

# Gray Weekly News



Week Leading to Sunday, May 1, 2022

**DON'T FORGET!**  
**The Big Give – Saturday, April 30**  
8 am to 12 noon



**Bring your unwanted and usable items to the church before Friday, April 29. If you need help moving large items, call the church office so we can arrange to pick them up by Friday.**

**We need baked goods to sell at the Big Give. Bring them, individually wrapped, to the church on Friday or early Saturday morning. Come join us Saturday morning!**

## Third Sunday of Easter



Acts 9:1-20  
Psalm 30  
John 21:1-19

**“Transformed by Love ”**

## News and Notes

### **THIS WEEK** **Sunday, May 1**

Please join us on Sundays at 11 am. If you are unable to come in person, you can watch our livestream at [graymemorialumc.org/facebook.com](http://graymemorialumc.org/facebook.com) or [graymemorialumc.org/youtube](http://graymemorialumc.org/youtube), at 11 am or any time after that at [graymemorialumc.org/](http://graymemorialumc.org/)



If you have prayer requests, please contact Norma Adams, Jennifer Skinner or Gail Teems.

You may also call the church office at 850/385-6441 or send a text to 850/933-8469.

### **Prayer Requests & Praises**

Sam, Patsy and Betty

Dawn and her family for struggles, challenges and needs

Jack, Randy, Jim & Jane Workman

Joyce and Bob

Husband of Christie Shellenberger

Chickie Smith with back injury-dependent on prayer for relief

All those who are suffering from accidents, illnesses and surgery

## **The Holy Spirit at work in your life?**

*By Rev. Ryan Dunn, [www.umc.org](http://www.umc.org)*

What is the evidence of the Holy Spirit in your life? Many faith traditions emphasize demonstrative acts of the Spirit's presence: speaking in tongues, miraculous healings, and the ability to prophesy. But what if that's not your experience?

When a young John Wesley saw no such witness in his own life, he struggled with this question. Did that mean that the Spirit was not present—and by extension, that he was not saved?

Wesley later understood that the Spirit can manifest in much subtler ways. In that tradition, United Methodists believe the Holy Spirit may bear witness through a demonstrative act like speaking in tongues, but might also be known in a myriad of other expressions, too.

During his now-famous moment on Aldersgate Street in London back in 1738, when Wesley felt his heart "strangely warmed" by an inexplicable love, he also experienced the calming reassurance that the Holy Spirit was present within him. An inward testimony revealed to Wesley that, "I am a child of God; that Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me;

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that all my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God” (“The Witness of the Spirit: 1” 1.7). The Holy Spirit eased the questioning turmoil of John’s soul and delivered an inner peace.

Wesley later noted other marks of the Spirit, all of them made present in the lives of every believer. In his sermon, “Marks of the New Birth,” Wesley suggested individuals displayed a witness to the presence of the Holy Spirit whenever they display faith, hope and love. 1 John 4 notes the evidence of God in our love for one another. When we put that love on display we are taking on God’s Spirit. The Holy Spirit is active in us and through us according to our love.

When we recognize the Spirit evident in love, we begin to see a witness to the Spirit across our United Methodist connection. We observe evidence of the Spirit in our practice of the three General Rules: To do no harm, do good, and attend to the ordinances of God.

Often, the Spirit prompts us to do something. When we feel a pull to check-in on a neighbor, we might attribute that to the work of the Spirit. Or when we spontaneously lift our voices in prayer for a hurting loved one, we call that a movement of the Spirit. But the Holy Spirit might also call us into inaction: inviting us to love by not participating in systems of harm.

In this way, we might attribute that urge we feel to hold our tongues while others are gossiping as the work of the Spirit. The child who holds back a funny but biting comment at the expense of her classmate is empowered by the Spirit. When United Methodists refuse to use mascots and names demeaning to Native Americans, they are reacting to the shared movement of the Spirit. The Spirit guides us into refraining from participation in systems and actions of harm.

In the same way, we witness the Spirit moving us towards acts of goodness. The compulsion we feel to feed a stranger’s expired parking meter might be evidence of the Spirit. So, too, is the shared support received by United Methodist disaster relief workers at work in hurricane-ravaged areas.

The Spirit inhabits us individually, but is often evidenced in community. Our invitation to the Lord’s Supper is a movement of the Spirit—as this invitation represents the extension of God’s grace. The Spirit moves us towards sharing this special meal together.

The fact that United Methodists observe an open table—a communion table where all who are willing are invited to participate—carries notes of the Spirit’s work. We believe that communion is a means for experiencing God’s grace together. An invitation to all to come and share in the meal of remembrance shows the Spirit’s marks of hope and love.

We observe evidence of the Spirit in our pursuit of justice, as well. Much like school spirit unites students to fanatically root for their hometown team, the Holy Spirit unites the faithful in working towards the establishment of God’s good, fair and equal human order. The pull we feel

as United Methodists (and humans) to stand against racism is a Spirit-inspired feeling. So, too, is the Spirit working through our call for a living wage model. The moments when we seek to address injustice because it “feels like the right thing to do” can be attributed to movements of the Spirit. The Spirit enables us to capture God’s vision for the world as it should be, it then provides ideas for how we participate in God’s good vision.

With this in mind, it is good to recall some of the visions the Holy Spirit has provided to us. We should acknowledge them and continue to share in the Spirit-driven work of the church: through worship and attending to the ordinances, through joining her good work in seeking justice, or in refraining from contributing to harm.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday, April 26	7 pm	Board of Trustees Meets
Wednesday April 27	10 am	Neighborly’s Time with Afghan Mothers and Children
	7 pm	Bible Study with Pastor Beth Via Zoom
Thursday, April 28	10 am	Bible Study No choir practice this week
<b>Saturday, April 30</b>	<b>8 am to 12 noon</b>	<b>Big Give and Bake Sale</b>
Sunday, May 1	11 am	Worship Service
Wednesday, May 4	10 am	Neighborly’s Time with Afghan Mothers and Children
	12 noon	Wonderful Weds Brown Bag Lunch
	7 pm	Acts Bible Study with Todd Clark
Thursday, May 5	10 am	Bible Study
	5:30 pm	Choir Practice