



United Methodist Church

Learn God ~ Love God ~ Share God ~ Serve God

October 2020

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WORSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

October 4th

Holy Communion: Please Have
Bread & Juice Ready
Worship at Legion Park 11:00 am

October 11th

Facebook Live: 8:30 am & 11:00 am

October 18th

Facebook Live: 8:30 am & 11:00 am

October 25th

Facebook Live: 8:30 am & 11:00 am

BULLETIN & SERMONS

We continue to not hold in person worship.
If you would like a paper copy of the bulletin
and sermon mailed to you each week,
please call the office and request this.



"Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written: 'They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever.

Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God." ~ 2 Corinthians 9:6-11 (NIV)

I want to share with you that I am proud of my daughters, Clara, Irina, Claudia, and my daughter-in-law, Ceranny. They have "committed" to riding their bicycles, to be healthy, and they have invited me to do the same, but I'll be using one of the beautiful trails that we have here in Platteville.

My new word to share is "scaling". It's a term used in the world of fitness that allows room for anyone to participate. For example, maybe you can ride your bike for ten miles in a row without stopping, but I can only do to three to five miles. My daughter, Clara's, "the head of the group," encouragement to me has been to scale back the riding miles according to my fitness level at this time. Recognizing that we are not all at the same level, but that we can all move in the same direction to get to the target. She said to me, "Dad, you are fine, do your three to five miles with all your heart and strength. Please don't compare yourself with us or anyone else. For now, scale the miles, keep doing what you can do, and you will be amazed that in no time you will be doing six, seven, eight, and even one day, ten miles without stopping!"

The lesson from my daughters has made me reflect on the giving to the church to the expansion of God's Kingdom in our community and into the world. A Kingdom, that is a Kingdom of compassion, love, peace, and justice for all. When it comes to giving to the church, as we have read in the introductory verses, the Apostle Paul was clear: "God loves a cheerful giver." But his encouragement to the believers in Corinth, and us, is a variation of scale. "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart." We each find ourselves at different giving levels, and sometimes those levels change over time and with other circumstances such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Comparison is not beneficial, but attitude is. Based on where you are, give generously. Our God has promised that the disciplined practice of such cheerful giving brings enrichment in every way with a blessed life that results in "thanksgiving to God." He has also said to us, "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house." *Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so many blessings that there will not be room enough to store it."* ~ Malachi 3:10

Beloved Friends, Sisters, and Brothers, my invitation to you is to give all you have decided in your heart to give because God loves a cheerful giver, and as He has promised, He will open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so many blessings that there will not be room enough to store it.

Your Servant in Christ,

Pastor Rafael

TRANSFORMATION OF THE CHURCH

In a world where material possessions may or may not lose its value. Where institutions may grow as a robust enterprise or fall and disappear, the church is an institution and regardless of the internal conflict that it may have; it is a relevant and necessary part of society for the hope it is bringing to the contemporary society through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. No other institution in our society can offer to human beings what the Lord Jesus Christ has commissioned to the church. Again, as church members, we have a unique and significant ministry as stewards of God's grace.

Paul says that we are no longer foreigners or strangers but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household. Through faith in Jesus, we are no longer alienated members of society; we are fellow citizens with God, people, and members of God's family. Through baptism, we are incorporated into the body of Christ, and this membership never loses its value when we are very active members in sharing God's grace as we proclaim the good news of salvation. As fellow citizens and members of God's household, our mission indicates that we are in a privileged condition compared to no one in the world. This privileged position is for service to God and humanity.

This is part of what we do in our local community on behalf of Christ:

- To offer the sacraments of baptism and communion.
- To offer traditional and contemporary Sunday worship services.
- To equip God's children of all ages through our ministries of Christian Education: Sunday School classes and VBS, so that all lives can be centered in Christ and become faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.
- To equip our church staff and church leaders so that we can better serve our church community, the community in which we live, and the world by having more efficient and relevant ministries.
- To visit those who are in the hospitals.
- To visit those who are in home bound due to various circumstances, including COVID-19.
- To officiate funerals. Walking with all family members to help them through their grief. Offering them support and providing them with materials to read and put in to practice.
- To walk with those who have cancer: visiting them and sharing with them materials that can help them and their families during this challenging time of their lives.
- To be part of social justice ministries, such as Family Promise and Adopted Family.
- To promote and practice ecumenism, recognizing that together we can do more.
- To proclaim and practice radical inclusion, recognizing that we are living in a diverse community.
- To serve as a channel to feed those in need through our programs, Ruby's Pantry and Community meal.
- To promote and participate in programs and activities of support groups.
- To promote and participate in events and community programs.

(continued on page 4)

(continued from page 3)

- To get out in the community and invite people to be part of a faith community.
- To meet with community leaders, sharing our vision about our community and the world.
- Having an informal weekly meeting with church members. Also, each week, several work meetings with the church leaders.

This is part of what we do in our world on behalf of Christ:

- To proclaim God's Kingdom. It is a kingdom of love, compassion, forgiveness, peace, justice, love, hope, and joy for all.
- To proclaim radical inclusion.
- To advocate for equality between human beings.
- To proclaim and advocate for the UMC mission statement: "To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the world's transformation."
- To participate in Special Sundays offerings.
- To participate in the mitigation of disasters through UMCOR and other institutions.

I want to invite you & yours, your friends, neighbors, and co-workers to be an active part of this transformation movement. Help us to re-think the church.

Your Servant in Christ,
Pastor Rafael

APRIL IS (FINALLY) GETTING MARRIED!



From **Monday, October 12th until Tuesday, October 20th**, April will be gone for her wedding! This means she will not be checking the Church Office email. If you need to contact the Church, please email Pastor Rafael at rcubilette@plattevilleumc.org. He will also be checking the voicemail during the week but it may take time for him to call you back. We plan on hosting a Bridal/Wedding Shower for her once we are able to meet again in person. Thank you so much in advance for your understanding and patience! Congratulations to April and Tucker on their special day!

WESLEY COMMITTEE

A new Wesley committee has formed and has begun work on the annual budget and scholarship program. Members of the committee are Joe Clifton, Betty Smith, John Cottingham, Cathy Simmons, Dustin Nunn, and Dawn Drake. We are pleased to announce that we are beginning a college scholarship program again. We will be awarding our first scholarships in December 2020 for the spring 2021 semester.

If you are interested in obtaining information about the scholarships and an application, please contact Dawn Drake at drake@uwplatt.edu.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS



Zoom Sunday School has begun! This year we offer two age level options for Zoom classes on Sunday mornings. Grades PreK-3rd meet at 9:40 am, and students from 4th-6th grades meet at 10:20 am. Class packs are distributed before each unit, so children have materials at home to work with during our classes. Teachers for Zoom Sunday School include Debby Schroedl, Tracy Harle, Chris McGuire, Sarah Fosbinder, and Ellen Carnahan.

Wednesday evenings, our older students meet on Zoom with Dustin Nunn for lessons and youth group. Our Confirmation students will meet again on Wednesday evenings with Sara Koeller.

The church building may be closed, but the work of the Church continues. Our children and youth are an important part of our Church and our ministry, and we are staying connected!

SMALL GROUPS STARTING SOON

Starting October 14th, we will be having different Small Groups for each day of the week! All classes will be held via Zoom and each person will need their own book to participate. All meetings will be held from 7:00 - 8:30 pm.

Monday

Living Your Strengths: Discover your God given talents and inspire your community.
Facilitator: Jim Wells **Dates:** October 19th & 26th, November 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd & December 7th

Tuesday

Anxious for Nothing: Finding calm in a chaotic world
Facilitator: Tom Lindahl **Dates:** October 20th & 27th, November 3rd, 10th & 17th

Wednesday

Life Together in Christ: Experiencing transformation in community
Facilitator: Jan Hollaway **Dates:** October 14th & 28th, November 4th & 11th, December 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, January 6th

Thursday

Invitation to Solitude and Silence: Experiencing God's transforming presence.
Facilitator: Susan Schlager **Dates:** October 15th, 22nd & 29th, November 5th, 12th & 19th, December 3rd, 10th, & 17th, January 7th, 14th & 21st

Friday

Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership: Seeking God in the Crucible of Ministry.
Facilitators: Dave Carnahan & Lynn Schlager **Dates:** October 16th, 23rd & 30th, November 6th, 13th & 20th, December 4th, 11th, & 18th, January 8th, 15th, 22nd & 29th

If you would like to participate in any of these groups, please contact the Church Office.

HOW WE CONTINUE TO BE THE CHURCH DURING THE PANDEMIC

As the months stretch on that we are unable to gather in person for church services, it is easy to forget that we continue to **BE** the church. Below is a summary of some of the things that have been worked on during this year.

MISSION AND OUTREACH

We have served over 300 families each month with Ruby's Pantry. May was the start of our fifth year of this wonderful mission. We received the Rainbow Covenant Award from the Wisconsin Conference for our outstanding mission activities. Our Adopted Families received their Easter food baskets and we are in contact with these families to determine how we can best serve them for the remainder of the year. We conducted a Give & Take Food Pantry for 13 weeks from April to June. Our monthly Food & Fellowship Free Community Meal continues to grow and we are now serving nearly 250 meals each month.

WORSHIP

Pastor Rafael and the worship team have been diligently working on a variety of new opportunities by which to experience worship. Expansion of the Facebook live worship services, worship in the park, Zoom meetings for Sunday School and small groups CDs are all being used to bring the word of the gospel to you. Nancy Fairchild, Ian McCann and the band continues to provide music at both services.

FINANCES

We have been busy writing grants this year and have received nearly \$52,000! We have three grants that we are currently waiting to hear from and are in the process of submitting five more grants before the end of the year. The Stewardship Committee has been formed and are working on a variety of activities for the Annual Campaign. The Capital Campaign Committee has been formed and has begun work on the Capital Campaign messages and activities.

COMMUNICATION

While it has been difficult not seeing each other face-to-face, there have been a number of communication efforts put together to keep people informed about what is happening with the church. In addition to the monthly newsletters and weekly emails, there have been a number of additional mailings and emails to church members. Calls and emails have gone out to church members from a number of people in the congregation. Zoom meetings have been used for committee meetings and fellowship. Facebook continues to be updated with new information.

COMMITTEES

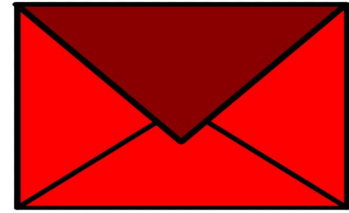
Committees continue to meet on an ongoing basis through a variety of different tools. The following committees are meeting on a regular basis to conduct their business: Stewardship Committee, Ruby's Pantry, Mission Committee, Worship Committee, Food & Fellowship Committee, Re-Opening Committee, Accountable Leadership Board, Nurture Committee, Capital Campaign Committee, Sunday School, and Wesley Committee.

These are just some of the activities that continue to take place while our church building is closed. As you can see, we have lots of activities taking place and we are continuing to **BE** the church during the difficult time. If you would like to become involved with some of these activities and/or have questions, please contact the Church Office and April can connect you with the appropriate person.

Until we see you again, stay safe and continue to **BE** the church in the community!

OFFERINGS

With the building remaining closed, we encourage members to mail in your gifts, or consider safe, convenient online giving so that we can continue our dedication to service and mission. Visit the church website at www.plattevilleumc.org, click on the "Support Our Ministries" button, then click on the "Create Profile" button and follow the onscreen instructions for safe, convenient, and easy giving!



Thank you to all who volunteered for Family Promise! Your contribution made an incredible impact on the family!

Our next Family Promise host week is **Sunday, November 22nd through Sunday, November 29th**. Please contact Bob Plourde at (608) 642-1018 with any questions.



Our **next food distribution is Thursday, October 1st**. We need volunteers starting around 2:30 pm. If you can help sometime between 2:30 and 6:30 pm. Please notify Deb Putnam at putnamd@uwplatt.edu if you can help out.



Our next Food & Fellowship Free Community Meal will be held on **Wednesday, October 14th from 5:00 - 6:30 pm**. The meal will include: beef stroganoff, corn, lettuce salad, fruit and dessert.



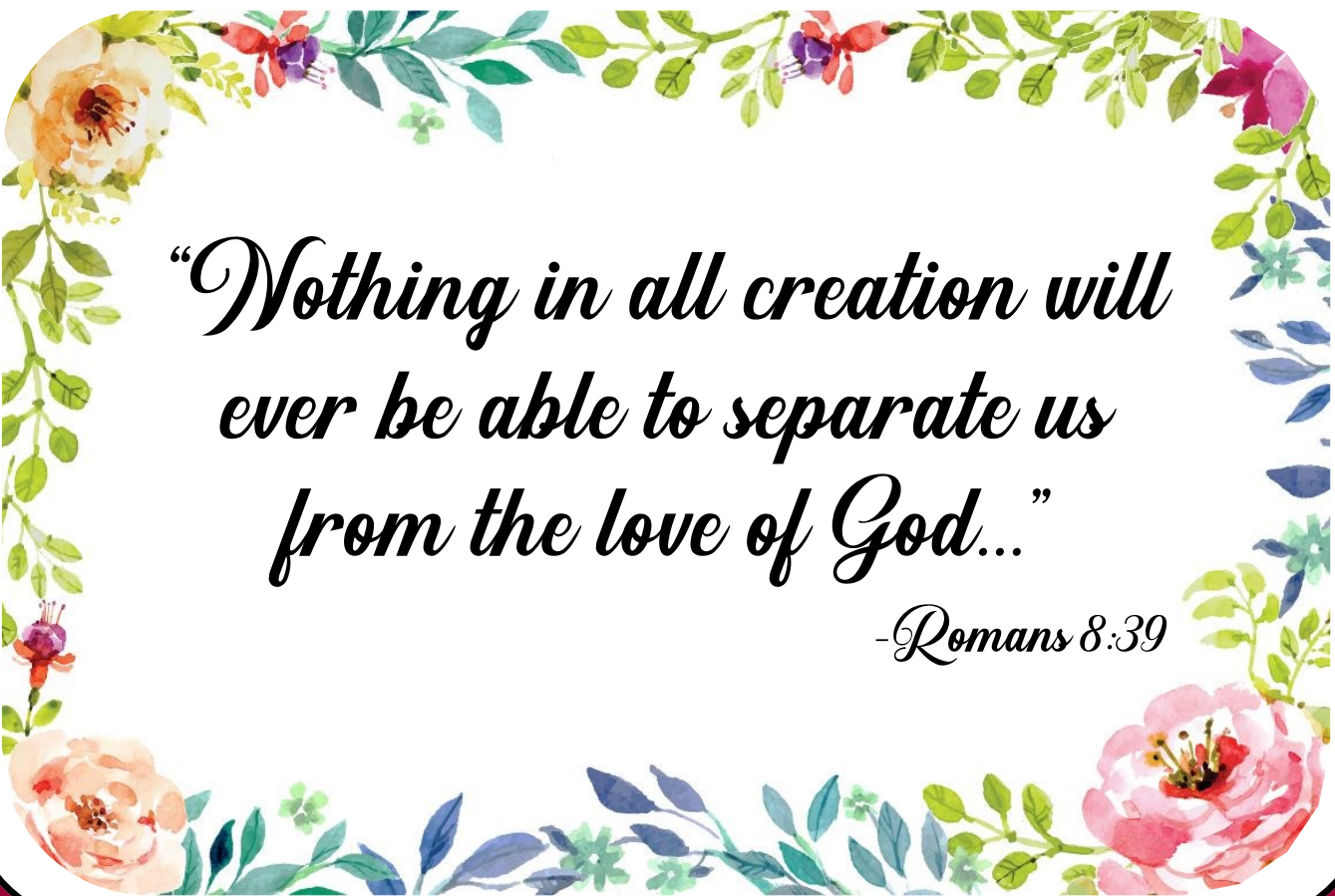
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If you would no longer
like to receive this
newsletter, please
contact the church
office to take your
name off the mailing
list. Thank you!



*“Nothing in all creation will
ever be able to separate us
from the love of God...”*

-Romans 8:39