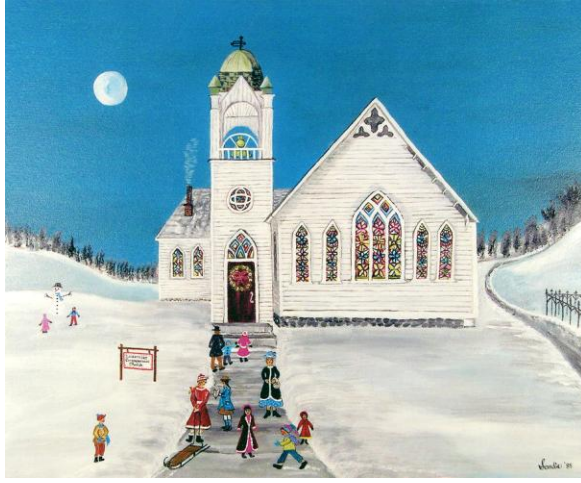


# The Kresge Kourier January 2021



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**As We Journey Together - Thoughts from Pastor Ed's Heart..... December 30, 2020**

You may remember from many previous articles this formula for Abundant Life in the Body of Christ:

**Formula for Life, life abundant in the Body of Christ - 25+2+1=28**

**25 Matthew 25:34-36, 40b,** "Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' .... 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'"

**+2 Acts 2:41-47,** "So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved."

**+1 Acts 1:8,** "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

**=28 Matthew 28:16-20,** "Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age'."

We find a framework for ministry within this formula and these texts. It is up to us to prayerfully discern the specifics and particulars for ourselves as individuals and for us as a congregation. Who specifically are we to feed, clothe, house, nurse, and visit? How and with whom will we the tasks we read in Acts 2:41-47? Are we full of the Holy Spirit? Do we spend time asking for, waiting to receive and allowing God to anoint us? Is there evidence of God's power in our missions and ministries? How will we study God's Word and learn about the United Methodist Church? We can begin to answer those questions by responding to the Commitment Letter sent out a few weeks ago.

Over the last year or so I've read articles and heard conversations that mention High Expectation Congregations have high expectations on their members/membership. The start point for member expectations in the United Methodist Church are found in paragraphs 217 - 221:

**217. When persons unite as professing members with a local United Methodist church, they profess their faith in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; in Jesus Christ his only son; and in the Holy Spirit. Thus they make known their desire to live as disciples of Jesus Christ. They covenant together with God and with the members of the local church to keep the vows which are part of the order of confirmation and reception into the church:**

1. To renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of the world, and repent of their sin;
2. To accept the freedom and power God gives to them to resist evil, injustice, and oppression;
3. To Confess Jesus Christ as Savior, put their whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as their Lord;
4. To remain faithful members of Christ's holy church and serve as Christ's representatives in the world;
5. To be loyal to Christ through The United Methodist Church and do all in their power to strengthen its ministries;
6. To Faithfully participate in its ministries by their prayers, their presence, their gifts, their service, and their witness;
7. To receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

**218. Growth in Faithful Discipleship - Faithful membership in the local church is essential for personal growth and for developing a deeper commitment to the will and grace of God. As members involve themselves in private and public prayer, worship, the sacraments, study, Christian action, systematic giving, and holy discipline, they grow in their appreciation of Christ, understanding of God at work in history and the natural order, and an understanding of themselves.**

**219. Mutual Responsibility - Faithful discipleship includes the obligation to participate in the corporate life of the congregation with fellow members of the body of Christ. A member is bound in sacred covenant to shoulder the burdens, share the risks, and celebrate the joys of fellow members. A Christian is called to speak the truth in love, always ready to confront conflict in the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation.**

**220. The Call to Ministry of All the Baptized - All members of Christ's universal church are called to share in the ministry which is committed to the whole church of Jesus Christ. Therefore, each member of The United Methodist Church is to be a servant of Christ on mission in the local and worldwide community. This servanthood is performed in family life, daily work, recreation and social activities, responsible citizenship, the stewardship of property and accumulated resources, the**

issues of corporate life, and all attitudes towards other persons. Participation in disciplined groups such as covenant discipleship groups or class meetings is an expected part of personal mission involvement. Each member is called upon to be a witness for Christ in the world, a light and leaven in society, and reconciler in a culture of conflict. Each member is to identify with the agony and suffering of the world and to radiate and exemplify the Christ of hope. The standards of attitude and conduct set forth in the Social Principles (Part V) shall be considered as an essential resource for guiding each member of the Church in being a Servant of Christ on mission.

**221. Accountability -**

1. All members are to be held accountable for faithfulness to their covenant.
2. If a baptized member neglects faithfulness and discipline in terms of the baptismal covenant, every means of encouraging that member to return and of nurturing him or her to assume the vows of professing membership should be made.
3. If a professing member should be accused of violating the covenant and failing to keep the vows as stated in 217, then it shall be the responsibility of the local church, working through its pastors and agencies, to minister to that member in compliance with the provisions of 228 in an effort to enable the member to faithfully perform the vows and covenant of membership.

Local Church membership comes with great responsibilities and few privileges. It is unfortunate when members forego those responsibilities swapping them for demands that things always be done their way on their time-table.

It is sad to me when someone dies and their obituary says they were a faithful, lifelong member of the \_\_\_\_\_ church, yet they haven't been a part of the life of that congregation in 40 years. It is one thing to be shut in or homebound and not be able to participate in person. It is another to claim membership but choose not to attend and participate – **To Faithfully participate in its ministries by their prayers, their presence, their gifts, their service, and their witness**

We do have many members who unable to attend do pray fervently and give generously. Some of those have died in the past year; their prayers and gifts are and will be greatly missed.

Going forward it is the hope and prayer of our Lay Leadership – The One Board – that we grow into the high expectations set forth in our denominational Book of Discipline. That we grow in discipleship as individuals and as a congregation. Not because there is a rule but in respond to God's love, mercy and grace. As disciples of Jesus Christ we Go, to make more disciples of Jesus Christ. That we fulfill and meet the high expectations, the responsibilities, we covenant to keep when we join a local congregation.

Going forward our One Board will endeavor to encourage each member to join with others in spiritual growth opportunities and to participate in the services and ministries of the Congregation and its organizations. Please prayerfully consider how you will get involved.

How will You respond to God's love, mercy, and grace in 2021 and beyond? How you will join with us as we live out the formula for Abundant Life in the Body of Christ.

In His grip, Ed





# January 2021

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
					1	2
					Genesis 1-3	Genesis 4-6
3 Worship @ 10:55 Social distancing Masks required  Genesis 7-9	4 Small Group 6:00  Genesis 10-12	5 Tues. Morn Prayer Group 10:30 am Small Group 11:30  Genesis 13-15	6  Genesis 16-18	7 Clothing Bank  Genesis 19-21	8  Genesis 22-24	9  Genesis 25-27
10 Worship @ 10:55 Social distancing Masks required  Genesis 28-30	11 Small Group 6:00  Genesis 31-33	12 Tues. Morn Prayer Group 10:30 am Small Group 11:30  Genesis 34-36	13  Genesis 37-39	14 Small Group 11:30  Genesis 40-42	15  Genesis 43-45	16  Genesis 46-48
17 Worship @ 10:55 Social distancing Masks required  Genesis 49-50 Exodus 1	18 Small Group 6:00  Exodus 2-4	19 Tues. Morn Prayer Group 10:30 am Small Group 11:30  Exodus 5-7	20  Exodus 8-10	21 Small Group 11:30  Exodus 11-13	22  Exodus 14-16	23  Exodus 17-19
24 Worship @ 10:55 Social distancing Masks required  Exodus 20-22	25 Small Group 6:00  Exodus 23-25	26 Tues. Morn Prayer Group 10:30 am Small Group 11:30  Exodus 26-28	27  Exodus 29-31	28 Small Group 11:30  Exodus 32-34	29  Exodus 35-37	30  Exodus 38-39
31 Worship @ 10:55 Social distancing Masks required Exodus 40						