

# Red Bank United Methodist Witness

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August 2022 Newsletter

## **"What should I do with the life God gave me?"**

*"The most important thing you can do is to discern what God is asking you to do with your life."*

*--Lovette H. Weems Jr. and Tom Berlin*

I love this question! Discovering and utilizing your spiritual gifts is one of the most exciting adventures a person can have with God. The Bible says spiritual gifts are abilities God gives every believer for the common good of the Church--the Body of Christ--of which each of us is a part!!!

Have you ever walked up to the church building and thought to yourself: *"I would love to take care of these flower pots; I love gardening, but I'm sure there is someone else doing this"?* Therefore, you don't do it.

Perhaps you have noticed that the hallway needs a new paint job, but you have thought to yourself, *"I'm new to the church. I don't want to bring it up and step on toes."*

Is there a group or ministry you would like to be involved in--feel a need for that we don't currently have? Maybe you would like to start a *"single's ministry,"* or a *"support group,"* a *"mom's Bible study,"* but don't know how to go about doing it, or you haven't been asked.

***Maybe you are searching for "your place in the church," but you don't know where to start.***

Please speak to me about any ideas you might have--any passions you feel God calling you to fulfill. ***God has brought you to Red Bank United Methodist Church for a reason--a good reason!!! All of us need you to fulfill God's call on your life; God's reason for bringing you here. We all have gifts which must be utilized in order for the church to be all that God wants it to be.***

Nancy Ortberg, a church leadership consultant, shares the following: *"Every spiritual gift is a reflection of God's nature that you carry within you. And because your spiritual gift reflects God's design and direction for your life, you'll find great passion, joy, and satisfaction in expressing it. Your spiritual gift also will be a place of deep spiritual formation in your life, as*

*God uses it both to powerfully connect you to him and to expose areas of your soul that need his forgiveness and redemption.*

*So, here's a process to start:*

***Pay attention.*** Notice the things that energize you and seem to come naturally. Remember the quote from the movie *Chariots of Fire* when Eric Liddell explained to his sister why he was postponing his return to the mission field in order to race in the Olympics? "Because when I run, I feel the pleasure of God."

*Every spiritual gift gives off clues. Your spiritual gift will cause you to react a certain way in a given situation. If there's a problem, people with the spiritual gift of shepherding will be immediately concerned that people are cared for and growing in Christlikeness as a result of the issue. Those with the gift of intercession (prayer) will immediately say, "We need to pray about this," while those with a leadership gift will begin looking at solutions for the problem.*

***Try.*** Once you've gathered enough information to create a list of some possible gifts, exercise your options. A great place to start would be a volunteer position at your church. While you're trying it out, you'll start to discern whether you're good at it or not.

*When my kids were young, our church needed help in the nursery during the worship services. I volunteered for a three-month opening. I didn't feel the pleasure of God; the children didn't feel the pleasure of God. It was so not my spiritual gift. Part of learning what you're good at is having to go through the pain of learning what you're not good at.*

*As you try different things, you'll eventually find yourself engaged in something through which you find a deep sense of connection to God. Pick that road to continue your adventure.*

***Develop.*** In 2 Timothy 1:6, the apostle Paul encourages Timothy to 'fan into flame the gift of God.' We're responsible to develop our gifts.

*It's remarkable how you can deepen your relationship with God as you uncover and live out the spiritual gifts he's bestowed on you. What could the church and our world look like if each of us used the gift God's given us?"*

What is Red Bank United Methodist not doing that you would like to see us doing? What are we doing that we could do better? Is there something going on that you would like to take a part in? ***How can you help us grow as God's Church, and in doing so, grow in your love and joy as a child of God?***

Please let me know. I love you; I am here for you. God has called me to be your pastor. I am humbled by the privilege.

Your Servant in Christ, Pastor Ken



If you would like to help with set-up, break-down, serving food—anything—please speak with Ken Sauer. We need HELP!



Terry and Kathy Worley along with Edna Henson joined the church Sunday, July 24.





**We are very excited to welcome our new Director of Music and Worship Arts, Michelle Motter. Michelle is a great addition to our Red Bank UMC family!**



**Please welcome the very talented Gabrielle Newman! Gabrielle is our new Pianist.**

## **“It’s Not Easy Being United Methodist”**

By Bishop Ken Carter of the Charlotte Episcopal Area



The United Methodist way of being a Christian is not the only way. It is not the easiest way. It is not the superior way. It is the way for me. And it holds together two different realities. First, we were created for relationships, and we flourish when we are in connection with each other. Second, we were created by and for God and we desire communion with God. Each of these realities is at the heart of the great commandment of Jesus, that we love God and our neighbor. And this is how John Wesley spoke of holiness and happiness.

It is significant that for Wesley, Holy Communion was a “converting ordinance.” Not every branch of the church, not every way of being Christian would see it this way. And so, we are in connection with sinners, imperfect people. We do not always love each other well. And our communion is with a God whom we do not always love completely. The relationship is a gesture of grace to us, the bread and wine placed in our hands. It is unmerited favor. And so, we say the ancient prayer, *“cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you.”* We receive communion with the hope that our imperfect, even disordered lives will mature.

It’s easy to be in communion with a God who sees all things in the way that we see them. And it is easy to be in connection with people who love us and who give us no reason not to love them. United Methodism is not easy for this very reason—it keeps us in communion with a God whose ways are not our ways. And it keeps us in connection with people who challenge our happiness, and, to take it a step farther, it keeps us in connection with people who are not obstacles to our holiness but whose differences are the way we learn the practices that move us closer to holiness, that is, perfection in love in this life. This is precisely the way of the cross. And for us the cross is fused with flame, the purifying work of the Holy Spirit. This is the United Methodist way of sanctification.

Today, may you have experiences that draw you closer to God and to other people, especially within the household of faith. May you know the gifts of communion and connection. And in this way, may you know that you are very close to the way of Jesus and his commandments that lead to life.

*Written the morning of July 30, 2022*

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## Faith Guided Leadership

By: Tom Mayberry

I had stopped in Nashville, that day, to get gas for the car, as I do often since I travel for my fulltime job. A gentleman approached me, and I knew right away he was going to ask for money. This scenario happens quite often. They are down on their luck, they need gas to go see a sick relative, their car broke down, and other situations that may tug at your heart. Normally, I will listen to their story and then politely decline to help. I do not “trust” the honesty of their story. I wonder how they will spend the money that I could give them.

Why do we hesitate to make a decision to help? What drives us to give or not to give? Are we worried that we would give them money and it will feed their alcoholism or drug addiction? Sometimes our fear of doing the wrong thing stops us from doing anything, which precludes us from serving anyone at all. Is this how God wants us to serve others? On their terms, not ours? Mark 9:35 says Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, “Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all.”

I understand the concept of servant leadership and have written about that many times over the years. There are programs set up to serve others. The food pantry at my church is one of these. We do not think twice about helping serve in that capacity, or to give our money to that cause. But when approached on the street, we are either frozen in our tracks on what to do, or we quickly decline giving money. I do not have an answer to how you should handle each situation. You will have to let God guide your actions.

I remember a friend telling me he saw a man standing at the exit ramp of the highway years ago with a sign saying, “Will work for food”. Since my friend was a contractor and had work to offer, he offered him a job for the day and told him how much he would pay him. The man turned him down saying he could make more money holding the sign on

the side of the street than he could by going to work for my friend. I think about that story often when I see someone pleading for help at the exit ramps.

Now back to the gas station and the man approaching me. He said he had just gotten out of prison, had no money, and was too far away from the community shelter where he could get a free meal. Could I possibly help him out, he was hungry? That day, it did not take me any time at all to make the decision to ask him to go inside the convenience store and get whatever he would like to eat. I would buy him lunch. He felt bad even asking me for help and did not want to take advantage of my generosity. He said he would just get a hot dog and would be fine with that. I convinced him to get two plus a drink. I also offered to buy him other food to keep with him for later that day. He took me up on the two hot dogs and the drink. He did not want anything else. He was extremely grateful and told me that I was the first person to not be scared to even talk to him when he approached them. He thanked me so many times before I left. It cost me less than \$5.00 to serve him that day.

We need to be aware of how God wants us to serve others throughout each day. It is not always on our terms. It needs to be on His terms. I pray you are blessed and can be a blessing to others.

## **Brackett's Rackett**

## Contentment by design

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

God tells us godliness with contentment is great gain, but being content is not always easy to do (1 Timothy 6:6). It's often difficult because we're looking around at others, wondering if what we have compares with what they have.

Paul said he learned how to be content in whatever state he found himself (Philippians 4:11). Paul didn't just talk about it, he showed us. There he was in prison, all shackled up, and what was he doing? Having a pity party? No, he was singing praises to God. Too often we choose to praise God after has answered our prayers. And while there's nothing wrong with thanking God for answered prayer, we miss out, if that's the only time we praise him with thanksgiving. God is good. It's impossible for God to be anything less than good. It's his character.

I often think of when Jesus visited Mary and Martha after their brother, Lazarus died. Even though Jesus went there after Lazarus was already dead, he still had a plan.

So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me." - John 11:41-42

I always found it interesting that Jesus thanked God for hearing his prayer before Lazarus took one step. Years ago, I made a mental note of that. God is worthy of praise. We don't have to wait to see if God delivers on something we ask him before we thank him. And if God chooses to say, "No," that doesn't mean God is less worthy of our praise.

God's Word tells us it's impossible to please God without faith (Hebrews 11:6). When we choose to be thankful and praise God at all times, we are exercising faith. We are praising God because we know God is capable of doing everything we ask and then so much more. When we thank God, we are pleasing our heavenly Father.

God is worthy of praise. Just because he's God. It pleases God when we praise him ahead of time because we're saying, God, whether or not you choose to answer my prayers, I praise you for who you are. I thank you for all you've given me. And Lord, even when you choose to say "no" to my requests, I know you have your reasons. You know the beginning from the end. Your thoughts are much higher than my thoughts and your ways are higher too (Isaiah 55:8-9). And Lord, if you withhold something I'm asking you for, then maybe the thing is not good for me, or the timing is not right. I know it's not good because you've said you will not withhold any good thing from me (Psalm 84:11). God, I trust you.

We can choose to be thankful in all things. Simply because God is all-wise and he allows what he does with his wisdom. And when things look like they will never work out, those impossible times are God's specialty. The things that are impossible with man are possible with God (Luke 18:27). I love it when God does what seems impossible, because there's no question at all who did it. And when we get discouraged because of our circumstances, God promises that in all things he can work for the good, for us (Romans 8:28).

We can rejoice always because we know the Almighty God, the everlasting Father. We can pray continually, because he invites us to bring our cares to Him, because he cares for us (1Peter 5:7). And we can give thanks in all circumstances because it is God's will. We also know none of God's plans can be thwarted (Job 42:2). I'm pretty certain that when Paul sang to the Lord from behind bars, it was one of the most beautiful praises ever heard. And we can do the same.



Happy Anniversary



2 Joy Brackett	18 Laney Millard	6 Brud and Sherri Millard
7 Jeanette Esch	20 Ginny Mabe	14 Hale and Susan Booth
10 Jeff Morris	21 Cheryl White	20 Keith and Jane Smith
11 Esther Clemmons	23 Linda Alexander	
15 Susan Hardin	28 Gina Thomas	
16 Betty Jackson	30 Taylor Millard	



### **Discipleship:**

Don't Forget that we have Five Adult Small Groups that meet on Sunday Morning at 9:30 a.m.:

Alpha – mostly younger adults – meets in the Fellowship Hall

Armstrong/Lyons – age 60 + (some younger adults) – meets in room 211

Cross Ties - age 45+ (some younger adults) – meets in room 216

Fidelis - age 50+ - meets regularly in room 217 (due to some health issues currently meeting in church parlor).

Shaw/Murray – age 65+ - meet in room 111

### **YOUTH (Grades 6-12):**

- Cornerstone Youth Class is meeting in the Loft they are currently studying “My Family, My Friends, My Life”

Youth Foundation Bible Study – Sunday Nights at 5:30 p.m. – this summer they are doing a study on various cults.



**Church Wide Picnic – Sunday August 21st, 5:00 p.m. in our church yard. Food will be Covered Dish and Church will provide Fried Chicken. Lots of games, entertainment and Fun!!**

(If it is raining or too hot to be outside we will move the picnic indoors)

### **Senior Adults/Young At Heart:**



August 2022:

9 11:00 a.m. - Restaurant: The Local Goat

25 10:30 a.m. - Theme: Luau Hostess:

Devotion: Sheila Calabrese

September 2022:

13 11:00 a.m. - Restaurant: Top of the Rock

22 10:30 a.m. - Program: Program Leader: Hostess:

Devotion: Jane Smith



Wacky Water Day was a SPLASH!









