



# The Beacon

Volume 58 Issue 3

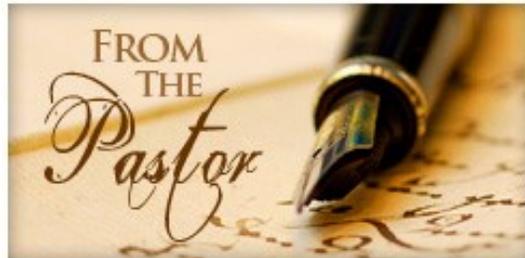
March 2021

**University United Methodist Church**  
Welcoming all to grow as disciples of Christ as we  
worship, learn, and serve in community.

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Web Site Address: [universityumctopeka.org](http://universityumctopeka.org) Like us at [jpotter@greatplainsumc.org](https://www.facebook.com/UUMC>Topeka</a><br/>Pastor Jeff's information: Email Address: <a href=) or phone 785-580-5468



Greetings in Christ,

Spring is upon us! By the time you receive the next church newsletter Spring will have officially arrived. Even as I write this article in mid-February, the temperature app on my phone says it is 72°! Compare that to about one week ago when the high temperature was -1°. Welcome to Kansas!

But also, welcome to life! Without a doubt, our lives can fluctuate wildly through highs and lows. Through sunshine and blizzards. We know this all too well. And in this season of Lent, this time of reflection and refocusing our gaze upon Jesus, we're quickly reminded that following Jesus has never meant we are exempt from the ups and downs. Indeed, our Lenten journey will guide us through betrayal, desertion, brutality, a cross, and a tomb before it leads us finally to the dazzling light of resurrection and eternal life.

But most importantly, following Jesus does lead us to resurrection and eternal life in all of their splendor and deep meanings. And Jesus tells us we get to see lasting glimpses and impressions of them now, not only on the other side of death (Luke 17:21). How about a sunny 72° day in the middle of a frozen February?!

As we continue to endure and persevere through this extended time of distance and isolation, let us keep ourselves focused on following Jesus and on the Easter promise on our not-so-distant horizon. I miss you all and look forward with great anticipation to the day we will come together again and proclaim "Alleluia!"

Grace and peace,  
Pastor Jeff

# worship

**Rend Your Hearts: Claiming the Promise Lenten Worship Series**

03.07.21 - *All These Words* - Exodus 20:1-7

03.14.21 - *Look Up and Live* - Numbers 21:4-9

03.21.21 - *Written on the Heart* - Jeremiah 31:31-34

03.28.21 - **Palm Sunday** - *The One Who Comes* - Mark 21:1-11



## **MISSIONS**

Warm winter-type foods (pop top cans of soup, canned spaghetti, etc.) are still needed for the Blessing Box. Continued thanks to all who contribute items and your time helping keep the box filled!



We are still partnering with Westminster Presbyterian Church (WPC) to provide grab-&-go lunches for neighborhood youth, ages 1-18, on Wednesdays from 11-Noon. Many thanks to Diana Whitney who has long been involved with this program, and is also helping to make about 50 sandwiches every other Monday at WPC for youth at Central Park Community Center for an evening meal.

"Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me." (Matt. 25:40)

## **UMW MUSINGS**

Maybe I haven't had the right idea the past year. I have seen it as a downer that has kept me from being active in too many ways. I have to think that I have missed something. I have spent too many days in a negative haze. My only saving grace is that there have been so many reasons for me to realize that God has been right there with me. God is my saving grace.

We are entering the Lenten season when it is up to each of us to enter into a closer relationship with God. I have never been big on giving up something for Lent but I would like to use my time more wisely. I am not a student of the Bible but would like to be. Therefore, I am going to make it my plan to spend some time each day during Lent to read the Bible in order to learn more about the life and times of Jesus Christ.

Never a day goes by that I don't think about going back to church as it was meant to be. We are moving in that direction, but there is still a danger that someone might be out and about while carrying the COVID germs. I know that we are moving toward that goal, but until it is safe to gather together and speak face to face, we must continue to be cautious about gathering in crowds. So, until enough people have been vaccinated and don't carry contagion, we must practice safety for everyone. If that means continuing to worship in the safety of our homes, then so be it.

Jo Miller  
UMW President

## **JUMP**

Justice ministry updates



### **Affordable Housing**

Before the pandemic, there were 7,000 families in Topeka struggling to pay rent or living in horrible conditions. Now, with the economy strained we are certain that number is much higher. We continue to press the Topeka City Council to put aside dedicated public revenue for the affordable housing trust fund. At the end of 2020, Topeka City Council agreed to move \$277,000 into the trust fund. We will continue pressing the council for dedicated revenue.

### **Transportation**

Topeka JUMP challenged JEDO to set aside \$100,000 for workforce transportation at the 2020 Nehemiah Action. In September of 2020, JEDO voted unanimously to set aside that \$100,000. This money will be used to match employers who want to establish a workforce transportation program for their employees. At the end of the year, there were no companies who had plans in place to do transportation. In the beginning of February, Target and Frito Lay signed contracts to participate in workforce transportation in 2021. We want at least three companies to be participating in these programs to give people better job options.

### **Mental Health/Addiction**

At the CPA in October 2020, hundreds of JUMP members like you gathered and voted to tackle mental health and addiction. The committee voted to narrow the problem area to substance abuse. We've learned that a major barrier to staying sober after treatment is a lack of structure and social support. Valeo has a reintegration program for people who are leaving treatment but are not ready to be back in society. However, there are only seven beds. We are looking into more programs that reduce the chance of relapsing for people in recovery.

### **Payday Lending**

In Kansas, a payday lender can charge up to 391% interest on a payday loan. We are partnering with Kansas for Payday Loan Reform to build a grassroots movement to make payday lending

## **FINANCE**

A whole 'boatload' of thanks to Thaine Hoffman and Bob Bearce. They got to the church at **1am Ash Wednesday morning** to answer the call that a pipe had burst in the boiler room of the church. They were met by several fire trucks and firemen. The phone system was also ruined, and many things need to be considered before repairs and/or replacement is done. You may reach Stacey by email ([univumc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:univumc@sbcglobal.net)), calls are also being forwarded to her phone during office hours. We are very thankful for the Buildings & Grounds team for their help with the cleanup. Thank you to Val Carter for exploring what our options are for repairing or replacing the phone system.

Please keep your pledges coming in faithfully as we do not yet know the extent of the damage. Be assured that we have all of our skilled people working on the situation and we will be good stewards with your funds to make lasting and updated repairs. Please be patient.

Blessings to each of you during this Lenten Season.

Karen Myers  
Finance Chair



## **BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS**

On Feb 16, the bitter cold caused the basement pipes to burst and water made its way into the elevator shaft and the neighboring class room. It also ruined the original telephone panel installed in 1963 located in the boiler room. What a mess! Thanks to Thaine Hoffman and Bob Bearce. They came in around 1am to tackle the cold mess. It took them several hours to clean up the water. This has currently left the church without phone service. We have been working on borrowed time with our phone system setup. This could be a great expense, which hasn't been included in our budget. Val Carter is exploring all options regarding phone repair/replacement.

## **ANAPRA**

UPDATE OF THE SUSANNA WESLEY SCHOOL IN ANAPRA, MEXICO.

The school is still meeting the needs of the children in Anapra, but these are trying times for them. They are still distance learning. This was a challenge as many of the parents did not have Wi-Fi or even a computer. Antonio distributed the computers from the school classroom and purchased additional computers as needed. But what to do with the Wi-Fi? He arranged with the parents that did have Wi-Fi to give out their passcode to students in nearby homes so they could all have access. Where this was not possible, some students go to a neighbor student's home each day for their on-line classes. Of course, they also have the same problems as our students in feeling isolated and missing the people contact and fun of going to actual school.

Of course that is only part of the problem. Most of the factories have closed down meaning that many parents have no income. Many of the parents and even a few teachers have had COVID-19. A few of the parents have died, leaving the students with one parent or as orphans. The pandemic has caused additional expenses for the school. Although tuition is minimal, many parents are not able to pay even that. Pastor Antonio makes allowance for this and does not turn any student away, but it means they need even more funding from churches like ours. Please pray for them and any financial help you can provide will be appreciated. If you can help, please mark "Anapra" on your contribution. Thanks so much for any help you can provide.

Thaine Hoffman



## UNITED METHODIST WOMEN



Thrift Sale 2021

It is that time of year again – Spring Thrift Sale at University United Methodist Church – Covid19 Style. We know many of you have been saving your gently used items for over a year and we want to be able to help relieve you of those items. Having said that, there will be a new protocol. We want to proceed as we did for the summer, allowing folks to bring their items to the church but with a couple caveats.

- We are going to need assistance from church folks so the workload may be spread among many rather than solely on a couple shoulders. This will require 2-3 folks be available at the church to meet consumers to pick up specific items.
- Items will be sold via Marketplace on Facebook. Items will be available for the public to pick up on Saturdays between 10:00 and noon at the church.
- **No clothing or books or magazines.** We have not figured out a safe way to handle these items at this point.
- **Please do not bring any items to the church without an appointment.**
- We will request people to bring items to the church in small groups. This will allow us to let the items sit for a couple days before we handle them to put into groups.
- Items to be sold remain the same, gently used furniture, kitchen items, toys, tools, suitcases, etc.
- If items need to be picked up during the work week, give the church a call (235-2331) to make arrangements.
- If there are large items like a dressers, tables, chairs to be sold, we are requesting pictures be taken by the owner or one of the chairpersons. We will then advertise the item and either plan for the potential item to be picked up at the home or we can make arrangements to bring the item(s) to the church.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



- Depending on how many people respond to providing thrift – Beginning March 1, we will take in as much thrift as we feel comfortable in organizing. We will advertise these items and sell through the month of April. Then begin again in May. We will try to do this throughout the summer until September and re-evaluate.
- Please call the church to make arrangements to drop off items or to make needed arrangements.

The date to start selling the thrift has not been determined. Much will depend on how many assistants sign up to support us in the endeavor. It will only require a couple of hours on a designated Saturday between 10-noon. Please prayerfully consider joining us in the Altered 2021 Spring Thrift Sale.

If you do not have any thrift for the sale (or even if you do), monetary donations are greatly appreciated so we may continue to support the missions of the UUMW.

#### Altered Thrift Sale Rules

1. Gather your gently used thrift.
2. Call the church (235-2331) to be sure we have room for more thrift.
3. Schedule a time to drop your thrift at the church.
4. If needed, schedule assistance with pick-up and delivery.

#### Thrift Sale Coordinators

Linda Benton  
Carol Hoffman  
Linda Reece  
Dar Smith  
Diana Whitney  
Mary Winans

## **DOORSTEP**

Thank you to everyone who donated soup and crackers during our **Souper Bowl Sunday** collection! A can of soup can be a meal or two, and your generous donations helped stock our pantry, and provide meals for your neighbors in need! We did not set a goal this year with the pandemic and most of our congregations not meeting in person. Last year 5,483 pounds of food were donated! So far by mid-February we had over 4,600 pounds donated. With the cold weather surge there is still more food to come in, which will up that total.

We know these past 11 months have been challenging for everyone in various ways, and we appreciate all of the support Doorstep has continued to receive! We feel very blessed to have the support that we do in the Topeka community. Thank you!

Last year, we were lucky to get our Operation Soup Line in a few weeks before the pandemic began. However, this year we are not so fortunate! We did ask our regular sponsors to still support Doorstep and our "un-event" so that we would not lose all of the funds we rely on from the event.

We want to thank **Stormont Vail Health, FHLBank, Security Benefit, Kansas Gas Service, BlueCrossBlueShield of Kansas, CoreFirst Bank & Trust, and Capitol Federal Foundation** for their continuing support for our neighbors in need.

Mark your calendars for Doorstep's **4th Annual Neighbors Helping Neighbors Walk/5K Fun Run** at Lake Shawnee. The big day is **Sunday, October 3rd at 2pm!** Come out and support Doorstep, and get some exercise at the same time! We made over \$7,000 last year, and have a goal of \$10,000 for our fourth year!



**DOORSTEP**  
Neighbors Helping Neighbors

## **CHURCH FAMILY**

### **Look who has done it again!**

As part of the MLK Living the Dream competition, Board Vice President Rev. John Williams presented the Community Action Award to Kelm Lear, one of the Topeka High School winners. Congratulations! Your church family couldn't be prouder of you. What a great example you are to other youth.



## **FELLOWSHIP AND FAITH**

Fellowship and Faith is in dire need: Adrienne, the administrator has recovered from her third surgery and she and the other staff at F&F are back at work! Her car finally died during this awful freeze so they are needing a volunteer truck and driver or two to help them pick up the Walmart donations 3 times a week. Anyone interested in volunteering should call the office at 354-7262. They are also in need of gently used blankets and Ramen noodles. Please prayerfully consider assisting during this time.

Mary Peters



**TO OUR MEMBERS & FRIENDS WITH SPECIAL CONCERNS:**

Jo Miller's son - John, Pam Campbell, Lisa Eiben, Jane Noble, Pam Land, Norma Pike, Michael Springer, Steve & Jan Kendall, Ed Querbach, Dave Schaffer, Gary Weekly, Jo Miller's Sister, Kathy England, Evie Unkefer's granddaughter-Ettie, Marlys Aune, Richard Brown, Debra Hayes & Family. Our Police Officers: Randy Bailey and Wendi Winans and our devoted caretakers, the essential/front line people who face COVID-19 daily, our enemies, peace for our world and prayers for our country.

**Our congregation members in the Retirement Centers:** Gayle Dick, Joanne Armstrong (Plaza West); Peggy Harrison, Jerry Hinton, Sue Holm & Dave Wexler, Marie Culver and Maxine McDaniel (Brewster Place); Ann Fredrickson (Lexington) and Ardith Granger (Aldersgate). And for all nursing homes themselves, all the essential people watching over all the people.

**SPECIAL PRAYERS FOR THOSE STILL SUFFERING IN TEXAS.**

**TO THESE DISTRICT CHURCHES:**

Sabetha	Seneca-Burn- Oneida	Shawnee Heights	Silver Lake
Doug Hasty Rick Smith	Willy Banza Mavis Johnson Gary Lortscher Mary Jane Schmelzle	Barb Clinger Bob Resnik	Alexander Rossow Julie Falk



Prayer Requests

***Please contact the UUMC office if you know of someone who should be included or removed from our prayer list.***

If you would like to be notified by e-mail when there are new prayer requests, such as church members in the hospital, surgeries, births, deaths, etc., or if you have a prayer request you would like others to know about, contact Mary Winans at [mewinans1950@gmail.com](mailto:mewinans1950@gmail.com) or phone 785-224-4155 and leave a message. If you do not have email and would like to be notified by phone, please call the office at 235-2331.

**March Birthdays**

- 1 Peggy Harrison
- 11 Linda Thomas
- 12 Kyle Lear
- 14 Mary Peters
- 14 Kathy Stover
- 16 Steve Hearrell
- 18 Melanie Wambsganss
- 18 Brock Rogers
- 20 Tammy Call
- 23 Bev Raney
- 24 Stacey Cooper
- 30 Karen Myers
- 31 Mary Henderson

**Milestone Birthdays**

- 1 Peggy Harrison 98
- 14 Kathy Stover 65
- 31 Mary Henderson 97

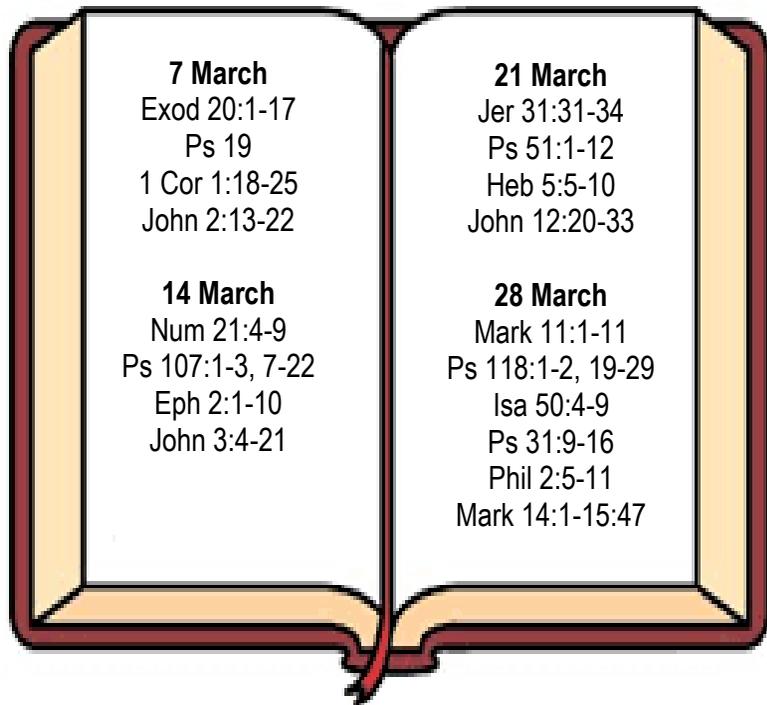


**March Anniversaries**

- 20 Bob & Mary Ann Bearce 45
- 28 George & Val Carter 51



If you know of a birthday or anniversary that has been omitted or is not correct on this list, please call the office and let us know.



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**The Beacon** is published  
monthly for the members  
and friends of University  
United Methodist Church.

**\* SUNDAY SCHEDULE \***  
9:15 a.m. Worship Service  
VIA Facebook  
You can also view on YouTube  
Links found on our website listed on  
the front page.

