



Community United Methodist Church
1480 Poplar Avenue - Oakdale, CA 95361
Office: 209 847-7777

SEPTEMBER 2022

Pastor: Jeff Holder
Cell: 209 840-7939

CHURCH CHATTER

Monthly Newsletter of Events and Information

Grace: A Four Part Series Part 2- Prevenient Grace

“Man is set free to depend on Christ”

Last month we opened with an overview of grace. We will continue to use The Book Of Discipline as our foundational source for our discussion.

As we found in our Book of Discipline grace is the undeserved, unmerited, and loving action of God in human existence through the ever-present Holy Spirit.

There are however, three types of grace. There is prevenient grace. There is sanctifying grace. There is justifying grace. This month we take a closer look at prevenient grace.

Prevenient grace explains how God mitigates human sinfulness enough to exercise saving faith in Christ. In God's infinite mercy, God opens a door for us to cross through into salvation. The emphasis is on each of us taking the overt and conscious action to walk through the door. The exercise of our free will to walk through the door is made wholly possible by the saving Grace made possible through Jesus Christ and His sacrifice on the cross.

In practical terms, prevenient grace is what allows us to open the door to God through Baptism. From earlier times a person would study, pray, read, and be moved by God's prevenient grace to be Baptized. Today, we will baptize infants on up. With infants the parents/godparents accept the role of teaching the children until Confirmation. At that point, the child begins to care for themselves.

Baptism is one of only two recognized sacraments. The other Methodist recognized sacrament is Holy Communion.

Next time: SANCTIFYING GRACE

Frank Remkiewicz

Certified Lay Minister

**November
Fundraiser
Event**

**Chili Cook Off Contest
November 5th**

Get your recipe ready and/or tell your favorite chili chef
the church is having a first annual contest with prizes!!

NEW WORSHIP SCHEDULE

It is our intent to start our worship on time so all can count on the start and conclusion of the worship service.

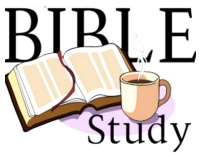
- 8:45am Open Church Doors open & Praise Team sets up and then rehearse
 9:30am Usher, Greeters, Readers, Audio/Video Technician, Lay Minister are all requested to be present
 9:55am Quiet time - a period for meditation and reflection. *At this time, please mute or turn off all cellphones, tablets, and other electronic devices*

10:00am Worship Begins Promptly

If you have suggestions or comments, please call Frank (209) 630-1882

BIBLE STUDY GROUP

by Pastor Jeff



Pastor Jeff is leading a Zoom Bible Study on Tuesdays @ 6:30pm Call for a Zoom link if you are interested in attending: Pastor Jeff (209) 840-7939.

MONDAY on CALL

Certified Lay Minister, Frank Remkiewicz, is now "on call" Mondays so Pastor Jeff can take a day off to "re-energize his batteries". Frank will be available ALL DAY Mondays by phone (209 630-1882) or email (clay.remkiewicz@gmail.com) He can meet at the church or if needed at a home.

CHURCH INFORMATION

Email: cumcOakdaleAdmin@gmail.com

Lay Minister: Frank Remkiewicz
 (209) 630-1882
 clay.remkiewicz@gmail.com

Pastor Jeff Holder:
 (209) 840-7939
 vjHolder@att.net



PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

Help keep church property repaired.

by Judy Bradley

If you see something needing maintenance, water where it shouldn't be, a/c left on, etc. please let me or Pastor know ASAP. Water and electric bills can be excessive and the church is on a tight budget.

Also, the janitor closet was cleaned out and cleaned up. We noticed quite a few cans of paint! The paint is now organized by color. If you are going to help by painting an area in need, please check to see if there is already paint in the janitor closet - please don't buy another gallon without checking.

BAKE SALE & CONTEST

by Frank Remkiewicz

Our Bake sale/auction on August 28th was exceptionally productive and quite tasty to boot. There were around 25 individual offerings for auction including a wonderful lemon cake, chocolate pudding cupcakes, a beautiful berry tart, numerous chocolate chip cookies, a cake with a beach scene and a peach pie. The auction action started slowly and built to a "frenzy" with a single item bringing a bid of \$45. The fun and fellowship was readily apparent. Awards were given to Glen Gorman - best use of color; Beech Remkiewicz - most artistic; Judy Nikkel - Most unique; Carolyn Hallinan - Grand Prize. Thank you to everyone that baked, everyone that bid, and especially those who took the leap and won a cake, pie, or cookies.

September

Jeff Holder - 2nd - Henry Kearns - 8th
 Melinda Screeton 11th - Brandon Cosio - 23rd
 Jackson Smith 27th

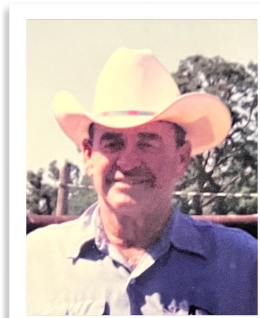


CALENDAR of EVENTS

Meetings here at the Church

Canoeing Spiritual Group	Tues Zoom Mtg 6:30pm
TOPS Weekly Classes	Mondays - 8:30 am
Scouting Nights	Mondays - 6pm
Girl Scouts	2nd/4th Wed 7pm
Alanon	Mon 7pm/Thurs noon/Fri 6pm
Life & Grief Support w/Pastor Jeff	Tuesdays 1pm
Addiction Ministry/Hand in Hand	Thursday 7pm
Art Classes w/Carole Earle	Tues/Thurs 9:30am/Tues 1:30
Oakdale Garden Club	3rd Tues 10am

In Memory



Jerry Ichord passed away on August 26th at the age of 87 after 68 years of marriage to Joyce. He had 3 daughters, 8 grandchildren, and 6 great grandchildren. He loved golfing, fishing, but most of all he loved cattle ranching and reminiscing about the old days. Everyone is invited to a celebration of life - Sept 23rd @ 11am @ Oakdale Golf & Country Club.

CALLING ALL PRAYER WARRIORS

We are considering forming a core congregational prayer group, and will be inviting some of you to participate. If you would like to volunteer, please call Frank. (209) 603-1882, Prayer can move mountains.

Quote for the month

"We make a living by what we get,
But make a life by what we give"

Unknown

ALL SAINTS DAY

October 30th

All Saints Day is a traditional special day in the church year when we remember all our friends and relatives who have passed on to heaven. There will be time set aside during the worship to recognize loved ones. Please submit name(s) to Frank by email, text, or calling prior to the service. (clay.remkiewicz@gmail.com -or call/text: 209 630-1882.

HAVC UNIT UPDATE

by Pastor Jeff

To keep everyone updated on our A/C units, the bigger HVAC unit on the sanctuary building was replaced @ a cost of \$18,300 - which was not in the church budget. (It was original and it died.) With generous extra donations from members and several fundraising events, we have raised about \$10K with \$8,300 to go. There are several other HVAC units nearing the end of life too. Fingers are crossed they continue to function for awhile.

Thank-you for any additional funds you can contribute for the HVAC replacement project. Please mark donations toward the HVAC project.

Office Volunteers

Still Needed

Coverage in the church office is needed for 2 hours on the day(s) of the week you can serve. This is a multi person help needed request. Duties include basic filing, answering the phone, special project, etc. Please contact Pastor Jeff.

COFFEE HOUR SIGN-UP

Coffee & treats after church is a great time for friendship/fellowship. **Hosts** are needed for Sept. 18th and 25th and



all dates in October too. If you or your church committee can be a hostess, please **contact Judy Bradley** (209 985-3590) It is less effort to prepare food if working together with someone else to share the load. After church

coffee time will only happen if there is someone signed up to host/hostess.

METHODIST MEN'S GROUP

by Frank Remkiewicz

The Men's group meets regularly the first Saturday of each month @ 9am, @ **HUCKLEBERRYS**. located in the small shopping center on the corner of Oak & F Street (Hwy 108). All men are welcome (bring a friend). There is discussion about sports, vacations, family, and what is going on in the church. We want to create a force to serve within our community.

For more information, Call Frank Remkiewicz (209) 630-1882.

WHY I AM A METHODIST

by Frank Remkiewicz
Certified Lay Minister

It is not often I go into or write about these things, but I feel a pressing need to talk with all of the congregation about this. See, I grew up in the Roman Catholic Church and was nurtured for years by Dominican nuns. I say this because nuns in this order are nuns of outreach. The Dominicans I know and by whom I was taught are teachers. That is what God called them to do. The priests I really know are of the Redemptorist order. The parish these priests established, my original home parish, was built as a “jumping off place” for the Redemptorist missionary work in Central and South America. The priests I interacted with were always missionaries at heart.

I had the good fortune to meet Bishop Lane, a close friend of my aunt and uncle. Bishop Lane was a significant force not only in his Maryknoll order, but in the missionary fields in Southeast Asia. What I came to believe at a very early age was the most effective way to demonstrate the love Christ has for all of us is through spreading that love to the people around me.

Ultimately I attended the Redemptorist seminary in Oakland (California) because outreach was what I believed I was called to do. In the years to come I left the Roman Catholic Church because I saw what I believe was “lip-service” to outreach. The fact that there were cathedrals built, artwork that was worth millions and the institution failing to live up to its own standard of outreach set by the very persons who refused to contribute vast sums of accumulated dollars.

Frustrated (and out of work) I enlisted in the Marine Corps. Then went to Viet Nam because we (America) were helping to gain and maintain the Vietnamese right to self-government. During my tour in Viet Nam, I began to wonder if there even was a God. No kidding, there were some unbelievably scary times when I prayed not to be killed. None the less, when not in combat I could not understand how an all-merciful and all-powerful God could let something like this war happen.

I returned home, nominally Catholic until, after a very long conversation with a close friend with whom I attended seminary, and by now an ordained priest, and discovered that the only thing that mattered was my loving relationship with God, through Christ with the Holy Spirit. And the two key things to that relationship were worshipping my God and demonstrating that love of God and love of my neighbor was what grew my relationship with my Lord and Savior. So, I finally said goodbye to the Roman Catholic Church.

I became an Episcopalian. I found that outreach was a focal point for the Episcopal Church. I belonged to several parishes, among them Messiah in Santa Ana, California. Outreach for this parish was as real as food banks, legal support, and other programs that truly meet Christ’s calling found in Matthew. Then came turmoil with a re-write of the prayer book. Women priests, and the concept of the big tent/all are welcome. Clearly moral and ethical issues all mainline churches had to contend with. What I witnessed during these days was the exercise of raw political power combined with a ravenous appetite to fund the fights which only laid waste to the Episcopal concept of outreach. It appeared to me as if the Episcopal church’s belief in “loving your neighbor” was conditional. The fight became so intense and consuming that the Episcopal Church literally closed parishes to fund the continuing battles without any consideration for the parishes or the people or the programs being accomplished through the parish. This was devastating to me.

So I ended up back in the desert. For a few years I thought that I could still worship my Lord and Savior, but I did not need an institution to help me. During this time, I read C.S. Lewis, Garry Will, and a few other books. In the process of reading I discovered that I could still do outreach as well as before, however doing outreach by myself left a hole that was not being filled. So, with my family, I started attending Oakdale Community Methodist Church. While the family attended with regularity I only attended off and on. I knew you folks regularly travelled to Guatemala and worked with a community in that country. That intrigued me. Pastor Ofa would stop by ever so often and we had several good conversations. The Pandemic hit and like most churches, in-person worship was stopped. Then Pastor Jeff stopped by, and we had some very

good conversations. Reading the Book of Discipline, I discovered the central theme of the Methodist Church was “worship and out reach”. We worship on Sundays to gain strength through Christ to perform our outreach during the week. This was right in my “wheelhouse”. I was invited to attend the District Conference and I discovered the real “big tent”. The diversity of representatives to the conference was nothing short of amazing. I knew, finally, I found a home with the Methodist Church. As I continue my reading, my belief that I am home is reinforced.

There are things within the Methodist Church that still bother me, or better, I ponder. I am “high” church not “low” church. I would like communion every Sunday. I miss the “pomp and circumstance that accompany’s Palm Sunday, Easter sunrise service, and All Saints Day. The application of the sacrament of Baptism confounds me. But the fact is, at it’s core, Sunday worship and outreach are vibrant and alive both here in Oakdale and in the greater Methodist reach.

So why do I bring all this up? What is my point? I bring this up because we are coming out of the pandemic and now is a good time to take a moment and look inward to what you may believe. Are you still onboard with Methodist core values? Are you growing in your relationship with the Lord? Is our worship, fellowship, and outreach feeding your soul? These are the truly important and valuable issues that make us Lutheran, or Catholic, or Episcopal, or Evangelical. Please take some time to strip everything else away. The time we worship, whether you are high church or low church. Who you may like or don’t like in our congregation. All the things that on a day to day basis may affect you at first blush, but in the long run do not make you a Methodist.

If you find, as I did, this is home then make it a priority to come to the table each Sunday. Shake off the last effects of the pandemic. Reestablish your Sunday routine. God wants you. God needs you and you need God. But do not stop there. There are tens of things to be done. Ushers, greeters, coffee hour hosts, Oakdale rescue mission work, readers, Praise Team members, gardeners, builders of all shapes forms, and outreach to the unchurched. I am 72 years old so age should be no factor. If you are housebound worship service is on-line. There is always a place for home prayer groups, on-line Bible study, and telephone trees for communication. There are so many things everyone can do, just call. As Garth Brooks said in his song The River (and I used in a prior sermon), “don’t stand along the shoreline and say you’re satisfied; choose to chance the rapids and dare to dance the tide”.

We, together, are building a future with God, through our Savior Jesus Christ and moving with the Holy Spirit.