



# The Messenger

January 4, 2023  
Volume 55, Issue 1

*A weekly publication of Laurel Heights United Methodist Church*

Dear Church-

The new year brings another expanse of Ordinary Time in the church calendar. Ordinary Time... I could use a little bit of the ordinary in my life right now! Our paraments will be green and we will travel the time between welcoming the birth of baby Jesus and walking with the adult Jesus as he sets his face towards Jerusalem. The Pastors and worship team have prayerfully developed two sermon series that will bring us right up to the edge of Lent! Both of these series are described below. I look forward to walking this time with you!

In Christ-

Pastor Lisa



## #BeUMC

**Sermon Series Starts  
Sunday, January 8**

### #BeUMC

**Resilient, Committed, Faithful, Jesus-seeking, Connected, Spirit-filled, Deeply rooted, Missional, Disciple-making, World-changing, Diverse, Generous, Justice-seeking...** These are a group of words developed by the United Methodist General Board of Discipleship that help capture the essence of what it means to be a part of the United Methodist tradition.

January 8-January 22, we will share a sermon series called #BeUMC that explores what traits those in the UMC share.

Each Sunday, we will focus on one of John Wesley's three Simple Rules: First, do no harm.

Second, do all the good you can.

Third, keep the ordinances of God.

This series is designed to help us celebrate how we do live that call as communities of faith around the world and to challenge us to go further, go deeper in our expression of faith in daily living.

## **Messy Spirituality: God's Annoying Love for Imperfect People**

Do you feel like: I don't pray enough I don't read my Bible enough I don't share my faith enough I don't love God enough I'm not committed enough I'm not spiritual enough? Messy Spirituality is a sermon series for the silent majority of us who have been convinced that we just don't do Christianity right. We spend most of our lives worried about what we don't do instead of what we have done, focused on our imperfections instead of God's fondness for imperfect people. Why? Because we've been bombarded with books, tapes, talks, seminars, and movies convincing us that real Christianity is all about perfection. Imperfection and messiness are, in fact, the earmarks of true Christianity; real Christianity is messy, erratic, lopsided . . . What if genuine faith begins with admitting we will never have our act completely together? Maybe messy disciples are exactly the kind of imperfect people Jesus came to earth for and whose company he actually enjoyed--and still enjoys. If you want to find Jesus today, look for him in the midst of burned-out believers, moral misfits, religious incompetents . . . men and women whose lives are, well, messy. Join us for this gloriously liberating sermon series beginning on Jan. 22. (This sermon series is loosely based upon a book of the same title written by Mike Yaconelli.)



**Happy New Year!**  
**The Messenger will return on  
January 11, with all of the upcoming  
happenings around the church.**