

HOPEWELL

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

'A Place to Find Hope and Be Well'

20220 Hopewell Road

Mount Vernon, OH 43050

*Our mission is to make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ
and minister to the needs of others in His name.*

April - May 2023

Pastor's Ponderings -- *Pastor Mearle Griffith*

Grace Upon Grace

In our last newsletter, I began a discussion of The United Methodist Church theological statement about the nature and doctrine of grace. The entire document is known as "Grace Upon Grace" and has been widely studied across the church. Today I will make a stab at explaining Preventive Grace. The other two aspects we will explore in upcoming issues will be Justifying Grace and Sanctifying Grace.

No doctrine was more beneficial to me as I began to study in the seminary after wrestling with a call to ordained ministry for more than a decade. Was I adequate? Were my thoughts and behaviors "holy" enough to be a pastor. Did I really want to commit to three more years of study after finishing college. All of these thoughts and concerns had kept me away from a commitment, but a study of grace helped me mightily.

Prevenient grace: Grace that goes before

One dynamic or expression of God's grace is prevenience or "preventing" grace. *Prevenient grace* includes, according to John Wesley, Founder of Methodism, "all that is wrought in the soul by what is frequently termed 'natural conscience,' ... all the 'drawings' of 'the Father,' the desires after God, ... that 'light' wherewith the Son of God 'enlightens everyone that cometh into the world,' showing every man 'to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with his God;' all the convictions which his Spirit from time to time works in every child of man."

While taking the seriousness of human sin and brokenness, Wesley believed that God's grace prevents the destruction of the divine image in us.

Prevenient grace is present in all creation — in the natural order, in human conscience, in the relationships and heritage into which we are born. Love of family, the Christian community, the sacraments, creation itself, the pangs of guilt, the pull toward a vision of what can be— these are all expressions of God's prevenient grace.



...continued on p.2

Wesley described prevenient grace as the porch on a house. It is where we prepare to enter the house. Grace may also be compared to a journey. The desire to embark on the trip, the road or trail, the vehicle in which the journey is to be made and the map to be followed are all gifts or gifts. The beauty of the landscape, the mind and eyes that conceived the journey and perceive its beauty, even the explorer who blazed the trail are all unmerited gifts — grace!

But there is more to a house than the porch! There is more to a journey than the desire to travel! We must enter the house or begin the journey.

Pentecost is Coming. . . -- Pastor Mearle Griffith

May 28 is Pentecost Sunday and the beginning of the Season of Pentecost in the church year.

It is more commonly known as the birthday of the church and symbolizes the descending of the Holy Spirit upon the people assembled as recorded in Acts 2. One of the customs on Pentecost Sunday is to wear red clothing to worship, to signify the fire of the Holy Spirit.



If you go back and read the Old Testament, you will discover that Pentecost was one of the Jewish feast days. Only they didn't call it Pentecost. That's the Greek name. The Jews called it the Feast of Harvest or the Feast of Weeks. It is mentioned in five places in the first five books — in Exodus 23, Exodus 24, Leviticus 16, Numbers 28, and Deuteronomy 16.

Modern Christians observe Pentecost Sunday as a holiday, not to celebrate a wheat harvest, but to remember when the Holy Spirit invaded the Church in Acts 2.

On Pentecost Sunday, the Holy Spirit filled the Church with power and added 3,000 new believers. The account in Act 2 reports that, after Jesus ascended into heaven, Jesus' followers were gathered together for the Feast of Harvest (aka Pentecost), and the Holy Spirit "*filled the whole house where they were sitting*" (Acts 2:2). "*All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them*" (Acts 2:4).

This strange occurrence drew a large crowd, and Peter stood up to speak to them about repentance and the gospel of Christ (Acts 2:14). By the end of the day that the Holy Spirit came, the Church grew by 3,000 people (Acts 2:41). This is why Christians still celebrate Pentecost.

The Significance of Pentecost Today

The significance of Pentecost to the church is something that we need to walk through carefully, and we shouldn't ignore, simply because Pentecost started as a Jewish celebration. And so, in our modern day of the New Testament church, we don't celebrate Pentecost in the way that the Old Testament Hebrews did. We celebrate it as the beginning of the church and each year recognize it as a Birthday of the Church Sunday.



And none of you thought to remind me to wear red for Pentecost!?!

Disclaimer: Any attempts at humor by the editors may not reflect the views of management, including the good Lord above. Laugh at your own risk.

Barnabas Project—Encouraging Our College Students – Donna Spinks/Jade Laymon

Bags stuffed with an abundance of goodies went to Hopewell's six post-high school students: Jessie Gourley, Aiden Scott, Emma Laymon, Macy Helser, Gina Lawhon, and Seth Lawhon. Thanks to a generous congregation for supporting and encouraging our young, aspiring adults. [And thanks to Donna Spinks, Phyllis Gourley, Bev Lahmon, and Jade Laymon for dividing and packing the contents.]



Hopewell Birthdays

April

2 Adam Lawhon
15 Tammy Gourley

May

7 Josh Laymon
7 Bitsi Gourley
12 Phyllis Gourley
12 Emma Laymon
14 Joe Needham
19 John Wolfe
19 Amanda Wells

New Members at HUMC -- Pastor Mearle Griffith

Hopewell United Methodist Church welcomed six new members on March 26. They were: Audra and Lee Cubie, Paul and Moreen Helser, and Amanda and Todd Wells.

Hopewell Prayer Chain – Marsha Clayborne

The Prayer Chain is a way for us to share our joys and concerns in the congregation. Here is how it works: If you or someone you know needs prayer, call Pastor Mearle or Marsha Clayborne, and they will get the prayer chain started. If you call someone and they don't answer the phone, please leave a message about the prayer request and call the next person in the prayer chain. Thank you.

If someone wants to be added to the prayer chain list, please give Marsha Clayborne a call.

Prayer Chain as of 3-24-2023

Pastor Mearle Griffith	937-903-0912
Marsha Clayborne	740-501-5841
Donna Spinks	740-501-8616
Nancy Gore	740-427-2780
Bev Lahmon	740-397-2906
Phyllis Gourley	614-946-9489
Bitsi Gourley	740-975-0995
Julie Britton	937-243-5672
Bob & Linda Joseph	614-565-1102
Jade Laymon	740-398-6785
Vicki Needham	419-708-1562
Cheryl McCracken	740-398-1311
Cary & Joanne Purcell	614-570-7809
Ellen Kaiser	740-501-0023
Erika Kanuckle Wolfe	740-397-5515
Bill Lawhon	614-309-4350

Follow Hopewell UMC

...on the Web: www.mvhopewellumc.org

...on Facebook: www.facebook.com/HopewellUMCMtVernon

www.facebook.com/HopewellUMCMtVernon

Women's Bible Study – Bitsi Gourley

The ladies of HUMC have started a ten-week Bible study on the books of 1 and 2 Thessalonians. It contains 9 sessions by Beth Moore and is titled Children of the Day. Workbooks have been purchased by the church and all you need is a Bible. Join the group on Thursday evenings!

Scioto Ridge Boys at HUMC



The Scioto Ridge Boys gospel quartet from Hilliard 'sang' the morning worship at Hopewell on Sunday, March 5. The 'Boys' appreciated the warm welcome from Hopewell and South Vernon congregation members, according to quartet member/Hopewell parishioner Bob Joseph. The quartet asked for prayers for Bob Houston (2nd from right) who undergoes ankle surgery on March 30.

--photo by Jade Laymon

April Schedule of Worship -- Pastor Mearle Griffith

- April 2 Palm Sunday
Sermon "Thinking about That Donkey" Matthew 21:1-11
Holy Communion
- April 6 Maundy Thursday Service 7:00 p.m. at South Vernon UMC
Sermon "Maundy Thoughts" John 13:1-31 Holy Communion
- April 9 Easter Sunrise Service 7:00 a. m. at Hopewell UMC
Meditation "A Garden of New Life" John 20:1-18
Easter Regular Worship Service, time to be announced
Sermon "Easter is Life" Matthew 28:1-10
- April 16 Sermon "Doubt into Belief" John 20:19-31
- April 23 Sermon "Justice, Mercy and Love" Micah 6:1-8
- April 30 Sermon "I Trouble" Luke 18:9-14

Quotes of Note --compiled by Dr. Chris Cordle, Apple Valley resident and friend of HUMC (and of Bob/Linda J)

"In the end you can only control two things, your effort and your attitude."

"Never grow a wishbone where your backbone should be."

"Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened."

"Vision without execution is hallucination."

The Nature, Design, and General Rules of Our United Societies* - *This excerpt from The Book of Discipline is the second of a two-part series about our Methodist roots. (Part 1 appeared in the Oct-Nov 2022 newsletter.) About 1832 this country church was organized as the 'Hopewell Society' and included a 'class leader' and 'class members' as specified by Methodism founder John Wesley. This second part of the series elaborates on Wesley's three ways for class members to 'evidence [demonstrate] their desire of salvation.'*

It is therefore expected of all who continue in these societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

First: By doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practiced, such as:

The taking of the name of God in vain.

The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work therein or by buying or selling.

Drunkenness: buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity.

Slaveholding; buying or selling slaves.

Fighting, quarreling, brawling, brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing; the using many words in buying or selling.

The buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty.

The giving or taking things on usury—i.e., unlawful interest.

Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation; particularly speaking evil of magistrates or of ministers.

Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us.

Doing what we know is not for the glory of God, as:

The putting on of gold and costly apparel.

The taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus.

The singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God.

Softness and needless self-indulgence.

Laying up treasure upon earth.

Borrowing without a probability of paying; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

It is expected of all who continue in these societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Secondly: By doing good; by being in every kind merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and, as far as possible, to all men:

To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison.

To their souls, by instructing, reproofing, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine that "we are not to do good unless *our hearts be free to it.*"

By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others; buying one of another, helping each other in business, and so much the more because the world will love its own and them only.

By all possible diligence and frugality, that the gospel be not blamed.

By running with patience the race which is set before them, denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and offscouring of the world; and looking that men should say all manner of evil of them *falsely*, for the Lord's sake.

It is expected of all who desire to continue in these societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Thirdly: By attending upon all the ordinances of God; such are:

The public worship of God.

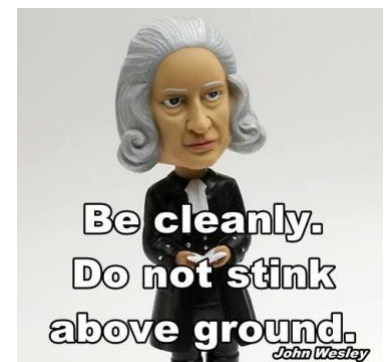
The ministry of the Word, either read or expounded.

The Supper of the Lord.

Family and private prayer.

Searching the Scriptures.

Fasting or abstinence.



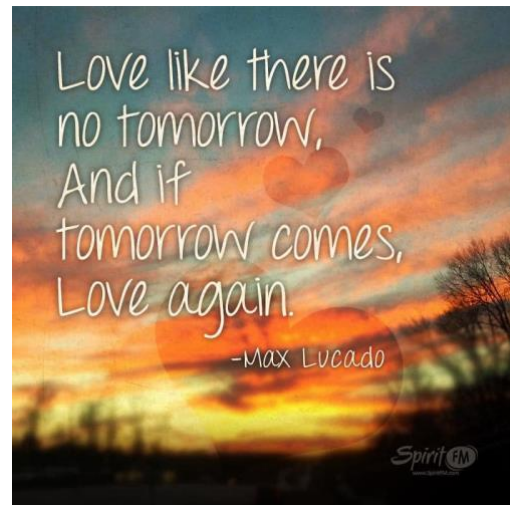
...continued on p. 6

These are the General Rules of our societies; all of which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written Word, which is the only rule, and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice. And all these we know his Spirit writes on truly awakened hearts. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be known unto them who watch over that soul as they who must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways. We will bear with him for a season. But then, if he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls.

**From The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church- 2016. Copyright 2016 by The United Methodist Publishing House. To see both first and second segment: <https://www.umc.org/en/content/the-general-rules-of-the-methodist-church>*



"I don't care if it's the local or the express. We're getting on board."



-Max Lucado

Spirit FM



"That's my boy!"



Favorite Hymns

- The Baker's Hymn.....When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder
- The Shoe Repairer's Hymn.....It Is Well With My Soul
- The Geologist's Hymn.....Rock of Ages
- The Librarian's Hymn.....Whispering Hope
- The Mail Carrier's Hymn.....Deliverance Will Come
- The Nurse's Hymn.....Rescue the Perishing
- The Telephone Operator's Hymn.....Jesus on the Mainline
- The Fisherman's Hymn.....Shall We Gather at the River?

April 2023							May 2023 ▶
◀ Mar 2023	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
							1 -April Fool's Day
2 -Palm Sunday 9:30 Worship/Holy Communion B'day: Adam Lawhon	3 -Nat'l Find a Rainbow Day	4 -Int'l Carrot Day	5 -Gold Star Spouses Day	6 Maundy Thursday 7 PM Maundy Thursday Service at South Vernon	7 Good Friday		8 -Nat'l Zoo Lovers Day
9 Easter 7 AM Sunrise Service TBD Worship	10 -Nat'l Siblings Day	11 -Nat'l Submarine Day	12 -Nat'l Grilled Cheese Sandwich Day	13 -Thomas Jefferson's B'day	14 -Nat'l Gardening Day		15 -Husband Appreciation Day B'day: Tammy Gourley
16 -Emancipation Day 9:30 Worship	17 -Patriots' Day	18 Tax Day (Taxes Due)	19 -Nat'l Garlic Day	20 -Nat'l Look Alike Day	21 -Nat'l Kindergarten Day		22 Earth Day
23 -Lover's Day 9:30 Worship	24 -Nat'l Pigs in a Blanket Day	25 -World Penguin Day	26 -Administrative Professionals Day	27 -Take Our Sons & Daughters to Work Day	28 Arbor Day		29 -Int'l Dance Day
30 -Int'l Jazz Day 9:30 Worship	-Garden Month -Distracted Driving Awareness Month -Stress Awareness Month -National Humor Month -Animal Cruelty Prevention Month						

May 2023							Jun 2023 ▶
◀ Apr 2023	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 -May Day		2 -Teacher's Day	3 -World Press Freedom Day	4 -Nat'l Day of Prayer	5 Cinco De Mayo	6 -Nat'l Nurses Day
7 -World Laughter Day 9:30 Worship/Holy Communion B'day: Bitsi Gourley B'day: Josh Laymon	8 -VE (Victory in Europe) Day 1945	9 -Nat'l Lost Sock Memorial Day	10 -Nat'l Clean Your Room Day	11 -Nat'l Eat What You Want Day	12 -Military Spouse Appreciation Day B'day: Phyllis Gourley B'day: Emma Laymon	13 -Nat'l Apple Pie Day	
14 Mother's Day 9:30 Worship/ Refreshments B'day: Joe Needham	15 -Int'l Day of Families	16 -Int'l Day of Light	17 -World Hypertension Day	18 -Nat'l No Dirty Dishes Day	19 -Bike-to-Work Day B'day: Amanda Wells B'day: John Wolfe	20 Armed Forces Day	
21 -World Baking Day 9:30 Worship	22 -World Goth Day	23 -World Turtle Day	24 -Nat'l Scavenger Hunt Day	25 -Red Nose Day	26 -Nat'l Paper Airplane Day	27 -Nat'l Screenshot Day	
28 -Nat'l Burger Day 9:30 Worship	29 Memorial Day	30 -Nat'l Creativity Day	31 -Nat'l Smile Day	-Bike Safety Month -National Physical Fitness and Sports Month -Healthy Vision Month -Mental Health Month -Older Americans Month			

Hopewell United Methodist Church
c/o Bob & Linda Joseph, newsletter editors
12511 Thomas Road
Monroeville, OH 44847

