

Seward United Methodist Church News Stream September 27th

Grace Abounds

Last Sunday, we started our sermon series "Grace Abounds." This three week series is a set of story sermons written by Rev. Mary Kay to help explain John Wesley's threefold understanding of grace -- that grace is experienced as prevenient grace, justifying grace, and sanctifying grace. If you missed last Sunday's sermon, the first in the series, you may watch the recording of it available online on [Facebook](#) (at the 27 minute mark) or [YouTube](#). While each of the three story sermons stand alone, the characters in them carry through each week.

Grace, peace,
Reverend Mary Kay

A Blessing of the Animals...

Everyone is invited to a Blessing of the Animals Service on Wednesday evening, October 7 at 6:00p.m. All of God's creatures are welcome: people and those with feathers, fur, fins, two feet and four feet! Following a brief order of worship, Mary Kay and Jo Ellen will offer individual prayers of blessing for each animal present. If your favorite animal would not do well around people and other creatures, you are invited to bring a picture instead. Anyone without an animal to bring may bring a stuffed animal to represent the creatures not with us. We do a Blessing of the Animals in early October to coincide with the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi who would preach to the animals of the field when people would not listen to him. The words to the hymn "All Creatures of Our God and King" are attributed to St. Francis.

Wednesday Re-FOCUS and Picnic on the Lawn

Picnic on the Lawn is open to all who wish to eat and fellowship. Simply [sign up](#) and then arrive right at 5:30pm. We will have your food/drink ready and it is a delicious picnic meal!!! Bring a chair or a blanket or sit right in the grass... Some weeks we will sing outside before heading inside for those who wish to join us for the activities. Just the picnic is fine to attend also, though!

Re- FOCUS is open to all who wish to join in inter-generational and interactive activities with a weekly theme. Some weeks we will be outside (like the blessing of the animals) and some weeks inside (like the fish week)... all are welcome and it is fun to make things and be creative in activities you will enjoy.

UMYF will begin on Wednesday October 7th. Watch for details from our great youth leaders!

Restarting the Parenting Group

Do you love your kids to pieces, yet find parenting very challenging at times? You are not alone! Connect with other parents at Seward United Methodist Church. Our goal is to sharpen and support each other in faith-based parenting. Email Matt and [Lindsay Hastings](#) or Cameron and [Melissa Soester](#) for more information.

Annual Seward County Crop Walk...

Our Crop Walk this year will be a virtual one, which means you can walk anytime the week of October 4th - 10th and give at any point up until October 15th. We are a collection point for Crop Walk as well as the local Seward banks. Please support our efforts again this year as hunger is a huge concern in light of Covid-19 Remember 25% of all funds stay local, with Food Net being one of the recipients along with Blue Valley. The remaining 75% of funds go to assist with world hunger relief directly. This year, Crop Walk is sponsoring a [silly selfie challenge](#) you can participate in!

Updates from United Methodist Women

United Methodist Women Leadership Team announces that they DO NOT plan to host the 2020 Annual Church Bazaar originally scheduled for Saturday, November 14th. United Methodist Women members will be planning for alternative mission fundraising projects which are less likely to expose volunteers and participants to COVID-19. Questions and/or fundraising ideas can be shared with [Jeanne Gee](#).

“All I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen.”

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Children's Ministry Links

Jo Ellen suggest that you might consider using the following links for your children's Sunday School Lessons:

- [Preschool Sunday School](#)
- [Children Sunday School](#)
- [Pre-Teen Sunday School](#)

Faithful and Inclusive Bible Study

This six-session resource for Sunday Schools and small groups has been designed for participants to develop their own perspectives on the Bible's passages related to homosexuality.

Reverend Rob Fuquay, pastor of one of the largest United Methodist congregations in the country, creates a safe space to navigate through this thorny issue, relying on the biblical-interpretation approach of Methodism's founder, John Wesley.

The six 50-minute video sessions cover these subjects:

1. How United Methodists Interpret Scripture
2. Old Testament Passages
3. The Influence of Culture on How We Read the Bible
4. New Testament Passages
5. The Jesus Ethic: What Did Christ Say?
6. Where Does the United Methodist Church Go From Here?

The study will be offered two nights a week beginning on Sunday, October 4th at 6:30pm and Tuesday, October 6th at 6:30pm. Please select the day/method that works the best for you. Plan on an hour each session, with the video lasting 20 minutes and subsequent discussion time. The Sunday session will be led by Merlyn Nielsen and will be offered via Zoom online. The Tuesday session will be in the church led by Amy Miller with social distancing and masks. Please call the church office (402 643-4156) to sign up. You will need to provide your email address for the online ZOOM sessions. If you have questions about the in-person session, contact Amy Miller.

Faith Community Nurses Purchase New AED Device

Thanks to a grant from the Seward United Methodist Church Foundation, the Faith Community Nursing Team has purchased a new AED (Automated External Defibrillator) for the church. An AED is a portable emergency medical device that analyzes the heart's rhythm for an arrhythmia and provides an electric shock to the heart if needed. While the AED is very simple to use, it gives you voice prompts as it is used, please view the demonstration video available online. The [five-minute training video](#) demonstrates how an AED is used in the event of a possible cardiac emergency.