



THE CENTRAL CHIMES

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April 2020

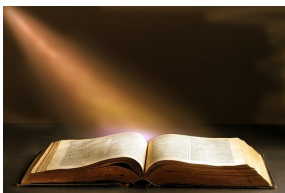
From the Pastor's Pen

"But my righteous one will live by faith." (Heb. 10:38)

I hope this newsletter finds you well. It is an understatement that we are going through an extraordinary time. The coronavirus outbreak has resulted in an unprecedented disruption in our way of life, let alone tragedy and hardship for many around the world. Against this challenging time, now is the time more than ever for us to be a people of Jesus Christ, whose resurrection we remember this month. Let's not be discouraged; Christ is still the way, the truth, and the life; and he is the same "yesterday, today, and forever." *"I will never leave you or forsake you."* (Heb. 13:5)

While we follow the guidelines by the authorities and the experts, how do we meet the challenges of the time as followers of Jesus Christ?

First of all, **take up faith**. When our future is uncertain, we trust in the grace of God in Christ. Faith enables us to take measured, proactive and creative responses instead of anxious reactions or 'paralysis by analysis.' *"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me."* (John 14:1)



Be connected to the Word. The word of God is to us what the shepherd's call is to his flock. *"One shall not live by bread*

alone; but lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord." (Deut. 8:3) What if our breakthrough comes from neither the left nor the right, but from above? Often

when we are in stuck in a place, an unexpected new door opens through what God says; and a great place where we encounter it is in the pages of the Bible. *"Your word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."* (Ps. 119:105)

Pray deeply. We need God's grace more than ever. We should pray for God's mercy to stem the pandemic, to aid those who are in the frontline of the battle, and to comfort the vulnerable and the suffering. It is also a time for individual and national soul-searching, as our society has been shaken to the core.

As at any other time, prayer is the soul's breath. Isolation can be challenging, but we are never alone when we pray in the Spirit. Prayer is also a great way to love people. We need one another's prayers. *"Keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints."* (Eph. 6:18)

Sharing tips on dealing with isolation, astronaut Scott Kelly, who spent a year in space, recommends maintaining schedule and keeping a journal. For those of us who are yet to develop disciplined ways of prayer and journaling, this may be an opportunity to give it a try.

Keep compassion and gratitude. Let's not lose head, or heart, in the debates that inevitably ensue in times of confusion. There are many who are immensely suffering. Cherish your loved ones, and reach out to one another. Above all, stay in the love of Christ. *"These three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."* (1 Cor. 13:13)

Witness. We have been entrusted with the word of God. Nowadays more than ever the world and our neighbors need to hear from God. Remain connected to Jesus Christ (John 15), and the Word will speak through you.

Update on Services

We are facing a potentially extended period of time when we are not meeting together on Sundays. The following is from the latest directive from Bishop Sharma Lewis and the district superintendents dated March 26:

In-person worship services are cancelled on all United Methodist Church properties for the next 30 days. This includes Holy Week services. We will revisit the possibility of re-opening our churches for in-person worship on or before April 23 when the state ban is scheduled to be lifted. Meetings in the church parking lot, "drive-in" worship services and drive-in communion are not allowed on church property during this period.

Churches must abide by "10 people or less and 6 feet distancing" whether officiating a funeral or wedding, conducting a meeting or overseeing a food pantry.

Churches not gathering on Sundays is a little bit like a car that sits on a driveway, but that is what happens when the road is icy. Yes, we will suffer from not gathering in person for a while, but we are not compromising on our call to love God and love one another, especially since our aim is to help lessen the suffering of our fellow citizens. We will endure this time if it means knowing God better through being in the wilderness for a while.

At the same time, we will find ways to stay connected and to work together. I am grateful that you are visiting one another through phone calls. I invite all who can go online to join me in a time of worship on Sundays at 9:15 a.m. by checking into the church's YouTube channel (You can find its link on the church's homepage on the web: www.centralumcmathews.org). We will also

meet and conference through calls and videos.

In these trying times, let us stay close to Christ, so that we may be ready for all that God has for us to be and to do.

Prayerfully,
John

Hospitality

As of now, our April greeters for the 8:30 worship service are Ken and Karen Palmer and Christine Ulrich will serve at the 11:00 service. Our greeters will have limited duties to assist with Communion. For the foreseeable future, we will be using the individual disposable cups that will be passed around from a tray. Individual small Communion wafers will also be used.

We are grateful to everyone who had agreed to provide refreshments for the month of March following our 8:30 worship service. Since we were unable to congregate, we will sign up anew when services start again.

Just a small housekeeping note... in order to keep our beautifully remodeled social hall looking as nice as it is now, we hope you will take special care to clean up after your group uses it, whether that is an outside organization, Sunday School class, refreshments after worship, committee meeting, etc.

For spills, a Swiffer Sweeper Wet mop is in the kitchen closet for your use. Thanks to James Martin for this donation. If there is a larger housekeeping issue and it requires custodial services beyond the normal cleaning, please call the office to make a request.

The kitchen and fellowship hall should always be left ready for its next use.

Thank you for always providing for our congregation and extended church family.

Emily Leap,
Hospitality Chair

United Methodist Women



Central United Methodist Women hosted our Annual Volunteer Luncheon on March 9th. We host this luncheon every year to thank our Volunteers for their service to our Church and to our Community. What a great day we had! We had 33 volunteers who joined the 8 of us for a delicious luncheon. Our numbers included 2 EMS volunteers and 1 firefighter.

It was a wonderful turn-out with delicious food, beautiful flowers, cute St. Patrick's Day decorations, and heartwarming fellowship. It was everything that we hoped for. Thank you to all that attended for making this day special. A special thanks to Louise Witherspoon, Peggy Leigh, and Jean Sutton for bringing dishes to add to ours. And, to Louise for taking the photos.

Our future events will be determined by the length of time that we are quarantined by COVID-19. In danger of being cancelled is one of our favorite events of hosting Three Rivers Healthy Families on April 17. If cancelled, it will be rescheduled to a safer time.

In the next month we hope to collect supplies and/or donations for the UMCOR Kits for the Annual Conference. This year we will be collecting items for the School Kit. A list of the requested supplies will be placed in the Church bulletins starting in April. There will be a container in the Fellowship Hall to collect the supplies. Even with this current crisis, we hope to be able to collect enough items to create the kits. If you are unable to shop, and still wish to donate, please send a check to the Church office made out to CUMW and clearly marked for the School Kits. Last year, your generous monetary donations, as well as the donated items for the kits, enabled us to prepare 53 kits to take to Conference. We are again asking for your support.

For the time being, our other future events

include preparing Kits for Conference in May, a Birthday Luncheon and Candle Burning Ceremony in September, Bay Belles Concert/ Ice Cream Social, hosting Three Rivers Healthy Families for our Annual Thanksgiving Celebration in November, and visiting our "Shut-ins" in December.

Our thoughts and prayers are with you during this difficult time. Please stay safe.

Martha Arnold
CUMW President



2020 Volunteer Luncheon

Photos by:
Louise Witherspoon

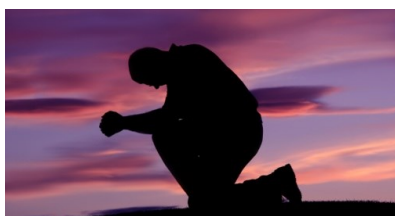


Administrative Council Chair

To say that we're in uncharted waters would be the understatement of the year, ranking right up there with, "Houston, we have a problem." Three months ago while we were experiencing the warmth and joy of Christmas and New Year's none of us could have foreseen what has transpired since.

On the same note, none of us can predict where we'll be three months from now or what will happen between now and then. When will we be able to hold regular services again? What about Holy Week and Easter Sunday? Maybe we can still hold Sunrise Service if we don't get too close. Maybe when it gets warm we can bring our own lawn chairs and hold services outside (thanks to Christine Ulrich for that idea). Maybe we can do some sort of online service. These are all things that we'll be taking a look at. In the meantime, thanks to Pastor John for sending the Worship Guide for use at home. I hope everyone finds it as useful as I have.

Outside of church we face many questions as well. In my family, for example, Pat wonders if she'll teach again this school year. Mackenzie is supposed to graduate from VCU in May and is wondering how her requirements in her remaining classes are going to change and if she'll actually be able to graduate then. The ceremony has already been postponed until December. And who knows what effect this will have on her (and every other senior class member in the world) job prospects. Nearly every family faces the same sort of uncertainties as these.



We will get through this. This is the time to lean on our faith in God more than ever, especially since we can't be physically together as a congregation. The other great quote from Apollo 13 fifty years ago is "Failure is not an option." With God's help and each other, failure won't be an option for us, either.

Chris Moughon,
Administrative Council Chair

Hands Across Mathews

With church services in hiatus, contributions of food or household supplies can be dropped off on Wednesdays from 9:00 am to 12:00 Noon by drive through.

UMCOR Giving

We can still support the mission of UMCOR and its disaster relief ministries. UMCOR Sunday offerings underwrite the organization's operation so that special gifts in response to a disaster may go entirely to the relief efforts.

Make your check to *Central UMC* and designate it to UMCOR. Donations can be mailed to the church office at PO Box 297, Mathews, VA 23109.

Thank you for being a part of our shared mission.



[Our Deepest Sympathy and Prayers go to the Families of...](#)

Stuart Keats
Edwina Casey
Linda Ruth Sadler
Ruth Downs
Pat Mantel



Mission and Evangelism

At our recent meeting we discussed the first Journeys with God program-what was positive about it, what could benefit from a little tweaking. We decided we definitely would like to continue the program, but would postpone the next meeting until late April.* This would relieve John of an additional responsibility during the Easter season, traditionally a busy period for the clergy.

On the plus side, it was agreed that Eric Stewart personal testimony was a moving example of how God works miracles in the lives of His children. We all agreed that this type of shared story is very beneficial and gives people something they can relate to. We plan to continue this as part of our Journeys worship service.

We also discussed future speakers who would also be willing to share their personal testimonies.

We decided that we would also continue to incorporate music and praying for others into the service. John has too many responsibilities for the first Journeys with God program, so we will all take a more active part in the future ones. It was suggested that lighting a candle would be a visual reminder of each person or thing we would like to remember in our prayers. It would be beneficial to have a period of reflection for each service. It was also suggested that laity members of the church could offer prayers for healing.

In other business, we decided that we would send monthly checks to our mission partners: the Paiges would receive \$250/month for the next 6 months and the Henry Fork Center would receive \$100/month the next ten months.

Finally, we discussed our need for a new web page. At the Radical Hospitality workshop John and Linda recently attended, it was stressed that this is an important tool in attracting new members. John mentioned this

is how he found a church to attend while he was on his recent retreat. It was agreed that the two most important aspects of a new web page would be content and design. John volunteered to work on a draft in the next week or so.

*Because of the coronavirus, this date is subject to change.

Linda Dalgety

Mission and Evangelism Chair



Finance Note to Congregation

Hello church members! We all hope this note finds one and all successfully surviving this pandemic while managing to be somewhat civil to our families and friends!

Once again, we must address the fact that our church responsibilities do not stop just because our weekly gatherings are curtailed. It appears that the month of May will be the soonest we can possibly hope for, and even that date is tenuous. With a mostly, senior membership, caution is a byword. We are blessed that Pastor John remains in excellent health.

Please remit your normal, monthly anticipated contributions.

Our mailing address: Central Methodist Church P.O. Box 297, Mathews, VA 23109

Sincerely,

Tim Hill

Chairman, Finance Committee

UM Women UMCOR School Kit Drive

Central's UMW will be assembling School kits to send to UMCOR. Below is a list of items for each kit. In some areas, children lack access to books and essential school supplies. Classes are held in inadequate buildings. School kits may be some children's only educational resource.

If participating, please place the items in the Fellowship Hall. Thank you!

Contact Martha Arnold at 1-201-232-5890 or marjoe5050@gmail.com for questions. **Deadline is May 10.**

School Kit Materials:

1-Pair blunt scissors

Round tips only
No plastic scissors

1-Box of 24 crayons

Only 24-count boxes are accepted

3-One-subject notebooks

No marble composition books
No 3 or 5-subject notebooks

1-Pack of loose-leaf paper

100-200 page packets are accepted
Wide or college rule accepted

1-Hand-held pencil sharpener

1-inch or longer
Remove from packaging

1-Ruler

12 inches or 30 centimeters long
Sturdy or flexible material accepted

6-Unsharpened pencils

1-Eraser

Two inches or larger

1-Two-gallon re-sealable plastic bag

Contact Martha Arnold
at 1-201-232-5890 or
marjoe5050@gmail.com
for questions.

Give the Gift of Life!

Mathews Community Blood Drive
Tuesday, April 21, 1:30 -7:00 pm

Piankatank Ruritan Building

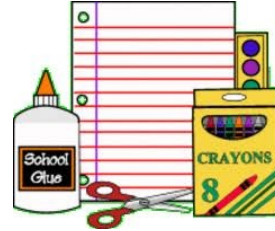
Must call for an appointment!

Individual appointments only

Go to redcrossblood.org for appt.
or Call [804-725-2485](tel:804-725-2485) for appt.
and for questions.



Image source: pixabay.com



(Value: \$11 per kit)

Important notes

- Homemade or purchased cloth tote bags are no longer being accepted.
- All items must be new.
- Please do not include any personal notes, money or additional materials in the kits.
- Contents of kits or the containers of kits should not be imprinted with cartoon characters, advertisements, religious, patriotic, military or camouflage symbols.

Assembly Instructions

1. Stack all paper items on top of each other.
2. Place all loose items on top of paper. Small loose items may be placed in a smaller re-sealable bag.
3. Place kit inside of re-sealable bag and seal.

CENTRAL U M W M E N ' S Steamed Shrimp Dinner



Saturday, May 16th





4:00-7:00 P.M.

Donation

\$19.00 Eat-in or \$18.00 Take-out
Children Age 5 -10 \$6.00 Under 5 FREE

*Purchase tickets in advance from any member of
the Central United Methodist Men or call 725-
8673, 725-2488 or 725-3751 today!*

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<h1>April 2020</h1>			1	2	3	4
			<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: yellow; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> All meeting times & dates are subject to change. If in doubt, contact the committee chair. </div>			
5 Palm Sunday  Last day to order Lilies	6	7	8 Finance 7:00 pm	9	10 Good Friday	11
12 Easter Sunday 	13 UM Women 10:00 am	14	15 Mission & Evangelism 10:00 am	16	17	18 UM Men Breakfast 8:00 am
19	20 Trustees 7:00 pm	21 Blood Drive Piankatank Ruritan Club 1:30 - 7:00pm 	22 Administrative Council 7:00 pm	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

Birthdays

Lisa Zerbe	4	Marcia Fry	18
Bobby Hudgins	11	Janet Burgess	20
Mark Lewis	12	Helen Lee	20
Kathy Bochau	13	Diana More	21
Christine Ulrich	14		

Anniversaries

Ken & Karen Palmer	8
Richard & Melissa Moughon	9
Chris & Pat Moughon	18
Craig & Katherine Small	21