

FEBRUARY 2, 2023

webster  
UNITED METHODIST

## Weekly Newsletter

# "Five Smiles"

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# *A Message from Our Pastor*

## FIVE SMILES

"What does the Lord require of you? To act justly, and to love kindness  
and to walk humbly with your God."  
(Micah 6:8)

We are currently in the middle of a sermon series, entitled "Walking with Jesus". John Wesley, founder of the Methodist tradition, championed a methodical practice of identifiable activities to keep our faith alive and fruitful, and our hand safely in our Savior's during our life journey.

So far, we have talked about:

- (1) joining others in worship
- (2) reading and studying the scriptures- especially with others, and
- (3) making the service to others part of the fabric of our days.

Serving is another way to describe offering grace, that hesed (the Hebrew word for completely undeserved kindness) love that God has for us. Sometimes, that grace-giving is organized, like when many of us came together for Welcome Neighbor StL to plate the dinners and run them to the waiting cars in our parking lot. But there are more organic ways to offer grace as well, and they don't cost us a thing, and take very little time. We can offer kindness in the form of smiles and words of encouragement. That is service too.

Sharing a smile, or a word of encouragement, a thank you for a job well done, or recognizing that someone is doing their best under difficult circumstances are all unexpected gifts of grace that can make a difference in a person's life. They are, in their own way, divine opportunities to serve. So, I challenged all of us to make an effort to give away five smiles a day this week, to exercise our giving muscles.

Hoping to practice what I preached, I thought to try it out when I visited the Social Security office this week, intending to smile at the government employee who would help answer my questions. Thinking that would rack up one smile, I was surprised that God presented many more opportunities during the errand, or maybe I just noticed them because my radar was up.

Leaving my car in the crowded lot, I noticed I was moving at about the same pace toward the door as an older man with a cane. Dismissing my initial instinct to get there first so I could get an earlier number in line, I did speed up so I could open the door and say good morning to the gentleman. It was easy, and his pleasant reply felt good.

I already gave one of the five smiles that I was hoping to give away that day. In the waiting room, an elderly woman dressed in a traditional Muslim hijab turned to notice me as I sat down beside her. She silently nodded her thanks when I leaned forward and returned her cane after it slid from her hands onto the floor. Later, leaning on the arm of her son as she was leaving, I caught her eye and smiled, nodding my head. I watched as her eyes, the only thing visible to me under her draping crinkled with a smile and she nodded again.

“Good morning!” I declared to the lady who already looked harassed in the cubical. Now was the moment I had planned to find a way to offer grace/kindness/service. After helping me resolve my questions, I thanked her for her expertise and patience. Her face brightened, and I could tell I had touched a place that was hungry for appreciation. Upon leaving, I thanked the security officer at the door for being there today and was rewarded with his nod.

None of these encounters cost me anything except maybe seconds of my time. In one errand, I “saw” four opportunities to offer grace. There may have been others that I didn’t see. In them all, I felt the warmth of a reward. A stop at the grocery store provided another encounter with a young man, who was collecting carts in the parking lot. I told him he was doing a good job, and he stopped and thanked me for noticing. It was just that easy to offer my five blessings.

Can you imagine if our whole church did that every day? What would be the impact we might make on our community? If even 70 of us did so (that’s about our average worship attendance last year), that would be 350 blessings a day, and just under 2,500 in a week. Over a year, that could add up to 127,400 moments of positive and loving energy that we as a church family can inject into our community. Do you think that might make a positive contribution to our neighbors?

The prophet Micah must have thought so, when he answered the question about what God wanted from us: “What does the Lord require of you? To act justly, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8). Now it’s your turn. Go give your five.



**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!

## THE NEXT WILD WEDNESDAY! - FEB. 15TH



Children ages 4-12 are welcome to join us for this month's Wild Wednesday! We will be learning about Black History Month and what our role is as a church. Dinner will be provided! Sign up [here](#).



## YOUTH MINISTRY

**February 5th - Trip to the Art Museum!** Our current plan is to have lunch together after worship and then go together in the early afternoon. The Pallia's have a new fryer and are planning on making something yummy!

**February 12th - Service Project!** Volunteer for our community collection of socks and underwear to donate to LifeWise StL.

**February 19th - Snow tubing at Hidden Valley!**



# THANK YOU NOTE FROM AVERY ELEMENTARY!



Dear Rev. Kichline, Beth, Ellen, Linda and the rest of your wonderful parishioners:

Thank you for the delicious goodies your church provided our Avery Staff. The thoughtful card, poinsettia plant and treats were just what we all needed to kick start us off into the New Year. We are so grateful and thankful!

.....The Avery Elementary Staff.....

Ann & Josh Stokes

Thank you  
Tim Wells

So Appreciated  
Nanci Polihman

Thank you so  
much!  
Will Ball  
Skurzy

Thank you  
for thinking  
of us!  
Heavenly  
Todd

Thanks for your  
yummies!  
Annie holder

Thank you!  
Delish - Meg  
Thank you  
so much!  
Katie F.

THANK YOU

FOR THE TREATS!  
Kerry Wildman

Thank you!  
Dani Foster

Thank you!  
Christina (Hart)

Thank you!  
Kathy

Thank you!  
Ellen

Thank you!  
Jenn

Thank you for your  
kindness + generosity!  
Nannah Peterson

Thank you  
Jenn  
Thank you!  
Jenna  
Thank you!

# INVITATION TO ADD JOY TO YOUR LIFE BY GIVING TO OTHERS

Pastor Sharon's January 29th sermon challenged us to give of ourselves this week starting with smiles and positive affirmations, at the very least. How about challenging yourself a bit more by joining our Volunteer-in-Mission Team from Sunday, April 30th through Thursday, May 4th?

We have 10 places reserved at Midwest Missions Distribution Center near Springfield, IL, again this year, and we are beginning our recruiting for the team now. Comfortable, reasonably-priced lodging, great food, warm fellowship, and a variety of ways to serve others with jobs tailor-made for anyone and everyone. You can build or refinish school desks to be sent to underdeveloped countries, pack a variety of emergency kits, sew or repair needed items, repair bikes or sewing machines, etc.

Reach out and try a new way to give to others; it will bring joy to all! Please contact Jan McCurley at (314)781-3969 (home phone), (314)378-5504 (cell phone), or email [janis.mccurley@gmail.com](mailto:janis.mccurley@gmail.com) to sign up, ask questions, or get more information. You may also sign up on the Connection Card in worship on Sunday. The deadline for team formation is Saturday, February 25, 2023.

**Thanks,**  
**Jan McCurley**



**District Lenten Reflection Service—*In Person* Event**

**February 18, 2023**

**10:00 a.m. –1:00 p.m.**

**Palmyra UMC**

**110 West Olive**

**Palmyra, MO 63146**

***Program: Growing in Friendship***

**Lenten Reflection, Brunch, Leadership Training,  
& Hands-On Mission Project**

**Ingathering—Quart size Ziploc bags and dollars for supplies for Hands on Mission Project**

To register, email this information to Karen Brancato-Martin, [martinkb87@gmail.com](mailto:martinkb87@gmail.com),  
or mail to 111 Calverton, Rd, St. Louis, MO 63135.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Church \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Dietary Needs \_\_\_\_\_

**Please circle the Training Session you will attend:**

President

Communications

Education & Interpretation

Program Resources

Vice President

Nomination

Spiritual Growth

Secretary

Social Action

Membership

Nurture & Outreach

Treasurer



# OUR PRAYER CONCERNS

Cindy Andrews; Bev Meseey; Margaret Christensen; Family of Don Blattner (Beth Anderson); Mark (Clay Grumke); Mary Gumerman, Connie Kroenung's mother; Mary Hoffman (Mary Taylor); John Pike, Dan & Katie's brother; Nick (Megan Gesse); Family of Tyre Nichols and healing throughout our communities; and People of Ukraine.



## NEWSLETTER ARTICLE DEADLINE

All articles and submissions must be sent to [secretary@websterum.org](mailto: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](mailto:admin.communications@websterum.org) to schedule all usage!