

NOWATA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

JULY 2021 NEWSLETTER



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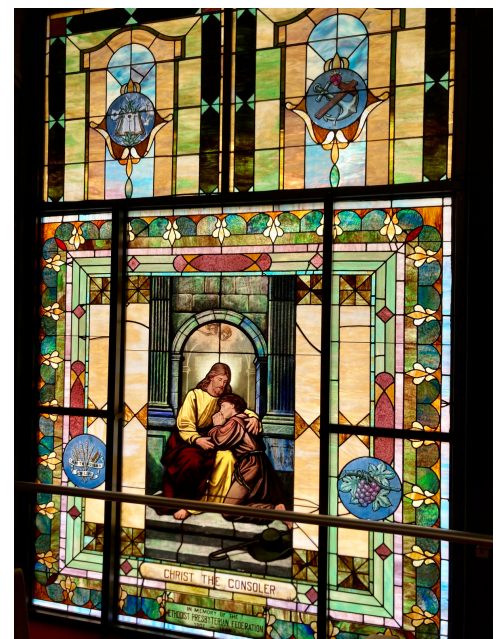
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The Church: Heavenly & Civic

Written by Pastor Jeffrey Rickman

The CHURCH is an otherworldly institution established here on earth by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The local church can be an extension of that. It can also be just another group of worldly people. Some of the things local churches do can directly correspond to the work Christ commissioned us to. Many churches also do things that don't even remotely connect to Jesus.

This church, the one that has hired the staff who put this newsletter together, is a combination of an otherworldly extension of heaven to earth, as well as a worldly institution representing worldly loyalties. There are many people who want our community to thrive, not necessarily because of their confession of Christ as Lord,





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or their passion for the saving of souls, but because they love our church's history in the community. They have fond memories of community leaders who built our church. They have a sense that only the local church can help the local poor in ways that other nonprofits cannot. Or they are tied to inexpressible joyful, wistful, nostalgic feelings around having seen family and friends baptized or married or buried in our midst here. Or they just love the town and can't bear to think of it losing yet another long-standing institution.

A local church is always managing different hopes and expectations of different members and community partners. Sometimes these hopes and expectations are so different from one another that people cannot really fit together. In such cases, that institution usually has to close its doors (Mark 3:25). Yet sometimes, people share the community well, giving before demanding, exercising grace over judgment. We have such a community of grace here.

I'm aware that many are not hungering and thirsting for righteousness as Christ urged, who are not loving the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, nor are they loving their neighbor as themselves, nor are they doing unto others as they would have them do unto them. I'm well aware that many are not regularly practicing daily disciplines. However, many of these folks love our church because of the promise she has for future generations, because of the work that has been done in the past and needs to be done in the future. Even if they themselves don't have the faith or the interest in what Jesus spoke of, they love our town and the people of it, and they see that our church honors the

legacy of those who came before while continuing to build a solid foundation for the transformation and betterment of many people into the future.

Our church is worth sacrificing for and giving to mainly (and really only) because of its connection to Christ, the author of our salvation and only gate to the Kingdom. Yet there are undeniable secondary and tertiary gifts that the local church offers while being salt and light to this bland and dark world. As we continue forward into the future, we will continue to receive the gifts and affections of those who do not bear the marks of Christian discipleship. Yet we will also continue to hope and pray that individuals do not stay comfortable regarding us only as a civic institution, but increasingly as an extension or bridge of heaven to earth.

Remember that our goal as a community and as individuals is to have the identity of Jesus himself (Phillipians 2:5). Everything we do is aimed at helping this dream come to fruition in all the lives we touch. Thank you for joining me and one another in this holy and worthy task.



Coming Up in July

- July 3 from 7-10am
Delaware Methodist
Church Breakfast
- July 13 at 6:30pm
Administrative Board
meeting
- July 17
Erin H.'s birthday
Joan P.'s birthday
- July 25
Potluck after worship
- July 28
Marileigh P.'s birthday

Happening Every Week

Worship: Sundays at 11am

Women's Prayer Group:
Wednesdays at 10:30am

Office Hours: Monday-
Friday from 9am-Noon

Contact Us

PO Box 129

109 West Shawnee Avenue

Nowata OK 74048

(918) 273-1562

nowataumc@gmail.com

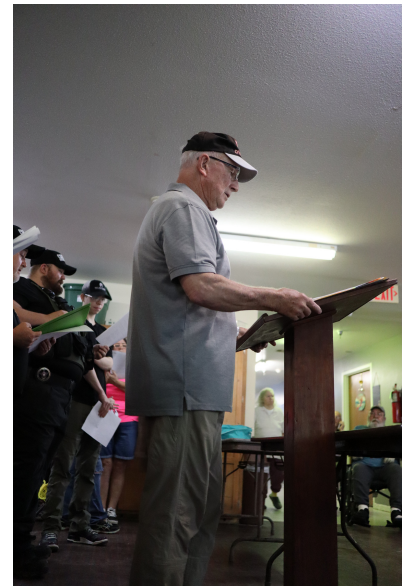
nowataumc.org

Visiting Nowata Nursing Home

Written by Bobby Wilson

On June 10, 2021, members of our church's choral group performed at the Nowata Nursing facility. Joining us in singing were members from the Delaware Methodist Church, other area churches, Nowata County Sheriff Jason McClain, Undersheriff Sandy Hadley, and other members of the Nowata Sheriff's Department. In all, we numbered 19 singers. The presence of Sara Beth and her magic keyboard made for an amazing evening of fellowship with the folks at the facility.

As always, Ms. Joanie Fisher, activities director, and her staff did a wonderful job of providing us with the community room and arranging and caring for the residents.



The residents were furnished with copies of the lyrics to our hymns and really jumped into the spirit of the evening and were engaged with us throughout: singing, clapping, and shouting suggestions and other comments. (I prefer to believe that all comments were, of course, complementary in nature.) Ms. Fisher has told me on numerous occasions that the residents always look forward to our visits and really appreciate the fact that we care for them.

In short, I believe this was an extraordinarily blessed evening. The joy I feel when seeing the effect our little group has upon others is enormous. A little effort bringing lots of joy to wonderful folks. Please join with us for our next performance.

