



First United Methodist Church of Dunnellon
OCTOBER 2020
NEWSLETTER

FROM YOUR PASTOR

Blessings as we enter into the Fall season of our church calendar. As you will see in the following information, many of our activities are newly directed and slightly scaled back because of COVID-19. We will continue through the Fall season to have on Sunday mornings, 8 o'clock 30-minute Communion, the 9 o'clock Contemporary, and 11 o'clock Traditional Service.

Communion went well the first Sunday in September so we will continue for the first Sunday of each month in the Fall. We will also continue Sunday school for the children at the 9 o'clock hour and the adult Sunday school class at 9:30. Miss Irene also offers a children's service at 11:00.

We have started a weekly midweek service on Thursdays in the sanctuary at 3 o'clock. I am leading this combination worship service and the former Grace Bible study class. The topic for the Fall will be the Holy Spirit. We do not yet have plans for our Wednesday night service to come back together just because it has always centered around the common meal that we all enjoy so very much and that type of gathering is still difficult at this time.

We are making plans for a Sacred Day of prayer on 26 September. We will be joining Franklin Graham and Jonathan Cahn as they make a holy walk of prayer at the Washington Mall. You will hear more about that very soon.

We are so blessed with our technology and we continue to learn how to use this vital work for God's kingdom. Thank you for your patience especially at times when we have difficulties posting the Sunday morning services online. We are so thankful to have our new sound tech and his dear bride who is our organist at our church. They have been wonderful in helping us get to where we are even at this point of our ministry.

Our yearly charge conference has been set this year for October 18 at 4 o'clock. This will be a virtual conference and you will hear more information about that in the near future.

We are so thankful that our tithes and offerings have increased over the last month and we hope and pray that throughout the Fall season this will continue to grow. This active Christian discipleship will only enhance the mission and ministry of our church. The Lord is still on the throne as we all know very well and even in the midst of a pandemic. Our Heavenly Father will guide, lead and direct us as we move forward building the kingdom in everything that we do. Blessings, Pastor Eddie

AGAPE SAFETY MINISTRY by: Bud Bowley

Since the pandemic we have pretty much been shut down and at a standstill with our training. PTL we will be starting back with our monthly meetings on 9/24 @ 6pm in Building #5. We have several members who are on the injury list, and we have had several resignations. With the church starting in-person services we have had several team members step up and provide protection. We have two church members recently ask to join our team and as soon as we are allowed, we will start back getting them and a few of our existing team members trained and licensed. Anyone interested in becoming a team member please contact a team member or the church office.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Harmony Preschool by: Linda Jones We have made it through COVID-19! Harmony would like to extend our gratitude for all the donations and we're happy to say we are back on track.

We started the VPK 2020-2021 school year on August 10th and it is going really well! With VPK starting, we can receive ELC payments again which is going to continue steering us on an upward path. We are also able to offer help for some parents with virtual school for their school aged children.

Harmony currently has 8 teachers on staff, with one of those teachers being a full time cleaner. We will be continuing to take safety precautions and continuously sanitizing for the remainder of the year. To avoid

combining groups of students, we have changed our hours to 7am-4pm for the remainder of the year to accommodate teachers being in their classroom with the same group of students for the entire day.

Thank you so much for everything that everyone continues to do for us, and we cannot wait to get back to normal. We are all missing the church activities immensely!

Sunday School by: Irene Brugh We are blessed to have about 7 or 8 children at 9:00 a.m. However, at 11 o'clock the children's program is slower to come back. I am hoping we will see more children at 11:00 a.m. if you child has been unable to attend, we would love to send lesson materials. Please let the office know.

FORGET ME NOT MINSITRY by: Grace Burks

Praying that everyone is staying home and taking care of their loved ones. It is with a sad heart that we are not yet able to open the Forget Me Not Ministry until we know the danger of spreading this dangerous virus is over.

Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. -Matthew 6:34 (NRSV)

Whatever tomorrow brings, God will walk us through it. Hugs and Blessings to everyone

HERNANDO HOMELESS MINISTRY by: Mike and Susie Phillips

Mike and I want to say thank you to the Missions Committee for allowing me to present the Hernando Homeless Ministry as the September Mission Moment this year. The "Moment" has generated funds to provide food for the homeless into 2021 and we are so grateful. Also, we now have volunteers for all Fridays through December.

I would like to define the services and physical needs that Connections and the Citrus County Family Resource Center offer: Connections is where the homeless go for services such as: Meals, Showers, Washer & Dryer, Computer to touch base with family, Nurses & Doctor

If you are interested in helping with the medical program, there is a list on the Welcome Center counter of O-T-C Medicines. We only take these donations on Wednesdays to Connections and deliver directly to the nurses.

Citrus County Family Resource Center offers physical and services such as: Food, Clothing and Shoes, Bikes, Tents, Tarps, Sleeping Bags, Blankets, Ice Chests, Bug Sprays, Parenting Classes

The Resource Center has relocated to a facility on Hwy. 200. They reopened on Wednesday, September 9th, but at this time they are only accepting food and clothing.

Tom Tarkenton, Happy Feet, has offered us money to purchase children's shoes and socks for the Resource Center. I will be getting in touch with Ginger and she will provide the (boy's - girl's) sizes needed.

LAY LEADER by: Irene Brugh

I am very pleased that we are able to have so many of our committee meetings and small groups return, and I'm looking forward to more groups forming in the future. We do hope that we receive more ideas from our congregation for increasing our income and saving on expenses. I urge all of our congregation to pray for The Church and the upcoming conferences. It is vitally important that we are united in our stand for Christ and His word. Please continue to support our Pastor and the church and I look forward to seeing everyone back in church for in person worship. God bless you all.

MISSION COMMITTEE by Rick DuCharme

The Missions Committee continues to meet throughout the Coronavirus pandemic. The committee met at the regular times in April and May using the Zoom computer application, and then in person monthly from June through September. Here is the latest news on our Missions programs:

In *Honduras*, Bob Wood, Jr. reports the Virus issue remains pretty bad. Online school started August 24. The school received a donation of 76 laptops from a company in Atlanta. There are 63 students participating (last year 112). Lessons run from 7 am to 2 pm. Bob paid for Internet service for the student's homes. Bob reports that the reduction in attendance is due to false media reports in Honduras have raised hopes that former VP Biden will be elected and US borders will be opened for all foreigners to enter the US. Four million Hondurans are ready to come to the US for free housing and free schooling. The food distribution program is going well. Bob's members are still not allowed to have church.

In *Cuba*, Pastor Yabay reports there is no Corona Virus in his area of Cuba. He reports buying 13 new 5-person pews (\$180) for the new church to supplement the 4-person pews from the old church. Most were paid for by

parishioners, however, Yabay was authorized to use \$60 from available funds to finish the purchase. They are saving money to buy a new pulpit. They have not been able to start renovation on the Admin Building next to the church due to administrative issues. They continue a monthly "day of service" to a needy family in the congregation. They have also started a youth band. The three satellite church missions are running smoothly.

Food Pantry Coordinator, Joann Garcia, reported on the transition to take over this program. Judy and Terry Vanshur are doing the shopping and Joann is doing the grocery packing.

In Dunnellon, *Habitat for Humanity* coordinator Elizabeth Chryst, reported the Habitat for Humanity build in Dunnellon is continuing. Volunteers with all skill levels are needed from 7:30 to 12:30, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays at 19348 St. George Street in Dunnellon. Email Tyler Starr for more details or to volunteer TStarr@habitatocala.org. Elizabeth reported that Habitat recently received a substantial financial donation from a Dunnellon resident.

Connections Homeless Shelter coordinator Susie Phillips reported, as a result of the Mission Moment presentations in August, Connections has sufficient funds and new volunteers for the remainder of the year. The Resource Center opened at the new location on Hwy 200 September 9. The homeless travel there twice per week to pick up groceries.

Michelle-O-Gram coordinator Sherry Roberts reported Michelle-O-Gram is staying busy with Advanced Imaging continuing from referrals. M-O-G recently paid a bill of \$7,000. for services. Sherry will make a Mission Moment presentation at three services on September 27.

Thanks to all who so faithfully support our church's various mission programs.

PRAYER QUILT MINISTRY by Charlotte Eberhard

Prayers and Squares members meet at Friendship Hall on the 2nd Thursday of each month (unless notified differently) from 9 – 11 AM. New members are always welcome. Fabrics, batting, and patterns are available at the meeting. We will also do the cutting out of a pattern for you, layer a quilt, and assist new quilters.

Due to the size of our congregation it is impossible for us to automatically make a quilt for each person whom is ill or hospitalized. Prayer quilts are made on request. A black notebook with information sheets to request a quilt for a friend or loved one is located at the Welcome Center in the Narthex. A prayer quilt may also be requested by calling Charlotte Eberhard at 352-465-7330 or Laura Rutkowski at 352-465-0527.

Prayer shawls and scarves are available for those whom have a new health issue and have already received a prayer quilt. FUMC shepherds may take one to their lambs. These are in the cabinet beside the coffee machine in Friendship Hall. Cards and bags are available to go with them. There is an updated list of church attendees whom have received a prayer quilt in the cabinet. Please write the name of the person in the notebook provided. Following CDC guidelines due to the COVID-19 virus we ask that each person use the hand sanitizer provided in the Narthex before tying a knot and signing the card. Clean pens are available in a container by the prayer quilts. After using a pen place it in the dirty basket at the Welcome Center to be sanitized. Prayer quilts will be sprayed with a disinfectant before taken down and placed in the blue bag for the recipient. All prayer quilts are machine washable and dryable.

We would like to share a thank you note received from Fran Ziemendorf, a friend of Jay and Lynn Brouwer in Pittsville, WI:

"Dear Jay, Lynn and Prayer Quilt Ministry, I want you to know how much I appreciate the prayers and the quilt. It's beautiful, it's the perfect weight and size, and I use it every day! I wish I could thank each one of you personally, but please know that your thoughtfulness will not be forgotten! I thank God daily for my improved health. He answered prayers! I thank Him for thoughtful and prayerful folks like you! May God bless each of you! Fran."

PRAYER COMMITTEE by Patti Pott

Our prayer chain is growing. If you do not receive the prayer chain and would like to, please send an email to prayers@fumcdunnellon.org and ask to be added. If you have asked to be added and are still not receiving the prayer chain, please check your spam or junk folder.

If you have not yet started attending church and you want a prayer request placed on the Wall of Intercession, there is a prayer box outside the front doors of the church where you may drop off your request. There is also a box for the prayer chain so be sure you pick the right box.

Somebody Cares Community Prayer Boxes have slackened a lot due to COVID. We hope people begin using them again soon. We have 30 boxes placed throughout the community. If you know of a new location for a prayer box, let us know at the prayer chain address and we will make some new ones. Our church's prayer ministry was recently featured in the Rainbow Springs Villager. A copy is posted by the Wall of Intercession.

SEWING FOR SOULS & UGLY QUILTS by Jolynn Peart

It is with a happy heart we announce that our August mission was Newborns in Need. Peg Eldridge (former member) made us aware of their need. She has made burial gowns from wedding dresses for some time. The chapters needed support for all newborns. I am happy to say we sent two boxes to a chapter in Lewiston Maine, where I was born a preemie, and the local Florida chapter in Tampa. We send preemie smocks, burp pads, blankets of various requested sizes and toys all of which a fabulous group of volunteers made.

SECOND LIFE THRIFT SHOP by: Dot Chadwick

Under the new leadership of Cathy Bashore and Diane Takahashi, the Thrift Shop has done very well despite the Covid-19 pandemic. We felt a need to close the Thrift Shop for a second time (due to the rising Florida and Marion County numbers) on July 20th. In August, the Marion County numbers seemed to be moving in a positive direction, so we reopened again on August 26th and we are currently open Mon/Tues/Wed/Fri 10-4 and Sat 10-2. We do ask that volunteers and customers wear a mask.

For donations, we currently accept donation ONLY by calling the store and making an appointment.

Since reopening, we had a 1/2 off sale on clothing marked under \$5 and then we had a \$4 bag sale September 14-16 on adult clothes with a blue or pink tag, all children's clothing.

The pandemic has caused some of our faithful volunteers to, at least temporarily, drop out because they still do not feel "health safe". So, PLEASE, we are asking both men and women who are willing to dedicate 3 hours a week to volunteer at the shop. If you might be interested, come by to visit the shop and fill out an application.

We are a "10% tithing mission", serving the Lord, and First United Methodist Church of Dunnellon.

We continued to ask the Lord to guide us as we faithfully work to serve Him through the Thrift Shop.

SHEPHERD MINISTRY by: Adele Strausburger

We are very grateful for those who have continued to minister as shepherds here at FUMC Dunnellon.

Unfortunately, we have many members(lambs) without Shepherds.

This is a ministry that everyone can be part of to build the Family of God in our part of Dunnellon. Please call the office to volunteer.

STEPHEN MINISTRY by: Irene Brugh

We are looking forward to having a class for new Stephen Ministers and also update our current members as we have received updated material. We continue to minister to our care receivers even though we cannot meet in person. If you would like to find out more about becoming a Stephen Minister, please call the office.

TRANSITION TASK FORCE by: Bob White

Pastor Eddie and I have determined that the work of the Plan B Task Force is complete. I would like to personally thank all those who supported and participated in one way or another! In spite of all the unknowns and course changes during our tenure, we have continued to keep our church leadership and congregation informed. We had an opportunity to sample the churches feelings about our recommendation to join a new Methodist Denomination when it is formed. We were given almost unanimous support by the congregation to move in that direction. Now that a new Methodist Denomination is likely to be formed immediately after the 2021 General Conference our church needs to begin planning for that transition.

In support of that goal Pastor Eddie has asked me to lead a new Transition Task Force to prepare our church to join the newly formed denomination. As before, I will include members from various areas of the church on the Task Force. We plan to have the team together and our first meeting in mid-October. Some of the areas that we will address are:

- Create congregational prayer response to ensure prayer is the foundation for our church making the transition to new denomination.

- Create a communications plan that ensures intentional, regular communication is being shared with entire congregation.
- Create a timeline for tasks that need to be performed and assign each task to an individual with a deadline for accountability purposes.
- Create a Financial Plan for ensuring that all connectional obligations are met for the church's final year in the Florida Conference of The United Methodist Church.
- Review deeds and titles to other assets (including bank and brokerage accounts) to ensure that once transfer has taken place that release of trust clause from UMC is recorded.
- Propose a leadership structure. The new church will only be required to have a leadership team of some kind, a lay leader who can serve as the chair of the leadership team, and a lay member to the annual conference. It is up to each church to decide how it wishes to organize itself from there.
- The new leadership team should decide what the name of the church will be in the new denomination. This may be the time to consider a new name to achieve some differentiation from the post-separation UMC.

With assistance from the WCA Transitional Leadership Council FUMC Dunnellon will be ready to join the new denomination soon after GC2021. We will continue to keep everyone informed as we complete the steps in this transition.

I pray this article finds you all in good health, I have missed our fellowship during this stressful time.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN by Sue Herrala

Three 2020 high school seniors each received \$500 scholarships from the Ruby Walker Designated Fund. Arden Ellis, Kristin Adams and Megan Burns were the recipients for 2020. In addition, Harmony Preschool received \$400 from UMW.

Since all UM Churches in Florida and UMW organizations are under the COVID 19 Guidelines, many plans and events have been either canceled or postponed. The following Dunnellon UMW events and meetings have been rescheduled for the remaining months in 2020 and early 2021. This is, of course, subject to change.

- a) Circle Meetings resume meeting in October 2020 in Friendship Hall.
- b) Annual Spaghetti Dinner - December 5, 2020. TAKE OUT ONLY.
- c) Installation of 2021 Officers - Sunday, December 13, 2020 at 11:00 service.
- d) Annual Flea Market and Bake Sale - Spring2021 specific date TBD