

# The Yoke



A PUBLICATION OF PEOTONE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

THE YOKE- October 2020

## SUNDAY SERVICE RETURNS

*In co-operation with requirements set forth by state government and the Northern Illinois Conference, please follow these social distancing guidelines when attending services:*

- Only sit in the approved areas pre-marked
- PLEASE BRING AND WEAR A MASK
- Please take home your bulletin. Do not leave in pew or discard at church. Please do not discard ANY garbage at the church, including tissues and gum or candy wrappers, etc.
- The offering plates and bulletins will be on the table at the back of the church. These will NOT be passed around. Please take a bulletin and submit your offering at the table.
- NO COFFEE HOUR

### Perfectly Given

When Jesus speaks of perfection, writes Kathleen Norris in *Amazing Grace*, he's referring to being "mature enough to give ourselves to others." For Norris, that brings to mind theology professor Catherine LaCugna, who, despite a terminal diagnosis, worked until the end of her life. Instead of checking out or indulging in self-pity, LaCugna kept the news from her students and continued teaching.

Norris writes: "Now, whenever I recite the prayer that ends the church's liturgical day, 'May the Lord grant us a peaceful night, and a perfect death,' it is her death that I think of. A perfect death, fully acknowledged and fully realized, offered for others."

**BIRTHDAY SUNDAY  
AND ALL OTHER  
ACTIVITIES  
CANCELLED UNTIL  
FURTHER NOTICE**

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**"Nothing [is] more truly  
artistic than to love  
people."  
—Vincent Van Gogh**

## FROM THE PASTOR:

Dear Friends,

As I have continued to experience our corona virus altered world and to process all that I am feeling as we live through this ordeal, I thought again about Pastor Lloyd Ogilvie's approach to releasing the power of prayer in his life. Here it is as I have taken it from his book *Making Stress Work for You*.

1. Sit with your hands open palms up on your lap symbolizing the release of yourself and your openness to receive.
2. With your eyes closed, focus on God. Remember what God has done—every expression of God's love and care that comes to mind. Sing or recite a praise song and visualize God's Spirit filling you.
3. Confess anything in you that needs attention: sin, pain, failure, struggle, poor attitude. Picture that thing that needs attention placed in your hands. Now lift your hands to God and let it go. Receive and affirm forgiveness.
4. Let thanksgiving flow from deep within.
5. Now read the Bible and let God speak to you.
6. Invite God's Spirit to search you. Ask God to heal whatever within you needs healing.

7. Take time to listen. Think about what God is saying to you.
8. Pray for others who need your prayers.
9. Commit the day to God.

When you feel like you have more to contend with in life than you can handle, be sure to turn to God for grace, strength, and courage.

When the pressure eases and life feels more manageable, still turn to God for the power to stay on course and be faithful.

"The prayer of the righteous person is powerful in what it can achieve." (James 5:16)

See you soon,

*RLY*  
Pastor Richard Young



## A Lesson in Appreciation

During a church anniversary celebration, a pastor overheard a group discussing various congregational leaders over the years. Her ears perked up when an older member said, "Whenever someone asks which of our pastors I liked best, my answer is always, 'The one we have at any given time is my favorite.'"

What a relief for the pastor to hear — and what a great lesson for Pastor Appreciation Month. God sends each shepherd to us with a specific set of spiritual gifts and then works through those gifts to bless us.



# Empowering women in Liberia amid COVID-19

By E Julu Swen

Sept. 18, 2020 | MONROVIA, Liberia (UM News)

United Methodist Women in Liberia rolled out a quick impact project intended to help women of the church deal with the financial hardships brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“While we are waiting for the government and other partners to intervene in our situation, we want to help ourselves in facing the challenge head-on,” said Muriel V. Nelson, president of the women’s group in Liberia.

Fifteen women, five from each of three districts (Monrovia, Kakata and St. Paul), participated in the initial weeklong training to prepare them to implement the project — dubbed the “Village Saving Scheme” — at the local level.

Each group will work together to make soap, detergent and sanitary pads for women and girls. Nelson said the products will be sold at a very reasonable cost to ensure that people in rural areas can afford them.

“We understand the economic hardship in our country. That is why we are using our own members to make these products right where the people can reach them and buy them,” Nelson said.

She said UMW will provide the training and raw materials to make the products, with funding from Methodist Women in Britain. The group provided about 1,500 British pounds (nearly \$2,000 U.S.) as seed money for the project.

Each group received \$350 to start the process. Nelson said the leadership of the three participating districts signed for the initial money, which they are expected to return after six months.

“They will keep the profit generated from their investment for onward continuation of the project,” she said, noting that once the initial seed money is returned, it will be given to other districts to implement the empowerment program.

Nelson told United Methodist News that the money was the first of its kind from the Methodist Women in Britain.

“We will ensure that this money is properly invested and the returns will help us with most of our ministries,” she said, adding that some of the funds raised will go toward the construction of women’s villages in the three regions of the conference.

“(The facilities) will house a national women’s office, a rehabilitation center for abused women and girls, and a skills training center for women. United Methodist Women in Liberia have secured a total of 90 acres of land around the country,” she said.

Dede Dolopei, one of the facilitators and a trainee in soap making, said her skills are saving her money that she can now spend on other family matters. “I make my own soap for home use and I am not spending money for soap since the training,” she said.

Already, the St. Paul River District women are implementing the project in three counties where they have a local church presence. District UMW president Josephine Snorton and lead training officer Oretha Goyanvator have rolled out the Village Saving Scheme in Bomi, Cape Mount and Montserrado counties.

Snorton said the trainers help the local women to make the products, which include liquid and powder soap and detergent, during the training week.

“We leave the products with them to sell, keep the profit and return the invested money to the district for onward transmission to the leadership of the United Methodist Women in Liberia,” she said.

The project is expected to be rolled out in waves in the rest of the 18 districts of the Liberia Conference.

# The Christian Review

## Just be- and be still.

Various versions of the following sentiment are posted online: “I am a human being, not a human doing. It’s okay to just *be* sometimes.” Many of us get anxious if we think we’re not *doing* enough, but peace activist Thich Nhat Hanh insists it’s not a waste of time to just be: “To be alive, to be peaceful, to be joyful, to be loving ... is what the world needs most.”

During the pandemic, when people were urged to stay home to slow the virus’ spread, we had to think hard about how to continue being the church while limited in what we could go out and “do.” Yet church leaders reminded us that we were actually loving our neighbors by staying home — by being less active.

It’s sometimes okay — ideal, even — to just be. In quieting our bodies, minds and hearts, we may find ourselves more often in prayer, more aware of God’s presence and more nourished for when the time is right to again take up more active forms of ministry, peacemaking and love. “In quietness and trust is your strength” (Isaiah 30:15, NIV).

—Heidi Mann

## Learning from the Autumn Leaves

Every fall, I marvel at the beautiful leaves, studying the intricate shapes and God’s creative, colorful displays. Despite its deterioration, the foliage reveals splendor — mere months after bursting out in spring and providing summer shade.

I often think I’m like an autumn leaf. Through many seasons, God has transformed me from a self-absorbed person to one who trusts his steadfast promises. Winter is approaching for me too. Yet the Holy Spirit keeps molding me to reflect God’s goodness and beauty.

During the autumn of my life, I pray that God helps me embrace changing seasons while reflecting his love and light to all.

—MaryAnn Sundby

## CHRISTIAN SYMBOL

### Plow

This farming implement is mentioned frequently in the Bible, often in verses about the harvest. Plowing symbolizes preparing the heart to receive God’s truth, or the “seed” of God’s word. The plow also represents commitment; Jesus says, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:62, NIV). The prophet Elisha burns his plow to show his commitment to answer God’s call (see 1 Kings 19:21).



# ACTIVITIES



## TRIVIA

In Jesus' parable about people who hear and live by God's words, on what did the wise man build his house?

- A. rock
- B. sand
- C. grassland
- D. soil that was free of rocks

Last month's trivia answer:

Answer: C (See Exodus 7:14-12:32.)



## A PLANTING PARABLE

Jesus had to explain his Parable of the Sower to the confused disciples.

*Directions: Use the word bank to answer the clues. Then fill in the correct words below to complete Matthew 13:23, NIV.*

**WORD BANK:** sow, soil, wither, root, thorn, crop, seed, farmer

1. Plant part that absorbs water . . . . .
2. Contains what's needed to grow a plant . . . . .
3. To plant . . . . .
4. Sharp part of a plant . . . . .
5. What is harvested. . . . .
6. To dry up and shrivel . . . . .
7. Person who plants . . . . .
8. The earth a plant grows in. . . . .

"But the 2 falling on good 8 refers to someone who hears the word and understands it.

This is the one who produces a 5, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was 3 n."

MATTHEW 13:23, NIV

# October 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7 <i>Disciple Bible Study 10:00AM via ZOOM</i>	8	9	10
Service 10:30am						
11  OPERATIONS Committee Meeting	12	13	14 <i>Disciple Bible Study 10:00AM via ZOOM</i>	15	16	17
Service 10:30am						
18 Charge Conference via ZOOM <i>Special Sunday Offering World Communion Day</i>	19	20	21 <i>Disciple Bible Study 10:00AM via ZOOM</i>	22	23	24
Service 10:30am						
25	26	27	28 <i>Disciple Bible Study 10:00AM via ZOOM</i>	29	30	31
Service 10:30am						
			<p align="center"><b><u>Helping Hands - October</u></b></p> <p align="center">The NOW Committee encourages you to bring your contributions of the following items to church so they can be delivered to Helping Hands: <b><u>PAPER PRODUCTS: toilet paper, paper towels, and tissues.</u></b></p>			



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**October 2020**

**God is  
Awesome!**