



Volume 32, Issue 4

First United Methodist Church

April 23, 2020

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Greetings in the Hope of the Risen Christ!

The Risen Christ had appeared to Mary Magdalene in the garden by the empty tomb, and the hopelessness of the day became the celebration of all time, when Jesus instructed Mary to “go to my brothers, and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” Mary went and announced to them, “I have seen the Lord!” and she told them what he had said to them. Later that evening, the disciples were ‘Sheltering in Place’ behind locked doors for fear of the Jews, and Jesus came among them and said, “Peace be with you.” Showing his hands and side, the disciples rejoiced... and Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father sends me, I send you.” Then he breathed on them, saying, “Receive the Holy Spirit...” (John 20:1-23) He did this in response to the promise he made to his disciples before his crucifixion when he said, “I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.” (John 14:25-27)

When the Risen Christ miraculously appeared to his ‘Sheltering in Place’ disciples, because they feared the Jews, he said “Peace be with you” twice, reminding them that he had left them his ‘peace’ twice in the upper room on the night before he died. He also promised them the coming of the Holy Spirit, and breathed it upon them as the Risen Christ, as promised. The advent of the Holy Spirit gave them the providence of his Holy presence, peace, and promise in an uncertain time.

The Book of Acts of the Apostles affirms that providence, when in Acts, chapter 2, during the Day of Pentecost, as the disciples were once again gathered together in one place, ‘suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the ruse of a violent wind, and it filled the house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.” (Acts 2: 1-4) Boldly, they went out into the streets and began to preach the good news of Jesus Christ in the native language of all who had come for the Feast of Pentecost from many lands. And many- about 3,000- were converted that day.

Today, the Holy Spirit does much the same in this uncertain time. It is present for us as the promise of the Risen Christ and provides peace regardless of our circumstance. It calls us to act boldly, sharing the good news found in following Jesus Christ, and the peace and promise that it brings. My prayer for you today is

that you acknowledge the presence, the peace, and the power of the Holy Spirit to draw you close to God, while continuing to maintain a healthy distance from our neighbors during this time of pandemic. For a while, we must Shelter in Place, but one day, by God’s grace, we will all be back together again, and what a day that will be!

Grace and Peace, Pastor Mike Rose

Thank You

Thanks to Vicki Kelly, Marcia Bannister, Jolie Green, Marilyn Wood, Donna Cooper, Jill Arensdorf, Karen Wilson, Jo Swayne, Sandy Henningsen, Shauna Zweifel, Sarah Schumacher and Wendy Beougher who provided food for the United Methodist Campus Center's Thursday meal this spring semester.

Children's Ministry Crazy Crayon Mission Project

Do you have any unwanted crayons? Children need them a MISSION! Their goal is to collect 100 pounds of crayons to recycle! Once crayons are sent off to the recycling company, new recycled crayons will be purchased for kids in our community! We are also collecting new color books to go with the crayons. Drop off location will be located in the hallway at the top of 2nd floor until August.



Sympathy

Our sincere sympathy is extended to the family & friends of

Sue & Carl Boldra on the death of Sue's sister, **Holly Mitchell**, who died on April 2.

Keith & Renee Eilts on the death of Keith's father, **Ray Eilts**, who died on April 8.

Bob & Sheryl Cox on the death of Bob's cousin, **Kelly Sitzman**, who died on April 9.

Lisa & Terry Bilde on the death of Lisa's mother, **Venita Gatton**, who died on April 11.

Memorial Committee

Memorial money has been designated for various projects throughout the church. The Miriam Osborne Memorial will fund internal church projects especially within the kitchen area.

Raymond and Cleo Noah's memorial will help fund Rachel Palmberg's mission. Other memorials honoring Peggy Heather, James P. and Connie Wilson have been put to use by the trustees.



If you are in the loving memory of your loved one

Concerns list or desire a phone



Pickup Game

This one's for you, multitaskers: Plogging- a combo of plocka upp, which means "pick up" in Swedish, and jogging-is the act of collecting trash as you exercise. You carry a lightweight bag, fill it with rubbish along your route, then you toss your haul in a garbage or recycling bin.

You already skip plastic straws at the coffee shop. Next step: Bring your own to-go container to cut down on paper and plastic waste.

8.7 billion gallons of water would be saved this year if every American who washed their car at home went to a car wash just once instead, according to The Green Book by Elizabeth Rogers and Thomas M. Kostigen.

90% of the energy used by your washing machine goes to warming its water. Switch to a detergent formulated to work best in cold water (Tide, Purex, Gain and Persil all make cold-water varieties.

Dear Heavenly Father, Our need for You is greater today than ever. As we face these uncertain times, we need to be reminded of Your constant and complete healing grace and love for us. As we reach out to You, we pray that You help us to heal the burdens of our neighborhoods, our country and our world. Help us be faithful in prayer and put our hope in You. Teach us what You want us to learn from this pandemic. Please help us to not take our fear and lack of control out on those around us, and show us how to be patient as the world heals. In these days of sickness, give us the wisdom to draw nearer to you. In your name we pray.

Salvation Army



INTRODUCING OUR STAFF PROGRAM STAFF

Pastor: Pastor Mike Rose
Congregational Care Director, Troy Miller
Director of Music: Johnny Matlock
Special Music Coordinator: Meredith Cory
Organist:
Pianist: Alexis Robinson
Handbell Choir Dir., Shawn Henderson
Children's Ministry Director: Jo Swayne
Asst. Children's Director: Melissa Pyle
Youth Ministry Director: Matt Dumler
Outreach Editor: Wendy Beougher

SUPPORT STAFF:

Administrative Secretary: Beverly Bearley
Administrative Assistant: Wendy Beougher
Financial Secretary: Don Forssberg
Childcare Director: Melissa Pyle
Building Supervisor: Joe Edwards

KIDS CORNER

Boy of the Year... Easter season was one to remember as all of our regularly scheduled services and events had to be canceled or watched online due to COVID-19. We're hopeful to meet in person sooner rather than later, but until then, prayers continue for everyone in the church to be healthy in mind and body. We will get through this!

Since we all have some extra time on our hands, search for o desk drawers or other places crayons hide and donate them crayons through the end of August. "Crazy Crayons" takes b crayons for purchase. Drop off crayons in the breezeway of t



Attention bakers in our church....keep baking and freezing b camp! Church camp is going to look much different this sun particulars now, we are hopeful for some sort of summer ca become available.

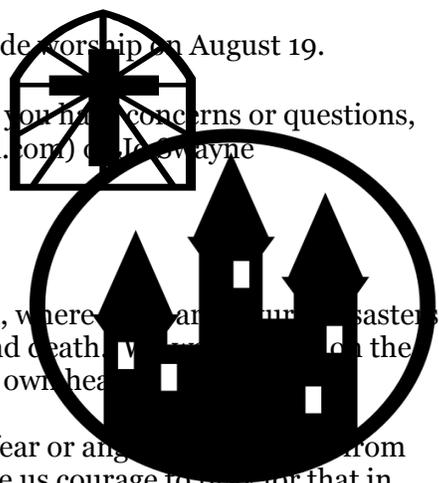


Summer Vacation" curriculum picked for Summer Sunday School that will lan to travel virtually with the kids, which might be the only vacations for all of on your calendar and we'll be in touch as it gets closer.

, July 20-23. This summer's theme, "Knights of the North Castle" will send us on Volunteers needed! Please let us know if you'd like to be a part of it!

be August 16 and WOW will kick-off with outside worship on August 19.

We realize the future is uncertain, but we plan anyway and keep the faith! If you have concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact either Melissa Pyle (pyle_melissa@hotmail.com) or J. Swayne (jswayne33@gmail.com).



Dear God,
Right now, Lord, we are not at peace. We are in the middle of a fallen world, where... Easter... and crushed dreams, where we're surrounded by heartbreaks and sorrow and death... on the news, we see them in the lives of our friends and family, we feel them in our own hearts.

To be honest, it's easier sometimes just to give up. To choose bitterness or fear or anger... from others and from you. But you call us to draw near in times of suffering. Give us courage to pray for that in our lives and those around us when we're tempted to give up or turn away from you. When our prayers are answered with "no" or even a time of silence, draw us in. Remind us of your love. Bring oth- ers around us to speak truth even when we can't yet feel it.

CrossTalk





Dear Friends & family,

I have been creating drafts of this newsletter in my head since February. As you all are aware, around that time a lot of major shifts started happening globally. I found it difficult to give an accurate, comprehensive update while so many changes were happening. Thank you all for your prayers and patience in this season, and thank you to those who have been reaching out to ask how I am doing.



Let's just jump right to it. So far, Thailand has 2,613 reported cases of COVID-19 and 41 deaths, most of which are in Bangkok. Today (Tuesday, April 14) is our sixth consecutive day of less than 100 new cases, and the number is generally decreasing each day. Most international travel is suspended, as well as travel between provinces. Several of my non-Thai friends made the decision to travel back to their home countries. After much thought and prayer, my roommate and I decided to stay here in Bangkok, and we are happy that we did.

The first government decision that greatly impacted my daily life was closing all entertainment venues, including the bars and strip clubs. This put thousands of men and women out of work with no compensation. My team quickly jumped to action, and we now distribute meals and hygiene kits to the increasing number of people on the streets in the red light area. Our usual programs at the outreach center (including the salon) are closed for the time being, and all NightLight's production employees are making jewelry from home, so we can still pay them their monthly salaries. Bangkok is not in lockdown. Restaurants are delivery/takeaway only, and the malls are closed except for supermarkets. There is a curfew every night from 10 p.m. to 4 a.m. (which also impacts the freelance sex industry) but other than that, we are free to leave our homes during the day.

This is our fifth week of distribution, and by Friday the 18th, we will have handed out 205 meals and 50 hygiene kits in the Nana area this week alone. We don't encounter the usual thousands of women who work in Nana, but the ones who are left behind now are especially desperate and vulnerable to violence and disease. As Outreach Director, this project has presented me with new challenges and opportunities to grow as a leader. We take the safety of our team and beneficiaries very seriously, and we take the necessary precautions (masks, gloves, hand gel, etc.) to reduce the risk of infection and carrying. I am so thankful for my team who is willing to take the risk to continue to reach out to this vulnerable population in this season. I am so happy to report that we all have been staying healthy, and I am grateful for this opportunity to reach out and continue to build relationships in the red light area.

We don't know how long this season will last, but we know God has a plan in it. As I was praying a few weeks ago for wisdom in what to do during this time, I sensed God say, "Rachel, you're young, healthy, and single. Use it." So that's what I've been doing, to the best of my ability. Every day, I am so thankful for the situation He has me in, and I trust He is walking alongside my team and me every step of the way.

Thank you all again for all your prayers and support. If you are interested in supporting NightLight's COVID-19 response financially, donations can be made online through our website. Specify "BKK Outreach/Intervention Program." Each meal we distribute costs about \$2. I know these are hard times financially for many families, so please do not feel pressured to donate.

God bless you all. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Rachel

Seasons Change

Matt Dumler, Youth Ministry Director

To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep and a time to cast away; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Embracing the seasons of life can be pure joy, or pure sorrow. They can build up or they can tear down. Seasons can reaffirm our strengths or test our weaknesses. Seasons make us prosper or send us crumbling to our knees. They can leave us praising with the highest joy or wondering as we ask the question "Why". We can plan for the change of seasons or it can come barreling down on us in the blink of an eye. No two seasons in life look the same. What doesn't change though is the one present with us in our seasons.

Right now, we are in a very different season than what many of us have ever been. The question that I am constantly asking myself is what am I learning in this season. I know that God is working and moving in a mighty way, but do I have the eyes to see and the ears to hear. Is my heart opened to the direction he is leading, or am I so caught up in what I am missing that what God is doing is flying by without me even realizing it? The writer of Hebrews reminds us that when we hear the Holy Spirit's voice, to not harden our hearts as the Israelites did in the wilderness. Moses led them into the wilderness with the intention of being there for a short amount of time. The purpose of the wilderness was to simply follow where God was leading. God was going before them to drive out the inhabitants of the land and prepare the land for them. However, they hardened their heart to the Holy Spirit's voice and watched as what God had for them fly right by. As a result, they remained in the wilderness much longer than anticipated, for many, it was for the rest of their lives.

Right now, we find ourselves in the wilderness. We didn't ask to be in this season. We didn't necessarily see it coming. However, here we are. Just like the Israelites, God is going before us to prepare the way that he has. He is working and moving. The Holy Spirit is speaking to you right now. Do you hear Him? Is your heart hardened by the circumstances of the season? It's in this time that we hold true to what God has promised us. He has promised to never leave us or forsake us. He has promised to keep us in the shelter of his wings. He has promised to go before us. He has promised to make us the head and not the tail; above and not beneath. That nothing formed against us shall prosper. You serve a mighty God that doesn't get surprised by the changing of seasons and doesn't get shaken when they shift.

I am reminded of what the prophet Jeremiah wrote to the people of Jerusalem as they were being taken captive into Babylon. He wrote that they would be there for a while. He wrote that he knew this wasn't where they wanted to be but it was where they were. He wrote that they should prosper. Then he wrote: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord. Plans to prosper and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

While you're in this season, remember that God has plans for you and he is using this time to prepare you for what those are. I believe that if you can look past the circumstances and look past what you are missing, you will find that God is driving out the inhabitants of the land you will occupy. When you walk into that land, you will find a new season and you will grab ahold of the promises that God has for you. Don't miss them because you are stuck in a season that has passed. Stop and ask the Lord, "What is it that you are doing?" Don't anticipate the answer, rather wait for him to reveal it to you. Ask it with expectation that He will answer. Ask it and be prepared to walk it out in hope.

Seasons change. Some are more beautiful than others. Some are easier than others. Embrace your seasons. Have hope in your seasons. Seek the Lord in your seasons. He is with you every step of the way.

April OUTREACH

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Upcoming Events



Monday, May 4

Red Cross Blood Drive