

Nature Strikes Again

☒ Wasn't it just a few years ago that I reported on a "microburst" which swept the village hall to shambles?! Last night around 11:00, another landmark was struck. This area has been in almost desperate need of rain. Our prayers were answered as lightning and thunder rolled throughout town. While watching the Yankees handle the Blue Jays, a large booming "pop" was heard, felt, and seen. No one knew where it originated from but undoubtedly, it was from one of those streaks of lightning that lit up the night sky. Between 10:30 and 11:00, police cars, fire engines, and ambulances lined the street in front of the house so of course, I began to wander outside to investigate. I did not get far before I came face to face with the unmistakable smell of smoke. I could not see anything so I came back home and called my sister who lives right across from the United Methodist Church (my house stands 5 buildings to the north of the church). "Yes, the church is on fire!" This would explain the pop that went off about a half-hour earlier!

At approximately 11:45, I saw the smoke and flame from outside our dining room window. Initially, heavy smoke was reported coming out of the steeple and higher parts of the building. Eventually, flames erupted and the roof caved in, injuring one of the dozens of firefighters from 15 surrounding communities. The firefighter was transported to an area hospital with non life-threatening battle scars. I went across the street to the empty school lot to investigate along with dozens of others some of whom were out of towners who had gotten off 2nd shift jobs. Thankfully, the blaze was contained and did not spread. However, the battle was fought well into the night/early morning.

This morning, the damage could really be seen. Holes in the roof. Stained glass windows on the north and south sides of

the building blown out. Remarkably, the bell tower was still hanging on and the windows on the east side of the church were still intact.

I personally have had a relationship with the church over the years. Each summer, my brothers and sister attended Vacation Bible School. The church has sponsored our village's Cub Scout pack for a number of years. Each year, the pack participated in a service by providing alter boys, readers, and other functions. Over the last several years, the church has held Wednesday Night meals and provided a food pantry for the needy in the area.

Another landmark that has stood over 75 years brought down by nature's fury. May God be with the rescue teams who responded so bravely, the one who was injured, and most importantly, the congregation of Edgerton United Methodist Church as they will rally together and continue to follow the Lord. 

