



Circuit Rider

June 2020

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A Monthly Publication of Solon United Methodist Church

My Friends,

We are moving into the summer season and it will be unlike any we have seen. No matter how young or old we are this is a unique and challenging time. Most of us are looking forward with hope, yet there is also something else.

I can almost fear the voice of Satchel Paige the great baseball player which is odd. It is odd because I am not a baseball fan. However, I am a fan of people who have keen insight into the experience we call life. Satchel Paige has been quoted to have said, "Don't look back. Something might be gaining on you." We understand this phase even if we are not a baseball fan.

I suspect many of us woke up this morning to realize it really is June of the year 2020. We have awakened to a world where masked people are a common sight. A world where we still wonder about the hoarding of toilet paper. It is a strange place we find ourselves. Perhaps we can even borrow the title of a classic work of science fiction by Robert Heinlein. Have you read it? It is called Stranger in a Strange Land. It is an allusion to Exodus 2:22; "And she bare him a son, and he called him Gershom: for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land." This was of course the son of Moses (the stranger).

Perhaps you are I feel a little like Gershom, which means alien or exiled in Hebrew. No doubt this Heinlein's intent when he named his book. The main character having been born on another planet and coming to earth and learning all of its strange customs. Perhaps there is a lesson in the story of Moses and Zipporah and their son Gershom? Do you perhaps feel a little bit alien in this new world? Perhaps you might look a little bit closer at the story of Moses found in Exodus, then perhaps Heinlein's; Stranger in a Strange Land, which was named one of 88 books that shaped America by the Library of Congress in 2012.

In the next few weeks we will be working together to see what this new world will look like for the latter half of 2020 and beyond. We have formed re-entry teams to help redefine and revision who we will be as the Solon United Methodist Church. Perhaps some of the questions we will ask and wrestle with are: How do we serve? What is our shared ministry? What is God up to and how do we get on board? How do we help? How do we refocus our mission here in Solon, Iowa and beyond?

I'm not sure about you my friends, but I have been asking myself a lot of new questions the last few weeks. I know this is God's worlds and all will be well. However, it is not that the old quests were not valid in their time or that they are not yet still good questions. What I have seen is a need for new questions and new insights and new learning. For the greatest question still rises to the top –How do we share Christ? How do we introduce people to our King, our Lord, our Savior and Friend Jesus Christ?

Shalom
Ken

Morning Prayer

Lord, You walk beside me
You are always there.
Come be in my waking
Go with me everywhere.

Lord, Your hand will lead me
Your light will show the way.
Come be in my thinking
Be my guide today.

Worship Schedule

June 7

Scripture: Genesis 1-2:4

Message: *Generational Blessing*

June 14

Scripture: Matthew 9:35-10:23

Message: *Wellness Programs*

June 21 - Father's Day

Scripture: Matthew 10:24-39

Message: *Fear and Mercy*

June 28

Scripture: Romans 6:12-33

Message: *Amazing Freedom*



As we begin the month of June, the church calendar reminds us that we are entering a new church season known as "Ordinary Time." This doesn't seem an accurate title because our lives certainly don't seem "ordinary" or "normal" right now. Actually the title refers to the part of the church year that is outside of Advent, Christmas Season, Lent, and Easter Season. Ordinarily, at this time of year, we would be celebrating graduations, planning summer vacations and family reunions. Instead we are deciding if we are brave enough to even leave our homes! And if you're like me, wanting to hose off our spouses who work in health care when they come home!

Over the past two months we have been experiencing church in a different way. Pastor Ken has been sharing the sermon live streamed on Sunday mornings and I've been sharing a music moment to add the rest of the elements of worship on Wednesday. It's been a time to really test the idea that worship can happen anywhere - even at home in your pj's! We are following the recommendations of the Conference and health professionals to have all meetings online. I've become proficient in Zoom, Microsoft Teams and Skype! It's good to be able to connect this way but I sure miss the face-to-face contact! We will be continuing these ways of connecting for some time yet.

A team will be using the guidelines for a re-entry plan for resuming worship at the church. There are many decisions to be made and many things to consider to keep everyone safe. Even as we have worship together in the sanctuary, we are advised to not have congregational singing, to keep social distancing of 6-10 feet and provide lots of sanitizing options before, during and after worship.

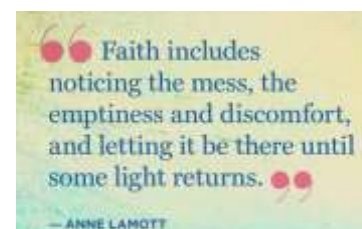
As we move into Ordinary Time and no matter how unordinary it actually is, we remember that we just celebrated Pentecost the last Sunday in May, and the Holy Spirit was given to each one of us so that God is as near to us as our breath and beating hearts! Continue to worship God in every place you find yourself and be assured that God is with you! Hear the words of Psalm 104 and proclaim them with me:

"I will sing praises to my God while I'm still alive! Let my praise be pleasing to God! I'm rejoicing in the Lord! Let my whole being bless the Lord! Praise the Lord!"

Be assured, you can worship God anytime and anywhere! Thanks be to God!

Stay healthy and keep the faith!

Pastor Lisa

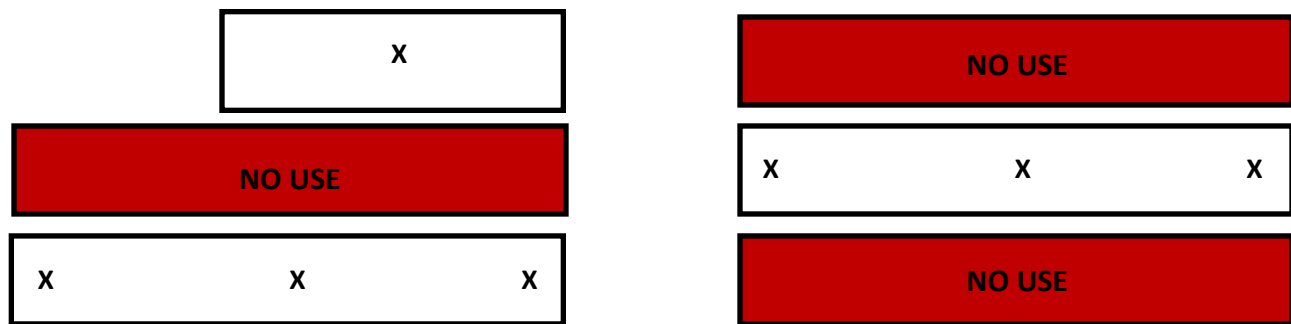


When you are going through something difficult and wonder where God is, remember the teacher is always quiet during the test.



Information regarding in-person worship

I don't think that any of us thought back in March that yet in June our doors would be closed. Well, that's where we are, currently weighing and considering all factors and what is best for the safety of all. Currently we are on ONLINE ONLY WORSHIP THROUGH June 7th. At that time the council and a newly formed committee tasked with how we will reopen will be reevaluating the COVID-19 cases in our area and the recommended steps to keep our congregation safe while worshipping. At this point there are lots of things that need to be considered pertaining to holding worship together again at church. Besides the obvious issues of social distancing and reduced capacity, the combination of an older congregation and having children with us, there are other factors to deal with. One is the fact that between services common surface areas such as the pews and door handles, rails and even pew pads will need to be sanitized. There is also a concern about air conditioning recirculating the air when you have a larger group of people together. Due to this it is recommended that air conditioners be turned off before gatherings and NOT be turned on again for 2-3 hours after. This will impact our schedule for the summer as we had originally planned to hold two services in the morning. It is likely that we will be having a morning and evening service although nothing has been officially decided at this time. While we haven't set out our official plan on opening due to the fluidity of the situation we are making plans. Things will look different. It is likely that we will NOT be holding communion or fellowship or even singing as a group when we first return to church as a congregation. We will be setting up the sanctuary to encourage safe social distancing, see the diagram below for our current plan for pew seating.



We will be blocking off every other pew to encourage a safe distance. There will be a one family per pew restriction of phase one reintegration or 1 person per small pew and 3 people per large pew. All contents have already been removed from the pews and we will default to our PowerPoint to help lead us in place of Hymnals for your safety.

Family Life Center Update

The council decided at their last meeting that the FLC will stay closed for the time being. We will not be allowing rentals while we are not worshipping. There is just too much of a risk of exposing those who rent and our staff to COVID-19. Along with contact surfaces there is also the air conditioner issue that was listed above. Something to be thankful for is that fact that the summer is the slowest time for rentals so the calendar was pretty clear before all of this. Thank you for understanding and trusting the council to make educated decisions regarding our facilities that keep the safety of all a priority.



Finance Update

Church Finances 101

Below you will find a listing of the different types of discussions we are having during our Finance team meetings as we continue to navigate through our life at the SUMC.

What are our reserves?

This is money that is carried over from the previous fiscal year.

- General Fund
 - Checking
 - Money donated specifically for various causes
- Permanent Endowment (PE) funds
- Dividends from the PE funds have historically been allocated for special capital projects (such as our current Sunday School remodeling project)
- There is current discussion of modifying distribution rules based on our current financial situation

What are our expenses?

The SUMC Finance team has been focusing on our monthly expenses and in previous newsletter we've talked through our payment priority algorithms. We are happy to report that to date we met all finance obligations outside apportionments. These expenses include the following

- Clergy salary, health care, and pensions
- Lay employee salary, health care, and pension
- Software subscriptions
- Utilities
- Leases (copier, equipment, etc.)
- Typical variable expenses (amount of expense varies by activity) might include:
 - Office supplies
 - Subscriptions
 - Curriculum
 - Furniture and equipment
 - Repairs



What is our revenue?

We review what SUMC is receiving regarding monthly gifts – mainly cash. For those of you who are meeting your pledge commitments, we thank you. For those of you who have not, we ask that you review your pledge and see what you can do to catch up. For those of you who have been impacted financially by COVID-19 and are unable to keep up with your pledged contributions, we understand and offer prayers that that your financial challenges will pass quickly.

What is our cash flow?

We carefully monitor our cash flow. For cash flow, we take our monthly revenue (as determined above) and subtract our monthly expenses. The difference between the revenue and expense is our cash-flow situation. All things considered, our giving has been quite good but expenses have, in fact, exceeded income by \$3,500. This shortfall was paid by our cash reserves. The committee is also concerned that our net cash flow, without any apportionment payments made, is \$7,300 less than anticipated by the budget.

In closing, the theme of our May 2020 Finance meeting was “holding our own”, meaning that during this challenging time, SUMC, so far, has been able to meet its financial obligations. Thank you to everyone who helps make that possible.

S.U.M.C. Finance Committee

Trustees Update

The Trustees Committee has been meeting monthly since March via virtual Zoom meetings due to the Corona virus issue.

I want to thank all the trustees and church Council for their support and communication with continuation of needed church related projects.

Project updates:

-Spring cleanup:

- > Tom Moore Family removed fallen tree branches and raked up flower garden area
- > Nancy Worrell is repairing spines of church hymnals, and also cleaned and polished sanctuary church pews. Lindy Hopp disinfected all hymnals and bibles.
- > Jon Lorence helped Nancy Worrell vacuum all the church pew cubbies and cushions
- > Joan and Jon Lorence continue to disinfect all door handles, light switches, chairs, tables and countertops in the Fellowship Hall
- > Jennifer and Jeff Allen family trimmed, raked, weeded the north side of the Fellowship Hall
- > UMW Women cleanup of the Fellowship Hall
- > Nathan Miller removed all remaining bushes and plants from around the parsonage deck to prepare for new landscaping
- > Jay Proffitt completed the grading and seeding around the Family Life Center
- > Al Hulse cleaned the sanctuary ceiling fans and suspended speaker
- > Jean Leighton cleaned and helped reorganize the sanctuary stage furniture after the electrical work was completed



-Install of and training on new computers and software for the church staff, will be completed before end of May by Rock Technology, thanks to Phil Kakacek for his support and guidance.

-ACE Electric completed install of new sanctuary ceiling lights for the quilters window and sanctuary stage, thanks to project lead Al Hulse and to Steve Fisher for construction of and providing wooden ramp, so ACE could use a mechanical lift to reach the ceiling.

-Renovation of the Christian Education rooms has started with removal of all current furniture, storage cabinets, chalkboards in each room. The old furniture and storage cabinets were carried out, loaded on truck and trailer from Tom Moore and stored in the FLC building for giveaway or disposal to be determined. Thanks goes out to the Christian Education teachers, Jill Weetman for her leadership of this project, Lindy Hopp, Tom and Justin Moore, Dave Weetman, Nancy Worrell, Al Hulse, Deb Miller, Nathan Miller and Megan Hanus for their help this past couple of weeks. Next stage includes removal of carpets and ceiling tiles to be replaced.



Regards,
Paul Miller

Christian Education

We may not be able to meet in worship upstairs, but the lower level is buzzing with activity! We have officially started to update and remodel the rooms! All of the chairs, tables and supplies have been moved to their temporary home at the FLC- more on that later. The hard-working Trustees, their family members and of course our awesome consultant Al Hulse are tearing up carpets, taking down ceiling tiles and readying the rooms for their new look! All I can say is...the kids (and their families) are going to LOVE it! We will keep you up-to-date with pictures and Facebook posts- keep an eye out for our progress!

Hey kids, who is ready to BOLT Towards Faith in Jesus?? Our online VBS is called BOLT!- and it is going to electrify your family's summer! BOLT combines videos, games and crafts for 3 days of fun while we learn more about God's love for us!

Parents, you'll be receiving lots more information about BOLT! And your family will receive a goodie bag filled with everything you'll need for a fun, safe VBS experience. We are looking at weekends in July and will set "official" dates by the end of June. But the best part is your family can do BOLT anytime! Stay tuned!



Stay safe and have a healthy summer!

Jill and Kera

ADULT OPPORTUNITIES

C3 (Crafts, creativity, & Christ)

At this time C3 is looking out for the safety of all and not holding meetings. Check back in the July newsletter for an update on when meetings will resume.



Sisters of Strength (SOS):

We are currently on Summer Break.

We will begin again in the fall with a clean slate and a renewed enthusiasm to read some books and share what we've learned with our friends.

We meet on Monday evenings during the school year, beginning in September. Expect more detail as the summer draws to a close.



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The UMW will not meet for the remainder of the summer, and will resume in September for their Fall Kick-Off meeting. Members are being encouraged to work at home on contributions to the group's various outreach projects. Updates will be posted in later Circuit Riders.

**UNITED METHODIST
WOMEN**



UNITED METHODIST MEN

We will NOT be holding meetings in June. Please stay safe and check church emails and the July newsletter for updates.

Prayers and Celebrations

Prayers

Pastor Ken -Prayer for my Niece Gina Mckinney. Diagnosed with Heart Failure, medication at the moment!

Recker Family as they have a family member going through testing and treatments.

Rejoices & Thanksgiving

Happy Mother's Day! Thank you Moms!

Do you have a Prayer Request?

Please call or email the church office at (319) 624-2288, soloniaumc@gmail.com.

Due to concerns for the safety of all the Youth Mission Trip for 2020 has been canceled. All participants have been notified and money has been refunded. Thank you to Deanna Kleinsmith and Carol Richards for volunteering to organize this year. The trip shall return in 2021!

YOUTH MISSION TRIP UPDATE



Congratulations to all our S.U.M.C. Seniors who graduated on May 17th! We hope to hold a "Graduation Sunday" in conjunction with the graduation ceremony in July but would like to recognize these special graduates now also for all their hard work!

Kellie Feldkamp, Tyler Locke, Beth Richards, Trey Stebral, Payton Wheeler & Leah Woessner



At this point the United Methodist Camps have canceled all camp activities including summer camp sessions for this summer. Camp Iodiseca here in Solon has not yet announced official plans and are hoping to be able to modify camp to

safely hold some sort of camp activities even if it is only a day camp option. For more information please go to :

<https://campiodiseca.org/>



The 4H on Wheels program that usually takes place weekly at the FLC here in the summer has been canceled. 4H wants to protect both the kids and their staff and look forward to returning safely in the summer of 2021!

June Birthdays

GREGOR, Timothy	06/01
MASTERS, Renee	06/01
MCGILL, Patrick	06/01
SWARTZENDRUBER, Dee	06/01
ALLEN, Jeffrey	06/06
KLEINSMITH, Elyjah	06/06
SWAN, Garrett	06/06
JOHNSON, Reilly	06/07
MANIFOLD, Jarrett	06/08
HANSEN, Marilyn	06/09
ADAMS, Jack	06/11
NOVAK, Norma	06/11
PROFFITT, Jay	06/11
OAKES, Madden	06/12
EVANS, Don	06/13
HAVEL, Colten	06/13
JEDLICKA, Rick	06/13
REYNOLDS, Kirk	06/13
GNIDA, Zeb	06/14
PUMPHREY, Coleen	06/15
STEGEMAN, Sydney	06/16
VAN ROEKEL, Jake	06/17
GEGUZIS, Kay	06/18
GERDIN, Grant	06/19
CABBAGE, Phyllis	06/20
HUNT, Allan	06/20
KLEINSMITH, Gidyon	06/21
RUNGE, Jordan	06/22
SCHAFFER, Catherine	06/23
MCPHERON, Yuriy	06/25
MILLER, Josh	06/25
NICOL, Scott	06/25
WILKINSON, Sue	06/25
ERHART, Clinton	06/26
HANSEN, Maddie	06/26
JAURON, Emma	06/26
LORENCE, Jon	06/26
SHERMAN, Karen	06/27
DEIKE, Kamryn	06/29
TIEDEMANN, Henry	06/29
STEBRAL, Trey	06/30



*Making disciples of Jesus Christ
for the transformation
of our world*

Rev. Ken Ferguson, Lead Minister
Lisa Schroeder, Minister of Music Ministries
Lindy Hopp, Office Administrator
Jenn Stiegemeyer, High School Youth Ministries
OPEN, Middle School Youth Ministries
Hsin Hui-Liu, Accompanist
Mary Kucera, Director of Hand Bells
Penny Tompkins, Treasurer
Jon Lorence, Custodian
Jerrod Hilton, Security
Lindy Hopp, Nursery Supervisor
Nurse staff: Alex, Annika, Cassandra & Selma



Sunday Schedule
9:15 AM—Worship Online

Church Phone: (319) 624-2288
Address: 122 North West St., Solon, IA 52333

Church Website: <https://soloniaumc.org/>
Church Facebook: Solon United Methodist Church—Iowa