

The First United Methodist Church of Lowell Tele-Christian ~ July 2020 Edition

**The mission of the United Methodist Church is to
make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.**

Mark's Remarks.....

Where did our Bible come from? The Bible is a book with a long history. It was written by over 40 authors and contains 66 books. It is divided into the Old Testament with 39 books and the New Testament with 27 books. Finally, the Bible covers over 2,000 years of history.

We believe that the Bible is the truth of God. Everything that we need for salvation is contained within its pages. It tells the love story of God and His people.

The Old Testament was compiled around 400 BC. Most leaders agreed that the 39 books should be viewed as scripture. They were written in Hebrew which was the language of the Jewish people at that time. By 132 BC the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek and was called the Septuagint. By being in Greek the Old Testament was able to be read by a much wider audience.

The New Testament was written between 50 and 100. Books included in the New Testament needed to meet the test of being written by an apostle and written in the lifetime of the witnesses to Jesus. As Christianity spread, false gospels appeared and were read by localized churches. In the second and third centuries, many gospels appeared claiming to be written by a contemporary of Jesus. The gospel of Thomas, gospel of Phillip, gospel of Judas, gospel of Mary Magdalene are just a few of the many.

The church knew that a set number of books needed to be chosen and declared the final form of the Bible. This is called the canon. The New Testament was canonized in 393 AD.

The New Testament was originally written in Greek. In 405 St. Jerome translated the Old and New Testaments in Latin. It was called the Vulgate. It remained the Bible used until the late 1300s. John Wycliffe translated the Bible into English. The Catholic church fought against this. At this time the scripture was for the priest to explain to the people.

Finally in the 1500's, the Protestant Reformation occurred. The Bible was translated into English and other European languages. For the first time in centuries the common people could read the scriptures. Bible translations have exploded. Today there are over 450 Bible translations in English. In addition there are countless paraphrase versions of the Bible.

Praise God that we live in the era we do. We can have access to the Bible in our own language and with so many versions to choose from. We have access to God's message in an unprecedented way. Whether you choose a print Bible, mp3, digital or some other form, you can't go wrong with the best selling book of all time!

Pastor Mark

July Sermon and Scripture Schedule

Throughout the next 12 Sundays we will study the books of the Minor Prophets.

July 5 ~ Communion Sunday

Scripture ~ Hebrews 11:13-16

Sermon Title ~ *'Country Longed For'*

July 12 ~

Scripture ~ Hosea 1:1-3

Sermon Title ~ *'The Message of Hosea'*

July 19 ~

Scripture ~ Joel 1:1-4

Sermon Title ~ *'The Locusts of Joel'*

July 26 ~

Scripture ~ Amos 5:21-27

Sermon Title ~ *'Amos' Message of Justice'*



WORSHIP NEWS...

What a blessing it has been to worship together again in the green cathedral at Evergreen Park! And what a blessing it is to continue to worship online and be fed with daily devotions!

Thank you to the leadership team and all who have made it possible for us, the church, to remain connected to God and each other during this time of separation. Also, thank you for working diligently to keep us safe as we slowly gather back together.

Continue to watch for additional information as we transition back to the Sanctuary for worship.

Communion

We will be having our next Communion service on Sunday, July 5. At the park we will have sealed Communion elements at the table for you to pick up as you arrive. For the online worship, please have a small amount of bread and a small drink of juice available ahead of the service.



The Music committee met in June. Thanks to all who came to give input.

Thanks to David Schoon for all his work on the organ (for recordings) and the keyboard (at the summer park services).

Special Music will continue through the summer months. Thanks to all those who have already shared.

Thanks to Paige Corning for all of her efforts to record the preludes, hymns and special music that is being sent out along with the podcasts. This is a blessing to our church family!

Thanks to Sam Conley & Craig Wilson for setting up the keyboard and sound equipment for the services at Evergreen Park. We appreciate your work.

Thanks to Kim McGinley & Patrice Martin who graciously sing all the hymns (recordings).

Michelle Mishlove

Finance Committee June Report

The following information provides data processed through the month of June. Budgets are created from reviewing the history of income and expenses realized over the past few years. Projections are determined by submitted committee budgets. A great deal of consideration is given to the income derived from committed pledge units.

Currently the church has realized an income of \$31,176.00 more than expenses. An exceptionally large reason for this is the approval of the government sponsored Payroll Protection Plan loan we had received for \$30,500.00. When we look at the Sunday giving thru May, we have received \$6,801.00 less than what had been budgeted. But, those who have made a "Pledge Commitment" have exceeded the percentage we calculated for this time of year both in the General Fund and the Capital Projects Fund. May giving was short \$5,500.00 from what was budgeted.

Also, the church expenses are currently \$20,240.00 less than budgeted. We have not been able to offer all the ministries we would normally be supporting due to the Covid crisis.

We do have a good balance in the Good Samaritan Fund as well as the Household Pantry. We have also been able to giving our church apportionment of 10% to the Conference and 1% to the district.

Should we be able to continue to support the church loan used to update the church, we would be able to pay off the loan in May 2021 instead of October 2021. This is a significant savings for use in other ministries.

One last note: We should be able to meet all the guidelines established by the Payroll Protection Plan which would turn the PPP from a loan into a grant.

In closing, we seek to let you know that we often see the word stewardship as a word that means raising money. More properly, stewardship is a word that might essentially mean "management. While the church's finances matter, they should never overshadow the importance of teaching our people to manage their lives and money in light of the gospel. The crisis gives us the chance to turn the whole idea of stewardship around into something that benefits people.

Yours in Gratitude
Finance Committee



HOUSEHOLD PANTRY NEWS

Julie Donovan, Chairperson

On June 16, we held another CURBSIDE household pantry serving 35 grateful families!

We will repeat this process on **TUESDAY, JULY 21**. We hope to return to our normal procedure in August, but that will be re-evaluated as it gets closer! Thank you for your continued support of our pantry!! **STAY HEALTHY!!!**



LOWELL CHURCH MOUSE

I'm the church mouse. I see all that goes on in the church and I love to gossip about it. Of course being a Christian mouse, I only say positive things.

If you weren't at the park for church Sunday, you really missed out. Hannah Mishlove played her autoharp and sang. It was beautiful. The children in our church are so talented!

Julie Donovan has been keeping our Household Pantry going over the last several months. She comes and packs up bags of household goods. Once a month, she stands out under the overhang and puts the bag in the clients cars. Thanks Julie!

Our Resale Shoppe has reopened on Saturdays lately. Rachelle Bernard has been opening it and getting some sales in again. This mouse sleeps in on Saturday, so I didn't spy and see who is helping Rachelle. Thanks to all who are keeping this vital ministry of our church going!

Dennis Olson and his son David were in the church replacing damaged ceiling tiles. It sure looked great when they were done.

Our money counters are still at work through the pandemic. Beth Bales, Luan Brown, Kirk and Sue McQuiston and Lynn Bochart take turns counting the money each week. Thanks to you all!

Be careful when you do good work for the church. I'm watching and just waiting to share that gossip.

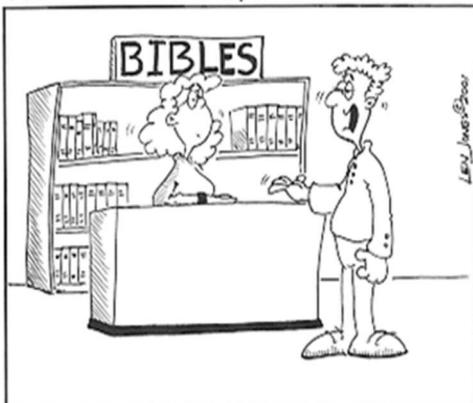


Pastor's Comic Corner

In case you haven't noticed, I love humor.

Below are a couple of comics that I've come across. Enjoy! Pastor Mark

ALTAR EGO by Len Jones



"What I really need is a translation that won't leave me feeling guilty, convicted, or in need of making some kind of decision."

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"Our pastor says all men are brothers. Does that mean all men want to pull my underwear up over my head?"