

APRIL 2020

FAITH *news*

Monthly Newsletter of
Eldridge United Methodist Church

CONVERSATION with Pastor Courtney

What Are We Missing?

We're all missing something during this time of social distancing and sheltering in place. Teachers are missing their students, and students are missing their teachers. People are missing their coffee hour at their favorite cafes or workouts at the fitness center. There are no social gatherings or school events to attend. The only way to stay connected with our church community is through YouTube, email and phone. We are even encouraged to keep our distance from extended family which means Easter celebrations may not happen. This is an unsettling time.

Here's a list of what I am missing. I planned to take my sister and brother-in-law to dinner for their March birthdays. That has been postponed. I've been looking forward to my vacation at the end of April. I booked a cabin for 48 hours with the intention of using no technology and spending my time reading and meditating – listening for God's voice. The resort I booked called me to say they have to cancel my reservation. Now I have to figure out how to make my apartment feel like a cabin and have that retreat feel. As the Methodist Church continues to cancel or postpone large gatherings, I have been wondering if my ordination ceremony will happen on June 7. Thankfully I got a call from the district superintendent reassuring me that ordination will happen, it may just not be during the regularly scheduled annual conference.

There is an opportunity during this time of social distancing and sheltering in place that I hope we will all take. When we ask ourselves the question "What are we missing?" we can take this time to ask, "What are we missing from God?" How is God communicating with us during this time? Because God is with us. God has not left us even though we are not gathered together in a building on Sunday mornings. As we create new routines, is God showing us that we need to be spending more time with him? Now is the time to set aside our distractions and tune in to God.

God is calling me to be a more creative pastor – to find ways for us to all stay connected during this time. I made my YouTube video premiere, and now I know I can use this resource more frequently in my ministry. God is showing me I can do pastoral care over the telephone and through email.

We all have something to learn during this time. My prayer for all of us is that we embrace the change and trust God will carry us through. I pray that all of us will build closer connections with God and our neighbor. May the peace of Christ shine in our hearts.

MISSION MINUTE

with Brittany



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

4/01	Mark Herrin
4/02	Laura Reth
4/07	Ron Carlson
4/08	Taylor Crain
4/11	Glendena Heiman
4/12	Jason Apple
4/18	Sondra Bulazo Samantha Stilson
4/21	Levi Lehman
4/22	Zach Petersen
4/23	Cory Crain Linda Tubbs
4/27	Sophia Popelka
4/29	Walker Gentz Mary Miller
4/30	Becky Esbaum



APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

4/09	Ken & Marcia Nestler
4/14	Cliff & Melissa Willey
4/24	Kortney & Mark McDermott
4/28	Jack & Carmen Darland

Hey friends! I wanted to send a quick update about my life + the coronavirus concerns. As far as I know, Corpus Christi doesn't have any confirmed cases of the virus right now. As a group, as YWAM Ships Corpus Christi, we're taking reasonable precautions, although our team is currently only four people (plus three kids). I, personally, am distancing myself as much as possible from any public areas or crowds. During my time overseas last year, I was exposed to tuberculosis and I have a latent form of TB. It's not symptomatic or contagious, but I have a 10% chance of it becoming active in my body, and anything that could weaken my immune system increases the likelihood of the disease becoming active and becoming a problem.

I wanted to keep you informed and let you know how you can be praying for me during this time. Please pray for my health. Please pray for my group, as my leaders have been traveling recently. Please also pray for our upcoming Discipleship Training School in September, as things are up in the air right now with the pandemic and it may affect our plans for running the school.

As always, please let me know how I can be praying for you!

Always,
Brittany

Easter

It is with a heavy heart I share with you that we will not be back in the pews for Easter Sunday. Bishop Laurie Haller has encouraged pastors across Iowa to follow the guidelines of the governor's office. This means no public gatherings until at least April 16. I will provide online worship on Easter Sunday. When we are able to gather together again, we will make that our Easter celebration.

United Methodist News

The General Conference of the United Methodist Church that was scheduled for May has been postponed until 2021. On the agenda was a decision about how to proceed with the ordination of LGBTQIA persons and clergy officiating same-sex weddings. A couple of months ago, news broke about a potential separation of the United Methodist Church. This decision will be put on hold until the conference is rescheduled. I will keep you up to date when new information is available.

At this point, the Iowa Annual Conference scheduled for June 5-7 is on schedule.

Let's Walk Together

During Lent, a small group of us have been studying *The Walk* by Adam Hamilton. Hamilton encourages us to use our hands to remember how to participate in spiritual practices every day. I would like to share those with you so that we can all be in prayer, study and service during this time of social distancing and sheltering in place.

Prayer: The five fingers on our hand remind us to pray at least five times a day: morning (when you wake up), breakfast, lunch, dinner and evening (when you go to bed). Hamilton encourages us to begin with "Thank you, God," and then grow our prayers from there.

Study/Scripture Reading: The five fingers on our hand remind us to read five verses of scripture every day. Choose any book and get started.

Service: The five fingers on our hand remind us to do five acts of kindness a day. This is especially important during this time. Pick up the phone and call someone. Write a note. Show people we are still connected even though we are apart.

**For more from Adam Hamilton,
log on at *any time* to
COR.ORG**

Please don't hesitate to call the church office with any prayer concerns that you would like to have posted:

285-4314

PRAYER During COVID-19

Dear God, we live in the world that has been experiencing fear, anxiety, and isolation. Please help us trust that our destiny is in your hand. Help us to be hope bearers. Thank you for being our Shepherd. Yes, You are our Shepherd therefore we shall not want. It is you who makes us lie down in green pastures. You lead us beside still waters. You restore our souls. Please restore us. You lead us in paths of righteousness for your name's sake. Even though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, surrounded by COVID-19 we will fear no evil because we know that you are with us; your rod and your staff comfort us. You always prepare a table before us in the presence of our enemies; you anoint our heads with oil; our cups, O God, overflow. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives, and we shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever. Amen.

---- The Rev. Kiboko Kiboko,
East Central District Superintendent
Iowa Annual Conference

Getting Bored with “Sheltering At Home”?

Here are 26 fun ideas!

A Try some art.

B Download a **book** from your library.

C Learn **calligraphy**. **D** Do a **devotional**.

E Time for **exercise**.

F Donate to a **food** pantry.

G Give to someone in need.

H Take a **hike** – literally!

I Interview a young person.

J Journal each day.

K Be **kind** to someone.

L Learn a new **language**.

M Read a **magazine**.

N Take a **nap**.

O Take an **online** class.

P Time to **pray**.

Q Quiet time.

R Reflect on the week.

S Send someone a giftcard.

T Hit a drive-in **theater**.

U Update your contact lists.

V Video call with an old friend.

W Write a letter.

X Practice **xeniality** (at a social distance).

Y Do some **yardwork**.

Z Find your **Zen**.

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