



The Circuit Rider



August

2020



SALMON CREEK CHURCH

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Do no harm. Do good.
 Stay in love with God.
 -John Wesley



a note from Pastor John

Tomorrow's Community

If you've been listening to my sermons through July, you'll know we were exploring the effects of chaos on Christian life, using a professional wrestling metaphor of "Smackdown!" Developing this sermon series has also led me to hone a vision for the future of Salmon Creek Church. Last month I talked about things like authenticity and faithfulness, and I have solicited comments and suggestions from a wide variety of people. And of course, I've listened to several influential speakers on their podcasts, all talking about the shape of church in a post-pandemic world. The one word that gets mentioned the most by all of these sources is "community."

Even before the pandemic, our society has had an increasing problem with isolation, influenced by a highly mobile society, too many broken families, and online relationships replacing real relationships. These forces may have created a problem, but they also present an opportunity. Some within this society of isolation are feeling that hunger for real belonging, the first sign of a hunger for God. This manifests when someone gets a growing sense that they themselves are not the source of truth: the truth exists outside of themselves. So, to find that truth, they seek to commune with others seeking the same thing.

Historically, mainline churches like the Methodist Church have best served those who already have some sense of this community; people brought up in the church, for example. But let's be honest: fewer and fewer people are being brought up in the church, yet the need for community has grown proportionally. Can a church like Salmon Creek meet that need?

If we approach that question with the assumption that people entering our existing community will need to conform to that community's ways, then the answer would be no. Authentic community grows up out of shared experience, and we are looking at a very basic experiential difference: knowledge of church/God/Jesus vs. little knowledge of any of those things.

To go down the path of providing for two different faith communities seems daunting. Do we have the right personnel? Do we have the right facilities? Do we have the will for such an undertaking? Will there be conflict between these two communities? How would they relate to each other? Can two communities really be the One Body of Christ? These are important questions that require serious discussion. My goal, through dialog and discussion, is to have these questions answered by January of 2021 when our church "relaunches" into a post-pandemic world. Our existing community will continue, faithfully, vibrantly and missional. But what about tomorrow's community?

Blessings, Pastor John Hiestand

Until certain conditions are met, Salmon Creek Church will not be holding indoor worship services. Please join us for drive-in and outdoor celebrations as they become available, or continue to enjoy our online services.

About Outdoor Worship

Salmon Creek Church is planning to continue with outdoor services as weather permits throughout August, or until Clark County moves to Phase III. If weather does not permit, there would be no in-person services that particular Sunday. Online services and Zoom Fellowship will continue on every Sunday.

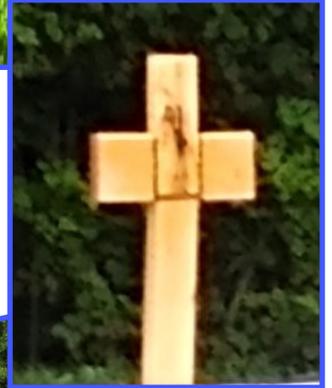
In the meantime, our leadership is working on preparing both the Sanctuary and the FMC for indoor worship when that becomes possible. It is likely that there will still be restrictions regarding masks and social distancing and number of attendees after we move indoors, as well as the continuing restriction on singing.

Here is my dream: that by Christmas Eve we will all have been vaccinated and we can SING Silent Night joyfully and reverently, together. But even if it takes a little longer than that, we will continue to bring the Word of God to the People of God in whatever way we can.

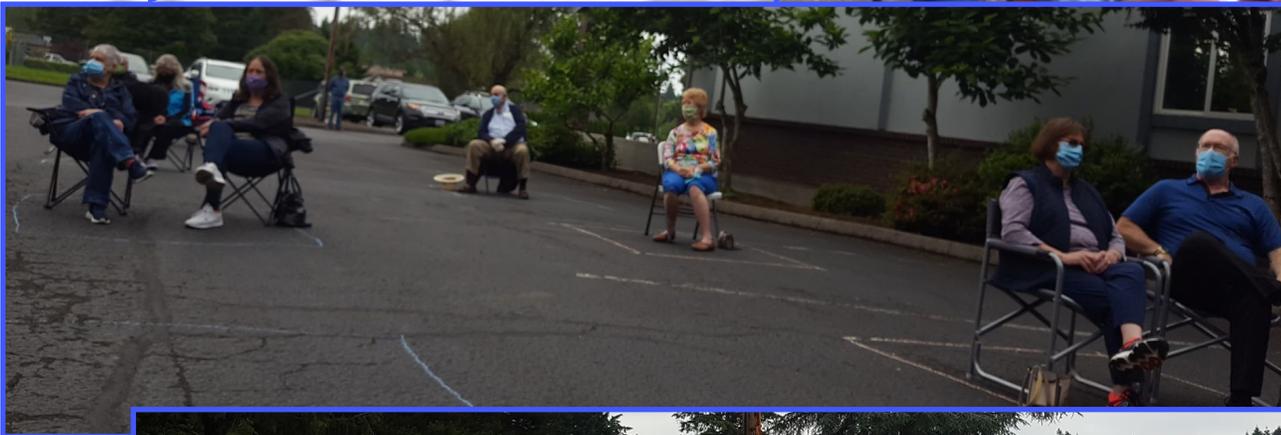
It has been great to worship together – properly socially distant and wearing masks – and I hope you will be able to join us. If you are unable, or do not yet feel safe to gather with a group, no worries: we still have our online service on YouTube, and Zoom Fellowship at 10:30 on Sunday mornings. Look for an e-mail notification by Saturday evening.

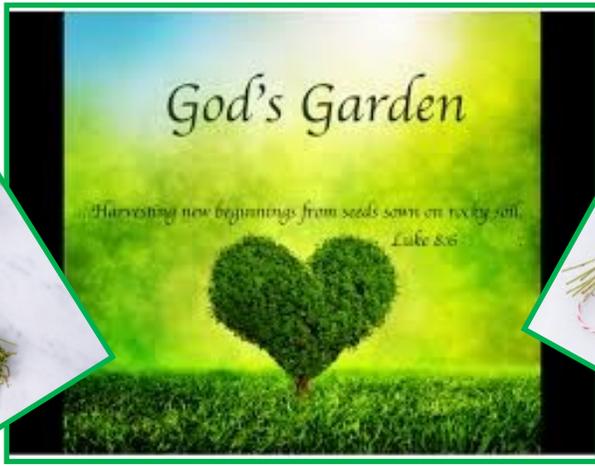
One thing is certain as this weird time of limited access to church continues: we aren't going to get through this without each other. Our church community not only helps keep us sane, it reminds us of God's grace poured out through so many individuals. Instead of looking to ourselves, we can look to God as the provider, the Waymaker. In community we can lose ourselves and find God without fear of getting lost upon the way. So, even if you can't get out quite yet, reach out to someone on the phone or on Zoom or Skype. It might be great for you; it might also be great for them.

outdoor WORSHIP









Excess produce from God's Garden will be placed on the food table in the breezeway area at the East entrance to the sanctuary. Other gardeners are welcome to place excess produce there as well. If you are near the Church while doing your shopping or errands, be sure to check that table. With so few people at the church on a regular basis we want to be sure the food gets taken and does not spoil.

God's Gardeners



Looking for all things
United Methodist?



**TUNE IN TO UMC.ORG FOR SO
MANY RESOURCES:**

United Methodists Stand Against Racism

We recognize racism as a sin.

We commit to challenging unjust systems of power and access.

We will work for equal and equitable opportunities in employment and promotion, education and training; in voting, access to public accommodations, and housing; to credit, loans, venture capital, and insurance; to positions of leadership and power in all elements of our life together; and to full participation in the Church and society.

What can you do?

Pray

Ask God to show us the truth of our sin and how we might become agents of God's justice, mercy, love and re-creation. Cry out to God for guidance. Listen for the voice of Jesus in meditation, Bible study, worship and conversation to guide our ways. Proclaim release, recovery and liberation for the oppressed.

The Upper Room has collected resources for the spiritual work of overcoming racism.
Prayers for the Healing of a Nation - Discipleship Ministries

No justice. No peace: Devotion written in response to George Floyd's murder.

Turning to God in Days of Trouble is a prayer for difficult days.

Connect

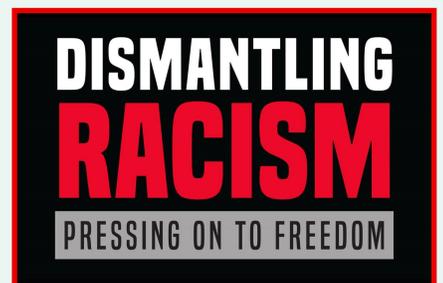
Talk to people within and beyond the church who are doing anti-racism well. Ask questions. Listen to and respect diverse voices. Learn how and where racism shows in your community and how others are harmed by its effects. Harness United Methodist and other resources that address institutional racism.

The General Commission on Religion and Race offers several video series to encourage discussion. Discipleship Ministries offers some great resources.

School-to-Prison Pipeline Bible Study by United Methodist Women.

We also have some tips for talking to your children about racism.

Seek diverse blogs, podcasts, news outlets, and new relationships.



DISMANTLING RACISM

PRESSING ON TO FREEDOM



Show up

Be present to the pain of another. Attend a prayer vigil. Join a demonstration. Organize a church school class to read, discuss, and respond to institutional racism. Tell church leaders, community leaders and elected officials that you want to learn and help with dismantling racism in your community.

Visit our 'Dismantling Racism' Events page to find places where you can show up. Watch the Worship Service of Lament.

Act

Support cross-racial/cross-cultural ministries in your area. Preach and teach about the harm racism does and how it offends our God. Harness the Holy Spirit anointing to rid your congregation and ministry settings of all vestiges of institutional racial bias. Challenge your bishop, mayor, governor, police chief, or other elected officials to encode anti-racism policies and practices. Join the ongoing work for racial justice in the church and world.

Join Church & Society of the United Methodist Church in their work for civil and human rights. Connect with United Methodist Women in their work for racial justice.

Racial Justice Advocacy Toolkit by United Methodist Women.

Creating Change Together: A Civic Engagement Toolkit from Church & Society

Suggested Resources for Becoming Anti-Racist: Discipleship Ministries.

Give to The United Methodist Committee on Relief's Community Developers Program.

Work for justice in your church, community, work and school.





We Persevere

We've been at this for months. It is difficult, frustrating and sometimes disheartening.

Restrictions are lifted, then reinstated. We move ahead a phase, only to return days later.

As the struggles last longer than we expected, we must continue to care for our neighbors, support our congregations, and check-in with one another. In this way, we "run with perseverance the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1).

The Coronavirus pandemic has rapidly transformed life as we know it for millions of people all over the world. For many, COVID-19 carries feelings and challenges of fear, anxiety, economic hardships, isolation, and many other stresses. This prayer reminds us that we are not alone in our feelings and we can ease our own fears by praying for others.

A Prayer for a World Facing the Coronavirus was adapted from a prayer posted by St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Houston, Texas.

Dear God,

It seems like lots of uncertainty around us.

So many people who need prayers.

Today, I pray...

For those whose health is compromised by the coronavirus or other health issues.
For those who suffer from the economic impact of the virus, in travel, manufacturing,
hospitality, energy or so many other industries.

For health care workers and first responders, and other public servants who put
themselves in harm's way for us.

For our leaders of the world, our countries, states, and cities, as they seek to help
manage this challenge

God, it can be overwhelming. But you tell us over and over again not to be afraid.

Show me how to trust in you.

As I examine my heart this Lenten season, help me to turn away from my concern
with self,

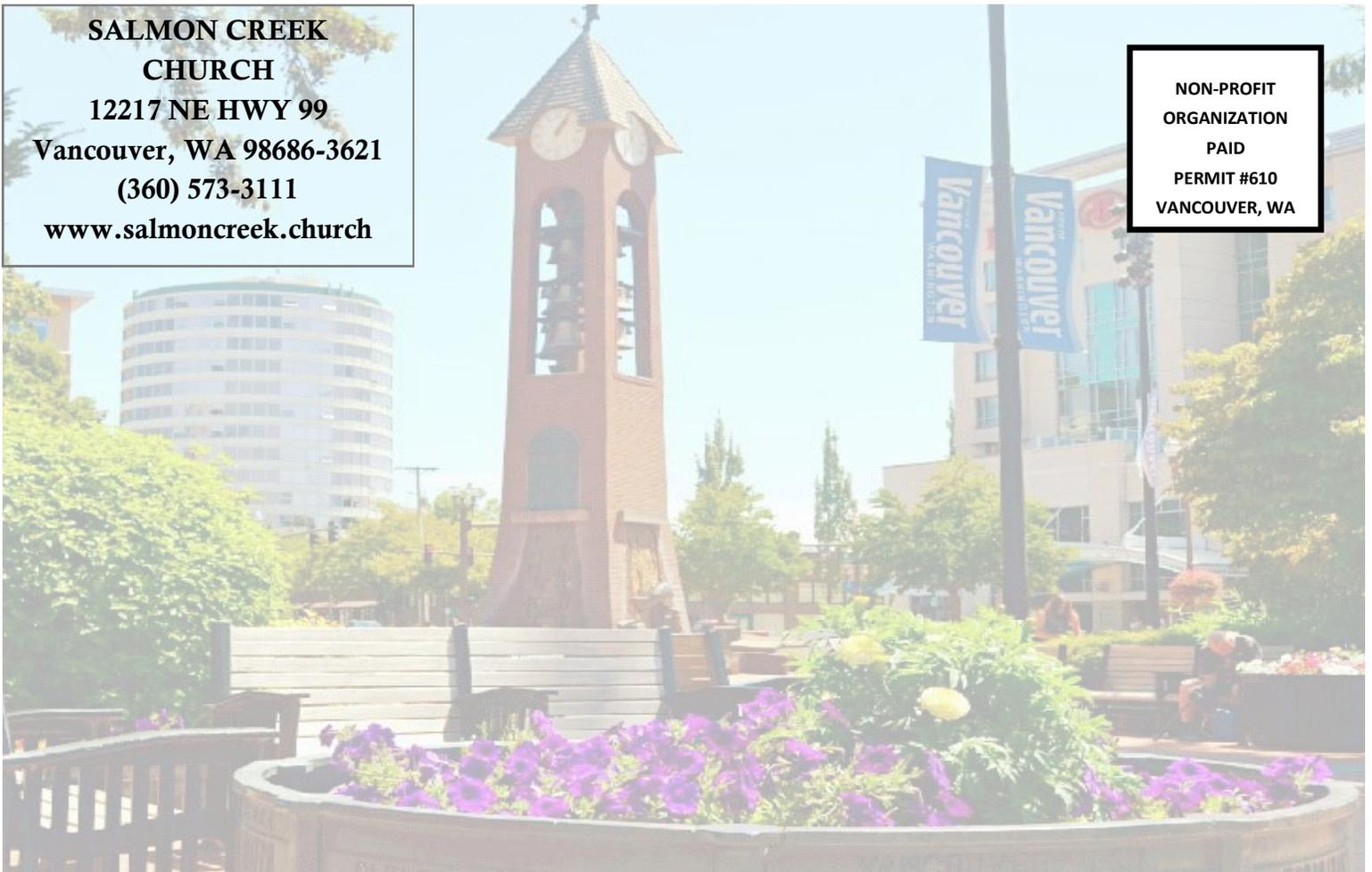
and turn my heart, hands, and prayers toward the concerns of others.

In the name of Jesus Christ, I pray.

Amen

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VANCOUVER, WA



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR FAMILY MEMBERS:

Due to the closure of the office, the list of family birthdays is unavailable this month. Our apologies for not being able to acknowledge your special day!



Thank you for reading the Circuit Rider! If you have questions or concerns please feel free to contact us.

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Submissions for the Circuit Rider can be sent to dalemv@att.net. Articles and announcements are due by midnight on the second Sunday of each month.

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