

THE CHIMES

April 4, 2020

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**“Don’t fear, because I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God.”
— Isaiah 41:10**

Articles for *The Chimes* must be submitted by noon on the deadline day and can be sent to: media@uumcsyracuse.org or put in Box No. 12 in the church office.

Alicia Wood, Pastor
Tom Boll, Editor

UUMC responds to shutdown by adjusting outreach, worship

In response to Gov. Mario Cuomo’s order to close all but essential activities because of the coronavirus that causes COVID-19, UUMC suspended in-person worship after Sunday, March 15.

Worship has moved online and is an ongoing experiment. Pastor Alicia delivered a message on March 22 on Facebook Live.

March 29, a recorded worship service with prelude, hymns, liturgy, pastor’s message, prayer and postlude was broadcast on YouTube. Church staff, members and friends all contributed parts.

Plans for Sunday’s worship — Palm Sunday, April 5 — include time for a Love Feast in place of the normally celebrated face-to-face Communion and waving of palms by viewers. It should be available on Facebook Live again.

On Holy Thursday, April 9, the four United Methodist pastors of Syracuse congregations will be participating in a service broadcast from Erwin First UMC beginning at 6 p.m. Information on a link will be forthcoming. Easter online worship will

include at least one surprise.

Since the church building is closed, the heat was turned off — two weeks earlier than normal — to save money.

And with the building closed, none of the community groups who meet there regularly have access.

Although the building is closed, the work of the church and staff goes on. Please continue contributing as you can via mail or online at tinyurl.com/UUMCdonate. Thank you to all who have done so already.

The Staff-Parish Relations Committee has decided to continue paying church staff their average hours as long as it’s possible.

UUMC’s Outreach feeding program has continued — from outside the building — see Outreach Coordinator Galyn Murphy-Stanley’s column on page 2 for details. It was featured in a news report on WSYR-TV Friday evening.

Pastor Alicia said that when we’re able to gather again safely for worship, we’ll have a resurrection/Easter service of celebration.

A new way to ‘church’: How UUMC moves forward

As the congregation and staff adapt to life apart physically, we’ve employed some new strategies.

Church committees are meeting virtually via the Zoom online platform.

Worship is broadcast online

through Facebook Live and YouTube.

Pastor Alicia has broadcast a midweek message and has broadcast from the Food Pantry operations on Friday.

At the request of the Governing
See **WORSHIP**, Page 5

Remember: 'Do not be afraid.' God is with us always.



Greetings!

Today I write while we are in a "State of Pause" in New York state.

We have

Alicia Wood been social distancing and limiting time out in public since March 20 due to COVID-19 from the coronavirus.

It is very scary and unsettling to watch the news these days. It is scary to see the numbers continue to rise in cases and deaths from the coronavirus.

It's unsettling to know not everyone is respecting the "State of Pause" order and guidelines.

It is heartbreaking when we learn that loved ones have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

Many in our church family have loved ones diagnosed with COVID-19. We continue to keep them in our prayers.

I don't know about you but every time I leave my house to go to the store (which I do only once a week or less) I get geared up like never before. I wear plastic gloves and a mask.

The idea of getting this disease or spreading it to someone I care about is overwhelming.

Then I remember so many times in the Bible we are given the message, "Do not be afraid."

I Googled how many times this instruction is given in the Bible. It is 365 times. 365 times the phrase "do not be afraid" or "do not fear" are written. One reminder for every day of the year. "Do not be afraid."

So, today, as I continue to be informed by reliable sources and take all the precautions given by scientists and government lead-



The Sea of Galilee from Pastor Alicia's hotel room on her trip to the Holy Land in February.

ers I will be smart and safe.

I will also listen to the daily reminder from the Bible, "do not be afraid."

Isaiah 41:10 says, "Don't fear, because I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will surely help you; I will hold you in my righteous strong hand." (CEB)

I'm reminded of the story of Jesus walking on the Sea of Galilee toward the boat filled with his disciples found in Mark 6: 49-51: "But when they saw him walking on the sea, they thought it was a ghost and cried out; for they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, 'Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.' Then he got into the boat with them and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded."

Sometimes it feels as if we are in rough waters or spiraling out of control or living in darkness.

Then, we remember to invite

Jesus in and the wind and storm seem to calm down or cease and we hear Jesus say, "Do not be afraid." The darkness begins to lift.

During these unprecedented times, let's not forget to invite Jesus in.

This will not magically take the coronavirus away. It *will* bring us some comfort and peace.

Let's be smart about our day-to-day living. Let's take the precautions recommended.

Let's connect with one another often over the phone or internet. Let's get fresh air every day safely.

Let's set daily goals as simple as they may seem.

Let's remember we are never truly alone.

Most of all, let's remember 365 days of the year: "Do not be afraid." God is with us.

Peace be with you until we meet again,

Pastor Alicia

A quick shift from expansion to emergency food distribution



**Galyn
Murphy-
Stanley**

Recent outreach efforts at UUMC have been directed to re-strategizing our weekly food distribution to be in compliance with social distancing and the national/

local hygienic directives that will keep us all safe during the coronavirus outbreak. Yet, able to distribute much needed foods at the same time.

In less than a week's time our Outreach ministry and Board of Trustees changed our efforts from the Food Pantry expansion project to joining all city food pantries in Emergency Food Distribution for Syracusans.

We paused nearly all of our volunteer workforce and some of our staff members, paused Sunday breakfasts inside UUMC, paused worship activities and all room rental agreements, found ourselves working from home (running a church is a "non-essential" work effort) and reorganizing UUMC's staff and their efforts to perform the necessary work we are called to do by the Food Bank of CNY.

This is to keep our food pantry open, give food to all abundantly, eliminate as many workers as possible and execute national, county and city health directives at all times.

Currently our activities support two food distribution events on Friday and Sunday mornings.

Friday mornings, 10 a.m. to noon, we distribute a pre-packed box of food to whoever comes to UUMC. Folk arrive in car, on foot, bike or bus.

We distribute food on a first-come, first-served philosophy and gave out 80 boxes the first attempt on March 20, 100 boxes on March 27 and 108 boxes on April 3.

We still have fresh produce and breads that top each box, along with meat, dairy and diapers.

All activities happen outside the 324 University Ave. entrance of UUMC. Guests remain at a distance, most of the time inside of their vehicle.

Sundays, 9 to 10 a.m., we lay out pre-packed to-go brown bag breakfasts.

Joyce Flynn still collects our weekly bagel donation from Bruegger's Bagels. These join a protein, fruit, orange juice, condiments and other additional items we've been able to gather from our friends at the Food Bank. Hot coffee accompanies each breakfast bag.

The past two Sundays we've had 25 visitors gather a breakfast bag and coffee for themselves, friends and/or family members.

Recognizing the frustration of our community, our congregation and our friends, we've decided to distribute and share the below document. We hope that this provides direction for your energy and your desire to support us and our city residents.

How to help University United Methodist Church during Coronavirus 2020 outbreak.

- *Donate strong cardboard boxes, about 18" x 24" with sound bottoms & sides to be*

used for our Emergency Food Distribution.

- *Give money to buy food for our Emergency Food Distribution. Checks can be mailed to University United Methodist Church 1085 E. Genesee St. Syracuse 13210 with Food Pantry or Emergency Foods written on the memo line. Or go to the bottom of our web page at uumcsyracuse.org, click "Give to UUMC," donate through "Square" to Outreach.*
- *Email Galyn at outreach@uumcsyracuse.org to indicate you'd like to learn about volunteering. Our volunteer listserv will explain volunteering after COVID limitations pass.*
- *Call UUMC at 315-475-7277 with any questions*

On a personal note, I want to celebrate my colleagues at UUMC. Food Distribution is not in any of their job descriptions nor is supporting a huge Emergency Food effort. My co-workers have quickly redirected their time, job duties and energy to include this citywide food effort in their weekly tasks.

They each work with generosity, empathy and comradery ensuring that the directives from the Food Bank are followed and everyone gets fed.

These tasks fall on top of keeping UUMC running, often re

See **ONCE**, Page 5

People & Prayers

THANK YOU:

- **Thanks from Nancy Hough:** My nephew, **Brian**, had COVID-19, which left him with pneumonia and on oxygen, is home and improving. His mother said prayers came in from all over the country.

PRAYERS REQUESTED:

For Those in Military Service:

- **Chance Lawson, Austin Payne, Ian Enderle**

Sunday, March 8

- Those recovering from addiction
- For so many who are suffering and face an unknown future
- **Elise:** Prophet Jesus: Praise you for having **Marilyn Benedict** to go with you to glory!
- Vito's sister, **Alice**, and her ongoing challenges with cancer
- **Kellie and Lynn:** My brother **Kevin**, who has minor surgery for skin cancer tomorrow and cousin **Todd**, who is going through treatment for throat cancer
- Prayers of healing for **Peter Swords**
- Prayers of thanks and remembrance for the lives of **Ray Ashwood** and **Marilyn Benedict** as faithful members of the UUMC community.
- **Angela:** The family of **Marilyn Benedict**

Sunday, March 15

- **Elise:** Prophet Jesus: Praise you for giving me courage in facing a trying time in my household!
- Those sick and fearful
- **Aimee:** Dr. Jim Dispenza, as he battles cancer and now a fever that has him in the hos-

pital. And for people to be wise and faithful during this tough time.

- Prayers for **Keith**, who is awaiting results from several medical tests and is concerned about the possible return of his cancer
- Comfort to those in nursing homes without visitors
- Our community
- Help for our world with the coronavirus
- **Jackie:** Safety for correction officers and personnel during this uncertain time at the jails
- Nothing is impossible to God. I pray God to stop this bad situation with the coronavirus
- **Sue:** My niece and her family. Those with health issues

Concerns via email and phone

- **Ralph Best**, who is in Crouse Hospital. His condition is improving.
- **Stephanie Hitztaler** asked that we send out to everyone a request for prayers of thanks for her father's discharge from the hospital in Denver, where he had been in ICU with COVID-19. Stephanie is also asking for prayers for all Health Care workers around the world who are providing support, care & compassion for all the people who are ill.
- **Ikechukwu Jacob**, who goes by "IK" and is a graduate student at SU who has been worshipping at UUMC every Sunday. His brother, **Elnest**, 42 in Scotland, also has COVID-19.
- The daughter of a friend of **Gail Tyndall's mom**, who has been diagnosed with brain cancer.

- **Ted Guercio** fell and broke his shoulder. He would really appreciate prayers and cards/notes. His current address is: Brookdale Summerfield
100 Summerfield Village
Syracuse, NY 13215
- **Peter Swords**
- **Elise Curry-Schemichen and her husband**, who had a heart attack, but is home now

JOYS, PRAISE and THANKS

Sunday, March 8

- **Ann Owens:** Celebration to my aunt and uncle for 60 years of marriage
- **Alice:** My sister, **Anne**, has a joy to share: She had a CAT scan and the tumor on her pancreas is gone. Her liver, spleen and adrenal gland are clear. She says it is because of prayer. I am so grateful.
- **Albertina:** Thank you, God, for everything you have done for me. I'm happy to see the children of God.

Sunday, March 15

- Thankful for a daughter who said, "Don't worry if you get sick. You have 3 children who love you and will take care of you."
- **Jim Tallman's** birthday March 16

May birthdays

- 2 – Melissa Pedro, Jaxon Steenberg
- 4 – David Bacon, Ethel Phillips, Marg McDivitt
- 6 – Bethany Boll
- 17 – Caroline Brackett
- 21 – Evan Simmons
- 25 – Allison Virgo, Benjamin Virgo, Kirstin Coutts
- 26 – Eileen Schell
- 29 – Joyce Flynn
- 30 – Bunny Hannum
- 31 – Sara Bergan

Guidance on prayer requests from Phone Tree calls

Following up on our Governing Board's Phone Tree guidance and prayer requests in general, in the names of confidentiality/privacy/disclosure, when the person you're speaking with requests prayers, please do the following:

1. Ask them to clarify if the prayer request is only for your prayers, or if they wish it to be shared via our Prayer Circle, Tom Boll's eblasts, Chimes, or to pass along only to Pastor Alicia.
2. If Prayer Circle or Tom, and the person wishes to word it, repeat their message. If they need help, speak your sugges-

tion so they can agree, or change. Or, rather than details, ask if just to name the person/s to be prayed for.

3. Email Pastor Alicia, pastor@uumcsyracuse.org or call Mary Slack in our church office at (315) 475-7277 (now she checks messages from home), email, office@uumcsyracuse.org, or Janet Sciscioli, (315) 472-7966, email jsciscio@twcny.rr.com, or Tom Boll, (315) 475-7277, email, media@uumcsyracuse.org.

\$500 sent to support family seeking asylum

UUMC has contributed \$500 to the support of the family seeking asylum and living in quarters at All Saints Roman Catholic Church.

Their sanctuary has been extended to next fall, when they will have another hearing in Immigration Court for permanent asylum.

Their children illustrate their journey to the U.S. The oldest is Congolese, the middle a Brazilian citizen and the youngest, born this year, is a U.S. citizen.

Our Church & Society Team is keeping in touch.

— Nelson Price

Worship, other offerings planned online after Easter

CONTINUED from Page 1

Board and under the leadership of Chair Joyce Flynn, phone trees have been set up by church groups to ensure that every member is contacted regularly to check on their situations.

Here is the plan for after Easter:

- **10:30 a.m. Sundays:** Continue worship online
- **10 a.m. Tuesdays:** Coffee with the Pastor. Pastor Alicia will be online via Zoom at 10 a.m.

- **10 a.m. Thursdays:** Mini-devotional or Thought of the Day by Pastor Alicia on Facebook Live
- **Daily devotionals** will be posted on our website and sent in emails

We are looking for volunteers to lead Bible Study and Book Study groups online via Zoom. Please contact Pastor Alicia if you have questions or can lead a group.

This is all a work in progress, and suggestions are welcome.

Altar flowers

Altar flowers were given:

In loving memory of Larry and Mary Klepper by their children.

By Jackie Sadowski in memory of family members and friends.

Flowers were given to Nate Appleton, Deb Virgo, Esther Pardue and Don Koten.

Flowers were delivered by Lee and Ed Potter and Jackie Sadowski.

Once a very busy place, UUMC is missing people

CONTINUED from Page 3

motely, and that we, with the building, are ready when UUMC can open again.

I completed a radio interview last weekend in support of the Diaper Bank of CNY. I found myself saying again and again how odd this time is as UUMC is a very busy church often full of people. Now we are not. WE MISS YOU ALL. Please know we are well, we keep close watch over one another and over UUMC. Stay safe and healthy.

Peace,

— Galyn Murphy-Stanley,

Postponed events

The **Alliance of Communities Transforming Syracuse's** annual fundraising banquet scheduled for April 21 has been postponed until Tuesday, Oct. 6, at Drumlins Country Club.

The **United Methodist General Conference 2020** has been postponed to 2021. No new date has been set.

Finance Corner

Pledging Update

2020 total pledges: \$217,360
 Total Pledges Received \$68,938
 Non-pledge contributions \$11,539
 Trustees Bathroom Renovation Fund \$24,625

Sounds of the Spirit Visual Fund

Donations received \$95,991
 Expenses paid \$88,891
 Current balance \$7,100



University United
 Methodist Church

Feeding God's People: Body, Mind and Spirit

1085 East Genesee Street, Syracuse, NY 13210

Phone: 315-475-7277 Fax: 315-475-8995

www.uumcsyracuse.org

Email: office@uumcsyracuse.org

www.facebook.com/UUMCSyracuse

Twitter: @UUMCSyracuse

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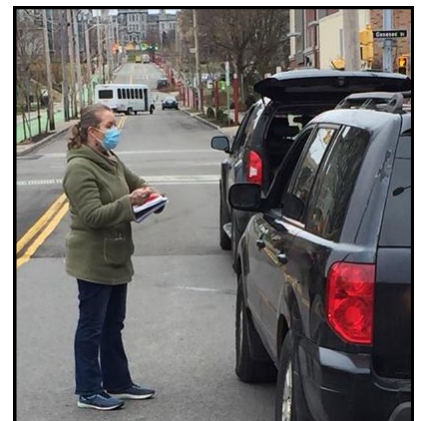
Vera and Oliver eat breakfast and watch last Sunday's worship.



Guests pick up a bagel and coffee breakfast to go March 29.



UUMC staff and volunteers work the outdoors Food Pantry on March 27.



Outreach Coordinator Galyn Murphy-Stanley checks in pantry guests.