

First Things

Issue No. 25

A weekly publication of First United Methodist Church, Oak Ridge, Tennessee

June 28, 2020

Highlights from June 23 Church Council

- The Council discussed when to reopen for in-person worship under stage 1 protocols. (A copy of that protocol is available on our church website.) The members examined the church-wide survey results and discussed the rising number of COVID-19 cases in our area, which was of great concern to all. There was discussion of the tension between wanting to reopen in order to serve those who desire to worship and concern for the vulnerable among us. Therefore, the decision was made to not reopen for in-person worship at this time and revisit it at a July 21 Council meeting, at which time the members will evaluate reopening based on the current infection control data."
- The Council discussed how best to continue online worship services. Staying with the recorded broadcasts presently being done will eventually require a part-time staff person of approximately 8 hours a week. An alternative would be to stream services live on Sunday mornings from our two worship spaces. That choice would require the purchase and installation of high quality cameras, mixing board, and computer. Jeff Kile has secured a bid of \$61,000 for this option. Live streaming would also require a part-time staff person of approximately 5 hours a week. Since either option requires changes to our budget and staffing, the Council is requesting that Finance and Staff Parish Relations Committees provide input on the decision.
- *The UMW celebrated their "Bakeless Bake Sale" fundraiser raised \$2,950.00, and all ten of the local organizations we support have received a donation. A special gift of \$500 was given to the Blossom Center. Thanks to everyone who contributed.*
- Our youth have been participating in a new video conference Sunday School series based on MLK's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail." Wednesday night Zoom Youth Group has extended into the summer, rather than ending with the school year as "usual." When the church re-opens they will have fun and safe outdoor events, such as having physically-distanced movie nights on the lawn.
- To celebrate the Independence Day holiday, Josh Sumter and the Music Ministry will be presenting a virtual organ recital, "Made in America," on July 5 at 6 p.m. The recital will feature sacred music that is unique to the United States with a special emphasis on spirituals and black composers. Be sure to tune in for this unique presentation of some fantastic music!
- June is LGBTQ Pride Month, and the Young Adult Sunday Class has celebrated this by unanimously voting to become a Reconciling Community. They adopted the following Welcome Statement: "The FUMCOR Young Adult Sunday School class is a group made up of allies and queer persons who welcome and affirm all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. We celebrate, uplift, and stand with persons of color and ethnic minorities. We also want to meet everyone where they are in regards to disability, mental health, and socio-economic status. Society has often let all of these people down, but we strive not to. Therefore, as followers of Christ, we are committed to upholding the baptismal vow to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves, and respect the dignity of every human being."
- Our Trustees agree to pursue purchasing the Microsoft 365 Suite of Programs, since it manages emails, documents generated, file storage and offsite access to the system. Linda Bowen will finalize and report the cost prior to signing a contract.
- One of our paid singers has been reactivated and two more have been hired. This group will lead music in the traditional services during the first stage of reopening. We will start to slowly reintroduce volunteers into the choral ensembles when it becomes safe for larger groups to sing together.
- All of our children's teachers have been doing a Zoom Sunday school class for kids in PreK to Grade 5 on Sunday mornings. In early June they "virtually" said goodbye to the 5th graders who were moving up into 6th grade in the Fall. Megan Alden and Autumn Bonifacious have also been filming Children's Church lessons for use on Sunday mornings in the Virtual Chapel.
- We continue to offer food to those in need every Wednesday evening through our Drive-thru Community Meal. 150 dinners are distributed each week, as well as bags of food for those who arrive after dinners are gone.
- Online classes have been going well. Mark just completed a Bible Study had, on average, 10 – 12 participants. Jenny has started a new class on Praying with the Psalms with 10 people, including some who have not recently been involved at FUMC. Chris will soon announce another online class offering.
- Staff Parish Relations Committee plans to meeting June 30 to discuss the staff implications of the Council's decisions on reopening and continuing our online worship presence.

Our Prayers:

Discharged: Linda Houlberg, Tom Scott to Commonwealth

MMC: Bill Martin, Bea Garber

In Loving Memory

Marjorie Congdon

Who joined FUMC on March 13, 1960 and died on June 8.
We extend love and sympathy to her family and friends.

Our Gifts

Offering this Week	\$11,575
2020 Year to Date	\$709,680
2019 Year to Date	\$673,463
Monthly Special Offering	\$1,180

June Special Offering:
YWCA of Anderson County

Young Adults Sunday School Becomes a Reconciling Community!

June was LGBTQ Pride Month, and the Young Adult Sunday Class has celebrated this by unanimously voting to become a Reconciling Community through the Reconciling Ministries Network. The class adopted a welcome statement that embodies its commitment to diversity in all forms. "The FUMCOR Young Adult Sunday School class is a group made up of allies and queer persons who welcome and affirm all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. We celebrate, uplift, and stand with persons of color and ethnic minorities. We also want to meet everyone where they are in regards to disability, mental health, and socio-economic status. Society has often let all of these people down, but we strive not to. Therefore, as followers of Christ, we are committed to upholding the baptismal vow to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves, and respect the dignity of every human being."

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



1350 Oak Ridge Turnpike
Oak Ridge, TN 37830

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage PAID
Permit #18
Oak Ridge, TN
37830

news@fumcor.org

The methods in which the news is dispensed and the ways in which it is consumed have changed greatly in the past few years. Websites and social media have replaced print media for many of us. As church staff come and go, various persons have had roles in getting our news to you. Below is a list of staff members who currently hold these responsibilities:

- ⇒ Kayla Carico - graphics, electronic sign, bulletin boards, social media, Welcome Center TVs, donut hole TV
- ⇒ Danielle Gallaher - First Things newsletter
- ⇒ Seth O'Kegley - website
- ⇒ Jeff Kile - contemporary worship welcome loop
- ⇒ Mark Flynn - news press releases

While this list has fluctuated and probably will again, **there is a single email address that goes to all of these persons: news@fumcor.org.** That address is a simple way to get your announcements, photos, and publicity needs to all church staff who hold these responsibilities.

Sermons and Music Available on YouTube

There are two playlists available on First Church's YouTube channel. One playlist is for the sermons in both services and the other one is for contemporary music virtual videos. Be sure to subscribe to the YouTube channel so you won't miss out on new videos.

July Homebound Member Birthdays

The following people are homebound members of our congregation who have birthdays in July. Please take a moment to send each one a card. You can get their addresses by looking in the directory or contacting the church office (483.4357 or dgallaher@fumcor.org). Thank you for this expression of care and concern!



July 4	John Sanders
July 9	Evelyn Martin
July 12	Irvin Speas
July 18	Edna Earl Donaghe
July 27	Don Sampsell
July 30	Helen Roberts

July Special Offering: Girls Incorporated

Girls Inc. serves three counties and 22 schools based out of a centrally located facility for after school and summer camp programs. They aim to serve the highest need, lowest income schools to ensure girls have access to an intentional and research based program in science, economics, health and more. This summer, Girls Inc. has an active summer camp. For girls who cannot attend in person, food and activity packages are being delivered to the girls' homes. This is in addition to virtual educational activities that girls engage in with computers. Please help support our their activities to lead girls to professional lives. Make checks out to FUMC (memo: July Special Offering).