

The Family Circle

A Publication of Fairview United Methodist Church

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May 2020

May Musings...

Philippians 1:3 *"I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now."*

Our sign out in front of the church says, "The church has left the building. We are out spreading the light of Christ." I chose that message because it is so true! I am so proud of our church for all we have done to reach out in Christ's name. Here are just a few glimpses of what we have done.

We have re-opened the **Food Pantry**. Thanks to your generous support of the pantry we were able to place a big order for food. (We filled every refrigerator and freezer in the church!) Many have come by (now out of work) and appreciate our offering of food. We have also been able to give them homemade masks for each family member.

Our **Blessing Box** by the bus stop is a hit! This is a Box containing food that people can access day and night. With the help of the Boy Scouts, Susan Button and Lori Barbeisch, Michelle Purdy, and Amanda Yates, we have been filling the Box with food about every other day.

Our **Prayer Messengers** have been "meeting" each Wednesday in their own homes to continue to offer up the prayers of our church, community and world. If you have a prayer request, please feel free to contact Karon Lewis@ 427-1533 or kayreno1@yahoo.com by 9AM on Wednesday mornings.

We have continued to offer **virtual worship** on Facebook that can also be accessed on our Website. We have many people viewing from both near and far. In the future we hope to find a way to continue this practice for those who may be sick, homebound, on vacation etc. Special thanks to our organist Chanmi Baek, our liturgists and singers, Austin and Emily Claire and Marcia Focht for helping to make this weekly on-line service happen!

There was a **Palm Sunday Road Rally**. (42 cars with 80+ people from 3 different churches) Participants left the parking lot shouting "Hosanna in the Highest." They then followed a designated route, stopping at various places and reading the scriptures provided as they remembered the last week of Christ's life. Many participants responded that it was a very meaningful and moving experience.

We have started "**Wonderful Wednesdays**" which includes a Zoom Bible Study on Phillipians at 1 PM with Pastor Jan and Bedtime Stories on Facebook at 7 PM read by Sunday School teachers and others. Special thanks to Elizabeth Noonan for coordinating this and to all our readers!

Last week we started **Operation Cookie**. We had many volunteer to bake and drop off cookies to church folks. This sweet treat made for a personal visit (at a safe distance) and a chance to remind them they are loved. Thanks to the bakers: Sue Barton, Ellen Gardiner, Karen Gdovin, Laura and Anne Colman, Cindy Minus, Korin and Jessica Spencer, Myrt Buchanan, and Phyllis Smith.

The **Children's Home Preventative Services** asked for help collecting **diapers and masks**. Thanks to Jenn Evans for coordinating this project. They were thrilled when I dropped off hundreds of diapers for needy families and two bags filled with masks. (Thank you Karen Lewis and Pat Kavalesky)

We appreciate the **financial gifts** that have come to the church to support our ministry. Many have gone the extra mile in offering gifts to the general fund, Easter offerings, the Capital Campaign (for air conditioning) and one family even offered money from their stimulus check to help where needed! Way to go church! Please, if possible, mail your offering to the church (254 Robinson St, Binghamton 13904)

The work of spreading the light of Christ continues with **some individual stories**. I think of Steve and Marianne Deinhardt who spent a day cleaning up the garden and driveway entrance by the parsonage. Robin Eastman volunteered many hours shampooing rugs and chairs at church. She even washed the children's activity bags! The work at the parsonage continues. Under the careful guidance of Dave Gardiner (who has spent hours working there) others have helped as well. Thank you to: Gary Loichle, Kathy and Kris Ballard, George and Brenda Ernst, Robin Eastman, Pastor Doug Clark, Kevin Emmons, Joe Coons, Ellen Gardiner.

Several of our members have been making masks. Ellen Gardiner, Celeste Keefe, Sue Barton, Phyllis Smith, Elizabeth Noonan, Blenda Smith, Judy Knewasser. I want to give a special thanks to Pat Kavalesky and Karon Lewis who have made over 500 masks! They provided them to friends, our food pantry clients, family, Child Protective Services, the Children's Home and even the cashiers at Schneider's Market. I am sure there are others doing this - but these are the ones I know!

Jon Gdovin noticed his co-workers were feeling down one day so he went to the store and brought back Drum Stick Ice Cream Cones for everyone. His refrigerator at work is filled with more and they can help themselves!

Sue Barton took to the road for an alternative celebration on Easter Sunday. She drove 30 miles and greeted 18 people. She called when almost at a home and then beeped her horn when arrived. Friends who came to their door were greeted with a shout of "Christ is Risen!" Many responded with "He has risen indeed!"

Carol Carpenetti, our Administrative Assistant, made several May Day Baskets that she delivered to door handles on May 1st - an old fashioned tradition that brightens up the day. She also supported the Sky Lake Bake Sales by buying cookies and then delivering them to other WUMC members. She said, "It was not about the cookies but the connection with people who are living alone during this time of separation."

I was happy to deliver a snack basket to Hannah Spencer, a nurse working on the front lines in the ICU at Wilson Hospital and a Lasagna Dinner was taken to Michelle Purdy who was working overtime as a pharmacist.

I have been calling people from our church and I know many members are calling and checking in with others as the weeks pass.

In Windsor, Loa Bagg Noyd is singing praise songs from her front lawn on Sunday mornings prior to the church's live stream worship service. Many neighbors come out to join in (appropriately distanced) and she posts on Facebook as well. It is uplifting whether you sing along or just listen!

This week I am feeling rather drained and was pleasantly surprised and energized to find a lovely gift bag on my doorstep... with all sorts of goodies and a card that read, "Hoping to put a smile on your face!" Someone knew I needed support this week and I was smiling from ear to ear! It made my day! (Thank you to the giver!)

I have no idea when we will be together in worship again. When we do re-open we will need to follow some new safety measures. Unfortunately, we will need to "let go" of a few programs, for now, because we will need to maintain a safe distance from each other.

Until we meet again, stay strong, keep the faith and know that God is with you! Also, know that I hold you in my prayers and am so proud of the church that has left the building!!!!

Pastor Jan

From Peg & Bob Muth we have this contribution:

We feel Pastor Jan has been the main person, helping us cope with this time of being shut-in. She lifts our spirit with the special services on Sunday, weekly devotions and words of encouragement. She is a very caring person and shows her love for our church family. Most importantly she has kept us altogether as a church. Members have sent cards and made phone calls. We are happy to be back at Fairview, being a part of the church family. We are also thankful for our wonderful Christian neighbor who checks on us, making sure we are okay. He and his wife tell us they are there for us if we need help in anyway. We have had things happen and he comes immediately. The manager of our neighborhood is always willing to do errands if necessary. We have had the support of our family. Our oldest son has placed all our grocery orders which has been wonderful. We have learned how nice it is that grocery stores deliver and other places too. It is also good news on TV when you hear of what so many others are doing to help people. We know God is with us and we will make it through.

From Liz Gdovin we hear:

Ever since quarantine began, my husband has been leaving huge tips for workers when we get take out. His generosity has even brought some people to tears. When I asked him why he does that, he said, "We can't keep it all to ourselves. They aren't making a lot of money during these times and they need it." I don't say this to brag, I just mention the fact because it inspires me.

From Jennifer Evans:

We are amid a pandemic. A dangerous virus has forced people out of work, has our most vulnerable individuals confined to their homes with little to no contact with others, and it has closed the church we gather at on Sunday to hear the word of God. We are wearing masks and distancing ourselves from others to protect our loved ones and are careful of every place we go and everything we touch. Some of us have not hugged our family members in months. So where is God in all of this? I will tell you what I have seen.

I have seen people from our community and from other states come together and provide hundreds of diapers for children in need.

Meals, cookies, and groceries are being taken to those that may not otherwise be getting out.

Teachers are going above and beyond to provide children with learning experiences in brand new ways.

Children are creating. Sidewalk chalk art, pictures, cards, and thank you notes to essential workers.

School food service workers have continued to work to make sure that children are fed.

Although we could not have a traditional party, more than 15 cars drove by my home beeping and cheering to celebrate Aariana's birthday. She felt incredibly special that day.

Online communities have been created with people sharing known resources and helpful ideas.

We are reaching out to our loved ones and others through letters and cards.

Church members are making masks and giving them to anyone in need.

We are taking long walks and spending time outdoors taking time to enjoy all that God has created.

Sunday school teachers are reading books to share with our children.

I have seen our pastor and many church members work endlessly to make sure that we are still receiving the word of God through online services and devotionals.

We are together. We are taking care of each other. Loving each other. Gods light is shining, and I pray that through the rain, you see it too!!

Elizabeth Noonan shares:

Since the virus struck I've watched my neighbor deal with an aggressive form of breast cancer, surgery and now chemotherapy, without complaining because every minute she's so grateful to be alive.

I've watched both my son and my daughter lose their incomes, be at first terrified about their futures, and then pull themselves up and do everything in their power to care for their families, keep their own health, and deal with their realities.

I've seen my friends, even some who haven't sewn in years, dust off their sewing machines and make hundreds of masks for those who are otherwise unable to get them.

I've watched some of these same people hand masks to total strangers they meet who can't afford to send for one.

I watch my phone light up several times a day with a text or call, a friend reaching out to say hi, a family member catching up, someone telling me they love me.

I've witnessed our Prayer Messengers literally pray my ill sister onto a plane and across the country to live safely with her daughter.

I've watched multiple angels from our church make and deliver cookies and other gifts to those who are unable to leave their homes. And many more angels just doing incredibly thoughtful things like dropping off care packages and flowers, making phone calls, writing cards and notes, just because.

I've watched many people brave the unknown and teach themselves how to use Zoom, Facebook Live, Facetime, Skype and other electronic means in order to help themselves and others conquer the loneliness we face.

I watched our Pastor find every conceivable way to reach out to our congregation and beyond, including speaking to a camera lens each week, so we can know the Grace of God.

There are hundreds of examples, these are just a few.

This is all Grace. This is all the Grace of God. It is God's grace working through God's people. It is the greatest gift of all in the midst of disaster, and it is how I know God is at work.



Remember Our “Seniors”

Can you set aside some time to remember our seniors and those who are shut-in....with a call, a note? It means a lot!

At Home

Dan & Estella Armstrong 30 Harry L Drive
Kirkwood NY 13795

Larry & Sarah Baker 146 Old State Road
Binghamton NY 13901

Jennie Brown 861 Front Street Apt 140
Binghamton NY 13905

Dawn Dressler 47 Moeller St
Binghamton NY 13904

Evelyn Evans 130 Robinson Street
Binghamton NY 13904

Leona Fiske 10 Gregory Ave
Binghamton NY 13901

John Hillard 54 Bigelow Street
Binghamton NY 13904

Ethel Jones 64 Ahern Road
Binghamton NY 13903

Bob & Peg Muth 725 Lee Circle N-58
Johnson City NY 13790

Patricia Reynolds 8 Wilcox Street
Binghamton NY 13904-1335

Sheila Runyon 58 Broome Street
Binghamton NY 13903

Isaiah 41:10 Contemporary English Version

Don't be afraid. I am with you.

Don't tremble with fear.

I am your God.

I will make you strong,
as I protect you with my arm
and give you victories.

Additional Easter flowers and Food Pantry Donations received after the April Family Circle was printed.

Food Pantry Donations

Dan & Estella Armstrong in honor of their children and in memory of parents

Susan Barton in honor of her children, Kimberly & Kevin

Carey & Bob Gorgrant in memory of Robert and Virginia Gorgrant

Flowers

Carey & Bob Gorgrant in honor of Pastor Jan Clark



The Fairview UMC Welcoming Statement:

Our God is a welcoming God. Fairview United Methodist Church affirms that all people are created in the image of God, and as beloved children of God all are worthy of God's love and grace.

We accept diversity as a rich gift in our community. We celebrate that diversity and fully welcome all people regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender, family structure, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic background, political affiliation, intellectual, physical, or other disability, faith history, incarceration history, or life experience.

We believe that "Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors." is not just a slogan; it is who we are. It's who Jesus calls us to be.



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How to Plant Your Garden

FOR THE GARDEN OF YOUR DAILY LIVING.

Plant three rows of peas:

- Peace of mind
- Peace of heart
- Peace of soul

Plant four rows of squash:

- Squash gossip
- Squash indifference
- Squash grumbling
- Squash selfishness

Plant four rows of lettuce:

- Lettuce be faithful
- Lettuce be kind
- Lettuce be patient
- Lettuce really love one another

No garden is without turnips:

- Turnip for meetings
- Turnip for service
- Turnip to help one another

To conclude our garden we must have Thyme:

- Thyme for each other
- Thyme for family
- Thyme for friends

Water freely with patience and cultivate with love. There is much fruit in your garden because you reap what you sow!