



The United Methodist Church of Ephrata

117 C Street NW
Ephrata, WA 98823



Pastor Don Dunn.....pastor@umcephrata.org...(208) 757-1733
Admin Assistant: Tresa Poe.....office@umcephrata.org...(509) 398-2599
Custodian: Jamie Downing



facebook.com/umcofeprata

Office Hours

Church Office is closed but can
be reached by phone.

Phone: (509)754-4664

Email: office@umcephrata.org



www.umcephrata.org

Thank you for supporting the work of the church through your prayers, your presence, your gifts, your service and your witness as we pursue our mission:

“We Serve God by Serving Others”

The United Methodist Church of Ephrata



The Update Newsletter

“We Serve God by Serving Others.”

September 2020

Still waiting for the time to be back in the sanctuary for worship! Our efforts are pending approval for Stage 2. Stage 3 is where we will need to be if we are going to have reduced the risk of Coronavirus enough to gather for corporate worship. All kinds of events have been canceled, postponed, or altered; weddings, graduations, celebrations, school attendance, and social gathering of one kind or another.

I am currently pondering a sermon by Walter Brueggemann “Until the Dancing Begins Again.” Walter draws from Jeremiah and writes of the cancellations as “no time to celebrate and no time to bet on the future.”

Jeremiah 7:34 – The corpses pile up and weddings among other events are cancelled, the land is laid to waste.

Jeremiah 16:9 – Not even having funerals.

Jeremiah 25:10 – Jeremiah anticipates that the land will become a ruin and a waste.

Walter continues about Jeremiah leaning into the disaster of his people seeing the failure to meet as a sign of the death of the city. “Social life has failed,” he continues and makes the link to our experience of the current pandemic. Walter following Jeremiah is critical of those who would continue assembling, among them Pastors who insist that Jesus will protect them from the virus. Walter says his own Pastor calls those Pastors who insist on meeting “Knuckleheads.” Jeremiah did not name them that because the whole social reality was shut down. (Note: Some large TV churches continue on TV with most worshipping not wearing masks.)

But Jeremiah is not without Hope! Jeremiah envisions a time of return, of a time when celebrations will again take place, and when people, “can again bet on and invest in the future.”

Jeremiah 33:10-11 ¹⁰ *The Lord proclaims: You have said about this place, “It is a wasteland, without humans or animals.” Yet in the ravaged and uninhabited towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem, ¹¹ the sounds of joy and laughter and the voices of the bride and the bridegroom will again be heard. So will the voices of those who say, as thank offerings are brought to the Lord’s temple, “Give thanks to the Lord of heavenly forces, for the Lord is good and his kindness lasts forever.” I will bring back the captives of this land as they were before, says the Lord.*

The anticipation will occur where waste, disaster, and devastation were, now with life resuming with “rich social thickness.” “Amid the sounds of social gladness there will be songs of thank offerings sung to the God who restores and revivifies.” *Give thanks to the God of host, for the Lord is good, for his steadfast love endures forever. –Psalm 126:11*

Walter has helped us to see that when scripture uses “steadfast love” or “loving kindness,” or “unfailing love,” these all mean “tenacious solidarity.” I like that: “God has not abandoned God’s people or God’s world – God remains faithful even through the devastation.”....**Continued on Next Page....**



Jeremiah speaks of the hope of returning to weddings, and the restoration of fortunes, Jeremiah 29:14, 30:3, 18, 31:23, 32:44, 33:7, 27. God restores – Homecoming, Friday gives way to Easter. Singing and dancing as when the Son returns home – lost now found, and they must celebrate. –Luke 15:11-32

Taken from “Until the Dancing Begins Again” by Walter Brueggemann

This song of thanks that Jeremiah anticipates puts me in mind of the great German anthem of thanks, “Now Thank We All Our God.” This best loved hymn of German Evangelicals was written by Pastor Martin Rinkart during the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) as a table grace for his family. The notice I have on this work by Pastor Rinkart offers this startling awareness:

Martin Rinkart was pastor in Eilenburg, Saxony, the town of his birth. The walled city was a refuge for many fleeing war and pestilence. Left as the only clergyman in town, he often buried as many as forty or fifty persons in one day. Although his wife died of the pestilence, Rinkart survived (A New Century Hymnal Companion: Ag Guide to the Hymns ed. by Kristen L. Forman [Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1998] 421.)

He wrote not only during the long-running war but in the face of pestilence that decimated the population as he presided over their many deaths. We do well to ponder this simple table prayer of gratitude amid pestilence:

*Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voices,
who wondrous things hath done, in whom this world rejoices;
who, from our mothers’ arms, hath blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.
O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us;
and keep us in God’s grace, and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ills in this world and the next.*

The context of his work, not unlike our own, was a scene of relentless death. Yet Rinkart wrote and sang of thanks! The hymn celebrates the “wondrous things” done by “this bounteous God.” We can picture pastor Rickart with his children counting out, one by one, “countless gifts of love.” The hymn invites us to cling to God’s grace that “frees us of all ills” in all imaginable futures. The words are as sure, bold, and as awe-filled as is Israel’s best doxology in 33:11.

Jeremiah breaths hope in the face of despair. God is the one who holds the future, who opens up ways of life before us. God is pro-life¹ in the broadest sense of that term from womb to tomb. Health care, education, livable wages, safety net, secure housing, elimination of poverty, environmental care of creation, addressing climate change, immigration, voting rights, civility in politics, overcoming systemic racism, all of which constitute some of what it means to be pro-life.

Now God is working, note how recently student debts and interest can be deferred, and medical copayments cancelled. God is working on behalf of people and care of the earth. These are ways we witness God’s abiding presence in this pandemic and beyond. Now thank we all our God.

Pastor Don

*A Statement of a Third Way by Rondell Trevino-December 22, 2019-appealing to Latinx evangelicas they are emphasized the full sacred dignity of all humans. Vol.70 #1, Cross Currents, March 2020 Pg. 47&50.

¹Genesis 2:7 - 7 the Lord God formed the human from the topsoil of the fertile land and blew life’s breath into his nostrils. The human came to life. Also John 10:10 - ¹⁰The thief enters only to steal, kill, and destroy. I came so that they could have life—indeed, so that they could live life to the fullest.

PRAYER REQUESTS

“I call to you, Lord, come quickly to me; hear me when I call to you. May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice.” Psalm 141: 1-2

One of the most wonderful gifts we are given is the gift of prayer.

We can pray for one another in times of need as well as times of celebration.

To join the email prayer chain, email Tresa at office@umcephrata.org

Prayers for Health, Healing, and Well-Being

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| • Bob St. Clair Jr | • Eleanor Gausman | • Marie Marsh |
| • Ed Sivula | • Dan Anderson | • Amy Torrens-Harry |
| • Ron Gardner | • Ed Warren | • Eric Moulton |
| • Steven Grass | • Marlene Fisk Warren | • Francie Hernandez |
| • Brian Davisson | • David Prince | • Shirley Johnson |
| • Renee Muse | • Abbie Thorndike | • Jeremy Warren |
| • Al Davisson | • Dennis Ackerman | • Kierra Smith |
| • Steve Smith | • Amy Torrens-Harry | • Jessica Smith |
| • Justin Townley | • Rayce & Tiffany Barnes | • Julea Dunn |
| • Gail Catlow | • Tabatha | |
| • Joe Hatch | • David Thompson | |



Chris Wash
Kevin Harmon
Michael Oliveira

Please let us know if someone should be added or taken off our prayer list by contacting the church office: Also contact the church office if you know of someone in need of a visit by our Congregational Care Team or Pastor Don.



Volunteer Coordinator Needed

If you'd like to help when our church returns to regular worship services and other events, consider volunteering to organize our volunteers. Tura Yount, who previously held this position, has left a notebook detailing how the task of scheduling the folks who serve as ushers, greeters, counters, fellowship hosts, liturgists and other assistants can be accomplished. This coordinator also serves on the Church Council. If you have questions about the position or you'd like to volun-

To date we are still looking for another accompanist, or multiple people to share the job, for when church services resume. Please spread the word and if you know of anyone who may be interested, have them call the church for more information. Music teacher, Pat Patterson, from Big Bend is offering some music in our weekly worship and we are grateful for the sharing of his gifts with us.



Unfortunately at this point we are going to have to cancel the yard sale for this year.

Thank you for your understanding.

UMC Update

Northwest Region is still maintaining suspension of worship and group activity in our church buildings. We continue to do what we can without gathering. One person commented recently that the church is not a building, the church is the people and does not necessarily depend on gathering, as important as that may be. We just got notification that our Phase 2 request was approved!! We are getting there. Phase 2 is up to 10 people which is basically the same as what we have been doing but we are on our way. Our Phase 3 request has been reviewed as well and some changes will be made and resubmitted to the District Superintendent after the September 9th Council meeting. Thank you for your patience! We will keep everyone updated on the status of our Phases.

**As some of you already know, people started getting text messages from someone claiming to be Pastor Don. We did find out that we were not the only church to be targeted in this way. We do not know at this time how they are getting the directory information but we are not the only church to have this happen.



First of all I would just like to thank everyone for being flexible with me while I finished college. My last day of class will be September 6th and I will have my Bachelor's in Applied Management. Thank you all for your love and support.

On another note, starting August 31st I will be working more from home to help family with homeschooling my nephews, due to Ephrata Schools going to online classes only. Three different boys with three different schedules and parents who both cannot work from home is a challenge. All of these kids, parents, and teachers need our prayers right now. This is a tough time for everyone. This is only temporary of course until it is safe for the kids to get back to school. I will still be in and out of the office and I will have the office phone forwarded to my cell phone so please don't hesitate to call or email me at any time (office@umcephrata.org) or you can call my cell phone directly at 509-398-2599.



Connect With Us!!

Links to all sermons, Zoom bible/book studies are on our website at
www.umcephrata.org

Zoom Bible Study (Sermon text for Sunday), Wednesdays at 12pm

Zoom Book Study (See Below), Mondays, Starting Sept. 21st at 11am

Sermons posted by Saturday to our Facebook & YouTube Channel

*****Subscribe to our YouTube channel and get notifications when a video has posted.***



Fellowship/Studies

Pastor would like to offer a chat time on Sundays or Mondays over Zoom/Conference Call. If interest let us know so we can decide the best day and time.

Pastor Don would also like to offer a study on the 10 Commandments or Fear of the Other, beginning on Monday, September 21st at 11am. Please call or email us if you are interested. The 10 Commandments covers the first 3 commandments is a longer study using Priorities by Anne Robertson. Fear of the Other by William Willimon is a shorter book.



Rob Mantz
September 2nd

Paul Morris
September 4th

Bob DelMar
September 5th

McKinley Fulk
September 13th

Jackie Driver
September 20th

Nick White
September 24th

Donna Anderson
September 26th



Nick & Ellen White
Sept 11th - 49 yrs

Camille & Christy Price
Sept 19th - 39 yrs

Louise & Ed Sivula
Sept 27th - 51 yrs

Mark Your Calendar

Sept 2	Zoom Bible Study, 12pm
Sept 7	Labor Day
Sept 9	Zoom Bible Study, 12pm & Zoom Church Council Meeting @ 5:15pm
Sept 11	Patriot Day
Sept 13	Grandparent's Day
Sept 15-Oct 15	Hispanic Heritage Month
Sept 16	Zoom Bible Study, 12pm
Sept 22	First Day of Autumn
Sept 23	Zoom Bible Study, 12pm
Sept 24	Community Dinner, 5:30pm (Take out or Delivery)
Sept 30	Zoom Bible Study, 12pm