



HOPE, JOY AND LOVE RISING

Cast~A~Net

First United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande

JUNE 2020

After service March 15th, we closed the buildings but not the church! We suspended in-person worship, but we didn't stop praising God! Faith calls us to "*love the Lord God with heart, soul, mind and strength,*" and to "*love neighbor as self*". We have been doing just that---minding the business, safeguarding the people and nurturing hearts and souls however we can "from a distance". We are a congregation in which hope, joy and love rise in all circumstances.

AGFUMC has been open and operating, even when the building is closed. The building is a tool for ministry, and the *people* are the church. We have continued to care for one another. We continue to reach out in myriad ways and our Worship Team has kept videos coming. Mission Team has fulfilled our commitment to feed hungry people locally. Frances Robertson, our Secretary, has been working hard in this unpredictable situation. Our hats go off to her as our hearts reach out with a big "THANK YOU!" We are elated with the beautiful counter shield installed in the office this weekend. It is a plexi-glass screen skillfully made that protects Frances, protects you and defines the space in our office in an attractive, professional way, helping us "keep the boundary". Thank you, Dave Bolterman and Trustees.

As you are likely anticipating, when worship re-opens there will be parameters in place to keep people protected and comfortable as we gather. The list of considerations is monumental. Advanced age and underlying health issues affect a large portion of our congregation. This is at the top of our hearts and minds. Young children have a more difficult time understanding and keeping social distance, so excellent plans have to be in place. (Seniors, parents and children may not choose to be present to worship at this time even if allowed.)

The worship service itself will be drastically modified. Ushers and greeters will not function in the usual sense, but the team will be directing worshippers to their seats, ensuring that they wear masks, and we will screen for temperature, mindful of asymptomatic carrying of the virus. Multi-touch items, such as hymnal, pew bibles, bulletins, and offering plates will not be in their usual places. Singing is considered a "high-risk" activity as fine aerosol particles are forced out at high velocity, so we will be without congregational singing. We will continue to greet without handshakes and hugs and will keep 6 feet apart. Coffee and fellowship time will disappear for a season. Communion will have to consist of a no-touch offering of the elements. Maybe it will be available in self-serve kits at our Tuesday & Thursday prayer time if that continues. There will be new requirements to frequently disinfect sanctuary, narthex, and restrooms and this may affect the timing of services. Services will consist of scripture, message, and prayer, and/or other "safe music". Now we provide worship moments online. Upon return, we will do both, continuing online options into the future even when onsite, face-to-face worship resumes.

Let's create a congregation where many are proficient in ZOOM groups and could lead an on-line group of church friends whether in Bible Study, prayer or social chat. Let's get busy with safe groups gathering while "*distanced*" on patios. Maybe our outdoor gardens adjacent to the sanctuary can be popular places for two people to sit and talk to one another. We need leaders, especially the technically savvy, to help us. Let us know if you can help.

Can we do a ZOOM fellowship time on Sunday or another day? The only reason many of these things are not in place yet is that the small group of us working *on the premises*, is too busy to do it all. It's time for you to join us. If you can convene an ongoing ZOOM meeting or chat, identify yourself to us! Organizers, we need you. Roger Sperling has sent me wonderful e-mails regarding small groups in the Wesleyan tradition. We need to go there! Let us know if you would like to participate.

Remember! We are open and in ministry, even without corporate worship on the premises. Remember!! Decisions about onsite worship will be made based on the best medical science and when we are ready to provide a safe worship environment, and when our procedures have received approval from the District Superintendent and the county. Remember!!! Arroyo Grande FUMC is guided by the Spirit in faith to do the most loving thing. Our decisions will be based on what is best for the common good and what it means to be the church of Jesus Christ. Join us in prayer to that end as hope, joy and love continue to rise at Arroyo Grande First UMC.

Rev. Mary Birgelaitis



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TREASURER'S REPORT

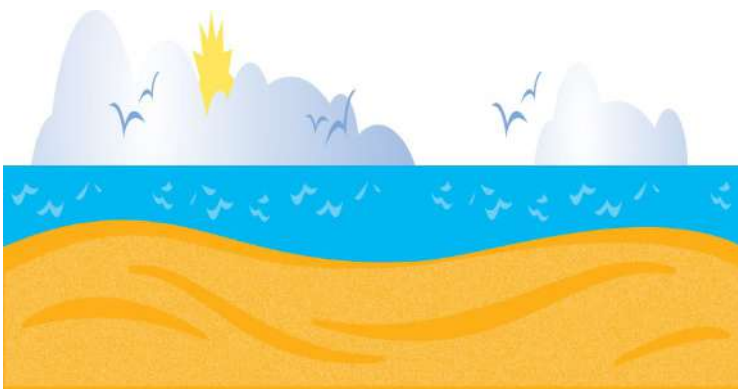
Thank you all for your continued generous contributions during this difficult time. Our Easter Offering was the largest in over a decade, even though we did not meet in the sanctuary for Easter. A special **Thank You** to all those that have increased their regular offerings during the time we are unable to meet. Because of everyone's generous support we will be able to survive this lockdown financially, resume our ministries and engage in new ministries after the restrictions are lifted.

Because of the uncertainty as to our plans and expenses in the coming months, our Stewardship Drive, which usually take place after Easter, has been suspended.

Please continue your regular tithes and offerings. You may use the envelopes provided in the weekly letters to return your contributions, or you may give on-line through the GIVE NOW portal on our website www.WorshipWeekly.com. The on-line giving can come from either your checking or savings account or a credit card. Giving can be one-time or can be set up on a regular basis.

Thank you for all your support and prayers for our Church.

Joel Anderson
Acting Treasurer



SUNDAY SCHOOL

Carolyn Russell reminds students that if you would like a weekly Sunday School lesson, go to Google Classroom. You use a Chrome browser and search for Google Classroom. You can join our classroom with this code:

Google Classroom Code
[fwvs5fk](#)

Good morning! Here is the lesson for May 24 —Paul Escapes Prison. God showed great love to Paul, and that love changed Paul's whole life. Find out what happens when Paul shares about Jesus. Paul's friends help him out of a bad situation. You can join our classroom by searching for Google Classrooms. Click on that, then use the code to join: [fwvs5fk](#)

We hope you enjoy! There is a video, and there are pages to print and do, coloring pages, and other activities. Our worship goes on whether we are in a church building or not!

Much Love to you.

Ms. Russell and Ms. Odom
First United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande



Google Classroom

FROM YOUR LAY LEADER

Patti Melsheimer

How have you been keeping yourself occupied during the Pandemic “stay at home” order??

People are finding a variety of creative things to do during this quarantine time! Several of my friends who are quilters have been completing projects that were started but never finished – what a great feeling to accomplish something!

Quilt made by Priscilla Alquist



Several members of our church have been making masks – not just one or two but many – even hundreds! What a wonderful service they are providing to their friends and relatives and to essential workers.

Wearing masks made by Gloria Johnson, we also socially distance

Have you been exercising? Many of us have been missing our weekly yoga classes with Niccola Nelson. If you would like to join her “virtually” you can go to www.yogashinenipomo.com for her “Live” streaming chair yoga class on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:45 – 8:30 a.m. Or you can go to her website at www.niccolayoga.com and watch one of her videos.



If you don't want to do yoga, at least get out for a walk even if it is just around the outside of your house or apartment! Everything I read urges us to get fresh air! And while you are outside take a moment to just watch and listen! I have been amazed at how many birds and lizards there are that I never took note of before now. We have had a special treat at our home. Two mallard ducks have been visiting our little back yard pond. Last Thursday we went out and found not only the male and female but also eight little ducklings! What fun to watch them paddle around in the water lilies! Many in our congregation are fortunate enough to have a dog or cat to help them pass the time or encourage getting out for a walk.

Stitchery projects have also become quite popular. Our United Methodist Women will gladly provide you with a project if you have run out of your own. There is a basket located just outside the church office door that has several projects that, when completed, will be part of the UMW annual Holiday Boutique. Stop by and pick one up! Or maybe you would like to make some strawberry jam or merlot wine jelly. These too will be welcomed for the Boutique.

Gardening has also taken top billing as a way to keep oneself occupied. Many are crating new “Victory Gardens”, planting vegetables as well as flowers -some in places where vegetables have never been seen before! You might want to start some plants that will be ready for the Boutique plant sale in November.

And many of us are reading – books for book clubs, classics, mysteries, books we always wished we had the time to read – even the Bible! I hope you have found things to help you during this time. Remember you can always call someone or send an email or even a “snail mail” greeting to someone. It will make their day and yours a little brighter! Stay healthy!



Melsheimers' duck pond and garden!



UMM Activities Postponed Until Possible!

UMM Welcome Back BBQ

Currently Set for Sunday September 13th, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The UMM Welcome Back BBQ will take place when it becomes possible. The return will be a process in graduated steps and likely serving and sharing food will not be possible for quite some time to come. Nevertheless, there is a tentative date, hopefully submitted above. Meanwhile, God bless our UMM and UMM leaders as they continue to shelter at home. The Vandenberg Adventure Tour at the Air Force Base is also on "hold". The UMM is expecting to hear back from them in the fall.



PROGRAM MINISTRY

The month of April has come and gone, and May is the same. The many things planned for March, April and May will be rescheduled for when we no longer need to be practicing social distancing! If you have ideas, please let me know through email or a phone call. I miss you all!

submitted by Sandy Underwood
(contact information found in Church Directory)



“The organized unit of the United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.”

Our UMW activities remain on hold as we continue with the “Stay at Home”. June was supposed to be a month of celebrations and gatherings with hugs. Instead we find ourselves in a holding pattern. This is a different world, but we will get through this together. “United Methodist Women will find peace in times of anxiety”. Interestingly, this was one of the themes for upcoming UMW Mission Study, before we began the Shelter at Home. Tara Barnes in UMW Response Magazine says “United Methodist Women is a creative, supportive fellowship. United Methodist Women members comfort and act to bring people together ... no doubt in these past few months you’ve leaned on your creativity to offer your support and your endless faith, hope and love in action”.

Use this time to get closer to God. When feeling particularly anxious, pray the Serenity Prayer:

“God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.”

The letters for the **Virtual Tea, honoring our mothers**, have been sent. In your mail you should receive an envelope with a tea bag, letter and envelope. Help us make the virtual tea a success.



Many mothers were treated with a rose as they drove through the church parking lot on Mothers Day, or a rose was placed on their doorstep. This was done with love and was well received. We continue to do what we can.

Not forgetting our fathers on Father’s Day, we will again be in the church parking lot on Sunday, June 21, between 10 am and 12:30 pm. We have a special token of our appreciation for them and perhaps a musical presentation for all our enjoyment!

We continue to fill a basket with kits to work on at home for the Craft Boutique that you can pick up outside the church office. When you have to go out, you could just pick up kits during regular office hours. No need to go into the office. Everyone can keep socially distanced.

Remember to give one of your UMW friends a call. Let’s all keep in touch. And remember **God** during these times, keep in touch with him. We’re strong women and God is with us and will guide us.

submitted by Gerry McGuire



UMW BOOK CLUB ON HOLD

We will meet again in September—hopefully. During the summer keep your eyes open for possible books to read together. In the meantime stay safe and connected with others.

submitted by Judy Leonard



Bishop Hagiya's Update on Public Health (May 25, 2020)

Editor's Note: Rev. Mary has chosen selected parts of this update to include in our newsletter.

From Bishop Hagiya:

“.... I do want to share our phased plans for reopening of in-person worship. We, as your California-Pacific Conference leadership propose a process for your own local church. Here are the broad steps involved:

- Follow the protocols set forth by your state, county or city in reopening in-person worship services.
- Develop a detailed plan of action that will be implemented before the date of resuming in-person worships.
- Create a local church task force that will create and implement the plan.
- Have the plan approved by your Administrative Council or leadership equivalent.
- Submit the final plan for to your District Superintendent for final approval.

“We are working on a check-off form to guide your local church plan, and this should be available later this week, as well as a document that includes all the relevant information involved in relaunching your in-person worship services.... Our proposed Cal-Pac steps outlined above can be worked on immediately, and if followed, they will not take long to be approved by your District Superintendent. Please remember that this applies to any groups who currently rent from your local church.

“According to our Book of Discipline, all appointed clergy do have the authority over the worship service itself, and clergy do have the authority to delay the reopening of in-person worship if they feel it is not yet safe. We have full confidence that our appointed clergy and lay leadership will be able to work this out amicably. For those who will be receiving a new pastor this coming July, we ask that you include your incoming pastor in the plans for relaunching...

“There will be major adjustments to our worship services until a vaccine is discovered, mass produced and administered to everyone. We really hope that some form of outdoor worship can be created to begin with. Our sanctuaries are some of the worst places to protect people from the virus, due to poor ventilation and an enclosed space. So, outdoor worship is preferred if possible. This also involves the banning of public singing as all the research shows that this can spread the virus precipitously. The Skagit Valley choir practice in the state of Washington is the prime example, where one person infected 87% of those attending the three-hour choir practice, and tragically two died of COVID-19.

“One additional caution will be very difficult for us: We strongly urge that those over 65 or who have underlying medical conditions avoid public worship at this time.

“Our Book of Discipline is quite clear that we cannot ban anyone from attending our worship services, so those who are in those categories and are willing to risk their health and safety by coming to physical worship must be accepted. However, the church must make some kind of arrangement for their safety, in a separate room or section of the sanctuary. This will be part of your plan for relaunching your worship services.

“This is the reason that online or streamed worship services should be continued indefinitely. It will be a way for those who are 65+ or who have medical conditions can safely participate while remaining at home.

“There will be much more detailed information coming to you this week, but I wanted to brief you on how we will proceed to relaunching our public in-person worship services. As always, we are available for counsel or questions, and just contact your own District Superintendent.

Be the Hope.

Bishop Grant J. Hagiya

Los Angeles Area Resident Bishop

Board of Trustees' MEETING

Hello from your Trustees committee. We hope you are staying healthy and looking forward to returning to church in the near future. For this reason we wanted to share with you some of the projects we are currently working on.

The major project is the development of new procedures and obtaining supplies for the safe and healthy opening of the church and the Children's Center. This is a complex problem with many new requirements that will have to be addressed. Some of the subjects that we are looking into are: new cleaning procedures, the availability of masks and disinfectant supplies, the way to do social distancing in the church and developing one way traffic patterns. Our Children's Center Director, Maddy, is also working on plans for the pre-school. We have not yet set a date for re-opening the church. That will be dependent upon what information and direction we receive from Bishop Hagiya and our state and county officials.

On Monday, June 8, a certified asbestos contractor will remove the asbestos material from the narthex ceiling so that we can continue the work of refurbishing the area. We are hoping to complete this project before the reopening of the church.

If you have questions about any of these things, please contact me or one of the members of the Trustees committee.

Submitted by Dick Melsheimer

Do you
recognize
these
"Masked
Members"?
See page 8
for the
reveal!



UPDATE ON NARTHEX REFURBISHMENT

submitted by Patti Melsheimer

Although we have not yet reached our fundraising goal for the refurbishment of the Narthex, the Trustees have decided that because the church building is closed due to the COVID-19 shutdown, it would be a good time to move forward with the refurbishment.

As I write, the old water fountain is being removed. On June 8-9 (Monday-Tuesday) the asbestos in the ceiling of the Narthex will be removed. While that is being accomplished no one will be able to enter the area. That effort will be followed by upgrading the lighting, then redoing the ceiling and painting the walls. The final effort will be the installation of new carpeting. Whether we will be finished with the refurbishing before we begin to have services is at this point still unclear. Either way, expect to see changes when you enter the Narthex.

Thank you for your patience during the refurbishment!

If you have not yet had an opportunity to contribute to the Refurbishment fund, you may send in a donation with the envelope sent out each week with Pastor Mary's letter or you can charge your contribution on our new e-giving system.

The Sanctuary!

Tuesday & Thursday 10:00 a.m. to Noon

(closed one Tuesday for narthex asbestos removal on Tuesday June 9th)

We all benefit from a sense of safety and belonging to help us endure the challenges of this difficult time. Current circumstances quicken fear and stir up whatever anxieties are latent within us. There are real threats from the outside and there's a real need for comfort on the inside. You may choose to seek the peace and quiet of our own church sanctuary. The ceiling is high, the ventilation is good, the participants are few and you can definitely sit down for a moment or two many feet apart at this time. Folks have been coming and going one or two at a time on Tuesdays and Thursdays and finding solace there. You can too. We sanitize before and after and there is sanitizer at the door for you to use. Just be sure you have a mask so that in the event that you are interacting with someone else you can use it.

Tuesday, June 9th, the usual Tuesday prayer time will not be offered as workers will be finishing up asbestos removal in the narthex and securing the place for your safety in that regard. Thank you! —MBB

The "Masked Members" are unmasked! Thank you to Nancy and Roger Sperling for sending their photos!



News from the Mission Team

by Judy Atwood, chair

MISSION TEAM: June 2020

Judy Atwood

MISSION HIGHLIGHTS:

1. [God's Steadfast Love...in Action](#)
2. [God's Love in Action in Chile](#)
3. [Sanctuary Cleaning](#)
4. [Special Giving Totals for 2020](#)

1. GOD'S STEADFAST LOVE...IN ACTION

Global Ministries has been busy since the start of the COVID-19 virus outbreak. Our church, through Global ministries, has been working with health boards, medical professionals, disaster management coordinators and faith leaders to prevent further spread of the disease.

Through the UMCOR COVID-19 Response funds, grants will be rapidly released to equip partners to assist worldwide vulnerable populations impacted by COVID-19, including indigenous communities and racial/ethnic communities in the United States. Grants from this fund will be disbursed to address health concerns, food insecurity, water and hygiene limitations and other pressing needs.

As we shelter in place, we can be there for others. To start with we can pray for all around the world in this pandemic, as it includes all of us. If you are able and desire, you can give a gift to UMCOR through the Advance #3022612. When you say yes to supporting this response, you will help bring God's love to life for those who need it most. This is God's Love in Action.

2. GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION IN CHILE

Today I received an email from John Elmore in Chile, our covenant missionary. This is what he reports. "I just received the \$1,200 stimulus check. I was a bit surprised, for the obvious reason that I cannot stimulate the economy in the United States.



After talking about this with my wife, we decided we could use that money to help the marginalized families here in our community.

We will go into a community, and find the Mom and Pop store that serves that community and ask which families are the most needy.

What we will do is fill up individual household bags with essentials, flour, noodles, sugar, tomato sauce, oil and anything else we might think the families might need to get them through this time. In the bag also we will put a copy of an Upper Room, in Spanish. Does not need to be a new one, anyone will do. We will gather them from the different church members in the community.

Then we will deliver. This is a way that we think we can maybe make a difference during these times. I hope you can share this with your church so you know your Missionary is still in mission."

3. SANCTUARY CLEANING

When we know the process and when we might be able to join in person again for worship, we will let you know if there are ways in which you might be able to help, if you are comfortable doing so.

4. SPECIAL GIVING TOTALS FOR 2020

Many hands made much possible!



Your second mile giving will be caught up when we have the information.

A THOUGHT FOR MEDITATION:
DON'T ASK GOD TO GUIDE YOUR FOOTSTEPS,
IF YOU'RE NOT WILLING TO MOVE YOUR FEET.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>MAY 31</p> <p>Pentecost</p>	1	2	3	<p>4</p> <p>Mike Reineke Birthday</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Jim Steiner Birthday</p>	6
<p>7</p> <p>TRINITY SUNDAY</p> <p>Ray Douglas Birthday</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Sadie Krovious Birthday</p>	9	10	<p>11</p> <p>Bill Weitkamp Birthday</p>	12	13
<p>14</p> <p>SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST</p> <p>Lilly Bauske Birthday</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Janice Moore Birthday</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Dennis Eiler Birthday</p> <p>Evelyn Green Birthday</p>	<p>17</p> <p>George Stewart Birthday</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Pauline Castillo Birthday</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Gloria Johnson Birthday</p> <p>Connie Clark Birthday</p>	<p>20</p> <p>First Day of Summer</p> <p>BG Perrigey Birthday</p>
<p>21</p> <p>THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST</p> <p>HAPPY FATHERS DAY!</p>	22	<p>23</p> <p>Sandy Underwood Birthday</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Victoria Paredes Birthday</p>	25	26	27
<p>28</p> <p>FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST</p> <p>Bobbi Merris Birthday</p>	29	<p>30</p> <p>Serving at People's Kitchen Meal at Noon</p>				



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PLEASE NOTE:

Layout Editor reserves the right to cut and edit articles to meet space limitations.



Flowers!

Our florist at the Grand Bouquet is definitely open for business. Even though we are not worshipping in person, you are welcomed to order flowers to honor the special occasions in your life and the lives of your loved ones with a “virtual” bouquet. That means that we will order the flowers, place them on the altar for our video mini-worship and deliver them to you after they appear as your floral tribute in our on-line service.

So, if you're interested, call the church office. I talked to the gal at the Grand Bouquet, and I'll be talking to Nancy St. Laurent who has faithfully picked up our bouquets for worship and a couple of our regular volunteers and we will see that you receive the flowers even if you cannot pick them up. We would love to continue to share your joys and special anniversaries. —*MBB*



Mike Reineke	06/04
Jim Steiner	06/05
Ray Douglas	06/07
Sadie Krovious	06/08
Bill Weitkamp	06/11
Lilly Bauske	06/14
Janice Moore	06/15
Dennis Eiler	06/16
Evelyn Green	06/16
George Stewart	06/17
Pauline Castillo	06/18
Connie Clark	06/19
Gloria Johnson	06/19
BG Perriguy	06/20
Sandy Underwood	06/23
Victoria Paredes	06/24
Bobbi Merris	06/28



We share sadness at the passing of Phil McKibben, beloved friend and long-time church member who passed away at Mission View Health Center this week. We are grateful for his loving son, Bill, who was able to see him and be with him during this difficult time after a surgery for a perforated ulcer. Our hearts go out to Bill as we pray for Phil and his family at his passing.

You are welcomed to send us news of your special occasions and milestones. We won't print them in the Cast-a-net without express permission as this newsletter does go on our website, but we can include bits of news about our people in those weekly letters if there's a new grandchild, graduation, anniversary or something you'd like to share.

—*MBB*

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Visit us on the web at worshipweekly.com

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www.facebook.com/fumcag



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THE FIVE CITIES CHRISTIAN WOMEN FOOD PANTRY CURRENTLY NEEDS:

- *Boxes of Macaroni and Cheese**
- *Breakfast Cereals**

You can bring these items to the church office, which is usually open between 9 AM and 2 PM Monday-Thursday. They will be delivered to the Pantry by church members who volunteer at the Pantry.

Thank You!

