



St. Paul's United Methodist Church  
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## April/May Newsletter

### A Note from Pastor Melodye...

As I type this from my dining room table, I observe two of my cats basking in the sunshine in front of the glass doors leading out to the parsonage deck. Happy, content, not a care in the world. They have a safe place to live, food, water and clean litter – until they dirty it! And then I clean it and again – all is right in Cat World!

The last few weeks for most of us have probably not been that carefree! Staying at home in this season of Covid-19 continues to be an interesting blend of dislocation and anxiety mixed with the blessing of unstructured time. None of us expected us for our lives to change this quickly.

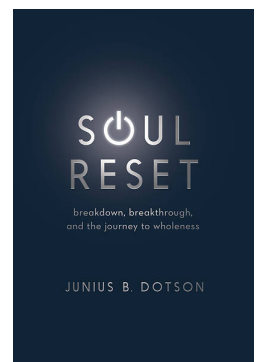
I have been reading a challenging book by Rev. Junius Dotson called “Soul Reset.” As the information states on the Cokesbury website:

*“Everything was going fine . . . until it wasn't. For Reverend Junius B. Dotson it took an actual breakdown during a funeral for him to realize he needed a reset. As he recalls his own journey through grief, depression, burnout, and emotional breakdown, Dotson is passionate about calling for a Soul Reset for pastors, church leaders, and all disciples of Jesus Christ.”*

We rely so much on our own strength and abilities to get through life. For me, this time of Social Distancing is helping me realize anew that we all need a balance of work, rest, play, worship, exercise, and eating well—spiritual practices that keep our souls hydrated and healthy as we do the work of the church in the world.

Starting on May 10, I would like us as a congregation to concentrate on resetting our own souls using “Soul Reset” as our focus.

- Beginning on Sunday, May 10, our next six weeks of worship will emphasize the different themes of this book, giving us spiritual practices and practical guides to “reset” ourselves during and after this difficult time of pandemic.
- I will be offering studies of this book in two ways:
  - Through Zoom Meeting, an online process for people to meet together. Several of us have been using Zoom to finish up our Lenten study, and it's been a positive experience! Zoom can be used with your phone OR your computer.
  - If the “stay home” directives are lifted, we can also meet in person to study this book together.
- I will also be offering short daily devotional based on Soul Reset on Facebook and YouTube using this book.



If you would like to order “Soul Reset”, the cost is \$15.00. The church will order them from Cokesbury. Please email the church or call me personally (517-250-1879) for us to order them for you. You can pick them up at the church after May 4<sup>th</sup> on Tuesdays during the God's Works meals.

Our situation with the “lockdown” is very fluid. We don't know when we will be gathering together again for physical worship. But God is with us in all of our life circumstances. God is faithful!

Blessings, Pastor Melodye

**General Conference rescheduled for 2021:** The world-wide meeting of the United Methodist Church that was scheduled to take place in early May, 2020 in Minneapolis, Minnesota has been canceled. General Conference organizers are exploring potential new dates in 2021 for The United Methodist Church's top legislative assembly after the coronavirus pandemic forced postponement. The Commission on the General Conference determined that multiple factors meant it would not be feasible to reschedule the international 10-day gathering this year. "These issues include the undetermined length of the pandemic, uncertainty around travel bans in different areas of the world, delays in processing visas due to government and business closures and other questions," Kim Simpson, commission chair, said in a statement. At this point, the commission does not have specific dates to announce.



**Michigan Annual Conference postponed:** The original plan was for the Michigan Annual Conference to meet in Traverse City from May 28 – May 31. The Commission on the Annual Conference Session has announced a postponement of Annual Conference due to COVID-19 concerns. The Commission continues to monitor CDC and government guidelines. A new plan will be announced by May 1.



**Easter Flowers:** Although we weren't able to order the lilies and tulips we usually do for Easter Sunday, many people filled out order forms for them. We've listed those people and the names of their loved ones the flowers were requested in honor or memory of below:

Colleen and Rachel Baker and Travis Smith, In memory of Lynn Baker

Terry and Terri Berry, In memory of Russell, Mabel and William Gross

Al and Amy Brooks, In memory of Stanley Landis

Lisa Byers, In honor of the kind Christians of St. Paul's

Joyce Collins, In memory of Kyle Collins

Kyle and Alisha Cooley Family, In memory of Richard and Patricia Cooley

Heatherly, Farmer and Fleming Families, In memory of George and Catherine Heatherly,  
Dennis Farmer and Ralph Fleming

Norma and Bill Huntley, In memory of Vicki Collins

Ken and Sally Jaynes, In memory of our parents and grandparents,  
and In honor of our children and our St. Paul's Family

George and Jannet Low, In memory of Faith Hunter, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Gustafson Sr.,  
Robert Gustafson, Robert Low, Gertrude Sandstorm and Ernestine Justice,  
and In honor of Lisa Byers

Paula Massengill, In memory of husband, parents and baby boy

Jack and Fran Rayce, In memory of Peter Massa and Thomas Rayce

John and Karen Salisbury, In honor of Loved Ones

Marie, Abigail and Daniel Snow, In memory of John Snow, Bill and Bettie Snow  
and Dale and Celia Miller

Jerry, Shirley and Bryan Spence, For Loved Ones

Paul and Sue Stanifer, Judie Wiseman and grandchildren, In memory of Troy and Gladys Clawson



**A Heartfelt Thank You:** Dear friends and St. Paul's UM Church Family, We simply can't thank you enough for all the beautiful cards you have so lovingly sent to Brad, as well as all the prayers, while he has been going through the tests, the waiting, the surgery and now the recovery period of his bout with Medullary Thyroid Cancer. Each card, note and prayer have meant so much! Also, we want to thank the Living in the Word Sunday School Class for their very thoughtful care package that was delivered by Adel Ivey. Wonderful goodies inside - pudding cups, applesauce cups, jello cups, Ensure, Lifesavers, coupons for free Frostys from Wendy's, and even a crossword puzzle book! Many thanks to all you, our friends, and God bless you! God loves you and so do we, Brad and Debbie Lewis.

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**Blood Drive:** St. Paul's is hosting a blood drive **Thursday, May 14, 2020 from 12:30p.m. - 6:00p.m.** To schedule an appointment, please call 1-800-RED-CROSS or visit [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) and enter sponsor code: STPAULMONROE. **Walk ins are not allowed at most locations at this time.** There will be no volunteers from St. Paul's needed for this blood drive. All workers will be trained Red Cross members who will follow CDC guidelines on sterilization and social distancing.

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### **Stewardship: Faith Turns the Key and Unlocks the Door**

The vast majority of people like to excel at something. Most of us like to do what we do in a manner that is truly first-class. Whether we are involved in one of the trades, or whether we are working in a profession, we like to excel in what we do. Similarly, in the Christian life, most of us like to demonstrate our love for the Lord in ways that will reflect properly on him and that will bring honor to him. As the Lord's servants, we take great care that our Christian service is of such quality that what we do for his sake is first-class. Thus, whether we sing a solo in a worship service at church, prepare a meal for someone who is a shut-in, or teach a Bible class, we strive to do what we do for God in the very best way possible. The Apostle Paul indicates we are also to excel in the grace of giving. "Now as you excel in everything — in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you — so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking" (2 Cor. 8:7). In other words, just as we might seek to excel in other ways which demonstrate our Christian faith in action, we are also to excel in the grace of giving. In the context of the verse we just read, Paul commends the Macedonian Christians for giving as much as they were able and more. When we follow their example, we experience "grace giving" in action, not only giving as we are able, but also, giving beyond our ability. This is possible only as we demonstrate the fruit of the Christian life by the power of the Holy Spirit within us. As we step out by faith (which is one of the signs of a Spirit-controlled life), we are able to give in ways which might seem improbable or impossible at first. The Spirit of God thereby motivates us and compels us to excel in the grace of giving! One anonymous writer penned these powerful words: "God has a storehouse of blessings. Prayer is the key to that storehouse. But faith both turns the key and unlocks the door." Say, are you excelling in the grace of giving? If not, why not take God at his Word — by faith — and begin today?

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**Office Hours:** If you would like to stop by the church to drop off a donation or prayer request, there will be someone there **Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 9:00a.m. -12:00 noon.** The first set of doors off the parking lot will be open and a basket will be available for you to place your donation or request in. You can also call the office during that time to speak with a staff person.

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**Worship:** Remember to join us on **Sunday mornings at 9:00am** on our church **Facebook** page ([facebook.com/stpaulsumc/](https://facebook.com/stpaulsumc/)) for a Facebook Live video with Pastor Melodye from the parsonage. If you miss the 9:00am video, you can catch the video on our **Youtube** page (search for St. Paul's UMC Monroe MI) any time. You can also follow links to these pages on our church website: [www.stpaulsumcmonroe.org](http://www.stpaulsumcmonroe.org).

**Prayer Requests:** While we have been apart we have tried to continue to take prayer requests via email or the office answering machine. Staff members are in and out of the office checking messages, so if you would like to leave a message, please do. You can also reach Pastor Melodye at (517) 250-1879. Here are some of the requests and updates we've had the past few weeks:



- Pastor Melodye's mother is back to her nursing home. She was unable to have surgery, so her nursing care facility is working with her as they learn to take care of her brain bleeds and seizures.
- Mary Vergowven asked for prayers for her extended family for the death of cousin Dennis Steele in Texas and the death of her Aunt by marriage who passed away Saturday in Monroe. Her uncle has memory issues so please pray for him and his family.
- Brad Lewis continues to recover, although his voice is still gone. His vocal cord is paralyzed on one side and they are waiting for an appointment with a Vocal Cord specialist. He has another blood test later this month and then will see his surgeon for a follow-up appointment.
- Geri Pleuss requested prayers for her sister Mary Ann who has multiple cancer issues, but couldn't start chemo because her kidney function was too low. She had been hospitalized to try and correct the kidney issue.
- And please continue to pray for our doctors, nurses, all hospital employees, EMTs, postal workers, grocery store workers, and all those who are working every day to keep us safe and attempt to continue a sense of normalcy during this time.

**Ways to Give:** We are thankful for technology that allows us to continue to give even though we are in a circumstance we have never been in before. You can give your tithe and offering in many different ways:

- **Mail a check** to 201 S. Monroe St., Monroe, MI 48161.
- **Use the ACH form** to have funds electronically transferred once or twice a month directly from your checking or savings account.
- **Drop donations at the church** during the office hours listed above.
- We have established a **PayPal account** through the Michigan UMC Conference. There is a link on the St. Paul's website, or **scan the QR Code with your smart phone camera (just like you are going to take a picture of it) and an option to go to the PayPal site should pop right up.**



### Birthday List:

May 3 – Marilyn Tyner

May 4 – Donald Sampsel

May 5 – Kylie Jacobs,  
Chris Morr

May 7 – Joan DeMarco,  
Ron Ivey

May 8 – Dan Hartong

May 9 – Cheryl Brophy,  
Shirley Spence,  
Eleanor Vergowven

May 10 – Richard Lannen

May 11 – Amy Brooks

May 12 – Zach Everly

May 13 – Bryan Spence

May 16 – Yvonne Gnaedinger,  
Rebecca Hunter

May 17 – Maxine Clute

May 19 – Robin Morr

May 20 – Grady Burhart

May 22 – Matt Smith

May 23 – Kyle Himebauch

May 24 – Paula Massengill

May 28 – Don Helser

May 30 – Laura Burchette,  
Kyle Leask

May 31 – Amy Ackerman,  
Elizabeth Harrington

June 8 – Brian Geal,  
Carol Geal

June 12 – John Hile

June 13 – Elsie Burhart

June 15 – Dale Sturm

June 18 – Becky Hutchins

June 19 – Michael Brophy

June 20 – Susan Myers

June 21 – Lucas Roa-Garcia,  
JoAnna Jacobs

June 22 – Adrienne Helser,  
Lisa Byers

June 23 – Carolyn Dutton

June 24 – Orion Tyner

June 26 – Wyatt Kittle,  
Tayia Himebauch

June 28 – Ken Vergowven

June 29 – Jerry Sampsel

June 30 – Kelly Skarbek





**2020 UMW Reading Program:** Since many of us are now home more than we used to be, we've listed the complete 2020 reading list below.

You can also find the list online at

[www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/readingprogram](http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/readingprogram).

If you order books through Amazon, please remember to visit [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com), Amazon's charitable giving page, and select "United Methodist Women" as your charitable organization. For all eligible purchases made on [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com), Amazon will donate 0.5% to United Methodist Women.

### Education For Mission

"The Pilgrim Journey: A History Of Pilgrimage In The Western World" James Harpur  
[Bluebridge (2016)]

"When Others Shuddered: Eight Women Who Refused To Give Up" Jamie Janosz  
[Moody Publishers (2014)]

**\*\*Bonus Book\*\***

"What About Our Money? A Faith Response" Susan Taylor [United Methodist Women (2018)]  
To Purchase, Go To: [unitedmethodistwomen.org /store](http://unitedmethodistwomen.org/store)

### Leadership Development

"Teaching Outside The Box: Five Approaches To Opening The Bible With Youth" Andrew Zirschky  
[Abingdon Press (2017)]

"Vital Voices: The Power Of Women Leading Change Around The World" Alyse Nelson  
[Jossey-Bass (2012)]

"Which Way Lord? Exploring Your Life's Purpose In The Journeys Of Paul" Rob Fuquay  
[Upper Room Books (2017)]

### Nurturing For Community

"#RUHooked: Teens & Social Media: For Teens And The People Who Care About Them"  
Jonathan Smith [Tristan Publishing (2017)]

"The Aging Of Aquarius: Igniting Passion And Purpose As An Elder" Helen Wilkes  
[New Society Publishers (2018)]

"The End Of The Island: Finding Life In The Movements Of Human Suffering, Pain, And Loss"  
Jeffrey C. Tucker [Wipf And Stock Publishers (2016)]

"Glory Happening: Finding The Divine In Everyday Places" Kaitlin B. Curtice [Paraclete Press (2017)]

"Heartbeat Of A Mother: Encouragement For The Lifelong Journey" Jane Rubietta  
[Wesleyan Publishing House (2016)]

"How The Woman At The Well Became The Well Woman" Donna Rhodes  
[Amazon Digital Services (2016)]

"The Life And Ministry Of Mary Webster" Anne Mathews-Younes [E. Stanley Jones Foundation (2017)]

"Owen And Eleanor Move In" H.M. Bouwman And Charlie Alder, Illustrator  
[Sparkhouse Family Publishing (2018)] **Suitable For Children**

"Tilly And The Crazy Eights" Monique Gray Smith [Second Story Press (2018)] **Suitable For Children**

"Who Is My Neighbor?" Amy-Jill Levine, Sandy Eisenberg Sasso And Denise Turu, Illustrator  
[Flyaway Books (2019)] **Suitable For Children**

**\*\*Bonus Book\*\***

"Women United For Change: 150 Years In Mission" Ellen Blue [United Methodist Women (2019)]  
To Purchase, Go To: [unitedmethodistwomen.org /store](http://unitedmethodistwomen.org/store)

## Social Action

- “A Cage Without Bars” Anne Dublin [Second Story Press (2018)] **Suitable For Youth**
- “The Fig Tree Revolution: Unleashing Local Churches Into The Mission Of Justice” Bill Mefford [Cascade Books (2017)]
- “Immigration And Justice For Our Neighbors” Jennifer Clark And Miriam Downey, Editors [Celery City Books (2017)]
- “Loaded: A Disarming History Of The Second Amendment” Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz [City Lights Books (2018)]
- “Holding Up Your Corner: Talking About Race In Your Community” F. Willis Johnson [Abingdon Press (2017)]
- “Midnight Teacher: Lilly Ann Granderson And Her Secret School” Janet Halfmann And London Ladd, Illustrator [Lee & Low Books (2018)] **Suitable For Children**
- “Six By Ten: Stories From Solitary” Taylor Pendergrass And Mateo Koke, Editors [Haymarket Books (2018)]
- “Storming The Wall: Climate Change, Migration And Homeland Security” Todd Miller [City Lights Books (2017)]
- “They Will Inherit The Earth: Peace And Nonviolence In A Time Of Climate Change” John Dear [Orbis Books (2018)]
- “The Water Walker” Joanne Robertson [Second Story Press (2017)] **Suitable For Children**
- “We Kiss Them With Rain” Futhi Ntshingila [Catalyst Press (2018)] **Suitable For Youth**
- “What Comes With The Dust” Gharbi M. Mustafa [Arcade Publishing (2018)]
- “Where Will I Live?” Rosemary Mccarney [Second Story Press (2017)] **Suitable For Children**
- “Who Lynched Willie Earle? Preaching To Confront Racism” William H. Willimon [Abingdon Press (2017)]
- \*\*Bonus Book\*\***
- “So You Want To Talk About Race” Ijeoma Oluo [Seal Press (2018)]

## Spiritual Growth

- “40 Days With Wesley” Rueben P. Job [Abingdon Press (2017)]
- “Easter Stories: Classic Tales For The Holy Season” C.S. Lewis, Leo Tolstoy, Selma Lagerlöf, Oscar Wilde And Others [Plough Publishing House (2015)]
- “God Unbound: Wisdom From Galatians For The Anxious Church” Elaine A. Heath [Upper Room Books (2016)]
- “If I Should Die Before I Live: Meditations For Seniors” Richard Renwick Smyth [Logos Books (2017)]
- “The Magnificent Story: Uncovering A Gospel Of Beauty, Goodness And Truth” James Bryan Smith [Ivp Books (2017)]
- “Raising World Changers In A Changing World: How One Family Discovered The Beauty Of Sacrifice And The Joy Of Giving” Kristen Welch [Baker Books (2018)]
- “Resist And Persist: Faith And The Fight For Equality” Erin Wathen [Westminster John Knox Press (2018)]
- “The Watcher” Nikki Grimes And Bryan Collier, Illustrator [Eerdmans Books For Young Readers (2017)] **Suitable For Children**
- “We Pray With Her: Encouragement For All Women Who Lead” Emily Peck-Mcclain, Danyelle Trexler, Jen Tyler, J. Paige Boyer And Shannon Sullivan [Abingdon Press (2018)]
- “Working Class Rage: A Field Guide To White Anger And Pain” Tex Sample [Abingdon Press (2018)]
- “Writings Of John Wesley” Keith Beasley-Topliff, Editor [Upper Room Books (2017)]
- \*\*Bonus Book\*\***
- “Practicing Resurrection: The Gospel Of Mark And Radical Discipleship” Janet Wolf [United Methodist Women (2019)] To Purchase, Go To: [unitedmethodistwomen.org /store](http://unitedmethodistwomen.org/store)