

CONNECT To GOD

 **saintmark's**
— United Methodist Church —
603 N. Jennings Road
Independence, Missouri 64056
Phone: 816-257-1812
Web: www.stmumc.net

September 2019

Paula's Pondering

I was asked recently what we do in Leadership Council. This is a valid question, given that we have gone to a Simplified Structure model rather than the Administrative Board model most of us are used to. In previous articles, I've described the differences in the models, so I won't go into much detail here. For the most part, though, the purpose of the Administrative Board model was to hear reports of what had been accomplished during the previous month and grant permission for the particular ministries that were to happen in the coming month. They took care of any problems that arose, working through standing committees, such as the Trustees and the Evangelism Committee. Essentially, it was a business model, with the Administrative Board managing the business of the church.

The purpose of the Leadership Council, using the simplified structure model, is govern the church. They do the strategic planning and aligning all our ministries to the mission and vision of the church. They do not manage the day-to-day running of the church. That is left up to the staff, both paid and unpaid, under the direction of the pastor. Thus, if a light bulb needs changing or we need to call in a plumber, the Leadership Council is not consulted. Instead, the issue is taken care of by staff - in this case, the Building and Grounds Team.

So what does the Leadership Council do then? One of their main jobs is to set up guidelines and policies to govern the running of the church. These guidelines set boundaries for the ministries of the church so the staff and congregation can be released to do the ministry of the church. They also keep us focused on our mission and vision, setting goals and ensuring those goals are being met.

Perhaps an example would help explain the use of guidelines. Under the old model of leadership, if you wanted to start a new ministry to the children at Randall Elementary of reading weekly with the students and each month providing the participants

Inside This Issue	
Paula's Ponderings	1
Upcoming Events	2
Sunday Sermon	2
Birthdays	2
Phone Prayer Chain	2
Bread of Life Food Pantry	3
Leadership Meeting Minutes	3
UMM Minutes	3
UMW Minutes	4
Festival of Sharing	4
Soapmaking Workshop	4
Is Cursing Really That Big of a Sin?	4
Spiritual Explorer	6

with a new book to take home, you'd first have to meet with the Administrative Board and pitch your proposal. They would point out that, since this involved meeting new people and spending the church's money, you'd need to get the approval of the Evangelism Committee, the Finance Committee, and possibly the Education Committee before you could proceed. Of course, they had all met for that month, so you'll have to contact them and get on their agendas for the next month, meet with them, amend your proposal as needed, secure their approvals, and then meet again with the Administrative Board for approval before you could proceed with this. And, of course, any one of those committees or the Administrative Board could turn you down or suggest amendments, which may or may not necessitate approval from the various committees again. Under our current model, you need only check the guidelines for ministries at St. Mark's to make sure you comply with them, and then go and do with our blessing. No other approval is needed. If you need help with the ministry, you simply contact the staff - our administrative assistant, the pastor, or the appropriate team - for assistance and guidance.

These guidelines are a living document – they can be amended, deleted, or added to as needed by the Leadership Council. Their purpose is to get everyone on the same page, working toward the same mission. They are also a work in progress. The Leadership Council has done a great job of putting into place financial policies and procedures, bylaws for the council itself, general guidelines for ministry, and specific guidelines for the food pantry and the clothes closet. Copies of these guidelines and policies are out in the west foyer on the shelf near the restroom for you to pick up and read. They are also available in the office.

I urge you to grab a copy and take a look at the work of your council. If you have any questions, suggestions, or concerns, let a council member or me know.

Blessings,

Pastor Paala

Upcoming Events

- 9/1 Communion
- 9/7 Soapmaking Workshop



Sunday Sermons

- 9/1 Belonging: Giving Back To God Genesis 28:20-26
- 9/8 Belonging: You Will Be My Witnesses 1 Peter 4:8-9, 15
- 9/15 When I Grow Up: Becoming Who We Were Meant To Be Gal 5:22-23, John 15:16, Matt 12:33, 7:20
- 9/22 When I Grow Up: Love, Joy, & Peace Heb. 10:19-25
- 9/29 When I Grow Up: Patience, Kindness & Goodness Gal. 5:22-23; John 15:4-5

Birthdays

September

- 9/5 Paula Smith
- 9/11 James Brison
- 9/12 Jeremiah Brison



Phone Prayer Chain

If you know of a member going to the hospital, have a need, a concern, or a joy, please call someone on the following list, starting at the top, if possible. Call any time, day or night. If the person you call is not at home, leave a message or call the next person on the list.

- Pat Townsend.....373-3915 or 225-9459
- Rosemary Garten.....427-5725 or 519-8500
- Carol Marcks427-5725 or 560-5627
- Marilyn Berry 796-5789
- Lucille Bolen 560-5131
- Mary Branstad 796-9659 or 868-3752
- Ann Fiene 257-5214
- Jackie Leffingwell..... 257-1123
- Linda Roberts650-5131 or 853-3398

Prayer Chain



- Carol Buhrlé 796-3630 or 225-8174
- Shirley Weaver..... 461-9224 or 716-1184
- Chris Pauley571-3922
- Gayle Elliott.....257-9655
- Arletta Cahill.....600-9203
- Flora Costanza.....914-8034
- Sandy Bower373-5603
- Anna Inman (660) 232-1221
- Jackie McMenemy.....461-7577



Bread Of Life Food Pantry

The Food Pantry and Clothes Closet are open **Wednesday from 3-5pm and Saturday from 5-7pm**. No appointment needed!

We need weekly donations! We are always in need of paper products and personal hygiene items.

Items in high demand: hygiene products (soap, deodorant, shampoo, toothpaste, feminine napkins), toilet paper, paper towels, canned food (meat, soup, vegetables, fruit), cereal, peanut butter, jelly, boxed sides (instant potatoes, Au-Gratin potatoes, pasta, spaghetti sauce, dry beans & rice), powdered milk, shelf milk (available at Walmart, Big Lots, Costco), laundry soap.

Thank you for your donations!

Website: <http://stmumc.net/outreach-ministries/food-pantry-clothes-closet/>

2019	FAMILIES	PEOPLE	ITEMS OUT	ITEMS IN
MAY	26	77	1032	2517
JUNE	22	77	724	358
JULY	42	176	1129	203



Leadership Meeting Minutes

AUGUST 15 MEETING

There were 14 in attendance for the August 15 meeting. The meeting was opened up in prayer by Craig Bolen at 7:00 p.m.

The Charge Conference will be held at Faith United Methodist in Grain Valley on Sunday, October 6 at 2 p.m. Lay leader forms for the conference are due by 2 p.m. September 1.

The minimum wage for pastors has gone up. The vote passed to increase Pastor Paula's salary to \$71,234, an increase of \$1,262.

Guidelines for the Food Pantry and Clothes Closet were reviewed. The Food Pantry guidelines were approved. The Clothes Closet guidelines were amended and approved to include a statement to not accept household items due to the lack of space. The issue of whether to keep the Clothes Closet open after September 17 was also discussed. The vote was unanimous to keep it open.

Chapter 4 of the book Mission Possible was gone over.

Mary Morris closed the meeting with a prayer.

UMM Minutes

Nine (9) in attendance for **August 17** meeting.

Last month's minutes and Treasurer's report were read and approved.

Ideas for outreach (Salvation Army Bell Ringing/will contact Carol Buhrlle to setup date). Harvester's (agreed to support Darlene Clark in this).

Cook's next Month/Brison's.

Devotion next month/Joshua Brison.

Testimony's this month "Car Crash" James Brison & association of Bible Scripture in her life by Lucille Bolen.

Devotion this Month/The meaning of the song "Taps" in our Christian Lives/Craig Bolen.

Closing Business Prayer/James Brison/8:33am. Breakfast was served.

UMW Minutes

Seven (7) in attendance for **August 7** meeting. July minutes were approved. Treasury balance is \$2,861.41. Ice cream social for Hemophiliac campers held July 29 was successful with approximately 160 campers served. UMW will serve a spaghetti lunch to approximately 100 campers at Eagle Lake Camp held at Independence First UMC.

There will be no baking of cookies for the Chuckwagon Cookie fundraising due to illness. Project will resume next year. Planning to have annual Thanksgiving Dinner.

Discussed future of Food Pantry & Clothes Closet. There is a great need for food and toiletry donations. Darlene organizing a group of 30 to work at Harvester's Defeat Hunger on September 14 from 8:30-10:30am. Meet at 8am at the church.

Festival of Sharing Dental Pack kits must be assembled by September 8 and delivered to St. James Church between September 9-13 from 10-3pm. Event is on September 14 at St. James. Monetary donations welcome.

Treasurer balance is \$2,877.75

Festival of Sharing

Deadline for packs is Sunday, September 8. Sharefest is Saturday, September 14. To register for the Mission Run/Walk or volunteer, go to <https://missouri-reg.brtapp.com/SharefestYouthRegistrationKC2019>. T-shirts are \$10. See Shirley Weaver for questions.

Soapmaking Class

By Kenna Leslie

Please join us for an introduction to vegetable-based soap making on **Saturday, September 7 from 1-2pm**. Suggested donation is \$15.

The workshop will begin with the benefits of creating your own soaps, selection of base oils, herbs and essential oils, safety instruction and end with a live demo of the soap making process

Participants will receive a supplies list and instructions on how to complete Kenna's soap recipe on their own. Each participant will receive a fully cured bar of soap upon completion of the workshop.

Pre-registration is required. There's a sign-up sheet on back table, or email kennaleslie@protonmail.com, or call / text her at 816-651-6792.



Missouri Student Dental Pack

4,816 requested versus 2,460 shared in 2018

\$11

Estimated Pack Value

Place items in a 1-gallon ziplock bag. Place completed packs in boxes labeled "Missouri Student Dental Packs" and mark the quantity on the box's exterior. Extra brushes are for family members.



4 child-sized soft toothbrushes (in original package)



2 adult soft toothbrushes (in original package)



1 dental floss (any size)



1 fluoride toothpaste (6 oz. or more)

GET TO KNOW THE AGENCIES YOU SUPPORT

Cornerstones of Care	Northwest Missouri	1,000 People Served Each Month	Mission: Partnering for safe and healthy communities.
----------------------	--------------------	--------------------------------	---



Is Cursing Really That Big of a Sin?



"It's only when I'm in the moment;" "Some situations you just have to say it;" "My parents cursed in front of me all the time and they were okay with it."

We all will justify our words when it comes to cursing, cussing, speaking profanity, letting zingers go, whatever it is you call the use of words when we are angry, sad, trying to be funny, or just speaking in regular conversation.

However, what seems like inconsequential words are actually sins, creating gateways for further, more dangerous sins to be committed. From Jesus to the apostles to Moses, cursing is conveyed in the Scriptures as a big deal to God and an indicator of a carnal-minded person.

But how big of a sin is cursing?

1) Cursing Ruins Your Witness of Jesus and Dishonors God

In [James 3:10 \(NKJV\)](#), it is expressed that having the same mouth to bless and curse is dishonorable to the Lord. When you are a follower of Christ, you are representing the Lord, not only in what you do but in what you say, think, and feel. If you are praising God one moment but cursing up a storm in the next moment, your witness as being one in mind with God is exposed as weak.

This also comes into the mindset of honoring God through your words. Using God or Jesus Christ in a derogatory way can also be the equivalent of the worst curse words you can think of. It is even stated in the Ten Commandments that God gives to Moses, as shared in the book of Exodus, that God will not tolerate the use of His name in vain: “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain” ([Exod. 20:7](#)).

God wants only what is pure and noble to come out of our mouths. When our mouths are spewing out expletives, it dishonors God and who He is to us. When we accept Jesus into our hearts, it should change how we view ourselves and how we present those changes into the world: “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is good and acceptable and the perfect will of God” ([Rom. 12:2](#)). So, when we are using inappropriate words, even occasionally, it shows God and those around you that maybe you truly aren’t transformed inside and out; thus, your witness of how Christ has changed you might not be accurate and you probably are still more of the world than you realize.

2) Cursing Doesn’t Lift You or Others Up

How many find that after spending time with someone who is constantly cursing, they are encouraged or uplifted after the conversation? Even if the person may be funny with their language choice or are telling a humorous story that requires colorful commentary, those listening often think there is a time and a place for that type of language.

That’s typically why some people will whisper their use of language in certain settings or not even use language around certain people or places, such as at church or home around children. Those that use this language openly in those scenarios are seen as uncouth and shameful, dispensing language that is more appropriate in private. This is because it sometimes is not seen as language that motivates people toward positivity.

The apostle Paul encourages the church of Ephesus to withhold corrupt talk from their mouths in favor of, “what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearer” ([Eph. 4:29](#)). Using foul language might relieve tension or difficulties in your life for the moment, but it could be the last thing someone else wants to hear or have to explain to their child. And we all know that children love to repeat what they hear from adults!

3) Cursing Creates an Open Gateway Into More Sinning

You might think it is harmless to have a “potty mouth,” but in God’s eyes, excusing your language choices could mean that you might be in line to excuse other behaviors far worse than cursing down the road. Cursing could be seen as similar to a smoking habit that leads you into more dangerous drugs, as cursing could have you believe it is okay to lie, gossip, or judge people regularly because they are all “minor” offenses.

King Solomon spoke of this succinctly in the book of [Proverbs](#), telling those reading that “death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit” ([Prov. 18:21](#)). He means that those who find that cursing every day is like breathing will soon eat the fruits of their choice, and those fruits will probably be bitter and cause them lots of spiritual damage.

Paul even impresses it upon his loyal apprentice Timothy in his letter to him in [2 Timothy 2](#), prompting him to tell those he is serving of the negative effects of cursing: “But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness” ([2 Tim. 2:16](#)). He could see, and wanted Timothy to be aware, that what could be seen as innocent profanity would only lead to demise for the person who dabbles in it.

What to Do to Curb Cursing

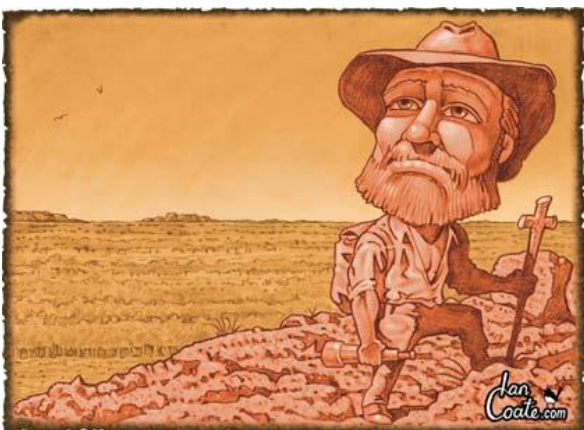
Now, this take on cursing isn't to condemn you or push you to think even uttering one curse word could lead to eternal damnation; we are all sinful people who need our Savior, who died for our sins (even cursing) and allowed us to be freed from that bondage.

What it does mean is that with this knowledge of what Jesus did for us, we need to be cognizant of how we present this knowledge to ourselves, our fellow Christians, and those who need to know about Jesus. A word may slip here and there, which is okay but you need to remember that although Jesus doesn't require your good works to save you, you do need to honor Him by watching and praying over the evilness of your tongue. “But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison” ([James 3:8](#)).

Just like with quitting smoking or some bad habit, learn new ways to catch yourself before you unleash a curse word in your day-to-day life. Maybe you could position the infamous swear jar in the place you find you curse the most (home, office, out with friends) so you feel the pinch in your heart and your wallet when you swear. Or you could have a list of reasons in your wallet/purse of why it is better not to curse, complete with some of these Scripture references listed here, to remind yourself that cursing doesn't have a hold of you; and that you would rather speak words of spiritual encouragement and praise to God instead of profanity.

Whatever you do, just make the effort to lessen your use of colorful language each day. Before you know it, you have replaced your cursing with words that not only lift others up but also lift up the God who loves you, potty mouth and all.

Spiritual Explorer



Explorers go to remote parts of the world to find out what's there. They need great determination and courage to face the unknown, as well as an insatiable curiosity to discover what's over the next horizon.

In colonial days, explorers were sent to find rich, fertile lands for future settlement. Once they had made such discoveries, they were then very eager to get back and give a glowing report on what they had found.

God loves an adventurous spirit that trusts in Him. We should all be Spiritual Explorers – seeking, investigating, examining and discovering. We should have an insatiable curiosity about our Maker and His plan for our lives. Every day is a new opportunity for exploration and unless we go searching, nothing will be discovered. Yes, there will be times of discouragement and exhaustion, and even times that we will be tempted to turn back. But we should foster an unrelenting resolve to investigate the frontiers of God's Word and the courage and confidence to face the unknown as we hold fast to His promises.

Then, when we discover the lands of Grace and how rich and fertile they are, we should eagerly rush back to tell all who will listen. For those who ask for direction, we should confidently be able to map out the way on how to cross the barrier of sin (through faith in Christ) and settle 'for eternity' in the golden lands of Grace.

[\(2 Timothy 1:7, 1 Chronicles 28:20\)](#)