Every culture has their “Taboos.” That is, there are religious or social customs that prohibit, forbid or strongly discourage discussion of certain topics. Most of us in the North American culture have been socially trained to not discuss religion, politics and how your sister raises her kids at the dinner table; they are taboo.

Though the church of Jesus is to influence the culture rather than the other way around; over the years, culturally sermons or discussions on certain topics have been seen as taboo. Typically, these things are just uncomfortable for us and we really don’t want to talk about them in church – even though we may talk about them just about everywhere else. “Taboos” are frequent fodder at coffee shops, school cafeterias, cubicles, bars, restaurants, social gatherings and every platform of media.

These difficult “taboos” are everywhere, part of our “real” life and often we come to worship seeking refuge and safety from the uncomfortable. Understandable and, if we really want to be relevant as a church, we offer that respite while speaking into the world around us and equipping ourselves to live Christlike lives in it.

Two encouragements. First, our dear Lord Jesus came to live in the world – the real world where all these “taboos” were around him too. He showed us how to be “in it” but not “of it” and every “taboo” he addressed from his perspective.

Second, they did not surprise him. Your memory verse from last month was John 1:1 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” and is followed by: “He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.” Which is to say, nothing that is, is unknown to God.” So, because we have rendered some topics “taboo” and Jesus both knew and addressed them, it is VERY APPROPRIATE to address them in worship – and we will.

Everyone I know has perspectives or opinions about most every “taboo” subject. Some we like to hold close to the vest and some we like to share liberally. So, let’s talk.

“Taboo at the Temple” will be six Sundays where our preachers will engage a few “taboo” subjects, not from a “perspective” or “opinion” of the speaker but rather, through what the Scriptures and the Christian church discern as Godly. Look at the subject matter below, invite a friend who is churchless to one that s/he talks about a lot and don’t miss a Sunday.

Sept. 23  Your Words
Sept. 30  Your Power
Oct. 7  Your Money
Oct. 21  Your Sex and Gender
Oct. 28  Your Addictions
Nov. 4  Your Kids

Pastor Mike
Marion First United Methodist Church is part of the global United Methodist Connection and has been extremely faithful to that covenant. This connection brings wonderful ministry opportunities such as the “Change a Child’s Story” where we contributed more books than any church in Iowa by 2/3. Also, we have been the leader in raising funds for Imagine No Malaria, the Central Conference Pastor’s Pension Fund, working for the United Methodist Commission on Relief (UMCOR), leading the charge in Flood recovery. Camping and, of course, faithfully paying our Conference apportionments for several decades.

The Apportionment is the funding stream for our Iowa Conference and the greater connection of the United Methodist Church, something we are proud to be part of, evidenced by the 10'-illuminated cross and flame (the UMC logo) on Highway 13. Our apportionments assigned to us by the Iowa Conference of the United Methodist Church, in round terms are $500 a day.

As reported previously, and desiring to remain transparent regarding church funds, in December of 2016 and again in December of 2017 the Church Council voted unanimously to “raise and hold” our apportioned funds. This decision was painful and made after thorough, thoughtful and faithful dialogue. The driving force behind raising and holding the apportioned funds is based on the leadership of many of our Bishops, who demand we adhere to the teachings of Scripture and the covenant found in the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, but have elected to not do the same.

Several North American Bishops have rejected the Divinity of Christ, questioned the physical resurrection Jesus and, because of their perspective on key issues, rendered the Holy Scriptures to the status of a guiding principle in its time. Further, rejecting the wishes of most United Methodists in America and all of the Bishops outside the United States, the Western Jurisdiction of the church elected a lesbian in a same-sex marriage to the office of Bishop and she serves as Bishop of Montana, Wyoming, Colorado and Utah. Other Bishops, including Iowa’s have embraced the ordination of self-avowed homosexual persons which is in defiance of the Discipline and, of course, Scripture.

We are a diverse church and aren’t fully of one mind in response to these things but we are of one mind in our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The extreme dissonance in the United Methodist Church, regarding the interpretation and meaning of scripture and what a holy perspective of human sexuality might be, caused the General Conference of the church to form a Commission on the Way Forward to help us discern as a denomination what to do next. Their report will be given at the Special General Conference in February to be held in St. Louis, where 848 United Methodists from around the world will ultimately decide.

Knowing the general church has several years of funding available, our Church Council in this moment of dissension and uncertainty, faithfully decided to continue to raise our funds and keep them at our lending institution. The plan is that the 2017 and 2018* monies will be released to the denomination or whatever new form United Methodism takes following General Conference, or repurposed for the work of the Kingdom of God here on earth as agreed upon by the congregation of Marion Methodist.

To this end, please consider attending the meeting September 24th (Sunday) at the Salem Church where the Bishop will be sharing the plans to be presented at General Conference.

* The Conference Treasurer has socialized that unpaid funds from 2016 will not be forgiven and the Trustees may need to utilize these funds to keep the historic building safe, operational and maintained until sold.
Open House for the Community -- Everyone is invited!
This will be a great chance to show off our new church!
5050 REC Drive on Saturday, October 6 from 1:00 – 4:00pm
Bring your friends, family, co-workers, and neighbors!

We will have invitation postcards for you to share with others.
These will be available for you to pick up on Sunday, September 23 and Sunday, September 30 at both Welcome Centers.

Orientation Quizzes (Just for fun)
Now that our new worship, fellowship and discipleship facility has been our home for three months, we thought it would be fun to see what you have "noticed" since the move. The first "quiz" appeared in the September 16th bulletin and asked you if you had noticed a number of things that had moved from our downtown historic facility to our new facility. If you missed or need the answers they are posted at MarionMethodist.org. September 23rd the quiz will ask you if you have noticed/seem understood a few of the new things in our new building. Again the answers will be posted in the Weekly Email and at MarionMethodist.org.

United Methodists Continue Discussions on Holy Sexuality
The General Conference of the United Methodist Church (the only body that can speak authoritatively for the church) of 2016 in a time of difficulty asked the Bishops to appoint a Commission on the Way forward to make a recommendation for a specially called session of the General Conference. This session will be held in February and the Commission itself could not come to agreement on one plan, but rather will bring three to the General Conference.

Our Bishop, Laurie Haller, will be coming to Cedar Rapids to share the three plans which are as follows:

1. One Church Plan: The one-church model would allow different United Methodists in different places to make different decisions regarding ministry with or by LGBTQ persons rather than maintaining a single standard that operates everywhere throughout the worldwide church. This plan would remove restrictive language from the Book of Discipline and give conferences, churches and pastors the flexibility to "uniquely reach their missional context in relation to human sexuality without changing the connectional nature of The United Methodist Church."

United Methodists in central conferences in Africa, Asia and Europe would retain the authority to adapt the Book of Discipline and could continue to include their traditional language and values. This plan would also protect the rights of United Methodists whose theological convictions will not allow them to perform same-sex weddings or ordain LGBTQ people.

2. Traditionalist Plan: This plan would affirm the current language about homosexuality in the Book of Discipline and seek to strengthen enforcement for violations of church law.

3. Connectional Conference Plan: This plan would create three connectional conferences based on theology or perspective, each having clearly defined values (accountability, contextualization and justice). The three connectional conferences would function throughout the worldwide church and the five existing U.S. juridictions would be abolished.

Adaptations to the Book of Discipline would be allowed by each connectional conference. Annual conferences would determine their affiliation with a connectional conference. Local churches who choose a branch other than the one chosen by their annual conference could vote to join another conference. This plan would require multiple amendments to the denomination's constitution.

Marion Methodist as a congregation has a stake in the outcome and you are encouraged to attend the special meeting in September at the Salem Church. Bishop Laurie Haller will be present to worship, answer questions, and be in dialogue together around the pros and cons of each of the three plans. You are invited and encouraged to attend our District meeting September 23, Salem United Methodist Church, Cedar Rapids, – 4:30 – 6:00 pm.

If you have any questions, please contact Jan Fawcett at JFL60@aol.com or 319-373-3212 (please leave a message).

One gallon Ziplock bags along with the gift suggestion sheet will be available for pickup September 23 & 30, and October 7 in the Center. All bags will be due by October 14. Sheets will need to be marked with appropriate age and gender and be placed in the bag. There will be a list of suggested items on the sheet but will include items such as toothbrushes and toothpaste, washcloth and bar of soap, travel size shampoo, school supplies, such as pencils, pencil sharper, eraser, crayons, etc. Small toys, socks, and many other items are also on the list that will be included in the bags. New this year, RTS is asking us to double bag the toiletries. A smaller bag will be included in the one gallon bag to put the toiletries in.

These bags will go to the children of Haiti that many of our church members have met and worked with during our mission trips to Haiti. If you have any questions, please contact Jan Fawcett at JFL60@aol.com or 319-373-3212 (please leave a message).

Christmas for Haiti

Meal Schedule:
9/26 - Tomaso's Pizza
10/3 - Kettle House Bakery

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. Get them “Hands On” with God’s Word. (Room E30)

Kindergarten - 5th Grade: Meet a Jesus that is real and relevant in your everyday life! Discover Jesus in you. (Room E10 & E60)

4:12 Youth Group: Junior High Worship 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm (Sanctuary). High School Worship 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm (Sanctuary).

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

Nursery: Offered in the Nursery

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

Matthew 25 is excited to be launching our new Groundswell Cafe: A Pay-it-Forward Eatery in October! We will be serving super-fresh and local ingredi ents to make delicious salads, sandwiches, and soups. At this cafe, patrons can round up their bill or make a donation to help pay for a meal for someone who can’t afford to pay. Those who can’t afford to pay will be able to order and enjoy our fresh, healthy food alongside our paying guests.

Volunteers are needed to help make this cafe a reality! There are three main categories of volunteers needed: 1) hospitality, 2) set-up and clean-up, and 3) order taking/cashier. If you are interested in volunteering, come to our volunteer orientation on Thursday, September 20 at noon at Matthew 25, 201 3rd Avenue SW, Cedar Rapids. Samples of our signature sandwiches will be served!
Congratulations to the following individuals who have a special occasion to celebrate:

**BIRTHS:**
- Grandsons Ian and Nolan Hollinger, daughter Brenda (Ken) Hollinger and Rod Thompson.
- Family includes Shirley Thompson, wife of Concern & Christian Love...

**DEATHS:**
- Our Congregation Shares Its Concern & Christian Love...

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**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.

**September**
- Soup
- October: Toiletry Tissue
- November: Cake Mix
- December: Pudding and Gelatin Mixes
- January: Macaroni & Cheese
- February: Canned Fruit

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**September / October**

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**Mission Breakfast**

**September 30th**
7:30 - 11:00 AM
The Center

The proceeds of our Mission Breakfast will go to support the November Mission Trip to Haiti.

**Swamp Fox Bivouac**

**Troop 35 would like to cordially invite our Charter Organization to Troop 35’s 90th Anniversary**

Swamp Fox Bivouac Pancake Breakfast
Sat. Sept 29th 6:30am - 9:30am
At Marion Methodist Church
5050 Rec. Dr.
Free will donations will be cheerfully accepted!