



280 E Stillwater  
Fallon Nevada  
89406

775.423.4714

[www.epworthfallon.org](http://www.epworthfallon.org)

Rev Dawn Blundell  
Senior Pastor

[pastor@eumcfallon.org](mailto:pastor@eumcfallon.org)

775.671.5553

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Hello church family!

One of the things I have made a deliberate practice of doing during this time of quarantine is to make sure I get a periodic infusion of good news. I find that it is essential to my own mental and spiritual health, and helps me to keep God in the forefront of my thoughts. It gives life to my prayers, inspiration to my time in worship, awareness of God's presence, strength to keep balance and peace of mind when bad news comes. I find it's especially helpful now, when so much is difficult and confusing and frustrating and uncertain. Things like Sean of the South, Some Good News with John Krazinski, the Upper Room daily devotional, and the Good News Network (all found online) bring much-needed laughter and happy tears. Here are some great things that are happening around the country and the world this week:

- Sand Hill Dairy, right here in Fallon, gave away hundreds of gallons of free milk last week, rather than dumping it for lack of any way to ship it where it ordinarily would go. In the midwest, Kroger Grocery Stores has bought over 50,000 gallons of milk from dairies in the same boat, and is donating it to food banks.
- Guy Fieri has raised over \$22 million to help restaurant workers, and is planning a nacho contest with Bill Murray to raise more.
- Marco's Pizza in Texas was robbed in April, and responded by putting up a sign in their store and on Facebook that they would be glad to provide food, for free, for anyone who is struggling.
- Landlords in California and Nevada (and elsewhere, too, I'm sure) are forgiving rent payments and donating anonymously to their tenants to help them pay their other bills.
- Members of our own community are going above and beyond to support our local businesses, especially when they are overwhelmed with increased demand (woo hoo!) and confusing new processes to put in place to protect themselves and others
- Scientists in Kenya have discovered a new microbe that completely stops malaria in mosquitos. Malaria remains one of the leading causes of death in Kenya and elsewhere, so this could be world-changing.
- Quarantined musicians like Bobby Jo Valentine (who lives in California and played at Dennis' and my wedding!), casts of Broadway shows, and professional opera singers all over the country are giving free concerts online and in their neighborhoods, just for fun.

In times of trial and persecution and fear, Paul encouraged the churches he pastored to do the same: in Philippians 4, written while Paul himself was in prison, he reminds us to focus on what is good. "Do not worry about anything," he says, "but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."

**“Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves.”**

*~ Luke 22:26b*

We don't focus on what is good in order to blind ourselves to what is NOT good. The idea is not to live behind rose-colored glasses, but rather to see clearly. We don't just pray and forget, we pray AND we give thanks for answered prayers. We don't just work to combat evil in ourselves and in the world, we look for ways God is already defeating evil and rejoice in that. We don't just focus on what we lack, or what is wrong in the world, we also give thanks for what we DO have and look for what is right. Doing so keeps our minds and hearts in the knowledge and the love of God, adding real joy to our lives while also enabling us to handle difficulty with wisdom and peace.

I pray that you have your own sources of joy, beloved. They are not just found online, but also in smiles and conversations with friends and neighbors, in music, in light exercise, in gardening, in cooking, in note-writing and gift-giving. I pray that you take note of something (or several somethings!) that brings you some happiness this week, and I would love to hear from you about it! Not only does telling it keep us wonderfully in relationship with each other, it also confirms our hope and increases our joy in the telling.

Thinking of you, and missing you, and praying for you always,

*Pastor Dawn*

## Kitchen Table Worship

This week, we continue with our series about Simon Peter and his relationship with Jesus. Things are coming to a head now, for Jesus and for the disciples. There have been miracles of healing and feeding and walking on water, shocking teachings that have confounded the disciples and enraged Jesus' enemies, and a great deal of love and care and growth. Now, they have come into Jerusalem and shared the Passover meal together, and in our passage for this week Peter makes his fateful promise: even though all others may desert you, Lord, I will not deny you. As you prepare your heart for worship this week, you might like to read the scripture passage in Matthew 26:31-35 and consider what God might have to say to you through this part of Peter's story. Might God be calling you to be more bold or unafraid, in some area of your life? More committed? Or, conversely, might God be calling you to be more patient, more humble, more teachable, less judgmental of others? Or both?

## What About Drive-In Worship?

Last week, at the request of our Bishop, Pastor Dawn was part of a small meeting with our District Superintendent Blake Busick, other DS's, and pastors and laypeople from different areas in our Conference regarding the ins and outs of "drive-in church." The particulars of it will be unique to each church, but we at Epworth have the tremendous benefit of our existing radio broadcast to work from; the only limitation is that we would have to broadcast from the church building because that's where our radio equipment lives. So, in theory, here is how it might work:

## May Birthdays!

♥ Shasta Kelley, 5/2  
Bailey Stritenberger, 5/13  
Ailene Brown, 5/18  
♥ Bob Johnston, 5/19  
Jeanie Fahl, 5/20  
Kate Pinder, 5/23  
Ernie DeCoux, 5/24  
Cathy McKean, 5/28  
Margaret Knox, 5/30  
Maggie Neidigh, 5/31

♥ Shasta Kelley,  
daughter of Kelli Kelley,  
passed away some  
years ago.  
Bob Johnston, Gaye  
Johnston's beloved  
husband, passed away  
in 2017. They were  
deeply loved, and are  
sorely missed.

Pastor Dawn and the worship leader would stand outside on the front steps of the church and lead prayers, read scripture, and do the sermon from there.

- Ushers would help guide people to park in ways that best enable them to see. We would need to connect with Fallon PD to allow us to park on the street in the wrong direction in some places.
- We \*might\* be able to have a subset of the Praise Team lead music before our 9:30 start time, using our portable sound system. If so, then we might do the call to worship and stuff that way, too. We will warn the neighbors in advance. 😊 Your Praise Team is in discussion about this right this minute.
- We \*might\* be able to do something fun with the kids, **IF** we have parent/grandparent help to ensure social distancing. We could easily sing and dance and teach a brief lesson, but we would need to count on the kids' guardians for help to make it work.
- Regardless, we will continue to do both the live Zoom portion of the service, and the Facebook Live sermon, for the sake of those who are worshipping from home.

We aren't sure how much longer we will have to keep our church doors closed. Though it is getting increasingly frustrating for many of us not to be in worship together, we are in constant prayer for our leaders who are doing the best they can to make these decisions well. So the question is, if we did "drive-in church" at Epworth in the meantime, would you come? Let us know your thoughts by calling the church at 423-4714, calling Pastor Dawn's cell phone at 671-5553, or by sending her a message at [pastor@eumcfallon.org](mailto:pastor@eumcfallon.org).

## News and Fun Stuff!

### Saturday Mornings with the Young at Heart

Every Saturday morning at 11:30, join us on Zoom (yay technology!) for a Word for the Young at Heart. It might be a story we tell together, or an activity, or a song, or something else altogether! Pastor Dawn will email all of the parents and grandparents the instructions each week. All the kids need is a computer with a video camera so that we can all see each other and talk together. Or even just a phone, and they can join us that way! If you have any questions, call Pastor Dawn at 775-671-5553. Hope you and your kiddos can join us!

### A Path of Easter Joy, All Year Long

It is great to hear that some of you are painting colorful rocks for our Wolf Center garden area! We conceived of the idea just before Easter, but the plan is to create a permanent path of colorful stones that reaches all across the Esmeralda Street side of the Wolf Center, with encouraging words and scriptures that express love of our neighbors and our hope in Jesus Christ. You can paint as many as you want – the more the better! – in whatever way you want, bring them by the church whenever you're able, and we will start creating the path. We will spray them with protectant so that they will hopefully last awhile, but even if the colors fade or wash away the path itself will still be lovely. And we can always refresh them, too!



**“God never said that they journey would be easy, but He did say that the arrival would be worthwhile.”**

*~ Max Lucado*

## **Epworth UMC Family Movie Nights**

Our Summer movie series begins on June 7! We have some potential movies picked out that you can watch from home with your loved ones, but we would love to hear your suggestions, too. Then we will get together on Tuesdays at 7:00pm to talk about it, via Zoom and by phone. Like a movie book club! Call or write to give us movie ideas, we would love it. And if it turns out that we can safely watch one or all of them in person, we will!

## **Making Soap During a Health Crisis**

*by Grace Musuka, United Methodist Women*

The COVID-19 pandemic has left no corner of the world untouched. In 2019, the North Katanga Annual Conference in the Democratic Republic of Congo received a \$14,000 Economic Development Grant from United Methodist Women to train women in 24 Districts to make and sell soap. “Under the leadership of Honorine Mujing Mwaad and her team, one step at a time the women of North Katanga Annual Conference were transforming their lives through the soap-making grant from United Methodist Women,” noted missionary Grace Musuka.



Little did they know how valuable their soap-making enterprise would turn out to be. In response to COVID-19, the women through their phone networks are sharing the message about staying at home, washing hands with soap and praying. They are using the soap in their homes and distributing it to widows and orphans as well as selling some. The women and young adults trained in soap-making are going a step further to train other women in this skill.

United Methodist Women’s international partners are adapting to meet the increasing needs caused by the worldwide pandemic. Join United Methodist Women to put your faith, hope and love in action with a gift today.

## **Epworth Swag 😊**

Thank you for your orders so far! If you are still thinking about ordering a hat, tshirt, or sweatshirt, please do so as soon as you can. We will be placing our order with Buttsup Duck on Friday May 15. The order form is included here, one last time, just in case. Call the church and let us know if you have any questions, 423-4714.

## **Pizza (or something) with the Pastor**

You are invited to spend some time together with Pastor Dawn, for no reason at all! We are finding that Zoom is the best way to do that right now, because folks can join by phone or by video. Every Tuesday evening at 6pm, you are invited to talk more deeply about whatever we talked about during Sunday’s sermon, ask questions or offer your own thoughts, hear the scripture for the coming week and study that a bit, and just talk together about Anything We Want! Watch your email for the phone number to call, or the link to connect by video. If you don’t have email, call Pastor Dawn on her cell phone at 671-5553 so that she can give you the phone number and password and stuff. ❤️