



# Good News

April 2020

## *a letter from the pastor*

I don't know of a time in my life and ministry that has been so fraught but filled with opportunity.

I don't like to miss on Sunday, but at least I know that when I'm not leading worship in my church, worship is going on. I imagine Ken Houghtaling, Bruce Simpson, Matt Swartzel, Mary Carefoot, Ruthie Nelson and Faye Monroe leading and carrying on. But now it's ALL OF YOU who are missing and we poor leaders are trying to carry on. And I'd never done a Facebook Live session!

In my little faith, I confess that I wondered how we would continue when the well practiced ritual of passing the offering plate was impossible. How would we continue our feeding ministry when people are afraid to come out and are being well counseled to stay home. And, of course, all this happening at the height of our snow bird season when our program is at it's biggest.

I've worried about so many in our congregation who are in the largest risk group for serious illness. I've wondered how we would stay in touch and reassure the home bound that they are loved by God and us.

Again and again I've seen the old saying "God will find a way when there is no other way" proven true. My anxiety has been met again and again by reassurance.

First, the congregation has been incredibly supportive and understanding through the frustrations of imposed changes. Whether it's worshipping or studying online, or changing the whole way we distribute food, or asking you to mail in your contributions even if you can't come to the church building there has been an amazing spirit of cooperation.

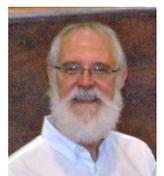
I'd like to thank Rob Marlowe and Ray Calvert for their expertise in getting us online on Sunday. They volunteered their time to come Saturday and set up the online system and Sunday went better than I could have imagined. Of course, Ruthie and Faye did their usual great job. And then we had wonderful video of our worship that we could share with our online friends. I believe once we are able to gather again, we'll be able to continue this kind of outreach to our online neighbors.

We are still working on how to continue our food distribution safely, but we are reaching far more people than we did before. I miss the fellowship of the Wednesday night Love Feast, but last Wednesday we gave food to over 250 people! Thanks to Hope UMC, all our volunteers, and One Community Now who came together so beautifully.

We are still working on ways to be together from a distance. If you need help, call the church office and we'll try to help. Be careful and be faithful.

Blessings with peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Carefoot".

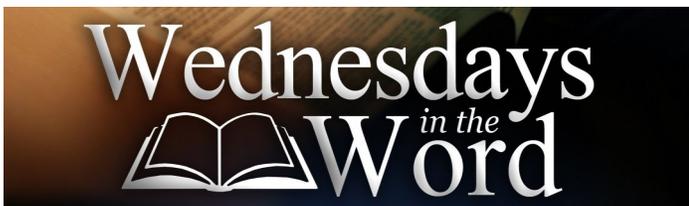




The Wednesday Love feast has morphed into a drive-thru and walk up event. We miss the sit down dinner in the hall, but the new format allows us to stay safe and continue to serve the growing number of people in need of food.

The numbers are incredible. We used to serve around 100 people at our sit down meals. The last Wednesday of March we served 250 people. *Thanks to Hope UMC!*

Below are a few images from that event. May God continue to bless our efforts!



The Wednesday Bible Study group will be meeting remotely for the time being. We are studying Simon Peter: Flawed but Faithful Disciple by Adam Hamilton. We will be using Facebook Live to share the lessons. Contact Ray Calvert, 912-571-2474, [calverr@gmail.com](mailto:calverr@gmail.com) about joining the group.

# HUNGER WALK

Saturday, April 18, 8:00am-noon

The Hunger Walk will be “virtual” this year because of the social distancing precautions associated with COVID-19. If you are interested in participating, go to:

<https://onecommunitynowhungerwalk.org/>



Our Food Pantry continues with the help of a pared down volunteer crew. We’ve also eliminated the coffee and snack table to discourage gathering and sharing onsite. Our numbers of individuals and families that we are helping remains about the same.



Thank you for your generous support during these difficult times. To date, we have been able to pay all our bills. Since your Finance Team is trying to adhere to the social distancing recommendations, we are only making deposits and paying bills on the 15th and 29th of April. Please have your donations and bills in to the church office by these dates.

Thank you again. Stay safe and may God Bless us all.

Jo Babcock, Treasurer.



Of course, as we all know, there won't be a UMW Unit Meeting on April 7<sup>th</sup> as originally scheduled, and not sure when we will meet next but know that we are all Sisters in Christ and thinking of each other.

Some good news to share from March, however, was the very successful Rummage Sale. We netted \$3,523 total, with \$658 of that from the Café.

Another item of interest was our Circles sent a total of 7 boxes for the Alaska Parcel Post Auction for the Willow UMC Food Pantry. Last year about 80 packages from around the country and the world brought in around \$6000! We are proud to help with this important ministry. Due to current circumstances, the Auction was postponed but will be held at a later date. Stay safe and stay in touch.

**“Thank you”**

Thank you to the Lydia Circle for the plant and for the sympathy cards I received at my husband's recent passing. *Dorothy Benham*

Thanks for all the cards, calls and prayers while I was in the hospital and convalescing at home. I am feeling much better now. The prayers worked! *Phyllis Cousino*

Thank you to Hope UMC for continuing to field their amazing team of volunteers for our Wednesday Drive Thru food distribution. They're amazing.

Thanks to our Food Pantry team that is pared down and redesigned for safety and social distance.

Thanks to everyone who is tuning in to Facebook Live for our Sunday worship. There are a LOT of new people being exposed to our church through this new ministry.

Thanks to Ray Calvert and Rob Marlowe who are managing the tech side of the online ministry.

## United Methodist Men

*Behold, how good and pleasant it is for Brothers to dwell together in Unity! Psalm 133*

In this time of world crisis, the United Methodist Men continues to seek fellowship. “Our mission” is to support spiritual growth among men, helping men to mature as disciples as they encourage spiritual formation in others.

With this thought in mind, I encourage us to set up a men's phone ministry. The phone ministry would be a way to connect with the men within the church.

Our mission as Christian men is to spiritually support each other. If you are interested in contacting the men within this church to maintain contact, please let me know.

I can be reached at 727-856-3179 or email me at [alexmrty@yahoo.com](mailto:alexmrty@yahoo.com).

Blessings, Alex



Have you ever seen a Luna Moth? This one was sighted on the property recently. It is the only moth to appear on a postage stamp!



Each day, as news about the COVID-19 pandemic spreads across this nation, families are recognizing a new daily lifestyle filled with anxiety, fear, social distancing, and home quarantine. Schools are closed; children certainly have seen the news and are asking questions regarding the Coronavirus. Parents are learning how to work from home. Churches are worshipping online. All are having to be creative in moving forward during the next coming weeks and months. While it seems that life as we knew it is out of control, this is also an excellent time to be creative in faith formation. Parents now have the opportunity to mentor their children and model faith formation in the home.

Remember, when talking to your children to:

Empower them to be helpers in fighting this disease. Encourage them to wash their hands and not touch their faces; both actions help decrease the spread of the virus.

Truly listen and hear children's concerns. Let them know that you are listening to them when they voice their feelings of fear and anxiety. Keep lines of communication open.

Model faith formation in everything you do. Include children in every conversation. Don't become the expert with all the answers. Admit when you don't have an answer; pursue an answer together.

Put God first and others second. Take this time to teach your children compassion for others. Pray for others. Model putting others' needs before yours.

Here are some websites that offer online resources and will help you through this difficult season of life.

"Cokesbury Kids," "Christine Hides: Weaving Faith into Every Day Life" and "Slugs & Bugs".

Children can keep up with the weekly Bible lessons by downloading the deep blue kids app. Each Sunday the new lesson is released.

May God bless you with patience above and beyond as we look forward to our return to the Sunshine Room!

*Miss Joan, Miss Jean Ann, Miss Mary and Miss Julie*

# In other news...



## Innovations

Several people from our church attended the recent District training at Anona UMC in Largo. We heard how the Sun City UMC is growing by reaching out to the needs of their community. We also received “best practices” training on financial processes.



Mary Carefoot with friends from Seminole



We have been blessed over the years by Eagle Projects from our Scouts. Recently an aspiring Eagle Scout took on the project of renovating our large shed. They changed the siding and repaired any necessary wood work. They painted the entire structure. The doors and locks were strengthened. We are proud of our relationship with the Scouts and are happy that they feel a responsibility to help keep things up at the church!



The local choir festival that has been going on for years but was suspended last year sprang back to life this year. Our church, Hope Lutheran, Faith UMC, Community Congregational, and Hudson UMC participated. It was a heart felt offering of holy music to God by all the churches. Our own Henry Fletcher and Peg Davis stole the show with an amazing duet. Thanks to Ruthie Nelson, Faye Monroe and all the choir members!

## GREEN TEAM

The Loquat Festival was cancelled. Plant something to cheer your heart and brighten your surroundings while we practice social distancing. Vegetables would be a sensible choice! Milkweed for the monarchs, Flowers for the pollinators, the possibilities are endless!

## Prayer Shawl Ministry

If you are looking for a productive way to use your time and your yarn while you are staying home, contact Brenda Smeby, 803-528-7740 for prayer shawl directions!



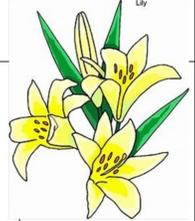
**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

- |                       |                     |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Sue Davis           | 17 Jeanine Hill     |
| 1 Sandra Buck         | 17 Maxine Petrovick |
| 9 Vonnie Maytum       | 23 Sharral Ruth     |
| 12 Mary-Anne Flowers  | 24 Fredia Russell   |
| 12 Carolyn Arnold     | 25 Bill Lewis       |
| 12 Lil Mahr           | 29 Judy Simpson     |
| 17 Catherine Phillips |                     |

# April 2020

**WEDDING ANNIVERSARY**

- 23 Pastor David & Mary Carefoot  
 28 Frank & Annette Cardente  
 30 Don & Sue Graner

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Facebook Live Bible Study —10:30a Drive Thru Love Feast in the Back Parking Lot—5p Choir Video Conf.—6:30p	2	3	4
5 <i>PALM SUNDAY</i> Facebook Live Sunday Worship —10:00a	6 Food Pantry 9:30-11:00 am	7	8 Facebook Live Bible Study —10:30a Drive Thru Love Feast in the Back Parking Lot—5p Choir Video Conf.—6:30p	9 Maundy Thursday Facebook Live-6p	10	11
12 <i>EASTER SUNDAY</i> Facebook Live Sunday Worship —10:00a	13 Food Pantry 9:30-11:00 am	14	15 Facebook Live Bible Study —10:30a Drive Thru Love Feast in the Back Parking Lot—5p Choir Video Conf.—6:30p	16	17	18
19 Facebook Live Sunday Worship —10:00a	20 Food Pantry 9:30-11:00 am	21 Administrative Council—by video conference (Zoom) 7 pm	22 <b>NEWSLETTER DEADLINE</b> Facebook Live Bible Study —10:30a Drive Thru Love Feast in the Back Parking Lot—5p Choir Video Conf.—6:30p	23	24	25
26 Facebook Live Sunday Worship —10:00a	27 Food Pantry 9:30-11:00 am	28	29 Facebook Live Bible Study —10:30a Drive Thru Love Feast in the Back Parking Lot—5p Choir Video Conf.—6:30p	30		



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NEW PORT RICHEY

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF

Postmaster Send Address Changes To:

## APRIL GOOD NEWS FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF NEW PORT RICHEY

5901 Indiana Avenue  
New Port Richey, FL 34652

SUNDAY	10:00 am	Worship Facebook Live
MONDAY	9:30 am	Food Pantry
TUESDAY	7:00pm	Administrative Council (3rd. Tuesday)
WEDNESDAY		
	10:30 am	Bible Study, Facebook Live
	5:00 pm	Love Feast, Drive Thru in Back Parking Lot

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