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webster
UNITED METHODIST

Weekly Newsletter

"HATING THE HATERS"



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A Message from Our Pastor

HATING THE HATERS

Antisemitism is on the rise... again. One would think that after being educated over the last 75 years or so of the horrific atrocities associated with the power of hate that ultimately resulted in the extermination of over six million Jews, people would be particularly sensitive to the well-being of our Jewish siblings. Yet, headlines are emerging once again of the rise in antisemitic hate groups, and Jewish persons and houses of worship are being targeted with increasing harassment, hate crimes, and acts of terrorism.

The Southern Poverty Law Center, an American legal advocacy organization specializing in civil rights, defines antisemitism this way:

"Antisemitism is often referred to as the oldest hatred, spanning nearly 2,000 years. Antisemitic hate groups seek to racialize Jewish people and vilify them as the manipulative puppet masters behind an economic, political and social scheme to undermine white people. Antisemitism also undergirds much of the far right, unifying adherents across various extremist ideologies around efforts to subvert and misconstrue the collective suffering of Jewish people in the Holocaust and cast them as conniving opportunists."

Hate is a powerful force. It causes destruction and is toxic to the soul and destructive to the human community. In a twist of irony, after listening to a recent news program about the rise of antisemitism, I caught myself hating that people were indulging in hate. I was responding to injustice and the lack of compassion and mercy on the part of others by feeling exactly what was repulsing me: hate.

Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King spoke to this twisted response explicitly. In one of his most famous sermons, "Loving Your Enemies", King preached: *"Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."*

So, what are we to do with our emotional revulsion toward those who would wound and insult others within our community?

Jesus said, *“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven.”* Matthew 5:43-45

Further, the Apostle Paul wrote, *“Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse . . . Do not repay anyone evil for evil.”* Romans 12:14

My grandma used to say, *“Kill them with kindness, honey.”* I’m not sure that’s what Jesus and Paul meant, as it projects a kind of shadowy undertone. I have discovered that including those who make me extremely angry/disappointed/irritated in my prayers can be an important antidote to the toxic acid of my own hate. I don’t know if asking God’s blessing for them changes them, but it does change me. I believe you will find that once you begin praying for someone holding a radically different perspective than your own, it is harder to dismiss them as fools, inhuman, or evil. It can lead to a new understanding and new language with which to communicate. Most importantly, by the Holy Spirit, it can open up new avenues to explore and build bridges of justice and reconciliation, which is the ultimate remedy for hate.

Rather than hating the haters, maybe we pray for them and see where the Spirit takes us. If that doesn’t work, you can always kill them with kindness.



Grace and peace+
Pastor Sharon

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

LIVING STONES

This program is for children, 4-years-old to 6th grade, and is held during worship (10:30-11:30 am). Each Sunday in worship, the children will be called forward for a blessing and then will go to the Discovery Room to learn about God. There will be games, stories, snacks, and prayer. We look forward to seeing you!



YOUTH MINISTRY

It takes all of us in this church family to support our youth. Every adult who is Safe Gatherings certified is invited to volunteer as a leader or co-leader for one of the dates ahead. If you are willing to serve as an adult volunteer to take over a certain date or assist with youth group, please email Pastor Sharon at pastorsharon@websterum.org. The tasks include planning the dinner, games, mission activities, and outings.

TENTATIVE YOUTH CALENDAR

*** Listed events are subject to change.*

Stay tuned for an updated calendar!

January 22nd - Parent/Youth Planning Meeting

January 29th - TBD

February 5th - Skiing or Iceskating (TBD)

February 12th - Ronald McDonald House Cards

A MESSAGE FROM GENE MORSE'S FAMILY

The family of Gene Morse would like to extend our deepest thanks to:

Pastor Sharon for preparing and leading the services for Gene

Lamar Fitzgerald, Beth Anderson, and the choir for the music

The Tuesday Guys for ushering both Wednesday and Thursday

The PALS moms and others for supplying our family with delicious food

The UWF for preparing a wonderful luncheon

Linda Guth Stangl who managed much of the above

Everyone who has shared a memory, story, or words of comfort with us

Deane Looney has said this church is a wonderful support group and he is correct. Our family appreciates every flower, casserole, card, and hug we've been given.

Lettie Morse, Lydia, Camille, Lily and Julian Nunes

OUR SECOND WELCOME NEIGHBOR STL DRIVE-THRU DINNER WAS A SUCCESS!

I wanted to thank each and every one of you for your participation. Whether you prayed for us, gave emotional support, put signs out, worked as a runner, helped pack food, delivered food or helped with the clean up, purchased a dinner, communicated the event, or provided a donation, each and every one of you was responsible for a successful event. No effort was too small. This was not my project -- it was you as a church demonstrating compassion, love, support, and care for others outside our community and new to our community. With all your efforts, Beatrice and Rosy will receive a gross amount of \$4,725 -- that is before their expenses. The dishes they provided include 2 meat dishes, egg in the salad, fish, and dairy products. We all know how expensive those items have become, meaning their net income will be smaller. Welcome Neighbor STL will receive a gross amount of \$525 to further their efforts in assisting refugees in adjusting to our country. Thank you all for being such a supporting and loving church community.

One last and most important thing -- thank you all for giving me the opportunity to assist you with this event.

Kris Maly



GIRL SCOUT COOKIES FOR SALE!!

The Girl Scouts will be selling cookies in Fellowship Hall this year on Sunday, January 22nd, before and after church.

Please visit their table if you would like to support them. You can also purchase online if you prefer. You fill out the online order form, pay online, and choose to have the cookies dropped off at your house by the Girl Scouts or delivered by mail. It is very easy!



Two girls, Sarah and Vivienne Vader, are selling cookies this year. We split the congregation in half by last name, please place your order online as follows:

A-M last names purchase from Sarah at:

<https://digitalcookie.girlscouts.org/scout/sarah290829>

N-Z last names purchase from Vivienne at:

<https://digitalcookie.girlscouts.org/scout/vivienne855166>

Announcements from the Community

AVAILABLE ACTIVITIES AT THE



ONLINE ART HISTORY CLASSES

Presented by Betsy Solomon, MA, Art Historian and
Executive Director, Shepherd's Center

Fridays, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm CT
\$12/session

FUTURE CLASS DATES:

January 20th - Art History 101: How to Look at a
Work of Art

January 27th - Post-Impressionism: Seurat,
Cezanne & Gauguin

February 10th - Portraiture through the Ages

February 17th - Edmonia Lewis & Augusta
Savage: Two African-American Sculptors

February 24th - Vermeer: Master of Light

If you have trouble with online registration, email
Betsy Solomon (bsolomon@shepherdscenter-wk.org)
with your name, address, phone number, and the
name/month(s) of the class you want to attend.

Register online by clicking [HERE!](#)

IN-PERSON BOOK CLUB GROUP

Facilitated by Brittany Riegert, St. Louis
County Library Oak Bend
Second Fridays, 1 - 2:30 pm
(Webster Groves Christian Church, 1320 W.
Lockwood, Glendale, MO 63122)

A limited number of books are available to
borrow from the Shepherd's Center office.

FUTURE BOOKS:

February 10th - *American Heiress: The Wild
Saga of the Kidnapping, Crimes and Trial of
Patty Hearst* by Jeffrey Toobin

March 10th - *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn
Hugo* by Taylor Jenkins Reid

**Pre-registration is required
by calling (314)395-0988!**

OUR PRAYER CONCERNS

Family and friends of Gene Morse; Margaret Christensen; Becca Stevens; Lettie Morse; Lydia, Camille, Lily, and Julian Nunes; Traci Stuart; Bev Meseey; Carol Wright; Carol Carinci (Debbie Lund); Connie Kroenung's mother, Mary Gumerman; Johnathan Zigman (Connie Kroenung); and People of Ukraine.

CONDOLENCES

**Sympathy to the family and friends of
Gordon Shull (101) who passed away January 11, 2023.**



NEWSLETTER ARTICLE DEADLINE

All articles and submissions must be sent to secretary@websterum.org by Monday at 10 am to be in that week's newsletter.

CHURCH SPACE RESERVATIONS

If you want to schedule a space for your group, check the calendar and send your request to admin.communications@websterum.org to schedule all usage!