

# First Things

Issue No. 27

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July 12, 2020

## A New Opportunity to Connect with Pastors

We are pleased to offer a new opportunity to allow our members to spend some time together with our pastoral staff as we continue to wait for the time we can safely be physically together again in our church building. Our pastoral staff will begin having Zoom meeting virtual office hours each Sunday evening from 7:00 -9:00 p.m. Hopefully, this will be a good opportunity for everyone to check in, say "hello," share a smile, ask questions, or have a deeper conversation. Rev. Mark Flynn will be available this Sunday, July 12; Rev. Chris Black will host the meeting the next Sunday, July 19; and Rev. Jenny Caughman will be online Sunday, July 26. The link for this Zoom meeting will be available on our website under the virtual chapel tab.

And, of course, if you would prefer a more private conversation with one of the pastors, you may always contact them through the church office.

## COVID-19: Current Facts and How to Stay Safe

There are over 10 million cases of COVID-19 and over 500,000 deaths worldwide, with the number of cases in the U.S. rising. This is a rapidly spreading virus like measles and flu. Most virologists predict it will be with us for at least 2 years. We need 60-80% of the population to be immune for the disease to go away. New York City has ~20% immunity at this point.

Many people with COVID are asymptomatic when they have the disease and are capable of spreading it to others. If you are exposed, it takes 1-2 weeks before you have symptoms. Testing is unlikely to be positive the week before you feel sick, yet you are able to spread the disease at that time. Once you feel sick, you are infectious for about 11 days.

The hope is to have antibody therapy (different from a vaccine) by this fall and a vaccine in 2021. The antibody therapy will be used to treat front line workers and the most at-risk of our population. Unfortunately, once a vaccine is developed, not everyone can be immunized at the same time. It will be months before everyone in the world can get vaccinated.

If the virus is going to be with us for two years, we need to figure out how to live our lives and be safe. The most important thing we can do to keep from getting sick is to *safely physically distance* ourselves from others. If we remain 6 feet apart, if someone has COVID, the virus would fall to the floor while they were talking. Socialize and stay connected, but be smart.

- We are most likely to get sick inside. The smaller the room, the more easily we can become sick. Bathrooms present a real issue. We are much safer outside and in big open rooms.
- We are not likely to get sick at a large store, but we should not relax our habits of wearing masks or using soap and water to clean our hands.
- The mail and newspaper are not as much of a risk as we first thought. Most disease is spread person-to-person.
- Wear a properly fitting face mask. It reduces your risk of acquiring the disease from about 20% to about 3%. Add safe distancing and the risk is even less. You do not need a mask outside unless you are going to talk face-to-face.
- Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer.
- Heating up a car to 133 degrees kills 99% of the virus, so park your car in the sun.
- Pool and ocean water are not going to transmit the virus, but being too close to someone and talking face-to-face in the water could.



## Volunteers Needed for Tabitha's Table

The FUMC Tabitha's Table food ministry team needs

two additional head cooks to plan and lead preparation of the meals. Each head cook will be in charge of the meal once every three months or so and may be part of the prep team when needed. Tabitha's Table is an ecumenical food ministry that provides a free community meal each Monday at Robertsville Baptist Church. FUMC is scheduled on the fourth Monday of each month to run the meal. Contact Linda Yarbrough (927.0430 or yarb2.jl@gmail.com) for more information.

## New Online Bible Study Beginning Soon *Letting Bible Study Get Back to Basics*

Have you been reading the Bible much during COVID-19? If not, have you thought about trying to do it more? Beginning Wednesday evening, July 15, Rev. Chris Black will offer a 5-week Zoom meeting class called, *Letting Bible Study Get Back To Basics*. He will discuss various timeless tools that are deceptively simple, but that can lead to a richer understanding of our sacred text. If you have ever thought, "Where should I begin with the Bible?," "I don't understand this at all," "Is a commentary really necessary?," "I am honestly a little intimidated by the Bible," this class is for you. Classes will begin at 8:00 p.m. and will last ~40 minutes. There will be a link for the Zoom meeting on our website (fumcor.org), under the Virtual Chapel tab. If you have questions, please contact Chris (cblack@fumcor.org).

## Holston Home Thanks

"I am writing to thank you for all the duffel bags, sheets, linens, undergarments, and comforters your church family recently donated to our youth. All of us at Holston Home—children, staff and board leadership—really appreciate your heart for youth." Sincerely, Susan Bernier, Resource Development Coordinator



And ... the collection coordinators would like to thank the very generous, always-supportive FUMC congregation. You went above and beyond in purchasing items from the Holston Home wish list. You donated \$2874 to buy duffel bags, and you also bought coverlets, comforters, sheets, bras, and large storage boxes—all in the midst of the pandemic. We certainly do appreciate the support we received during the 2020 collection, and HHC was thrilled to receive our gifts, which were delivered in late June.

Thanks again, Melanie Fillauer and Vicki Hinkel

### Our Prayers:

*Personal information removed for privacy*

### Our Gifts

Offering this Week	\$21,214
2020 Year to Date	\$748,571
2019 Year to Date	\$709,936
Monthly Special Offering	\$90

### 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



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### A Big Thank You!

A big thank you to Sandi and Bill Henry who made over 200 cloth masks for our church! We also thank Terry Copeland, Diane Edwards, and Kathy Gillenwaters as well as all others who contributed to our goal of 400 masks. As of the end of June, 406 masks have been donated. Thank you for helping us all keep each other healthy.

### July Special Offering: Girls Incorporated

Girls Inc. serves 3 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 their activities to lead girls to professional lives. Make checks payable to FUMC (memo: July Special Offering).

### Directory Photos Sessions Postponed

Once again, FUMC is postponing the scheduled photo sessions for the new church directory. We feel strongly about trying to get as many people in the directory as possible and believe that come this September, families just won't be willing to gather for sessions. The staff has decided to wait until next year, 2021, to start scheduling photo sessions. The new dates to be planning for are February 10-13 and 25-27. Watch for how to sign up for an appointment in January.



### Worship CD and DVD Available

When we had to close the building due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we quickly explored ways of providing online worship and other devotional activities. This works quite well - for those who have access to the internet but not everyone does. In an effort to serve all of our members, we will be making CD and DVD recordings of our worship services available. If you do not have a CD player, we will work to find you one. Many assisted living facilities have both CD and DVD players available to borrow. If you would like a CD or DVD or help finding a way to use them, please call Jenny Caughman (483.4357).