

First News

First United Methodist Church

A Note from Pastor Toni

Dear Friends,

I miss “routine.” I enjoy a certain amount of predictability. To me, it’s not boring, but comfortable. I like having a calendar that tells me when meetings will be, I like traveling on my day off to see my grandkids at least every other Friday (Okay, so it’s often been every Friday, until I discovered a few months ago that just staying home and not going anywhere one day every couple of weeks is kind of nice, too). I like eating out a couple of lunches a week. I like worshipping with one another on Sunday mornings. I like looking out into the congregation and seeing people who I know and love, and noticing who’s missing and wondering if they’re traveling, sick or whatever... I miss the routine.

I feel a little lost on Sunday mornings before the worship team arrives to set things in motion. I do what I can do, and then wait in a building that is oddly quiet for a Sunday morning.

I’ve set up a “home office” on our sun porch at home. My “study” inside the house is small and overrun with paintings and projects and the desk in there is filled with the same. But the sun porch is bright and joyful and inviting, and the

windows provide a great view to our backyard—to spring flowers, budding trees and overgrown grass. This morning there have been 4 bunnies running back and forth between Earl’s yard and ours, and I can hear the birds, too, so that’s all an added plus. (Though the bunnies seem less cute when my veggies are out there trying to grow). Our big old dining room table is the perfect place for me to spread

out my books and papers and computer to work.

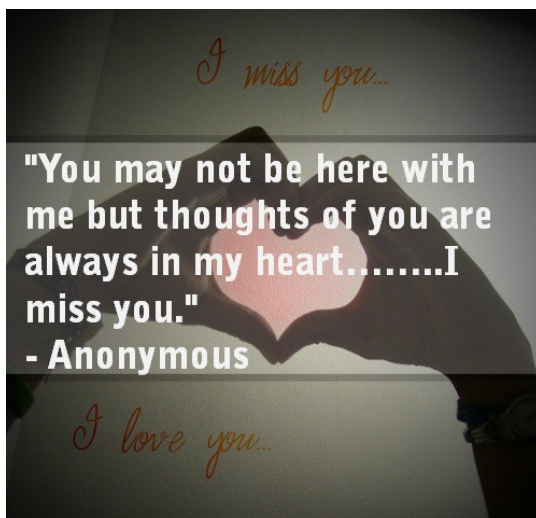
So that part is good. I’ve got a good place at home to work.

But I miss seeing people. I miss you. I miss my family. I miss not really knowing what’s ahead, although we all know the future isn’t predictable. Still. My calendar has a whole lot of things with a line

drawn through, because what was formerly routine isn’t routine anymore.

We’re told our old ways are going to change. We’re going to need to figure out how to worship with social distancing in mind. We’re going to do less handshaking and hugging. Being a hugger at heart, I realize that I’m going to have to fight my natural inclination. I want to do what’s best for others, so I am committed to learn new ways.

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THE OUTREACH COMMITTEE IS CANCELING THE FOLLOWING FOR THE MONTH OF MAY:

Dominos and Euchre

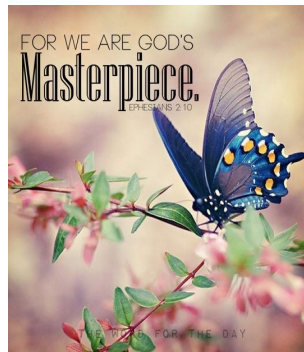
Blessed Bookies

Bad Girls

The Lunch Bunch

First Sunday Brunch

Knit Two...Pray Three



It seems strange to be speaking of “outreach” as we are all being reminded to “shelter in”. Even though we are not physically together this month, there are still ways we can “reach out” to others.

A greeting card, an email, a telephone call can lift spirits and the 23rd Psalm reminds us that “even when we walk through the darkest valley, I fear no danger, because you are with me.”

We can reach out, in spite of our present circumstances, and The FUMC family will be stronger for it.

Barbie Pickut shared with the church family a prayer that had been written by Matt....During this time of unrest, worry, fear, and uncertainty it is important that we pray this prayer and allow its peace to calm our souls. Thank you, Barbie, for gifting us this treasure.

Lord,

By your Mercy and through your Spirit

Grant me

More faith than doubt

More hope than fear

And more love than pride

So that I may desire

Deeds more than words

Kindness more than success

And your Son more than my life itself.

Amen

(Submitted by Barbie Pickut, written by Matt Pickut)

Many heartfelt thanks to Pastor Toni, Kathy, Jeff, Tom, Cindy, Brian, Kay, Katie, Ralph, and all those who make it possible for us to worship on Sunday mornings.

We are reminded that the technology that we used to complain about now enables us to maintain contact with those we hold dear.

As William Arthur Ward reminds us: “The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails.”

Let us all adjust our sails and reach out to offer comfort to our church family, as well as our neighbors, family, and friends.



WOW News by Donna Hemmig

The WOW spring luncheon on May 4 **has been cancelled**. But stay tuned...we have left open the possibility of having a lunch gathering later in the summer. Stay safe everyone!

United Methodist Men by David Hogsett

The United Methodist Men will not be meeting in May. Hopefully, they will have their regular meeting in June. Stay tuned!



Smiles and Encouragement by Dorothy Steinke

When they were discouraged, I smiled and that encouraged them and lightened their spirit. Job 29:24

I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy. Philippians 1:3-4

We certainly all need smiles during this time of staying at a distance and staying at home. It is hard to see smiles through a mask. My daughter thought her husband had been in contact with someone infected with the virus. So she didn't make her usual visit. It turned out to be a false alarm. This pandemic has united us in other ways - every one around the world working together to control this virus. Will we remember this unity on the other side of this pandemic or go back to our old ways. Job had many trials but he didn't waver in his faith and tried to lift his friend's spirit.



Mission Statement

Healing, meal-ing, and revealing is my favorite triplet because it affirms the power of

Christian community in this ever-changing world. The meal-ing is being at table with one another, not alone. Christ breaking bread with His disciples. In breaking the bread, hearts experienced wholeness, the healing. And in this healing lies the possibility for transformation - God's revealing of grace.

Catherine Inserra

Order of Deaconess and Home Missioner

Director of Family Ministry

Trinity United Methodist Church, Wilmette, Ill.

Yield Not To Temptation 3rd verse

To those who o'er cometh, God giveth a crown;
 through faith we will conquer, tho' often cast down
 He who is our Savior, our strength will renew;
 Look ever to Jesus, He'll carry you through.
 Ask the Savior to help you, comfort. strengthen, and keep you;
 He is willing to aid you, He will carry you through.

Social Concerns Report by Mary Kaufman

This has been a difficult time for all of us with being isolated from loved ones and friends, and even not being able to come to church. (Thank heaven for our online service!) However, many of our neighbors right here in Plymouth have much more serious struggles such as being laid off, worrying about how to pay the rent or utilities, and how they will get food for their families. All agencies report more persons in need every week. Now more than ever, these persons less fortunate than us need our help.

During the month of March, we received no contributions to Social Concerns.

This is a time when these agencies need us the most to help those persons they see each day. We ask that you consider sending a contribution (along with your church pledge) to Social Concerns in order to assist Link to Hope, an agency which helps those in need with rent and utilities, and Bread of Life food pantry.

You may also give food to Bread of Life. (Neighborhood Center is not currently accepting

food donations). Bread of Life Food Pantry is in need of Ramen noodles and canned soup, mac and cheese, boxed dinner meals, peanut butter, bars of soap, diapers, cleaning supplies and toilet paper. If you bring these items to the church office, Linda Hagan will deliver them to Bread of Life for you. If you prefer, Linda will pick up items on your porch and deliver them for you. Just text Linda at 630-209-4562.



As a recent newspaper article about Bread of Life stated, "Remember we were all put on this earth to love and care for each other, so exhibit your care, courtesy, respect and love to your fellow human, especially at this volatile time in our country."

There are people right here in Plymouth who need God's love and generosity to be shown to them. We are the ones to do that. Please send your contributions to Social Concerns, First United Methodist Church, 400 N. Michigan Street, Plymouth.

Thank you and God bless you.

Preaching Plan for May continued

(Continued from page 6)

May 24, 2020

7th Sunday of Easter (Ascension Sunday)

Texts: Luke 24:44-53; Ephesians 1:15-23

Title: Open the Eyes of My Heart

Theme: The story of the last time the disciples saw Jesus is a story of blessing. Jesus says that as witnesses to his presence and resurrection, they too will be filled with power to carry on his ministry, to be his hands and feet in the world. To see the world through the eyes of Jesus is to see through the eyes of love.

May 31, 2020

Pentecost Sunday

Texts: John 7:37-39; Acts 2:1-21

Title: The Heart of the Matter

Theme: Throughout this season, we have proclaimed that love is that which binds us (the root of "religion") to God, to Jesus, to each other. Love IS our religion. On the day of Pentecost, the church received the power of the Holy Spirit to let this message flow out to all. The power of this message is ever-so important to spread in the world today. Let us be a community of messengers letting living compassion flow from our hearts.

A Note from Pastor Toni continued

(Continued from page 1)

We've been instructed by Bishop Trimble not to gather together in worship before May 17. I'm not expecting that we will be gathering right after that date, because along with that statement, he added that he remains in contact with the governor, IU health and the medical community locally and nationally, who have all agreed that we should not plan to gather together with any group over 10 people until we have 14 consecutive days of our COVID 19 numbers going downward. That's not happening here or in any other state yet. But we'll stay in touch with the experts and follow recommendations. I'd rather move too slow than too fast in order for us all to stay healthy.

We're going to get to the other side of this. If you want to think in terms of a river—we don't want to just get midstream where we might need lifeboats

again, but we want to get clear over to the other side. To the place where we can look back and celebrate what we've learned, the progress that we've made, and the community that held us strong. We can't just go back to what we had and where we were, but we need to keep our hearts and minds and vision to what will be.



I ask you to keep praying for one another, keep praying for our church, our nation and world. Keep praying for God's guidance, and that we will step carefully with open minds and hearts and much love into the future that lies ahead. We've got this with God's help and with one another. This I do so believe.

Rejoice in hope; be patient in suffering; persevere in prayer (Romans 12:12). God is with us.

In Christ,
Pastor Toni

May Birthdays



May 7	Lily Cochern	May 14	Tom Douglass	May 23	Laurie Morris
May 9	Luke Felde		Spencer Goebel	May 24	Betty Kay Eley
	Roberta Isom	May 15	John Wautelet		Nancy Felde
May 10	Linda Hagan	May 16	Curtis Smith		Hayley Morris
	Kelsey Miller	May 18	Judy Stump	May 27	Barbie Pickut
May 13	Adin Daren	May 20	Ryan Gray		June Pullen
	Dorothy Morgan	May 21	Allie Rans-Schell	May 30	Shirley Magnuson



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Love God ~ Love Others ~ Serve Others

Preaching Plan for May

May 3, 2020

4th Sunday of Easter

Communion

Texts: John 10:1-10; Acts 2:42-47

Title: Hearts Overflowing

Theme: Jesus used the image of the shepherd several times in his ministry. In this passage, the sheep know the shepherd's voice and they follow because this Shepherd offers abundant life. What does a loving Christian community look like? What would it take to live with "glad and generous hearts?"

May 10, 2020

5th Sunday of Easter

Texts: Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16; John 14:1-14

Title: No Trouble in My Heart

Theme: Jesus himself cried out to God from the He-

brew scriptures that were his holy texts, "Into your hands I commit my spirit." He reminded his disciples, and he reminds us, to trust in God when our hearts are troubled. Steadfast love is what God shows and what we are called to offer each other.

May 17, 2020

6th Sunday of Easter

Texts: John 14:15-21; 1 Peter 3:13-16a

Title: Kept in Our Hearts

Theme: To "sanctify" something is to set it apart as holy and consecrated. The resurrected Jesus tells his disciples that the Spirit will be with them when he is gone. Holiness resides within each of us. It calls us to see holiness in others. It calls us to do the right thing in the name of Love, even when the right thing isn't easy.

(Continued on page 4)