

The Bell-Tower NEWS

Florissant Presbyterian Church

May 2020

*Enter as Guests, Leave as
Friends, Return as Family*

PANDEMIC GRIEF

In order to get through the emotional roller-coaster of fighting the Covid 19 pandemic, there are some who would urge us to put off, cover up, and postpone our grief. Yet, we need to let our grief out into the light of God's Love; I need to grieve and you need to grieve what we have lost. Healthy, healing grief cannot be postponed. It cannot be covered-up until the pandemic is over (Whenever that could be?). We are missing gathering, holding hands and hugging each other, and our congregation shouldn't wait to grieve until we gather back in our beautiful sanctuary. We must recognize all the things, people and places we have lost and are losing right now. We have lost our travel plans, graduations, weddings, funerals, birthday celebrations, our traditional Holy Week and Easter, income, jobs, school, time with friends and family, and maybe even some dreams. Part of our regular connectedness is walking together through grief in all its waves and complexities, and now we are being forced to reimagine what sharing grief in

isolation and at socially safe distances might look like.

This is the time for you and me to rethink how we feel denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance as we live through the coronavirus out-breaks. This pandemic has forced us to reimagine what we think of as worship, stewardship, and mission, yet are we rethinking our personal and communal engagement with grief and loss. The crisis has us reimagining how to do all the regular activities of life, maybe we need to even re-examine the way we grieve, as we learn and change in response to this deadly virus. We are living in an unprecedented time of global loss and grief and we will need to be attentive to the different ways that people around us move through grief for some time into the future. Some will move through the losses that we are experiencing quickly, and for other it will be more slowly.

We are missing gathering face to face, shaking hands, hugging friends and we need to show it. We are sad about not worshiping in the serenity of our sanctuary, and “sad” is how you are really feeling. We need to grieve, now, what we have lost during this pandemic and not postpone until later, so that we can be ready to re-emerge from the other side of this emotional roller-coaster with a stronger unity and renewed focus on serving God’s people. As I think hard about the canceled gatherings of family, friends, and church and all the events we have lost during the Covid 19 pandemic, I find something changing inside of me that feels less like fear or denial and more like hope.

Stay Safe, Keep Your Social Distance, and Pray Often,

Pastor Sean

CLERK’S REPORT

The monthly Session of Florissant Presbyterian Church was cancelled.

– *Candy Shelton, Clerk of Session*

CHURCH NEWS

Florissant Presbyterian Church COVID Response

As COVID has brought many things to a standstill, it seems appropriate to stop and provide a quick update on the

response of Florissant Presbyterian Church.

- When the St Louis County Stay at Home order was put into place as well as the cancelling of schools, it was decided to close the Learning Center for the remainder of the school year. Angie continues to plan for and enroll for a class of students for the 2020-2021 School Year.
- To allow us to continue paying the Learning Center staff for the remainder of the school year, Session voted to apply for the Payroll Protection Program through the Federal CARES Act. We received approval for the forgivable program loan allowing us to support our valued teachers. The protection plan, also, helps cover Paula and Ellen’s salaries. The funds may, also, be used to assist with utility bills for the church during this time when social distancing and remote worship is ongoing
- The PCUSA through the Hunger Action Committee provided an opportunity to apply for a grant to assist with Hunger Action in the areas. Each Presbytery was provided two \$1000 grants to be distributed to two congregations based on application. FPC applied for and has been granted one of the Giddings-Lovejoy Presbytery Hunger Action food grants

of \$1000 that upon receipt will be going to TEAM to assist in this time. As we have been unable to provide food through collection, this will provide a great support for our local TEAM ministry as community need is high. Upon receipt of the check, Pastor Sean and I will be presenting the check to TEAM with photos placed both on our website and Facebook page as well as that of TEAMS Facebook page.

- FPC was able to quickly transition to Drive-In Worship service with the addition of Facebook Live to share our worship with a larger population. Thanks to Ellen and her son for their assistance with providing mobile sound. As we continue to work out the bugs of both being in a virtual world and a nontraditional world, one thing is for sure and that God continues to work through each of our talents during this time of transition.
- Presbytery has, also, shared some questions to consider in preparation for reopening the church buildings for worship. These questions will be discussed with decisions made by Session related to what will worship service look like when the time comes to gather together again. The one thing for sure is that change is constant and with that comes changes necessary as we continue to know that

COVID is still a risk. As decisions are made, Pastor Sean and the Session will be providing further information as to what to expect. This of course will be dependent upon St Louis County orders when the time is right.

- FPC now has a PayPal account which will be loaded on the website later this week. This will allow for individuals to contribute to the church in a new way and expand our ability to reach individuals that are being reached in our new virtual world that aren't current members.

Last but not least to quote Sean, in this time of COVID remember to pray often and remember FPC continues to require the support during this time of change and uncertainty.

Chris Mahurin

PER CAPITA - Per Capita for this year is \$32.00/person. We would appreciate it if everyone could complete this task by July 1st. Thanks for your support.

PRAYERS – Marilynn, Bill, Esther, Mike, Doris, Carol, Sara, Jon, Ester, Pamela, Georgiana, Mary's brother, Barb's son-in-law Cliff, Sue's friend Lill, Ruth and her great grandson, Sue and her brothers-in-law Jeff and Shawn and her sister Lynn.

Continued prayers for Georgiana as she is in remission.

Esther is at the Sarah Community Nursing Home in Bridgeton. She is locked down in her room because of the Covid19 risk, with no visitors. She would appreciate talking to her FPC friends. Her phone # is 314-209-5366.

BIRTHDAYS

- 8 Dan Edwards
- 11 Brandon Goehri
- 13 Diane Ruyle
- 14 Cliff Webb
- 22 Sue Seibman
- 26 Lynn Bohler
- 29 Terry Salfen



ANNIVERSARIES

John & Caitlin Gierer
 Married 8 years on May 26

IN LOVING MEMORY

Louise Scudder - April 11, 2020



ACTIVITY

Spring Word Scramble

- WBNIAOR _____
- BLLAMURE _____
- WFLORE _____
- PLITU _____
- NERGE _____
- MLOBO _____
- UORSPT _____
- LFBTUTREY _____
- NIAR _____
- DREGNA _____
- EBE _____
- AMY _____
- GNRIPS _____
- HSSNIEUN _____
- YBNUN _____
- TENS _____
- EDES _____

- Rainbow
- Umbrella
- Flower
- Tulip
- Green
- Bloom
- Sprout
- Butterfly
- Rain
- Garden
- Bee
- May
- Spring
- Sunshine
- Bunny
- Nest
- Seed

She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. – Proverbs 31:36

"The bond between mothers and their children is one defined by love. As a mother's prayers for her children are unending, so are the wisdom, grace, and strength they provide to their children." - George W. Bush

"No man is poor who has a Godly mother." – Abraham Lincoln

Blessed are those who mourn on Mother's Day, and Blessed are those who rejoice.