

Reflections

July 2020

317 S. Main Street
Monticello, AR 71655



OUR MISSION CONTINUES

“And coming up, Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority on heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to keep all that I have commanded you. And, see, I am with you every day until the end of the age.’”—Matthew 28:18-20

One summer when I was a kid, my brother and I got into watching reruns of *Mission: Impossible*. The show began with the Impossible Mission Force (IMF) leader, Jim Phelps, receiving a recording, usually on a small reel-to-reel tape. The recording would begin, “Your mission, should you decide to accept it...” and would end “This tape will self-destruct in 5 seconds.” Phelps would retrieve the dossier and gather the agents with the necessary skills to accomplish the mission.

I think about that show every time I read the Great Commission at the end of Matthew’s gospel. After the resurrection, Jesus called his disciples and gave them a mission: disciple all the nations, baptizing and teaching them Jesus’ commands. Jesus says, “Disciple everybody!” Talk about an impossible mission!!!

The mission of every United Methodist congregation is to “make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world” (*Book of Discipline*, ¶120). That involves two things: 1) Making new disciples by inviting people to commit to follow Christ, and 2) Helping committed disciples (church members) grow in faith and service to God. When those two things happen in a church, the world is changed. We accept that mission in our baptism.

Making new disciples may seem like an impossible mission in a pandemic with limited use of our facility. Nevertheless, with God’s help we are accomplishing that mission. In a short amount of time, we developed an excellent weekly online worship service. I appreciate our church staff, volunteer musicians, and everyone who has shared a video. Online worship has expanded our congregation’s reach: over the last two weeks, viewers included people from eleven states as well as England and Spain. While it is not yet safe to meet in person, we are using tools like Zoom, Facebook Live, and old-fashioned phone trees to try to keep our congregation connected. No, it is not the same as meeting in person, but it is a blessing to have these tools at our disposal. Sunday school classes and small groups will not be meeting in-person and indoors for the foreseeable future. If your group or class would like to use Zoom, please email me at hammett.evans@fumcmonticello.org.

Jesus never promised that our mission would be easy. He did promise, however, that he would be with us. In the coming year, may we continue to follow where Jesus leads, and may God continue to accomplish Jesus’ mission through us. This document will not self-destruct in 5 seconds.

Grace and Peace!



Transition to Online Giving

Thanks to everyone who has made the transition to online giving. Because we won't be "passing the plates" in worship for the foreseeable future, **we encourage every family who is able to transition to electronic giving.** There are three ways for you to do so that:

Go to www.fumcmonticello.org/give. Sign up for an account. It's free, simple, and secure.

Download the Give+ app to your phone or smart device (<https://giveplushelp.vancopayments.com/>). Set up an account for ease of use.

Contact your bank to set up an automatic draft to the church.

For those who choose to give by check, please mail your gifts to the church office at 317 South Main Street, Monticello, AR 71655. However you choose to give, God will honor and bless it for the building of God's Kingdom in Monticello and beyond.

UPDATE: FUMC MONTICELLO IN THE PANDEMIC

a Word from Bro. Hammett

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we closed the doors to the church facility on March 13. The church staff and I have moved our offices to our homes. The office phone has been forwarded to our Administrative Assistant, Lynne Russell. Feel free to call her at (870) 367-2471. Here are answers to some of the questions I have received.

Why is the church facility closed? Because people can be contagious with COVID-19 without showing symptoms. Most, if not all, of our interactions within the building put us in close proximity with one another. That puts all of us at risk, especially those who are most vulnerable.

When will in-person church events, including worship, resume? We are still waiting until there is a steady, fourteen-consecutive-day decline in active cases in Arkansas to enter Stage 1 (see below). In Stage 1, church staff may work in their offices or in different parts of the facility at the same time. Right now, the only in-person church events taking place are Feed Our Neighbors and the drive-by parades. The parades allow us to see each other with appropriate distancing between families. We are considering offering outdoor worship opportunities, including drive-in worship. Recently, Bishop Mueller released additional guidance, which places a 50-person limit on outdoor worship services (for the purposes of contact tracing). For a congregation our size, this will require families to make a reservation. Even these outdoor events require us to strictly enforce physical distancing between households. Indoor worship and other events would be limited to 30 minutes or less with strict enforcement of mask and distancing requirements.

What about Sunday school classes, Small Groups, Circles, etc.? Though it may be possible for such groups of 10 or less to meet in-person, indoors in Stage 1, there would be a 30 minute time limit, masks would be required, and households would have to maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from one another under Bishop Mueller's current guidance. It isn't the same as meeting in person, but right now Zoom is your best option. I would be glad to work with any group or class to coordinate meeting in Zoom.

How long will the restrictions be in place? Bishop Mueller has provided pastors with guidance for re-opening in three stages. We will enter Stage 1, allowing groups of 10 persons or less to meet, once we have had fourteen consecutive days of declining cases in the State of Arkansas. In-person, indoor gatherings will be phased in over time, and will include strict enforcement of safety measures like wearing masks and physical distancing. Stage 2 allows for groups of less than 50, and Stage 3 allows for groups of more than 50 with strict enforcement of the restrictions. According to the current guidance, the church will fully re-open without restrictions and safety measures in place when there is a vaccine or 95%-effective treatment for COVID-19.

What can I do? Support our church family through your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness, and keep yourself and your family safe and healthy. This includes the following:

Wear a mask or facial covering anytime you are near people who do not live in your household. It is true that cloth masks aren't 100% effective, but they do *reduce* your risk of infection, especially when everyone is wearing one.

Maintain a minimum of 6ft of physical distance between yourself and anyone who does not live in your household. Wear a mask if you have to be inside with them.

Limit your time indoors with people who do not live in your home. Being indoors – in a home, in a restaurant, or in a vehicle – is *highly* risky. Do not allow anyone in your home who does not live with you. If you must enter someone else's home, masks are essential for everyone, and limit the time you are together. Contracting COVID-19 involves both distance from infected persons and duration of exposure. Based on current research, 5 minutes of conversation in close proximity is enough to transmit the disease. An hour or more of conversation in a home or restaurant is more than enough to spread the disease.

Who can I contact about a care or concern? Call or text me at (501) 944-9719 or email me at hammett.evans@fumcmonticello.org.



FUMY News

July 2020

Important Reminders:

- **Sundays in July...**
Junior High Small Group
@ 8 pm (via zoom)
- **Mondays in July...**
Girls Only Small Group
@ 8 pm (via zoom)
- **Tuesdays in July...**
FUMY Alums @ 8 pm
(via zoom)
- **Wednesdays in July...**
All FUMY @ 8 pm
(via zoom)
- **July 30—August 1...**
Virtual FUMY Mission
Experience with worship
@ 8 pm & small groups
(via zoom)

DIFFERENT...not the same as another or each other; unlike in nature, form, or quality. The month of June was again VERY different for FUMY. This past month we zoomed on Sunday, Monday and Wednesday nights! Sunday nights were for “guys only.” We played trivia and hung out! Monday nights were “girls only” and we, too, played trivia and hung out PLUS we had a fun “makeup tutorial” with Morgan Hopper. Wednesday nights were with all FUMY. We had a youth lesson, more games plus small groups all via Zoom. This month our mission challenge was for the youth to add food & toiletry items to the FUMC Blessing Box. We will announce the youth winner (the youth that added items the most number of times to the box) of the \$50 gift card soon! We gave Brendon Berry his Bible before he left for basic training for US Coast Guard. We plan to give the other high school graduates their Bibles during the month of July.

Our summer mission trip has been canceled and we have come up with a virtual mission experience! July 30—August 1 we will have mission opportunities and online worship each night. Plus right now we are having a t-shirt design contest so that we will have a t-shirt for our mission experience. We welcome FUMY alums & all FUMY plus youth parents to be a part of our mission experience.

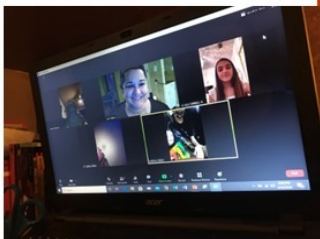
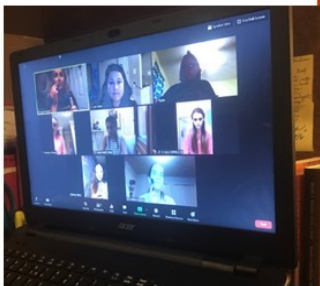
July means we welcome our new 7th graders to FUMY! We will Zoom with them on Sundays and Wednesdays. We are excited to get to know our new 8 youth! Our annual FUMY Rummage Sale is **CANCELLED for this summer**. As soon as it is safe to have one, we will. Thank you for saving your rummage for our group. I'm sorry we cannot collect it just now.

Please pray for our youth and their parents and all of us. **Our first response is TO DO NO HARM!** So we will continue to Zoom and social distance and wear our masks so that we do no harm!

I want to leave you with **Psalm 86: 3-11 (CEB)**, “³ Have mercy on me, Lord, because I cry out to you all day long. ⁴ Make your servant’s life happy again because, my Lord, I offer my life to you, ⁵ because, my Lord, you are good and forgiving, full of faithful love for all those who cry out to you. ⁶ Listen closely to my prayer, LORD; pay close attention to the sound of my requests for mercy. ⁷ Whenever I am in trouble, I cry out to you, because you will answer me. ⁸ My Lord! There is no one like you among the gods! There is nothing that can compare to your works! ⁹ All the nations that you’ve made will come and bow down before you, Lord; they will glorify your name, ¹⁰ because you are awesome and a wonder worker. **You are God. Just you.** ¹¹ Teach me your way, LORD, so that I can walk in your truth. **Make my heart focused only on honoring your name.**”

Let us continue to be the hands & feet of Jesus...be safe! Wear your masks! And know that you are in my prayers.

Christ above all, Lori



Children's Ministry News

Vacation Bible School is JULY 6-10. The theme is Knights of North Castle. Ember Davis is the director and has so many wonderful things planned. Those who register will get a t-shirt, a VBS packet, and five other packets full of daily activities that include a Bible story, coloring sheets, and art activities with needed supplies included. Kathy Borchardt and Jennifer Fryer will be teaching new songs that go along with the theme. It is all going to be such fun! Please sign up your kids, grandkids, friends, and neighbors by going to funcmonticello.org. Click on MENU.

Scroll down and click on VBS 2020. Click. Register. It's not too late. You can be part of this from wherever you are!

A few weeks ago our children each received a fun bag that was delivered to their doors. We miss seeing each one! I hope we never forget this "being apart" experience and never take being together for granted ever again.

In Christian love,
Ms. Brenda, Children's Minister

"And He took them up in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them." Mark 10:16.



BSA Troop 67 has been given permission by the district and national office to hold small patrol meetings outside. We will start doing these to keep the boys on task with merit badge and rank tasks so they do not fall too far behind. Screening procedures will be used for all meetings and masks and social distancing will be required. Cub Scout Pack 69 will not start back any meetings at this time.

De Soto Area council is offering weekend Camporee options for both Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts starting July 17 through August 2. Information is available from the Council office or you can contact Renee' Holland. The same weekend camporees are happening at other councils around the state. They have established a screening tool and set up the proper ADH procedures required with any outside event during this time in the state.

If you have any questions about the Scouting program in Monticello please feel free to call Andy Connard, Troop 67 Scoutmaster, at 870-443-1111; Renee Holland at 870-550-1281; or Jonathon McMahan, Pack 69 Scoutmaster, at 870-723-0996.

FEED Our NEIGHBORS Ministry

THANK YOU for supporting this ministry with your prayers, nonperishable food items, and monetary contributions. We are now delivering a 'box' to 42 different families each week. With your help and the help of other groups, we are able to supplement Our Neighbors' groceries each week with a relatively small box of food. By and large the food that is in the 'boxes' comes from a grant from the Arkansas United Methodist Foundation and the Arkansas FoodBank. FUMC receives a Food Distribution from this grant about every four weeks. It contains some of these items: fresh and/or canned fruits, canned vegetables, frozen and/or canned meats, peanut butter, pasta, spaghetti sauce, loaves of bread, and various other nonperishable items.

There are two different teams from our church family that work with this Food Distribution: one to receive the food from the truck and another to separate the food into over 100 'boxes' (so the food can be carried to Our Neighbors). Lori Fallon heads the teams that receive and separate the food from the Food Distributions! THANK YOU, Lori, and THANK YOU to your teams!

A few weeks ago before the next scheduled distribution, we were over a dozen 'boxes' short. Thanks to the nonperishables you had left at the church, enough additional 'boxes' were made to complete the number we needed for Our Neighbors that fourth Thursday. But there was still one more Thursday before the next Food Distribution. Thanks to your monetary donations, we were able to order plate lunches from the local restaurant Young's. We delivered 97 plate lunches to Our Neighbors. You should have seen the looks on their faces and heard their many Thank YOUs. On one Thursday included in each 'box' was a \$50 gift certificate to be used at Save a Lot. Many of Our Neighbors were speechless, but all were genuinely thankful! THANK YOU to FEED the KIDS for these gift certificates!

Each Thursday several of us meet at 3:30 P.M. in the FUMC Family Life Center. We enter with our masks on and do not remove them. Our temperatures are taken, and we each fill out and sign a CDC form before loading our cars with the 'boxes' to take to our families. Those faithful deliverers are the following: Maggie Brown, LeAnne Burch, Hammett Evans, Christine Felts, Michelle Pounds, Julie Smith, Louisa Smith, Paul Smith, and Kathy Tumilson. THANK YOU!

Love in Christ,
Brenda Wright

***Memorials were given to the glory of God and
in loving memory of:***

Carolyn Brown by: Sue & David Anderson, Judy & George Harris, Rene & Jerry Johnson, Charlotte McGarr, Diane and Mark Pennington, and Patty Ross

Betty Jane Andrews Davis by: Commercial Bank, Bennie & Buck Henderson & employees of Mr. Bug, Patty Ross, Sandra & J.D. West

Peggy Goodwin by: Sandra & J.D. West

Tommy Hadwin by: Charlotte McGarr

Larry Hart by: Charlotte McGarr

Leone Hendrickson by: Sandra & J.D. West

Wes McCoy by: Sandra & J.D. West

Norma McGaha by: Sandra & J.D. West

Betty Cater Rabb by: Patty Ross, Sandra & J.D. West

Judy Ryburn by: Elgenia & Jim Ross

In loving honor of: Janie and Larry Fuller by: Sandra & J.D. West

Gifts Given in Love:

FUMC Youth by: Monteene McCoy

FUMC Women by: Monteene McCoy

Samaritan's Feet by: Monteene McCoy

Weekly Events

Sundays

9:00 AM Online Worship

Wednesdays:

6:00 Online Wednesday meeting

Acknowledgments

The McCoy Family thanks the FUMC church family for the prayers for their family.

The Brown Family thank their FUMC church family for providing lunch after Mrs. Brown's graveside service. A special thank you to Sandy Funderberg for making it happen.

A-State Childhood Services thanks FUMC for the use of the FLC—pre COVID 19—to train and connect with early childhood educators.

Chancel Choir and Bells of Hope

HOW IN THE WORLD ARE THESE PEOPLE MAKING MUSIC?

Due to the restrains of COVID 19, the Chancel Choir and Bells of Hope are embracing a new way to make music together! Using MOVTIV Video app (by Shure) each individual records their voice, or handbell instrument, onto their phone. As a tool to balance their tempo and melody line with all other singers and ringers, they listen (through a headset) to a piano accompaniment (provided by our accompanist, Mary Donaldson). Once the individual recording is finished, it is forwarded to the director, Kathy Lyon, who previews and then forwards to Bro. Hammett to complete the final editing and compiling of voices onto the presentation that you watch each Sunday during our on-line worship. This has been a challenge, but a fun venue to share the joy of ensemble singing and ringing. We are blessed with such a great group of talented musicians at FUMC, Monticello! If you see one of these dedicated individuals, please tell them how much you appreciate their continued contribution to our weekly worship!



First United Methodist Church
317 S. Main Street
Monticello, AR 71655