



Beacon

June 2020

... guiding our walk

A Word from Pastor John

As you may have heard, beginning June 7, I will begin an eight-week sermon series I'm calling "**Christianity 101: The Basics of the Christian Faith.**" We will be considering John Wesley's (founder of Methodism) "**Way of Salvation,**" – the spiritual journey all of us must travel if we are to have a mature faith in Jesus Christ. These steppingstones of faith are:

- 6/7 **Original Sin** (read Genesis 2:4b – 3:24 and Romans 5:12-21)
- 6/14 **Prevenient Grace** (read Matthew 18:12-14 and Luke 19:1-10)
- 6/21 **Repentance** (read Luke 15:11-24a)
- 6/28 **Justification** (read Romans 5:1-2, 8-11 and Titus 3:3-7)
- 7/5 **Rebirth** (read John 3:1-8 and First John 4:4-7)
- 7/12 **Assurance** (read First John 4:13-16a; 5:11-13 and Second Timothy 1:11-12)
- 7/19 **Sanctification** (read First John 2:3-6 and Romans 12:1-2)
- 7/26 **Social Holiness** (read Matthew 25:31-40 and James 2:14-18)

Plan now to join us for worship (on Facebook Live, and hopefully eventually in person) each Sunday. Invite family and friends to tune in as well. The service videos and manuscripts of messages will be posted and available at our church's website www.sebastianumc.com.

As Methodists, we need to become better acquainted with our founder, John Wesley. Even though he lived in 18th century England (1703-1791), his theology and teachings are timeless. In fact, I believe his views about what it means to live as Christian in the world are as applicable today as ever!

You may have seen a meme that has circulated on Facebook, called "John Wesley's Manifesto." On it were listed twelve principles Wesley held and taught. While Wesley never created this list or used the word "manifesto," Wesleyan scholars associated with "The New Room" in Bristol, England, compiled the list and posted it in the "The New Room," the first Methodist meeting house, which you can still visit today. I was struck by how current Wesley's principles for living out our faith in the world are! I share them for your reflection, in light of the challenges facing America today:

Reduce the gap between rich and poor.

"Be ye ready to distribute to every one, according to his necessity." (Sermon 28: Eighth Discourse on the Sermon on the Mount, 1747/8)

Seek to ensure full employment.

"Wickedly, devilishly false is that common objection, 'They are poor only because they are idle.... Find them work.... They will then earn and eat their own bread.'" (First sentence: 8 Feb 1753 Journal; second sentence is from Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisions 1773)

Introduce measures to help the poorest, including a living wage.

"How many are there in this Christian country that toil, and labour, and sweat... but struggle with weariness and hunger together? Is it not worse for one, after a hard days labour, to come back to a poor, cold, dirty, uncomfortable lodging, and to find there not even the food which is needful to repair his wasted strength?" (Sermon 47: Heaviness Through Temptation 1754/1760)

Offer the best possible education.

"Beware of that common, but accursed, way of making children parrots Regard not how much, but how well, to what good purpose, they read.... The end of education....[is to] help us discover every false judgement of our minds, and to subdue every wrong passion

in our hearts... [and] to understand as much as we are able.” (Lessons for Children 1746)

Empower individuals to feel they can make a difference.

“Do all the good you can. By all the means you can. In all the ways you can. In all the places you can. At all the times you can. To all the people you can. As long as you ever can.” (Attributed to Wesley but source unknown. Possibly written after his death as a summary of his teaching.)

Promote tolerance.

“Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion?” (Sermon 39: On a Catholic Spirit 1749/50)

Promote equal treatment for women.

“May not women as well as men bear an honourable part.....yield not to the vile bondage any longer. You, as well as men, are rational creatures. You, like them, were made in the image of God.” (Sermon 98: On Visiting the Sick 1786)

Create a society based on values and not on profits and consumerism.

“In seeking happiness from riches, you are only striving to drink out of empty cups. And let them be painted and gilded ever so finely, they are empty still.” (Sermon 126: Danger of Increasing Riches 1790)

End all forms of enslavement.

“Let none serve you but by his own act and deed, by his own voluntary action. Away with all whips, all chains, all compulsion!.... Do with everyone else as you would he should do to you.” (Thoughts on Slavery 1774)

Avoid engaging in wars.

“War: What farther proof of do we need of the utter degeneracy of all nations from the plainest principles of reason and virtue? Of the absolute want, both of common sense and common humanity, which runs through the whole race of mankind?” (The Doctrine of Original Sin according to Scripture, Reason and Experience 1757)

Avoid narrow self-interest and promote a world view.

“I look upon the whole world as my parish.” (Letter written to John Clayton March 1739)

Care for the environment.

“Lead us beyond an exclusive concern for the well-being of other human beings to the broader concern for the well-being of the birds in our backyards, the fish in our rivers, and every living creature on the face of the earth.” (Sermon 60: The General Deliverance 1781)

© Gary Best, The New Room Bristol

What if we in America were to adopt these twelve principles in living together today? What problems would disappear? What issues would be resolved? How would our society be happier and healthier if we all lived out this “manifesto?” I leave it for you to ponder and reflect on.

While Wesley was passionate about faithfully living out the Christian faith in the world, and was not shy to address the issues that caused suffering in the England of his day, he always strove to be nonpartisan. While he encouraged people to vote, he left it up to his followers to apply these Biblical principles in deciding how best to vote. He recognized that in his day (as in ours), his followers held differing political views. He also recognized that “politics” can be very divisive, even destructive, to the Body of Christ.

His advice to his followers is good advice for followers of Wesley today. A quote taken from John Wesley's 1774 journal, written on October 6th: *“I met those of our society who had votes in the ensuing election, and advised them: To vote, without fee or reward, for the person they judged most worthy, to speak no evil of the person they voted against, and to take care their spirits were not sharpened against those that voted on the other side.”*

As we approach a contentious election season, may we all treat our sisters and brothers with respect, and may we “take care (our) spirits (are) not sharpened against those” who vote differently than we do.

Friends, this is a troubling time for our nation. Please be in prayer for America, that we may come through these days of conflict and tension to a day of better understanding and mutual love.

I love being your Pastor,

Pastor John



Just a Note from Megan Mash

The turmoil in our country continues. In some ways we are shielded from aspects of it because of where we live. We must open our eyes and ears to the events of the world and the ways God is calling us as Christians to respond. One way for me to speak out is to talk about hymns. Especially during the Civil Rights Movement, and even now, hymns and other songs of protest unite people peaceably. "Lift Every Voice and Sing" is a powerful text of sorrow and hope. This hymn is often referred to as the "Black National Anthem." Author James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938) was a writer, teacher, diplomat and lawyer who attended the Atlanta University and lived in Jacksonville, FL. He was the first African-American to pass the Florida bar. In 1920 he became the executive secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Johnson penned the poem "Lift Every Voice and Sing" for a celebration in Jacksonville on February 12, 1900 to celebrate Lincoln's Birthday. Johnson's brother John Rosamond Johnson wrote the music and it was sung by 500 schoolchildren at the Stanton School where James was the principal. He writes about the song's conception in this way:

*Lift ev'ry voice and sing,
Till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the list'ning skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith
that the dark past has taught us;
Sing a song full of the hope
that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun
Of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.*

A group of young men in Jacksonville, Florida, arranged to celebrate Lincoln's birthday in 1900. My brother, J. Rosamond Johnson, and I decided to write a song to be sung at the exercises. I wrote the words and he wrote the music. Our New York publisher, Edward B. Marks, made mimeographed copies for us, and the song was taught to and sung by a chorus of five hundred colored school children.

Shortly afterwards my brother and I moved away from Jacksonville to New York, and the song passed out of our minds. But the school children of Jacksonville kept singing it; they went off to other schools and sang it; they became teachers and taught it to other children. Within twenty years it was being sung over the South and in some other parts of the country. Today the song, popularly known as the Negro National Hymn, is quite generally used.

The lines of this song repay me in an elation, almost of exquisite anguish, whenever I hear them sung by Negro children.

The first stanza begins with praise. "Lift every voice and sing,/till earth and heaven ring,/ring with the harmonies of liberty." This reminds of the scripture that reminds us that even the rocks will cry out. We have all been created by the same God in unique and different ways. We must come together to praise God and learn from each other. The stanza continues stating "Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us;/sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us." I pray that hope will lead us forward from the dark past to a place of peace and understanding. The second stanza is one of lament of this dark past that is also still the present. It states "We have come over a way that with tears has been watered." This lament continues into the third stanza that begins with "God of our weary years, God of our silent tears." This reminds us that God always walks with us. God is there as we cry tears along side our black brothers and sisters, for the hatred and racism that still exists in our country. The stanza ends with a prayer that God will place our feet on the path placed before us and keep us from straying. We must remain true to God who has brought us this far and who will continue to guide our path towards peace and reconciliation.

FINANCE
DIANN FLANIGAN, CHAIR

Below is our financial snapshot for April.

April 2020

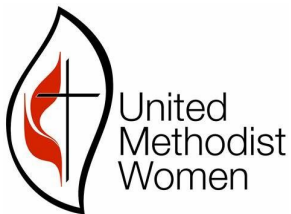
<u>INCOME</u>	Actual	Budget
Church Offering	\$ 25,499.87	\$ 18,558.67
Church Use	\$ 25.00	\$ 116.66
Div & Interest (Qtrly)	\$ 0.00	\$ 625.00
Thrift Shop	<u>\$ 595.00</u>	<u>\$ 8,333.34</u>
 Total Income	 <u>\$ 26,119.87</u>	 <u>\$ 27,633.67</u>
 <u>EXPENSES</u>		
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 25,614.78</u>	<u>\$ 27,634.03</u>

As you can see, our Church Offering exceeded our budget for April, which is a blessing from God through you and your generosity. And, even though our Thrift Shop was closed and still is, there were a few items sold by “word of mouth.” Again, thank you for your continued financial support of the church!

Please continue to pray for our healthcare providers, those on our prayer list, each other, and practice social distancing. Please pray for our SUMC leaders, District leaders and our Conference leaders as they make difficult decisions over the next few weeks.

Remember God is always walking in front of, beside and behind us. Thank you God!

Diann Flanigan
Finance Committee Chairperson



Dear ladies of the Sebastian United Methodist Women,

I pray all of you are safe and well. We are still pretty much sequestered in place, but have been communicating with possible program speakers for fall.

We sadly say goodbye and safe travels as Sally Lambert and husband move to their new home. We will miss her.

Also, Roseland UMC has invited us to their Christmas Program where their children come in and do a program for them. I also have a nutritionist lined up to come to one of our programs in addition to the programs we had to cancel from this past spring.

Looking forward to seeing you soon.

Blessings,

Ginger Horner



Tuesdays 10:00 a.m. via Zoom
"Book of Acts"

Watch for the link in the E-mails from the church.

Happy June Anniversary

Renford & Muriel Douglas	June 8
Larry & Suzann Moritz	June 10
Bill & Kathy Messersmith	June 19

Happy June Birthday

Colin MacNeil	June 4
Ann Marie Van House	June 14
Vicky Hay	June 16
Ron McCullough	June 19
Evelyn Wiltsie	June 22
Donna Osborne	June 26
Sharon Johnson	June 27
Kent Casey	June 28
Wayne Van House	June 29
Sue Shepper	June 30



These Flowers are from Gene Nunez

In Memory of Barb Nunez



If you do not have Email this is a special note for you.

A survey was sent out in Email with different options about resuming worship.



The survey option questions are for resuming worship in July

- ◇ 8:00 a.m. outdoors—no music
- ◇ 8:30 a.m. indoors—limited music, no hymn singing
- ◇ 9:00 a.m. indoors limited music, no hymn singing
- ◇ 11:00 a.m. indoors limited music, no hymn singing
- ◇ 10:00 a.m. virtual service, full music (the service we have been livestreaming)
- ◇ Undecided

Please call the church office with your choices. You can also tear this off and send to the church office.

1029 Main St. Sebastian FL 32958

Church telephone: 772-589-5230

MISSIONS

DONNA OBORNE, CHAIR

A Note from Missions

John 21:17 New International Version (NIV)

The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep.

Matthew 25:35-40 New International Version (NIV)

³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶ I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' ³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' ⁴⁰ "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

These biblical verses, to me, make me feel that Jesus is standing right in front of me talking to me. I feel compelled to respond.

Five years ago we started to help feed our seniors once a month, which brought much happiness to many who we fed and to those volunteering, to do the feeding as well. Suddenly we can't bring our restaurant style feeding to our seniors during these unusual times. But God found another way. It really feels like a miracle.

I think we are so blessed to have been given the opportunity to work with the Salvation Army with our Soul Café Feeding Program. It is a great way to respond to this request from Jesus.

Another important part of our directives from Jesus is "Go Make Disciples". It seems to me God made it so easy for us to follow these directives as partnering with the Salvation Army allowed us to do more than we thought we could. Now not only are we feeding over 160 people in need, weekly, we are encouraging others to do the same. Two different churches are now working with us to reach the hungry.

It feels to me that not only are we responding to Jesus but we are helping others to respond as well. A small local business and people, whom we wouldn't have known without the Soul Café, are being encouraged to do for others. They called and asked how they could help.

Each group that works in our kitchen cooking, cleaning or delivering tell me they feel more blessed than the people they are helping.

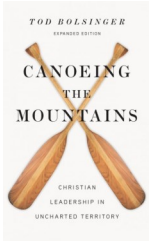
It seems that God is making it so easy for us to positively answer the question that the hymn, "Here I Am Lord", asks....

***"Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?
Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night
I will go, Lord, if you lead me I will hold your people in my heart***

Donna Osborne, Mission Chair

Pastor John's Book Club (on Zoom)

Pastor John is inviting you to join a "book club" where all those participating will read the same book on the same schedule and periodically come together on a Zoom "meeting" to have conversation about our thoughts and insights. The first book we will be reading together is ***Canoeing the Mountains*** (by Tod Bolsinger).



Bolsinger uses the Lewis and Clark Expedition, which set out to canoe America's rivers westward all the way to the Pacific Ocean. Unfortunately, halfway through their journey of discovery, they ran out of rivers as they came up against the Rocky Mountains. They had no choice but to shift their approach to accomplish their mission. They ditched their canoes and acquired horses from the Native Americans in order to continue their expedition.

Bolsinger analyzes the ways they adapted to unexpected change, and he applies their learnings to the Church, as we travel the uncharted waters of the 21st century. What are the "canoes," which served us well in the past, that no longer work in this brave new environment? What adaptations must we make if we are to continue our journey and complete our mission? How can we take advantage of unexpected obstacles to make needed changes to the way we "do church" in 21st century America?

In this era of the coronavirus pandemic and upheaval in our American society, the Church (our church) is having to adapt. We will be exploring what we will need to do differently in order to succeed in uncharted territory.

Contact Pastor John at john.gill@bellsouth.net to let him know you are interested. Go ahead and order the book (print and digital versions are available) so that you are prepared to begin reading with the group. It is available from Cokesbury.com or Amazon.com (and many other suppliers). The book is divided into five "Parts," and we will gather five times on Zoom at the end of each Part for a time of sharing and conversation.

Sebastian UMC has a mission to fulfill. Join us as we discern what it will take to succeed as we move into a future that will not look like the past. I am looking forward to our times together!

Pastor John



Bishop Ken Carter invites you to join him for a Summer in the Scriptures as we journey through the Gospels!

Starting June 1, we'll read a chapter each day, beginning with the book of Matthew. Then, join the "Summer in the Scriptures" Facebook group to share your insights and gain inspiration from others across the Conference.

Connect with us today at facebook.com/groups/GospelSummer and click to join the group for video content, podcasts and daily support for deepening in the mind, heart and life of Jesus.

[Click here](#) to download your Daily Reading Plan check list.

Live Stream Worship at: www.facebook.com/sebastianumc



Sebastian United Methodist Church
1029 Main Street
Sebastian, Florida 32958

Pastor John Gill
Pastor's cell 321-794-0010
johngillumc@bellsouth.net
Church Office: 772-589-5230
Thrift Shop Direct Line: 772-388-0405
sebastianumc@bellsouth.net

Just remember God is in control and that He Loves us!
The world awaits His Master Plan...
As each day passes we pray for answers...
We do our best and wear our masks...
Wash our hands and hope at last...
We'll see the day when this pandemic passes!
We pray that soon we'll see the day when hugs and kisses
become the norm like before this terrible silent storm!
So again, today we wait and pray hoping that soon we'll see
the day when our lives return to stay the normal way!
So let's put our trust in God above and pray to Him to make
us strong to see us through this terrible storm and listen for
His Master Plan...



Nancy L Fox, May 22, 2020