

Events/ Information: Middleburg United Methodist Church

Faith Over Fear

My commentary this month is a compilation of challenges, reflection, and tremendous wrestling of faith against a world filled with chaos and panic over the Coronavirus, or COVID-19. This article has been revised three times since I originally wrote it.

I have asked God...

What is the right and faithful response of the church given this pandemonium amidst government safety restrictions?

It's been a struggle for many of us to discern the right and faithful response apart from our own agendas. Though you won't read this for a couple of more weeks, and hopefully we'll be on the other side of all of this, I still wanted to share with you my reflection, perhaps my reasoning, but all the more I want to share God with you.

Dan and I have been through a lot the past several months. And, as you read in last month's newsletter, you know that there were life and death moments that grew our faith tremendously because of what we experienced in those moments through the power of prayer. We've tried to share them with you to help your faith in a mighty God to grow, too.

The wrestling in recent days has been in discerning whether we would assemble for worship, particularly as the weeks moved on and the cases in the U.S. began to spike. The church leadership and I have a responsibility together for the people of this congregation and for the safety of individuals. Yet, there is our faith in God and our right to assemble together for worship. So, we determined that each person/household could weigh their own risks and determine if they should attend or not. Still, I wondered in the second week, should we be risking the possibility of transmit the virus unknowingly if we were carriers of it. And now, I the third week of the battle, with the governor's stay-at-home order, we're adjusting our "assembling" to comply.

First, please know that I have studied the CDC documents and the governor's state order. **Understand that religious entities are considered essential, and are under the exemption of the order.** HOWEVER, I believe it to be prudent that we limit ourselves to the small gathering of 10 or less at this time. I can have a "skeleton crew" assisting with Sunday morning worship as we prepare to offer online viewing options. The equipment is being installed and I will be notifying you by phone and on our website and Facebook page of the actual method we will be using for your access. I am exploring other ways we may connect throughout the week as well.

In my deliberations, I also studied what the church's role has been in the past and what has been done in every health crisis since the 3rd century as I asked God for wisdom and guidance.

What should our role be now in this unprecedented time?

Here is what God spoke to me that cleared up matters and brought peace to me...

Luke 10 and the story of the Good Samaritan. As worship took to online gatherings and buildings closed on Sundays, I couldn't help but feel that the "big Church" was acting as the Pharisees in the story—the priest and the Levite who walked past the beaten man. **They didn't want to touch for fear of becoming unclean for their rituals they had to perform. The church is supposed to be on the front lines touching and ministering to the lepers, the afflicted, bringing Jesus to bind up the wounds of all those in need.**

Do we really not trust that God will protect us from the virus if we are doing his will?

And in the verses before that story (parable), we read about Jesus sending out the 72 followers. As the 72 returned and shared their reports with joy, Jesus said this in vs. 18-19 (emphasis mine)...

"I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you AUTHORITY to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome ALL the POWER of the enemy; NOTHING WILL HARM YOU." (NIV) * NOTE: Snakes and scorpions represent evil.

Please don't misunderstand because I have compassion on those with compromised immune systems and I realize the need for those in the high-risk categories of health conditions to act on the side of caution. That is why we advised you to stay safe. But...the rest of us (myself included) need to be available and out helping others. We have been given the authority by God in Christ to stamp out the evil and overcome the power of Satan in the world. WE SHOULD BE LIVING IN THAT POWER, not in fear! Believe too in God's sovereignty and his promise to us in Romans 8:28.

We weren't meant to live in isolation either for an extended period of time. Adam needed a suitable companion. You can call it the pretty name of 'social distancing' or even self-quarantine. But what it really is...is isolation. We have been instructed to isolate ourselves from touching one another out of fear of spreading the virus and the consequences that might result. And **that fear has crippled the church from its mission in the world.** The church should be leading the world by faith and instead, I see it retreating and following the world in so many ways. This is only one profound instance.

"For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight."—[1 Corinthians 3:19a]

In today's world, we fortunately can connect through phone and technology. But nothing will ever replace the power of God through the human touch. Touch means so much to those in the hospital with infectious diseases. There is nothing worse than people fearing to touch you. It is through touch that we come to know the living God of grace, that we are real and loved; that we matter; and often that we feel the presence of God with us. We can say all this in words or through music, but touch speaks another language altogether that draws us closer to God and connects us to one another.

Dan and I have faith that God will protect and shield us. It's faith over fear now.

Peace and Love, ~Pastor Carolyn

A Poem Author Peg Hill March 4, 2020

WOW LORD!!! You've told me to discern
You've asked me to stand firm
You've showed me what is True
But sometimes I struggle in what to do

My knees start shaking and I feel weak
I cast my eyes up, cuz its You I seek
That noise that surrounds and causes fear
Just fades away cuz I know You are near

I know You're with me every step of my walk
I'm SO Thankful, Jesus! That You are my Rock
I'm flawed, I'm broken, incomplete, Not Whole
But because of Your Grace, I can reach my goal

You love me so sweetly and ask me to share
You bless me repeatedly to show You care
You hear my cries and Your Peace You give
And show me the Way for me to live

How Can I Still Give To The Church

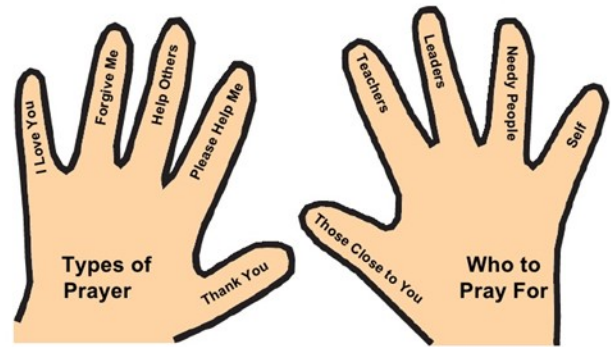
You can continue your giving of your tithes and offerings by mailing a check to the church or by utilizing bill pay options online from your checking account. If you need assistance with this, please contact the church office.



A **New** monthly feature submitted by: Heather Hawley

April Edition

Hands For Prayer



No surprise this month we are focusing on the Corona-virus. There is much good information online about the facts and how to talk with your children about it. Here we are some ways to pray with your children about it. Be well!

A prayer for when a friend is ill: Dear God, (name of friend) is ill. They are not allowed to go out or come over to play. I'm sad because I miss them. They must be feeling miserable and lonely as well. Please be close to them. Please be with the people who are looking after them. Please help them to get better and to know that you love them. Amen.

A prayer for the world: God of love and hope, you made the world and care for all creation, but the world feels strange right now. The news is full of stories about Coronavirus. Some people are worried that they might get ill. Others are anxious for their family and friends. Be with them and help them to find peace. We pray for the doctors and nurses and scientists, and all who are working to discover the right medicines to help those who are ill. Thank you that even in these anxious times, you are with us. Help us to put our trust in you and keep us safe. Amen.

A prayer at bedtime: Before the ending of the day, Creator of the world, we pray that you, with steadfast love, would keep Your watch around us while we sleep. Tonight we pray especially for (names family or friends who are affected by Coronavirus) and the people of (country or place which is affected by Coronavirus). Please give skill and wisdom to all who are caring for them. Amen.

A prayer remembering God is with us: Lord God, you are always with me. You are with me in the day and in the night. You are with me when I'm happy and when I'm sad. You are with me when I'm healthy and when I am ill. You are with me when I am peaceful and when I am worried. Today I am feeling (name how you are feeling) because (reasons you are feeling this way). Help me to remember that you love me and are with me in everything today. Amen.

Source: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-liturgy-and-prayer-resources>

Mark your calendars! We set the meeting dates for the Education team for the rest of the year. Times for the meetings will be **6:00 PM-7:00 PM**.

Dates are:

April 2nd

July 8th

Oct. 7th



Backpack Program 2020 Backpack Leader: Patty Curtis

Please continue to pray for this ministry. If you would like to get involved, please notify the office. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex. We pack them on **Fridays at 1:00 PM-1:30 PM** with the help of kids from the Ben Logan Key Club and our Youth One80. We have received some donations from people outside our church and some organizations. Pickrelltown Cub Scouts gave us some food donations. The FFA of Ben Logan High School organized a food drive. We are stocked up for the rest of the year. Thanks to these two groups. We only have a few weeks left. Mrs. Ridge is packing backpacks during this time school is not in session. The school has supplied food for all students through a local food pantry. I will notify you if we need volunteers to help pack in the future.

Operation Christmas Child Shipping fund!

We sent so many boxes we need to replenish this fund for the year of 2020! Continue to fill the pill containers with quarters. Each bottle will hold 36 quarters worth a value to \$9.00. Once it is filled you can place in the offering plate. This small bottle is enough to ship 1 shoebox and help the Gospel to be told around the world!



Please donate the items below for each month.

Remember toys must be new and no military toys or liquids.

May-Small toys (no glass, liquid or war related toys)

June - Combs, brushes, hair ties and headband, and hats

July - Wash Clothes & Bars of Soap

August - School supplies (crayons, markers, tablets, scissors, pencils, pens & erasers)

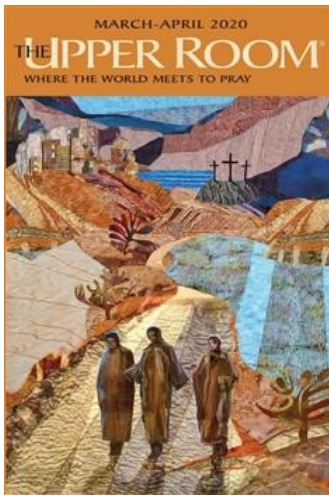
Sept - Toothpaste and tooth brushes

Sign-Ups LOCATED IN THE NARTHEX.

- ⇒ **We need greeters/communion servers/scripture readers for April/May/June**
- ⇒ **Groups to sign up and organize and execute the community meal Nov. and Dec. There will be no community meal in July due to the fair.**
- ⇒ **Volunteer to pack backpacks for backpack program**
- ⇒ **New Landscaping team**

You are invited to contribute articles, devotions, personal testimony, or other such information of interest in our church newsletter. Extra fun and humor are encouraged if it is appropriate. All entries will be subject to pastoral approval.

Please email articles to pastor or the church email at mumcoffice@embarqmail.com by the 20th of each month of every month.



The Upper Room daily devotional are free and is a *great way to help us focus on him daily*. **March April** devotional books are available now in the narthex. If you do not currently read them, try them! Continue to spend time alone with God.



Do you love getting dirty outside in the dirt?

Do you have a talent of arranging plants to make the world a better place?

Come join our Landscaping team!

This group will be responsible for pulling weeds during the summer months, trimming hedges, watering plants, and planting new plants. There is a sign up in the narthex. If you have any questions contact the office.

Community Meal

We are organizing and planning the community meal a little bit differently. We are looking for groups of people to plan/organize/execute the meal. There is a fund for the community meal. If you purchase food for the community meal, you can fill out a reimbursement slip and get reimbursed. A list of duties and sign-up sheet is in the narthex. **We need a group of people to sign up for Sept., Nov., and Dec.** The next community meal date is **Thursday, April 16 2020 at 6:00 PM.**

KIDS CLUB— This group is for Children in grades K-4th. Leader is Heather Hawley. It meets the first and third Wednesday of every month at **6:00 PM**. April dates are **April 1 & April 15**. **Kids are invited to come have fun learning about Jesus through games, crafts and snacks!**

Youth 58-Youth 58 meets twice a month on Sunday evenings **2:00-3:30 PM**. This is a casual, fun group for grades 5th-8th. Meeting location is the “Henry House” the home of Kevin & Mary Henry.

Youth One80 —We would like to thank you all who support this ministry. Without your financial donations, this ministry would not be possible.

MARCH—Administrative Council Highlights: *(Look for the ways you can help.)*

The Administrative Church Council met on March 12, 2020 and addressed the following business of the church:

Secretary, Treasurer, and Financial reports were reviewed and approved as presented.

Finance—Fund balances were reviewed. Gerry Lininger reported that the interest from the Willit Fund was transferred to the Faith Promise Fund accordingly. Recommendation to designate \$1,000 of the General Fund offering to help pay for the parking lot maintenance that was done last year. It was properly moved and seconded. Motion passed. The revised reimbursement form was reviewed and accepted.

Pastor's Report—Pastor Carolyn discussed sanitary measures to be taken against the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and discussed plans for worship services in light of the pandemic with the Council. Team members agreed to move forward with worship as planned but to make the congregation aware of safety measures and risks as they decide for themselves if they should attend services or not.

Pastor Carolyn also shared information on some upcoming events, inviting leaders to become involved as participants: **Feeding the 5,000 (this summer), GO2020 (Revive), and a Small Church Conference at Marysville First UMC March 27-28 (POSTPONED).**

She is also planning a special Pastor's Bible study to focus on exploring what the Bible does and does not say regarding human sexuality. It will begin after Easter in April. More information will be forthcoming.

Pastor Carolyn would also like for our congregation to consider a hands-on mission work trip to Tennessee through UMCOR this summer to help rebuild after the tornado damage that has occurred there. Heather showed interest and Pastor Carolyn will look into us partnering with another church on the venture.

She also reminded us that NOW is the time to begin plans for Outreach events such as a 5K Walk/Run, Fall Festival (fellowship team is working on it in October). If you are interested in helping to plan one of these or a similar event, please see an Ad Council member or speak to Pastor Carolyn. Now is the time to create interest and begin planning.

Outreach—Dave Hardman followed up on some of the events Pastor Carolyn mentioned. The Outreach Team (church) purchased Action Bibles for the COG (Children of God) program at Ben Logan Elementary. Donation to Union Station was also given and support will be given to Revive, the GO2020 in May, and the Feeding of the 5,000 (June)

Youth Ministry/Education—Heather Hawley reported the Sunday School and WOW schedule is completed for the next quarter/end of school year and the attendance at Youth 58 & Kids Club events. Regarding the COG program, she will be delivering the Action Bibles. Youth Sunday plans were coming together. **VBS will be June 15-19 from 9:30-12.**

Heather also reported that the Vineyard Church in Bellefontaine will be holding a 5K to raise money for our backpack program. This ministry is receiving lots of donations and we hope that more families will begin to take advantage of these resources we're providing.

Backpack Ministry—A written report was received. New incentives for students who return the backpacks each week in a timely fashion. And, lots of donations and support coming in for this ministry. Thank you to these groups around the area that are supporting the students and families of Ben Logan Schools.

Ladies Circle—No report.

Staff/Pastor-Parish (SPRC)—No report received, but there is a meeting scheduled for next week to address some matters of concern regarding nursery care and coverage.

Trustees—No official report. Mary Jaunzemis and Pastor Carolyn said that the Trustees are comparing the costs of renewing the contract for our current copier or upgrading to a newer color copier. It will be discussed further at their next meeting.

Fellowship Team—Mary Jaunzemis reported that Graduation Sunday is set for May 17th. So far we know of two high school graduates and approximately three college graduates. Plans are being made for a Fall Festival celebration at Marmon Valley Farms in October for the congregation & guests.

Old business: Dana responded to the request for us to work the Hardin Co. Fair Gate again this summer one of the days when she is available to be present. We will also be working the Logan Co. Fair Gate as usual this summer.

New business: Council discussed the protocol for usage of the church debit card for large orders, particularly VBS, OCC, etc. I was moved and seconded that a **committee chairperson can sign out the debit card for 24 hours and return it with receipts.** Motion passed. Office staff will make a sign-up sheet for this.

Prayer concerns were shared and meeting adjourned with prayer.

NEXT MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR May 14th

Finance will meet at 6:30 PM Ad Council at 7:00 PM

PLEASE PLAN ACCORDINGLY & MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!!

FOR MORE INFORMATION feel free to speak with any member or the Chairperson of Administrative Council or the Pastor. And please remember that designated financial gifts supporting our ministry and mission projects are welcomed and encouraged in addition to your regular offering. Thank you!!

With the Humility of a Child

"I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children."

Luke 10:21

In Word Granted the authority of the kingdom and being placed at top levels of the spiritual pecking order of the universe, we could develop a superiority complex. And we would, except for one thing: that isn't the nature of the King. Wielding all authority, Jesus came to serve. In spite of all His accomplishments and glory, He's humble. He's worthy of everything, but He doesn't demand our hearts. He invites us into His blessings. We share in His authority because He generously allows us to do so.

Not only is humility the nature of the King, but it's also the appropriate attitude for beings with our background. We remember where we came from. We know we didn't earn this. We were worthy of a far worse fate, but the mercy of the King rescued us from it. We became the ultimate rags-to-riches story.

So our response to the authority of the kingdom is never pride; it's gratitude. We don't exercise that authority for self-promotion but for love of God and others. We overcome evil by liberating others from its destruction. That's why we have been given the keys of the kingdom. It isn't a power trip. It's a confrontation against everything that contradicts the truth, beauty, and love of the kingdom.

In Deed Make that your mission in life--to stand for God's kingdom by claiming spiritual authority over all that opposes it. With the humility of a child, learn how to exercise that authority wisely. Don't use it in arguments or selfish agendas. Don't put it on business cards or T-shirts as though it's a credential to boast about. Use it in faith. It's your spiritual trump card against all the enemy's purposes, your veto of his agenda. You don't have it by being wise and learned. You have it because the King revealed it to you as His child. Learn to wield it exactly as Jesus showed you.

Submitted by Peg Hill

DENOMINATIONAL NEWS...

The 2020 General Conference of the United Methodist Church scheduled for May 5-15 in Minneapolis has been postponed until 2021. Dates have not been announced yet.

Connecting in New Ways.....

As a way to stay connected, our friends at *HomeTouch Ministry* have provided 4 days worth of devotions and activities to send to the loved ones in your lives. We've also included a template that you may send to families in your congregation who would like to color a picture and send a note to those who might feel isolated.

You may download these free resources for unrestricted, re-distributable use here:
www.hometouchministry.com/covid19-resources-for-elderly-homebound

May you also be strengthened as you serve in Christ's name!

New Path Pregnancy Center Update.

Website: www.newpathprc.com

If you encounter someone with needs for an infant see below.

The center is closed but they will make arrangements for supplies of diapers, formula, wipes if they are a current/active client.

If someone is not a current client but has an emergency need for baby supplies please have them email with their contact information.

Email kshanks@newpathprc.com

If you are unable to email call (937) 642-5683 and leave a message with contact information

Opportunity to Serve.....

Pastor Carolyn would like to have palm branches delivered to your doorstep for Palm Sunday. Anyone willing to help with the delivery of these palms, please contact Pastor Carolyn (937) 248-8930

Church Hours and Contact Information:

Please like us on Facebook and stay tuned to One call for instructions to join us online for services and meetings. We will be working from home during some office hours and limited office hours. The church building is closed until further notice.

Secretary: Patty Curtis Hours: Tuesday & Thursdays at 8:00AM - 12:00 PM

Pastor: Carolyn Christman Also available by appointment.

Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 10:00 AM-12:00 PM. (Lunch from 12-1:00 PM) & 1:00 – 4:00PM

Website www.middleburgumc.com

Facebook Page: Middleburg United Methodist Church

Facebook Group: Middleburg Ohio UMC

Birthdays:

Paula Cronkleton	4/1
Nikki Hardman	4/4
Mia Ortiz	4/4
Kiel Henry	4/5
Chris Spain	4/6
Kylie Curtis	4/8
Lois Hardman	4/8
Jill Hardman	4/10
Cherl Crowder	4/13
Patti Levingston	4/13
Ruthie Hardman	4/18
Cindy Drumm	4/25
Tracey Nicholas	4/26
Bob Godwin	4/27
Dean Hagar	4/27
Kaylee Nicholas	4/28

Anniversaries-

Paul & Lois Hardman	4/8
Trent & Jeny Hammer	4/10
Rob & Cindy Drumm	4/14

Beginning Tuesday, April 21st at 7 PM, the Pastor's Bible Study will be a study of scripture regarding human sexuality: What does the Bible say and what does it not say?

Please plan to attend as we dig into the Word and discuss interpretation within the biblical context.

Holy Week

We are continuing to be hopeful for our tentative Holy Week and Easter Events. Below is the TENTATIVE schedule. If the only way we can celebrate is via the Internet and online services, we will do that. The only thing that is certain at time of this publication is that WE WILL WORSHIP ON EASTER by one means or another even if our other events are cancelled.

Maundy Thursday, April 9th at 7 PM

Good Friday, April 10th at 7 PM

Easter Morning, April 12th

SonRise service 7:30 AM

Breakfast 8:15 AM

Egg Hunt 8:45 AM

Worship service 9:30 AM

Graduation Sunday will be held on May 17th. Please turn in names of high school and college graduates so that we may include them in our recognition and celebration. The office will also need a small biography as to what their future plans are. If you have any questions please contact Mary Jaunzemis.

Please review the calendar below for meeting times and times of worship. Contact the committee leader if you have any questions if your committee is meeting on a certain date. We are working on having some meetings via zoom, and streaming the services online. We will send out one call with instructions and cancellations as they are decided.

April 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 6:00 Kids club 6:30 Worship Planning	2 6:00 Education Meeting	3	4
5 Palm Sunday 9:30 Worship	6	7 7:00 Ladies Circle	8 7:00 Praise Team	9 7:00 Maundy Thursday Service	10 7:00 Good Friday Service	11
12 7:30 AM Sonrise Service 8:15 AM Breakfast 845 Easter Egg hunt 9:30 AM Worship	13.	14	15 6:00 PM Kids Club 7:00 Praise Team	16 6:00 PM Community Meal 7:00 PM Outreach 7:00 SPRC	17	18
19 9:30 Worship	20	21 7:00 PM Bible Study	22 7:00 Praise Team	23	24	25
26 2:00 PM Youth 58	27	28	29 6:30 PM Worship Planning 7:00 Praise Team	30		