

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

416 Crescent Avenue, Ellwood City, PA 16117

Phone: (724) 758-6278 Website: www.firstumcec.org

Rev. Patricia Cleary

Pastor's Page –October 2014

Social Holiness: Our Wesleyan Legacy

The movement begun by John Wesley was a powerful mix of personal and social holiness. John and his colleagues who made themselves accountable for their personal spiritual holiness worked tirelessly to rid England of social injustices of all kinds. Child labor, dangerous working conditions, long work hours were confronted by the early Methodists. Add to that prison reform, free education for children, access to health care...the list goes on and on.

Thankfully many of the reforms the Methodists worked so hard for are now the law of the land. But the same forces that created the injustices of the 18th century are still alive and well. Many of those who have the upper hand are still greedy. Too often the wealthy make the rules to benefit themselves without regard for what their oppressive policies do to those who work for them. For these reasons, United Methodists have as many social ills to address as did our foremothers and fathers.

What is your social justice passion? One of mine is a guaranteed living wage. People who work a full time job should not come home tired at the end of the day and still not have enough to pay for what it takes to provide a safe, secure home for themselves and their family.

The conflict in our day is the difference between minimum wage and a living wage. They used to be one and the same thing, but no longer.

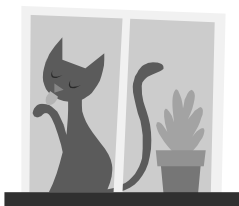
Minimum wages are designed for those who are just starting out in the job market and don't need a living wage.

My first job at a men's clothing store in South Hills Village mall. I earned minimum wage. But I lived in my parents' home and walked to work. I am thankful for how that job taught me the basics of employment. It gave me a work record to show I could hold a job. Minimum wage was appropriate.

For independent adults and those with families, minimum wage is not appropriate. And neither are jobs that give people the number of hours just under the hours needed to get health care benefits. Who will stand up for these people and tell their employers to stop? Who will work to enact laws that guarantee workers enough money so they don't have to work two, three, four jobs just to make ends meet? To me this sounds like an assignment for the heirs of John Wesley and the early Methodists. It is how we can demonstrate God's love in practical ways in our day.

Serving God's Kingdom with you,

Pastor Pat



I AM HAPPY TO REPORT THAT LIFE HERE IS GETTING MORE NORMAL ALL THE TIME. ALL THOSE BOXES HAVE DISAPPEARED INTO THE ROOM UPSTAIRS. NOW THAT THE WEATHER IS COOLING OFF I GET MORE CUDDLE TIME WITH MY HUMANS. BUT I WANT TO KEEP THEM ON THEIR TOES. SO SOMETIMES I SHOW UP FOR A CUDDLE COVERED WITH DIRT AND COBWEBS. THEY HAVE NO IDEA WHERE I'VE BEEN. IT'S FOR ME TO KNOW AND FOR THEM TO FIND OUT!

- GEORGE, THE PARSONAGE CAT