



# CONNECTIONS

*“Making Christian Disciples”*

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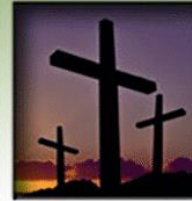
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**All services and events are subject to cancel/change as we receive news on the Coronavirus.**

**If you do not have access to the internet, would you please let us know? We would like to find other avenues for us to be in touch with you and share communication.**

**If you are receiving this newsletter by USPS mail, but have an email, please let us know so we can get your email on file and send communication electronically.**

## *Holy Week Schedule*



### *Palm Sunday*

April 5<sup>th</sup> 9:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.



### *Holy Thursday*

April 9<sup>th</sup> – 6:15 p.m.



### *Good Friday*

April 10<sup>th</sup> – 6:15 p.m.



## *Easter*



Saturday, April 11<sup>th</sup> – 5:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 12<sup>th</sup> – 9:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

*We will worship in person or online*

*Come worship with us!*

### ***April Memory Verse:***

Hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

*Romans 5:5*

## April 2020 Pastor Ponderings

### Viral Infections



### Pastor Ponderings

The spread of the coronavirus is something I have not seen before. There have been severe threats to public health during my life time, much more deadly than what we have seen this virus do so far – I'm just thinking of the global AIDS epidemic. The virus (HIV) that causes AIDS still affects almost 40 million people (37.9 million in 2018).

What's 'amazing' about the coronavirus is the news coverage. For many of us it has almost become a habit to wake up in the morning and check our phones briefly for the latest number of infected people and new responses that governments and health officials come up with.

**What role does your personal faith play in the ways you engage with news regarding the coronavirus?**

It can be very easy to get lost in complex questions like: *Why does the Bible say God created this world perfectly when there are so many terrible conditions in it? Are viruses part of God's original creation plan? If diseases are the consequences of humanity's fall (Garden of Eden story of the Bible), why did God create humans with an immune system – did he foresee the fall?*

Do you see how tedious such good questions can get? Instead, I wonder if it is more helpful to 'use' our faith in more practical ways. The coronavirus – along with many other ugly conditions – reminds us that we don't live in a safe world, no matter how precautions we live in it. I find much comfort in knowing that my help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth (Psalm 121:1). I understand my own life as something that is ultimately in God's hands. There are many things that I am not in control of – I can do things to stay healthy, but I cannot completely prevent from getting sick or into an accident. When God tells me not to worry about tomorrow (Matthew 6:34) I understand that I'm not asked to be ignorant about what I can do today for my tomorrow – I'm asked to understand that my life, its quality, and its span are not a random coincidence. God is my help and my hope, this is how I approach my today and my tomorrow, and I hope to be viral about it.

Truly yours,

*Pastor Markus*

Pastor Markus

## How Church Continues On...

When looking at our statistics on Facebook it is very encouraging to see how many people our posts are reaching. Reach is defined as the number of unique people who saw your content. The post from our Pastors on 3/14 reached 1.6 thousand people! This week alone we had an engagement rate of 413 people (More than a Sunday!) Engagement on Facebook is defined as post clicks, likes, shares and comments. Our reach went up by over 1000%.

Thank you so much for sharing and commenting on our online services. While this is a challenging time it provides new opportunities for you to spread good and encouraging news with your family and friends, even at great distance.

**If you do not have access to the internet, would you please let us know? We would like to find other avenues for us to be in touch with you and share communication.**



*We Are The*  
**CHURCH**



### A Message from Pastor Liz

We are currently spending 6 weeks investigating the case for Christ, and for some there may be great intrigue and for others the book may cause less than excitement. It seems as if the two books between Advent and Lent are polar opposites. Well, that's because they are! Just as we all learn differently, we all grow spiritually different as well. During the Advent season not so long ago, we focused on the spirituality of what it meant to live in the mystery of Advent. During Lent, we have come from a much more intellectual standing. I hope that through these two seasons you have come to understand better for yourself, which style of reading, of focus is more comfortable and which one pushes you more. I hope, so that you may not stay within that which is comfortable, but rather use both to grow as disciples. God has called us to be contemplative and investigative in different parts of life. Which is God calling you to right now?

With God's love,

*Pastor Liz*



### Social Justice Topics from FUMC Congregation (Sticky Notes) 2020 Condensed

- Education and destigmatizing of persons experiencing homelessness
- Affordable housing in Fox Cities and beyond
- Gaps in community resources and services
- Transportation inequity
- Transition from incarceration into society
- Child abuse and neglect
- Foster care
- Ageism- unemployment in younger and older ages
- Respect for immigrants
- Understanding that black and other people of color born in America are also as deserving of compassion, kindness and respect as immigrants
- Institutional racism and its effects on our educational, private and religious organizations
- Be honest with ourselves about micro aggressions
- Historical trauma- how it affects us, what it means
- Recycling and how to encourage companies to use environmentally friendly packaging and our church to be more environmentally friendly
- Climate change, sustainability and environmental awareness
- Destigmatizing mental illness
- Inclusiveness, equality and safety for LGBTQ community members
- Sex trafficking
- Loneliness
- To like and help each other
- Food insecurity
- Poverty in Fox Cities/ persons living in poverty but can't qualify for needed services
- Love



Thank you from Kathy Orth

A heartfelt thank you for prayers, food, cards, and encouragement during my recent hospitalizations

~Kathy

### Church Records

#### Deaths:

03/07/2020

Beverly Kemp

03/16/2020

Ralph Chamberlain





### Scrapbooking Weekend

How can we serve to serve? What better way than to have a Scrapbooking Weekend this fall at First Church?! Currently we are looking for those interested in being a part of a Leadership Team to set up this great event. The purpose of this event is to provide a space for people to scrapbook while donating proceeds to one of our great community organizations! Call the church office at 920-734-2677 today!



## Adieu

We at FUMC Appleton have been blessed with the leadership and talent of Bob Butler as Director of Music Ministries for the past 13 years. Bob has submitted his wish to retire at the end of this choir season in May of this year.

Under his leadership the music ministry has flourished from the Festival of Carols to special music events as well as the music we all enjoy every week in worship. In conversation about his retirement, Bob stated that he felt his service in this position was a ministry and not a job. Bob plans include spending more time with his family.

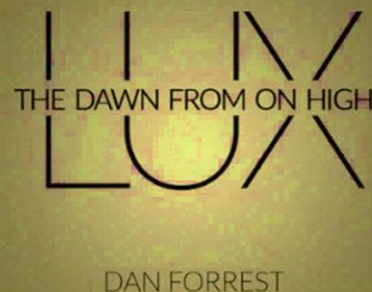
We plan on celebrating Bob's retirement in Fellowship Hall on Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> following the 9:00 a.m. service. We will be collecting money for a Love Gift for Bob; anyone wishing to contribute, please give your donation to the church office no later than April 30<sup>th</sup>.



One way that you can still support the Church at this time is through Scrip! Now is a great time to sign up to purchase Scrip on your computer or phone! There are many businesses that allow you to upload Scrip gift cards to your phone such as Amazon, Home Depot, Kohl's, Lowe's, Sam's, Starbucks, TJ Maxx, Target, Walmart and even UberEats! Also many of your present gift cards will allow you to Reload them online - Kwik Trip, Meijers, Pick n Save, Starbucks and Walmart. Sign up by going to ShopWithScrip.com or the MyScripWallet app. The enrollment code is BD4E7AC639651.

You can also still purchase physical Scrip gift cards by calling the Church office. We will make arrangements for you to pick them up during regular Church office hours. The building is locked, but we will meet you at the door.

Thank you for your continued support of the Church through Scrip purchases. Please call or email Lynn ([Lhalley@appfumc.org](mailto:Lhalley@appfumc.org)) with any questions!



### Annual Musical Celebration of Pentecost

The Festival Choir and Orchestra of the First United Methodist Church plan to present Dan Forrest's *LUX: The Dawn from On High* on May 17<sup>th</sup> for the church's annual musical celebration of Pentecost. This is one of the composer's newest major works, a five-movement work, following in the same vein as his *Requiem* and *Jubilate Deo*, both of which have previously been presented here at First Church. This masterwork encompasses ancient chant, shimmering light, unconditional love, heavenly joy, and deep peace in its setting of five texts about Light in darkness. You won't want to miss out on this special music presentation, so mark your calendars now, May 17<sup>th</sup> for a combined morning worship service at 10:00.

## Multigenerational Missions

A new whole church venture to increase our mission works will begin in May. The vision is to foster inter-generational relationships while sharing God's love with others. This is a collaborative effort between members of the Mission Ministry Team, the Youth and Young Adult ministries and the Volunteers In Mission (VIM) teams. We are seeking ways to serve many, in many places, in many ways. First, we will be offering Mission Blast dates a few times a year allowing our members to join together and blast off from our church serving the local community in small groups - inclusive of various ages. There may be opportunities to come back together after serving to share how we have been impacted or have seen God at work through others. More opportunities may include short trips around the state to serve agencies that serve others. These may include day trips or an overnight or two. Ideas for agencies, groups, or locations we can serve can be sent to Lynn Herge, 920-858-4318 or [lherge88@gmail.com](mailto:lherge88@gmail.com).

The first Blast will take place on May 2, from 9 to 12. We are going to start by serving our church and its members. This day will focus on light home repairs, yard care, or other small projects for those unable to do this work themselves. We may also do some work around our church campus and those living nearby. Please volunteer on *You Can Count On Me*, by email to [office@appfumc.org](mailto:office@appfumc.org) or by calling the office 920-734-2677 on or before April 27. If you know of anyone who is in need of assistance please forward their name and phone number to Brian [bstahl@appfumc.org](mailto:bstahl@appfumc.org). Looking forward to growing our missional work with you!



### Our Amazing Church!

First Church is AMAZING!!! The collection of the hygiene supplies for the homeless during the month of February was a success beyond expectations! Thank you, Church!

When staff from The Family Radio, sponsors of the **Help for the Homeless Hygiene Drive**, saw what we collected, their jaws just dropped with huge smiles on their faces. They were so impressed! Ruth Henschel and Cynthia Whitely, from the Missions Ministry Team, along with Brian Stahl's help, loaded The Family Radio van with almost 1200 items! Among the count, there were 436 rolls of TP, 58 tubes of toothpaste, 90 toothbrushes and much more such as deodorants, bar soap, shampoos, diapers and feminine products.

These items, along with other items collected from the community, will be distributed to 16 local Fox Cities Crisis Programs, such as Pillars and the Salvation Army. The Crisis Programs are so very grateful for the hygiene product donations. Helping to keep people clean and healthy is essential.

Blessings to all from the Mission Committee and the support you give monthly for the Mission of the Month donations.

### 2020 Budget Update as of February 29, 2020

Through the month of February, the Church was in good financial condition.

<b>Total Income</b>	<b>February \$61,268</b>	<b>Year to Date \$178,515</b>
<b>Budgeted Income</b>	<b>February \$54,208</b>	<b>Year to Date \$167,953</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>February \$75,407</b>	<b>Year to Date \$144,924</b>

*Of course since then things have changed drastically. Without worship services, we will undoubtedly see shortages in our giving. While the staff will do everything possible to cut spending, we appreciate you remembering the Church financially through these times.*



# YOUTH GROUP

Hey Awesome Youth,

The past few days have been filled with uncertainty and questions. I don't pretend to have the answers. However, what I do know, and truly believe is God is in control, He loves you, and the church loves you. You may feel isolated, bored, or afraid right now. And that is ok. We have cancelled Worship, Youth Group, and Classes. We have been encouraged to practice Social Distancing, but we have the ability through social media to stay connected. My hope is through our new FUMC Appleton Youth Instagram (fumcappletonyouth) and Youth facebook page (FUMC Appleton Youth Ministries) we can gather together each day and encourage each other with the Love of Christ. Please hear these words from Hebrews, "Let us consider how to inspire each other to greater love and to righteous deeds, not forgetting to gather as a community, as some have forgotten, but encouraging each other, especially as the day of His return approaches." As of today all Youth Ministries events are cancelled. If you would like to talk about what you are going through, please call or text me at 920-840-5075. #YouAreLoved #ChurchOfToday

Boom!

Brian Stahl

Director of Youth & Young Adult Ministries



Ladies: Mark your calendar!

**4<sup>th</sup> Annual Salad Luncheon**  
**Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.**

Sponsored by Phoebe Circle



## Ways to Give

Of course one option to give is through the mail. The postal carrier has assured us that they will continue to deliver mail daily and we will be in the office to process any payments received that way.

However, giving electronically allows for less handling of funds and therefore is easier on our staff and volunteers. You can sign up to give electronically through this link <https://bit.ly/2IRRjEG> or on our website [www.appfumc.org](http://www.appfumc.org). In the middle of the home page you will see Electronic Giving/Online Giving - CLICK HERE. Just create an online account and the system allows you to set up weekly, monthly, or one-time payments through your checking account or credit card.

If you prefer to pay through your phone, you can upload our free giving app at GivePlus. Just go to the app store, find our church, and set up your account; then you can give from your phone at any time.



## Easter Flowers

Your Chancel Ministry Team is planning a beautiful backdrop for all of us as we worship our risen Savior during Easter. A variety of spring flowers will be an important part of our décor. When making a donation, you may designate whether it is "in honor of" or "in memory of" a friend or family member.

These will be listed on an insert in the Easter bulletins. If you have any questions, please call Julie Anderson at 731-7899. ***Please call the church office with your flower order. Flowers available this year are:*** Easter Lily \$15, Mum \$15, Tulips \$15, Daffodil \$15, and Hydrangea \$25.

You can also make a monetary donation to Appleton Area Schools.

# FUMC KIDZ

**Please check our Facebook page, [FUMCKidzKonnection](#), for daily inspiration, messages, updates, and resources for families.**

If you need supplies to do crafts or activities with your children please let Christine Ladewig know. She would love to gather items and drop them off or meet you outside our church building.

There will be no Sunday School, Kidz Konnection, Children or Family Ministry team meetings, or gatherings until further notice.

Please check our website, Facebook page, or contact Christine Ladewig for updates or questions.

Each Sunday during our recorded Sunday services there will be a message for our children. View the service on our website at [www.appfumc.com](http://www.appfumc.com)

If you have an immediate need for food, prayer, or just need to talk to someone please feel free to contact Christine Ladewig at church 920-734-2677 or by cell at 920-750-9433.

## Sunday School Pretzel Fundraiser



Thank you to everyone that came and supported our kids! We earned \$212 that will be donated to our three partner schools: West High School, Wilson Middle School, and Columbus Elementary School. The kids did a great job and prepared some tasty treats for everyone to enjoy!



## Come worship with us!

Sundays at 9:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. or Saturdays at 5:30 p.m.

Children's Sunday School begins at 9:00 a.m. in Kidz Worship

The Sacrament of Holy Communion is offered on the First Weekend of the Month.

Office Phone 920-734-2677 Fax number 920-882-1461 Website [www.appfumc.org](http://www.appfumc.org)

Want to receive this newsletter by e-mail? E-mail [office@appfumc.org](mailto:office@appfumc.org) with that request.

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<https://www.facebook.com/FirstUnitedMethodistChurchofAppleton/>

*Hearing Loop and Handicap Accessible*

**Ministers:**

All members and friends

**Lay Leader:**

Julie Anderson [zookeeper5us@yahoo.com](mailto:zookeeper5us@yahoo.com)

**Lay Speaker:**

Denise Anderson [djanderson851@gmail.com](mailto:djanderson851@gmail.com)

**Staff Parish Relations Chairperson:**

Steve Spangenberg [stevespangenberg142@gmail.com](mailto:stevespangenberg142@gmail.com)

**Lead Pastor:**

Rev. Markus Wegenast [Mwegenast@appfumc.org](mailto:Mwegenast@appfumc.org)

**Pastor of Discipleship:**

Rev. Liz Whitford [LWhitford@appfumc.org](mailto:LWhitford@appfumc.org)

**Visitation Pastor:**

Rev. Dave Farina [DLFarina71@hotmail.com](mailto:DLFarina71@hotmail.com)

**Director of Youth & Young Adult Ministries:**

Brian Stahl [Bstahl@appfumc.org](mailto:Bstahl@appfumc.org)

**Director of Children's Ministries:**

Christine Ladewig [CLadewig@appfumc.org](mailto:CLadewig@appfumc.org)

**Director of Music Ministries & Sanctuary Choir:**

Bob Butler [Bbutler@appfumc.org](mailto:Bbutler@appfumc.org)

**Principal Organist:**

Kathy Orth [Lkorth8285@att.net](mailto:Lkorth8285@att.net)

**Pianist:**

Norma Anderson [nja9553@gmail.com](mailto:nja9553@gmail.com)

**Interim Assistant to the Director of Music &****Bass Clef Director:**

PJ Uhazie [pjuhaz@gmail.com](mailto:pjuhaz@gmail.com)

**Wesley Handbell Choir Director:**

Danny Schierl [danny.schierl@gmail.com](mailto:danny.schierl@gmail.com)

**Sonshine Singers Director:**

Kelci Page [Kelci.m.page@Lawrence.edu](mailto:Kelci.m.page@Lawrence.edu)

**Grace Director:**

Cindy Trudell [Cindy.Trudell@yahoo.com](mailto:Cindy.Trudell@yahoo.com)

**Nursery Coordinator:**

Shelby Wessley [swessley37@gmail.com](mailto:swessley37@gmail.com)

**Building & Technology Manager:**

Tom Weinfurter [TomW@appfumc.org](mailto:TomW@appfumc.org)

**Finance Manager:**

Lynn Halley [LHalley@appfumc.org](mailto:LHalley@appfumc.org)

**Administrative Assistant:**

Amy Concepción [Amy@appfumc.org](mailto:Amy@appfumc.org)

**Custodians:**

Tom Martens/ Doug Herge/ norm Ladewig

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

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Appleton, WI 54911

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## VIM Plant Sale

Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>

The Volunteers in Mission (VIM) team plan to hold their annual plant sale again this year.

There are two ways to support VIM in this mission:

- 1- Donate plants for the sale
- 2- Visit the sale in the church gym to choose plants you would like in your own garden. *All sales are on a donation basis - you pay what you feel is reasonable.*





## FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

325 East Franklin Street

Appleton, Wisconsin 54911-5476

Phone (920) 734-2677 • E-mail [office@appfumc.org](mailto:office@appfumc.org)

Website: [www.appfumc.org](http://www.appfumc.org)

March 19, 2020

Dear Members and Friends,

In this difficult time, we at First Church are aware of the many pressing issues on your mind, and we want you to know we are still here to help. Our Finance Committee is charged with doing what we can to keep the church as financially healthy as possible during this challenging time period. We will be monitoring expenses on a weekly basis and trying to save on some costs during this near lock down mode. However many of our expenses are fixed. For example our pastors are still delivering messages and in many ways their position has become more complex as they lead our church and its members through this health emergency.

Approximately 40% of our church presently donates electronically, so we are very dependent upon weekly plate offerings. For those of you who give faithfully at worship services, we encourage you to select one of the following options to maintain your gifting:

---Give through the mail. Whether it be your weekly amount or combine weeks into one check, the postal carrier has assured us they will continue to deliver mail daily and the church will be here to receive your payment

---Consider this as a good time to convert to electronic gifting. This allows for less handling of funds, is dependable, and helps our staff and volunteers. You can sign up to give electronically through this link <https://bit.ly/2IRRjEG> or on our website [www.appfumc.org](http://www.appfumc.org). In the middle of the Church home page you will see Electronic Giving/Online Giving **CLICK HERE**. Just create an online account and the system allows you to set up weekly, monthly, or one-time payments through your checking account or credit card

---If you would like to donate through your phone, you can upload our free giving app at GivePlus. Just go to your app store, find our church, and set up your account; then you can give from your phone at any time.

--- Call in. If you are not computer savvy but would like to be set up for electronic giving, you can call the electronic company directly and they will talk you through the process or take a payment over the phone.

If you have any questions, contact Lynn Halley at the church office during her hours (Mon, Tues, Thurs 8am-2pm) and she can help you with any of the options listed above.

We have a caring and generous congregation and we know you look forward to seeing First United Methodist Church return to its many ways of meeting your spiritual needs by offering the programs and services you have been accustomed to receiving. With your help and God's guidance, we will get through this together.

Blessings and thanks to you all,

On behalf the Finance Committee  
Richard Ruhsam  
Finance Chairperson