**SERMON PLAN Date:**

**Series theme:** Thank God, I’m a Methodist

**Sermon Title: A Creed for Our Times**

Sermon Purpose: We must be involved in our communities

Scriptures: Major ideas:

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| **Luke 4: 14-21** | 1908 The first Social Creed of the Methodist Church. |

**Intro: “What time is it?” Do we have a standard? Or do we just follow each other?**

**The TEXT : Jesus begins his ministry with a declaration of intent. This is what I am all about!!!**

**1. The Social Ills of the World in 1908. The Methodist Episcopal Church adopted the first Social Creed ever used by any Christian organization.**

 a. Read original statement.

**2. Methodists understood saving peoples souls was not going to matter if the society crushed their spirits.**

 a. Steel striker explained why he wanted a 40 hour week. “I leave when my children are asleep, I come home after they go to bed. I’m striking for the right to know my own child.”

 b. Rights of children to a public education. Goes back to the first Methodist Kindergarten.

 c. Rights of women to work in respectable professions.

 d. Removal of the 12 hour day, and the 7 day work week.

**3. General Board of Church and Society**

a. We still have a local church committee on Church and Society. A voice of conscience in a exploitative world.

b. These are issues we are still wrestling with **today**.

1. World wide child labor is a huge issue.

2. Womens rights issues. Women are sold as Sex Slaves. It is estimated that between 30,000 and 50,000 women are held against their will today.

 33% of American women will experience some level of sexual violence in their lives. 30% of women murdered in America are killed by their husbands.

3. Health care is not available everywhere.

4. Alcohol and Drug adiction are more prevalent today than during the opium dens of 100 years ago.

5. Right to family planning and reproductive health.

6. Gambling – just because the government sanctions gambling doesn’t make it right, it just goes to show the level of moral degradation in our elected officials.

7. Immigration – America is a nation of immigrants. Yet each new wave wants to close the door behind them. We cannot close the door to hope for a better life.

8. Environmental Justice and Sustainability of resources. We have a responsibility for God’s good creation. The future of the world is in our hands today.

**Conclusion: United Methodists are, and have always been, on the cutting edge of freedom for all people, education for all people, the uplifting of all people, and the future of all God’s people. And we will continue to uphold all people to insure freedom and dignity for all.**

Original Statement 1908

**The Methodist Episcopal Church stands:**

For equal rights and complete justice for all men in all stations of life.

For the principles of conciliation and arbitration in industrial dissensions.

For the protection of the worker 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.

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 for [from] employment one day in seven.

For a living wage in every industry.

For the highest wage 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.

To the toilers of America and to those who by organized effort are seeking to lift the crushing burdens of the poor, and to reduce the hardships and uphold the dignity of labor, this Council sends the greeting of human brotherhood and the pledge of sympathy and of help in a cause which belongs to all who follow Christ.

There was a small town up in the Sierra Nevadas. The main industry in that town was a sawmill. Every day at about 11:30, the foreman at the sawmill would call the operator at the local telephone company and say “What time is it?” This was back in the early days of the telephone. The operator would look at the clock on the wall, and would say “It’s 11:35,” and he’d say, “Thank you.”

This went on for some time till one day the operator at the phone company got curious. The phone rang about 11:30, and the guy on the other end said, “What time is it?” She said, “It’s 11:30.”

He said “Thank you”, and she said “Wait a minute. Who’s calling? Why do you call every day?”

“I’m Frank, the foreman up at the sawmill,” he explained. “I call every day because I have to blow the whistle at noon for the people to change shifts, so I call you to get the exact time.”

She laughed out loud. He said, “What’s wrong?” She said, “We set our clock by your whistle.”

**Scripture**

## Luke 4:14-21

## The Beginning of the Galilean Ministry

Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

## The Rejection of Jesus at Nazareth

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:
‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
   because he has anointed me
     to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
   and recovery of sight to the blind,
     to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.’
And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, ‘Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.’