

# THE MESSENGER

*The United Methodist Church in Stow*



*April 2025*

As you all know, we spent the end of last month on a Caribbean cruise. During the cruise, I was able to do one of my favorite activities, which is snorkeling. The reason that I like to snorkel is that it is so beautiful and sometimes I see things I don't expect. The diversity of life and the beauty reawakens my appreciation of God's creation. No matter how many times I snorkel I am amazed by what I see. It is truly a gift from God.



But there is another aspect of diversity that I enjoy on a cruise. That is the people. Usually my family jokes about the time I spend talking to strangers. Talking to the people I meet on the different islands we visit lets me see a part of life that I don't ever see at home. Understanding their way of life and the culture of the island is very interesting to me. Again, it is a part of God's creation that is to be accepted and not looked down on.

Anyone who has ever cruised knows that on the ship, there is quite a variety of people. Although most come from a similar background, there are differences. This includes the crew as well as my fellow passengers. They are interesting to talk to. It is amazing what you can learn from others. And just like snorkeling, sometimes I see things I don't expect. That is when God's diversity becomes evident. It is usually not the beauty I see underwater, but I know it may be if I open my eyes.

# Upcoming Events

## Worship Planning Meeting

All are invited to attend a worship planning meeting on Sunday, **April 13th** following the service. This will be an opportunity to weigh-in on scripture lessons, themes, and music for the upcoming worship services. We will continue to meet monthly on the second Sunday of the month. The meetings should last no more than one hour. Please plan to attend.



Please join us for our **Maundy Thursday Service** at 7 pm on April 17th. If you cannot attend, you may watch it online.



## From the Stow UMC Preschool.....

March was a great month full of St Patrick's Day fun. To celebrate, our classes had special treats, built Leprechaun traps, and had classroom shenanigans!

Our classes also explored rainbows with books, science experiments, art and exploration. Karen Rocco was a guest reader for all of our preschool classes in early March, reading her book "The Domino Effect". She talked about what an author is, and did a cute dog craft with our students. They all loved it!

The preschool also had a successful school-wide collection for Bulldog Bags.

The preschool is "egg-cited" to be hosting a new family event this year during class time on April 16th and 17th, a Spring Egg Hunt and more.

Our preschool classes are almost full for the 2025/26 school year, beginning in September. Our 3-year-old class is full, and we only have a few openings left in our 4-day pre-k class. If you have friends/family/neighbors looking for a preschool, have them email us at [stowumcpreschool@outlook.com](mailto:stowumcpreschool@outlook.com).

## Noisy Offering



We collected **\$124 on March 23rd** for our Noisy Offering. Thank you! This offering is collected on the 4th Sunday of each month. Any loose change or other money collected goes to the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) for their missions. Please save your change for our next collection on **April 27th**. Thank you for your continued support!



**It's Spring!!** By the calendar, at least. Karen Rocco and her son are cleaning up the parsonage yard and would love to plant flowers, bushes, plants, etc. that would spruce it up. She is inviting the congregation to share in this. If anyone is separating, digging up or looking to get rid of any plants they might have in their yard, she would be willing to add them to the parsonage. This not only will beautify the house, but will make the donor an everlasting part of it. You are welcome to drop anything off at the end of the parsonage driveway and they will find a suitable spot for it!



**Thank you for keeping our shelves stocked!!**

We are currently in need of the following:

Boxed potatoes, pasta sauce, spaghetti noodles, condiments, toothpaste & toothbrushes, personal care items.

Thank you for your continued support!!



**Here are the YouTube links for the April worship services.**

April 6 - <https://youtube.com/live/6j5HdX9Hy84?feature=share>

April 13 - <https://youtube.com/live/Fpx4f1Ejg-A?feature=share>

Maunday Thurs -

<https://youtube.com/live/iZRoeJVEDIw?feature=share>

April 20 - Easter -

<https://youtube.com/live/QXBIYQkypR0?feature=share>

April 27 - [https://youtube.com/live/5HE3O\\_BpmmY?feature=share](https://youtube.com/live/5HE3O_BpmmY?feature=share)

## ***Missions Memos...***

March was an exciting month. There were 40 people who shopped at our pantry and there were many large donations. We can thank God for the success we had and thank UMC members, UCC Community Church, the Muslim Community Center, and individuals from the community through the Helping Hands Food Drive at the Stow-Munroe Falls Chamber event. What a month March was!

We received a card from one of our Pantry's regulars-

*"Dear Stow Methodist Food Pantry People, I have had a miracle on this long journey coming back from living through what had happened to me. Because of this miracle, I will now have enough money to live. God has been my miracle carrying me every step of the way and you have been my miracle with your loving, giving, joyful spirit in this wonderful Food Pantry and praying for me! I loved every minute of it! I have been coming here for a long time, but I won't need this wonderful help with food, etc. now, but I will pray for you in your beautiful God given calling that you do. You are such a blessing! God bless you abundantly in your calling."* Kathy Morris

A connection like this is how we know God's hand is in this ministry. So happy for Kathy and we will continue to pray for her. The pantry still has some needs. I am asking you to continue to donate to the pantry so more people can receive the help they need. There are some great people working the jobs in the pantry, picking up bread, packing bread, and stocking shelves, serving the people who come to the pantry and praying for the mission. At this time, there is a need for a person to work with Carolyn Young to wrap bread the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month. And a person is needed to pick up the bread the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of each month and deliver it to the church. Please contact the church office or Laura Root if you are willing to fill one of these jobs.

## **Would You Rather?**

Jennifer Ruth Lynn Garrison

*You keep my eyelids from closing; I am so troubled that I cannot speak. I consider the days of old, and remember the years of long ago. I commune with my heart in the night; I meditate and search my spirit: Will the Lord spurn forever, and never again be favorable? Has [God's] steadfast love ceased forever?" - Psalm 77:4-8a (NRSV)*

Some years ago, a youth group I traveled with played a version of "Would you rather?"

"Would you rather be a bald eagle or a grizzly bear?" "Would you rather eat only broccoli or only liver?" "Would you rather listen only to babies crying or [this was, as I said, a few years ago] listen only to the music of Justin Bieber?" Each question brought laughter and eager answers.

Then, "Would you rather regret the past or worry about the future?"

The whole car groaned. People who had cheerfully, if hypothetically, chosen a lifetime of eating liver or listening to baby cries refused to choose either regret or worry. We moved on to the next question.

In real life it feels as if I don't choose either worry or regret. Too often, alas, as with the psalmist, in the middle of the night they choose me. When regretful, I am also "troubled": thoughts spinning back over years, lamenting the actions never taken, the words hastily spoken. With worry, I also spin out, but this time over what is to come, what is unseen and unknown.

Regret and worry seem to choose me at first, but how do I respond? Invariably, I choose them back. Like the psalmist, I let my mind circle around whatever unresolvable thing has been placed before me by worry or regret.

Maybe it's time to try something different. Maybe like the kids in the car, I can moan once and then move on to the next question. Maybe then I will find that God's love hasn't "ceased" at all. Maybe then I will recognize the steadfastness of God's presence with me the whole time.

### **Prayer**

You are God, and I am not. To you be all the glory.

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
<b>9am</b> Sunday School  <b>10am</b> Worship Service						
		<b>1</b> 5:30pm Jazzercise  7pm SPRC mtg	<b>2</b> 9am Jazzercise  9am-12pm Food Pantry	<b>3</b> 5:30pm Jazzercise  6-8pm Food Pantry  6pm Chancel Choir  7pm Brees Bells	<b>4</b> 9am Jazzercise    Office closed	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b>    Holy Communion	<b>7</b> 9am Jazzercise 9am-12pm Food Pantry  6:30pm Scout Troop 270/FH 7pm New Member Class	<b>8</b> 5:30pm Jazzercise  7pm Committee Night	<b>9</b> 9am Jazzercise  9am-12pm Food Pantry	<b>10</b> 5:30pm Jazzercise  6-8pm Food Pantry  6pm Chancel Choir  7pm Brees Bells	<b>11</b> 9am Jazzercise    Office closed	<b>12</b> 9am-1pm Scout Troop 270 Car Wash
<b>13</b> Worship Planning Meeting following the service  Palm Sunday	<b>14</b> 9am Jazzercise 9am-12pm Food Pantry  6:30pm Scout Troop 270/FH 7pm New Member Class	<b>15</b> 9am-12pm Helping Hands  5:30pm Jazzercise	<b>16</b> 9am Jazzercise  9am-12pm Food Pantry	<b>17</b> 5:30pm Jazzercise 6-8pm Food Pantry 6pm Chancel Choir 7pm Brees Bells  7pm Maundy Thursday Service	<b>18</b> 9am Jazzercise    Office closed  Good Friday	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b>  Easter Sunday	<b>21</b> 9am Jazzercise 9am-12pm Food Pantry  6:30pm Scout Troop 270/FH 7pm New Member Class	<b>22</b> 5:30pm Jazzercise	<b>23</b> 9am Jazzercise  9am-12pm Food Pantry  3pm Clothes Closet prep/FH	<b>24</b> 5:30pm Jazzercise  6-8pm Food Pantry  6pm Chancel Choir  7pm Brees Bells	<b>25</b> 9am Jazzercise    Office closed	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b>  4-7pm Scout Troop 270 Court of Honor/FH  Noisy Offering	<b>28</b> 9am Jazzercise  9am-12pm Food Pantry  6:30pm Scout Troop 270/FH	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>			



**United Methodist Church**  
**In Stow**  
4880 Fishcreek Rd.  
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**GROW-GATHER-GO**

**RETURN SERVICE  
REQUESTED**

Contact us:

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Web Site: [www.umcstow.org](http://www.umcstow.org)  
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**Our Mission: Grow in Faith in Christ~ Reach Out in God's Love**

**Pastor:** Pastor Michael Swab: 330.673.7752 [swabcats@yahoo.com](mailto:swabcats@yahoo.com)

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**Director of Vacation Bible School:** Karen Rocco: [kdrocco6@aol.com](mailto:kdrocco6@aol.com)

**UMC Preschool:** Karen McCaffrey: [stowumcpreschool@outlook.com](mailto:stowumcpreschool@outlook.com)

**Church Office Hours:** Monday-Thursday 9:00 am– 3:00 pm

**Deadline for the Sunday Worship bulletin: Wednesdays at noon**

**Deadline for the newsletter, *The Messenger*: 24th of each month**

Don't forget our Permanent Endowment Fund in your will. Make The United Methodist Church in Stow a part of your financial planning.