

United Methodist Church Newsletter

MAY

2020

stpaulneunitedmethodistchurch.com

Office Hours
Tuesday-Friday
9:00 a.m.—3:00 pm
754-4247

Staff
Rev. Dr. Russell
Anderson

Church Secretary
Carrie Hancock

Custodian
Integrated Life Choices
Call Office

Committee Chairs
Admin Council
Mikaleh Esquitin

Board of Trustees
Brenda Starkey
Janet Thomsen

Finance
Evan Carlson

Staff/Parish Relations
Bob Rasmussen

Worship

Mission-Outreach
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UMM
Dave Snow
Tom Knutson

UMW

Education
Nancy Harrington

VBS
Vacant

Auditor
Larry Hurlburt

So, as many of you are probably aware, Sunday, April 26th, worship service did not get aired on Facebook. As maddening and frustrating as the whole weekend was trying to get my cell phone to record and then upload the service there is only one thing I can do about it now and that is chuckle move-on and try it again. In the end, it took the loss of family vacation pictures to make room for the recording of Sunday services and a complete “reset” of my cell phone so that the video recording could be uploaded to Facebook (scheduled to be aired this coming Sunday, May 3rd).

As we continue to move through these days of living in the midst of a pandemic, I cannot help but to see the similarities between my cell phone and our current situation. Perhaps, in this time of frustration and a maddening mindset of how long will this last, it is time to press “reset” and do a complete reset of church, of life, of everything.

As that ancient early church was learning what it meant to be followers of a resurrected Jesus who had now ascended back to heaven they had to discover a whole new way of being in the world. Peter and John learned that they had a voice, that they had the Spirit living within them, empowering them to shine brightly in a darkened world. They brought healing and grace into a time and a place that needed it. The other apostles moved out of the building they hid themselves in and went to work being the hands and feet of a Jesus who was no longer physically present except in and through them. And, no, it wasn't easy. There were many difficulties along the way. There was opposition to what they were doing from without and within themselves. They had to decide which traditions were important to hold onto and which they could let go of. They had to move into a whole new way of being a gathered community, something unlike they had never seen or done before, something that spoke too and gathered all kinds of people to the message they were proclaiming.

The religious elite and even some of Jesus' followers objected to all of the new things that were happening. They longed for the way it used to be and in so doing became what I affectionately call “candle snuffers.” Almost every time, Peter or John said this new way or this new thing of being Jesus' disciples was working, someone was sure to come along and try to snuff it out. It took a long time, but eventually the ancient early church finally pushed “reset” and look what happened.

I think COVID-19 has given us the perfect opportunity to push “reset.” I now have more features on my phone than I had before, all because things got to a point where they were not working correctly anymore and becoming a source of frustration and my only way forward was to push “reset.” What in your life has become a source of frustration? Where do you find yourself saying, “I can't do that” or “That won't work”? Are you only seeing everything wrong in the world and our current situation? Is it time to push “reset”?

Being brave enough, strong enough to push “reset” allows us to see and experience all that is new. It helps us see things in a different way, see clearly the abundant life that God is offering even in the midst of a down turned economy, sheltering place, limited gatherings. As John writes in his Gospel, those other things – candle snuffers – only come to steal life away from us. They kill our spirit. They dash our hopes. They deflate our dreams. But Jesus came to give us life and not just any ol' life, but abundant life (Jn 10:10).

Are you ready to push reset and see what God has in store?

Grace and peace,

Pastor Russ



March Offering Totals

March 1st:	\$3,245
March 8th:	\$1,840
March 15th :	\$2,714
March 22nd:	\$630
March 29th:	\$974

March Attendance

March 1st:	73
March 8th:	62
March 15th:	57
March 22nd:	123 views/FB
March 29th:	268 views/FB



Why video or live stream the church service?

This question has been asked in numerous churches recently. There isn't just one answer to this question; there are several good reasons to offer this service. Let's have a little bit of background first. A year ago a committee was formed to study the feasibility and necessity of live streaming our service. This committee consists of Bob Rasmussen, chairperson, Tom Knutson, Brittini Meyer, Bill Greenway, Pastor Russ and Carol Phillips. Brian Clymer was initially on the committee but has since moved away. Bill had contacted Yanda's Music for an estimate of equipment needed. This estimate came in higher than anticipated so an alternative was suggested. For a few Sundays we live streamed the service through Facebook Live. This wasn't ideal, we also realized we needed to be careful of any copyright violations. In the meantime, this project was presented at the Round Table meeting where the Memorial Committee pledged some monies to help with the project. At the next Finance Committee a decision was made to proceed with the project with the approval of live streaming committee mentioned above. The live streaming committee wasn't able to meet for a few months so no progress was made. The church has had home bound members ask about this service so we know it is a real need and will benefit our congregation. So....back to the reasons for live streaming the service, homebound members will be able to stay in touch with their church family, being a part of the worshipping community, learning what we are learning and growing as we grow. Members that go to warmer destinations during the winter will be able to stay in communion with their home church. College students or families that have moved away will also be able to stay in contact with their church family.

This equipment will have the capability to record the service so we could also have a DVD made and take it to care homes for residents to watch our worship service at their convenience. Additionally, the worship service could be archived on the website for anyone to watch at a time convenient for them. Funeral services and weddings would also be recorded on DVD at a cost for those that can't travel or attend the service or as a keepsake, and possibly live streamed.

The spaghetti feed that was originally planned for Wednesday, March 25th as a fundraiser for this project has been postponed until further notice.

If you have any questions, please contact any of the committee members.

Thank you
Video/Live Stream Committee members

Digital Church

Digital church is here to stay - By [Carey Nieuwhof](#) from a Lewis Center for Church Leadership article on April 29, 2020.

As we continue to move into the digital age and are “forced” to worship on-line instead of in-person, I thought this article was relevant and worth sharing. (Pastor Russ)

Because so many churches have gone online for the first time and everyone has made digital their default, the long debate about whether online church is ‘real’ or not is settled. And even if it’s not settled theologically (a few still have questions and objections and always will), it is settled practically.

Of course physical gatherings will return with joy as restrictions lift (don’t ignore the probability that the restrictions will lift partially and gradually), but to think that the world will suddenly go back to 100 percent physical when people have experienced digital is highly unlikely for a number of reasons.

Churches are experimenting and making digital church better. Because digital church is the only option now, churches have poured a ton of time and energy (and I would add, money) into making it better, experimenting with different formats and opportunities and really connecting with people. Many are doing a great job, and it’s only likely to get better in the upcoming months as smaller churches come online and all churches keep innovating.

Digital connections have proven meaningful for many. Sometimes the digital connections have been as or more meaningful than the in-person connections. I realize there will be many who push back against this, but it’s foolish to ignore the fact that people connect more easily online and often admit the truth more readily online than they do in person. (That might not be right, but it is true.)

Most of the churches who are online now are experiencing growth. Again, the critics will question how to count the online numbers as real growth and raise 100 other objections, but it’s unmistakable that people who were unaware or disengaged with church a month ago are leaning in now. I have people in my own life who have attended a service now who never came to a building before. Our church has seen a 500 percent Sunday ‘attendance’ spike since the pandemic grew. And, yes, people are texting in their decision to follow Jesus and we’re opening up digital discipleship pathways and groups for more people than we’ve ever connected before. What about the argument that some of this won’t stick? Let me take you back to the analog days for a minute: everyone who attended your church in person didn’t ‘stick’ either.

Unprecedented challenges provide unprecedented opportunities.

What we’re seeing in these early days of digital church is a huge spike in engagement and interest. To put digital church back on the shelf in the new normal is to ignore the greatest opportunity the church has today to reach people. And it also ignores the fact that many will want digital to be at least an optional if not a preferred method of engagement where geography and other barriers prevent access.

Will we go back to in-person and physical gatherings and services? Absolutely. But digital isn’t going away. It will continue to grow and advance.



The Lord’s Prayer



During this time of no in-person worship Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr, presiding bishop of the Great Plains Conference, has asked for all Great Plains United Methodist to pray the Lord’s Prayer at noon every day until all gathering restrictions are lifted. “This act of solidarity,” he states, “will keep us prayerfully connected. It takes less than 30 seconds to pray the Lord’s Prayer, but doing so will unite us with Christ, with each other, and it will change the world.”

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

IN OUR STREETS

AN UPDATE OF OUR STREET OUTREACH

I'VE GOT A
▶ NAME
END SEX TRAFFICKING WHERE WE LIVE
.....
MAY | 2020

THE FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN AND THE RISE OF VULNERABILITY

The greatest fear we face during this time is the fear of the "unknown." When things are unpredictable, a perceived lack of control arises. I believe, as humans, we desire a sense of self-control, whether it be with our family, careers or just every day being. When we don't have that certainty and control... **that's when fear begins.**

The women I'm working with shared some of their fears, including being sick with this virus, not knowing it, and ultimately being carriers of it.

- One woman said to me, "Our current situation and limitations placed on us" **trigger my past life.** I am reminded of my past-life, of losing control of my life. Once again, I'm being controlled, not by my trafficker, but instead by the government. I am limited to my home, I'm only allowed to buy one gallon of milk, one hand sanitizer, etc."
- A mother of a victim I'm working with told me she is concerned that with all of the services and organizations closing, there **will not be help available** for her daughter if she needs it. Her daughter left home. She now lives out of state.
- A girl I'm working with said she felt **isolated** from the world when being trafficked. She explained, "**With all this going on... I'm feeling the exact same way now, being alone in my house isolated once again. It brings back memories...ones that are not good.**"

These are only a few examples of fear expressed by the girls I continue to work with. I do my best to let them know they can ALWAYS count on me! **I explain to them that their positive choices reflect their hope not their fears.** I reassure them, we will get through these times together!

I love my work and I honestly love and care about each girl I work with. If you are a person who prays, please pray for me and "**my girls**". None of this would be possible without those who encourage and support me. I know I am not alone in our streets!

Blessings,

Megan

Street Outreach Director



"Megan made a much bigger impact on me than she understands. I'd love to help, like she helped me."

SURVIVOR

Our Street Outreach provides personal one-on-one help to those on our streets and within our neighborhoods.

Megan, our Street Outreach Director, provides emotional support and comfort to the vulnerable, victims, and survivors of sex trafficking while connecting them to needed services.

For more info please visit:
www.ivegotaname.org
info@ivegotaname.org

Camp Fontanelle

May Camp Sessions Canceled-all others still open

Using Governor Pete Ricketts directed health measure guidelines, Site Director Trent Meyer made the difficult decision to cancel the May Guardian Angel and SonShine Camp Sessions. At this time, the rest of the sessions are scheduled to run as planned.

Site directors from the Great Plains Conference communicate weekly, to discuss how camps are affected by the pandemic. While each camp director makes decisions independently for their camp, being able to talk through options is welcomed.

As changes occur almost daily, each camp family will be contacted if their camp session will be affected by the social distancing standards that are set by the State of Nebraska.

Campers are encouraged to continue registering for camps. Visit their summer camp page for more information at <http://campfontanelle.com/summer-camp/register-for-camp.html>



May 1	Alyssa Swanson	May 20	Mikaleh Esquitin
May 2	Brad Wells	May 21	Loren Studley
May 3	Jeovany Cole-Lopez	May 22	Pastor Russ Anderson
May 4	Machell Naylor	May 25	Mick McDowell
May 7	Thaddeus Radke	May 26	Deidre Hurlburt
May 8	Linnea Vogel	May 27	Gordon Knuth
May 13	Kelly Gebhardt		Macy Porter
May 14	Linda Jacobsen	May 28	Aiden Anderson
May 16	Kent Meyer		Crysta Naylor
May 18	Alex Coslor	May 29	Brandon Starkey
	Nathan Swanson	May 31	Dorothy Jorgensen
May 19	Darwin Lee		

Happy Anniversary

May 13	Jarold and Linda Jacobsen
May 20	Buck and Dixie Buxton
May 25	Jeff and Stacy Vogel
May 28	Dave and Connie Snow
May 29	Tom and Sheryl Mortimer

May at a Glance

Just a note:

With the COVID-19 pandemic recommendations in place, all in-person worship services, Sunday school classes, Youth Group meetings, Bible studies, UMW and UMM meetings are cancelled until further notice. This includes any church or community related event over ten people that may have been previously scheduled with the church. We will keep you informed of any changes.

*Please watch services on-line on Facebook under *United Methodist Church in St. Paul, Nebraska*. These services are not a live-streamed service, but are recorded and posted soon after the initial recording. If you can't watch on Sunday Morning, you can always watch anytime under the "videos" section. We encourage you all to do so!

The **Food Pantry** here in St. Paul is always looking for food donations. Please help us stock the shelves. Any food or paper item is accepted but these items are in high demand every month.

Jelly	Syrup
Pancake Mix	Dish Soap
Cake or Brownie Mixes	Laundry Soap
Puddings	Pie Fillings
Jello	Ketchup
Toilet Tissue	Cereal
Mustard	Fruit

Food Pantry hours

Saturday
9:00-11:00 am

Tuesday
4:00-6:00 pm

Beginning in 2018, February will be the month for United Methodist Church to donate to the Food Pantry.

Food Pantry

The United Methodist Church is responsible for operating the Food Pantry every third Saturday from 9-11 am. If you could volunteer to help any one of these Saturdays, it would be greatly appreciated.

May 16th is our next work date. Precautions are taken to insure the health and protection of both the worker and the consumer.

Thank you, Theda Van Horn

We are starting a new prayer request list. If you would like your name added to this list, please let the church office know.

Thank you



Note: We can only publish prayer concerns with the permission of the people involved. Also, Pastor Russ often does not find out about hospitalizations. HIPPA regulations do not allow the hospital to call unless they are requested to do so. Please give him a call (Church 754-4247). if you or someone you know is in the hospital or desires a call. Thank you for your help.

For the month of May, there are currently no Worship services, Fellowship, Children's Sunday School, Youth Group or Come and Go coffee time scheduled.

Sunday

Worship time 10:00 a.m.

Fellowship 9:30 and 11:00 a.m.

Adult Bible Study

Sunday morning 9:00 am

Children's Education

Sunday School 11:00 am.

*New time –after Worship

Youth Group

Wednesday evenings 6:30 pm during school year

Thursday

Come 'n Go Coffee 10:00-11:00 a.m.



CIRCLE MEETINGS

No Circle Meetings this month



May

Epworth Village Needs:

Monetary gifts
Gift Cards to Walmart, Walgreens
Bosselman's or Casey's gas purchase cards
Menard's gift cards for maintenance needs
Reams of plain white copy paper
Antibacterial soap, hand pump or refillables
Alcohol-free hand sanitizer
Hand lotion-unscented
Generic hygiene products-hair products, body wash, feminine hygiene products
Infant-toddler hygiene products
Infant-toddler baby wipes and disposable diapers
Paper towels, toilet tissue, napkins
Medium laundry baskets
Large duffel bags for foster care belongings
Basic cleaning supplies for a home
Letter/brochure folding machine
Manila folders and label stickers

MISSION STATEMENT

'Making and Nurturing Disciples'

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF ST. PAUL



Preparing a Worship Space

As we prepare our hearts and our minds to do worship in a way we are unaccustomed -- staying at home -- I invite you to do this; set-up a space, a place in your home to call sacred, holy. Perhaps this is a corner of the den, or maybe part of the dining room table or the breakfast nook. Maybe for you it's in your study or office, or in your living room or bedroom. Wherever it is, set it aside for the next several weeks, or for however long we need to worship this way before we can all come back together in the church building.

Find something that is meaningful to you such as a picture of Jesus, or a saying, or a wall plaque and set it up there. Decorate the space with a nice cloth or some flowers or a vase. Again, make it meaningful to you. Find a cross to place in the center. If you have a candle be sure to place it in the space as well. Make sure you have your Bible present.

As the 10:00 hour approaches on Sunday mornings, I encourage you to gather around that space. Still your heart and your mind, and invite the Holy Spirit to come in. Light the candle as a reminder of Christ's presence. Allow yourself to just be in that space.

I will post a video to the church's Facebook page at that hour. I invite you to watch it if you can. If not, numerous churches are going to be livestreaming their service tomorrow. Find one that is not going through their Facebook page, but through their website. Perhaps there is a local congregation that televises their service, watch it. Just be in worship tomorrow. As we talked about several weeks ago at the beginning of Lent, worship is what Jesus did and so too should we if we are to follow in his footsteps. (As a side note, I am concerned and can't help but to wonder if Facebook will be overwhelmed tomorrow by the sheer volume of churches using this platform. If so, be patient and keep watching for the video). We hope you can join us!

Pastor Russ



United Methodist Church Prayer Chain

The purpose of the prayer chain is to offer special prayers for individuals in critical need. The chain cannot be activated without the permission of the family in need. Call prayer requests to the church office 754-4247. The prayer request will be called to the first person on these lists. Each caller then calls the next person on the list. If that person is unavailable, a call should be placed to the following name and contact made with the first party later in the day. Last name on list does not call anyone. We are in need of more people joining the prayer chain. Praying for each other is an important ministry that we can do for our church family. If you would be interested in becoming part of this mission, please contact the church office.

Marilyn Wall	754-5100	Rae Lee	754-5209	Jackie Cook	754-9115
Deb Wells	754-5620	Marlene Kremlacek	754-4876	Charlene Craig	754-5503
Nancy Harrington	754-5136	Martha Voigt	754-4666	Mary Ann Rickertsen	754-4038
Theda Van Horn	754-4541	Rose Ross	754-4993	DeEtte Lukasiewicz	750-0246
Cleo Edwards	754-4853	Lory Thomsen	754-4286	Brenda Starkey	750-7967
Ashley Meyer	308-627-2808	Charlotte Rasmussen	308-863-2281	LuAnn Todd	308-380-5022
		Vanice Bahensky	754-7873	Carol Tjernagel	750-2830
				Dorothy Jorgensen	754-4126

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