During our generation, several challenges to the church have risen; some have been met, conquered and put away. In this I am addressing "Free Jesus - Facing the Church," Today, let me address, “The Privatization of Belief.”

One of the guaranteed freedoms in the United States is the freedom to believe what you want to believe. There are no "spiritual police" patrolling worshipping congregations to make sure citizens "believe the right things." There is not a dictatorial force peering into your emails, Internet activity, or your mail to make sure only approved dogma and doctrine is expressed therein. You are not being "watched" to see if you do not express what you believe in public.

We have the freedom to believe and the freedom to express that belief. But, for the most part, we don’t exercise the opportunity of expression.

Despite technological advances, American Christians are becoming more spiritually isolated from non-believers than ever before. In countries where Christianity is frowned upon, discouraged and in some cases illegal, Christians are strategizing, praying, working to come alongside non-believers so they might share their love of Jesus with them. Their freedom of expression is minimal and they seek to maximize their witness. (For instance, during a revival I attended in Haiti, ONE woman invited more than 200 people to worship in one week and her neighborhood is a very dark, very oppressive place.)

Despite our freedoms, less than 10% of United Methodist worship attenders plan to express our faith even to the extent of offering an invitation to anyone, including family members, to worship with them - EVER. This statistic includes Easter, Christmas, special events and programs. Following our example (as mentors and guides), teenagers are even less likely to invite a friend.

Christianity in America is day by day becoming an individualized, privatized concern. The privatization of belief and the relativizing of Biblical truth, in the midst of moral and ethical dilemmas to fit what an individual wants in concern. The privatization of belief and the relativizing of Biblical truth, in Christianity in America is day by day becoming an individualized, privatized friend.

Privatization of the faith can be the unraveling of the church. It’s not too late to reverse this trend but in North America there is more sand in the bottom half of the hourglass than the top. So, I appeal to you in the name of the Jesus who knows you ("even before you were knit in your mothers womb" Psalm 139) to not keep your faith or His church to yourself. The mission of the church is to make disciples and transform the world, these are not private acts. They are not things done quietly in the back bedroom, they are very public and those who endeavor to do these things cannot have a private faith.

At some point in every episode of Law & Order the question is asked, "well what do you have to say?" In a really deep place in your heart don’t you think Jesus is asking, "Are you the same question?" We have the freedom to believe and the freedom to express that belief. But, for the most part, we don’t exercise the opportunity of expression.

Privatization of Belief. "The mission of the church is to make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

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Pastor Mike
Decommissioning of World War II plaque

Sunday, November 12, at the 8:30 am worship service a special moment on Veterans Weekend will be held in worship to honor the 12 members of Marion Methodist who lost their lives in World War II. During the service we will decommission the plaque that has hung in our Narthex in their honor since 1947. This plaque will be “going with us” for installation on our memorial wall at 5050 REC Drive next year. This is the second item to be decommissioned in our facility, joining the Roy Meier memorial window commemorating the only Marion Methodist soldier who died in the Vietnam War, which was presented to his family on Independence Sunday.

Let’s Pound the DeReus Family!

Kelsie DeReus, our Director of Youth and Connectional Missions, first Sunday is October 22nd. The Staff Parish Relations Committee is suggesting we celebrate her coming (along with husband Ben and two children) with a “pounding.”

A “pounding” long ago was a custom to welcome the new pastor to churches. Traditionally everyone was invited to bring a pound of something to stock the pantry of the new preacher and family. Our “pounding” will expand to bringing them a pound of something you want them to have: sugar, candy, quarters, nails, paper goods, a pie, whatever…just bring a pound of it.

There will be a “pounding” table in the hallway outside of the chapel on Sunday, October 22nd and you are invited to “pound” away on our new leader. We think it will be a fun way to welcome Kelsie and Ben to our church leadership team.

The weather is changing and Fall is Here We Need Your Help!

It’s time for our annual Fall Cleanup Day. We need your help to make our church look its best.

Our Fall Cleanup Day is an ideal way to get involved. We have a range of work tasks from painting, to inside cleaning and outside yard work.

If you can volunteer for an hour or the whole morning, please come join us Saturday, October 28 from 8:00 AM to Noon (rain or shine).

Thank you,
The Trustees

Legacy Christmas Eve

The 122nd celebration of Christmas Eve will be our congregations last in our current facility. Many of you have fond memories of Christmas Eve candlelight or other services with your family in our historic building that absolutely fill your heart with joy. You are encouraged to come back or make plans to host your family at Christmas this year so you might participate in our last service of Christmas here.

Christmas Eve Services

11:00 AM Communion Service

4:00 PM Service of Carols and Candlelight

5:30 PM Service of Carols and Candlelight

7:00 PM Service of Carols and Candlelight

11:00 PM Service of Praise and Candlelight Featuring the 4:12 Worship Band

Drifted away? Became Less regular? Come to Worship

Each year under the leadership of our Lead Pastor, a “Plan of Work” is created for execution by Marion Methodist. This year one of the important pieces of work is to increase worship attendance.

A growth team has assessed our current situation and come to two very logical and obvious conclusions. Increasing Worship attendance can come from two streams:

1. Increased attendance from current attenders, friends and members.
2. Increased volume of new people coming for the first time.

Our current preaching series “Sharing Your Faith” primarily focuses on #2 as will this space next issue.

There are many factors that distract currently infrequent attenders who call Marion Methodist their church from attending worship. These include:

- Seasonal issues - snowbirds and non-religious youth programming (i.e. sports, music, etc.)
- Work related issues in a global economy can take some away.
- Family Commitments ranging from caregiving to celebrations.
- Many others including personal priorities.

Some of these things are out of the absent worshippers’ control while others are not.

The unapologetic appeal of putting a continuing emphasis on Worship attendance as a necessary spiritual discipline for growing in relationship with God, will, we pray, have the effect of greater faithfulness. Every person (maybe you) that has drifted away once loved this great fellowship and the worship of the Holy and Almighty God at Marion Methodist. You are invited to grab the rudder of your life and steer yourself back to Worship. Once you come back with regularity, no doubt the Spirit of God will encourage you to want more and more of it in your life.

The Lord God has created you and claimed you as a priority in His life and existence. Does your life - specifically your participation in private and public Worship express your gratitude for that?

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If you have drifted away, if you have lowered worship in your priority schedule, if you are reading this, obviously, once your life was centered around worship and praise for this profound truth. The fire in your belly for Worship has not been extinguished, but it may need to be stoked in a time of evaluating your priorities and the direction God desires your life and family to be led. So, come home to Worship or come with greater frequency, your spirit will not be disappointed.

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.

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**What’s Next?**

**Guaranteed Maximum Price**

For those that attended the Church Conference meeting on 5 March 2017, you may recall that as a congregation we voted to approve a budget of $9.8M to build our new church facility. Since that time, you may have asked yourself some of the following questions:

- How does the final cost of the project compare to the budget amount we approved?
- Is the budget “finalized” now?
- What happens if something changes, and expenses come up that weren’t anticipated?
- Do we have a guaranteed maximum price from our builder?

The following are the answers to those questions.

- We have been working with our architect and builder to finalize the plans for the facility, and have gone through several versions of a budget number as we have made changes to those plans. We have also seen some of the original bids we received for various aspects of the work change, from the time the bids were originally accepted due to the changes we have asked for.
- We have finally gotten everything to a point in the planning process where our builder has provided us a “guaranteed maximum price” for the remaining work to be completed, and that GMP was approved by the Building Committee at their 9 October meeting. That GMP amount, along with some of the things that we have already paid for such as our portion of the 35th Ave paving and the REC Drive paving, comes to a total of about $9.1M for the total project.
- If you have ever gone through any kind of a building project of your own, or where you work, you are probably saying to yourself that is great but what about the things we didn’t think about or what happens if we run into an issue that nobody anticipated, how is that handled and who pays for those changes? We are covered there as well. Once we sign the contracts stating what the GMP is, then going forward after that any changes or issues that would significantly change or add to the GMP have to be approved by a “change order”. That will give us the opportunity to make sure that it is truly something additional we should be or want to pay for, and those change orders will have to be approved by the Building Committee. Thus, we have a way to help hold everyone accountable to the GMP we agreed to.

Our project is moving forward, and based on what we know now, it appears we will be able to complete our project within the budget approved by the congregation. Truly another blessing to be thankful for in regards to our new facility.

**Mission Breakfast**

**October 29**

**7:30 - 11:00 AM**

**Fellowship Hall**

Proceeds to support the Collins Family.

**Powerhouse**

Powerhouse meets every Wednesday. From 5:45 pm to 6:15 pm we have a Family Meal (Free Will Offering) and from 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm we have activities for all ages.

**Preschoolers:** Kids may forget what you say - but they remember what they discover on their own.

**Kindergarten - 5th Grade:** Meet a Jesus that is real and relevant in your everyday life! Discover Jesus in you. (Room 303/305)

**4:12 Youth Group:** Junior High Worship 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm (Sanctuary). High School Worship 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm (Sanctuary). Games will be in the alley

**Adult Classes:** Come for a midweek boost. Check out classes at www.marionmethodist.org

**Nursery:** Offered in the Nursery room located near the elevators

**Meal Schedule:**

- 10/25 - Pizza Ranch
- 11/1 - Dairy Queen

**TV Broadcast**

Marion Methodist worship services are typically rebroadcasted on Mediaco and ImOn Channel 4 at 7:00 PM on Monday evenings. There is a multiewek delay between when a sermon is preached and when it airs on TV.

**Haiti Missionaries at Marion Methodist**

Greg and Maria Shepherd, our missionaries in Lascohabas, Haiti are coming to Marion Methodist for the very first time this month. Greg and Maria (with son Caleb) are the directors of R.T.S. Ministries (Reach Teach Send) in Lascohabas. Their ministry has multiplied the presence of Christ in this area of Haiti and many have come to know Jesus through this work.

Marion Methodist has supported R.T.S. Ministries now for several years. Many of us have traveled to Lascohabas on short term mission trips to preach, lead Bible Schools, go house to house with the message of Jesus and help with several building projects. In addition to sponsoring or partially sponsoring the building of a school and church building, Marion Methodist friends and members support scores of children in the area by sponsoring their tuition and school expenses, thus providing a gateway for Haiti's growth through education. These ministries are all done through Haitians and are coordinated by the Shepherds.

October 27th please come meet, greet and get to know those you have been supporting for years with your prayers, financial support and presence.

R.T.S. Ministries
Greg and Maria Shepherd
Program in the Sanctuary
Friday, October 27th
7:00 PM

**Thank You**

I would like to thank everyone who has been so kind and thoughtful and done so much for me lately. Since my hospitalization, I have received all kinds of visits, phone calls, messages and cards that have lifted my spirits. I am so grateful for each and every one. I’m especially thankful for all the hard work that was done by Walker and the Methodist Men to make accommodations to my home that make it easier and safer for me to remain here. You have blessed me far more than you will ever know. Thank you! Bernita Sills

**Second Chance Opportunity**

Proceed to be part of our Lifetouch Picture Directory

If you weren’t able to have your picture taken when Lifetouch was here in May and June, now you have a second chance.

Lifetouch Photography Sessions will be Wednesday, November 1 from 2:00 – 8:30pm.

So if…..

…you are new to our church
…you’ve added to your family since June
…you just missed out having your picture taken
…you’d like a new picture (maybe for Christmas cards or gifts)

then NOW IS YOUR CHANCE. To sign up go to www.marionmethodist.org or call Karen at the church office 377-4856.

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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 as 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
11/3 10/25
11/17 11/8
12/1 11/22
12/15 12/6

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 one of the grocery carts located in the Narthex or at the 8th Avenue glass doors, or in the Mission Depot in Fellowship Hall or the Church Office.

October: Toilet Tissue November: Cake Mix
December: Pudding and Gelatin Mixes
January: Macaroni and Cheese
February: Canned Fruit
March: Peanut Butter

THE MARION METHODIST NEWSLETTER

October

Our Congregation Shares Its Concern & Christian Love...

DEATHS:

September 27: Terri Tiede, father of Dave (Jim) Tiede, grandfather of Isla Tiede

September 27: Mark Rae, brother of Kathy Murdoch, uncle of Jaime (Dan) Steward and Hailey Murdoch

September 29: Jean Jones, mother of Jennifer Story

BIRTHS:

WEDDINGS:

October: 6: Stacey Twedd and Jim Redmond

NOMADS Mission Volunteers

NOMADS is Nomads On a Mission Active in Divine Service. This group is dedicated to rebuilding lives, homes and facilities with God’s love and our hands. We joined NOMADS about a year after we retired and have been members for almost 3 years. It has been a rewarding and wonderful experience getting to meet new people and having the opportunity to help people or organizations in need as we travel to different parts of the country. Most Nomads are retired and come from many different backgrounds and lifestyles. They enjoy travel in their RV’s and doing projects for many different organizations. There are currently about 900 members in Nomads. Although most are couples there are also several individuals who travel on their own.

As we plan our winter down south we can look at the NOMADS website and sign up for projects we can work. The website identifies where projects exist, what type of work is expected and how many people are needed. There are basically three different types of projects to choose from. There are three week projects that are scheduled through the year and involve working at churches, church camps, shelters, and mission agencies. There are disaster recovery projects which follow up after floods, tornadoes or other natural disasters in an area. Finally, there are drop-in projects where a Nomad can just drop in and work for a week or more while passing through an area.

The type of work accomplished by Nomads can vary from remodeling, maintenance, repairs, dry wall, painting, gardening, office work or what ever else may need to be done. Nomads carry their own basic tools to do the work although some organizations may also have some of the tools needed. Each project usually can accommodate from two to six RV’s.

It is amazing to see how often the random people who select a project results in the right mix of talents needed for the project. There are also some projects in Alaska during the summer.

Our only payment for working four days a week at the projects is a place to park our RV with utilities. The RV site may be at the project or you may have to travel a few miles to the work. Three days each week are unscheduled to allow you to explore whatever part of the country you are working in. It has been a wonderful way for us to see the country and also help others along the way.

If this sounds of interest to you or if you know someone who would be interested please visit the website at www.nomadsumc.org for more information. You do not need to be a Methodist to belong to Nomads. You may also give us a call if you have questions about Nomads.

Henry and Barb Schmoll (319-981-2129)