



Messenger Newsletter

*First and Grand Avenue
United Methodist Churches*

September 2019

Glory Days

by Pastor Tom Buratovich

And all the people gave a great shout of praise to the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. But many of the older priests and Levites and family heads, who had seen the former temple, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this temple being laid, while many others shouted for joy. Ezra 3:11-12

Nostalgia involves mentally gazing longingly with a sentimental longing for the past. Some have sculpted nostalgia into a fine art of making the past seem better than it really was. As a retired colleague told me once, “*The good ol’ days weren’t that good; they were just old.*”

There is nothing wrong with nostalgia, proper. If you live in the present and regularly focus on the future, nostalgia is healthy and gives way to honor and respect for the past. However, nostalgia can have a dark side, a dangerous and seductive quality that can subtly cause us to trade the present potential and future promises for a past that is an illusion, a place to which there is no return.

In its worst form, nostalgia can distort our perspective, make change seem less urgent and needed, and cause us to needlessly second-guess ourselves and others.

Sometimes, our biggest barrier to future possibilities is the memory

of our past. Longing for the way things used to be keeps us from seeing the way things can be. This happens to us as individuals, but I often see it happening in organizations, companies, and churches.

So many churches cannot seem to let go of the way things used to be. Nostalgia keeps them remembering the days when the pews were full, kids roamed the halls, and the offering plates overflowed. They will remember when people used to prioritize church or when the youth group was thriving. Whatever the memory, it is clear they cannot let go of the way things used to be.

Surely, God realized that we would be primed from birth to attach ourselves to things familiar, comfortable, pleasant? Of course, that is why the Word of God is so quick to remind us of the quality of God’s work in the future: *I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive*

it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. Isaiah 43:19

The Word of God is always a new work. The old work is based on the fulfilled promises that are never old. We simply tend to run to old forms rather than look to the fulfillment of promises. God doing a new thing doesn’t mean the old ways are bad. But it does mean the new ways must be embraced as a form of the old.

How do we do this in the church? We do this by looking at people. The needs people have do not change but the way we meet those needs do. The old ways met the same needs at a different time. The new ways meet the same needs in a different time, in a different way. Neither is better than the other just more relevant to the time. My parents Oldsmobile would not be roadworthy today because it does not meet modern safety standards. It does not mean it was a bad car. It does mean if I am to drive a street legal car, I can’t drive my parents Oldsmobile as good as that car might be.

Similarly, the cross, the Lordship of Jesus, the substitutionary atonement of his death for ours, the Great

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Youth Ministry

For as long as I can remember, we here at Grand Avenue have put on Vacation Bible School during the summer months, similar to many of the other churches in our community. Recently, we made a strategic decision to try something new and exciting for our children and the children in our community by moving our Vacation Bible School to the time during the students' Christmas vacation. I believe this decision is a good move and can really bless our young families in the church and community in many amazing ways.

Vacation Bible School has the potential to drastically change the lives of children and their families. For many of us accustomed to attending these types of events, we sometimes fall into repetition mode and each event feels like the same. But imagine the magnitude of going to a Vacation Bible School event for the first time and discovering that there is a God and He has a Son who loves you so much that He laid down His life for you. Think of meeting new friends, playing fun games, sharing snacks, and witnessing them opening their hearts to Jesus and the joy it brings them. Imagine being excited about this new friend you call, "Jesus" and eagerly going home each day and telling your parents all about the love that He has for you and them. This discovery of love can positively impact and change your family forever, in a beautiful life-giving way. Wouldn't you want to go to Vacation Bible School viewed from this mindset? I would!

To make Vacation Bible School a success, we need a team of volunteers dedicated to the cause of sharing the love of Jesus with children in our church and community all while engaging their parents as they bring their young ones to our church during the days of the event. This is a great opportunity for each of us to embrace the spiritual gifts God has put within us and use them to bless the families we get to encounter during Vacation Bible School. At the conclusion of reading this article, I ask that each of you take time to pray about how you can be a part of this event. Ask God to use you to grow His kingdom through your work at this event.

Though the event is a few months off, we will have our first Vacation Bible School meeting on **Sunday, September 15** in the Fireside room immediately following the worship service. I invite you to attend our get together and learn how you can play an exciting role in making this event a success through sharing Jesus with our community. See you there!

God is Love,
Ryan

"Mega Sports Camp"

VBS is December 16-19
Pray for the kids who will attend
and who you will invite.
Planning Meeting Sunday,
September 15.

At-Risk Ministry Opportunities

Our at risk programs continue on Wednesday nights offering two programs for families.

Parent Project Sr. offers concrete solutions for tough kids. Extremely practical tools for out-of-control behavior. We help parents get their family back! Through 12 sessions filled with interactive exercises, parents will learn hand-on skills to stop unwanted behavior, even ADD/ADHD children!

Additionally, we offer **Teach 1 to Lead 1, Primo** ages grades 3-5. This program teaches Universal Principles to kids to

help them build and strengthen foundational values that assist in decision making and healthy habit formation. Starting time is the same, 4:30 p.m.

There is no tuition, just a \$40 material charge for parent class. Limited scholarships are available. For more information contact Ryan Ridenour at Grand Avenue 784-3791 or Pastor Tom.

If you or someone you know has a passion for kids, we encourage you to seek us out and observe a class. Mentors are desperately needed for this rewarding frontline ministry.

Slow and Steady

"I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."
Philippians 3:12b-15 NIV

When I was a child, our grandfather used to accompany us on camping trips, rock-hunting adventures and hikes in the mountains. I especially remember his telling us kids that it was best to keep a slow, steady pace on steep mountain trails. We didn't listen much, but would run right by him. It wouldn't be long, however before he'd pass by us as we sat on rocks or tree stumps panting.

Grandpa Fred wouldn't say anything at those times; but rather would keep on walking, with an "I told you so" expression on his face. I thought of grandpa's advice during a 22-mile bike ride and fund raiser in which we participated last Saturday morning. This was the second year we had participated in the ride. Still, twenty-two miles would be a stretch for me.

Before the ride, I met a man named Paul who said that he showed up at most of the organized rides with tools to help fix the bikes that broke down along the route. This was done voluntarily, at his own expense.

Paul called himself a "sweep" because he would ride behind the group, looking for people who needed help. I told him to keep an eye out for me just in case I ended up on the ground. However, he said that he didn't carry a gurney! As it turned out, he went with the riders that were going down to the Detroit river, making a 44-mile loop.

This year, the group of about 80 cyclists stayed close together keeping a fairly fast pace. Al was kind enough to ride with me most of

the time, even though he could have been up at the front. No matter how hard I pedaled or maneuvered to pass people, I stayed at the back of the pack, riding just ahead of the sweep.

To complicate matters, the gears on my bike became stuck in a gear that had more resistance and I had to push harder on the pedals with my tired old legs. Where was that Paul when I needed him?

Grandpa's words of 'slow and steady' came back to me in the midst of complaining to myself. Slow was easy; steady was harder. But as I tried to focus on his advice, my negative attitude began to change. Breathing helped too. Exhale, inhale, exhale, inhale.

The volunteer who was the sweep chatted with me as we rode along. We were nearing the 22-mile mark, when I hit a bump in the road that knocked off my water bottle. She did her job well and stopped, while I circled around to pick it up. The rest of the group completely disappeared from sight, eager to get back to the Ferndale City Hall where we had begun the ride.

It was a great feeling when we joined the others at the city hall. Many people said that Al and I inspired them. That was a surprise! Inspiring? I was just trying to survive.

The image of my white-haired grandpa with his old felt hat and hiking stick came to mind. Well, Al and I are now older than he was during my early teen years. One lady even wanted to take our picture.

Al and Judy Lowery at the bicycle race.



"Do you mind me asking how old you are?" she queried.

"Almost seventy-two," I answered, struggling with the desire to hide my age. "I'm not sure how I got here. One breath at a time, I guess."

She shared that she was fifty-four years old, trying to recover from cancer surgery last spring. That was why she wasn't able to ride with us. Her own journey...not easy.

"It's just life!" she exclaimed and we both laughed.

"Well, maybe you'll join us next year." I replied.

May we follow the apostle Paul's example of perseverance, who desired to "press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus has taken hold of me." He went on to say, "Beloved, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal..." *

Slow and steady! Pressing on, one pedal, one breath, one step, one prayer at a time. Help us persevere oh Lord, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Submitted by Judy Lowery

September 2019 Prayer Calendar

Sunday, September 1 - Pray for Sunday School, Children's Church, Youth Group and Worship Services. Pray for the youth group as they meet at Ryan & Amanda's house at 5:30 p.m.

Monday, September 2 - Pray for safe travels for those who are travelling this Labor Day.

Tuesday, September 3 - Pray for the ones who are unable to attend church due to illness or rehabilitation. Pray for strength and healing. Pray for Melissa, administrative assistant at First Church, for joy and peace.

Wednesday, September 4 - Pray for *T1L1 Primo and Parent Project* as they meet at 4:30 p.m. Pray for the kids, parents and mentors that they will all learn from this experience.

Thursday, September 5 - Pray for our community. Pray also for Melody, the custodian and children's director at First Church.

Friday, September 6 - Pray and reflect on the bible verse Romans 15:13. *"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."*

Saturday, September 7 - Pray for the Clothing Closet from 1:00-2:30 p.m. at First Church. Pray for the relationships they will have. Pray for Ryan Ridenour as he plans for the youth of our community.

Sunday, September 8 - Pray for Sunday School, Children's Church, Youth Group and Worship Services.

Monday, September 9 - Pray as we start a new week and that we know God is with us as we go through many different situations.

Tuesday, September 10 - Pray for the Finance Committee Meeting at 6:00 p.m. as they make important decisions. Pray for the Morning Watch group as they pray for the souls of First Church

Wednesday, September 11 - Pray for the at-risk, parents and mentors of *T1L1 Primo and Parent Project* that begins at 4:30 p.m. Pray for hand bells and choir rehearsal.

Thursday, September 12 - Pray for the GAUMC Women's Bible Study at 5:00 p.m. today.

Friday, September 13 - Pray for the worship/tech/music teams as they prepare for Sunday Worship Services.

Saturday, September 14 - Pray for the Greeter's tomorrow who will welcome all to Sunday Worship Services.

Sunday, September 15 - Pray for Sunday School, Children's Church and Youth Group. Pray as we come together for Worship Services. Pray also for the taco night outreach at First Church at 2:00 p.m.

Monday, September 16 - Pray for the youth who attend Monday Night Youth Group at 5:30 p.m. Pray for the GAUMC Governing Board that meets at 9:00 a.m.

Tuesday, September 17 - Pray for the ladies of Linda Circle who will meet today at 11:00 a.m. Pray also for the Morning Watch prayer group at First Church

Wednesday, September 18 - Pray for the ladies who organize and price items for the "All Church Yard Sale" on October 4 & 5. Pray for *T1L1 Primo and Parent Project* at 4:30 p.m.

Thursday, September 19 - Pray for Trustees, Grand who meet at 6:00 p.m. today and First as they navigate the HVAC replacement. Pray for them as they make important decisions.

Friday, September 20 - Pray for the Children's Church teachers as they prayerfully plan for the youth.

Saturday, September 21 - Pray for the staff at FUMC as they prepare for Sunday Worship Service.



Sunday, September 22 - Pray for Sunday School, Children's Church, Youth Group and Worship Services.

Monday, September 23 - Today thank God for the many blessings of Fall.

Tuesday, September 24 - Pray for Francie as she continues to take prayer requests by email and sends them out to the prayer group.

Wednesday, September 25 - Pray for *T1L1 Primo and Parent Project* at 4:30 p.m. Pray that this program will the help all involved make better decisions in their lives.

Thursday, September 26 - Pray for the GAUMC Women's Bible Study at 5:00 p.m.

Friday, September 27 - Pray for Pastor Tom as he completes his sermon for Sunday Services.

Saturday, September 28 - Pray that we can invite someone to Worship Service tomorrow.

Sunday, September 29 - Pray for the Sunday School, Children's Church, Youth Group and Worship Services as we come together in his Holy name.

Monday, September 30 - Pray that we can reflect on Deuteronomy 31:6 *"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."*

Announcements

Taco Rhythms Family Night

Come join us for a family fun night on Sunday, September 15, at 2:00 p.m. at First United Methodist Church. Our afternoon features a Taco Bar and music for the whole family. Pastor Tom will teach children and adults how to make their own maracas and how to use their maracas to keep rhythm to music.

We hope you come and join us for a fun afternoon filled with food, fellowship, and music. Invite a friend!

A sign up sheet with items needed to make this event spectacular is located in the lobby at First Methodist. Call the office at 784-4232 for more information.

Clothes for the Needy

The First Methodist clothes closet is open on the first Saturday of every month. Our next clothes closet is open Saturday, September 7 from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. for those in our community in need. Volunteers are welcome to help distribute outfits.

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.

Bunco Fundraising Party

Everyone is welcome to join the Bunco Fundraising Party on Sunday, September 8, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Meet us in the Fellowship Hall at Grand Ave. Contact Lenora 942-0995 for registration information. Proceeds will help First Methodist raise funds for the Sanctuary air conditioning system.

Church Yard Sale Pricing

We'd love your help with pricing every Wednesday, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Please bring slightly used treasures to the church. NO ELECTRONICS. Please hold larger items until October 1. The ***Grand Ave Yard Sale*** will be held on Friday and Saturday, October 4 and 5, 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Help will be needed those days.

Handbell Rehearsal

First Methodist Handbell Choir rehearsals continue Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. Contact the church office for more information 784-4232.

Church Offices Closed for Labor Day

The church offices will be closed on Monday, September 2, in observance of Labor Day.

Choir Rehearsal

First Methodist Choir rehearsals continue Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. Contact Christine Morell for more information at ckmorell78@gmail.com.

Glory Days

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Linda Circle

Linda Circle starts again on Tuesday, September 17 at 11:00 a.m. in the Fireside Room at Grand Avenue. Bring a sack lunch. Drinks and dessert are provided by the hostess. All ladies are welcome. Come join us for lunch and fellowship.

Commission, the Great Commandment, the imminent return of Jesus, and the church triumphant do not change as doctrinal foundational standards. However, the way we communicate in the stories we tell and the lives we live look much different than the lives of first century Jews.

To be Wesleyan Methodists is to lean back into that change and allow God to lead us into that new thing that Jesus does in our midst and our community. Let us be part of the crowd that shouts for joy at the new thing even if we feel a loss at what used to be. Let us rejoice at what God is doing now.

Next Newsletter Deadline

Please send information for the Messenger Newsletter to Judy at judy.bur87@gmail.com. The deadline for the October Messenger is **September 16**. Thank 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

9:00 a.m. All Church Yard Sale Pricing
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 September Calendar

Tuesday, September 10

6:00 p.m. Finance Meeting

Tuesday, September 17

9:00 a.m. Church Council Meeting
11:00 a.m. Linda Circle

Wednesday, September 18

9:00 a.m. First SPRC Meeting
10:00 a.m. Combined SPRC
11:00 a.m. Grand Ave SPRC Meeting

Thursday, September 19

6:00 p.m. Trustees Meeting

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 September Calendar

Saturday, September 7

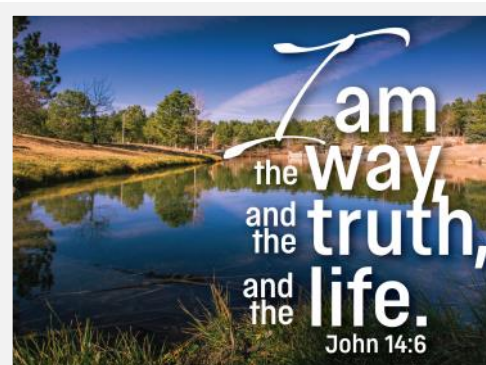
1:00 p.m. Clothes Closet

Saturday, September 15

2:00 p.m. Taco and Rhythms

Wednesday, September 18

9:00 a.m. First SPRC Meeting
10:00 a.m. Combined SPRC
11:00 a.m. Grand Ave SPRC Meeting



Happy Birthday!

Gerri Jasper	9-4	Jackie Borges	9-15
Aprille Wait	9-7	Barbara Means	9-20
Pat Duboski	9-8	Shaughn Galloway	9-24

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
info@grandavenue.org
www.grandavenue.org

Grand Avenue United Methodist Church
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First Methodist Office Hours:

Monday– Thursday
9:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

Phone: 559-784-4232
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