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Faith Church's Response to COVID-19

APRIL

*Faith United Methodist Church
"Engage, Equip, and Empower!"*

Volume 2020.
Issue 4

Message from Bishop Ough:

I believe those of us in the faith community should be the first responders when it comes to the spiritual, physical, and mental health of all of God's people. Thus, I am asking all United Methodist congregations in the Minnesota Conference to suspend in-person worship through the end of March. Further, I urge the postponement or cancellation of all non-essential, in-person small group meetings or gatherings in our church buildings during this timeframe. Finally, I urge all pastors to exercise thoughtful discretion with regard to conducting funerals or other religious rites and pastoral visitations. Stricter recommendations are being announced almost daily, so I will revisit these recommendations by the end of March.

In response Bishop Ough's request Faith United Methodist Church canceled the following events:

March 16– April 1

All Non-Essential Small Groups

Noon Lenten Luncheons

7 Pm Lenten Wednesday Evening Services

Choir Practice

Food @ Faith March 21

Sunday Worship March 22 and Sunday Worship March 29

M&M Night March 22

We will revisit these precautions at the end of the month to see if we need to continue our social distancing.

Take all the wise precautions you are advised to take and keep hoping in the Lord...Pastor Victor

If you need to talk with me you can call me at the office 835-3167 or at the parsonage 835-2535

Prayer Requests

Remember our church members & friends who are less mobile and are unable to join us as often as they would like, including:

Janesville Nursing Home: Nina Youngberg

Traditions Assisted Living Owatonna: Ardella Draheim

Colony Court: Muriel Jenkins

Foxdale: Gordy Miller, Joe & Gloria Tollefson

Koda Living Community: Chuck Youngberg

Lakeshore Inn: Liz Corchran, Leona Quast, George Kubista

Latham Place: Lucille Kubista, Elaine Westrum

Prayer Requests from Sunday Worship: Michael Schumacher, Mary Stauffer, the containment of the coronavirus and those who are most at risk and vulnerable, first responders and hospital personnel, those who battle chronic illness and pain.



Crafters & Stitchers

Faith Crafters & Stitchers will meet on **Thursday, April 9** from **1:00 to 3:00 pm** in the Fellowship Hall.

Come join the fun and enjoy the fellowship with goodies. We are working on some new ideas for the bazaar. If you prefer, you can work on your own projects too. See you there!

Administrative Assistant Hours

Due to the evolving concerns regarding the COVID-10 (novel coronavirus), office hours will vary until further notice. If you need to visit the church please call ahead. The church office phone number is 507-835-3167. You may also leave a message on the answering machine. Messages will be checked regularly.

Thank you for your understanding.

Spring Luncheon Cancelled

After much thoughtful consideration and due to concerns with the current situation of the coronavirus, the difficult decision has been made to cancel the Spring Luncheon which had been scheduled for Wednesday, April 15.

Faith Church's Response to COVID-19

The following letter was mailed or e-mailed to church members on March 19.

To Faith United Methodist Church Members:

We are in unprecedented times. The COVID-19 pandemic has gripped the world's attention and placed a strain on our everyday lives and how we go about our daily business. The rapid spreading of the virus, the endless news cycle, and the every-changing recommendations and directions from the federal, state and local officials creates fear upon fear for all of us.

With the common goal in all the steps being taken to close public schools, entertainment, restricted travel, in an effort to slow or stop the virus, we have to also look at Faith United Methodist Church. The recommendations from both the federal and state government are that gatherings of 10 people and more should be cancelled or postponed. In a letter from our bishop, Bruce R. Ough, he is asking that all United Methodist congregations in Minnesota Conference suspend in-person worship through the end of March. Further, he is urging the postponement or cancellation of all non-essential, in-person small group meetings or gatherings in our church building during this timeframe. We have also asked Pastor Victor to exercise thoughtful discretion with regard to pastoral visitations, hospital calls, conducting funerals or other religious rites for the next 2 weeks.

We are not making this decision to shut down the church for the next 2 weeks lightly. There was much discussion, prayers and ideas put out for us to talk and think about. In the best interest for our congregation, it is our feeling to follow what our government and bishop are asking us to do. We can continue to worship God outside the four walls of our church. This can be done by daily devotions, how we treat people, actions, individual prayers, but most of all by taking care of yourself, family and your neighbors. We are asking you check with your neighbors by telephone calls, maybe run an errand for an elderly person or shut-in, this may mean a little hardship on you personally but the rewards will be more than you are giving.

We are also asking Pastor Victor to post a Sunday morning message on Facebook and also on our church website. Because this situation is changing on a daily basis, we will try to keep the congregation updated with the latest information we have.

We ask that you continue to support the church through your offerings. We are asking our Administrative Assistant to make sure she is taking what time she needs to make sure her family's needs are met. You may mail your offering to the church, use the mail box in front of the church, or stop by and give it to Stacy. It may be best to give the church office a call to make sure she will be there when you are thinking of coming. Her hours could change because of her needs at home.

We thank you for your understanding during this period of time that we are going through. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the following individuals:

Dave Baldini – 835-3697 or dsbaldini@gmail.com

Jarod True – 833-3103 or jarodtrue@hotmail.com

Pastor Victor – 835-2535 or thevicar61@gmail.com

God bless to all of you and we wish good health and together we will get through this crisis.

Followers, Not Admirers by Soren Kierkegaard

It is well known that Christ consistently used the expression “follower.” He never asks for admirers, worshippers, or adherents. No, he calls disciples. It is not adherents of a teaching but followers of a life Christ is looking for.

Christ understood that being a “disciple” was in innermost and deepest harmony with what he said about himself. Christ claimed to be the way and the truth and the life (Jn. 14:6). For this reason, he could never be satisfied with adherents who accepted his teaching – especially with those who in their lives ignored it or let things take their usual course. His whole life on earth, from beginning to end, was destined solely to have followers and to make admirers impossible.

Christ came into the world with the purpose of saving, not instructing it. At the same time – as is implied in his saving work – he came to be the pattern, to leave footprints for the person who would join him, who would become a follower. This is why Christ was born and lived and died in lowness. It is absolutely impossible for anyone to sneak away from the Pattern with excuse and evasion on the basis that It, after all, possessed earthly and worldly advantages that he did not have. In that sense, to admire Christ is the false invention of a later age, aided by the presumption of “loftiness.” No, there is absolutely nothing to admire in Jesus, unless you want to admire poverty, misery, and contempt.

What then, is the difference between an admirer and a follower? A follower is or strives to be what he admires. An admirer, however, keeps himself personally detached. He fails to see that what is admired involves a claim upon him, and thus he fails to be or strive to be what he admires.

If you have any knowledge at all of human nature, who can doubt that Judas was an admirer of Christ! And we know that Christ at the beginning of his work had many admirers. Judas was precisely such an admirer and thus later became a traitor.

It is not hard to imagine that those who only admire the truth will, when danger appears, become traitors. The admirer is infatuated with the false security of greatness; but if there is any inconvenience or trouble, he pulls back. Admiring the truth, instead of following it, is just as dubious a fire as the fire of erotic love, which at the turn of the hand can be changed into exactly the opposite, to hate, jealousy, and revenge.

Followers, Not Admirers by Soren Kierkegaard

There is a story of yet another admirer – Nicodemus. Despite the risk to his reputation, despite the effort on his part, Nicodemus was only an admirer; he never became a follower. It is as if he might have said to Christ, “If we are able to reach a compromise, you and I, then I will accept your teaching in eternity. But here in this world, no, I cannot. Could you not make an exception for me? Could it not be enough if once in a while, at great risk to myself, I come to you during the night, but during the day (yes, I confess it, I feel how humiliating this is for me and how disgraceful, indeed also how very insulting it is toward you) I say ‘I do not know you?’” See in what a web of untruth an admirer can entangle himself!

The admirer never makes any true sacrifices. He always plays it safe. Though in words, phrases, songs, he is inexhaustible about how highly he prizes Christ, he renounces nothing, will not reconstruct his life, and will not let his life express what it is he supposedly admires. Not so for the follower. No, no. The follower aspires with all his strength to be what he admires. And then, remarkably enough, even though he is living amongst a “Christian people,” he incurs the same peril as he did when it was dangerous to openly confess Christ. And because of the follower’s life, it will become evident who the admirers are, for the admirers will become agitated with him. Even these words will disturb many – but then they must likewise belong to the admirers.

This is from my devotional readings this week and I hope it speaks to you as it did to me.

2 Thessalonians 2:16–17

"Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and strengthen them in every good work and word."

United Methodist Women Unit Meeting
February 17, 2020

Faith United Methodist Women met on Monday, February 17, 2020 with 11 members and 1 visitor attending. Elizabeth Circle was the hostess and grace was given by Sherry Scholljegerdes

UMW Co-Leader, Karen Ferch, opened the meeting with a prayer. She then gave the program which was “Prayer and Self Denial” and explained that this was God’s call to help spiritual growth, increase leadership and transform communities.

Treasurer, Sandy Voshell, gave her report telling everyone where our money goes. As of January 1, 2020 our balance was \$4288.13. Following the report we gave our “Prayer and Self Denial” offerings.

Secretary pro-tem, Janet Welch, read minutes. There was one correction – Tea Party date will be May 23, 2020.

Old Business

Directories for 2020 were distributed.

Andrea Johnson reported on the May Tea Party as follows:

Time will be 2:00 pm. There will be 10 tables of 6 participants each.

Pastor Peter Law of “Jacob’s Ladder” will be the speaker.

After discussion it was decided that the Steering Committee (Andrea Johnson, Nancy Tollefson, and Sherry Scholljegerdes) would make the final decision concerning the price, menu, and other arrangements. Karen Ferch will make tickets and posters. Andrea will make programs.

Andrea also said that our church will have a “Prayer Tree” for the Easter Season.

New Business

Sherry announced that Faith Church will be the venue for “Mission u Too” on July 25, 2020.

We have been asked to provide volunteers to serve and clean up for the “KMM Family Reunion” being held at our church on July 11, 2020 with set up on July 10. It was decided to do this.

Future activities include:

Mother's Day – each woman attending church will get a flower. Sherry and Karen will take care of this.

Lenten Service on March 18 with Elizabeth Circle serving bars.

Berts reminded us that the Spring Luncheon is April 15. She also said there were 2 Bible studies beginning on Thursday, February 27 at 10:00 am and 6:30 pm.

Kelly Boeddeker, Waseca Area Caregivers, gave a brief presentation about her program and expressed her need for volunteers and funding. She is having an Avon Party on March 14th as part of her fundraising efforts and would appreciate any support we can give her. Following the presentation, Sandy Voshell made a motion that UMW donate \$100 to Waseca Area Caregivers for their program. It was unanimously approved.

Next Meeting is Monday, May 18, 2020 at 10:00 am. Ruth Circle will host. Program will be given by Sherry Scholljegerdes: The Art of Listening. We will also work on our budget for 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Welch, Secretary pro-tem



Faith United Methodist Church

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Change Service Requested

Come Worship with Us

We have room.

MONTHLY MEET-UPS:

Elizabeth Circle

UMW Elizabeth Circle will not meet in April.

Ruth Circle

Ruth Circle's April meeting will be held in the Gathering Room. Watch the bulletin for the date. Roberta will be hosting and presenting the program.