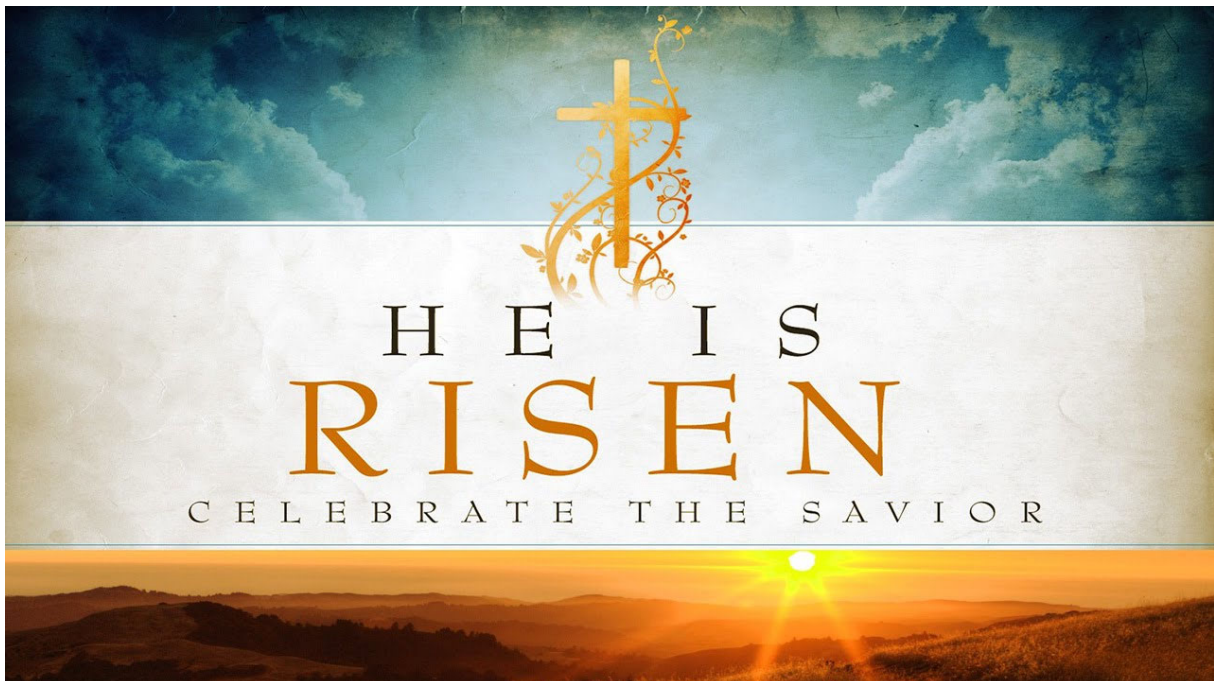


The Church Tower
First United Methodist Church
April 2021



A Note from the Pastor ...

Today, in Chapel with our preschoolers, I read The Little Golden Book Noah's Ark. I did so mainly because of the rain coming down (again), but within its pages, just like the pages of Scripture, are God's words of promise:

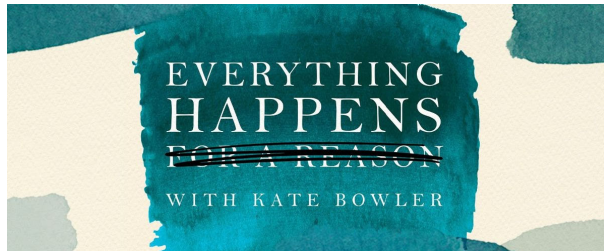
“God said, ‘This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.’ God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.” ~ Genesis 9.12-17

Of course, this is just one of many promises God makes to humankind, to provide for, to look after, to guide, to offer comfort, to give peace, to not abandon, and to save.

It's been a strange year for everyone, this may be an understatement, but in the midst of every single moment has been the promises of God! I have been asked, and have wondered myself, how is it that people with no faith get up each morning and face the day?

This question cannot be answered easily. For myself, and those of you who love God in Christ, we get up every morning because God has made the above promises, because Christ has gone through all before us.

Continued on page 13 ...



Beginning Tuesday, April 6th, at 7pm, via Zoom, I will lead a discussion of this thought-provoking book. If you are interested please let me know. Elizabeth



Please share the First United Methodist Church Tower with your friends, family and neighbors!

Anyone who has a computer or smartphone can sign up for a monthly electronic version! Just visit our website at:

FirstUMCNewportNews.com

Scroll to the bottom of the page, add your email address, and click 'Subscribe'.

This could provide an encouraging and needed means of interaction and devotion while we are struggling with health and social matters. If you have any questions, please contact the church office.

Maundy Thursday

While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, 'Take, this is my body.' ~ Mark 14:22

Jesus,

When you had nothing else to give you gave yourself.

And as your friends shared and ate, they were confused and complicit, just like all of us.

May we give – our lives and confusions; our hollowness and our hearts –
because when we give like this, we are like you, who became like us.

Amen.

~ Pádraig Ó Tuama



Good Friday



'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.'

~ John 14:27

Jesus, you shared peace around the table of anxiety,
peace with bread, peace with wine, peace in the face of the uncertain,
peace in the place of pain.

May we share tables of peace in places of pain,
sharing food and friendship and words and life.

Because you came to a fearful world
and found your place around those tables.

Amen.

~ Pádraig Ó Tuama

I Have Been Entombed

I have been entombed within ego and the self;
I have been dead within the walls of winter.
I have long lain aside the hope that once I knew;
many forgotten truths line the path of wilderness.
I have grown weary with the waiting cocoon;
I have sensed with sorrow the pain of transformation.
Yet, in the graceful stillness of this early April morning,
I am greeted in love with inside eastering.
I stand before this moment with silent, rising sun
and page-full of Scripture and I proclaim: I am coming forth!
I've left the linens of winter lying there behind me;
I've shook off the dust of dead and I'm bounding forth in Spirit.
It is time to break loose.
It is time to come forth.
It is time to allow life to wing its way into depths.
This is the season of my Savior,
the One whom God raised from the dead.
This is the moment of resurrection
and I know it is the right time.
For I am coming forth,
coming forth from the tomb –
and just like my God risen,

I feel bonded with the world,
I feel all brokenness brought unto one.
I'm on my way to bless bread
with each of my dear friends;
I'm on my way to offer presence
to all those I meet on the road;
I'm on my way to bring resurrection
to all who need God's healing Life.
It is Easter
and I proclaim: I've been raised from the dead!
I am coming forth from the tomb!

~ Joyce Rupp, OSB





**FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA
COUNCIL MEETING OF MARCH 9, 2021**

Members Present Via Zoom: David Dellinger (Church Treasurer), Doug Foltz, (Trustees Chair), Dianne Harwood, (Council Secretary/SPRC Chair), Elizabeth Lutz (Pastor), Phil Rehrig (Council Chair), Jane Preston (LMAC), Mahla Swinford (Foundation President), John Talbert (Finance Chair), Jane Waters (President UMW), Kim Webster (Lay Leader/Preschool Director)

Guest: Kevin Wilson, Business Administrator, Bill Jones, Norman Shields, Jr.

Call to Order and Opening Devotion: The meeting was called to order at 2:05 by Chairman Phil Rehrig who opened the meeting with a devotional reading and prayer.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the January 12, 2021 meeting were approved as written and submitted.

Committee Reports:

- + **Staff Parish:** Dianne Harwood reported that Kevin Wilson has joined the First Church staff and will assume the responsibilities of our Business Administrator. Welcome, Kevin!
- + **Trustees:** Doug Foltz reported that the contractors work on the Heating/AC in the fellowship hall is complete; we are waiting on the city inspection, which should be on March 10. He noted that new units more than 5,000 BTU's have to have smoke alarms in the vents (they are approximately \$125 each). City inspectors will let us know if we need them. All repair work for the building will now be on the calendar and the administrative assistant will be notified.
- + **Treasurer:** David Dellinger reported that money was moved from Wood-Miner to cover this year's expenses and the new Heating/AC unit. Due to data input delays, a current financial statement is not available.
- + **Finance:** John Talbert also welcomed our new Business Administrator, Kevin Wilson.

New Business:

- + **Foundation:** Mahla Swinford moved to accept Teresa Michener, Bill Waters, and Beverly Yeoman as Foundation directors.

Pastor's Report:

- + Pastor Lutz stated that as of July 1, the 16 districts of the Virginia Annual Conference will be temporarily appointed a new DS for one year. York River and Rappahannock River Districts will be under the supervision of the Rev. Dr. Charles Ledlum-Bates. Rev. Bates will be alternating every week

between the two district offices and will have 140 churches under his supervision. Annual conference will be held virtually on June 18&19; the 2020 General Conference has been postponed to August 29-September 6, 2022.

In-person worship resumed February 21 with attendance growing each Sunday. Thanks to Thom Robertson and Doug Lutz for all the effort and time they have offered to learn new ways to share music and the Word of God. Sunday School, committee meetings, and all other church activities are still on hold pending the Bishop's authorization. Virtual bible study continues on Monday morning and Wednesday evening; a new book study will begin just after Easter on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.

We will have 2 worship services Easter Sunday: a sunrise service at 6:35 a.m. and a 10:00 a.m. service. Please let the church office know by Palm Sunday if you wish to attend either service so social distancing practices may be properly observed.

Pastor Lutz will be on vacation March 15-23.

Announcements/Comments: Next meeting will be May11, 2:00 p.m., via Zoom.

Closing: After a closing prayer, the meeting was adjourned at 2:35.

The Resurrection is a giant receipt, stamped across history, that reads: "Paid in Full"

Tim Keller

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 <i>Maundy Thursday</i> Worship 7pm	2 <i>Good Friday</i> FUMC Closed Spring Break April 2-9, 2021	3
el Service, 10am 5:00 pm via Zoom	8	9	10
dist Preschool Closed for Spring Break April 2-9			
5:00 pm via Zoom			
	15	16 FUMP Music, 10am	17
el Service, 10am			
	22	23 FUMP Music, 10am	24 Blessing of the Worms FUMP 10:00 am
el Service, 10am 5:00 pm via Zoom			
	29	30 FUMP Music, 10am	
el Service, 10am 5:00 pm via Zoom			



APRIL BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

April Birthdays

4/1 Saunders White, Jr.	4/4 Brenda Garriss	4/4 Richard Joyce
4/6 Rita Potter	4/7 Sonny Forbes III	4/10 Dianne Harwood
4/10 Judy Nice	4/10 Grant Sletten	4/11 Anita Crumpler
4/12 Max Bell	4/13 Rachel Nightingale	4/14 Dan Carter
4/16 Madonna Brink	4/17 Sandy Crick	4/17 Doug Lutz
4/18 Bill Jones, Jr.	4/19 Chelsea Marstellar	4/20 Sewell Brewer Jr.
4/22 Charles Yost	4/23 Erin Barnes	4/23 Christopher Hicks
4/25 John Price	4/26 Beverly Monk	4/29 David Oakley Jr.

April Anniversaries

4/2 Ed Creech Jr.	4/17 Debbi and John Harrell, Jr.
4/20 Rick & Cindy Marstellar	4/23 Guy Amory, Jr.

[Continued from page 2 ...]

It sounds simple, but there are days that each of us would rather pull the blankets over our heads and wait for the sun to shine again, and yet we swing our feet onto the floor, get up, praise God, and continue to repeat day after day.

May the promises of God give you strength, peace, and salvation!


Pastor Elizabeth



Morning Prayer

Dear Lord,
So far I've done all right.
I haven't gossiped,
haven't lost my temper,
haven't been greedy, grumpy, nasty,
selfish, or overindulgent.
I'm really glad about that.
But in a few minutes, God,
I'm going to get out of bed.
And from then on,
I'm going to need a lot more help.

April Tower Report ~ UMWomen 2021

Renyatta Banks, Executive Director of the Wesley Community Service Center, recently sent our UMWomen a letter expressing the need for ChromeBook laptop computers. A Program Engineer from Cox Communications started teaching classes with the Girls Who Code Club on February 27th. The Circle Leaders were called and asked to notify their members. What a response we received! In less than a week, we had collected \$750.00 to purchase ChromeBooks for the young students participating in the class. *Thank You so much Ladies!* This shows what team work can do. You are to be commended for your generosity and your desire to help these students.

The Pastoral Letter from our Council of Bishops says, "God's creation is in crisis. We, the Bishops of the UMC cannot remain silent while God's people and God's planet suffer. This beautiful natural world is a loving gift from God, the creator of all things seen and unseen. God has entrusted its care to all of us....but we cannot help the world until we change our way of living in it."

Our church had a Green Team in 2015. We made great strides in making our church a Green Church. Shelby Knoble and I have just completed a conference workshop ~ Loving People

and Planet in the Name of God ~ 5 sessions 2 hours each. This was just a start in rededicating ourselves to strive to do our best to be good stewards in caring for God's Creation. Many of you have never stopped caring as evidenced by the beautiful grounds surrounding our church. Shelby and I are making a list of goals to work towards and hope to take an inventory to see what still exists and what needs to be re-addressed to achieve our goals. We will start small and hope to have suggestions from our church members and at least one representative from each circle join our Green Team. We will keep you posted on our progress in our UMWomen Tower Reports.

Those of you who are participating in the UMWomen Reading Program by checking out books I have here at my house; just give me a call when you need another book (874-4888)I will bring you a new one or you may come pick one up.

It's time to select someone for our Special Mission Recognition Award. Please send name of person and a note saying why he/she deserves the reward to: Cathy Nicholson/184 Carnegie Drive/Newport News, VA/23606 by Thursday. May 13th.

May the Lord Bless and Keep You,
Jane Waters, UMW President

Foundation News

FUMC Foundation Welcomes Three New Directors:

FUMC Foundation extends a warm 2021 welcome to three new Directors: Teresa Michener, Bill Waters and Beverly Yeoman, who were confirmed by FUMC Council at its March 12 meeting. They replace openings created on the 15-member Foundation Board by the December 31 departure of longtime Directors David Dellinger, Shelby Knoble and Cathy Nicholson, who rotated off the Board at the completion of their terms. Thank you, David, Shelby and Cathy for your service!

Foundation Donates to FUMC HV/AC Repair:

The Board of Directors of FUMC Foundation has donated \$5,000 toward the cost of the Church's recent repair/replacement of the HVAC system.

SAVE THE DATE: MAY 15, 2021

**Virginia Conference United Methodist Women
Spiritual Life Retreat**

Peace Be With You



***Our Speaker: Rev. Ileana Rosario
Pastor of Lower United Methodist Church***



First Church's HomeBound Members

Have you been in touch? Cards, notes and letters are encouraging .

Are you able to visit by telephone? What a difference 15 minutes would make by calling to check in on your brother or sister in Christ!

Are you able to deliver a special meal or treat? Do you cook or bake? If you know that any of our HomeBound Members are able to have a treat, or receive a special meal—what a blessing you could be!

*First United Methodist Church
HomeBound Members*

*Some of our members need your care and attention
Please feel free to take a list of names and address to:
Send a Card
Or Make a Phone Visit*

Evelyn Creasy
107 James River Drive
Newport News, VA 23601

Robert & Sally Walker
52 Ferguson Cove
Newport News, VA 23606

C/O Carl Crigger
Louise Crigger
406 Jeffress Road
Keyssville, VA 23947

Margaret Way (Billie)
Bayside Convalescent Center
1 Vantage Drive, Rm. 301
Poquoson, VA 23662

Ola Lawson
534 Blount Point Road
Newport News, VA 23606

Robert Tankard
605 Hamlin Street
Newport News, VA 23601-3714

Agnes Rodgers
22 Milford Road
Newport News, VA 23601

Fred Way
c/o The Mennowood
13030 Warwick Blvd., Room 261
Newport News, VA 23602

Let each of you look not to your
own interests, but to the interests of
others.

Philippians 2:4

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Lutz, *Pastor*
Kim Webster, *Pre-School Director*
Kevin Wilson, *Business Administrator*
Thom Robertson, *Director of Music Ministries*
Debbie Wolff, *Administrative Assistant*
Kaylee Correll, *Nursery Director*
Rick Clifton, *Custodian*



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Pastor's phone: (cell) 757/335-2649 (home) 757/595-5630