



Pastor Peter's message notes from June 14, 2020: **The Kingdom Coming**

Jesus began his public ministry in the gospel of Mark with these words: **'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'** *Mark 1:15*

Learning about the coming of God's kingdom may have been one of the most challenging parts of my seminary education. I struggled with the idea that God's Kingdom is already here as Jesus says in Mark 1 and yet when Jesus is asked by his disciples how to pray, he tells them to pray for God's kingdom to come. So, which is it? Dr. Stamm, one of my theology professors, said, "The kingdom of God is already here, but it has not yet fully arrived." *Already, but not yet.*

I asked him, "How can something be here, but not yet have fully arrived?" He said to me, "What does the Kingdom of Heaven look like?" In Revelation 5:9-10 we're told in the kingdom of heaven all people of different languages, races, and nations worship God together. But I said, there is so much division. It makes a huge difference what language, race, and nation you are a part of. These can be such barriers for creating the world that God intends on earth. This is true, but I've lived to see the kingdom of heaven unfolding. It wasn't so long ago that African American students weren't accepted as students at my seminary. In 1955 it was a major event to have five black students enroll and graduate from Perkins School of Theology with Master of Divinity degrees. Reflecting on the scriptures encouraged the faculty to make this decision. This foretells what is to come. Someday there will be an end to racism as all people come together to worship God together.

Already, but not yet

What does the kingdom of heaven look like? The return of Jesus. In Acts, we read how Jesus returned to his disciples after his death and resurrection and prepared them for the ministry God was calling them to do. **So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority Acts 1:6-8**

The goal of discipleship isn't to know when Jesus will return but to live with the expectation that it could be any time. We should live our lives in each moment preparing for the kingdom of heaven on earth. This passage from Matthew reminds us that we have a responsibility to be a part of the work God is accomplishing to bring about the kingdom of heaven on earth: **³⁵For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me."** ³⁷Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" ⁴⁰And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." *Matthew 25:35-40*

How can we be a part of the Kingdom of heaven? Through prayer and studying the scriptures God invites us to include the story of our lives in the story of what God is doing to heal and redeem the whole world. John Wesley, the founder of the movement of faith that is now the United Methodist Church, understood God calling us to be both a people of prayer and a people of action. When he was a student at Oxford University in England in the 1730s, he and his friends would meet several times a week for prayer and Bible Study. Through this, they heard God calling them to serve the people in their community. They visited people at the local jail and taught them about Jesus' forgiveness. They volunteered their time to teach children of poor families. The practice of prayer led John Wesley and his friends to live out the actions described by Jesus in Matthew 25.

The kingdom of heaven is here, the kingdom of heaven is coming. We are called to pray and listen to where God is calling us to serve in the world.

Our Church Family

Prayer concerns from our church family

Aura Tavernner, Judy Murray, Bill Brame, Donna Rosiere, Jaccie Blaszczyk, Linda Riddle, Camden Garcia, Peggy Province, Beverly Jackson, Nita Woodrel

Birthdays for the coming week

June 21: Evelyn Baker, Jack Hart
 June 22: Parker Lightfoot
 June 24: Caleb Thompson
 June 26: Gabrielle Benedict, Ashlyn Culp

Anniversaries for the coming week

June 23: Brian and Krystle Gremaud

Preparing For Worship

Scriptures for the coming week

June 22: Genesis 1:1-2,4
 June 23: Genesis 2: 5-25
 June 24: Genesis 3: 1-24
 June 25: Revelations 21:1-5
 June 26: Revelations 22:1-7
 June 27: Revelations 21: 6-27

Upcoming Services

Services are 9:30 a.m. every Sunday on Facebook

- June 21: The Kingdom Here and Now
- June 23: The Kingdom on Earth

Wednesday Work Crew Gives Time and Talent For 35 Years To Maintain Church

Ever since I started attending UMC-Burg, I have heard about the Wednesday Work Crew but never really knew much about them. When it was suggested I do an article on them, I immediately agreed. And when I asked the crew, they agreed--on the condition that I bring them a treat for their break. So, on Wednesday, June 3—a batch of cinnamon rolls in hand—and again June 17—donuts in hand—I sat down with Paul Rowland, Tom Mellenger, Don Riffle, Jerry Murray and Rick Schmidli during their break to find out how they got their start and just what this crew is up to every Wednesday. -By Carol Hassler



Wednesday Work Crew Dec. 15, 2004
Left to right: Don Riffle, Bob Ruth, Baird Brock, Bill Brame, Jerry Murray, Carl Haldiman, Paul Rowland

The Start

In the early 1980s, four members of the First United Methodist Church retired from their respective professions and began doing volunteer work as a small, loosely formed group. They were Paul Rowland, Carl Haldiman, Bob Ruth and Oliver Kassel. Under the leadership of Ginger Baile, also an FUMC member, they remodeled a house on Christopher Street and turned it into the first adult abuse home in Warrensburg. They also maintained the Red Cross building on Emerson Street and spent many hours doing maintenance and repair work at the church.

This group of men evolved into an efficient, dedicated team, and by 1985 they had started meeting regularly at the church every Wednesday morning. The Board of Trustees soon recognized the value of such a group, and by 1985 they were made a part of the church's official organizational structure and given the name "Wednesday Work Crew." This group has been in existence with only minor interruptions for 35 years.

The Job

The crew was formed primarily to assist with maintenance on and around the facility. This included the parsonage. Paul said, "There are a lot of little items that didn't fit to have done by a contractor. We decided we could do that and save the church money. We really weren't in the business of building new walls or partitions. We were replacing lightbulbs and painting, doing jobs that were considered maintenance, not new constructions. Later on, we got into a lot of new construction as well, and a lot of times we get more credit for that because it's visible and people see it and appreciate it. One thing we were pretty active in was getting the Morton building built to the west of the property to provide more space for the scouts' camping supplies and materials."

The maintenance is where the crew has really helped save the church money and resources. One area the Wednesday Work Crew covers is inspection. Paul explained, "We've been doing the elevator maintenance and inspection for 20 years, and as I recall that maintenance agreement they were asking us to sign at that point was around \$2,200 a year, so we have saved a considerable amount in that area." Tom added, "We check the emergency lights every six months, fire extinguishers once a month, defibrillator--that's Don's baby."

There are 50 emergency lights in this building and 20 fire extinguishers. Last time we checked the emergency lights, five needed to have batteries replaced." Some inspections the crew cannot do; for instance, the sprinkler system has to be done by a contractor.

As a guide, the crew has a detailed checklist of tasks for each month. For instance, Rick went into the catch basin--a small manhole on the west end of the parking lot--where all the debris over the year washes down and piles up. Rick had to shovel all that out, a job scheduled for twice a year.

Although they have a regular maintenance schedule to follow, the crew always has something come up. People can fill out a work order and put it in their mailbox, which they check every week. Tom said, "This week Rick and Paul are working on a leak in Chuck's (Linville) office. That's something that came up out of the blue."

Tom explained that overall their job "is like home maintenance. It's the things you need to do in your own home to keep things up to snuff but on a larger scale."

The Talent

The crew brings with them a wealth of talent. Paul is an engineer. Tom taught drafting at UCM. Don worked for Missouri Public Service as an electrician. Jerry is the fabricator. He also does a lot of welding work at his home. For instance, he fabricated the cages around the speakers in the Family Life Center to protect them from flying basketballs and such. Jerry said jokingly, "I don't want you to remember that though, in case one falls off."

Paul said, "It's probably a mistake to single out one or two, but I think we would be remiss if we didn't say something about the work that Bill Brame has done over the years. He was our cabinet maker. He built more shelves and cabinets in this building than most people realize, especially after we built the FLC. Bill did a tremendous amount of skilled craftsmanship in woodworking and professional work. I'd like to call attention to Don Riffle, too. He has left his mark here--very visible. The room directly off the elevator in the basement is a monument to Don's skills and craftsmanship, and he really changed the look of that area down there--well, all over the building for that matter."

Wednesday Work Crew, continued



Rick Schmidli, Tom Mellenger and Paul Rowland in the workroom.

Don added, "Steve Mills has contributed a lot to the maintenance and care of The Rock. Every member of the crew has worked there at some point, but Steve has really put in a lot of work there." Paul agreed: "Steve has contributed a lot in the last 10 years or so. He's been very valuable in maintaining The Rock; he has done that almost single handedly."

Everyone who has ever worked for the Wednesday Work Crew deserves recognition. Paul said, "I could single out any one of the group. Each has left his mark. If I was to walk through the building, I could say who did what. We've been a great team."

And while Paul is the first to give others credit, the rest of the crew is just as quick to sing Paul's praises. Tom said, "Paul is the expert on the heating and cooling. You would not believe the system that we have. We have 20 furnaces and air conditioners in this building." Rick added, "Paul has ordered plates to put on each unit so each is named. When you come up off the ladder and turn, he wants you to be able to see that. If you're an H-VAC person coming to work at the church, it's got to be easy. Everything is organized. Paul is very detailed that way. It makes working here much easier."

Don said, "Everywhere you turn you will see something that Paul has initiated or repaired or built. The workshop used to be a furnace room and a classroom. Paul has turned it into a workshop and brought if not all of his tools most of them to supply it. He's a good teacher and a good worker. You can't say that about everyone." Tom agreed, "He's a well of wisdom." To commemorate the work that Paul has done, a wooden sign hangs outside the workshop that says "Paul Rowland Workshop."

The Mission

The crew believes strongly in their work to help the church. Tom explained, "Most people in the congregation don't realize how much money this crew saves the church every year. It's thousands of dollars. If we had had Fox Heating and Cooling come over today and do what these guys did on the roof and work on the leak in Chuck's office, it would be several hundred dollars just for a service call. That's just one example. I don't think anyone has really ever kept track of cost savings, but if they did they would be surprised. That's our main purpose: to serve the church and save them money for other missions."

The Call to Volunteer

Anyone is welcome to join the Wednesday Work Crew. The "newbie" to the group is Rick Schmidli, who joined Fall of 2016. Rick said, "Something brought my attention to the Wednesday Crew--maybe something in the bulletin. I asked Tom about it. I had just retired, and I thought this was a way I could give to the church, so Tom said, we'd love to have you. I showed up and have been coming ever since."

Don jokingly said, "We were really happy when Rick came along because most of us are at the age we don't climb ladders anymore."

Paul said, "And if you are a reliable worker and stay with us, you get to ride on the top of the elevator."

"If Rick will let you," added Tom. This is just one example of the comradery the men have as joking was constant during the interview.

"We welcome anyone who is interested," Paul said. "In fact, we've had women come and say, 'Haven't you got something my husband can do?'"

The Fellowship

The Wednesday Work Crew isn't all work and no play. Don said, "Everyone on this team comes with a unique background and a unique ability to work together and get the job done while having fun doing it. It's always been one of my favorite times of the week."

"I value working with these men because they are all very competent, and especially, mechanically competent," Jerry said. "In 2001 we moved to this area. When my daughter, Kelly, told me about this group, she said that I would never find a custodial type work crew more intelligent, better educated, or knowledgeable than the work crew at our church. Although there have been retirements and additions, the quality has always remained. The work environment is optimal."

In reference to small groups within the church, Tom said this is his small group: "We meet every week and we always take a break around 10, and before COVID came along we would go out to lunch somewhere. We would sit around and talk maybe til around 2. We feel like we are accomplishing something for the church and at the same time supporting each other."



Don Riffle and Jerry Murray

Final Note

After a delightful conversation, I was treated to a tour of the workshop and electric room. I left in awe. It's amazing how organized everything is, how much detailed information is available, and how much work the Wednesday Work Crew has done and continues to do for our church. If you would ever like to visit the crew—or just stop by to say hello and thank you—you can find them every Wednesday morning around 10. They would love to see you—especially if you come bearing a sweet treat.

News and Updates

Church Receives Grant For Online Worship

The pandemic has been horrible. However, this crisis has been an opportunity for our church to create online worship for the first time in our history. Before the pandemic we were sharing the Good News of Jesus with between 170 and 200 people each Sunday. Through online worship, we have been consistently reaching over 300 people every week. This has been an awesome opportunity for us to reach new people for Jesus in our community.

As we prepare to return to in-person worship, it is critical that we secure the resources necessary to continue to provide online worship to our congregation and community. Our audio-visual team believes that with an additional 15 hours a week of staff time, we will be able to continue to provide high quality live stream online worship and safe high quality in person worship. To provide the resources necessary for this essential ministry the finance committee has approved an additional \$7,800 a year in staffing expenses; \$1,500 of this money came from a grant for online worship from the Missouri United Methodist Foundation, and \$1,500 came from an individual donation. It is awesome to see how our church is creatively using this crisis as an opportunity to develop strategies for reaching new people for Jesus. *-submitted by Pastor Peter*

Small Bible Study Groups Postponed

The planning team for First Conversations, the small group ministry, has decided efforts to begin online small groups will be postponed until the church resumes in-person worship.

Communicating the four options via online methods is difficult, and the team wants to make sure everybody is able to make a choice that best suits them. Therefore, please review the four options, talk to your friends, and send questions to susan@umcburg.org for more information.

These are the four options currently prepared to begin, either online or as soon as a small group wants to get started. Groups of 10 or fewer can begin meeting at the church, in homes, or at other safe locations of their choosing. This includes the option of meeting through Zoom or other social media formats.

- The Book of James: an audio-based curriculum from Dr. Howe's teachings. The previous session was a study on Philippians.
- A Walk with God in the Desert: seven video sessions based on how God retrained the Hebrew nation during the 40-year walk in the wilderness.
- A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood: a Bible study based on Tom Hank's movie about Mr. Rogers that is available through the UMC Discipleship.org website.
- Readings in Faith: each week an article will be posted online for participants to read and reflect. An open forum will follow in which members can share their thoughts about the article using social media or in person as participants choose.



Campus Ministry Team: Bob Muir, Preston Parks (student director), Steve Mills, Lisa Schmidli, and Ginger Cochran

Sign Up For the ROCK Service Day

Where: The ROCK 305 S Holden St, Warrensburg, MO

When: July 18 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM

The congregation and residents of the ROCK will be coming together to clean, organize, and revamp the ROCK! We want to make the ROCK into a new place where we can house new and upcoming campus ministry!

So bring work clothes, some gloves (some will be working outside doing landscaping) and a hard-working spirit!

* Here is the link for the google forms signup sheet*

<https://forms.gle/G5XPUIyzxfHTiDx66>

Campus Cupboard Update

Thanks to the generosity of our congregation this spring during the pandemic, \$3,310 was donated to the UCM Campus Cupboard enabling them to supply free food for college students still in town.



A Note For Children

How do you know who is in your community? What about who your neighbor is? Join us on our Facebook group page to learn who our neighbors are and why they are our neighbors. We

will also explore how we can be a good neighbor! We will be learning through Luke 10:25-37.

June's Verse: Now faith, hope, and love remain - these three things - and the greatest of these is love.

-1 Corinthians 13:13

*Facebook: UMCburg.org Children & Young Families

*Email: kingdomkids@umcburg.org