

2017



# The Epistle

The Official Newsletter of United Methodist Church of Hartford

*Be Rooted in God's Love*

*Grow in Grace*

*Bear Fruit of  
Justice and Peace*

JUNE



From the  
Pastor

## *BE NOT ASHAMED*

It finally happened to me. I've heard stories about Pastors/Priests who've experienced such a "horror" and wondered how I would react should such a thing happen to me. Well, on Sunday, May 6, 2017, what was once curiosity became a real life, slow motion moment. The story goes a little something like this:

The table was set. The white table cloths, trays, chalice, and paten were all in their proper places. The communion stewards were all in their respective positions, and the congregation joined in reciting the United Methodist Service of Word and Table litany. The sacrament of Holy Communion was now ready to be administered. Then it happened! The silver tray slipped out of my hand, and well, you know where this story is going...

Grape juice was everywhere! The small chalice cups which held the juice were rolling away, and my poor liturgist and communion stewards were standing there frozen and probably feeling awful for their pastor, along with the congregation whose shocked gasps and looks filled the air. If there was a sunken place available, I may have jumped in. Instead, I stood there calmly and hoped the Lord would appear. As with Isaiah, maybe the Lord's robe would fill the sanctuary, or maybe a bolt of fire would appear. No, like Jacob, I heard a small still voice saying, "Rhonda, it is okay". Then I told the congregation, "It's ok, let's not get distracted." When I looked back at the communion table, I had a spiritual revelation.

When most people think of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and His heavenly angels, we imagined all of them dressed in white, symbolizing holiness and purity. Yet, we are reminded that as long as we are here on earth, we will have spills. When I saw the grape juice splashed over the communion table, I could not help but think of my own life. How many times have I done things that were not pleasing to God, only to discover how the devil used my sinful nature along with his enticing rhetoric to cause me to feel ashamed, embarrassed, and thinking that God does not love me? I'm almost certain that I am not alone in feeling this way.

Seeing the juice run over the table, I wondered how many times you have felt that your life is running away from you. The things you've done wrong have finally spilled over and it seems as if there is no way to fix the problems. It seems that everyone sees your failings and faults, and of course the devil is standing there feeling a great sense of accomplishment, "You're a failure. Jesus is not going to save you." Then a sweet voice of assurance appears.

Jesus says, "It is okay. This is the reason why I came. While you were yet a sinner I died for you. I took all of your mishaps and spills and laid them on me. I took the shame away, cleansed you with hyssop and removed your sins and mistakes."

Beloved, whatever spills you experience in life, be not ashamed; the Lord, Jesus Christ is with you. Though we try to do things in the highest of spiritual excellence for the Lord and try to maintain the holiness of our sacraments, we need to realize that we are still on our way to perfection; we aren't there yet. Until we see Jesus face to face, we are going to experience some spills in our lives. But, no need to worry; when we come to the table in the presence of God, we are reminded of how much we need Him and one another. But more importantly, we need to remember how Jesus loves us despite all the spilling we have done. Amen!

*Peace,*  
Pastor Rhonda

## Lectionary Readings for the Month of June 2017

### **June 4 – Pentecost / Confirmation (Color: Red)**

Acts 2:1-21; Psalm 104:24-34, 35b (UM826); 1Corinthians 12:3b-13; John 7:37-39  
Liturgists: Confirmands

### **June 11 – Trinity Sunday / Peace with Justice Sunday (Color: White)**

Genesis 1:1-2:4a; Psalm 8 (UM743); 2Corinthians 13:11-13; Matthew 28:16-20  
Liturgist: Katherine Lahti

### **June 18 – Father’s Day (Color: Green)**

Genesis 18:1-15, (21:1-7); Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19 (UM837); Romans 5:1-8; Matthew 9:35-10:8, (9-23)  
Liturgist: Sandra Ann Craig

### **June 25 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost (Color: Green)**

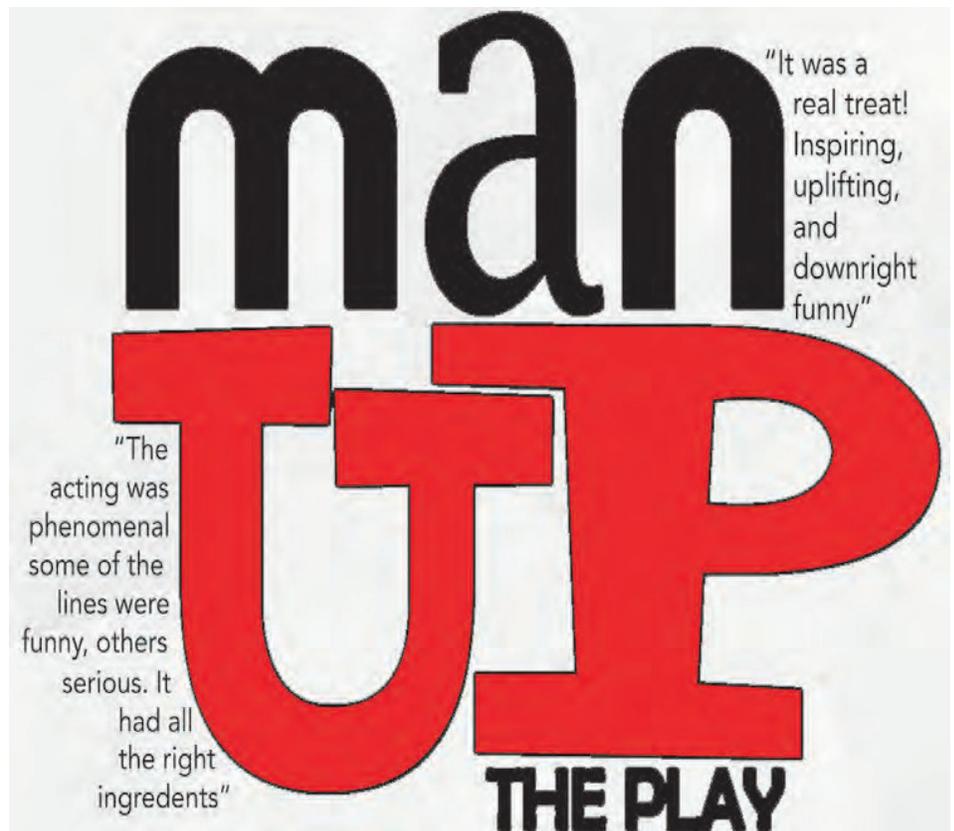
Genesis 21:8-21; Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17; Romans 6:1b-11; Matthew 10:24-39

## **On June 11, 2017, the Community Outreach Ministry will be honoring the Men of UMC of Hartford.**

Instead of serving our usual  
Community Breakfast, we will  
host a Community Brunch  
with a Pre-Father’s Day  
Special Presentation of  
“ManUp, The Play” featuring  
Elijah M. Brown &  
Jamal T. Hinnant.

We are asking all the men of  
UMC of Hartford to be  
in attendance as we  
would like to honor you.

*Brunch starts at Noon  
Play starts at 1:30pm*



## **JUNE CELEBRATIONS**

### **BIRTHDAYS**

### **ANNIVERSARIES**

4 - Flora Wilmot	13 - Bonnie Loveland	22 - Emily Loveland
5 - Aldora Boutwell	15 - Alberta Elliott	23 - June Nelson
8 - Peter Antos	20 - Deshawn Parkes	24 - Gretchen (Vivier) Derby

Dianne & Peter Antos - 6/10/67
Donnalyn & Egya Aggrey - 6/25/11
Sandra Ann & Harold Craig - 6/27/56
Stacia & Deshaun Parkes - 6/27/09

# UMW NEWS



**Love. Grow. Serve.**

**The June United Methodist Women's gathering will be held on Tuesday, June 6, 2017.**

Alberta Elliott will present the program – **“The Call Goes On”** – We will look back on this year's amazing topics. Since serving women, children and youth is our purpose, we will consider WHO we are and WHAT we are. We will enjoy a social time together as we always do.

The UMW officers for 2017-2018 will be installed at this meeting, also.

**SUPPER AT 6:30 PM - - MEETING AT 7:15 PM - - PROGRAM AT 7:45 PM**

***THE EXECUTIVE TEAM will be providing supper. The meal is NOT a potluck. However, please remember to bring your table setting!***

If you are interested, please call the church office (860-523-5132).

***All are welcome! We look forward to seeing you!***

## **UNITED METHODIST WOMEN - OFFICERS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2017-2018**

At the May meeting, elections were held for officers for the upcoming year. Installation of these officers takes place at the June monthly meeting. The incoming officers are Christine Atkinson, President; Ashley Blount, Vice President; Dianne Antos, Treasurer; Ruth Sweeney, Secretary; Susan Powers, Communications; Deborah LaPierre, Secy. Program Resources; Meletha Peters, Membership; Beverley Nepal, Nominations; Jackie Berg, Hospitality Chair; Dianne Antos and Alberta Elliott, Memorial Fund Committee.

A HUGE thank you to Sandra Ann Craig, outgoing President, for her many years of leadership to our unit and The PURPOSE of United Methodist Women!



## **GRADUATION SUNDAY CELEBRATION IS JUNE 18!**

### ***PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR GRADUATION INFORMATION SOON***

On Sunday, June 18, at 10:00 AM, UMCH will honor our students who are graduating from pre-K, kindergarten, elementary, junior high, high school, trade school and college, and those students who have completed their graduate and doctoral studies. We will also be acknowledging scholarship recipients. Please join us for this special day of recognition!

A cake reception will be held following our morning worship service. If you or your child are graduating this year, and would like to participate in our Graduation Celebration

please submit your information to [staff@umcofhartford.org](mailto:staff@umcofhartford.org). You may also contact the church office at 860-523-5132.

When submitting your information, please include the following:

1. The graduate's full name
2. A photograph of the graduate
3. The name of the school graduated from
4. The diploma or degree received
5. The next level of education (if any) and new school to which the graduate will be advancing

***All information and photos must be submitted by Sunday, June 4, to be included in the service.***