

Fairview United Methodist Church

Newsletter

January 2022

Loving God & Loving Others = worship + missions



Now that the Christmas Season is over, we can all take a little time to sit back and count our blessings. I don't mean just the wonderful things that have happened during the past season, and there have been many, but it is also a wonderful time just to relax and look at all the wonderful things that God has done and is continuing to do in our lives. I know that I am very blessed because of the wonderful family that I have. The wonderful wife that I have and the wonderful church family that I have in the Fairview United Methodist Church. You are a very kind and loving Church and I am blessed to be your pastor. You have always been very caring, loving and generous to Stacy and I and we know that we are blessed. You all were very generous this Christmas, and even more generous with putting up with me and all of my little quirks.

I wish you all a very happy and holy new year as we continue our ministry together.

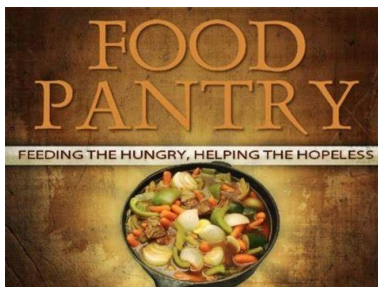
God Bless

Rev. Joe Tomich

Havana Area Food Pantry

Central Christian Church
215 S. Broadway
Open every Tuesday & Friday
9:00-11:00 a.m.

Must live in
Havana School District
For more information, Call:
309-453-1703



Prayer Concerns

Morris Bell, Hannah and Eva Blair, Rob Calder, Deandre Gabor, Elaine Harper, Brian Ralston



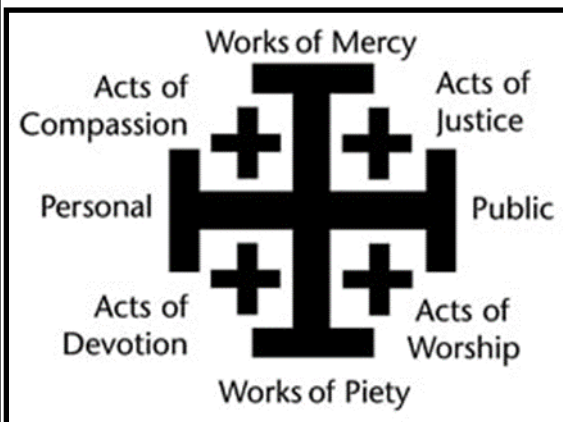


Intercessory prayer brings people of all ages together. Photo courtesy of Bob Dickson and his daughter Rachel, Madison (Ga.) First United Methodist Church.

All is prayer': How words and actions serve God and others

By Joe Iovino

When tragedy occurs, we offer our thoughts and prayers for the victims. When a friend is suffering through a difficult time, we promise to pray for them. When we have a big decision to make, we ask others to pray for us.



Some will say that instead of praying for victims, we should do what we can to prevent a repeat of the tragedy. When we tell someone about a struggle and they say they will pray for us, a small part of us may wonder if there isn't something more concrete they could offer. When we ask others to pray for guidance, they may instead be quick to offer advice to help with our decision.

So which is it? Should we pray or do something? For John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, this was not an either/or question. In *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* Wesley writes:

"Whether we think of or speak to God, whether we act or suffer for him, all is prayer, when we have no other object than his love, and the desire of pleasing him."

All that a Christian does, even in eating and sleeping, is prayer, when it is done in simplicity, according to the order of God, without either adding to or diminishing from it by his own choice (A Plain Account of Christian Perfection, Q 38, 5).

Wesley taught that the complete Christian has a well-rounded spiritual life, sometimes tending to his or her own soul and other

The Wesleyan General Rule of Discipleship teaches that a complete Christian participates in both works of piety and works of mercy. Illustration by [Discipleship Ministries](#) of The United Methodist Church.

times serving others. He called these "acts of piety" and "acts of mercy."

Acts of piety include things like reading the Bible, going to church, and receiving communion. Acts of mercy are things like offering comfort to others, visiting the sick and in prison, and working to change systems that hurt and victimize people.

For Wesley, acts of both piety and mercy are part of a life of prayer. "In souls filled with love," Wesley continues, "the desire to please God is a continual prayer."

Praying for one another

One of the ways we show love for others is by lifting them before God in prayer. Nancy Miles of Madison (Georgia) First United Methodist Church knows the power of these intercessory prayers.

"I had cancer in 1996 and I started receiving prayer cards from Peachtree Road United Methodist Church in Atlanta. Our daughter-in-law was a member of their intercessory prayer team," Nancy continues. "It blew me away that people I didn't even know were lifting me up."

The cards and prayers also impressed her husband Jack. He told Nancy, "When you get well, we are going to start a prayer ministry here in Madison."

In 2016, the Miles are in their 19th year of leading this ministry that has grown to include 100 members of their congregation volunteering to pray one hour a week. After praying, the congregants send handwritten notes, much like the ones Nancy received years before.

"The importance of those cards," Jack says, "can't be overstated. Some recipients have taped all the cards they've received and they become a headboard over their hospital bed," he reports. Another told Nancy, "I can't get rid of the cards you wrote for my mom."

Covered in prayer

At Englewood (Florida) United Methodist Church, Jane Parker leads a group called, "Prayers & Squares, the Prayer Quilt Ministry." Parker's group is a chapter of an interfaith ministry started by a United Methodist Congregation in California nearly 25 years ago.

Each month "our servants gather to help with the various tasks involved with creating a prayer quilt," Parker reports. These special quilts feature loose threads called "ties" in the corners of each square.

When complete, Parker displays the quilt with a card describing for whom the congregation will be praying. "Our congregation is invited to offer a loving, silent prayer for the recipient and then tie that prayer to the quilt with a square knot."

Since 2012, "we have made, prayed over, and given this wonderful gift of love to 68 saints," Parker reports. "Each quilt has 96 ties and often there are multiple knots on each tie," she continues. "The number of prayers is countless. God is the only one who knows for sure."

Prayer quilt recipients often take them to treatment or the hospital. It is quite a source of comfort to be literally blanketed in the prayers of your church.

Relationships

It is also a blessing to be part of a team that is praying.

Jack reports that his time with intercessory prayer "drives home the truth of how important it is to communicate with our Father in heaven on a regular basis, because of the wonderful things that does to the relationship that we have with him."

Nancy agrees. "One of the ladies in our original group said, 'It's the best hour of the week for *me*,'" she remembers.

Jane Parker reports that Prayers & Squares not only wraps folks in the love and prayers of God's people, it also encourages members of the congregation to develop deeper prayer lives.

Focusing people in prayer for others not only deepens our relationship to God; it brings those who are praying together.

"I can best describe it as a connectedness," Parker explains, "a bond with each of our souls and hearts that didn't seem to exist as fully as it does now."

These connections come while uniting in prayer, working on quilts, writing cards, and performing other loving acts. "All is prayer," Wesley wrote, "when we have no other object than [God's] love, and the desire of pleasing him."

[Joe Iovino](#) works for UMC.org at [United Methodist Communications](#).



Prayers and Squares of Englewood United Methodist Church leaves loose strings at the corners of each square on the prayer quilts they make, creating places where others can "tie" their prayers to the quilt. Photo courtesy of Jane Parker.

OUR STAFF AND SERVICES AT A GLANCE

FAIRVIEW UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
3135 N. Cr 800e
Bath Illinois 62617

10:00 AM Fairview Sunday School
10:50 AM Fairview Worship Service

Pastor: Joe Tomich
Executive Administrative Assistant: Jess Miller

Pastor's Phone: (217) 251-8563
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Church Phone: (217) 452-3534
Church E-mail: virgnumc@casscomm.com
Website: <http://www.virginiaumc.org>

