
Saint Andrew's Messenger

July-August 2016

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The Newsletter of Saint Andrew's United Methodist Church

1230 Townsend Avenue, New haven, CT 06513

Phone: (203) 467-0117 E-mail:office@standrewsnh.com

Visit us on the web at: standrewsnh.com



I am writing this message just three days after the shooting at Pulse Club in Orlando, FL.....

I am angry, I am in pain, 50 people have died, 53 have been wounded. I have seen pictures of the 49 victims and read the names of them, most of them Hispanic, all of them too young to have died; I have asked myself once again, how many more people will have to die before something changes?

Before you get upset, please let me start by saying, I am not against the second amendment, nor do I advocate for the government to take guns away from citizens. I know many responsible gun owners who would never ever think about using those guns to hurt someone else, I recognize the problem is bigger than just owning guns.

For the last two days, we have all "Been Orlando", I have heard the same discussions, I have seen Facebook full of rainbow flags, lots of "thoughts and prayers" have been sent and moments of silence have been observed, Muslims have been blamed for the action of one obviously disturbed man, and I am tired of it.

I am tired of mass shooting; I am tired of life lost, I am tired of the political games. I am tired that God's children been slaughtered.

Did you know that this year alone we have had 133 mass shooting (where 4 or more people have been shot at the same location, not counting the shooter)? Did you know that since Sandy Hook, more than 1000 mass shootings have taken place in our country, killing over 1300 people? And if we count all the people killed by gun violence, that number sky rockets to 30,000 per year.... the bad news is that we have not even a slight hope to stop it. My guess is that by the time you read this, the country will be back to business as usual.

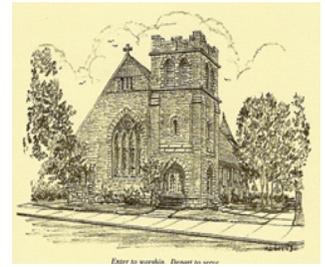


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When car crashes were killing people, especially children, we were quick to change our laws; seat belts and air bags became mandatory, and whoever wanted to drive a car needed to pass proper screening in order to drive. Many people were banned from driving due to health issues or age. Why don't we do the same for gun users? When we discovered that cigarette smoking was causing cancer and killing people, we banned it from schools and made cigarettes hard for children to buy. Many toys and candies have been banned from being sold, just to prevent children from getting sick. Why don't we do the same when it comes to gun violence?

Why is there not good mental health understanding and coverage? Why do so many people, who are obviously not mentally stable, have easy access to guns?

Why do we continue to encourage hate toward communities, based on faiths, customs, race or lifestyles? Why do we let the news misguide us? Why do we spend so much energy in demonizing the ones who think different than us, instead of fighting against the ones who are trying to destroy our communities?

One of our vows that we pledge when we join The United Methodist church is to "accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves." I believe we are in front of a big evil and I confess I am not sure I am doing all in my power to prevent it. I have stood silent against discrimination and promotion of hate, even in the Church. I have heard the voice of Jesus who asks me to care for His people, all His people, and I don't know how.

Friends, I am hurt, I am angry, I wish I had the answers so we could easily come to a middle ground and find ways to solve this problem, once and for all, so that there is no more "Sandy Hook," no more "Orlando, FL," no more fear of sending my children to school or college or to a mall or even to a church.

So what do I do when I feel this angry and this hurt? I go back to the feet of Christ, who weeps with me when evil strikes, who teaches me that God is bigger and can do what I cannot do. That teaches me that hate is NEVER OK, and my job is to love God with all my heart, soul and mind and my neighbors like myself, all my neighbors, without buts or ifs.

Mike Slaughter reminded me this week that "As followers of Jesus, let us not be lured into the politics of hate by the fear of our enemies, but realize that the fiercest defense against evil is ultimately the proactive demonstration of Christ's love."

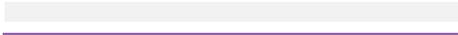
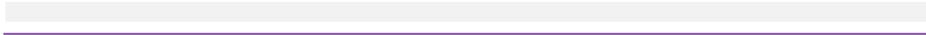
I may not be able to fix this problem, but I pledge to do all in my power to resist evil, to show the power of God's Grace and Love in my life and to reflect that Grace and Love with my words and actions. I pledge that the fear, terror and hate that the world advertises will not enter into my heart and live, and in the struggle, I will continue to look to God for answers.

I pray God give us all the strength to make our world safer for all God's children, whatever it takes.

Ximena



Join us every Sunday at 10:00am during July and August



IMPORTANT NEWS



We serve God by serving others; here is what you can do:

Connectional giving — all of us giving together — allows United Methodists to do together what we cannot do alone. We join in with United Methodists around the world in 6 special collections throughout the year. The money collected goes 100% to a specific mission designated by the general church. For more information, go to UMCGIVING.com.

Every first Sunday you can donate to the **Pastor's Discretionary Fund**; this money is used by the pastor to help with immediate needs in the community.



Food Pantry
Donations Needed

Food Pantry Collection, non-perishable items are collected during the month. Every first Sunday of each month all the collected food items will be taken and be delivered to a local food pantry. Fall and winter months are always difficult and food pantries are always empty!



Join us in our 2016 Operation Christmas Child campaign. Help us fill many boxes full with hope and joy for children all over the world. We will be collecting small toys, school supplies and \$7 per box so they can be shipped around the world.

HELP IS NEEDED! Help our trustees with building repairs. Contact the pastor or Jamie Lawson.

Remember!

Dates to remember:

Clean Up day every First Saturday of the month

July 4, Happy Independence Day

Administrative Church Council July 5, 2016 7:00pm at the parsonage

Pastor on Vacation June 20 to July 3 in case of an emergency call Phillipa Blake or Diana Grippen

2016 Jurisdictional Conference of the UMC July 11-15 at the Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square, Lancaster, PA.

July 17, after service we will have a Church Picnic at Lois McDonald's house



Are you interested in becoming a member of our church, or do you want to learn more about us?

Please contact the pastor!



Here at St. Andrew's, we believe in the power of prayer! If you or someone you know needs to be prayed for please contact pastor by phone or email.

MORE IMPORTANT NEWS



Sunday School will take a Summer Break!
Join us again on September 11, 2016
Nursery available for Children 4 year and under



Adult Bible Study Discovering the Book of Acts

Join us every Tuesday night at 6:00pm for fellowship and learning at the parsonage. We will be looking at the Book of Acts, learning about the early Christians, their struggles and joys, and the lessons we can apply today in our church. Can't make it? no problem let the pastor know if you want to join the email group.

Our Choir will begin rehearsals on Sunday, August 21st. Rehearsal will start promptly at 9:15 Sunday morning.

We would welcome any new members - our hope is that singers of all ages will consider joining this group.

Looking forward to seeing you



Thank you for all who participated on our 2016-2017 Stewardship campaign

Thank you to the congregation for your financial and spiritual support to the UMARMY Team.

Thank you to all who helped make our tag sale and Mac and Cheese dinner a success.



Pastor Ximena is available for a talk, prayers and visits, in fact she would love for you to invite her to visit. Please call the office, pastor's cell phone or email to set up an appointment.



Receive updates, prayer request and what is happening in worship every week, subscribe to our mailing list by emailing us!



Junette Cole New Address: 8142 Fenwick Court, Laurel, MD 20707

Joshua Cordero New Address: 404 Burr St. New Haven, CT 06512

MORE IMPORTANT NEWS



The mission of The United Methodist Church is to “Make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world” (Matt. 28:18-20; Matt. 22:36-40). This mission is achieved through vital congregations that equip and empower people to be disciples of Jesus Christ in their homes and communities around the world.

Our Vital Signs

The Vital Signs Dashboard is a tool developed by Brick River through GCFA. This tool allows you to track your weekly worship attendance, professions of faith, small group participation, missional participation and financial giving for your congregation. It is a tool designed to help congregations follow their progress on the goals that they set for each year, based on the goal-setting challenge initiated by the Vital Congregations work. It is in response to the Call To Action to focus on fostering and sustaining an increase in the number of vital congregations effective in the mission of The United Methodist Church.

Date	Worship Attendance	Small Groups Attendance (week)	Pledges & Offerings	Charitable Giving	New Members
6/12/16	54	5	674	0	0
6/5/16	41	13	1222	47	0
5/29/16	44	13	855	5	0
5/22/16	40	7	41	594	1
5/15/16	35	20	0	617	0
5/8/16	40	16	3	1002	0
5/1/16	45	7	57	1124	0
4/24/16	78	17	0	859	0
4/17/16	45	24	70	1075	0

If you or someone you know needs to be prayed for please contact pastor by phone or email

Prayer for Our Congregation- Dear God, I thank you for all the ways you are present in my life, especially today I thank you for Saint Andrew’s United Methodist Church and all the ways you are present among us.

Lord, I ask for all the leaders of my church today, I ask that you guide us to be the church you want us to be. Transform us oh Lord, so we can truly be your hand and feet on earth.

Lord, I pray for the health and growth of Saint Andrew’s UMC, I ask that you heal our hearts and give us a courageous spirit so we can reach out to the ones that need to hear the Good News.

Lord, I ask for my brothers and sister who are not yet in our midst, Lord, send us all the people who no one else wants but you are calling to follow you and help us to welcome them as you have welcomed us.

Send your Holy Spirit to us so we can transform the world in Jesus’ name, give me the strength to love you with all my heart soul and mind and to love my neighbors as myself. In Jesus’ name, I pray. Amen





New York Annual Conference: An Overview-By Ximena Varas

New York Annual Conference was an amazing experience and one that I am very grateful to have been a part of. That being said, I would like to say thank you to all for voting me in and allowing me to be your representative.

Within our time at conference, many things happened all at once. There were booths of all different kinds supporting, informing, or selling many things, as well as the main stage that hosted worship and a lot of the voting and conversation. One of the booths that I experienced was the booth talking about prison cruelty through the use of solitary confinement, and they even set up a prison cell with added sounds to make the experience real. Worship was grand and loud. Our voices were able to echo through the room and you could feel the spirit moving in the arena. On the very first worship service I was given the honor of carrying the cross onto the stage as well as partaking in serving communion with others that our pastor was able to consecrate for the lay representatives. When we were in session in the arena, we were able to vote on many different topics, like approving a budget, who to sponsor for episcopacy, and any changes that we wanted to make or review on the petitions that were voted upon in our separate sessions. I voted mainly on what the conference as a whole would support. As well as being a part of worship and voting, we split up into different workshop groups. I went to the Building H.O.P.E. workshop given by David Abarca, Assistant Director of Annual Conference Relationships, Discipleship Ministries. He spoke about who he is and what is a disciple as well as the importance of disciples in the church and how to create and foster growth of our disciples using the H.O.P.E. model. H.O.P.E. stands for Hospitality, Offer Christ, Purpose, and Engagement. It is our ability to show hospitality, to offer Christ and make that commitment with him, to have that purpose to grow in faith through grace, and to engage in the transformation of our community where we find true discipleship. As a friend at my table said, "being a disciple is a life style; if you don't got it, you can't give it."

The conference ended with awards being handed out for the mission work of local churches, where our church was recognized; as well as the reappointment of pastors throughout the conference. This included the reappointment of our pastor for one more year to Saint Andrew's. If you have any more questions or would like to discuss in more detail about what I experienced in conference, feel free to come and talk to me. I have brought back some pamphlets of different varieties that I have left in the church for all to read whatever they may.

-Ximena B. Varas



UM ARMY 2016- By Moises Varas

United Methodist Action Reach-out Mission by Youth, or UM ARMY, is a mission trip for youth to go to a local neighborhood for a week and help the elderly and the disabled with work ranging from yard work to minor repairs. It started in 1979 in Athens, Texas with volunteers from churches in Houston. This year a group of youth plus their pastor, went to Amityville, New York for their mission trip. I was a part of this group. We arrived at Amityville United Methodist Church (AUMC) on Sunday, where we unloaded our cars, organized the tools we borrowed, had dinner, worship. However, one of the things we needed to do was find out who our teams were. Each year, the Program Director has an activity to help us find our teammates. The activity this year was that we were given a water bottle, with our name on it, and an image inside. Each image was Disney themed, so our job was to find the other people that had an image from the same Disney movie as us. Each team is a part of a color group. The teams were Purple Team as the administrators, Red A and B, Orange C and D, Green E, and Blue F, and day of the week was themed around each color group. From there, we were served dinner by some of the members of AUMC, went around to hear from each leader about what to do and expect for the week, as well as find out what our chores were going to be, and our site for Monday, and then went into worship.

Our week goes from Monday to Friday. We wake up with worship, and the way worship worked was that there was the lighting of the Christ candle, opening prayer, opening song, scripture reading, a small video, the message, closing song, and closing prayer, and at night, we light candles representing our color group, team, and work sites completed, as well as give a joy, concern, or God sighting. All of these are done by volunteers in the color group based on the day. Monday was Purple, Tuesday was Red, Wednesday was Orange, Thursday was Green, and Friday was Blue. After worship, we go to breakfast, then get our tools ready for the work day, then go to our site. A lot of what was done as far as work was a mix of yard work, minor repairs, and 2 teams were assigned to build a ramp for handicapped clients. One of the teams needed to return Saturday morning to finish up the ramp.

Our work day, however, ends at about 3. After that, we go to take our showers, which usually is either at a YMCA or a high school, but this time was at a yacht club. On the route to the yacht club, we pass by the Amityville Horror House, which the local neighborhood, I'm told, isn't pleased with being known for that one house. The house itself looked like a regular house. Nothing special. After our showers, we had dinner, and then every day before worship, we had an activity. Monday was a group of games ranging from races to Frisbee throwing, to knocking down bottles with an orange in a pantyhose that's tied around the waist and no use of hands. All this "competition" is merely for fun. Tuesday was a day at the beach. Wednesday was a dinner with the entire group out at a nearby pub. We did have a limited menu, but we were guaranteed an appetizer, an entrée, soda or water, and dessert, all of which were really good and filling. Another activity we did on Wednesday was a Prayer Journey. There were different stations, each with a reflection and an activity relating to the reflection. It started with getting a stone, and writing something that represents where you need help from God in your daily life. You keep this stone until the end when you figuratively give it up to God. Thursday night was something that happens every year. It's called "Client Night," and it's a way for the UM ARMY team to say thank you to our clients. When we finish a site, we invite the clients over for a dinner. As I've mentioned, Client Night is our way of

saying "thank you" to our clients, but what ends up happening is that our clients say "thank you" to us. Each of them has their own way of saying it, but the common thing that's said is how much UM ARMY impacted their lives, even after tragedy struck. Friday night, we all got together and one at a time described what we took from the weekend. A lot of the stories were how it felt like coming to UM ARMY for the first time, and these stories were coming from people with experience in UM ARMY. Saturday we needed to pack up and go home. While it is a sad day for all of us, if there is anything we all agree on, it is that the memories made this week won't be forgotten. Neither will the friendships made. To that, I say, "Thank you, AUMC and St. Andrew's UMC."



Journal of John Wesley

By Norma Ryan

Week 28: July 3, 2016

Tuesday, June 7, 1763: Wesley writes-- "There is something remarkable in the manner wherein God revived his work in these parts. A few months ago the generality of people in this circuit were exceedingly lifeless. Samuel Meggot, perceiving this, advised the society at Barnard Castle to observe every Friday with fasting and prayer. The very first Friday they met together, God broke upon them in a wonderful manner; and his work has been increasing among them ever since. The neighboring societies heard of this, agreed to follow the same rule, and soon experienced the same blessing. Is not the neglect of this plain duty (I mean fasting, ranked by our Lord with almsgiving and prayer) one general occasion of deadness among Christians? Can anyone neglect it and be guiltless?"

Food for Thought: The Lenten season has ended but has our fasting ended also?

This summer, why not continue the Christian discipline of fasting? Even our children could fast in this manner. Isaiah 58:6-7 NLT reads: "This is the kind of fasting I want:

Free those who are wrongly imprisoned; lighten the burden of those who work for you. Let the oppressed go free; and remove the chains that bind people. Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help.

Isaiah gives us a new definition for fasting. The fasting our Lord wants is for us to help others--- not just to 'give up' something that we normally ascribe as fasting. If each day we intentionally did at least one of these 'good works' we would bless our neighbors and give God glory through our obedience. It could be a family affair.

Week 29: July 10

Wesley believed and taught the doctrine of Christian perfection taken from Philippians 3:12 "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." For this he was often criticized and misunderstood. Wednesday, September 14, 1762 he wrote: "The more I converse with the believers in Cornwall, the more I am convinced that they have sustained great loss for want of hearing the doctrine of Christian perfection clearly and strongly enforced. I see that wherever this is not done, the believers grow dead and cold. Nor can this be prevented but by keeping up in them an hourly expectation of being perfected in love. I say an hourly expectation; for to expect it at death, or sometime hence, is much the same as not expecting it at all.

Question: As a Methodist, do you know what Wesley believed and taught his followers? This week make time to read his sermon on Christian perfection. You just may be surprised at what Wesley believed and taught his disciples. It can be found at: <http://www.umcmission.org/Find-Resources/John-Wesley-Sermons/Sermon-40-Christian-Perfection> or just Google: Wesley Sermon #40.

Week 30: July 17:

These are a few excerpts from Wesley's journal that could be used during daily devotions or times of quiet meditation. May the reader receive insight and understanding of what it is that Wesley expected Methodists to be and to do. God Bless...

Saturday, July 21, 1764: It was a great comfort to me to converse once more with a Methodist of the old stamp, denying himself, taking up his cross, and resolved to be "altogether a Christian."

Sunday, November 24, 1765: Alas, for their simplicity! In spite of all I can print, say, or do, will not those who seek occasion of offence find occasion?

Friday, January 31, 1766: Mr. Whitefield called upon me. He breathes nothing but peace and love. Bigotry cannot stand before him but hides its head wherever he comes.

Week 31: July 24, 2016

Saturday, March 19, 1768: We rode to Birmingham. The tumults which subsisted here so many years are now wholly suppressed by a resolute magistrate. After preaching, I was pleased to see a venerable monument of antiquity. George Bridgins, in the one hundred and seventh year of his age. He can still walk to the peaching and retains his senses and understanding tolerably well. But what a dream will even a life of a hundred years appear the moment he awakes in eternity!

Food for thought: Do you ever think how long eternity will be especially in comparison to our earthly existence? One hundred seven years seems so long, yet 2 Peter 3:8 says, Beloved, do not forget this one thing--- that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. As Wesley grew older, he became more pensive and aware of his mortality. His writings began to reflect his thoughts on the eternal life set before him. Where will you spend eternity? It is your choice.

Week 32: July 31

Wednesday, September 7, 1768: After the early preaching, the select society met; such a company of lively believers, full of faith and love, I never found in this country before. This, and the three following days, I preached at as many places as I could, though I was in doubt whether I could preach eight days together, mostly in the open air, three or four times a day. But my strength was as my work; I hardly felt any weariness, first or last.

Wesley worked diligently at his God given calling but he was always concerned that he needed to be doing what God called him to do... no more...no less.

Food for thought: Am I doing what God is calling me to do or am I possibly pleasing people? We need to always take time to pray and "Check in with God" before saying "yes". Know that if it is God calling you -- He will give direction and provide the necessary grace, strength and provision just as He did for Wesley. If you are cranky, tired, worn out, or maybe just plain unhappy, it may be time to take stock of where you are in your discipleship journey.

Week 33: August 7, 2016

Today's submission may give you a little chuckle specially to know the world has not changed that much over the decades.

On Friday, February 17, 1769 Wesley writes: "I abridged Dr. Watt's pretty treatise on the Passions. His hundred and seventy-seven pages will make a useful tract of four and twenty. Why do persons who treat the same subjects as me, write so much larger books? Of many reasons, is not this the chief---we do not write with the same view? Their principle end is to get money; my only one; to do good."

Food for thought: Today's journal entry is almost a sequel to the previous entry; why do we do what we do? What is our motivation?

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. (Psalm 139:23-24)

Isn't it wonderful that our God is our God and he never changes! He is always there for us.

Week 34: August 14, 2016

Wesley had a sense of humor as well as an appreciation for beauty.

September 19, 1769: "...a gentleman in the town desired me to preach at his door. The beasts of the people were tolerably quiet till I had nearly finished my sermon. They then lifted up their voices, especially one, called a gentleman, who had filled his pockets with rotten eggs. But, a young man coming unawares, clapped his hands on each side and mashed them all at once. In an instant, he was perfume all over, though it was not so sweet as balsam.

Tuesday, October 24, 1769: "This evening there was such an aurora borealis as I never saw before; the colors, both the white, the flame color, and the scarlet, were exceedingly strong and beautiful.

Food for thought: Today and forever, don't forget to laugh and look deeply at the beauty all around us that God has provided for our pleasure. If creation can be this beautiful, how much more beautiful is its Creator?

Week 35: August 21, 2016

Thursday 28, 1769 Wesley muses: "I can hardly believe that I am this day entered into the sixty-eighth year of my age. How marvelous are the ways of God! How has he kept me even from a child! From ten to thirteen or fourteen I had but bread to eat, and not a great plenty of that. I believe this was so far from hurting me that it laid the foundation of lasting health. When I grew up... I chose to eat sparingly and to drink water. This was another great means of continuing my health till I was about seven and twenty. I then began spitting of blood, which continued several years. A warm climate cured this. I was afterward brought to the brink of death by a fever; but it left me healthier than before. Eleven years after, I was in the third stage of consumption; in three months it pleased God to remove this also. Since that time I have not known pain nor sickness, and am now healthier than I was forty years ago. This hath God wrought.

Food for thought: Amen! and Amen! We take so many things for granted; our health, our hearing and eyesight, our family and friends, the ability to go off to work, the privilege of retirement, that we have clean water and shoes to wear, and so much more. Every day thank God that he takes care of us and provides for all of our needs. Amen and Amen!

Week 36: August 28, 2016

Monday, April 6, 1772: "In the afternoon I drank tea at Am. O. But how was I shocked! The children that used to cling about me and drink every word had been at boarding school. There they had unlearned all religion and even seriousness and had learned pride, vanity, affectation, and whatever could guard them against the knowledge and love of God. Methodist parents who would send your young girls headlong to hell --- send them to a fashionable boarding school!"

Food for thought: This journal entry is timely in that it is the beginning of a new school year. Wesley was admonishing Methodists to be careful when schooling their children. Have we compromised our God given mandate to educate our children allowing them to learn pride, vanity, affectation and that which keeps them from the knowledge and love of God? Remember from several weeks ago---Susannah Wesley and her methods of education? We are engaged in a battle for our children's minds! With God on our side, we can win the battle and our children will be imitators of Jesus not of the world! Grandparents, NEVER stop praying for your grandchildren. Parents, pray also, but watch carefully over your children---especially what they see and hear when away from your presence.



Join us every Sunday at 10:00am during July and August

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**everyone is
welcome**

www.facebook.com/church
ofSaintAndrews

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**

July 2016

01 Oriana Webster
03 Donna Francis
04 Jayne Crowley
10 Pauline Kidd
25 Rawle Lynch
26 Anthony Penna, Jr.
29 Nicole Morales
29 Elva Tripp

August 2016

01 John Quimby
05 Joshua Cordero
06 Destiny Hermann
13 Moises Varas
17 Carol Tripp
28 David Guthrie
31 Mark Little
24 Mckenzie Miessau

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July/August