

From Your Pastor

May 2020



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Revelation

Greetings in the name of the Risen Christ! I pray that this newsletter finds you doing okay. I pray that you find a reason to get up each morning! I pray that you are remaining hopeful!

In this Easter season we are especially reminded of hope. The disciples and the women at the tomb that first Easter likely found it nearly impossible to have hope. But God was about to do a new thing. As Jesus appeared to the women and then later to the disciples the time of fear and hopelessness was over!

God does not disappoint. In the Hebrew scriptures we find words that would have had new meaning to Jesus' followers that day: "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 'The Lord is my portion,' says my soul, 'therefore I will hope in him.'" - Lamentations 3:22-24 (NRSV)

In Christ we see this scripture with new hope. In light of the resurrection we have hope that cannot die. God's mercies are indeed "new every morning!"

As the weeks drag on in our fight against the spread of the coronavirus may we live in that hope!

Pastor Melanie

When Will the Church be Open Again?

This is a question that is on most of our minds. The answer is, of course, we don't know. We will NOT open the church up again for worship, Sunday school, meetings, or activities until we are told it is safe to do so.

I know we all wish it were different. In the meantime, please keep praying for our church, our community, state, country, and world. Keep on doing the things you are doing to make a real difference. Every small action helps! Some examples include: stocking the little free pantry, helping with emergency food distribution, giving to United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), calling a neighbor to check up on them, sending notes of encouragement, saying "thank you" to our public servants, making masks, etc.

We WILL be together again! I look forward to that day.
- Pastor Melanie

More From Your Pastor

Some Scriptures and Prayers to Guide You

Scripture insight: You have turned my mourning into dancing; you have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, so that my soul may praise you and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever.

- PS 30:11-12

Prayer: Divine Presence, remind me in my difficult moments that there was a before (and you were with me then), and there will be an after, because you are with me, even now. Amen.

Scripture insight: Our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth.

- PS 124:8

Prayer: God of Eternal Hope, at any given moment, all around the world, there are people who have been displaced. There are those who have been displaced by war and violence, by economic crises, by disease, and by natural disasters. We lift these persons up to your care. Help us to find ways to make a difference in the lives of those who are desperate and losing hope, as you move our hearts to hear their cries. Amen.

Scripture insight: I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- Rom. 8:38-39

Prayer: Oh God, my Rock, I admit that at times my faith falters. Sometimes, in the midst of challenges and great difficulties, I forget to seek you with all my heart. Forgive me, God. Show me your faithfulness and your steadfast love and mercy. May I remember that nothing can separate me from your love in Christ Jesus. May my faith in you grow each day. Amen.

Online Worship

Have you been joining us for Facebook Live worship at 9:00 am on Sunday mornings? Join us at www.facebook.com/concordia1umc! Online worship will continue until we are able to meet in person again.

The www.concordiafirstumc.com web site includes links to a number of other United Methodist streaming services if you would like to add to your worship experience. Information about upcoming events and services is also updated frequently on the web site.



Mission Buckets

Missions Buckets will be passed on May 17th for a COVID-19 Advance Fund.

Since the start of the novel coronavirus outbreak, UMCOR has been working with health boards, medical professionals, disaster management coordinators and faith leaders to prevent the further spread of this disease. Now it is clear that the impact of COVID-19 will be far-reaching and demands an even greater response.

The UMCOR COVID-19 Response fund will equip Methodist partners to assist vulnerable populations in the U.S. and around the world. Grants from this fund will be disbursed quickly and efficiently to address health concerns, food insecurity, water and hygiene limitations and other pressing needs.

Even as you shelter in place, you can be there for others. When you say "yes" to supporting the UMCOR COVID-19 Response, you will help bring God's love to life for those who need it most.



Meetings and Office News

Trustees: Tuesday, May 5th @ 7:00 pm

Finance: Monday, May 11th @ 7:00 pm

ADCO: Monday, May 18th @ 5:30 pm





Congratulations Class of 2020

Maddie Laine Johnson

Plans to attend Bellus Academy in Manhattan, KS this Fall. She will be studying all aspects of cosmetology and makeup. Maddie is the daughter of Jason and Andrea Johnson.



Genna Irene Strait

Plans to attend Cloud County Community College and Fort Hays State University. She will be majoring in Elementary Education. Genna is the daughter of Gary and Cynthia Strait.



Nathan Charles Lawrence

Plans to join the work force upon graduation. Nathan is the son of Willie and Karla Lawrence.



Kyle Brently Ray Palmquist

Plans to attend Cloud County Community College in the Fall. He will major in Physical Training and Fitness. Kyle is the son of Nicole Clark and Steve Palmquist.



Happiness Ideas

Do you need a dose of happiness right now? Here are some ideas!

- 😊 A great way to connect with others during these difficult times is through the mail. Use this [link](#) to register for a free pack of cards from Hallmark!
- 😊 Are you dreading another week of social distancing? Yale's most popular ever class "[The Science of Well Being](#)" (also known as the "happiness class") is available free online!
- 😊 Join Dolly Parton's Imagination Library on Thursday nights on [Facebook Live](#) for a bedtime story! Did you know that you can register your child to receive free books from birth through the age of 5 through the [Imagination Library](#)?!
- 😊 Wishing you were on vacation right now? Tour Kenai Fjords in Alaska, Hawaiian volcanoes, New Mexico's Carlsbad Caverns, Utah's Bryce Canyon, and Florida's Dry Tortugas National Parks courtesy of [Google](#)!
- 😊 Check out the [Some Good News](#) for some ways to make your heart smile today!
- 😊 Check out Concordia [Golden Rule Preschool](#) for a nightly bedtime story!
- 😊 Check out all of these free [virtual tours](#) of museums and other educational experiences available from all over the world!
- 😊 Need to hear some uplifting news? Check out CBS News [The Uplift](#)!

Cloud County Resource Center Needs

If you have items to donate to the Food Bank, they can be dropped off at the Concordia Home Store (1621 E 6th St) through May 15th. Drop off hours are Monday – Friday 7 :30 am – 5:30 pm and Saturday 8:00 am – 5:00 pm.

If you would like to volunteer at the CCRC, please contact Tonya Merrill at 243-1065 or ccrc@nekcnc.com.



Random Acts of Kindness

Due to COVID-19, we will not be able to host our annual Change the World event in this year. This was a very hard decision, but we realized we have a great opportunity to complete Random Acts of Kindness for others during these very difficult times. Below is a list of all the ideas we have posted since the project started!



- * March 27th: Send a recipe to a friend who loves something you cook. You could even post the recipe on Facebook so we can all enjoy it!
- * March 28th: Leave a note of thanks for the mail carrier. They are still working hard to get us our mail and packages!
- * March 29th: Pray for someone, then, send them a note letting them know that you did.
- * March 30th: Social distancing isn't easy - especially if you live alone. Check on a neighbor to see if they need help with any errands or tasks they may not be able to complete on their own.
- * March 31st: Have you had more time than usual to read? Share information about a good book or magazine with a friend! Consider ordering a magazine subscription or a book/e-book for a friend.
- * April 1st: Today is April Fool's Day...usually a day for pranks! How about a nice prank like getting a group of people to simultaneously text nice things to one person? Or, planning an elaborate scavenger hunt for those who are part of your quarantine group?
- * April 2nd: Many in our community may need extra assistance right now. Please consider purchasing a few items for our Little Free Pantry when you do your grocery supply shopping. If you would rather, donations can be made to the LFP fund through [online giving](#) or by mailing your donation.
- * April 3rd: Many of our local businesses are closed or have significantly reduced their hours or workforce. The owners of these businesses are making hard decisions they never thought they would have to make. Call, e-mail, or send a card to one of your local business owners to let them know you appreciate their services. You could even buy a gift card to use when the business reopens.
- * April 4th: Hopefully you are able to spend some time outside every day as the weather is getting nicer. Consider taking a trash bag with you on a walk around the neighborhood and pick up trash or debris. If you can, wear gloves and don't forget to wash your hands when you are done!
- * April 5th: Today is International [Golden Rule Day](#). Let's put it in practice and say something nice to those who we may be spending more time with than usual!
- * April 6th: Did you stock up on supplies a few weeks ago and realize now you have more than you need? Check in with your friends and neighbors to see if there is anything they need that you could share with them. Don't forget to practice social distancing when delivering supplies to others!

Random Acts of Kindness Continued

- * April 7th: Are you usually too busy to send cards for birthdays, anniversaries, or other special events? Now is a great time to get all of your cards ready for the next few weeks, months, or even a year! You could even make handcrafted cards that are ready to send when the special day arrives!
- * April 8th: No matter how hard we try, some acts of kindness require in-person interaction. Make coupons for friends, relatives, or neighbors can used when the pandemic has subsided.
- * April 9th: Did you know our United Methodist Women collect saving of [Best Choice Labels](#)? Locally, the Best Choice products are available at Rod's Food Store. If you save labels, you can drop them off at the church!
- * April 10th: Animal shelters are still caring for animals in need. Consider making a financial donation to your local shelter.
- * April 11th: Arrange a virtual bible study, book club, or game night via social media (Facebook Live, Zoom, or Skype). We know some of you have the personality to go viral on Facebook but you just don't realize it yet!
- * April 12th: This is Easter! Jesus love YOU. Call, text, or e-mail to let others know that he loves them, too!
- * April 13th: We are all having a hard time maintaining positive thoughts right now. Post a positive comment on your Facebook page or on someone else's post today!
- * April 14th: Are you missing seeing your grandchildren, nieces, nephews or other young people? Order a book for a child you know and have it shipped directly to them – you can order one for yourself so you can read it together over the phone or social media!
- * April 15th: Have you thanked a medical professional, health care employee, or first responder lately? How about all of those administrative and technical staff who maintain the healthcare system so clinicians can take care of their patients? Thank one of those workers today!
- * April 16th: Do you always plan to send out a Christmas letter but the holidays slip by before you have a chance to gather the addresses and get the letter written? Now is a perfect time to prepare an update to your friends and family to let them know how you are doing!
- * April 17th: Did you know our local schools collect [Box Tops for Education](#)? If you have tops you have clipped, you can drop them off at the church. If you purchase items that have tops to scan, you can download an app to scan your receipts for our local schools!
- * April 18th: Text a friend or loved one good morning or good night to let them know they are in your thoughts!
- * April 19th: Today is [Native American Ministries Sunday](#). Consider making an [online gift](#) for this offering – select the category “other” and add a memo that your gift is for this offering.
- * April 20th: Everyone loves a hug! How about [mailing someone a hug](#) today? You could also send a text hug or a phone call hug!

Random Acts of Kindness Continued

- * April 21st: Offer to walk a neighbor's dog if they aren't able to get out of the house right now. Just remember to practice social distancing!
- * April 22nd: Are you finding that your quarantine crew is getting on each other's nerves? Do something nice for someone in your own home today! Maybe there is a chore they are responsible for that you could do. Or, maybe throw their towel in the dryer while they are in the shower so it is warm when they get out!
- * April 23rd: Prepare and send a care package to someone far away – family, friends, or to a military person overseas. Boxes and packing supplies can be ordered and shipped to your door and you can pay for shipping online at [USPS](#).
- * April 24th: Think of someone who is experiencing a stress or hardship right now and say a prayer for them right now!
- * April 25th: Are you crafty with supplies you have around the house? Share your idea with others on social media
- * April 26th: Do you know someone who is struggling financially right now? Send them a gift card that can be used to buy groceries or other supplies. You could even pre-pay for items over the phone or purchase an online gift card from [Caring for Cloud County](#).
- * April 27th: May 1st is on Friday. Do you know what that means? Time to start crafting your May Baskets! We have made it a tradition to make May Baskets at our annual Change the World event, but since we are not able to gather for the event this year, we hope you will make your own baskets at home. The [history of May Baskets](#) can be fun, too!
- * April 28th: May 1st is only 3 days away. What are you putting in your May Baskets this year? Flowers are traditional. If you don't have real blooms available, consider making some out of paper – they will last longer!
- * April 29th: May 1st is only 2 days away. Have you considered adding a sweet treat to your May Basket for this year?
- * April 30th: May 1st is tomorrow. Don't forget to include a note in your May Basket...unless you prefer for it to be anonymous!
- * May 1st: Time to deliver those May Baskets! The great thing is you are supposed to leave your basket on a doorstep and then run – perfect for social distancing!
- * May 2nd: Make a sweet treat for your quarantine crew to celebrate spring! If you have already been overindulging, make a healthy snack instead!
- * May 3rd: Are you a procrastinator? Here is a reminder that you only have one week until Mother's Day! Make a plan now to show appreciation for your Mother or someone who has been like a Mother to you!

How have you shown kindness to others during the past few weeks? Send your ideas to Nancy Wentz at ndwentz@gmail.com and we will keep sharing ideas into May! We would also love to get any photos you have had to share with the congregation!

Volunteers Needed



We are in need of Volunteers to clean the Church before we re-open and for the rest of the month. **Area to Clean:**

Sanctuary, Chapel/Entry/Balcony, Bathrooms, Nursery, Parlor & Kitchen, Classrooms/Choir Room, Fellowship Hall, Halls/Stairs, Youth Room, Kitchen.

We would also like to know if anyone is willing to help out as Worship Leaders to fill the spots for when we do re-open. **Areas of Need:**

Worship Leader, Greeters: Upstairs and Down Stairs, Media, Sound, Liturgist, Children's Moment, Fellowship Hosts.

Please email or call the office to let us know where you would like to help. While practicing “Social Distancing” and “Stay Home Stay Healthy” orders we will get back to you as soon as possible. Thank you for your Grace during this difficult time for ALL.

Crusaders

Mystery Trip – CANCELLED

Unfortunately the Crusaders annual Mystery Trip in June has been canceled for this year.

Watch for more details on other activities once everything returns to “normal”.



Meals on Wheels

The Senior Center is looking for volunteers to deliver Meals on Wheels. To volunteer, contact Lori Raccagno at 243-1872.

Meals on Wheels provides a hot meal and human contact for the homebound.



Enhanced Online Giving

Additional options have been enabled for online giving through our web site. You can access [Online Giving](#) or scan the QR code with your phone.



Through online giving, you have the option to give with a credit card or to setup direct deposit from your checking account. These gifts can be setup for a one-time gift or as a recurring gift. There is even an option to setup giving by text!

We encourage you to create an account using the e-mail address you receive e-mails on from the church so your giving is associated with your account in the ChurchTrac membership system and will appear on your annual giving statement. By creating an account, you will also have access to all of the giving options mentioned above. If you do not want to create an account, there is an option to give as a guest.

Lenten Boxes

Don't forget to return your Lenten box when regular services resume!

Money collected in Lenten boxes will go to [Missions Agency Support](#) in the Great Plans Conference.



2020 Census

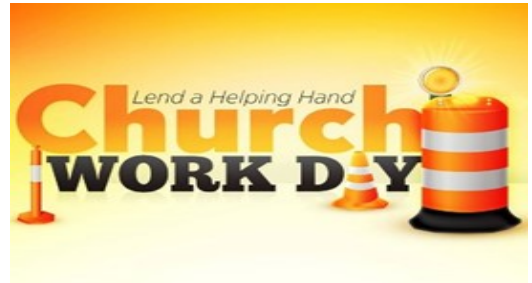
Have you received your census form but need assistance filling it out? Contact the church office for assistance! Please leave your name and number and we will return your call as soon as possible.

United States®
Census
2020



Trustee Workday

The Trustees have planned a Workday on
Saturday, May 30th.
Watch for more details in May!



Healthy Congregation



Yoga Classes

We have suspended yoga classes until the stay-at-home order is lifted and we are safely able to resume. In the interim, check out the [Sun Salutation](#) series!

Mask Project

We are accepting donations of masks to distribute to our members and to the community through our Little Free Pantry. If you would like to make a mask for yourself or to donate, patterns for masks can be found at on these sites:

[CDC Mask Information](#)

[Missouri Quilt Mask Tutorial](#)

[Craft Passion Mask Pattern](#)

[Fabric Patch Mask Pattern](#)



If you need materials to make masks, please contact Nancy Wentz (ndwentz@gmail.com) as there is some funding available through Healthy Congregations. There are several people in the congregation already making masks (Peggi Barrett, Eudora Petersen, and Marsha Wentz) that can provide additional tips. When you have masks to donate, they can be dropped off outside the door of the church office.

If you aren't a sewer, but need a mask, check out the CDC link for no-sew mask options!

Food Distribution

Disaster Household Distribution: Thank you to the 13-Volunteers who came out in the rain to unload and reload 6-other cities, and then serve 20-Singles, 30- Couples, and 37- Families in our city.



Assistance is needed with Commodities Distribution on Wednesday, May 13^h.

Volunteers are needed at 10:00 am to help unload the truck and box items for pickup between 11:15 am – 12:15 pm. Please contact the church office if you can help.

All volunteers will need to wear a mask and practice social distancing.



Little Free Pantry

With school out and many area residents experiencing hardships as a result of COVID-19, volunteers have been placing food from our food supply in the pantry every day during April. **Our food stores are very low. If you would like to help feed those in our community who are food insecure, we ask that you place items directly into the pantry at your convenience. If you prefer, you can also make a monetary donation to help purchase food for the pantry.**



Thanks to those that have been placing food from our store in the pantry daily for the past month: Cindy Kocher, Pam Campbell, Melanie Adams, and Dee Ann Lightfoot!



Return Service Requested
First United Methodist Church
740 West 11th Street
Concordia, KS 66901

Sunday Services
 Adult & Youth Sunday School at 9:30 am
 Worship at 10:30 am
Table Talk every Wednesday Evening (during the school year)
 Dinner at 6:00 pm
 Classes for all ages at 6:30 pm

Pastor: Rev. Melanie Adams
 Administrative Assistant: Dee Ann Lightfoot
 Christian Education Coordinator: Kathy Poore
 Groundskeeper: Devin Pearson
 Choir Director: Renata Knox
 Organist: Pam Campbell
 Nursery: Jan Novlan

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