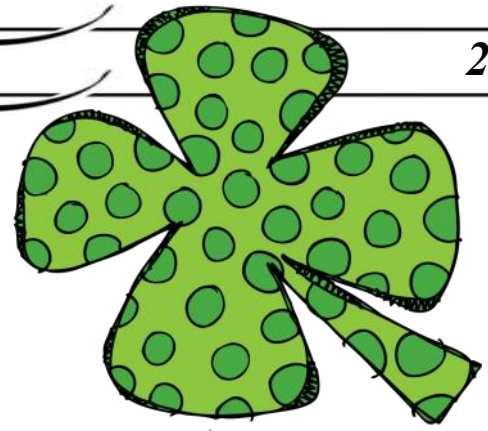


Jarrett's Jottings



Dear friends,

As of this writing, it has been 345 days since the first positively tested case of Covid-19 in Springfield, and a global pandemic appeared at our doorstep. It would be another few weeks before Cass County saw its first positively tested case. I have wondered frequently if “where were you when things came to a halt?” would be this generation’s equivalent to “where were you when Kennedy was assassinated?”. Certainly, our world has changed and been thrown upside-down in these last 11 months. Life as we knew it may not return for a long time, if ever. As we begin to see, if ever so slightly, what we hope is the light at the end of the tunnel, I’ve been thinking about some of the realities that have been revealed through or have come out of these days. I have come up with five realities for us, as a church, that I think are fairly plain. Perhaps you can think of a few more.

**Reality #1 We NEED one another** — Of all the things that we could learn from this pandemic, I hope and pray the most important thing we’ve learned is the value of one another and of human interaction. The stories are both numerous and heartbreaking of loved ones who have not physically seen or touched one another in nearly a year: grandparents who haven’t been able to hug their grandchildren, spouses and children who have only seen their loved one through the nursing home window, those who have limited or no contact with “the outside world”...I could go on and on, but you get the picture. You have lived this nightmare in gut-wrenching ways. Oh sure...modern technology allows us to “see” one another digitally, but, speaking for myself, I’m Zoomed-out by now. If I don’t have a Zoom call or video-conference for another six months, I wouldn’t complain! The reality we have seen is that, regardless of how much of an introvert we might be and regardless of how much other people might get on our nerves, we need each other. It’s how we were created. God wired us to crave companionship with one another. I pray that as we inch closer to the end of these days, we might never again take one another for granted. We are critical to one another’s well-being!

**Reality #2 “Hybrid” worship is here to stay** — As large gatherings began to be discouraged, if not outright banned, and “stay at home” orders went into effect, the Church began to scramble. How in the world do we continue to worship and bring people together? The answer was “digitally”. I’m proud to say we were ahead of the game on this one. We had been livestreaming our Sunday message for nearly three years prior to Covid. The shutdown only had to nudge us to stream our entire service. As we move forward, digital worship is here to stay—much like TV

worship was here to stay because of the likes of Charles Stanley, Joel Osteen, and Robert Schueller. I believe that from now on, there will always be a digital attendance at worship. Even now as things begin to loosen there will be, at least for the near future, those who are not comfortable being in large-group settings. I understand this completely. Digital worship presents us with an opportunity and a temptation, though. The opportunity is to be able to worship with our congregation, either live or after-the-fact, in those instances where we are not able to be physically present (weather, illness, etc.). The temptation, though, is to solely worship online and forego being physically present. See reality #1 above—we need one another! So, while digital worship is here to stay...if you are at all able and comfortable, I want to HIGHLY encourage you to be physically present for worship. I promise...you won’t regret it!

**Reality #3 “Cultural Christianity” is dying or is already dead** — Many of us have known for a while that our society and culture is moving further and further away from Christian principles and is becoming less and less shy about it. I believe the days of people professing Christianity simply because “that’s what you do” are almost past. The days of people coming to worship, whether they believed or not, simply because it was expected are over. Nominal Christianity is fading. No longer do people have to “pretend” to be Christian because it makes them look “respectable”. The down side to this is the post-pandemic church will appear to have shrunk, both in numbers and in assets. The up-side is what will be left will be those who are committed not solely to the Church, but to Christ. I know what you might be thinking...those last few sentences sound a bit harsh, even condemning. I do not intend that, rather, my contention is that the death of “cultural Christianity” just might be God’s best gift to the church in these days. It reveals where the church has glossed over so much in recent generations, and both challenges and encourages the church to be the church. Take heart, though; there’s good news! That takes me to...

**Reality #4 An Awakening is Underway** — There is a movement of the Holy Spirit afoot that is unlike anything many of us have ever seen. God is wooing people back to Himself and is doing something amazing within them. This movement isn’t happening “out there”, though (that is, in the community at-large). No...this movement is starting IN THE CHURCH. The Holy Spirit is working to show the Church where we have been complacent, where we have lost our first love, and where we might have fallen away from communion with God. It is in the Church that, through the Holy Spirit, Jesus is calling again “follow me”;

*Continue to read Jarrett’s Jottings on another page...*

The Mustard Seed

# March

**Ministry Team:**

Pastor ~ Jarrett Wells

Office Manager ~

Maria Hymes

Pianist/Organist ~

Jill Roegge

Choral Director ~

Tim Bartholomew

Financial Secretary ~

Lynne O'Hara

Treasurer ~

Susan Treadway

Youth Director ~

Andrea Wells

Custodian ~

Tonya White

**Sunday Services:**

Worship Service ~

9:00 a.m.

Sunday School ~

10:30 a.m.

Phone ~ 217-323-1257

E-mail ~

beardsumc@sbcglobal.net

Website ~

beardstownfumc.com

"Like" us on Facebook ~

Beardstown First UMC

## Birthdays

- 3 Sarah Elliott
- 4 Bill Barnhart  
Christy Bley  
Debby Malcomson  
Jaye Winkleman  
Amanda Parish  
Evaristo Rodriguez
- 6 Lynda Olson
- 7 Maria Hymes  
Kate Reichert  
Raji Nijhawan  
Amy Watkins
- 9 Jeff Baer  
Mark O'Hara  
Dalton Large
- 10 Jeff Olson
- 12 Jeanette Barker
- 12 Marti Fearneyhough
- 13 Mita Elam  
Tom Bell  
Brad Allen  
Colby DeSollar
- 15 Ronda Large  
Mikalia Kirchner
- 18 Jennifer Cagle
- 19 Brittney Taylor
- 20 Miriam Kight  
Ellie McGinnis
- 21 Tiffany Logsdon
- 22 Fawn Rohn

- 24 Ava Quigley  
Vicki Meyer  
Matt Hack
- 26 Karen Spencer
- 27 Karen Robinson
- 28 Chase Sommers
- 29 Will Barnhart
- 30 Marilyn Glasgow
- 31 Nancy Lamb

## Anniversaries

- 1 Chris & Peggy Kinsey
- 2 Bill & Janet Logsdon
- 5 Bill & Angela Robertson
- 7 Dan & Mitzi McClenning
- 13 Mike & Linda Mullen
- 18 Bruce & Julie Cordell
- 23 Brian & Kathy Newman



## Christian Love In Action

Currently C.L.I.A. is in need of: *Crackers & Soup*. You can bring your donated items to the church again. Office hours are 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. CLIA hours are: Tuesdays from 12:00 - 4:00 p.m. and Saturdays, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Thank you for donations. If you would like to contribute but don't have time / remember to shop, you can give money to Lynne O'Hara and she will pick up the items.

## Cass County Food Pantry

The Cass County Food Pantry is another place that helps Cass County residents in need of food. To help with their mission, they are asking churches for donations for the month of **MARCH: Au Gratin, Scalloped or Mashed Potatoes, Pork & Beans, and Gravy Mixes.**

They are always in need of: *Peanut Butter, Jelly, Macaroni & Cheese, Canned Vegetables, Canned Fruit, Cereal, or Non-Perishable Food Items.* They have a walk in cooler or freezer to hold perishable items, and are able to take fresh produce items.

*Jarrett's Jotting's continued...*

and the response is heart-stirring. I have said before, in this space and other spaces, that a revival and spiritual awakening happens first within the church and then spreads outward. God is moving, church!!! Every time I hear someone say they feel God inviting them to "go deeper", I can't help but pray "do it again, Lord; do it again!" I have no idea what the end result will be, but it's always exciting when the Holy Spirit is involved!

**Reality #5 The Church will NOT be defeated** — These last 11 months have been hard. They have tested our faith, our patience, and our resolve. In so many ways, it has felt as if the voice of the church has been silenced or at least muffled. I confess that I've had times when I've gotten down and wondered "how long, O Lord?" In the midst of those times, I am reminded that not even the gates of hell will overcome the Church, the Bride of Christ. Will things look differently? Possibly. Will we have to find new and creative ways to be in ministry? Definitely. Will the church fade quietly into the pages of history? Never! There is no force on earth as powerful as the Church of Jesus Christ, and there is no virus, no political movement, no social movement, no nothing that will eradicate the Church. I rest in this thought; in this promise.

So friends...as the end of this season draws ever closer, I want to share with you that I am excited at what God might do among us and through us. I am excited for new seasons of ministry. May the Holy Spirit lead us and empower us as we move forward!

*Grace and Peace,*

*Pastor Jarrett*



## *Looking Ahead....*

The cliché says "communication is key". That certainly holds true in the church. As things begin to get closer and closer to normal, that means the redoing of a few of our key forms of communication: our Sunday worship bulletin and our monthly newsletter.

If you've been in worship lately, you know that we have not had any form of printed worship bulletin since we've returned to in-person worship. In the coming weeks, our bulletin will be making a return, with a couple of tweaks. We will still be including the order of worship and announcements, but we are going to be adding a few things to the bulletin. The first thing we'll be adding is a "prayer page" — this will be a page for us to share those persons and situations that need our prayers, AS WELL AS a place for us to share updates or answers to prayer. The second part we will be including is a brief outline or bullet points for each week's sermon, in addition to the page already provided for individual notes.

As church activity has decreased significantly over these past months, so, too, has the content of our monthly newsletter. As our ministry teams began to take on the work for which they were created (almost 13 months ago!!), you'll start seeing more updates and information from those groups.



## *Local Missions*

One of the most frequent questions asked lately has been about our Local Missions giving. I have heard some say the "rumor" is that we've done away with Local Missions. Allow me to share what has happened, and where we're going. One of the first actions that was going to be taken by our Mission and Outreach Team was to completely revamp and overhaul the way we do our Local Missions. That team was ready to go...and then Covid stopped everything in its tracks. That team is preparing now to do the work it was to do 13 months ago. All of that to say, while there was no Local Missions done in 2020, we are NOT stopping that completely. We are simply revamping the way we do it. You will hear more and more about that in the coming weeks and months. For now, please rest assured this important ministry is not going away.

You may be asking "what exactly did we do for our community last year?". That's a fair question. While there was not Local Missions, we were able to help several families and individuals through our Samaritan Fund. We helped to provide winter coats, hats, and gloves for a family, we provided a space heater for a family whose landlord was slow in fixing their heat, we helped provide assistance above and beyond what the Ministerial Alliance could provide for bills, gas, and other necessities. In multiple small ways, we cared for those in need in our community. Thank you for your offerings for our Samaritan Fund. We will continue to do all we can to help in our community!

## *Meals on Wheels*

Thank you to everyone who helped deliver food this past month of February for Meals on Wheels. With some of those frigidly cold, snowy and icy days your service and dedication is much appreciated.



# DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

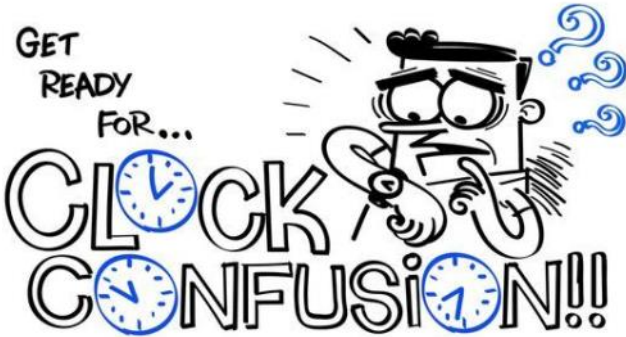
## Daylight Savings Time



# BEGINS

# HAPPY SPRING

Well it is getting warmer and it is still daylight a little longer. With that comes the time change... set clocks forward, backward? Well rule of thumb you "fall" back in the fall and in the spring we "SPRING" forward. So Saturday night or Sunday morning at 2:00 a.m. set your clocks forward 1 hour as Daylight Savings Time begins on March 14<sup>th</sup>. Happy Springing!



P P V M T M G W Q F S V S A E C D J Y R  
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CLIMATE  
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PLANTS  
REBIRTH  
REJUVENATION  
RESURRECTION  
SHOWER  
SPRING  
WARM  
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TULIP  
APRIL  
CULTURES  
GARDEN  
MAY  
RAINBOW  
REGROWTH  
RENEWAL  
SEASONS  
SOIL  
SPRINGTIME  
SPROUT  
TEMPERATE

# Spring



*“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Blessed is the king of Israel!”*  
~ John 12:13

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Beardstown, IL 62618  
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