

Light of Grace

a monthly publication of:
GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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June 1, 2020

Adult Sunday School: 9:00 AM
Sunday Worship: 10:00 AM

Dear Friends,

I saw a Facebook post where a child of the future asks a parent, “why is grandma washing her plastic grocery bag?” Says the parent, “grandma lived through the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020. She doesn’t like to talk about it, though.” Every generation faces challenges that leave lasting effects—the Great Depression, WWII, Vietnam. Life inflicts changes upon us whether we want them or not. Any change that pauses church gatherings for months is significant; even lessened restrictions by ND and MN Governors are still restrictions; I miss your faces, laughter, and presence in my life. Humans are not made for isolation. We need to gather.

Minnesota United Methodist pastors and ELCA pastors had the opportunity to virtually meet with Dr. Mike Osterholm who is head of the U of M Hospital Infectious Diseases program. He’s also a Lutheran Layperson. Our respective Bishops also consult with him to learn specifically how Covid-19 is affecting church settings. After Governor Walz’s 25% of capacity worship announcement, our Bishop Ough wrote:

“Calls for re-opening...forget that churches have remained open throughout the pandemic. Our buildings might be closed, but churches have never been buildings—churches are followers of Jesus who embody his teachings and share God’s love throughout the world. As followers of Jesus, we are called to be leaders in caring for those who are most vulnerable. We are called to love our neighbors and to act for the good of the whole. We are called to heal a broken world. Right now, I believe that means mitigating the spread of coronavirus by staying the course, worshiping online, and

significantly limiting in-person gatherings. For this reason, I continue to lift up the guidance we provided in the [Phased Re-Gathering Plan for Churches](#) that we released yesterday—and **I ask you to limit to 10 the number of people gathering in your church building.”**



When Jesus was asked to name the greatest commandment he replied, **“Love the Lord your God... and love your neighbor as yourself.”** John Wesley, Methodism’s founder named three basic rules for loving God and neighbor, **“1) Do no harm; 2) Do all the good you can; 3) Stay in love with God.”** Our Bishop asks us to refrain from gathering—except outside with guidelines—for the summer. Having learned from Dr. Osterholm, how churches are a near-perfect environment for spreading Covid-19, I agree with Bishop Ough. Lengthy time in the same space and singing/preaching along with the fact Covid-19 particles can float in an aerosol form (smaller than droplets) for 9-12 minutes, means contact-tracing repeatedly revealed one or two people unaware they had Covid-19 infected 30-40 in church gatherings. These were small church gatherings where congregations were practicing social distancing, proper sanitizing, wearing masks and sometimes even gloves. Singing and speaking over a length of time are highly effective at spreading Covid-19 in enclosed spaces.

Continued on Page 4



PRAYER LIST AT Care Facilities
Peggy Anderson (R.E.M. House)
Mary J. Phillips
Bonnie Wagner (Fergus Falls)
Pat Walter (Villa Marie)
Don Walter (Villa Marie)

PRAYER LIST at Home

Caliann Gedrose Carol Devine
 Lorraine Taggett Shirley Mohr
 Ilo Koenning Luann Larson
 JoAnne Oelke Richard Wagner



OFFUTT SCHOLARSHIP

Applications for the 2020 Offutt Scholarship are available. These scholarships are available to members of Grace UMC and their families for post-secondary education for the coming academic year. Applications are due in the office by July 1, 2020. These funds are generated by a generous gift from the Ron and Lidia Offutt family to the Grace UMC Endowment Fund. The applications are available in the Church office and at the Church website: www.graceumcmoorhead.org. under forms. If you have any questions about the Scholarships or about the Grace UMC Endowment and its activities, please contact P. Anderson.



June Birthdays

- 1—C. Lindner
- 12—T. Anderson
- 14—R. Maag
- 15—A. Gumto
- 16—B. Christopherson
T. Newgard
- 18- I. Beving
R. Burkhardt
- 21—L. Collins
- 26-- J. Devine
- 29- I. Koenning
C. Anderson

CONDOLENCES

Our sympathies to R. and C. Able on the death of their son, Robert. Robert passed away on Monday, May 18th. A family graveside service was held on Thursday, May 28th.



MOWING

Summer is here and that means the church lawn will need to be mowed. Must be 18 years or older to use the riding mower. If you can mow the Church lawn, please call the church office, 281-233-1857, to make arrangements to get the key.



June Anniversaries

- 1 —C. & D. Burkhardt
- 3—M. & A. Gumto
- 4—S. & L. Gedrose
- 7—C. & P. Welsh
- 13—B. & S. Martin
- 19—J. & K. Thiseth
- 26—D. & L. Larson

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR JUNE

- Sunday, June 7 - Genesis 1:1-2:4a, Psalm 8, II Corinthians 13:11-13, Matthew 28:16-20**
- Sunday, June 14 - Genesis 18:1-15, Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19, Romans 5:1-8, Matthew 9:35-10:8**
- Sunday, June 21 - Genesis 21:8-21, Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17, Romans 6:1b-11, Matthew 10:24-39**
- Sunday, June 28 - Genesis 22:1-14; Psalm 13, Romans 6:12-23, Matthew 10:40-42**

Re-Gathering In-Person @ Grace UMC

(Note: In-person worship will be a later step ...
not the next step)

See Minnesota Annual Conference 5 Phase

Guide: <https://www.minnesotaumc.org/regatheringplan>

Purpose: This document will serve as a place for formulating our process and plan to reopen for public worship at **Grace UMC – Moorhead**. Each of the items is subject to change as more information becomes available and as discussion and discernment continues to take place.

Sunday Morning/Worship:

- The church will first consider the advice of the Governor's office and MN Bishop when determining the timeline of re-gathering. If either recommends closure, we will do so.
- The church will consider the availability of sanitizing products (e.g. Lysol wipes, hand sanitizer, etc.). If there is still a shortage; if we cannot obtain ample supplies, we will remain closed.
- We will ensure that we are not exceeding the number of people allowed in an area as determined by the Governor's office and MN Bishop.
- Upon initial reopening, the nursery will be unavailable.
- Upon initial reopening we will not offer coffee and food fellowship.
- Masks will be made available and need to be worn. Exception is people leading worship who are 12+ feet away from the closest person, and on ground level.
- Sunday School classes will not begin on the same week as public worship. An announcement will be made via pulpit announcement, social media, and e-mail the week before classes restart.
- Following each worship service everyone will be encouraged to leave the building and commence their fellowship time outdoors following social distancing guidelines.
- The office will be open only to essential staff (paid and volunteer).
- The pastor will not be greeting before or after worship.
- The offering will not be collected by the passing of plates.
- Sign-up sheets will not be placed out. Sign-up by calling the office during office hours 9 AM – 1 PM.

- The service will continue to be made available online. A posting will be made to indicate that the service is being livestreamed to reach beyond these walls.
- Pencils, envelopes, Bibles, and hymnals will be removed from the pews.
- A bulletin may be provided to pick up on a table but will not be handed to people. One per family.
- Every other pew will be cordoned off and family units should leave the center of pews empty to maintain at least six feet to the next family. Numbers will be limited.
- Interior doors will be propped open as people are entering and exiting the church. Exterior doors will be monitored by a single socially-distanced masked greeter. Exterior doors may be propped open or sanitized during entrance times.
- The church will not actively promote item donations upon initial reopening (e.g. school supplies, food products, etc.). We will continue to encourage people 65+ and/or with health vulnerabilities to participate from home and will offer worship and connection opportunities for them remotely.

Congregational Care:

- In person visits by the pastor/parish nurse/lay pastors/staff will be unavailable until nursing homes open for visitations.
- The Pastor may set a couple of chairs outside, 6' apart for pastoral visits, with masks.
- Such chairs would be sanitized between visits.
- The door to the church will be locked during the week with the doorbell functioning.
- The Office Administrator's door will be locked. During non-office hours - there will be no admittance except by paid staff who will immediately sanitize door-handles, keyboards, copiers, whatever they touch. When the door is opened individuals will be instructed to step back, wait until the administrator is back behind the desk shield, then enter. Entrance to the pastor's office will be similar, and through the hallway door. Visits will be less than 2 minutes since there are no air exchangers (e.g. picking up a key, arranging for an outdoor visit, dropping off an offering or invoice, etc.). Some items may be cared for by simply slipping them under the door. If Sondra or Pastor Roger have been in the office for a length of time, the office will be filled with their breath; they don't wish to be an asymptomatic carrier.

(Continued next page)

Other things to consider:

Grace will send out announcement and guidelines to let people know when and how we are re-opening.

Masks will be a requirement when we re-enter the worship space and in the building at all times, when more than one person is present. We will have a supply of masks on hand.

We will consider one entrance for entering and the other for exiting.

Worship leaders do not need to wear masks when leading worship as long as they maintain 12' distance from all others and masks will be worn when that person(s) is not leading worship.

We will need to sanitize and clean all publicly open spaces.

Our cleaning person (Carrie) will focus on sanitizing. Volunteer involvement may be needed.

Communion elements will temporarily be given in sealed, individual packets to maximize safety. The congregation will take them with them when they leave.

Baptism will be accomplished by the parents/sponsors putting the water on their child while the pastor extends hands in blessing and says the baptismal words. The same will be true for confirmation.

Congregational singing will not take place – humming is allowed. Designated singers will share music.

We will have some kind of collection box for offerings with a socially-distanced usher watching over it.

Weddings & Funeral policy will first consider the advice of the Governor's office and MN Bishop when determining availability. Policy will be the same as worship policy.

Our own groups using the building must follow policy at the time (no meetings while the church is closed and then follow guidelines as we slowly re-open). Before an individual or group is present in the building they must have an orientation to our policies and procedures by trainers to be determined.

Outside group use/rental at this point will not happen. When our policies allow for small groups they must follow our guidelines. Before an individual or group is present in the building they must have an orientation to our policies and procedures by a designated person.

Outreach Events, Scouts, etc. must have a Covid-

19 safety plan in place and abide by the church's re-opening guidelines.

In-person worship without restricted numbers will be the final step, not the next step. As restrictions ease we will find in-person small group ways for prayer and connection (e.g., hours the sanctuary is open for prayer, small group worship, drive by blessings, small group outdoor worship, small group video worship).

As restrictions ease one possibility for increasing worship participation may be through family or friends connecting with those who do not have technology to watch worship. (For instance a family member or friend with a smart-phone might visit a person without one, sit 6' from the friend or family member on their patio to share the online worship experience.

PASTOR'S LETTER CONTINUED:

That information has led Grace's leadership team to decide in-person worship inside the building is not wise or safe for this summer season—as Minnesota and North Dakota have increasing hospitalizations right now, and we are a metro area. New information may change that decision.

You can find out more from the May 24th Message: <http://graceumcmoorhead.org/2020/05/22/may-24-live-stream-worship/> If you don't have a smart-phone or internet access, perhaps you have a family-member or friend who can go to our website at www.Graceumcmoorhead.org and **click** on sermons. The May 24th Sermon has more info on **how going to church is NOT like going to the grocery-store when it comes to Covid-19.**

Still, we are working on the details of what we need to do to move toward in-person worship outside the building and eventually inside the building. The re-gathering guidelines are in this newsletter.

May the Living Christ Bless You & Sustain You,

Pastor Roger

Date	Psalm	OT	Epistle	Gospel
Mon, Jun 1	am: 1, 2, 3, pm: 4,7	Prov 3:11-20	1 John 3:19-4:6	Matt 11:1-6
Tue, Jun 2	am: 5.6, pm: 10, 11	Prov 4:1-27	1 John 4:7-21	Matt 11:7-15
Wed, Jun 3	am: 119:1-24, pm: 12, 13, 14	Prov 6:1-19	1 John 5:1-12	Matt 11:16-24
Thur, Jun 4	am: 18:1-20, pm: 18:21-50	Prov 7:1-27	1 John 5:13-21	Matt 11:25-30
Fri, Jun 5	am: 16, 17, pm: 22	Prov 8:1-21	2 John 1-13	Matt 12:1-14
Sat, Jun 6	am: 20, 21:1-14, pm: 104	Prov 8:22-36	3 John 1-15	Matt 12:15-21
Sun, Jun 7	am: 146, 147, pm: 111, 112, 113	Job 38:1-11, 42:1-5	Rev 19:4-6	John 1:29-34
Mon, Jun 8	am: 25, pm: 9, 15	Prov 10:1-12	1 Tim 1:1-17	Matt 12:22-32
Tue, Jun 9	am: 26, 28, pm: 36, 39	Prov 15:16-33	1 Tim 1:18-2:8	Matt 12:33-42
Wed, Jun 10	am: 38, pm: 119:25-48	Prov 17:1-20	1 Tim 3:1-16	Matt 12:43-50
Thur, Jun 11	am: 37:1-18, pm: 37:19-42	Prov 21:30-22:6	1 Tim 4:1-16	Matt 13:24-30
Fri, Jun 12	am: 31, pm: 35	Prov 23:19-21, 29-24:2	1 Tim 5:17-25	Matt 13:31-25
Sat, Jun 13	am: 30, 32, pm: 42, 43	Prov 25:15-28	1 Tim 6:6-21	Matt 143:31-35
Sun, Jun 14	am: 93, 96, pm: 34	Num 6:22-27	Acts 13:1-12	Luke 12:41-48
Mon, Jun 15	am: 80, pm: 77, 79	Num 9:15-23, 10:29-36	Rom 1:1-15	Matt 17:14-21
Tue, Jun 16	am: 78:1-39, pm: 78:40-72	Num 11:1-23	Rom 1:16-25	Matt 17:22-27
Wed, Jun 17	am: 119:97-120, pm: 81, 82	Num 11:24-35	Rom 1:28-2:11	Matt 18:1-9
Thur, Jun 18	am: 83, pm: 85, 86	Num 12:1-16	Rom 2:12-24	Matt 18:10-20
Fri, Jun 19	am: 88, pm: 91, 92	Num 13:1-3, 21-30	Rom 2:25-3:8	Matt 18:21-35
Sat, Jun 20	am: 87, 90, pm: 136	Num 13:31-14:25	Rom 3:9-20	Matt 19:1-12
Sun, Jun 21	am: 66, 67, pm: 19, 46	Num 14:26-45	Acts 15:1-12	Luke 12:49-56
Mon, Jun 22	am: 89:1-18, pm: 89:19-52	Num 16:1-19	Rom 3:21-31	Matt 19:13-22
Tue, Jun 23	am: 97, 99, 100, pm: 94, 95	Num 16:20-35	Rom 4:1-12	Matt 19:23-30
Wed, Jun 24	am: 101, 109, pm: 119:121-144	Num 16:36-50	Rom 4:13-25	Matt 20:1-16
Thur, Jun 25	am: 105:1-22, pm: 105:23-45	Num 17:1-11	Rom 5:1-11	Matt 20:17-28
Fri, Jun 26	am: 102, pm: 107:1-32	Num 20:1-13	Rom 5:12-21	Matt 20:29-34
Sat, Jun 27	am: 107:33-43, 108, pm: 33	Num 20:14-29	Rom 6:1-11	Matt 21:1-11
Sun, Jun 28	am: 118, pm: 145	Num 21:4-9, 21-35	Acts 17:12-34	Luke 13:10-17
Mon, Jun 29	am: 106:1-18, pm: 106:19-48	Num 22:1-21	Rom 6:12-23	Matt 21:12-22
Tue, Jun 30	am: 121, 122, 123, pm: 124, 125, 126	Num 22:21-38	Rom 7:1-12	Matt 21:23-32



THE WINNER

A father of five won a toy in a raffle. He gathered his young children to ask who should get the present.

"Who is the most obedient?" Dad asked.
"Who never talks back to Mom? Who does everything she says?"

Five small voices answered in union, "Okay, Dad, you get the toy."

POINTES FOR HONESTY

A Sunday School teacher was telling his class the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-237), in which Jesus describes three individuals' responses to a man found beaten and in grave need of help along the side of the road. Hoping to bring home the point of the parable, the teacher asked the class, "If you saw a person lying on the roadside, all wounded and bleeding, what would you do?"

A hushed silence followed, broken after a moment by a thoughtful little girl: "I think I'd throw up."



WHAT'S MISSING?

While teaching a Bible college class, Donald Miller conducted an interesting experiment. He told students he was going to leave out one important truth and that they should try to detect it. Miller then talked about people's sinfulness and our need to repent; he read Scripture and stories; he discussed the reward awaiting us in heaven.

Not one of the 45 students realized their professor had left out Jesus. "I had said nothing about his love, his life and incarnation, his death or his resurrection," Miller says. "I had said nothing about our need to ...have his righteousness cover us."

Miller, author of *Blue Like Jazz*, says he could probably conduct the same experiment from Christian church pulpits, and few people would notice or be upset. Faith should be a relationship, not a formula, he argues, and it's hard to have a relationship when you leave out Jesus.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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