



Orchard Park United Methodist Church

WEEKLY

NEWSFLASH

The United Methodist Church is making a difference. The impact of 12.5 million United Methodists in 136 countries is being felt around the world. While extending help and serving abroad for the sake of the Great Commission is a real and important thing, so is loving our neighbor at home. We are called to both.

In the 1800s, there was a British missionary named Charles T. Studd. C. T. Studd spoke these words:

"The light that shines farthest shines brightest nearest home."

Human Relations Day is a powerful avenue to extend help and service to our local communities. It is about getting out of our comfortable social circles and offering love and care to those who need help in our neighborhoods and cities. It's about walking with those who feel like everything in life is stacked against them.

Think about how Jesus walked with those in the margins.

- In Mark, Jesus eats with a tax collector.
- In Luke, Jesus heals a woman from 12 years of hemorrhaging and calls her daughter.

Read these words in Luke: *"But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."*

**This is the spirit of Human Relations Day; helping those on the margins and offering a message of hope.** Let's continue the ministry of Jesus with a united front through the Human Relations Day Special Sunday. Together as a church, we participate in helping our communities and being a bright light at home.

Giving on Human Relations Day nurtures at-risk youth, strengthens communities' self-improvement efforts, and advocates for the oppressed. Let's become comfortable with being outside our social circles than we are within them. Let's be more like Jesus, together, on Human Relations Day.

Lord, open our eyes so we can see our abundance of resources, and to share with those in need.

Luke 3:11

Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors  
The people of The United Methodist Church

www.umcgviv.org/HRD

## Prayer Requests

- PRAISE THE LORD! Baby Vivian, great granddaughter to Jane Varney, was born on January 8. Mom, Dad, and baby are doing well. This is Jane's eighth great grandchild!
- Pray for Rose Budnick and family as they mourn the passing of Lou Budnick.
- Pray for *Lurly Hunsberger*, who is having memory troubles.
- Pray for continued healing for Beth Stuart's friend *Tony*.
- Pray for the families that we bless through our AOK program.
- Pray for people people in our community, as the COVID-19 pandemic affects all of us in different ways.

Have a prayer request you'd like to share? Has God answered your prayer? Email [opumc@verizon.net](mailto:opumc@verizon.net) or call Pastor Jen at 603-4470. We will include your prayer request or praise report in next week's NewsFlash.

*Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.*

James 5:16



Louis E. Budnick Jr.  
January 8, 1928-  
January 6, 2021

A celebration of life will  
be held at a later date.  
Condolences can be  
sent to  
Rose Budnick  
510 Reserve Rd.  
West Seneca, NY  
14224



## Upcoming Events

January 16 @ 10 AM: **NF UMW Book**

**Discussion** (Zoom)

January 17: **Human Relations Day**

January 24 @ 1 PM: introductory **FLITs**  
**meeting** (Zoom)

## January Birthdays

Diane Smith (1/7)

Art Cooper (1/13)

Peter Slotman (1/18)

Dan Liggett (1/22)

Thank you to this month's  
St. Pauly's Clothing Shed  
volunteers!

Dan Liggett (1/3)

Mike Waters (1/10)

George Slocum (1/17)

Linda Carroll (1/24)

Rich Spinelli (1/31)

Christians can have good intentions all day long, but intentions without precise aim at exactly the one we are trying to be like, Jesus, will always lead to unintended consequences. God has been gracious to all, and being compelled by that grace, we believe that following Jesus is the single greatest opportunity of our lifetime!

**We are starting the Red Letter Challenge on February 17**, but how does it work? What's this going to look like? The first five days will serve as an introduction. You'll learn a bit more about each of the five major principles from Jesus. From there, on each of the following 35 days, you will see a quote directly from the mouth of Jesus. The quotation will be followed by a devotion, one or more companion Bible readings, and a Challenge of how you might live out those specific words on that day. Some will be very specific and others will be very broad. Each day you will be encouraged to complete the Challenge.



**The Sewing Circle** has not been meeting as a group, but it has been a good time to distribute those items already sewn. As announced in December, 6 quilts were given to AOK families. In January, 6 quilts and food gift cards, along with 3 bags of food from OPUMC food shelf delivered to the Southtown Family Justice Center in OP. Buffalo City Mission received 17 pillowcases and 5 blankets went to Cornerstone Manor.



*Orchard Park United Methodist Church is a Reconciling Congregation.*

We affirm the sacred worth of all people and strive to practice Christ's example of unconditional love without exclusion. All are welcome to participate fully in the life and ministries of this congregation. Whatever your race, ethnicity, economic situation, background or belief, age or condition of ableness, whether single or partnered, you are God's beloved and are welcome here. God calls us to acts of love, grace, and advocacy to promote healing and reconciliation. We welcome and affirm our LGBTQIA+ brothers, sisters and siblings, sons, daughters and children, people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

We desire to follow God's vision to be a place without barriers, a sanctuary for all.

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January 6, 2021

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.  
He was with God in the beginning.  
Through him all things were made; without him, nothing was made that has been made.  
In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.  
The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.  
-John 1:1-5*

The light of Epiphany rose with the sun this morning as people of faith celebrated the culmination of Christmastide. That light was met with darkness as a mob pushed past police and broke into the U.S. Capitol while senators and members of Congress debated the certification of the presidential election. As the scene unfolded, most could not comprehend that this insurrection is taking place in the United States of America.

It is tempting to call for peace, for order and unity. And while we do need to reclaim the peace, we can only do so while speaking the truth of today's horror. It is time to name our reality, to name the deep divisions and hatred being played out in the Senate chamber and throughout the People's House. It is another watershed moment; a time to raise our voices to heaven and take stock of who we, as Americans, have become.

This alarming occupation and violence at the U.S. Capitol are symptomatic of the vitriol and poison that now infects our culture. It disheartens. The rioters who climbed the steps and walls of the Capitol sought to overturn the law, a fair election, and justice, and claimed their motivation was to defend God and their freedoms. They waved banners emblazoned with the words, "Jesus Saves," but this is not what Emmanuel came to earth to embody. This is a perversion of the Gospel. This should drive all of us to our knees.

Since March, I have shared messages with you as we live through this liminal time of two pandemics. Today, the chasm of this in-between time grows deeper. As a church, we are called to profound and fervent prayer - prayer that will shake foundations and usher in a new age; prayer that will transform hearts and a nation; prayer that reminds us of what Christ has called us to be beyond partisan divides. I call on each of you to transcend fear and to resist the temptation to seek the reassurance of easy answers. Followers of Jesus Christ must prophetically embody, in word and deed, the precepts, practices and promises of the Gospel message. It is a message of love, but a love that speaks truth and stands against immorality.

As a church, as Christians, we must condemn all the forces that led to the unprecedented insurrection today - forces of hate, of white supremacy, of distorted self-interest, and abuse of power.

Lawmakers and national leaders are all invoking the name of God, asking that God bless America. That is my prayer as well. But, we must be instruments of that blessing, humbling ourselves to truly claim what Abraham Lincoln called, "the better angels of our nature," seeking to discern how to rebuild our nation and nurture the restoration that God demands. In this light, we continue to pray for and support the peaceful transfer of power that is a hallmark of the democratic process.

In my study, the word HOPE sits on my shelf. It's a word I claim. It is a primary foundation of our faith. I will not allow the actions of an angry mob to steal that hope for our nation, for our church, for our future. Our hope, if it is to be manifest, must be grounded in courage, in justice, in good order, and in fervent love. Our hope proclaims that our light shines in the darkness, and the darkness shall not overcome it - must not overcome it.

Blessings and peace,  
Bishop LaTrelle Easterling  
Baltimore-Washington Conference  
The United Methodist Church