Great God  Great Men

Our Vision: Build an ongrowing relationship between Jesus and men of all ages, both inside and outside the church, by mentoring men and engaging in small groups, while also recognizing each man’s unique fit into the body of Christ.

Thoughts from George:

NORMAL? OR IS IT “NEW NORMAL”? What was the old normal anyway? Are you as frustrated and confused as I am? Has there ever been anything “normal” about being a disciple of Jesus? Disciples, the “church” and Christianity have always been under some attack. Our Creator God, through the spoken word of His Son, Jesus Christ, created everything and there was order until humankind fell and introduced chaos into paradise.

In my lifetime, and probably yours, my normal has been exposure to such diseases as polio and MRSA and several other infectious diseases, the social unrest of the 60s and Viet Nam and the fear of the destruction of the world as we know it from nuclear holocaust. NORMAL?

What has been normal, what should be normal going forward, is that Jesus is at the center, Jesus is Lord, and Jesus is in charge.

Part of my daily prayer discipline is the Serenity Prayer. It goes beyond knowing what to change and what not to change. Part of it is asking for help to “accept hardships as a pathway to peace.” Took me a long time to accept and understand that. Covid 19 is a hardship! Is it a pathway to peace? It can be. It should be.

I hope that each of us is using this time of forced “solitude” to return to Jesus. My prayer for us as men, as disciples of Jesus, is that our “normal” will have Jesus at the center and that we will lead our families, our churches in refocusing on Jesus as the center.

Jesus must be the reason for our ministry. Jesus is the only way out of the chaos of the world. The Kingdom of God is near. We can choose to live in it now.
We are called “Christians”. 2 Chronicles 7:14 is very appropriate to us at this time in our history. I urge you to go to www.thereturn.org and learn for yourself how you and your church can be part of a national and global movement of prayer and repentance. It starts now. It starts with each of us.

**SPIRITUAL INSIGHT**

By Gary Spivey, GPUMMen Spiritual Guide, 402-740-1514 garyspivey2003@cox.net

Honor God, pray often, keep praying till something happens.

**LISTEN LEARN LOVE**

Your leadership team is focusing on three words to guide us. We want to LISTEN to you and to God so that we may LEARN how we may better serve in LOVE. As a part of that, we will host periodic “roundtables” on ZOOM. The first will be August 8 from 8 – 10 AM as a Bring Your Own Breakfast.

Pastor Eric Rook and Steve Kirkeby of Stillwell UMC are the organizers. Gil Hanke, General Secretary/Chief Executive Officer for Methodist Men and Rev. Dr. Rick Vance, Director of Men’s Ministry for the UMC will lead us in discussions of why we, as spiritual leaders, have such a great impact on our families and the ministry life of the local church.

We will provide the log in information the first week of August. Till then, save the morning, prepare your breakfast, spread the word but most of all, PRAY.
Personally, I have found that having something worthwhile to do makes life much more meaningful. This truism (for me) has only been reinforced during the "quiet" of the pandemic we are in. For me, staying connected with God's people has continued mostly via virtual gatherings for camp development, UMMen, Sunday school and church.

As family we "gathered" virtually from seventeen locations around the world to catch up with each other.

Now as we return to church, probably slowly, let us be steadfast in our support, unity and understanding of each other. Especially let's pray, as George encourages us, for our pastors and other church leaders with these thoughts in mind:

- that we give what we can, knowing that our churches and affiliated ministries have struggled during this time of great need,
- that we be patient with people who view and respond to the “reopening” differently, and
- especially, in those churches where pastors have been appointed elsewhere (without having a proper goodbye) and in those same churches where new pastors are trying to get acquainted, may God's LOVE reign bountifully!

For more information on how you can get involved I encourage all to put the upcoming opportunities mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter on your calendar and take part. Also, keep on keepin’ on with God's work -- doing so gives meaning to our lives.

**MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS**

Released and Restored [www.releasedandrestored.org](http://www.releasedandrestored.org) started in 2004 in Lincoln, Nebraska. We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. We would LOVE to help in Kansas. Are you interested?
Released and Restored provides inmates and ex-offenders in Nebraska with the tools and support systems needed for learning how to live moral, ethical, and legal lives in our communities. Our goal is to prepare individuals for their release, restore family relationships that were harmed or broken by incarceration, and to renew lives.

In the state of Nebraska, 2200 people are released from prison each year, typically with less than $100 in their pocket. They are challenged to find a job, a place to live, medications, and food. Without programs like Released and Restored providing them education, guidance, and support systems, 2 out of every 3 people released from prison will re-offend and return to prison.

- We believe there is a better way than simply continuing business as usual by recycling these individuals back through the prison system.
- We believe our communities are safer and taxpayer costs are reduced when fewer crimes are committed.
- We believe fewer crimes are committed when former offenders who have been released from prison don’t commit new crimes.
- We believe that former offenders are less likely to commit new crimes when they have the skills necessary to live moral, ethical, and legal lives in our communities.

**GREAT PLAINS UM MEN 100 CLUB**

The [Nebraska UM Foundation’s Annual Report](#) includes a celebration of its 20-year partnership with the [Great Plains United Methodist Men 100 Club](#). The Annual Report (pages 10 - 11) details the joint-ministry and its impact on so many.

The GPUMMen 100 Club is celebrating 31 years of ministry that encourages Kansas and Nebraska men and women to enter full-time Christian service, partially through the development of seminary scholarships. These scholarships are supported through their 1,000 Club, an opportunity that encourages people to give $100 per year for 10 years.

**GREAT PLAINS UM MEN INTERNET LINKS**

If questions... Craig Nordaker, GPUMMen Sec & Web Coord, 402) 453-6666  cnordaker@cox.net

The Internet is an incredible resource. It certainly has its advantages and *also* disadvantages! The links below are offered only as some potential resources for each of us to consider as we minister to other men about Jesus Christ.
These links are not to be considered recommendations by your GPUMMen leadership team. Remembering that we must always use the Word of God (the Bible) as our foundation is our hope and prayer.

Foundation- Nebraska UMC
Foundation- Kansas Area UMC
GP UMMen
Great Plains Conference of the United Methodist Church
Mission Impact Tour
SCJUMMen
200 Years of United Methodism
5 Ways to Reach Younger Men
A Transforming Word
Band of Brothers
biblegateway.com A searchable online Bible in over 100 versions and 50 languages.
CBMC Heartland
comochristian.com
disciplemen
GCUMM
GCUMM video introduction
GodTube - Video Sharing - Browse by Category
Iron Sharpens Iron National Men's Conferences
kidsarecute's Video Channel - Watch Videos - GodTube
LIVE BOLD
Man in the Mirror
ManToMan
Men At The Cross
Pastor Prayer Team | Pray For and Affirm Your Pastor
REAL MOMENTUM | a movement of men transforming families & churches to the ends of the earth
Religion, World Religions, Comparative Religion - Just the facts on the world's religions.
Rough Cut Men | Real Men - Real Life - Real Impact
SoSA HomePage
UMC.org
UMMen store- Promotional Products
UMTV.org
Upper Room Living Prayer Center
Ark Encounter