

THE MESSENGER
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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April 29, 2020

Vol. XXXI No. 5

Rev. Zack Christy
Pastor

Teresa Gardo
Administrative Assistant

Bess Thornburg
Director of Christian Education

Nancy Catena
Pianist / Organist (Interim)

Linda Barger
Chancel Choir Director

Andrew Harmon
Handbell Director

Mildred Young
FUMC Weekday Preschool Dir.

MAY REFLECTION

Romans 5:1-5: "Therefore since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that but we also boast in our sufferings knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us."

I don't know about y'all but it feels to me that we have been in quarantine for about six hundred and seventy five days. The days they start to run together at a certain point. Sometimes at night Crystal and I will sit down and daydream about what it is going to be like when this quarantine is finally lifted like Andy and Red in the Shawshank Redemption, only instead of trying to get to Zihuatanejo we are trying to get to Chuck E Cheese.

All kidding aside though, I believe it is fair to say, these past few months have been tough, trying, unpleasant, and even downright discouraging. The lack of answers, the seemingly never ending nature of this pandemic it has been tough to deal with. I remember when I first got here, I asked you as question during a sermon, I asked you to raise your hand if you like to wait. No one in the sanctuary raised their hand, I most certainly did not raise mine either.

Yet here we all are in the age of Amazon Prime, and Google's 5 million results in under a minute waiting around. Waiting for answers, waiting for normalcy, waiting for something, anything that will give us hope, anything that will help us to believe that life can continue on at a normal pace sometime soon. But still we have nothing, it is almost like living under a dark cloud of uncertainty. We all go through these things from time to time, never in my knowledge have we been through something such as this communally.

It almost feels as if we are adrift in a sea, and if you find yourself out in the middle of the ocean floating along, what do you do? You try to find something to grab onto. As a society we are trying to find something to grab onto, anything to pull us up, and it seems like we are just slapping at the water. But I want you to hear the good news, as a Christian you aren't just slapping at the water, you have a firm rope to pull yourself up, and that rope is hope.

The hope that we have is the same kind of hope that Paul talks about in Romans. In our world today hope is a word that is often offered as an excuse, we say things like "I hope to be there." Which roughly translates to, "I can't think of a good excuse right now." This is not the kind of hope that Paul is speaking about. When Paul talks of hope, he is talking about the kind of hope that comes directly from the heart of God.

This is the kind of hope that transcends current circumstances, and is lived out in the life of believers. Because friends when your hope is found in God, when God is the author and source of your hope, nothing in this world can steal it from you, for God has conquered the world. We have a living hope, a hope that much

like the peace we enjoy passes all understanding.

As we journey deeper into these uncertain times, may you be certain of one thing, you have hope! Real authentic, life giving hope, a hope that you continue to bear witness to each time you tune into worship. A hope that is made manifest in the actions of this church when we feed the community. A hope that is lived into each and every time you send a card, or give a call to one another.

Praise be to God that we have hope! A hope that is real and tangible, as you go forward into a new week, may this hope be at the forefront of your heart and mind. I am so thankful for each and everyone of you for your prayers and your understanding during this difficult time, and I know we will be together soon. Until then may your hope lead you, and may God's peace comfort you.

Grace and Peace,

Zack Christy

Dear Church Members:

Over the last 7 weeks, we have made many changes in our lives, but at First United Methodist Church our contributions have remained constant. Contributions for the first quarter of 2020 were \$84,287 and our expenses for the first quarter were \$86,220 which is a deficit of \$1,933. We have been faithful stewards of our resources in the church and have looked for ways to hold down expenses while maintaining a somewhat "normal" daily operation. We have been able to cover our operating costs because of your love and dedication to the church. We are very fortunate to have such faithful members!

During this time of uncertainty, several of our church members have looked for ways to help out in the community. As many of you know, we began a Thursday evening meal for those in the community who are facing hunger and may not know where their next meal is coming from. We felt that since we were doing this meal for those in need that we would like to include our Senior Adults of the church to show them that they are appreciated and because it may be difficult for them to shop in the grocery stores due to "social distancing." We appreciate Crystal Thornburg for heading up this ministry and for the many volunteers that are assisting her on a weekly basis.

During these times, Pastor Zack and other members have been participating in a video worship service at 10:30 am on Sunday mornings. They have been remarkable in finding ways to keep us engaged with our church. Bo & Betsy Baity have been doing a Sunday School lesson on facebook for adults, and Andrew Harmon has been doing a Sunday School lesson for the children via "Zoom."

Our Children are fortunate to get to see the weekly lessons on Facebook or our church website by Bess Thornburg each Wednesday as she continues to try to stay in touch with them.

I am sure over the next few weeks; we will face obstacles that we have never faced before. God has blessed us not only financially, but with members who genuinely care and love this community. Please continue to pray for Pastor Zack and our staff in these unusual times.

God Bless you, and I look forward to the day that we can worship together again.

Teresa Gardo
Administrative Assistant



UMKs are not meeting at this time due to the COVID19 virus. We miss you so much at FUMC on Wednesday nights. In order to stay safe we will not meet again until later in the year. So, until things get going again, we will still have our Bible lessons at 5:00 pm each Wednesday on our church Facebook page and website with Miss Bess. Please remember to join in for a lesson each week. Hopefully by summer we can plan to have our Wonderful Whacky Wednesday days of fun. We are also doing our “Zoom” Children’s Sunday School class with Andrew Harmon at 9:45 am each Sunday morning. This has been a wonderful experience and you are invited to join in (even in your PJ’s and bed head!) LOL).



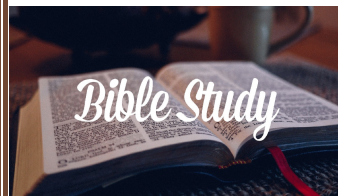
UMYF: United Methodist Youth Fellowship will start back in the fall when hopefully the COVID19 situation is under control. We may have a few special activities during the summer if regulations allow. You will hear more about this program of Bible study and activities and fun in the “SON” as we make plans for our Youth Group! UMYF will be for middle and high school youths ages 6th thru 12th graders. We will meet on Sunday nights at 6 pm down stairs in the youth room for a snack, study and activities. Make plans now to be a part of our group!



Congratulations to our 2020 High School Graduates! Great job guys! Your church is proud of you and we want to honor and support your success on Sunday June 7th at our 10:30 worship service here in our FUMC Sanctuary. Even if we are not meeting as a congregation we will honor you via our on-line and Facebook service. Please plan to be at the church with your cap and gown at 9 am that day for breakfast and a celebration (be it on a small scale!). We will also present scholarships that day to our deserving seniors. Our 2020 High School graduates are:

Pierston Kate Elliott
Brent Carter Walls

Attention all College Graduates: Congratulations to our College Graduates Class of 2020. Wow! You have finally made it! Your church stands with you and wants to celebrate with you as you move forward into your life goals. We need to know who you are! If you are a College Graduate Class of 2020, please contact the church office, Bess or Teresa, and let us know what School you are graduating from and your degree information. Way to GO! We will also recognize you by name on June 7th.



Pastor Zack will hold his Bible Study by “Zoom”. To connect to this live Bible Study, you will need to go to our church website and click on the “facebook” link and the instructions will be on the page how to join in with him and interact with others who have joined him for this remote Bible Study.



LENT BOXES

We are still collecting Lent Box to help with “rise against hunger”. We will need 40 - 50 people to assist with packing for the completion of this project. We will collect these boxes once we are able to Worship together again as one or you can drop it by the church office.



The Cherryville Ministerial Association invites you to join them for the National Day of Prayer Service. It will be broadcast on Facebook

Live on **May 7** at 12 noon. We will not have an in-person service this year in order to comply with our government's guidelines. People need to search Facebook for "Association of Cherryville Ministers" and like that page. It will be on this facebook page.



A giving portal is now available to submit tithes and offerings to any United Methodist

Church within the Western North Carolina Conference.

To give to a church, a donor would go to the following website: <https://www.wnccumc.org/online-donations-to-churches>

Follow the prompts to identify the church, along with the amount of the donation. Please see more details on the front page of our website.

PRAYER LIST (Members)

Billy Alexander, Mike Burgess, Janet Carter, Deborah DeVenny, Vera Eaker, Jim Eaton, The family of Carole Fields, Ruth Gaston, Sherie Harrelson, John Hines, Janice Hovis, Bertha Maxey, Aura Ann McGinnis, Larry McGinnis, Sue Nolen, Ed Pierce & family, Karleen Price, Joe Putnam, Chris Sneed, Gary Thornburg, Earlene Williams, and all our homebound and nursing home members.

PRAYER LIST (Family & Friends)

E. L. Beam, Marty Beam, Betty Dellinger, Hudson Digh, Lisa Hastings, Brandon Heavner, Teresa Henley, Katie Pruitt, Jeff Schrum, Beverly Hamrick Stiles, Kim Stout, Rita Stroupe, Loren Tidick, Rick Walker, Martha Jane Zeigler, and our loved ones in the military.

LOVED ONES IN THE MILITARY:

#*Ethan Beck, Aron Dickerson, Jessica Lovell, Cody Spiker.

Church Member, *Stationed in the Middle East

STEWARDSHIP REPORT APRIL 26, 2020

Total To Date \$115,678.89
Needs To Date..... \$128,005.07
Under..... \$12,326.18



Our Christian Sympathy

is extended Susan Beam and family following the death of her sister, Carole Fields on April 15; to John Hines & family following the death of his wife, Anne Lawson-Hines, on March 31; and to Ed Pierce and family following the death of his wife, Nancy Pierce, on April 21.

May Birthdays

1	Samantha Moss
3	Deborah DeVenny
4	Susan Beam
6	Renee Allen
7	Betty Dellinger
8	Paige Sigmon
9	Audie McGinnis
11	Walter Putnam
12	Harry Putnam
13	Greyson Haynes
13	Pam Huffstetler
13	Bertha Maxey
13	Landis Moss
13	Robert Turner
14	Jim Eaton
16	Dawn Whitworth
19	Michelle Bingham
19	Jennifer Bradley
20	Lance Hudson
20	Rozzie Norwood
20	Bayne Phillips
20	Kevin Thornburg
21	Jerry Hudson
21	Nate Thornburg
22	M'Shel Bowen
22	Wayne Watts
24	Andrew Harmon
24	Lucas Smith
24	Ben Sneed
25	Eddie Pursley
25	Robert Sneed
25	Kim Young
27	Hayden Morehouse
28	Genea Moss
28	Hazeline Moss
28	Kaitlin Starling
30	Kent Ballard
30	Elisabeth Huss
30	Chelsea Thornburg



If your birthday is in May and not listed, please contact the church office.

June Birthdays

2 Caleb Ballard
3 Mike Canipe
6 Ben Blackburn
6 Debbie Gantt
7 Eloise Mauney
7 Rhonda Wehunt
8 Casey Sigmon
10 Abby Burleson
11 Jake Dellinger
12 June Gaston
12 Natalie Allen McNeely
15 Phyllis Thornburg
16 Dustin Mauney
16 Eric Starling
17 Zack Christy
17 Lewis Costner
17 Ruth Gaston
17 Larry McGinnis
18 Tim Moss
18 Joe Putnam
21 Ryan Thornburg
22 Meredith Bowen
22 Logan Hendrick
22 Scott Sigmon
23 Gregory Kirby, Jr.
23 Aura Ann McGinnis
24 Tessley Moss
24 Shirley Smith
24 Jessica Thornburg
25 Keith Kiser
26 Lilah Spangler
27 Kade Thornburg
29 Raegan Nowowiecki



When we learn more from our Bishop about when can resume normal operations, we will let you know. There is no calendar of events included in this newsletter.

If your birthday is in June and not listed, please contact the church office