Landon Miller
Greg/Carrie Edwards
- 30 Lee Kester, Janette Weaver

Looking ahead to January...

- 1 Carl Anderson
- 3 Caroline Aphthorpe, Erin Miller, Reese McGaffick
Pam Sali, **Shaun/Amy Hummel**
- 4 Isaac Landin
- 5 Kimberly Barton, Betty Johnson
- 6 Jeff Ireland

If the names of your immediate family are not included on our monthly birthday/anniversary list, please leave a note in the newsletter box in the hallway or let Debbie in the office know. (First and last names as well as birthday and or anniversary dates). We would like to include you and yours!

WHITE GIFT FUND

**Throughout the month of December,
all donations will be put towards our White**

Gift Christmas needs.

Thank you!

CONNECTIONS

The Connection Team is blessing the 40 Connections families this Christmas with goodie bags. If you would like to contribute - please see Candy Scarem, Stacy Taylor, Carol Hay, Roberta Anderson, Roberta Schruise or Pam Sali.

Donations of the following needed items can be made by Sunday, December 9th:

Individual size bags of pretzels
Small packages of cookies
Microwave popcorn
Hot cocoa packets
Christmas movies
Reading and/or puzzle books
Christmas Coloring Books
Crayons

Thanks in advance for your generosity!

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

LUNCH BUNCH

***Don't forget LUNCH BUNCH
on
December 19 at
Panama Baptist Church
At 11:45am.***

***QUESTIONS?
Contact Kathy Foulk***



.....For unto us is born this daya child!

WALKING CLUB...

with Parish Nurse Jody!

WHERE?

Panama Central School halls

WHEN?

Monday nights from 6-7pm
Now that the evenings are becoming a little cooler, we will be meeting near the snack bar near the North gym for indoor walking.

Come and join us! We typically end up breaking off into 2 groups, depending on individual speed.

See you there!



Jesus is

the reason

for the season!

Bible Quizzing
Jon Cable

Our team members continue to work hard at memorizing their assigned material. Please continue to pray for Josiah, Jubal, Jalynn, Josh, Julianna & Gracie. Our team placed 2nd at the November 17th quiz with Josh placing 4th top quizzier! This month they are adding John 7:25-53, 10:22-42, 11:1-27, 14 & 19:1-16. In preparation for attending the April 2019 National Tournament in Green Lake, Wisconsin, the team is making & selling 4 oz. sugar scrubs for \$5 each. The available scents are Cinnamon Vanilla, Lavender, Vanilla Pumpkin Spice and Lavender Lemon. They make great Christmas gifts! Please see Gracie or Becky if you are interested in ordering.



Mark your calendars....

December 7 - Family Movie Night; "The Star"; 6:30pm

December 9 - Blue Christmas Worship; 6pm

December 11 - PUMC Charge Conference; 6:30pm

December 16 - Joy Unspeakable Joy Musical; 10:15am

December 16 - Joy Unspeakable Joy Musical; 4pm

December 24 - Family Christmas Eve Worship; 4pm

December 24 - Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship; 11pm

December 25 - Merry Christmas

August 2019 - Mission Trip to Red Bird Mission

Discipleship Corner...by Yvette Winans

The True Meaning Of Christmas

I love to tell the story of the day my mom took me to see Santa. As I sat upon Santa's lap, waiting for him to ask me that famous question, "What do you want for Christmas?", I remember being surprised that, instead, he asked me, "Do you know the true meaning of Christmas?" and I proudly replied "baby Jesus". He told my mother that not many children could answer "that" question. I remember being so proud I knew the answer, as was my mom.

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus, it's important that we teach our children and grandchildren the "true" meaning of Christmas. Not sure how to go about it? There are many children's books, movies and music available during the Christmas season to assist you in telling the story. There are also live Nativity scenes and plays in the community you can take advantage of, Christmas Eve service and don't forget, every Sunday at 9am at PUMC, there are Sunday school classes available to children of all ages. We would love for your children or grandchildren to join us!

"And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them...And the angel said unto them, 'Fear not, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord'."

LUKE 2:9-11

Recipe from Jody Marsh, Parish Nurse

Taco Soup (Low carb and Keto friendly)

- 1 lb. boneless skinless chicken breast
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 14.5 oz. can pinto beans, drained
- 14.5 oz. can black beans, drained
- 14.5 oz. canned corn, drained
- 14.5 oz. can diced tomatoes w/ green chiles, not drained; plain, canned tomatoes, if preferred
- 2 c. fat free chicken broth
- 1.25 oz. taco seasoning

Add everything to slow cooker. Cook on low for 4 hours (up to 5 is fine).

Remove the chicken and shred or chop and then place back in the crock pot to serve.

ENJOY!

NEW MEMBERS

On Sunday, November 11, 2018, the PUMC congregation celebrated 4 Baptisms and welcomed 10 new members.

Pastor Steve baptized Lillyanna Rose Morris Aldrich, Chase Alan Aldrich, and Dean Taylor Aldrich, children of Tara (and the late Brent) Aldrich. Scott Hall was baptized as an adult.

The new members by profession of faith include Kara Aldrich, Pauline Edsall, Deanne Geist, Scott Hall, Karen Parker, Curtis Reynolds and Megan Reynolds.

Kim Bajdo, Yvette Winans and William Scarem joined the PUMC through letters of transfer from another United Methodist Church.

Reverend Steven M. Taylor, Lead Pastor
steven.taylor@panamaum.org
Candy Scarem, Director of Student Ministries
candy.scarem@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
Sandy Crossley, Connections
Joan Monroy, Connections
Tara Hosier, Connections
Dr. Mark and Diane Abbott, Spain
Blog: www.markabbott007.com
Rev. Paul D. Caseman, Alaska

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
meetings and activities
for the month of December.**

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



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Church E-mail – contact@panamaum.org
Church website - www.panamaum.org
www.facebook.com/panamaum**