Money is a powerful force. We absolutely need to recognize the power money wields in our lives. Many decisions we make or need to make regarding where we live, how we live and what we do include, as one of the powerful deciding forces, a question about money.

We all know that money is a magnifier. It can magnify our feelings of security or insecurity. It can allow us to feel free or restricted. It can also be managed.

Money is an inanimate object. It is without passion or prejudice. It has no feelings and a dollar has the same value to the one who has many as the one who has few. It is an overpowering force because many of us have allowed in large and small ways our money to manage us. Because of this very real need in our community, Marion Methodist is taking the very bold step of offering FREEDOM in the fall of 2019.

FREEDOM is so important to us that we are pushing the "pause" button on many of our regular things. For instance, this fall for the first time in many years I will not be teaching Basic Bible. This is one of my great joys in ministry (and it will return in the spring semester) but I feel so strongly about the need for financial freedom in our families, church and community that full commitment needs to be given to FREEDOM.

FREEDOM, if you have not been made aware, is an opportunity being offered you, and everyone you know, in and outside of the church, to become financially free. The main tool in FREEDOM is Financial Peace University which is a product put together by Dave Ramsey and his team. Throughout the course you will find rich Biblical principles shared and very practical guidance regarding managing your finances as part of your faithful living.

In April, I attended the training for spiritual leaders that is at the heart of this campaign. From it there are three things necessary for me to share. First, I make Disciples of Jesus Christ

Second, THIS IS NOT A CAMPAIGN TO RAISE FUNDS FOR THE CHURCH. Oh yeah, we've heard that one before….Truly, while Marion Methodist always needs your tithes and offerings, FREEDOM is about finding a way to be in charge of your money so, as the materials say; "You can live like no one else so you can live and give like no one else." Thus, might increased giving to Marion Methodist be an outcome of our learning to lead our own money rather than it leading us – likely. Is that the target? No. You are.

Third, in training it was clear to me that Theresa and I have been implementing many of these principles for many years and so, at a level it feels like, "We don't need this." On the other hand, because the Lord spoke 5 times more about money and wealth management than he did about prayer, those who have their retirement planned and some financial security are very much needed to participate. You are the target of this epistle.

If you are one who immediately thought "I don't need this", you might be right – and – our community needs your experiences, your wisdom, and your presence to mentor some not so far down the financial stability path. The guarantee I will make you is this: you will be entertained, you will be affirmed, the scriptures will be spoken to you. You will enjoy the fellowship and you likely may impart a sentence or paragraph from your life experience in managing your money that is transformative to a friend at the church or in our community.

So, I plead with you who feel you need this not, your FREEDOM has been secured, be a mentor! Register for a class, pay the materials fee, look at the wide variety of resources available and pray that you will be a valuable mentor in setting another free from the shackles that have been put on their own lives.

Pastor Mike
Pastor Mike Morgan and Realtor Jeanne Matthews smile broadly as they hold the check from First Pentecostal Church of Cedar Rapids at the closing of the sale of the historic property at 1277 8th Avenue on July 12th.

New Offering from GRIEFSHARE

Grieving the death of a spouse?
Or do you know someone who is?

If you have lost a spouse, you feel that your life has changed forever. The daily emotions and challenges can sometimes seem too hard to bear.

Find help at a “Loss of a Spouse” seminar.

You’ll hear:

- Practical advice from others who’ve been there.
- What to expect in your grief.
- How to cope with life without your spouse.
- Why it won’t always hurt this much.

If you or someone you know has lost a spouse, please plan to attend this one-time session of “Loss of Spouse.”

It will be held on:

Sunday August 11 from 2-4 pm
Marion Methodist Church Room W10
5050 REC Drive, Marion, IA

Call 377-4856 to register or email vstandley@marionmethodist.org

A Defining Annual Conference

After reading about and listening to others recount the events at the special General conference in St Louis, where traditional leaning people were called a Virus, or sickness if you will, that want to kill the church, I was very saddened. That conference was supposed to be the culmination of millions of dollars’ worth of meetings and intense reflection by our council of bishops. A highly anticipated affair that was to help settle the sexual ethics issues that have caused such upheaval in the church. Instead, it turned into a contentious event that denigrated into vindictive name calling and dirty tricks when things did not go as expected and the one church plan was rejected in favor of the traditional plan.

Given the events of General conference I was not sure what to expect going to our annual conference. Would it be of a similar nature or would we focus on Christ and begin the process of healing and strengthening the church? Once I was able to download the pre-conference manual, it was obvious the events of General conference had not altered our tragic trajectory. We certainly did not focus on a way forward, preaching the gospel or making disciples of Christ. I can tell you that our conference is outwardly hostile to the conservative traditional viewpoint and has become very social issue driven. The entire program contained an undercurrent of disapproval of any conservative viewpoint. The messages from our Bishop, staff and guest speakers all had an unmistakable agenda. If you want a flavor of what I’m talking about, type this into your web browser and watch Conference Lay Leader Margaret Borgen give her presentation. https://wmo.co/343496025

The conference focused on a radical set of social issues. Elimination of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, ICE for short, firearms control and safety, plastic pollution issues, climate change and lastly two action items to Disavow and reject the traditional plan passed at General conference. Sadly, Pictured Rocks campground was sold (vindictively by the conference in my view) to try and offset the financial drain that continues to weaken the church. Making these issues even more difficult, it was obvious that a well-coordinated effort was afoot to control vote outcomes. I felt pretty railroaded.

It was difficult to see that our focus is on hot topic social issues and not how to heal the church, preach the Gospel and make disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world. It was obvious that the rejection by our conference of the results of the General conference means we will continue to fight amongst ourselves and further weaken a church in decline. The focus will not be where it should be, on the gospel of Christ. The delegates to the next General conference that were elected are all very liberal leaning folks, most of whom are in churches that are in decline.

I am thankful that our church has the leadership that it does. We are not in decline. We focus on the Gospel. We stand on a firm foundation rooted in the word of God. That, and my Church family, is what keeps me at Marion Methodist.

After this conference, it was obvious change is coming sooner rather than later. The progressive movement has made the statement: “We will not compromise queer liberation or the full inclusion and affirmation of PoC+Q+T people in any way. This non-negotiable stance includes ceasing all bans, penalties, and church trials related to gender and sexual identity or expression, marriages, and sacred unions.” That statement came from the Movement Forward Summit held in Minneapolis as a response to General Conference. You can learn and read about it here: https://um-forward.org/proclamation.

Those with a more traditional view may find more information here: https://wesleyancovenant.org

What is to become of the UMC? Stay tuned because God is in control. I am certain that he will deliver us where we need to be with a strong hand. In the meantime, I would suggest that you ask questions, seek to inform yourself and do your own research and reflection.

Tim Atwood

Annual Conference Review

Annual conference this year had two clear emphases that appeared in almost every discussion: budget crisis and reaction against the passed traditional plan. The budget issue was brought up by nearly every speaker at the podium. The disconnect between different-thinking branches of the church is making itself known in the financial state of the conference. The conference has no choice but to dramatically shrink the budget, which they have been reluctant to do so until now that the circumstances dictate it.

The second recurring theme was many pastors and lay people spoke, voted, and legislated their disapproval of the traditional plan passed at General Conference in February. This gathering of the annual conference was very progressive, and the votes showed this. The most demonstrative of these actions was a resolution of disapproval of the traditional plan. The resolution stated that our Iowa Conference did not resonate with the ruling of the General Conference.

In summary, the division in our church was made even more evident at this Annual Conference than in previous years.

Laura Campbell
The following are a few that are representative of your responses for Micah 6:8: *He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.*

| This verse speaks about the way I should conduct myself and be a model for my children. |
| Reminds me to be merciful and loving to unbelievers. And to be humble while pursuing what is good. |
| It tells what the Lord requires of us, so Just Do It. |
| It reminds me to be humble and live a life worthy of Christ and to try to be more like Jesus and not like this world. |
| We mortals are to do good in all times and ways to act responsibly and be humble. |
| To keep my pride in check and put others needs above my own, basically not be selfish. |
| Listen to God speak to and through each of us. Be humble and not boastful. Follow his word in our daily lives. |

**2019 Annual Conference Review**

The 2019 Iowa Annual Conference for the United Methodist Church was an overall positive experience. It is always nice to connect with other clergy members around the state of Iowa and to see how their churches are going. However, there were a couple of happenings within the conference that I felt were very one-sided in regard to theology and political understanding.

To start, the lay delegates and the clergy were all given the opportunity to vote for who will be representing the church of Iowa at the upcoming General Conference in Minneapolis. While I do think the voting was done the best way that it possibly could have, the results of the voting were a little underwhelming and disappointing. Every single lay delegate and clergy delegate consider themselves to be more on the progressive side of the political scale. I am not personally jealous or upset by this action. I just believe that the best results would have come from a community that have views from both sides of the spectrum. Instead, there is only one traditional clergy delegate that is an alternate for General Conference. I believe that this will lead to decisions being made, strictly based off of their emotions and what they want, instead of what God is intending for the Church. Again, I am happy for the delegates that were voted to go to General Conference. I just believe that having individuals from both sides of an issue is healthier and it can lead to unification. With this combination of delegates, I find it hard to find unification within the denomination. While I know the voting was done in a fair way, it is obvious to see that there was a great effort from one side of the issues that we’re facing, but it may be smarter in the future to make sure that there are individuals from both belief systems to represent a conference.

Another vote that had many reactions to it, was the vote to sell Pictured Rocks Camp. Again, there were people that thought the camp should be closed and some that thought it should not have been closed. This is another vote that I was down about. Many individuals who spoke on the camp said exactly why the camp should not be sold by our denomination. Pictured Rocks Camp was a place where kids went to learn more about Jesus and to feel like they belonged with everyone there as well. Many of the clergy in the Methodist denomination actually found Christ because of this particular camp. It was great to hear so many stories and testimonies about how their lives were changed by this camp. This reason and others made it sad to see the vote go through that we would indeed sell the camp. On the other side, I can understand why we are selling it. The denomination is losing more and more money it seems like. Selling the camp will help the conference feel more comfortable with their financial situation. However, there were other things that could have been done in order to get some money back. Selling Picture Rocks Camp did not have to be the way to do that. It is truly a sad event for many people within the Methodist and Christian community of Iowa.

**Your Journey from Mourning to Joy**

GriefShare is a special group for people grieving the death of someone close. It’s a place where you can be around people who understand how you feel and the pain of your loss. At GriefShare you’ll learn valuable information that will help you through this difficult time in your life.

If you have experienced the loss of someone you love, please consider attending this next session. GriefShare will be offered beginning **Thursday August 22 from 6:15 to 7:30 in Room W40**.

GriefShare runs for 13 weeks and you are welcome to join at any time.

If you have questions or would like to register for this session, please call the church office at 377-4856 or email vstandley@marionmethodist.org.

**Marion Methodist is Praying for:**

We hope you’ll join us for this joy filled worship experience!

**Watch LIVE at 10:15 AM**

Go to our YouTube channel or online at MarionMethodist.org/watchlive

**Marion Methodist is Praying for:**

Prayer is a powerful way of caring for each other in our Marion Methodist family. There are several avenues open to everyone – the prayer cards on Sunday morning and the prayer wall which is available 24/7, are two that are used most often. You can have a more active part in entering into prayer for each other. Check out the prayer wall frequently as prayers are submitted there often. Each time you visit, and pray for one of the requests found there, click the “I Prayed For This” tab; more prayers are always better.

Let’s be in prayer the next few weeks for those who are on vacations, visiting friends and family, attending family reunions or vacationing at home. Pray for safe travel, for relaxation and restoration and some fun times reconnecting with others.
Our Congregation Shares Its Concern & Christian Love...

DEATHS:
July 2: Dean Knight, father of Sherri (Doug) Martin and grandfather of Abby, Grant and Noah Martin.

BAPTISMS:

WEDDINGS:
July 13: Quinn Treiber and Lauren Geising

Freedom from Financial Anxiety—Yes, There Is Hope for Your Financial Mess!
by Tom Copland

By his very nature, God is the God of hope. "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with joy by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 15:13).

Do you have God's peace and joy in regard to your finances? If not, spending less than you are earning on a monthly basis. Use the surplus to pay down debt and save for future needs. Planning is biblical. For instance, in his example of building a tower, Jesus said, in substance, that if you don’t plan ahead, then you are foolish (Luke 14:28–30).

Don’t Give up!—When someone is in financial difficulty, generally it takes a few years to really get the financial house in order. However, significant changes can be made in just a few months. Even if finance is not your area of expertise, God has promised that he will provide what we need. Jesus said, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness” (2 Cor. 12:9, NKJV).

More information at www.biblefinance.org

Pantry Partners for Marion Food Pantry

We help folks in need by supplying items for the Marion Churches Food Pantry. You may bring the following items to church any time during each month. Please put your contributions in the Mission Depot in The Center or the Church Office.

July: Macaroni & Cheese
August: Peanut Butter
September: Soup
October: Toilet Tissue
November: Cake Mix
December: Pudding and Gelatin Mixes

The Marion Methodist newsletter deadline schedule

Articles for our Marion Methodist need to be submitted by due date at 12:00 PM. You may email them to wildman@marionmethodist.org with newsletter in the subject line. Please send any information or images as an attachment. If you do not have access to a computer, you may call or bring to the office items to be published. We ask that you honor the deadlines listed below:

Date Arrived in Mail  Date Articles Due
8/9 7/31
8/23 8/14
9/6 8/28
9/20 9/11

Sunday

8:30am-9:15am: Men’s Breakfast (The Center)
8:00am-8:30am: 9:00am-10:30am: Children’s SMASH Time (The Center)
9:15am-10:15am: Sunday School - Preschool - Kindergarten (E60)
10:15am-11:30am: Summer Sunday School - Preschool - Kindergarten (E60)

Monday

8:00am-8:15am: Worship Band Practice (Sanctuary)
8:30am-9:00am: Bible Study (Sanctuary)
9:00am-9:30am: Worship Band Practice (Sanctuary)
10:00am-11:00am: Bible Study (Sanctuary)
11:00am-12:00 noon: Coffee Hour (The Center)
12:00 noon-1:00pm: Women’s Group (The Center)
1:00pm-2:00pm: Marion Food Pantry (W50)
2:00pm-3:00pm: Quilters (South Lower Level Carnegie)

Tuesday

6:30am-7:30am: Boy Scouts (W50)
7:00pm-8:00pm: Boy Scouts (W50)
7:00pm-8:00pm: Bookends (Sanctuary)

Wednesday

10:15am-11:00am: Quilters (South Lower Level Carnegie)
11:00am-12:00 noon: Men’s Breakfast (The Center)
12:00 noon-1:00pm: FLP - Freedom Leadership Training (The Center)
1:00pm-2:00pm: Women’s Group (The Center)
3:00pm-4:00pm: AA Support Group (Carnegie)

Thursday

8:00am-9:00am: Men’s Breakfast (The Center)
8:00am-9:00am: Bible Study (Sanctuary)
8:00am-9:00am: Bible Study (Sanctuary)
10:00am-11:00am: Children’s SMASH Time (The Center)
12:00 noon-1:00pm: FLP - Freedom Leadership Training (The Center)
3:00pm-4:00pm: AA Support Group (Carnegie)

Friday

8:00am-9:00am: Men’s Breakfast (The Center)
8:00am-9:00am: Bible Study (Sanctuary)
8:00am-9:00am: Bible Study (Sanctuary)
10:00am-11:00am: Children’s SMASH Time (The Center)
12:00 noon-1:00pm: FLP - Freedom Leadership Training (The Center)
4:00pm-5:00pm: AA Support Group (Carnegie)

Saturday

8:00am-9:00am: Men’s Breakfast (The Center)
8:00am-9:00am: Bible Study (Sanctuary)
8:00am-9:00am: Bible Study (Sanctuary)
10:00am-11:00am: Children’s SMASH Time (The Center)
12:00 noon-1:00pm: FLP - Freedom Leadership Training (The Center)
4:00pm-5:00pm: AA Support Group (Carnegie)

8:00pm-9:00pm: AA Support Group (Carnegie)

The Center)

9:00am-10:30am: Worship Band Practice (Sanctuary)
10:00am-11:00am: Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
11:00am-12:00 noon: Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
12:00 noon-1:00pm: Repetition Band Practice (Sanctuary)
1:00pm-2:00pm: Women’s Group (The Center)
2:00pm-3:00pm: Quilters (South Lower Level Carnegie)

8:00am-9:00am: Bible Study (Sanctuary)
8:00am-9:00am: Bible Study (Sanctuary)
10:00am-11:00am: Children’s SMASH Time (The Center)
12:00 noon-1:00pm: FLP - Freedom Leadership Training (The Center)
3:00pm-4:00pm: AA Support Group (Carnegie)

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More information at www.biblefinance.org

Register online at marionmethodist.org/students

7/20

9/20

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday