



Three Rivers Current

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of the United Methodist Church



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www.eocumc.com/threerivers

NOVEMBER 2016



FROM THE DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

A few years ago, I came across these instructions by the famous 18th-century evangelist and preacher George Whitefield for how to hear a sermon effectively.

1. Come ready to hear. Says Whitefield, "Come to hear [the sermon] not out of curiosity, but from a sincere desire to know and do your duty. To enter his house merely to have our ears entertained, and not our hearts reformed, must certainly be highly displeasing to the Most High God, as well as unprofitable to ourselves." Preaching, at its best, is about call and response. It shouldn't be about evaluating the sermon or the preacher, nor about whether it keeps you religiously entertained for a while. What it should be about is hearing the word of God. This leads to Whitefield's second piece of advice:

2. Listen for the word of God. As Whitefield put it: "Give diligent heed to the things that are spoken from the word of God." In other words, focus on the word more than the preacher. Every preacher is merely an ambassador, a messenger for Christ. Whether the presentation is exciting or flat, look for God's word in it. You will hear it if you come prepared to receive it. As Whitefield put it, "Other men may preach the gospel better than I, but no man can preach a better gospel." So listen for Christ in the sermon.

3. Apply what you are hearing to your life. Good preaching will not just stir our hearts; it will also move us to think about what God has to say to your life. "Make particular application in your hearts of everything that is delivered," says Whitefield. It's easy to think that the sermon we're hearing is for someone else instead of for us. When the disciples were confronted with the reality that one of them was going to betray Jesus, their first response was, "Is it I?" That's a great question to have in your mind as you hear a sermon.

4. Devote time to prayer before and after the sermon. Prayer is the best preparation for worship and for hearing a sermon. Whitefield says, "Pray to the Lord, before, during and after every sermon, to endue the minister with power to speak, and to grant you a will and ability to put into practice what [the Lord] shall show from the Book of God to be your duty." Yes, pray for the preacher who delivers the sermon; we all need the help! But also pray that God will reveal his word and will to you, and that God would strengthen and encourage you toward transformation.

Dr. Bradley S. Coe

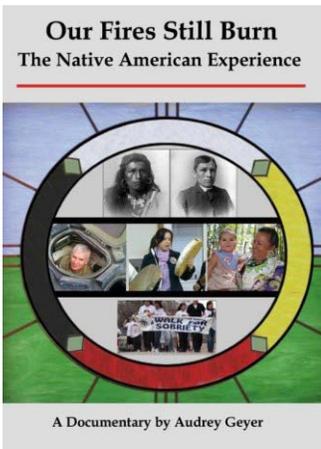


THANK YOU TO OUR VIM VOLUNTEERS

We want to express great appreciation to **Marshall Winkle, Jack Scott, David & Barb Crider, John Hill & Keene UMC** for their work on the **3:12 projects**. A team from Waterford UMC will soon complete project #5. There is one remaining 3:12 project in Coshocton requiring skilled carpentry and plumbing. The work on the Apostle Build quickly progresses but it is not too late to be a part of this awesome experience. Contact the office if you can help complete these projects before year's end.



November is National Native American Heritage Month



"OUR FIRES STILL BURN" NATIVE AMERICAN DOCUMENTARY

- Thursday, November 3 @ 7p at Ashland University
- Friday, November 4 @ 7p at Kent State University

The documentary invites viewers into the lives of contemporary Native Americans role models as they are healing from the past and confronting the challenges of today to keep their culture alive as well as make significant contributions to society. Free and open to the public. Film producer Audrey Geyer will be available following the showing for discussions.

On October 21, largely unnoticed by national media, Native American Indians collectively forgave the U.S. government for breaking treaties with their ancestors during a public ceremony on the National Mall. The National Day of Prayer for First Nations, held near the Washington Monument, included intercessory petitions, proclamations and declarations of forgiveness by leaders from All Tribes D.C., a fellowship of Christians representing 1,000 North American Indian tribes from the United States and Canada.

In Scripture, breaking a vow or treaty brings a curse on the land. In a very charitable act of Christian character and forgiveness, Chief Negiel Bigpond and hundreds of North American Indians gathered to forgive the U.S. Government for all of its broken treaties. Chief Bigpond said, "**As indigenous people of this land, we carry a governmental responsibility to bring a Nation back to its ordained purpose. A representation of Nations within a Nation, we believe in an outcome that will yield a bountiful harvest of souls through the power of forgiveness.**" Dr. Billy Graham writes, *"The greatest moments of Native History may lie ahead of us if a great spiritual renewal and awakening should take place. The Native American has been a sleeping giant. He is awakening. The original Americans could become the evangelists who will help win America for Christ! Remember these forgotten people!"*

At The 2016 General Conference of The United Methodist Church delegates focused on the Sand Creek Massacre, a tragedy with Methodist involvement. The incident occurred along the Big Sandy River of the Colorado Territory, on Nov. 29, 1864. Col. John Milton Chivington, a Methodist Episcopal pastor who had joined the Union Army, led a surprise attack on a Cheyenne and Arapaho encampment which claimed about 200 Native American lives, including women, children and the elderly.



The 1996 General Conference apologized for the Methodist involvement in the massacre, but erred in some historical details and failed to show proper respect to descendants of the survivors, according to Mountain Sky Area Bishop Elaine Stanovsky. In 2012, delegates engaged in an "Act of Repentance" worship service aimed at healing relationships with indigenous people. Now in 2016, evidence of true healing was noted. "We now extend our hand in friendship to the Methodist Church," said William Walks Along, a Northern Cheyenne descendent of massacre survivors. "We have developed a measure of trust, respect and honor for each other." [Read more](#) Sam Hodges of United Methodist News Service (UMNS) reported on May 18, 2016

Youth Ministry for the Small Church

I want to thank Three Rivers District and Chasity for holding the district wide retreat at Camp Zimmerman on October 7th & 8th. We are a small church and it would be difficult for us to have this type of event on our own. I also would like to encourage other churches in our district to give these events a try. Sticky Faith Retreat was an amazing, jam packed 24 hours. The lessons were relevant to things youth face every day. The highlight for many was the prayer/fire circle on Friday evening.



We had great meals, tons of snacks, hiking, basketball, awesome crafts and some alone time to reflect. We also had some special guests as Dr. Call and Sue stopped in and shared a few moments with us. Thanks Chasity for all your hard work in putting this together (and Brad too). I know our youth all have busy schedules **but I would encourage you to check out the district youth events. They are well planned and you will not be disappointed.**

--Beth Murphy & Youth at Irish Ridge UMC

The five Methodist Churches in the Ridgewood School District held their first youth event for Ridgewood Middle and High School students on Sunday at Fresno UMC. Approximately 40 youth and adults took part in the Prayer Wagon Ride through the Fresno area. The wagon made several stops at area homes of



those in need of prayer at which time we lifted them and their families up to the Lord. We also prayed for our area schools and the government. It was an awesome experience. Afterwards, the wagon returned to Fresno UMC where were shared in a time of fellowship and hot dogs and s'mores. --Many Armstrong, Plainfield UMC

EOC YOUTH MISSION PROJECT



Sat, November 12 @ 2-6 p.m.
Newcomerstown Middle
School 325 W State St, * 43832



Changing the World - One Meal at a Time Working together to Stop Hunger Now for those in need in developing countries. After meals are packaged, there will be a concert by [Rapture Ruckus.](#)

Cost: \$15 or \$10 with a canned food. Free t-shirts until they run out

(photo from Roscoe UMC 2015 Stop Hunger Now Campaign)

4 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SMALL TOWNS & BIG CITIES (Part 3 of 4)

Factor #2: Change and Conformity

For a variety of reasons, people in small towns are not typically open to change in comparison to people who live in larger cities. But this isn't necessarily bad, because when people actually do change, they aren't likely to change back to their old ways. This is often the case when someone becomes a Christian in a small town: they aren't likely to turn their back on Jesus after they've switched their allegiance to him.

Similarly, the lack of change in small towns often leads to a high degree of conformity. For better or worse, people from small towns adhere to a relatively narrow range of acceptable behaviors, choices, and ideas. Smaller the town, narrower the range! For people who have odd personalities or embrace non-traditional behaviors, it's often difficult to be respected in the small town goldfish bowl. In fact, Christians like this might even have a reputation that is ultimately at odds with their mission.

Practical Advice: A veteran pastor in a small town once told me, "You can't be weird in a small town. You need to be normal. You can't scare people and expect to advance the gospel. You can maybe get away with being weird in Seattle or Chicago and still be great at evangelism but that doesn't work in a small town." If you think this might describe you, I would suggest talking with your pastor or a trusted friend and get their advice so that mission can advance in your spheres of influence.

Factor #3: Reputations Are Hard to Shake

It's often said that newspapers in small towns don't *report* the news, they *confirm* the news. That's because people know who you are. Parts of your life are common knowledge (which wouldn't be the case in a larger city). In fact, many people who live in small towns end up being celebrities without trying, and for all the wrong reasons. Even your police record will be common knowledge because all the citations are listed in the newspaper! Like it or not, people tend to know details and the integrity of your marriage, family, and business. That's why reputations are hard to shake in small towns and they follow us around like our shadows.



Practical Advice: The reputation of the gospel is strongly tied to the reputation of our marriage, family, and business. This is especially true in a small town. This reality can be a helpful asset to your mission, or an incredible liability. If you are committed to being on mission in your town, it might be helpful to sit down with your pastor or a trusted friend and reverse.

In other words, if you want the reputation of your marriage, family, and business to point to the gospel, then you'll need to decide on the series of steps you may need to take to make that happen. However, as you go through this process, **don't accidentally make your reputation into an idol**. If you do, you probably won't take meaningful risks for the gospel, because your deepest desire will be to protect your reputation instead of advancing the mission.

Editor's Note: This is the Part 3 of a 4 part series that are excerpts from Aaron Morrow's book, *Small Town Mission*. Mr. Morrow is one of the pastors of River City Church in Dubuque, Iowa and is associated with M.A. Moody Bible Institute. Next month's concluding thoughts: **Factor #10: The Ten and Done Principle**. <http://gcdiscipleship.com/2016/07/31/4-differences-between-small-towns-and-big-cities/>

UMW MEETING FOCUSES ON IDENTITY, MISSION

by Julia Chance, managing editor of *response: the print and digital magazine of women in mission!*

United Methodist Women General Secretary Harriett Jane Olson talked about UMW's strategic plan focused on identity, increasing membership, enhancing relationships with the wider church and the world, and the organization's mission priorities which for are:

- Climate Justice
- Economic Inequality
- Maternal and Child Health, and
- Criminalization of Communities of Color and Mass Incarceration



"We are rooted in who God is and who we are in Jesus Christ. ...We are also rooted in the United Methodist Church and the broader Wesleyan family, emphasizing grace . . . and showing our love for God in our service and advocacy in the world," she said. "We have a renewed resolve to make certain that our identity is clearly visible in all of our work."

Ms. Olson said spiritual growth, transformative education and leadership development are intentional parts of United Methodist Women that lead to compassionate service and passionate advocacy. "This is the strength of our movement," she said. "Find your voice and use it, even if it shakes a little," Board president Shannon Priddy said. "We are advocates for women, youth and children around the world, bringing it back to our conferences, districts, and local organizations (reprinted by UMNS) — [Read story](#)



A SPIRITUAL RETREAT with REV. VALERIE STULTZ

The Mission Team of the Three Rivers United Methodist Women are sponsoring a spiritual retreat with the Rev. Valerie Stultz. This time of renewal and refreshment will be on Saturday, November 19 from 10 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. at the Mt. Vernon Gay St. UMC, 18 N. Gay St. * 43050. The cost is \$8 which includes lunch. Contact Trish Rankin at 740-392-8158 to register. You may pay at the door, but must register so the appropriate meals can be prepared.

MOVIE AFFIRMS UNITED METHODIST TEACHINGS ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

According to studies, near 700,000 individuals are trafficked across borders every year resulting in over 500,000 involving sexual exploitation of which 80% are female and 50% are children. These same estimates propose that there are currently 20-30 million slaves in the world today. The United Methodist Church takes a strong stance and advocates the abolition of sex trafficking. [Links to resources](#) found in Christopher Fenoglio's UMNS article or through the [General Board of Church and Society](#) and the [United Methodist Women's](#) organization.

In the new film [Priceless](#) a young man dealing with life crisis finds himself unsuspectingly entangled in a series of events resulting in human trafficking. The movie portrays the issue of modern-day slavery as well as the personal struggles we all encounter when we realize the error of our choices. You can view the trailer and find a theater near you by visiting <http://pricelessthemovie.com/>



NOVEMBER 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>To date, 120 students have given their hearts to Jesus during ENERGIZE Events. Following worship will be an EPIC After-Party with Bubble Soccer, karaoke, fun snacks, and door prizes</p>		1	2	3	4 Energize Youth Rally 7-10p Newcomerstown Christ UMC	5
6 Daylight Savings Turn back clocks	7 Charge Conference @ Kimbolton @ 7p	8 	9 Charge Conference @ Warsaw @ 7p	10	11	12 Charge Conference @ Adamsville @ 9:30 a.m.
13	14 Charge Conference @ Fredericktown @ 7p	15 Leadership Committee Mtg @ 3p	16	17	18	19 Mt. V. Gay St UMW Spiritual Retreat with Valeria Stultz 2-4p
		Fall-for-All Clergy Retreat		CABINET		
20	21	22	23 The office will close at noon	24 We Are Blessed! HAPPY THANKSGIVING	25 Office Closed	26
27	28	29 DS at a Regional Mtg	30 DS Out of the Office	1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 ESV Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.		

DECEMBER 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><u>SAVE the DATE:</u> The 2017 District Leadership Event will be held on Saturday, January 21. More details about workshops and registration in next month's newsletter.</p>				1	2	3 Clergy Christmas Gathering 12-1:30p Grace UMC
4	5 Bishop Malone in TR District	6 5:00 p.m. Super'tncy Meeting at District Office	7	8 <div style="background-color: yellow; text-align: center; padding: 2px;">CABINET</div>	9 Office Closed Admin. Asst Meeting	10
11	12	13	14 7p SPRC Mtg Nashville	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 	26	27	28	29	30	31 <div style="background-color: lightgreen; text-align: center; padding: 5px;">OFFICE CLOSED FOR HOLIDAYS</div>



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On November 29, United Methodists will once again come together to support the work of the Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church on UMC #GivingTuesday. Resources such as bulletin inserts can be found at UMCMission.org/giving-tuesday. This year, consider supporting one of the 800 Advance projects or 300 missionaries around that world that represents an area you care about, such as hunger and poverty, education, social justice, or a specific people group. For a complete list visit [The Advance](#).

UMC #GIVINGTUESDAY

November 29, 2016

umcmmission.org/give

Because we have received, we
**GIVE LIGHT
GIVE LOVE
GIVE LIFE**

 **GLOBAL MINISTRIES**
The United Methodist Church