

First Things

Issue No. 12 A weekly publication of First United Methodist Church, Oak Ridge, Tennessee

March 22, 2020

Dear Friends and Family of FUMCOR,

In response to the emergence of the COVID-19 virus, our Bishop has mandated that **all worship services move to online for Sunday, March 15 and Sunday, March 22** and that **all programs in the congregation be cancelled** for that same two week period.

Please join us for worship at our website (FUMCOR.org) on those Sundays we are not meeting in person.

As you might imagine, this uncertainty about when our schedule will return to normal leaves us in a bit of a quandary about which events and programs to publicize at this point. Please check our website for any updates on in-person worship and program gatherings after Saturday, March 28.

If it turns out this suspension of our worship and programs extends through Sunday, April 12, let us reassure all of you that we will celebrate Holy Week and Easter on the first week we return. After all, the celebration of Jesus' resurrection is a reality every day of the year! Postponing our celebration may not be our first choice, but we find ourselves in an unusual season as a church, city, state, nation and world.

Remember that God is with you, and all of us. Remember to check on those in your circle of friends who need extra support during this time. Let's stay connected and supportive via phone calls, emails, and texts. One thing we have learned from the teachings of Jesus is that every person matters. In a season of uncertainty regarding communicable illness, these decisions are driven by the realization that every person in this congregation matters, and we can take measures to protect and respect those who may be in places of vulnerability.

We hope and pray you understand the importance of doing our part to protect our people. We are not alone. Thank God for the gift of technology that enables us to worship and be the family of God together in a time of physical distancing.

Your pastors,

Mark, Chris, and Jenny

April Homebound Member's Birthdays

The following people are homebound members of our congregation who have birthdays this month. Please take a moment to send each a card. For addresses, check the directory or contact the church office (483-4357). Thank you for this expression of care and concern!

April 8 Kelly Dagenhart **April 13** Bob Smith & Emma Boyd **April 16** Bonnie Hedrick

While the world around us is practicing social distancing and self-quarantine to help slow the spread of COVID-19, our own First Church staff are working to disinfect the building, provide remote worship opportunities for kids and adults, and continue to minister to our community. While the building is closed and in person activities have been cancelled, the staff are working and the expenses continue. Please consider mailing your financial gifts to the church office or visit <https://www.fumcor.org/give> for a variety of online giving options.

Congratulations to

Gary and Laura Zuehsow Gravelly on the birth of their son, Thomas Robert, born on March 13, 2020. Grandparents are Janise and Matt Libby.

In Loving Memory

Ewin Kiser

Who joined FUMC on March 3, 1968, and died on March 7.

Bill Laing

Who joined FUMC on February 14, 1957, and died on February 19. We extend love and sympathy to their family and friends.

In Sympathy

We extend love and sympathy to Sherry & Harold Ketterer in the death of Sherry's mother, Jody Towell, on March 10.

Our Gifts

Offering this Week	\$21,667
2020 Year to Date	\$374,454
2019 Year to Date	\$319,209
Monthly Special Offering	\$772

Thank you to all of you who mailed in your financial gifts.

Pastors

Mark Flynn, lead pastor
Chris Black, associate pastor
Jenny Caughman, spiritual care

Contact Information

865.483.4357
www.fumcor.org
Pastor on call: 865.272.9862

Happy 100th Birthday!!

On March 30, Hoke Culbertson will be 100 years old! If you would like to wish him a happy birthday or send him a birthday card, please call the church office for his information.



High School Seniors Save the Date: May 24

Sunday, May 24, we will host the Senior Reception and Senior Dinner. The Senior Reception will take place in the Welcome Center during the Sunday school hour. The Senior Dinner will take place at 6:30 p.m. After dinner, graduating seniors will have the opportunity to leave their handprints and signatures in the youth loft, a time-honored tradition! Kayla asks that all graduating high school seniors and their families send her a few senior pictures and baby pictures for the dinner, and RSVP to the reception and dinner by May 1. Contact Kayla with questions (kcarico@fumcor.org).

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Facts and Medical Advice regarding COVID-19

COVID-19 is the infectious respiratory disease caused by the coronavirus that originated in China in December 2019.

The symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, cough and shortness of breath. These symptoms are similar to the seasonal flu.

The virus is spread mainly between people who are in close contact with each other (< 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

Right now there is already community spread of COVID-19 in the U.S. It no longer requires an infected traveler coming to the U.S. from a foreign country with the disease.

This coronavirus is very contagious. An infected person infects an average of 2.5 other persons. That means that COVID-19 is about twice as contagious as the typical seasonal flu.

The average incubation period for COVID-19 is 5 days. It can be up to 12 days.

An infected person may be contagious even before developing symptoms. In mild cases, a person is contagious for 7-12 days. In more severe cases, a person can be contagious for 2 weeks or more.

80% of COVID-19 cases are mild or moderate and do not require hospitalization. Recovery happens in about 2 weeks.

14% of COVID-19 cases are severe and do require hospitalization. Severe cases last 3-6 weeks.

5% of cases are critical and require intensive care in an ICU. Most of these cases require mechanical ventilatory support.

Risk factors for developing a severe infection are older age (>60) and having a serious medical condition like heart disease > diabetes > chronic lung disease. Also persons who are immunocompromised or who are taking immunosuppressive medication.

The mortality rate is higher for older individuals: 5% in adults over 60 years old and about 16% in people over 80 years old.

COVID-19 severe complications can be pneumonia in both lungs, multi-organ failure, and death.

There is no vaccine for COVID-19. There is no specific treatment for COVID-19. The only treatment is symptomatic and supportive.

Continued on next page.

What should you do about all this?

What you should do to protect yourself from getting the infection:

Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place or after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.

Use a hand sanitizer which contains at least 60% alcohol when soap and water are not available.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

If you are older or have a chronic health condition, avoid close contact with other persons (< 6 ft.), not knowing whether they may be infected.

Definitely avoid close contact with people who are sick.

What you should do if you are sick:

STAY HOME except to get medical care. Do not go to work, school or public areas. Avoid public transportation.

You should stay in a specific separate room and away from other people in your own home. You should use a separate bathroom. If you are test (+) for COVID-19, it is even better to be isolated away from your home and family, if possible.

Wear a face mask if you are sick and around other people.

As above, cover your coughs and sneezes. Wash your hands often. Avoid sharing personal household items. Clean all "high-touch" surfaces every day.

If you have symptoms of fever, cough and shortness of breath, you should be evaluated. CALL AHEAD BEFORE GOING TO YOUR DOCTOR OR THE ER. Tell them that you may have COVID-19. If your symptoms are minor, you can call your primary care provider. Go to the ER for severe symptoms such as marked shortness of breath. CDC criteria for testing now allows your PCP to order the test if you have symptoms compatible with COVID-19, whereas before you had to have a known exposure to someone with the disease.

The CDC does not recommend people who are NOT sick wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory illnesses including COVID-19. Only people who have COVID-19 and are showing symptoms and healthcare workers should wear a facemask. Since facemasks are in short supply, save them for the people who really need them.

Current CDC guidance for when it is OK to release a COVID-19 patient from isolation include all of the following requirements:

- The patient is free from fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- The patient is no longer showing symptoms including cough.
- The patient has tested negative on at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected at least 24 hours apart.

Someone who has been released from isolation is not considered to pose a risk of infection to others.

Social distancing is about avoiding crowds and keeping a safe distance from other people. It is extremely important from a public health point of view. This will prevent the peak incidence of COVID-19 from becoming so great that it overwhelms our healthcare system and its hospital intensive care units. If they are overwhelmed, the case fatality rate will likely go from 0.5% when health care is good to 4%.

It is for social distancing reasons that First Church has cancelled worship services for at least the next two weeks. Let us be understanding of the good cause for which we are doing this, not only to protect our self but also our fellow congregant.

"Also reach out to your neighbors to offer them help with errands and pharmacy runs, especially your elderly neighbors who should stay indoors and away from others but will need help. This is a very sacred moment and will demonstrate what it really means to be human, Christian and in community with one another. Learn to play an instrument or bake the perfect pie. Play board games. Take walks. Slow down."

A good CDC information sheet is <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf>.

