



Chapel Hill

United Methodist Church

September 7, 2020

Labor Day Message



Chapel Hill UMC
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One hundred hour work weeks. Unsafe working conditions. Children laboring in these conditions. Wages that failed to create a sustainable life. These factors which arose in the midst of the Industrial Revolution led to the rise of the labor movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Workers organized and struggled for years for more reasonable hours, safer working conditions, and prohibitions against child labor. The movement led to many reforms for labor in America and the establishment of Labor Day in 1894.

Yet the struggle continued and the Methodist Episcopal Church, though not the first to join in solidarity with America's workforce, became involved with the movement. The God who hears the cries of the oppressed and comes to their aid was perceived in the cries of the industrial workers. In *The Methodist Experience of America*, Russell Richey chronicles the following examples of the MEC's involvement.

Mary McDowell was a member of the Women's Christian Temperance Union and a devout Methodist. In 1894, she developed a social services program for immigrant workers in Chicago. As the years went on, the "Angel of the Stockyards" began to see the workers needed more than the charity and other services her program provided and helped form the National Women's Trade Union League which stood in solidarity with the workers in Chicago's meatpacking plants when they went on strike to resist oppressive conditions.

In 1908, the Methodist Episcopal Church adopted its first Social Creed in 1908, authored by Harry Ward. It read:

The Methodist Episcopal Church stands— For equal rights and complete justice for all (people) in all stations of life. For the principle of conciliation and arbitration in industrial dissensions. For the protection of the workers from dangerous machinery, occupational diseases, injuries, and mortality. For the abolition of child labor. For such regulation of the conditions of labor for women as shall safeguard the physical and moral health of the community.

Prayer List

CHUMC Home Bound	Hank
The Gee Family	Project Transformation After School
Jocelyn Barnard	Justin Graham
Scott Fletcher	Those affected by COVID-19:
Jennie Leamons	Nurses and Doctors
Tom Sanders	All patients in hospitals
Charles Cellulare	Families who have lost people and cannot have funerals
David Rice	First responders
Peggy Shoemaker	Medical personnel who are working
Robbyn Smith (Cranford)	Parents of students
Family of Loretta Culp	Senior citizens in nursing homes
Jordan Hammett	Students and teachers taking classes online
Jennifer and James	Those who have lost jobs
Sandy Ball	
Neal Ellis	
Jordan Moll	
Donna Daggett	

Labor Day Part 2

For the suppression of the "sweating system." For the gradual and reasonable reduction of the hours of labor to the lowest practical point, with work for all; and for that degree of leisure for all which is the condition of the highest human life. For a release from employment one day in seven. For a living wage in every industry. For the highest wages that each industry can afford, and for the most equitable division of the products of industry that can ultimately be devised. For the recognition of the Golden Rule and the mind of Christ as the supreme law of society and the sure remedy for all social ills.

An enhanced version was penned by Frank Mason North later that year and adopted by the Federal Council of Churches and by all the Wesleyan denominations in the United States. Methodists in the North and South and their theological kin all saw the injustice in the social system and pledged to take action to aid reform. They saw the image of God in the American worker and heard the call of the Golden Rule.

Labor Day Part 3

You can see the current Social Creed of the United Methodist Church at chapelhillumc.org/welcome/welcome.

Today, we may notice the stagnation of wages, especially for low-income workers. We see many of the gains of the early labor movement rolled back. Globally, we see the workers making many of the goods we buy working insufferably long hours in unsafe sweatshops for far less than a living wage. As we who are able to rest and reflect this Labor Day observe this holiday, the question arises: how will we respond?

Grace and peace,

Rev. J.D. Allen
Senior Pastor

While we are unable to gather, please remember CHUMC still has expenses. Please continue to make your faith pledge offerings by mail by sending them directly to our treasurer, Jan Wooldridge, at 12930 Mitchwin Road, Farmers Branch, TX 75234.

Please send prayer requests to Alec and Adam at office@chapelhillumc.org. Please note, the office is closed during the week, so the phone is not being checked. If you are unable to email, please ask someone with email to send your information to the office email or contact J.D. at (972) 467-7756.

In the case of a pastoral care emergency, please contact J.D. at (972) 467-7756.

BIRTHDAY REMINDER: Please let our church office know your birthdate, mm/dd/yyyy, so your church family can acknowledge your special day. **Your 'year' will remain private:** office@chapelhillumc.org



Walter Ochoa 9/11	Beth Laney 9/14
Beverly Holmes 9/15	Glorie Romine 9/16
Nancy Hartman 9/17	Felice Ricks 9/21
Joanne Marchant 9/22	Nancy Ochoa 9/23
Roxanne Rawdon 9/23	Kaye Bandy 9/26
Emily Metzger 9/28	Ruth Medcalf 9/29

Join Us for Online Worship!

YouTube: Search for CHUMC FarmersBranch

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