

# The Messenger

RIVERSIDE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

*Where the Spirit runs deep...*

## GREETINGS FROM PASTOR SCOTT

Hello! My name is Pastor Scott Jakel. I usually go by "Pastor Scott," but I'll probably answer to most anything.

Starting in late June, I'll be your new pastor! I've been assigned by Bishop Ough of the Minnesota Annual Conference as an intentional interim pastor. Let me say a few things about what that means. Whereas most clergy are appointed, I'm being assigned. (I'm not sure how much that will make a big difference - being assigned vs. appointed.) My coming to you and serving as an intentional interim pastor is worth noting.

Churches that have intentional interim pastors assigned to them find themselves in a position to take stock of their ministry in a very intentional way because of what they've been going through recently. That doesn't mean there are problems at such churches, although there can be some difficulties to address. In some ways, it means that the Bishop cares deeply about a congregation that is being assigned this type of pastor and really wants that church to do well. Obviously the

Bishop wants all churches to do well - it's just that some are in need of special care.

What follows is a list of things that happen during intentional interims. Conflict is addressed and resolved. Mission and ministry focus areas are clarified. I spend time listening "care"-fully as each church spends time with me looking back at their history - grieving difficult days, as well as celebrating high points and milestones. They assess where things are at in the present - acknowledging assets and liabilities. They prayerfully and strategically prepare to enter the future God is calling them to enter with renewed strength and hope. And.... we have some fun along the way!

Here is some background information on me. I grew up in the Willmar area, attending school in the small town of Raymond, MN. (When I was just a young boy, we actually vacationed in Park Rapids, spending time at places like Potato Lake and Spider Lake. I have some fond memories of this

area!) I am 56 years old, turning 57 in September. I live in Hastings with my wife Cyndi. We've been there since February of 2016. We've been married since 1992.

In November of 2015, I began an interesting and rewarding new type of calling in becoming an intentional interim pastor! I had been a regular pastor for over 23 years. The past nearly 4½ years I've served in a unique way, coming into congregations and parishes to help them in times of decline and discord. This is the calling that the Holy Spirit has both equipped me for and blessed me with the chance to carry out. Even though it's a challenge to start fresh every few months or even every couple of years, it's truly rewarding to me! I like a challenge and I'm curious!

A bit more about my own background/interests. My wife and I have two daughters, Hannah and Miriam, both in their mid-twenties. Cyndi is a teacher, specializing in reading intervention at the Hastings Middle

# The Messenger

RIVERSIDE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

*Where the Spirit runs deep...*

Continued from page 1:

School. Hannah will be working as a music therapist. Miriam is studying Landscape Architecture.

Some of the active things I enjoy doing are walking, biking, playing tennis, and playing pickle ball. In terms of quiet activities, I read a ton! I'm currently reading a book that helps churches break through barriers in how they function by comparing the barriers that have happened throughout history – things like the 4-minute mile barrier and thinking that we lived on a flat earth. Also, I love to both sing and listen to music. Finally, spending time “up north” has always been a real treat for me! I can sit in a forest and watch life happening all around me – it's so peaceful!!

It might interest you to know that I'm an ELCA Lutheran pastor! I've served in United Methodist congregations for over 6½ years of my 28 years of ordained ministry. By the time you read this, I will have completed my fourth interim placement – this time in Owatonna and Dodge Center at the Prairie Spirit UMC parish. I had served there since October 1<sup>st</sup>. The other UMC setting where I served was in Morgan, MN, serving the Morgan UMC from March, 2007 through April, 2011. In case you haven't figured it out, I feel “at home” among United Methodists!

When it comes to practical matters, I'll be spending some of my time working

from my home in Hastings - writing sermons, doing worship planning, reading, and doing other intentional interim ministry work. I'll do this on most Mondays and Fridays. Being in Hastings will help me in the areas of self-care and - obviously - marriage-care!

However, I'll spend a lot of my time with you in Park Rapids (Saturday nights through Sunday early afternoons and mid-Tuesday mornings through early Thursday afternoons). Obviously I'll also spend a fair amount of time on the road in between Hastings and Park Rapids. I'd appreciate any prayers you can offer for my safe travels!

I'll also spend a lot of time on the phone with members of the church, getting to know them via telephone conversations. I'm a very attentive driver and - with a good phone signal - I can spend significant time talking with Riverside UMC members as I travel to and from Park Rapids. I've already had the chance to do that with several of the members of RUMC!

I've been able to work out my housing situation for the Saturday, Tuesday, and Wednesday nights each week (plus any other overnights I'll be spending in Park Rapids due to funerals, snowstorms, and other significant changes to my schedule related to ministry.) I'm staying at Northern Pines Bible

Camp! I'm so deeply grateful for this arrangement!

To wrap things up - I look forward to the adventure of deeply entering into the life and ministry of Riverside UMC! In fact, I feel like I've already done that to some extent! How, you ask? Pastor Lori was so gracious in setting up appointments for me to be able to visit (just me) with over 20 different people - usually one or two at a time. I was able to do this when I came up to visit Park Rapids in early June. (I wanted to find out what my housing accommodations would be.) Visiting with folks was a fantastic experience for me to be able to hear from your leadership about what's been going on, and what you'd like to see change at RUMC.

When I think about it, that's the real joy and challenge for me of interim work - I get to enter into your congregational life and join you as we figure out how to best serve and glorify our Lord, Jesus Christ, and to share God's unconditional love with those in the Park Rapids area and people around the world!

When I get a chance to speak to you in person, I'll be glad to share some of my faith journey with you. God's been so patient and generous in supplying grace and support to me throughout my life. I'm happy to share that with you! We all have a

# The Messenger

RIVERSIDE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

*Where the Spirit runs deep...*

Continued from page 2:

story to tell about how God has been at work in our lives. I love to tell the story of God's work in me.

Last spring, I along with the leaders from your church who met with our District Superintendent Laurie Kantonen, highly affirmed the Bishop's assignment of me to serve in your midst. We're all excited! Now it's time to get started. We feel strongly that this is a great chance for this congregation to build trust within the leadership and the congregation – especially in regard to your clergy.

We'll use our time together to assess the health, strength, and resiliency of this church. We'll agree upon behavioral covenants for ourselves so that we can have that safety net of accountability and support as we handle challenging issues. And, as should be obvious, I'll attend to pastoral care and provide worship leadership, along with leading Christian Education and faith formation, too. (Preaching and teaching are two of my

favorite things to do!!)

Overall, it'll be a great trust-exercise as we depend upon God's abundant grace - providing all that is needed as God guides us forward in faith. I can hardly wait to get started!

That's a bit of a lengthy introduction to who I am and what we'll be doing. (I know that it's similar to what I had mailed out to you several weeks ago – but I thought I'd update it and resend it for your information.) I think it's worth the time it took me to write it and hopefully, having read it, you feel informed about what's coming up in the days ahead.

I'd like you to know that open lines of communication and transparency will be hallmarks of my time with you. My first Sunday with you is June 28<sup>th</sup> for the 10AM parking lot worship service. At this point, it's anybody's guess when we'll actually be meeting in the sanctuary at Riverside UMC for worship services! I will be honest with you that I'm highly committed to your

safety and well-being - so we may have to be quite patient before we start resuming face to face worship inside of buildings. I understand that the vast majority of the RUMC membership is in the vulnerable category of being over 60 years old. We want you all to be healthy and safe.

However, as we ask you to show your care for those who are in the risk categories (by doing things like wearing face masks inside and by keeping social distancing), we'll be as creative as we can be. We'll see what the Holy Spirit can guide us to discover in terms of new forms of ministry. Great things can happen in our partnership with each other in doing God's work, even under the circumstances we must live with – giving thanks for the hard stuff in life because of the rewards of perseverance and peace that come along the way.

That's all for now!

*Pastor Scott*

## CONNECT WITH PASTOR SCOTT

**UPCOMING ZOOM TIMES WITH PASTOR SCOTT - Monday, June 29th**, three different 40-minute in length opportunities at 1:15PM, 2:00PM and 2:45PM (pick the one that works best for you) - all using the same Zoom information. Zoom meeting I.D.: **777 174 2684**. Password is **453197**.

**UPCOMING CONFERENCE CALL TIMES WITH PASTOR SCOTT - Friday, July 3rd**, three different sessions where you just dial in with your telephone and have a 40-minute conversation (for those who don't "zoom"). Times are 1:15PM, 2PM, or 2:45PM. Conference call number is: **425-436-6394**. It will ask for an access code which you enter followed by the "#" sign. Here's that code: **240414#**.

## Enjoy *The Messenger* - your way!

Riverside's newsletter, *The Messenger*, is available in a format that fits your lifestyle. You may receive it on your e-mail, regular mail delivery or on our website at [www.riversideumcchurch.com](http://www.riversideumcchurch.com). **Articles must be submitted for publication by the 15th day of each month.** Space is limited, and we reserve the right to review for content and appropriateness.



### OFFICE HOURS

Regular office hours are suspended at this time due to COVID-19. Please call ahead if you would like to speak to someone or have a questions. If no one is available, leave a message and your call will be returned.

## July Events

4 INDEPENDENCE DAY!!!

Until further notice, join us for worship in the parking lot Sunday mornings at 10AM. Stay in your car, roll down your windows or tune your radio to 88.1 FM, and enjoy worship! Bring your coffee! The message will also be available by video on "Facebook Live."

## CONTACT US:

### Riverside UMC

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## WEEKLY SCHEDULE

### OFFICE HOURS

**Mon. - Thurs:** Regular hours are suspended. Please call the office for updates (218-732-5205)

**BUILDING CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

### SUNDAY WORSHIP

9:00 AM Facebook Live Worship  
10:00 AM Parking Lot Worship

### Minnesota Annual Conference:

[www.minnesotaumc.org](http://www.minnesotaumc.org)

### United Methodist Websites:

[www.rethinkchurch.org](http://www.rethinkchurch.org)  
[www.umc.org](http://www.umc.org)  
[www.unitedmethodistwomen.org](http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org)

*"Casting the net of Christ's love to all through Faith, Action and Compassion."*



Riverside United Methodist Church

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