

# FIRST NEWS AND NOTES

A Newsletter of The First United Methodist Church in Hagerstown

April/May Newsletter 2021



## The Pastor's Pen

*"I know what I'm doing. I have it all planned out—plans to take care of you, not abandon you, plans to give you the future you hope for."*

Jeremiah 29:11 MSG

A little over a year ago, we entered into a season unlike any other. The

pandemic caused us to suspend in-person worship twice and adapt many of our ministries to continue to make disciples of Jesus Christ. Now as we have begun to resume ministries, it's important for us as a congregation to pause and ask the question, "How can this season of return/rebuild be a new beginning rather than restart?" How can we use the season behind us as a tool to help empower us into our present and future seasons? These questions are not unfamiliar to God's people. These same questions were pondered by God's people when they returned to their promised land after seventy years in exile at Babylon. There were so many questions about what would be left. How would they defend themselves against foreign aggressors as they rebuilt? Would there be enough people left to get the job done? All of these questions were floating around in the heads and conversations of the people of God. However, God assures them that God's plan and purpose for God's people will be accomplished. Nothing will stand in God's way. What was required of God's people in this season was to simply rely and trust in God's leading and wisdom. The same is required of us now. As we return and rebuild, we are called to rely and trust in God's leading and to answer God's call when opportunities to serve arise. This must be an all church effort and all gifts and talents are needed and we all have something to offer.

As we go through Holy Week, we remember that nothing, not even sin or death, will stand in the way of God's redemptive plan for God's people. I invite you to attend our Holy Week services, which are listed in this newsletter, and reflect on the love of God lived out in Christ's life, death, and resurrection is being lived out in your own life. As Frederick Buechner said, "The resurrection tells us that the worst thing is never the last thing." Grace and Peace, Pastor John

## Church Mouse Musings by Paula Guth

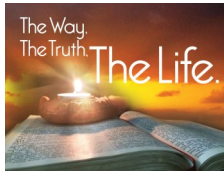
During a year of Covid shutdown and isolation, it seemed I was essentially under house arrest. Like other seniors with multiple pre-existing conditions, I was a prime candidate for severe illness or even death if I was infected with the Covid virus. My brother and I, with our dark humor bent, decided if we showed up in an overwhelmed ER with Covid, we would get a "Not Likely to Survive" toe tag. We would get put in the Palliative Care waiting area next to the morgue. Precious ICU beds and staffing would be utilized for younger, healthier patients with a more hopeful prognosis. My best option was to stay in a protective house bubble.

I have been blessed with a loving family, good friends and 70+ years for which I am grateful. Sadly, like many of you, many people in my circle or their family members have gotten Covid. Two special long time close friends died. I was unable to safely travel to visit or attend their services. I really miss being able to talk with them and their warm hugs. So many people have lost their jobs or have limited hours. We have long lines at food banks and more homeless people. Students, parents and teachers are struggling with online instruction and modified school programming. People with chronic conditions and mental health issues are falling through the gaps in the system.

Thank God for all the hard work done by an army of researchers and medical workers for the rapid development and distribution of multiple effective Covid vaccines. I like many others have received my two shots with great relief and gratitude. What a joy to see the smiling eyes of others being vaccinated and the cheerful staff giving out those doses of hope! There is a country and world-wide race to get enough shots in arms before the Covid variants cause another surge in new cases and deaths again.

If we all wear masks, socially distance and follow CDC guidelines, the vaccinated people can safely gather with others for limited gatherings, go back to work, schedule all those long delayed appointments and

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**Upper Rooms & Daily Bread on Bookrack/Table at the Door in Friendship Haven Café**  
**Donation \$1.00**  
**Place in the box in the book rack.**

**The Church Mouse Musings Continued:** attend church in person without infecting others. It is a relief to be back out in the world again. I'm looking forward to some long planned family gatherings. Hopefully, if enough people get vaccinated and follow the guidelines we can all get back to a new safe normal. I will continue to wear my mask in public, not for me, but to protect and show my love for others.

**Romans 12:12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.**



**March 28 we will collect for UMCOR.**  
 United Methodist Committee on Relief)  
 Last year UMCOR responded to 55 disasters.

We are ordering Lilies for Easter.



Cost is \$10.00

You may wish to honor someone or do in memory. Contact the Church Office @489-4558 to sign up for lily

or lilies. You may place money in the offering plate marked Lily, or stop by the Church Office.

**2021 Leadership Table Members**

**Pastor John**



**Chair Linda Cowan**  
**Vice, Shawn Murphy**  
**Secretary Amanda Stainbrook**

**Treasurer Greta Gustin**  
**Lay Leader Jean Dilley**  
**Finance Cory Herr**

**Trustee Chair Chris Lane**  
**Missions Chair Debra Salhoff**

**Staff Parish Chair Amy Zetzl**

**UMW Continued from Page 3**

We owe a Big Thank You to Susie for creating our program books for this year. The District was not going to have any printed for us to purchase and she got to work and put together a wonderful book for us to have. Call me or your unit President if you don't have yours.

In closing I want to share a special thought from our East District President Cheryl Wilson. "Giving....I really believe our mission giving is so vital to God's work, whether done individually or as a unit." A recent Response article about the miracle of mission giving states, "It transports our caring to places we will never go in person. It connects us to all of God's creation. It travels as close as the mission project down the street and as far away as the work of a regional missionary on another continent. It combines everyone's small gift into one mighty whole. It's the way we live our Purpose." *Blessings, Mindy, UMW President*



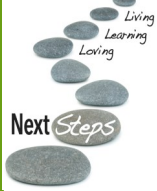
*This year—perhaps more than any other—we are grateful for your tithes and offerings. Thank you. Because of your faithfulness, our Connection is stronger, and lives are being changed. May God bless you abundantly for your generosity. Wishing you a blessed Easter as we celebrate that Jesus is risen! Be encouraged, Bishop Julius C. Trimble UMC*



**Church Clean Up Day**  
**Saturday, March 27 Begins at 9 a.m.**  
**Headed up by Trustee Chair Chris Lane**

- Leaves in the alley by air conditioning.
- Clean up fenced in area.
- Any dusting and windows needed throughout the church.
- Any light bulbs
- Weeding or trimming if needed.
- Mulch and weed flower beds.

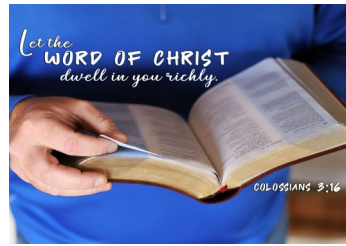
## Living ---



17% of all the financial gifts given through the church offerings are used to support ministries outside the church walls in our community, our country, and around the globe. We invite you to live out your faith by helping to transform the world through acts of hospitality, care and service.

**Gleaners - Volunteer helping with this Mission Outreach!**  
**Back here Thursday, April 22!**  
**Also on Thursday, May 27!**  
**Talk to Joe Smith for more info.**

**UMW**  
Continue saving postage stamps  
Containers located in Narthex.



**The Women's Sunday School Class** has met on Sunday nights at 7 p.m. via ZOOM to discuss the book "So You Want to Talk About Race" by Ijeome Olou. After meeting on March 21 and 28, we will have finished the

book and will conclude our ZOOM meetings. Our 9 a.m. Sunday School class, which now meets in the open Choir Room, will use the UMW Spiritual Growth study Finding Peace in an Anxious World by the staff of the Urban Valley Church. It uses the book of Proverbs and the Serenity prayer as a guide to help Christians move toward God's peace. We will start Chapter 1 on March 28th. Please join us! Jean Dille



Plans are underway to start having Sunday School and K.I.D.S. church again! Please watch announcements for details. Also, WE NEED TEACHERS! We would like to put together a team of teachers to cover kids ages preschool to 5th grade. If you have interest in teaching kids, please contact Stacy Herr at 765.524.3529.

### **United Methodist Women—A Word from Our President Mindy Smith**

Spring seems to have sprung and I'm so happy for that! Guess we still have to see if March roars out like a lion. We had a GREAT General Meeting on Saturday, March 20th. Thirteen members attended in person and three more joined us by Zoom.

Important things you should know if you were unable to attend:

- 1. All UMW are now able to receive the Eastern Flame via e-mail. The Eastern Flame is the East District's newsletter and before this year was only mailed out to Executive Officers. Since new officers joined the East District Board it was voted to make this newsletter available to all E District members. Thanks to Susie Lewis' love of all things, computer, she graciously got on and signed all of our membership up. So if you haven't checked your e-mail yet, get on and look for the Flame. It should have been sent to you March 18th. It's a very well done, informative newsletter (like our own church newsletter) and you'll be glad you took the time to read it.
- 2. Lucille Raines Residence is needing twin size, regular length sheet sets and pillows. If you want a group project or have some left over Stimulus money, consider a gift to Lucille Raines. Every year UMW provides Christmas \$25.00 gift cards to the 49 residents at the Lucille Raines Residence. This responsibility rotates among all the IN District every five years. E District is responsible to raise \$1,225. this year to provide these gift cards. Another need to consider as you tithe your stimulus check.
- 3. Spring Fling will be the Theme for our E D Spring meeting on April 17th. Time is 10 a.m. This is a Zoom meeting. However we could meet as a group in Fellowship Hall and have a group Zoom. Please let me know your thoughts.
- 4. Calendar of Events for 2021: **April 10** Spiritual Growth Retreat via Zoom, 10 a.m. **April 17** ED Spring Fling (Climate Justice) via Zoom, 10 a.m. **July 10,17,24,31** Mission u. Virtual Meetings (see article pg.12)  
**Sept. 11** ED Fall Gathering Location TBA **Oct. 1-2** Annual Celebration St. Andrews UMC Indy **Oct. 22-24** Silent Retreat at Tipton.  
**Nov. 5-6** Leadership Development/Officer Training.

**March 28, 2021- Palm Sunday**

Waving of Palms from pews (no parade)

**Holy Week**

**April 1, 2021-Maundy Thursday**

5:00-7:00 pm **Stations of the Cross**

**April 2, 2021 Good Friday**

12:00 Noon 'First Methodist Church' Service in sanctuary

**Good Friday** 6:30 pm Community Live Stream Service

**Contact Us:**

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Senior Pastor

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812-592-0359

**Rick Peelle**

Director of Music & Worship

nccgardenspso@aol.com

765-220-2336

**Carol Meyer**

Church Secretary

hfumc@firsthagerstown.org

489-5536 (After office hours)

**Connect with Us-**  
[www.firsthagerstown.org](http://www.firsthagerstown.org)

Church Number 489-4558

First Hagerstown

United Methodist

Church



**April 4, 2021-Easter Sunday**

8:30 a.m. Church Service

9:30 am Easter Egg Hunt

10:15 am Traditional Church Easter

Celebration Service (Including communion)

**Eastertide Sermon Series**

Living the Resurrection

**First United Methodist**

199 South Perry Street

PO Box 65

Hagerstown, Indiana 47346

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