

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.*

June - July 2023

Pastor's Ponderings -- Reverend Dr. Mearle Griffith

Justifying/saving grace: Doorway into new identity, new creation

We continue this newsletter with our discussion of 'Grace Upon Grace', our denomination's theological statement on the nature and doctrine of Grace. Last newsletter we discussed Preventive Grace. In this issue we will discuss Justified grace and, finally we will discuss Sanctified Grace.



Prevenient grace prepares us for justifying grace. "Justification," said Wesley, "is another word for pardon. It is the forgiveness of all our sins, and ... our acceptance with God." Justifying grace is the assurance of forgiveness that comes from repentance, from turning toward God's gracious gift of new life. It is being reconciled and realigned with God and the acceptance of God's atoning act in Jesus Christ.

Wesley considered justification, or justifying grace, as the doorway into the house of God's salvation. God reconciles us to Godself, adopts us into the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, bestows upon us our identity as beloved sons and daughters and incorporates us into the body of Christ, the church.

Wesley's description of his experience at Aldersgate Street on May 24, 1738, perhaps portrays the meaning of justifying grace:

"About a quarter before nine, while he [the leader] was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine and saved me from the law of sin and death."

Realizing our identity and worth as being rooted in the one to whom we belong is the essence of justifying grace. To accept that identity is to enter the doorway into a whole new existence. It is an identity we can never earn, nor can it be taken from us.

Continuing the analogy of the house, justifying grace is the doorway and the process of walking through it. The door is open with a welcome sign on it. If grace is compared to a journey, there comes a time when the traveler packs the bags, joins the guide and sets out toward the destination. That is justifying grace, turning toward a new future.

Jessica Gourley Wins United Methodist Scholarship – Rev. Mearle Griffith

Jessica Gourley has been named a recipient of a United Methodist Scholarship for her Junior year at Otterbein University, a United Methodist-related university in Westerville.

Recommended by Pastor Griffith, Jessica has stellar academic and community service accomplishments and is an active person on the university campus.

The scholarships are awarded to outstanding United Methodist Church members attending one of more than 104 United Methodist Colleges and Universities through a denomination wide competition.

She is studying for a B.A. degree in English with a concentration in Film Studies and Creative Writing, with a minor in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. She has also been on the Otterbein Dean's List.

Jessica is the daughter of Mickey and Bitsi Gourley and is a member of Hopewell UMC.

United Methodist Scholarships Available

Apply by March 1

Applications are now open for scholarships from the United Methodist Higher Education Foundation. Every year, UMHEF awards \$2+ million to students planning to attend one of the 100+ UM-related colleges, universities, and seminaries across the country.

Don't let finances get in the way of achieving your dreams of a quality education! Learn more about UM Scholarships at

<https://umhef.org/resources/media-resources/> or contact Pastor Griffith.

Apply by March 1 at

<https://umhef.org/apply>.

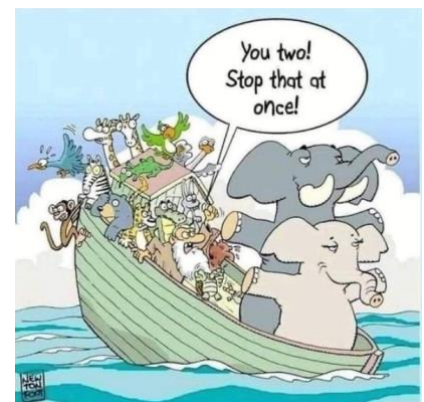
Pastoral Appointment Changes – Jade Laymon, PPR chair

As the Pastor-Parish Relations chair of Hopewell UMC, I want to keep the congregation updated on the news of Rev. Mearle Griffith finishing his appointment at Hopewell UMC. We have so enjoyed having Rev. Mearle and his wife Jane share their wisdom, knowledge, and kindness with us and wish them both all the best on their future endeavors.

The Staff Parish committee moves forward to take the next steps and planning in relation to finding a replacement pastor. Reverend Mearle will continue through June 11. We will gratefully have Rev. Robert Alexander fill in for the last two Sundays of June. According to my conversation with our district superintendent Rev. Kelly Brown, the East Ohio bishop's cabinet will approve a new pastor, whose appointment will begin on July 2nd.



Rev. Mearle and Theo



Heavenly Harmonizing: The Story of 'Blessed Assurance' – by Crystal Caviness, United Methodist Communications

In a New York City home in 1873, one friend played a few bars of music on the piano for another friend and then asked, “What does that melody say to you?”

The story goes that the second friend immediately replied, “Blessed Assurance, Jesus is mine! O what a foretaste of glory divine!”

Almost effortlessly and within a few minutes, Fanny Crosby had written the verses and refrain to accompany the music written by Phoebe Palmer Knapp. The beloved hymn, aptly titled, “Blessed Assurance,” (no. 369 in the United Methodist Hymnal), celebrates its 150th anniversary in 2023.

The musical collaboration was among the first between Crosby, a woman who was blind and became known as one of the most prolific hymn writers in history, and Knapp, a successful composer and the daughter of famed Methodist revivalist Phoebe Palmer. Crosby and Knapp ran in the same musical circles in New York, as well as worshipping together at Old John Street Methodist Episcopal Church.

The new hymn was an almost instant hit, as far as hymn popularity goes. In its first year, it was published in three different publications: “Gems of Praise, No. 1 (Methodist Episcopal Book-Room); “Guide to Holiness,” a Methodist periodical published by Walter and Phoebe Palmer; and “Bible School Songs,” edited by Knapp and J.H. Vincent, according to HymnologyArchives.com.

In the past 150 years, the hymn has been published by faith communities throughout the world and has been recorded by the likes of Carrie Underwood, Alan Jackson, CeCe Winans, Glen Campbell, and Third Day.



Rev. Mearle received six new members on March 26: (from left) Moreen and Paul Helser, Audra and Lee Cubie, and Amanda and Todd Wells

Hopewell Birthdays

June

- 10 Erin Lawhon
- 20 Greg Yashnik
- 24 Lee Cubie
- 29 Annika Kanuckel-Wolfe

July

- 2 Mickey Gourley
- 2 Ellen Kaiser
- 13 Tim Wright
- 20 Katie Beran
- 21 Ryan Rupp
- 24 Nancy Gore

Follow Hopewell UMC

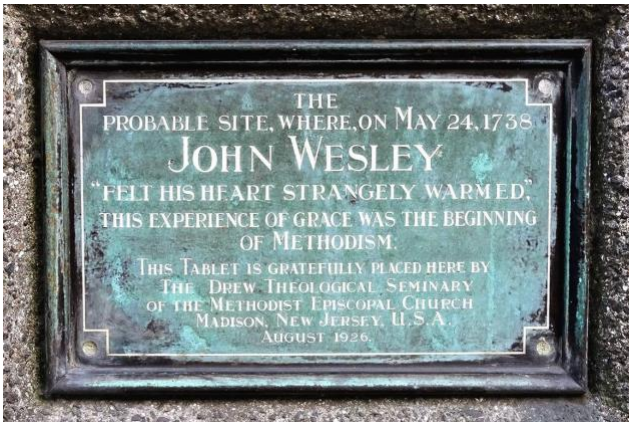
...on the Web: www.mvhopewellumc.org

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Our Methodist Heritage: More about Aldersgate -- by Ask The UMC, a ministry of United Methodist Communications.

Aldersgate Day is celebrated on May 24 (or the Sunday closest) to commemorate the day in 1738 [285 years ago] when John Wesley experienced assurance of his salvation. Wesley reluctantly attended a group meeting that evening on Aldersgate Street in London. As he heard a reading from Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, he felt his "heart strangely warmed." Wesley wrote in his journal that at about 8:45 p.m. "while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."



Charles Wesley only a few days before had also had a conversion experience in a building that still stands on an adjacent block (John Bray's house on Little Britain). We do not know whether the building where John Wesley's experience took place still exists, nor exactly in which building on Aldersgate Street it may have been if it still stands. A monument at the London Museum on Aldersgate Street marks where some believe the building may have been.

Over time, Aldersgate Street has been shortened by common Methodist usage to simply Aldersgate. The word has come to represent both the place and John Wesley's experience.

Life Lessons: Gossip

In Ancient Greece, Socrates had a great reputation for dispensing wisdom. One day someone came to find the great philosopher and said to him:

- Do you know what I just heard about your friend?
- A moment, replied Socrates. Before you tell me, I would like to test you the three sieves.
- The three sieves?

- Yes, continued Socrates. Before telling anything about the others, it's good to take the time to filter what you mean. I call it the test of the three sieves. The first sieve is the TRUTH. Have you checked if what you're going to tell me is true?

- No, I just heard it.

- Very good! So, you don't know if it's true. We continue with the second sieve, that of KINDNESS. What you want to tell me about my friend, is it good?

- Oh, no! On the contrary.

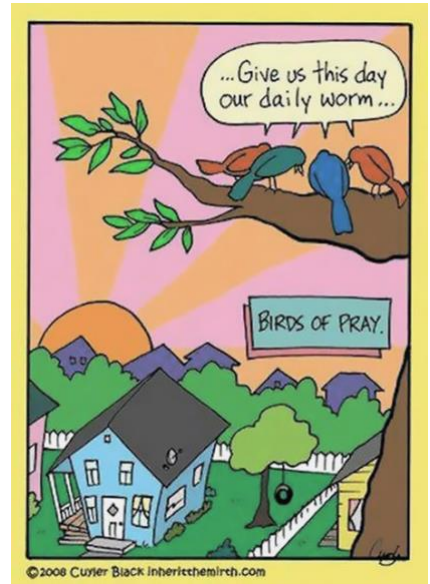
- So, questioned Socrates, you want to tell me bad things about him and you're not even sure they're true? Maybe you can still pass the test of the third sieve, that of UTILITY. Is it useful that I know what you're going to tell me about this friend?

- No, really.

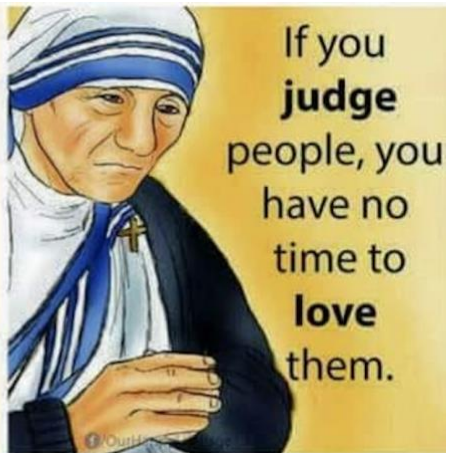
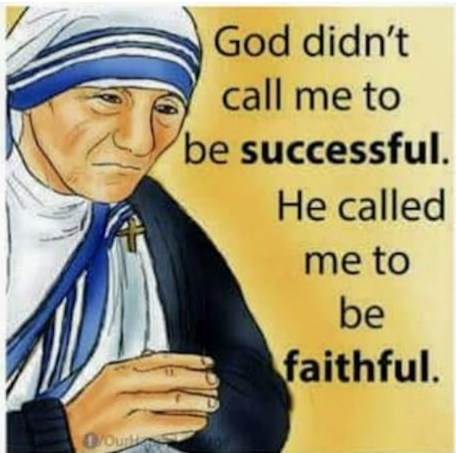
- So, concluded Socrates, what you were going to tell me is neither true, nor good, nor useful. Why, then, did you want to tell me this?

"Gossip is a bad thing. In the beginning it may seem enjoyable and fun, but in the end, it fills our hearts with bitterness and poisons us, too!"





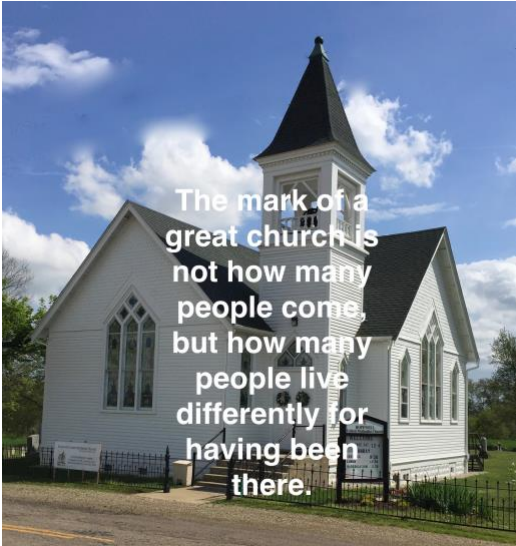
Mother Theresa's words



June 2023							Jul 2023 ▶
◀ May 2023	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
-National Safety Month -National Candy Month -National Great Outdoors Month					1 -Nat'l Say Something Nice Day	2 -Nat'l Moonshine day	3 -World Bicycle Day
4 -Nat'l Cancer Survivors Day 9:30 Worship/Holy Communion	5 -Nat'l Donut Day	6 -D-Day (WW II) 1944	7 -Global Running Day	8 -Nat'l Best Friends Day	9 -Nat'l Donald Duck Day	10 -Nat'l Iced Tea Day B'day: Erin Lawhon	
11 -Nat'l Children's Day 9:30 Worship/Refreshments	12 -Nat'l Loving Day	13 -Nat'l Sewing Machine Day	14 Flag Day	15 -Nature Photography Day	16 -Bloomsday	17 -Bunker Hill Day	
18 Father's Day 9:30 Worship	19 Juneteenth	20 -American Eagle Day B'day: Greg Yashnik	21 Summer Solstice (Summer Begins)	22 -Nat'l Take Your Cat to Work Day	23 -Nat'l Hydration Day	24 -Nat'l Pralines Day B'day: Lee Cubie	
25 -Battle of Little Bighorn 1876 9:30 Worship	26 -Nat'l Beauticians' Day	27 -Helen Keller Day	28 -Nat'l Insurance Awareness Day	29 -Nat'l Handshake Day B'day: Annika Kanuckel-Wolfe	30 -Int'l Asteroid Day		

July 2023							Aug 2023 ▶
◀ Jun 2023	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
							1 -Int'l Day of Cooperatives
2 -World UFO Day 9:30 Worship/Holy Communion B'day: Mickey Gourley B'day: Ellen Kaiser	3 -Nat'l Stay Out of the Sun Day	4 Independence Day	5 -Nat'l Workaholics Day	6 -Nat'l Fried Chicken Day	7 -Global Forgiveness Day	8 -Nat'l Video Game Day	
9 -Nat'l Sugar Cookie Day 9:30 Worship/ Refreshments	10 -Nat'l Kitten Day	11 -Cow Appreciation Day	12 -Nat'l Simplicity Day	13 -Nat'l French Fry Day B'day: Tim Wright	14 -Pandemonium Day	15 -Nat'l Give Something Away Day	
16 -Nat'l Ice Cream Day 9:30 Worship	17 -World Emoji Day	18 -World Listening Day	19 -Stick Out Your Tongue Day	20 -Int'l Chess Day B'day: Katie Beran	21 -Nat'l Junk Food Day B'day: Ryan Rupp	22 -Nat'l Hammock Day	
23 -Parents' Day 9:30 Worship	24 -Nat'l Drive-Thru Day B'day: Nancy Gore	25 -Nat'l Hire a Veteran Day	26 -Uncle and Aunt Day	27 -Nat'l Intern Day	28 -Nat'l Milk Chocolate Day	29 -Nat'l Lasagna Day	
30 -Int'l Friendship Day 9:30 Worship	31 -Nat'l Avacado Day	-National Grilling Month -UV Safety Month -National Cell Phone Courtesy Month -National Culinary Arts Month					

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The mark of a great church is not how many people come, but how many people live differently for having been there.



Centennial celebration, 2016