

Reaping and Sowing:

A Newsletter of Ashley and Kilbourne

September 2020

Worship Update

I would like to start by thanking each person and family for your amazing devotion during these last 6 months. You have been committed, flexible, and understanding. You have been willing to try new ways to worship and engage with each other. You have been patient and kind. You have comprised and stayed in relationship in the ways you could. You have been amazing examples of what it looks like to live as a faithful, devoted Christian community. And I will go ahead and thank you for continuing to be so in the coming months as we continue to navigate this pandemic as a community.

While many of us have enjoyed worship at the Oxford Township Park, it is time to plan in ways that we can continue through the fall and winter. We offered another online survey to gauge where people are and to try to make decisions that are both safe and reflective of the desires of the community. As you might imagine, though, the survey showed that we are not all of one mind or in the same place with the virus. Both Ashley and Kilbourne were almost evenly split between the desire to stay as we are and to separate into our normal two communities, making decisions harder. However, we must all recognize that at some point the weather will force us inside, and I do not want us to be making that decision on the fly and then not be properly prepared or to have failed to communicate as well as possible. So while we are divided in our exact preferences, decisions have been made as to have to proceed.

Much of the remainder of this newsletter is about upcoming worship changes. We will be continuing to offer online worship for all those who are not able to join us in person. For those for are able to be in-person, there are dates and reminders on the following page.

I am lovingly asking all of you to be diligent in following the guidelines that have been previously set and sent (these were in our newsletter this summer but if you want a new copy, I am happy to send you one). The number one concerned listed on our survey was that guidelines would not be followed. Following guidelines allows everyone to know what to expect so that they can make the best informed decision based on health and other factors. In the October newsletter there will be a full list of guidelines to make sure we are all on the same page.

Thank you again for your grace and patience in this time, and I look forward to worshipping with you in the format that fits you best.

Pastor Beth

October 4th

Starting October 4th, we will resume worshipping at the church properties. Worship will occur at Ashley at 9:30AM and be inside. Worship will occur at Kilbourne at 10:45AM and will be outside, weather permitting.

You are highly encouraged to attend the service that works the best for you, regardless of what your home church is. If 9:30 is the best time for you, then go to Ashley. If outside is more comfortable to you, then go to Kilbourne. Just think of it as God's church with two locations.

Outside worship at Kilbourne will generally follow the same procedure as the park. We ask that you bring your own chair and leave at least 6 feet between family groups. We will have the shelter house available for easy access for those not as good at walking on uneven ground. Worship will be outside 'weather permitting' which means that it is not actively precipitating or about to, and that it is 52 degrees or warmer. So dress accordingly!

Sept 20th Hymn Sing

Many in our congregations have shared that they have missed singing together. However, we have been unsure on how to safely sing, due to a lack of information. Recently there was conducted a study on how to safely sing together. Following the guidelines provided by the study, we will joyously lift our voices together on one of our last Sundays at the township park at 10AM!

It will not be a true hymn sing because the hymns will all be selected ahead of time and copies of the hymns will be distributed at the beginning of service. However, the hope is that at least one of your favorites will be in the mix!

In order to safely sing, we will follow the guidelines laid out by the study. All are asked to wear their masks for the entire time. If you cannot do so due to health conditions, we invite you to listen and enjoy but refrain from singing. Please also sit at least 6 feet from those not in your family group. The weather should hopefully be comfortable enough that neither of these will be an issue. Finally, we will sing for about 20-25 minutes and then we ask all to leave the area. Sunday school will still occur but will be moved to an area of fresh air. We ask general conversations to head to the parking lot or other spaces.

We hope to see all who are comfortable at this song-filled service. If you wish to see a copy of the study, email Pastor Beth and she will send you a link.

Sept 27th: Final Sunday at the Park

Come join together for this final Sunday as we rejoice for our time together and take Holy Communion together. Service will begin at 10AM.

Great Can Off

Thank you to all who donated to our Great Can Off! We surpassed our goal and ended up with about 2080 items. We have been blessed and have been a blessing to others.

Donations were divided between Camp Christian Food Pantry, Buckeye Valley Food Pantry and People in Need.



Beans for Benevolence

Beans is well under way for this year! We have collected \$2470 of the \$4500 needed. Please consider continuing to donate generously to the fund that does God's work in our communities.

Beans for Benevolence is a fund operated by Ashley UMC which helps out organizations and individuals when there is a need. Examples of the use of funds are sponsoring Honor Flights, paying childcare expenses for a family after a medical emergency impacted their finances, and buying meat for holiday meals for Buckeye Valley Food Pantry. Through Beans for Benevolence, Ashley UMC actively gives to local and global neighbors and lives out God's call to serve others.

Donations can be marked for "Beans" and put in the morning offering container, if you cannot make it to worship, feel free to mail it in.

BOOK CLUB

Book Club will meet via Zoom on the fourth Mondays of the months at 6:30PM. All are welcome to attend even if you have never been before. The meeting information will be emailed.

Sept 28th
Oct 26th
Nov 23rd
Dec 28th
Jan 25th

My Story by Elizabeth Smart
Mercy by Jodi Piccoli
The Hate You Give by Angie Thompson
Holiday on Ice by David Sedaris
This Is How It Always Is by Laurie Frankel

Bible Study

We are continuing to meet for Bible study on Wednesdays (except the last Wednesdays of the month) at 7pm via Zoom. Typically we discuss the scripture that will be preached the following Sunday. There is no prep. Just show up with your Bible.

Meeting login information is shared in the weekly email but if you do not receive that and wish to attend, contact Pastor Beth.



Food Pantry

For those of you that are not familiar with the Food Pantry, a lot of changes have taken place since the initial concept was started. We started out in ½ of a Church closet and over several months, went from the closet, to the Fellowship Hall, and then into a room in the Education wing in the back of the Church where we even have our own freezer.

Before the pandemic, we were a quiet pantry filled entirely by donations from our congregations and our 4H and Girl Scout groups. We initially served 5 or 6 people a week. Once the COVID 19 hit, we were helping 15-20 people a week. These people were often shopping for families of four or more. We were so busy and often ended the day with almost nothing on the shelves. We added another day for the pantry to be open, to take care of the number people who needed help. We also went from needing just two volunteers a week to needing a whole team when for safety we asked shoppers to stay in their vehicles and allow volunteers to do the shopping.

At first we continued to rely only on the churches to fill the pantry but we soon realized that we needed more. In April, our prayers were answered. Community members with no direct church connection began generously donating money and items. Both Ashley and Kilbourne church members gave even more generously of their money, donations and time. Also over the course of a couple months, we received food assistance grants through the United Way, and the COVID-19 Relief Fund totaling \$4,250.00.

Due to all the people and organizations, we have been able to create a well-stocked, safely operated pantry. We have served to-date, approximately 300 individuals in-person and reached approximately 700 family members (and pets). As an example, last Tuesday we had 13 individuals, who shopped for a total of 42 family members!

Through it all we have stayed true to the guiding principles of our food pantry. That God called us to feed the hungry. In line with that belief, we do not require proof of need or any personal documentation. If someone is hungry, we give them food, no questions asked.

I want to thank all the dedicated volunteers from both Kilbourne and Ashley. I also want to thank everyone who has given in any way. This truly takes a community and we are blessed to have all of you. .

Kathy Caudill, Food Pantry Manger

A Note on Health: Resilience and Your Mental Health

I listened to a TED (Technology, Entertainment and Design) talk the other day in my infinite spare time. It seems we have a lot of extra time lately due to COVID-19. The talk was presented by a resilience expert by the name of Lucy Hone. It sort of fit our current situation. She suggested that resilient people have three things in common:

1. Stuff Happens - they realize that they are not being discriminated against. (Who knew?)
2. They select where to focus their attention - accepting what they can change and what they cannot. (I knew about that one.)
3. Andthey ask themselves, "Is what I'm doing helping me or harming me?"

I would like to add a fourth.....Pray About It

Ann Sanderson, RN