



FOREST GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Messenger

May 2020

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WORSHIP IN MAY

Worship, Messages, and Offerings

FYI there are sermons, and some church music from our staff, soon to be available on our website, www.umcforestgrove.org. Look for links on the home page.

Also, I am sending sermons out via email, and some regular mailings. I hope they give you something to think about. Of course, if ever you get something from me that you don't want, you can delete it, or let me know you want off the list — no offense. You can also freely share content I give you with others, on the other hand.

By the way, I really appreciate many of you continuing to support the church financially, even though we can't have an offering on Sunday. So, thanks for mailing in those pledges; and thanks to those who are sending them via direct deposit.

Submitted by: *Pastor Dan*



RUMMAGE SALE — MAYBE

Our **United Methodist Women** are planning a rummage sale this summer. Well, we were planning a sale. Everything's on hold now, but watch the Messenger for updates.

Warning! Keep in mind that Rummage Sale items are collecting in Room 9. If you have anything stored there, please remove it before the sale. Or at least label it prominently "Not for Sale", otherwise we won't be responsible for the result.

We're aware that the Trustees have a number of items stored in Room 9. We won't sell the extension ladders labeled FGUMC. If we're in doubt we'll consult the Trustees. Provided the sale happens at all.

Submitted by: *Liz Swenson*

BUILDING UPGRADES FOR FUTURE MINISTRY

When you get back to church, please notice that the fellowship hall will look much better, as lights have been upgraded to use LEDs with a warm, glowing feeling. Also, peek in the Garden Room and see that our new accordion door divider has been installed. This restores that room to its original design, and will permit us to host two separate families in that room when Family Promise resumes. This will also make the room more adaptable for meeting space for our own programming.

These improvements were paid for by allocations from The Foundation Fund of the church, with an additional \$2,000 grant from the Cascadia District Church Extension Society.

Submitted by: *Pastor Dan*

THE PASTOR'S PAGE

Several people in my life have observed that days seem to pass very slowly these days. Does it feel, to you, like we have taken a decade just to get through March? April has crept along, as well. For me it is a symptom of slowing down in general; I know the busier I am, the more time flies.

When this pandemic ends (which it will!) I hope we all won't immediately get so busy that our lives slip by in a great rush again. I've learned to just relax when I need to be out for essentials. Foot lines are like traffic jams, only folks keep about six car lengths (six feet) separation on foot, like we should on the road. Doing anything takes longer because everything must be sanitized between transactions. And there is no hurry to get home, or back to work, because nothing is on time or tied very much to a schedule. So, life is slower.

I hope I'm getting the hang of reading human expressions with faces obscured by masks. The language of the eyes is subtle, isn't it? But I'm beginning to be able to tell how a person is feeling, just by looking at their eyes. I often tell people that I am smiling so they will know I am friendly and safe. Just as often, they tell me they can tell I am smiling by my eyes. So, there is another good thing; perhaps we will learn to look more closely and compassionately at each other in the future.

I do wish I could tell you, today, when we will be able to come back to church. But I don't know when, and my feeling is that it will be and should be a while yet. Our bishop has directed all of us to refrain from gathering until at least May 1. I anticipate this will be extended; or if not, that such conditions will be put on gathering that we may not all be able to meet them.

I felt very saddened not to share what would have been my last Easter worship as an active pastor with you. But I get over that little ego itch easily when I realize that we are refraining from our lovely traditions to stay alive, and to keep others alive. So as Easter is about life, we are certainly in the spirit of it. None the less, I am not sure when, or if, I'll be able to lead you in worship again before I retire. I hope so, but if I can't I would much rather you all live to worship together another day.

As the good old song goes . . .

God be with you, till we meet again.



Pastor Dan

NOTE

Our work to stay safe and protect others is not over. **Bishop Elaine Stanovsky** has announced that she has extended her directive requiring United Methodist churches in the Greater Northwest Episcopal Area to abstain from gatherings, including face to face worship, **through May 30th, 2020.**

FROM THE ALTAR TO THE WORLD

The Early Church group met for the second time yesterday on ZOOM. It sure is good to see faces and hear voices, discuss ideas and engage in bantering. It's a bring your own coffee deal these days if you are so inclined. Isn't technology wonderful (when it's not frustrating!). I've had my own set of technological problems relating to my voice not being projected. Yesterday when I was just dying to say something I would write in out in large print on a tablet and hold it up to the camera and someone would read it out the group. I guess if you have something to say there's almost always a way to do it.

On Facebook this morning someone commented on the many way's churches are using technology to stay connected with congregations. Some even have gone so far as to suggest that maybe virtual church is all we need these days. While it has been great to have some contact through ZOOM there are always going to be people left out because of technology. I say, where would the HUGS be if that were to be the only way of doing church? Where would the thrill of congregational singing be if that were to happen?

Church is so much more than a Sunday morning thing with a preacher giving a sermon and a choir singing a song. Essential as those things are, church is about relationships. When we leave the sanctuary at the end of worship, we cross into a time of seeing and catching up with friends. We have tasty treats to indulge in – a way of breaking bread together. When we leave for the parking lot sometime there are mission events to look forward to, ideas to share with non-church friends, families and world. I might liken it to a phone conversation with a beloved family member.

Most Monday mornings my son Mark calls me. He works nights at Amazon which gives him a strange framework for life. Monday morning is a pause for a bit when he can think beyond getting some sleep to go back to work again in the late afternoon. This morning we talked for close to an hour and our conversation ranged from catching up on family to me telling 1965-67 Costa Rica stories and him connecting them to the places and people he knows from trips to Costa Rica. He and his partner, Tamara, live on Fairview lake in the Fairview/Troutdale area. I heard about swifts that live in a neighbor's chimney, drank in his description of a calm lake overlooked by Mount Hood, birds enjoying the early morning and neighbors already out on the lake on their paddle boards.

Staying at home these days.

Submitted by: Reverend *Rhoda Pittman Fuentes*, Retired Deacon

From the Bishop

Sharing what we can when people are suffering comes as second nature to people who follow Jesus. If you have the ability to give money at this time of crisis, I am writing to do so. If you are able, please consider one or all the following actions.

1. **Support your Local Church.** Your church needs your support for as long as this crisis lasts and beyond. A check in the mail is a blessing.
2. After you have given to your local church, if you can do more, please give a "thank offering" to the **FUND FOR FAMILIES**. Text the code "GNWFFF" to 44-321 or visit <http://bit.ly/gnwfff> to give. Local Churches will partner with community organizations to "practice being human" with people who are especially vulnerable to the impacts of COVID-19.
3. If someone else may need your **Stimulus check** more than you do, consider "passing it along" to the **FUND FOR FAMILIES** (above).

FGUMC Church Council April 15th, 2020

Draft

Meeting called to order via ZOOM at ~7:00 p.m.

Present: John Hayes, Doug Scott, Laura Thompson-Aue, Mary Jane Nordgren, Dan Thompson-Aue

Discussion of Cascadia District Church Extension Society Grant

After brief discussion, it was agreed that the \$500 grant be used to purchase grocery gift cards for designated individuals and families who have a connection to the church and are in economic distress. A confidential working list was provided to Pastor Dan, who will facilitate distribution of the gift cards and follow up report to the CDCES.

Discussion of the state of the church

Concern expressed about cash flow and future of the congregation . . . discussion included these observations: many contributors continue to support the church through direct deposits and offerings by mail. Rentals are down; reserves have decreased in value by ~10%; but the church still has substantial backup in endowed funds for the short term. FGUMC is in much better shape financially than many churches; we have money to pay essential bills and have not furloughed or laid off any staff at this time. Pastor and congregation are learning to stay in touch via video conferencing, phone calls, letters, emails, and church newsletter. The church office is officially closed, but Dan and Noelle are coordinating handling of essential business, as needed. In summary we are in a holding pattern maintaining safe practices while the pandemic plays out.

In the meantime, several improvements are being made to the property in anticipation of the eventual reopening of facilities and programs . . . fellowship hall now has upgraded lights; Garden Room will soon have an accordion divider door¹ installed for staging Family Promise clients; a new janitor is about to be hired; the parsonage has been cleaned and vacated, ready for inspection and attention prior to the new pastor's arrival. Dan will make a walk-through video of the parsonage for Trustees and SPRC to evaluate repair needs; communication will be underway re resetting the pastor compensation package for Rev. King.

(Addendum: Dan G and Ken B continue to groom the church properties . . . Lisa Peterson has adapted Music Bridge programs to serve clients on-line from the studio on site. . . Janet H. and others are sorting rummage for a sale in the summer . . . Montessori staff are doing cleaning and other prep/staging work in anticipation of school restarting . . . there are likely other positive and hopeful things going on in the background.)

Follow up on pastor compensation

John Hayes agreed to be the point person to communicate with the District about protocols for resetting the pastoral compensation package prior to Rev. King's installation on July 1st, 2020.

Meeting adjourned with prayer by John, Notes by Dan TA

¹ We have received a \$2,000 grant from CDCES for this accordion door project!

FINANCE UPDATE

The finance committee and the Trustees held a virtual Investment committee meeting earlier this month. During the meeting we reviewed our accounts and decided not to make any changes to our investment strategy at this time. Although both of the two major accounts are down as well as the entire stock market they are not down as bad as they could have been.

We have seen a revenue decrease since the Montessori school and some of the other groups that use our facilities have discontinued their meetings. That being said I would like to give a personal thank-you to all of you that continue to submit your offerings. You can do so by simply mailing your checks directly to the church.

An extended thank you to Dan Gustafson, who continues to handle our weekly deposits. Let's all pray that we can continue our worship together soon.

Stay safe,

Submitted by: Doug Scott, Finance Chair



SITED IN OUR CHURCH COURTYARD!

“THE EASTER GIFT”

I watched a news story just before Easter Sunday about a celebrity who was paying the bill for shoppers during the seniors only hour at a local New Orleans grocery store (I missed the intro and don't know who the celebrity is). What stood out was a picture of a senior shopper holding up her cash register receipt that had been paid for with a great wonderful grin on her face. What came to my mind was the season we were in; with Lent and Holy Week we were approaching the celebration about to take place in just a couple of days.

This was going to be a rather subdued celebration as compared to most years, but in reflection it was less subdued than the morning of the first Easter. When the early followers of Jesus gathered in fear and silence and confusion over what had taken place and then to discover that the body of Jesus was missing! The rest of the story is of course revealed over several days and resulted in a revelation that has taken place over centuries.

This year's time of celebration was certainly more subdued than previous but the picture of the woman holding up her paid for cash register receipt makes me mindful of the bill paid for us by Jesus on the cross. So much more than a grocery receipt we are celebrating a debt paid for in full that each of us has “rung up”. This Easter gift is what we celebrate, it cannot be paid back by any amount of festivity, but only accepted for what it is, a full atonement for our sins.

The coming years will certainly have greater celebration observances, but none will mean more than the original gift given to each of us.

Submitted by: *Dexter Danielson*, retired Deacon



40 DAYS AND 40 NIGHTS

The “stay home, stay safe” started in the earliest impacted US states right around March 23rd and some have targeted May 1st as a date to begin reopening. That is 40 days.

The Latin root of the word "quarantine" is "forty."

So how does the Bible use the number 40?

The flood lasted 40 days.

40 days Moses stayed on Mount Sinai to receive the Commandments.

The Israelites wandered the desert for 40 years.

Jesus fasted in the wilderness for 40 days.

Secularly:

Some suggest 40 days for a woman to rest after giving birth.

Optimum number of weeks for human gestation is 40.

The website “Today I Found Out” suggests the number 40, biblically, is “a number that, when used in terms of time, represents a period of probation, trial, and chastisement,” or the time of preparing a person, or people, to make a fundamental change. When the number 40 appears in the Bible, there is a major transformation taking place.

During this "quarantine" rivers are cleaning up, vegetation is growing, the air is becoming cleaner because of less pollution, there is less theft and murder, healing is happening, and most importantly, people are taking a good long look inside themselves. The Earth is at rest for the first time in many years and hearts have the opportunity to transform.

We are in the year 2020, and $20 + 20 = 40$.

Also, 2020 is the year of the United States Census. Jesus was born during a census.

2020 is also perfect vision. What vision are you developing during these 40 days and 40 nights?"

Contributed by: *Jon Albertson*

U. M. W. MEETINGS

United Methodist Women may be meeting Monday, May 25th in the library at 1:00 p.m. If the church is open!

We are open to all women in the church wishing to join us.

Come One and All!

Submitted by: **Sue Brenner**, President, U.M.W.

MUSIC BRIDGE

I don't have any classes being held in my space currently, due to covid-19. However, I am working with Memory Care units at different facilities to provide Zoom video Music Therapy sessions, from the Music Bridge classroom space.

Stay safe and healthy!

Submitted by: **Lisa Peterson**

FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS

For years we've been collecting donations for the St. Vincent de Paul food pantry at St. Anthony's church. Now we're not meeting for church, and the food pantry is closed until further notice. Even the Oregon Food Bank has stopped accepting donations from individuals.

But we can still donate on-line.

The Oregon Food Bank is at oregonfoodbank.org.

Saint Vincent de Paul is at svdppdx.org.

Submitted by: **Liz Swenson**

HELLO TO EVERYONE

I hope this message finds all of us doing well. We have been through a month we will never forget. Let's hope it does not continue much longer.

My schedule re; the Back Pack Program, was put on hold with grocery shopping out of the question. I was not going to ask anyone to go out, when we were told to stay in, even though the need is probably greater.

I missed a lot of church this year, and missed seeing everyone. I am so happy no one in our family has been ill. I am looking forward to when it's over.

Submitted by: **Linda Randle**

BIRTHDAYS

Merrill Ludlam	May 4 th
Lela Baskins	May 4 th
Andrea Edgerton	May 6 th
Trudy Sundstrom	May 8 th
Loretta Evans	May 9 th
Matt Jones	May 13 th
Donna Berget	May 13 th
Sarah Hampton	May 15 th
Chad Pritchard	May 17 th
Janet Hummel	May 18 th
Sarah Tunall	May 24 th
Dylan Gunther	May 25 th
Lynn Anderson	May 27 th

HAVE YOU MOVED?

Please be sure that the church office has your new address as soon as possible. Thank you.

Submitted by: **Noelle Voepel**
Church Administrative Assistant

CHURCH CORNER

REMEMBERING LUTHER SCHROCK

Luther could not speak English when he entered 1st grade. Surrounded by Amish relatives, he spent his first 10 years in Berne, a Swiss-German community.

During five years as an apprentice machinist, he realized that many fellow workers had been at their same machine for decades. Although neither parent had completed high school, the three Schrock brothers opted for education. Luther married Jan and earned his Master's in engineering at Purdue U. "One brother is a retired surgeon; the other is a Nobel Prize-winning chemist teaching at MIT."

Luther worked for Dow Chemical Co, in Michigan for 20 years, and then in Texas for 23 years. As part of his work, he traveled to Europe 20+ times, sometimes being able to bring Jan along. He and Jan have also traveled to Japan and Sweden.

Upon retirement, the Schrocks settled in F.G. because one son and several grandsons live in Beaverton. Their other son lives in Kentucky. Luther, who enjoyed wood-working, created a sand table for the FGUMC nursery and the candle stand for the altar. Luther believed the most important event in his life was meeting Jan in the basement of the Methodist church in Decatur, Indiana. Their first 'date' was the Sunday evening service that same day. "We've been attending Methodist church together ever since."

Submitted by: *M. J. Nordgren*

SERVING IN MAY

Lay Leader	John Hayes
Altar Guild	Val Hawkins
Coffee Coordinator	Amy Scott
Nursery Supervisor	TBD
Kitchen Elves 3rd 10th 17th 24th	M.J. Nordgren & Betty Pritchard

MISSION STATEMENT

Know God.
Build Community.
Impact the World.

NOTE

We are going to attempt to return to the original method for assigning Elves', using a weekly basis for each pair of people.

*Open Hearts, Open Minds,
Open Doors*

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Church Office Hours, Monday through Thursday

8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Patty Davie	503-357-3185	Messenger Editor
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Please send your articles to me
by the 18th of each month!

e-mail: plc2fd@frontier.com & edavie@frontier.com