



Messenger Newsletter

*First and Grand Ave
United Methodist Churches*

October 2019

A Master Plan

by Pastor Tom Buratovich

There is something satisfying about learning the inter-workings of something, some organization, some system, or elegant piece of machinery.

The church sometimes presents us with systems that feel like there are many moving parts sometimes. From a distance, it is exciting to see all that is going on. Up close the unprepared soul can easily feel overwhelmed.

One such system is called the EM 360 which stands for “effective ministry 360° assessment.” Is an assessment that seeks to accurately define the complex mixture of effective pastoral leadership. It uses a combination of measuring tools to measure the pastor’s skills, abilities, and personal characteristics which are then applied to a wide range ministry and congregational leadership tasks.

Each church requires a unique mix of strengths, gifts and graces. The EM 360 provides a rich and detailed picture of perceptions from multiple angles.

Once we finish individual assessments and assemble the report, we assemble a formation team to reflect with the pastor on the feedback. No pastor is excellent at everything. No church requires a pastor to be good at everything.

The formation team seeks to put together a plan that leverages the pastor strengths and develops ways to support the pastor in areas that are weaker.

The process of the formation plan is very conversational, interactive, and relationally cultivating, stimulating, and growth minded.

The hope is to create a plan that his applicable in principle to both churches and can then be applied in each unique environment. There will be areas of further development for me, the pastor and for you, church. We are then able to foster a mutual collaborative support system and plan for growth.

Many of you were part of the paragraph 213 both Grand Ave and First Church went through. The resulting report was a wonderful reminder of our need to reach out to our community in ways that only each church can. We can now sharpen our tools even more as we dial into how we can do that and support one another to mutually strengthen each of our areas of passion, discipleship, and evangelism.

This gives us a master plan which is actually a plan from the Master. It is a plan bathed in prayer, sought through deep reflection and discernment, and formulated with the utmost care and collaboration. It is my hope you will joyfully embrace it as a master plan from The Master.

As we look to the near future, we have so many opportunities to reach our community with the love

of Jesus. First Church continues to reach out to families of young children through their once a month gatherings. So far, we have fed our community ice cream, tacos, and made some “holy racket.”

Grand Ave continues to reach out to at-risk kids and parents with at-risk kids. They continue to reach into the school system and work with our law enforcement to find those people who need to find hope and are looking for a better way.

It is easy for us to feel discouraged as people age, get sick, and numbers seem to dwindle. It can feel frustrating. It is important to be reminded of how much the Bible talks about what is not seen as well as what is seen. It talks about putting our confidence, our hope, our sight into the world that is unseen. When we look at only what is seen we might only see frustration. When we look at what is unseen, we can see the great cloud of witnesses that cheer us on. If we only see pain, we may miss the peace that lies in the unseen. If we only see doubt and fear, we may miss confidence, boldness and endurance of what is unseen.

Maybe our church thrives in what is unseen. Maybe our lives should be partly lived out of what is unseen. Maybe the fuel for our perseverance, our sanctification, and the strength of our witness lies in the world that is unseen, and the world where Jesus reigns and all creation gives him praise.

That sounds like a master plan to me. That sounds like a plan from The Master!

Youth Ministry

We are in full swing in our outreach efforts as we enter the fall months of the year. *Teach One to Lead One* at Vine Street School and our *Primo* program here at Grand Ave are going well and we continue to push forward spreading the love of Jesus through our relationships with at-risk youth. Each moment we get to spend with our students is an opportunity to show them a different way of life that many of them have never experienced before. We strive to show them patience and grace as they struggle to grasp the new ways of living that we teach them. We also do our best to show our students mercy and forgiveness when they are having a difficult day and take it out on those around them. These efforts pave the way for our students to trust us and it also allows us the opportunity to spend more time with them, which is an amazing blessing.

To make our time with our students special and memorable, and to show them all that we are not simply serious adults, but that we really do like to have fun, we are going to put on our second annual "Trunk or Treat" event. Last year the "Trunk or Treat" event was a hit with our at-risk students and their families and resulted in getting visitors to our Sunday service. If you have not heard of this event before, what it entails is each person with a vehicle comes to Grand Ave and decorates their vehicle's trunk with fun and unique themes and games representing the harvest season. When students are released from our program and their families show up, they will each go trunk to trunk and gather candy and play games similar to trick or treating. It is so much fun

for all involved and presents us an opportunity to spend time with our students outside of the classroom and we get to meet their parents and siblings.

This year the "Trunk or Treat" event will take place on Wednesday, October 30, in the parking lot of Grand Ave. We will be asking for candy donations beginning the first Sunday of October so we will have plenty of treats to hand out to our students. More information regarding this event will be printed in upcoming bulletins with specific details.

Another event we are working on is our **VBS** that will take place in December. We had our first meeting in September and covered the basics of the program. **We will have a second meeting on Sunday, October 13** immediately following our worship service to dive deeper into the program, assign roles, and discuss new ways to make VBS a success.

I encourage you all to pray and ask God how He can use you

in these upcoming events. Please pray for each of us involved as we go out into our community and share the love of Jesus through our programs and our witness.

God is Love,
Ryan Ridenour

"Mega Sports Camp"

VBS is December 16-19

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Pray for the kids who will attend and who you will invite.

**Join the planning meeting
Sunday, October 13
immediately following
the Service.**



Wednesday, October 30

6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Grand Ave Parking Lot

Operation Christmas Child

The 2019 OCC season is underway!

We encourage you to prayerfully consider packing several shoeboxes or donating items for shoeboxes this year. Remember to not include: glass, liquids, heavily scented items, military figurines, gum, candy, food, hand sanitizer, or lotion, etc.

It is recommended that all packaging be removed before placing items in shoeboxes. We



will have a donation box at Grand Ave in the Sanctuary foyer for all OCC

donations. May God bless you as you pack a simple shoebox filled with gifts of love. At First Methodist, please talk with Melody about filling shoeboxes.

In His Service,
Donna Schmutz

Collection week is November 12-19.



From Disappointment to Joy

"He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end."

Ecclesiastes 3:11 NIV

One of the things I looked forward to with great anticipation on our recent trip to Switzerland was seeing the Matterhorn. At one point in my life, I even dreamt of climbing it, perhaps influenced by reading the book, *Heidi*, in the third grade. That heart-warming story captured my imagination, transporting me to the Alps along with Heidi, Grandfather and her friend, Peter.

The dream of climbing the mountain never materialized. However, it was still quite a thrill to actually find myself traveling through the Swiss Alps by rail. There was just one problem though. On the day our tour group took the train to the village of Zermatt just below the Matterhorn, storm clouds were piling up overhead. All of the towering peaks surrounding the town were hidden from view and snow was predicted for later in the afternoon.

Hoping that the sky would clear up enough to catch a glimpse of the jagged peak, our leaders took us on the underground funicular to a popular viewing site high up on the side of a mountain. During the winter, skiers would ride up to that spot and then take a gondola further up before the challenging downhill run.

By the time we arrived at the end of the funicular line, it was already snowing on the Matterhorn and clouds completely obscured it from view. There was a blue frame on the edge of a stone wall to show its location. Usually the peak would be in the center of the frame...but

not on that day. I stared through that frame for a long time, hoping and praying that the rugged peak would appear. How disappointing!

Our guide Paula said that she had been there several times during the summer and had gotten to see the mountain all but once. Evidently our timing was a bit too late in the season for a good viewing. Even though it was the beginning of September, the weather was getting cooler and fall in the Alps was already on the way.

While we were standing around, a group of young people arrived with rented bike-scooters that resembled bicycles minus pedals and seats. The daring riders were all helmeted, a good thing as some of them looked wobbly and unconfident at the top of the precarious downhill ride. Al and I wondered if some of them would end up walking their scooters down the mountain. Hopefully they all made it to the bottom in one piece!

On the way back to the hotel from Zermatt, a strong looking man with muscular arms sat across from us. He was a seasonal worker from Italy who was just finishing up his third summer there and was on his way home. His job involved laying down water lines above the city.

When I told him of our disappointing afternoon, he showed us several pictures of the Matterhorn. "I got to see it every day!" he said, adding that he was happy to work in such a beautiful place. It was well worth the long laborious hours

spent climbing up and down the mountain. At least we were able to see his pictures and share in his joy.

The best scenery was still ahead however, as we continued journeying by rail through the Alps. When we arrived at St. Moritz a few days later, the sky was a brilliant blue and the surrounding peaks were covered with fresh snow. Al and I had awesome views from every window in our hotel room. The beauty was breathtaking.

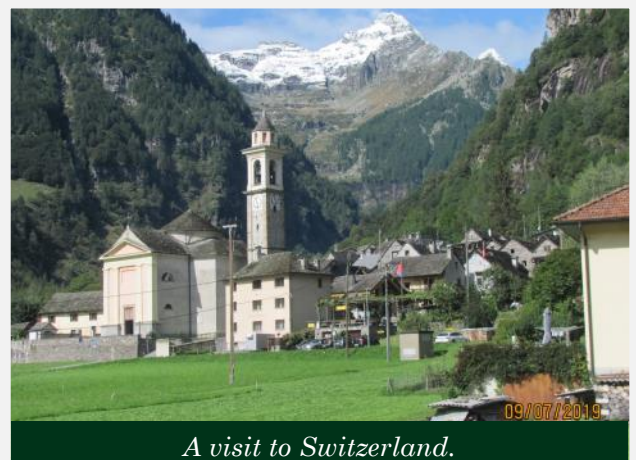
It surpassed my expectations of the Matterhorn and caught me by surprise. Someone from our group began counting other peaks that were just as imposing. We decided that we saw at least five Matterhorns! As our Swiss guide Paula said many times during the trip, "Thanks God!"

Isn't that just like our loving Heavenly Father, who takes our disappointments and surprises us with joy? Oh, to trust Him more... we will never be disappointed when our eyes are on Him.

Submitted by Judy Lowry

For more photos and information, please visit

www.goodnewswithjudy.blogspot.com



A visit to Switzerland.

October 2019 Prayer Calendar

Tuesday, October 1 - Pray for our church as we begin the month of October.

Wednesday, October 2 - Pray for the *Parent Project* and *Teach 1 to Lead 1* and all who are involved. Pray that it will be an enlightening experience for all.

Thursday, October 3 - Pray for the Praise Team as they prepare for Sunday Worship Service.

Friday, October 4 - Please pray for the ladies from Linda Circle who work very hard to put on the *All Church Yard Sale* that will begin at 8:00 a.m. Pray for a successful yard sale.

Saturday, October 5 - Please pray for the *Sack Lunch* at 9:45 a.m. Pray for the preparers and receivers of the lunches. Pray that all will know God's love. Please continue to pray for all those involved in the *All Church Yard Sale* today. Pray for the visitors who come to our church for the yard sale.

Sunday, October 6 - Please pray for Sunday School, Children's Church, Youth and Worship Service,

Monday, October 7 - Pray for all the youth of our community who attend Youth Sports at 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, October 8 - Pray for the Finance Committee meeting at 6:00 p.m. Pray for them as they make important decisions for our church.

Wednesday, October 9 - Pray for the *Parent Project* and *Teach 1 to Lead 1* that will take place at 4:30 p.m.

Thursday, October 10 - Pray for the ladies who attend the Women's Bible Study at 5:00 p.m. at Grand Ave.

Friday, October 11 - Pray for the staff at FUMC as they will prepare for Sunday Worship Service.

Saturday, October 12 - Pray for the greeters for tomorrow as they welcome all through our church doors.

Sunday, October 13 - Pray for Sunday School, Children's Church, Youth Group and Worship Service as we all come together for fellowship.

Monday, October 14 - Pray for Youth Sports at 5:30 p.m. and all who are involved.

Tuesday, October 15 - Pray for Linda Circle ladies as they meet today at 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday, October 16 - Pray for the *Parent Project* and *Teach 1 to Lead 1* and for the youth involved.

Thursday, October 17 - Pray for the *Trustees Meeting* 6:00 p.m. Pray for them as they make important decisions for our church. Pray also for the SPRC meeting that will take place at 9:00 a.m., then again at 5:00 p.m.

Friday, October 18 - Pray for Pastor Tom as he prepares his sermon for Sunday Worship Services.

Saturday, October 19 - Pray that we can reflect on bible verse Psalm 31:24: *"Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who wait for the Lord"*.

Sunday, October 20 - Pray for Sunday School, Children's Church, Youth Group and Worship Services.

Monday, October 21 - Pray for the *Church Governing Board* that will meet at 9:00 a.m. today.

Tuesday, October 22 - Pray for the churches as they prepare for our *Charge Conference* on Sunday, November 17, at 4:30, First Church. For all the paperwork and conversations to happen in time.

Wednesday, October 23 - Pray for the *Parent Project* and *Teach 1 to Lead 1* that will begin at 4:30 p.m.

Thursday, October 24 - Pray for the "Formation Plan Team." May God give them discernment, wisdom, and direction as they plan and discuss the growth of the pastor, the leaders, and the church.



Friday, October 25 - Pray that we can reflect on this bible verse: *"But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."* Isaiah 40:31.

Saturday, October 26 - Pray for the ones who are not able to come to church Worship Services due to illness or rehabilitation. Pray for healing, strength and comfort.

Sunday, October 27 - Pray for Sunday School, Children's Church, Youth Group and Worship Service pray as we all gather in Christ's name.

Monday, October 28 - Pray for the Youth Sports that will begin at 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, October 29 - Pray that we can reflect on Mark 10:27 *"Jesus looked at them and said "With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God."*

Wednesday, October 30 - Pray for the *Parent Project* and *Teach 1 to Lead 1* that will take place at 4:30 pm. Pray also for the *Trunk R Treat* that happens in the parking lot 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. For all who would visit and for us who receive them with grace.

Thursday, October 31 - Pray that all will have a fun and safe night for Halloween.

Announcements

Trunk R Treat

All are welcome to join Grand Ave on Wednesday, October 30 - 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. for **Trunk or Treat**. Decorate your car and pass out candy! Invite your friends and family to join you. We look forward to blessing the children of our community.

Movie Night November 24 at 2:00 p.m.

Everyone is invited to First Methodist on Sunday, November 24 at 2:00 p.m. for an afternoon Craft, Movie and Hotdogs and Root beer Floats. The movie is *The Emperor's New Groove*. Please call the office for more information 784-4232.

Sermon Video

Watch a video of the sermon during the week or share a link with a friend. Pastor Tom's sermons are posted on www.grandavenue.org/sermon-video each week.

Sack Lunch

Share the Gospel with us by sharing food with the hungry. We meet at 9:45 a.m. at Grand Ave on Saturday, October 5, then serve at 11:30 a.m. at Porterville Coordinating Council on Date and Plano. You will give and receive a blessing!

Linda Circle

Linda Circle continues on Tuesday, October 15 at 11:00 a.m. in the Fireside Room at Grand Ave. Bring a sack lunch. Drinks and dessert are provided by the hostess. All ladies are welcome. Come join us for lunch and fellowship.

Next Newsletter Deadline

Please send information for the Messenger Newsletter to Judy at judy.bur87@gmail.com. The deadline for the November Messenger is **October 17**. Thank you.



Yard Sale

Friday, October 4 - 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Saturday, October 5 - 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Grand Ave United Methodist Church

In Fellowship Hall

776 W. Grand Ave



Clothes for the Needy

The First Methodist Clothing Closet is open on the first Saturday of every month. We open on Saturday, October 5 from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. for those in our community in need. Greeters and volunteers are welcome to help distribute and engage visitors.

Charge Conference • November 17

The Annual Charge Conference with our District Superintendent, Debra Brady, is Sunday, November 17 at 4:30 p.m. Both Methodist congregations will share a potluck at First Methodist. All are invited and encouraged to attend.

Service of Remembrance • December 1

The Service of Remembrance is for those who have lost loved ones. We invite you to come and remember those we have lost and as we look forward to the future. This service Sunday, December 1 at 2:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary at First Methodist.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Tuesday, December 24 • 6:00 p.m.

At First Methodist Church

We will have one Christmas Eve Service at First Methodist Church this year for Porterville Methodist congregations. Make plans to join us for an inspirational service celebrating the birth of Jesus. Invite family and friends to join you.

Grand Ave Methodist Weekly Schedule

Sundays

8:30 a.m. Sunday School • Fireside Room
9:30 a.m. Worship Service • Sanctuary
5:00 p.m. Youth Bible Study

Mondays

5:30 p.m. Youth Group

Wednesdays

4:30 p.m. Loving Solutions

Thursdays

10:00 a.m. Prayer Group
5:00 p.m. Women's Bible Study
(2nd & 4th Thursdays)

Grand Ave Methodist Calendar

Friday, October 4

8:00 a.m. Yard Sale

Saturday, October 5

8:00 a.m. Yard Sale

Tuesday, October 8

6:00 p.m. Grand Ave Finance Meeting

Tuesday, October 15

11:00 a.m. Linda Circle

Thursday, October 17

9:00 a.m. First SPRC Meeting - at Grand Ave
11:00 a.m. Combined SPRC - at Grand Ave
5:00 p.m. Grand Ave SPRC Meeting
6:00 p.m. Trustees Meeting

Wednesday, October 30

6:00 p.m. Trunk or Treat - Grand Ave Parking Lot

First Methodist Weekly Schedule

Sundays

9:30 a.m. Bible Study
11:00 a.m. Children's Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Worship Service

Tuesdays

10:00 a.m. Morning Watch Prayer Group

Wednesdays

6:00 p.m. Handbell Rehearsal
7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

First Methodist Calendar

Saturday, October 5

1:00 p.m. Clothing Closet

Thursday, October 17

9:00 a.m. First SPRC Meeting - at Grand Ave
10:00 a.m. Combined SPRC - at Grand Ave



Happy Birthday!

Lenora Rodarte: 10-5
Charles Nevells: 10-7
Linda Brown: 10-9

Kathy Bartlett: 10-20

Mike Wait 10-20

Gordon Young 10-26

Raymond Lipumano 10-28

Grand Ave Staff

Senior Pastor • Rev. Tom Buratovich
Director of Youth Ministries • Ryan Ridenour
Worship Administrator • Judy Buratovich
Treasurer • Rodel Lipumano
Custodian • The Congregation

First Staff

Senior Pastor • Rev. Tom Buratovich
Counseling Center Director • Joy Semple
Administrative Assistant • Melissa Sutherland
Music Coordinator • Christine Morell
Organist • Donita Roulsten
Custodian • Melody Burkhart

Grand Ave Office Hours:

Monday– Thursday
9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

Phone: 559-784-3791

Fax: 559-784-3798

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www.grandavenue.org

Grand Ave United Methodist Church
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First Methodist Office Hours:

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