



Online Worship Services and Godly Play Classes Continue Each Week

A recorded worship service for each Sunday will continue until we can gather at the church again. Access these services on Sundays by visiting the church website at mtvernonumc.org.

If you have not been receiving emails from the church each week with information about the Sunday services (and other announcements), please send your current email address to mtvernonumc@comcast.net.



Jae Cho, Beth Bauman, Juliet Cho, Megan Gould, and Alex Larking produce these worship services, and each week this team is joined by others. Please join us on Sundays!

For our children, Beth Bauman records a Godly Play lesson for each Sunday. These are also accessed from the church website.

And Behind the Scenes ...

A special thank you to Alex Larking and Kathryn Waters for making our worship services online and virtual choirs possible!

Alex Larking assembles all the parts of the service – which are recorded separately by the participants – into the video you see on Sundays.

Kathryn Waters has the know-how and programs to assemble a virtual choir from separate recordings made by each singer. Rumor has it that another virtual choir, this time featuring Mount Vernon children, is in the works!

Both are spending a lot of time on sharing their skills with us.



A makeshift tripod holds a phone at the right angle to record special music.

**Coming
Wednesday, May 6:**

A new kind of "Wednesday Fellowship"

We would like to reconnect with people through a Zoom meeting. There will be a time of meditation and prayer, as well as conversation and announcements.

This is open to anyone from Mount Vernon.

Watch for more information in emails.

Questions? Contact Jae Cho at jaewukcho@gmail.com



Many thanks to all who have contributed to the Easter offering. So far we have collected \$1,700.00 of our \$3,000.00 goal, which has been sent to Haiti. Our offering benefits the New Hope Hospital, near Cap-Haitien.


Dr. Maklin Eugene and Wanda Musgrave (chair of the Board of Partners for New Hope) extend their deep appreciation for what we have sent so far and send

this message: "This is such a generous gift and will offer so much help to New Hope Hospital as they also live through this virus. It is such a blessing to be in partnership together for Haiti. Please give our appreciation and blessings to the people of Mount Vernon Church."


As more funds are received, we will make sure they get to Haiti immediately as the needs are great.


This New Season of Our Lives By Beth Bauman

When we entered a new season of our lives – a season of working from home, worshipping together online, meeting via Zoom, etc. – I thought, “What will I do with my time? I don’t have my youth groups on Sunday nights, children’s choir, Sunday morning activities, no meetings!” To my surprise, I’m as busy as ever, and it has been a joy to see the ministry of Mount Vernon continue in spite of the difficulties we face. As always, God places new ways of doing things and new ministry opportunities in our midst when we are faced with challenges! So many people have risen to the occasion to make difficult decisions and to insure that our ministries go forward:

 What a blessing Zoom is! We are able to “meet” together, seeing each other’s faces, hearing others’ voices. I have been participating in Zoom calls several times each week with younger youth meetings, Young Women’s Bible Study, Children’s House Executive Committee meetings, staff meetings, etc.



 One of our first big challenges was to close our Children’s House day care and to take care of its staff. Many hours have been spent navigating all the variables, and outstanding leadership has been provided by Lindsay Cohn, director; Lindsay Payne, Board chair; Evie Jackson, financial secretary; Steven Gould, Finance chair; and other Board members. At this time, Children’s House is not open because we have very few essential workers who need day care. We are closely monitoring the situation and will open when we decide it is wise to do so. The first week we were closed, our staff worked hard painting and organizing the classrooms and washing every toy and piece of equipment. They were unable to finish that project and will resume when they can safely return.

 It has been a challenge and a joy to record Godly Play lessons from home and to share with the children. It is a challenge because it is hard to tell a story with no children present to respond, but it has been gratifying to hear from parents whose children are participating in this new way of being together. As I prepare the lessons, I am blown away by the beautiful resources


we have, some of which were made by volunteers in our church and others that were purchased. We are so blessed to have such quality teaching materials!



My favorite Godly Play story: “The Good Shepherd and World Communion”



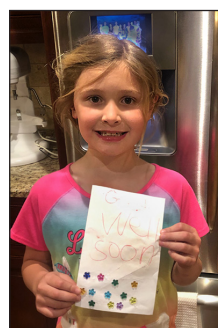
Another story, “The Synagogue and the Upper Room,” ties together the synagogue that Jesus attended, the Upper Room where Jesus and the disciples had their last supper, and our present-day sanctuaries.

 I appreciate those who have responded to my request to hear from parents, children, and youth about ways they are using their time:

Harper and other members of our youth group and church family made food for people who are sick and recovering. Please let me know if you know of a need and I will be very happy to deliver the frozen food to the doorstep of anyone who needs it.



Anne Hatton and other children made Get Well Soon cards for SOVAH patients. Children have been delivering cookies and inspirational



messages to their neighbors. Some children, including Samuel Eugene, are learning new skills, like playing the guitar. The Cho children had fun making salt dough ornaments for Christmas and Easter. All our families



are hard at work with online school lessons and are having fun times too.

On behalf of the Finance Committee, thank you for your continued support of Mount Vernon during these uncertain times, both through gifts made online and checks mailed to the church. While the cancellation of most regular activities affords us with some opportunities for savings, the overwhelming majority of the costs in our operating budget (e.g., personnel, utilities, apportionments) are unaffected by COVID-19.



We are fortunate that our finances are sound currently, but the continuation of giving at anticipated levels is crucial for the sustained financial health our church community.

Our Committee has begun working to develop a helpful snapshot of our finances that can be included in newsletters moving forward. We are excited to share that with you in the coming months. If you are interested in being part of this conversation, please email (sgould@byrnesgould.com) or call (792.2424, ext. 2) me.

As always, if you have any questions regarding the finances of Mount Vernon, do not hesitate to reach out to any member of the Finance Committee or to our financial secretary, Evie Jackson (ejackson.mtvernonumc@gmail.com). – Steven P. Gould, Chair

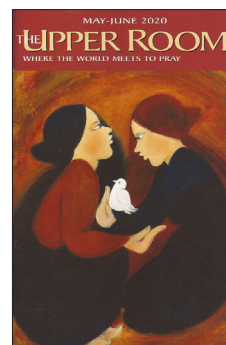
Congratulations

*To Wright Garrett and Lamar Barr
who were united in marriage on April 16
at First Baptist Church.*

*To Christopher and Linzy Dunn Ebel.
Their son, James Howard Ebel,
was born on April 16.*

*To Christopher and Ann Stuart Ray Zakhary.
Their daughter, Hazel Alexandria Zakhary,
was born on April 22.*

If you would like to request delivery of the May/June *Upper Room*, please call Ann Williamson or Beth Bauman and they will be glad to deliver it to you.



Stay the Course, Stay Strong: Serving God While Social Distancing

Dear Virginia Conference,

I hope you and your families had a very blessed Easter celebration. Let us remember that our hope as believers is in Jesus Christ.

Though our Easter services looked quite different this year, I hope that, especially in this challenging time of a global pandemic, you heard the Easter story anew and, with confidence assured in the resurrected Christ, said, "Alleluia! Christ IS risen!"

Thank you to our pastors, church staff and volunteers who are continuing to find creative worship opportunities through livestream, phone, print and many other communications avenues, so we can worship, promote fellowship and do the mission of the church.

The commitment of so many of you to be flexible and to take on the challenges that COVID-19 presents empowers us to do God's work effectively and SAFELY. It brings joy to our congregants, communities and the heart of God. And we must persevere.

Governor Northam's statewide stay-at-home order is in effect until June 10. As such, in-person worship cannot take place until June 11. If the Governor's executive

order is rescinded or revised before June 10, we will re-evaluate the status of in-person worship.

In-person, "drive-thru" or "drive-in" worship services on or off Virginia Conference property remain canceled until further notice.

I ask that our Virginia Conference clergy and laity stay the course by continuing to observe social distancing, proper hygiene and follow the stay-at-home directive.

This is not an easy time for any of us, but in Christian love we need to look out for our vulnerable communities and do our utmost to decrease the strain on our healthcare system and emergency services. It is hard not to be able to meet in-person as a community of faith, but we know God is not the church building. God is so much more than a building.

May the promise of Easter remain with us during the pandemic and through the rest of our year.

Peace and Blessings,
Bishop Sharma D. Lewis



From the
Bishop



"Today Emma ate a small piece of broccoli."
- Tafton Coleman Trent, April 21



"My nephew is learning to play the guitar."
- Lude Labieville, April 24



"Thanking God for small graces today: a friend mailed me a UGA facemask, out of the blue ... and he's an LSU fan."
- Tobias Lutz, April 13

"Big Brother is doing the schooling today."
- Emily Bennett, April 22



Social Distancing Days ...

"Anna caught a fish for the first time. Jae is so jealous of her."
- Juliet Cho, April 13



"The animals are taking back the world since everyone is in isolation. Seriously, just another day in Dry Fork."
- Emma Rich, April 19



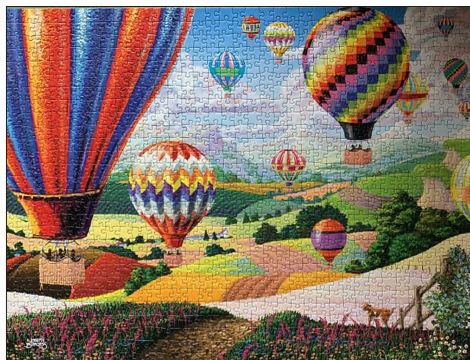
"Today we suffer from a total lack of motivation."
- Emma Rich, April 10



"It's my turn. 15 inch."
- Juliet Cho, April 26



"1,000 piece puzzle!"
- Sophie Parrish March 31



"Six romaine lettuce seedlings planted in March now provide enough lettuce every two days for two tossed salads!"
- Lin Benefield, April 25





Photos by Briggs Bauman



Our newsletter editor (Lin) asked our staff to share what we have been doing personally, in hopes others may be inspired to share in the next newsletter.

Briggs has had more time to devote to his passion: wildlife photography. We were excited to discover a den of baby foxes, and he got some photos before the mother caught on and moved her litter. He also found a nest of baby brown-headed nuthatches in a rotten tree and has enjoyed watching the parents, whose babies have a ravenous appetite.

I have really enjoyed connecting with our children, Catherine and Carter, seeing our granddaughter, Malia, daily, and visiting with extended family via WhatsApp and Zoom. We have had several calls with my mother's extended family. On a recent call with family in Zambia, France, Arizona, Texas, Alabama, and other states, little Ivy in Richmond was rocking in the chair of her great-great-great-grandmother whose descendants were on the call. Technology is enabling us to stay connected and make new memories!

We are Easter people! When all seems hopeless and overwhelming, God is at work with us in transforming bad to good. We see people helping others and sharing generously of their resources and time, people sharing their talents in new ways, new technology which enables us to stay connected. Please be in touch with our church staff if we can help you in any way. We are family! Thanks be to God!
– Beth Bauman



At Blue Ridge Rehab: **Betty Jennings**

At Brookdale: **Jean Beach**

At Roman Eagle: **Betty Adkins, Tom Darkis**

At Commonwealth/Stratford House: **Ruth Waggoner**

At home: **Frances Stoneburner, Rev. Joyce Johnson, Bill Hardy, Dorothy Stephens, Berkeley & Van Keck**

May Birthdays

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 2 Harper Mitchell | 22 Clara Fountain |
| Meredith Ashby | 24 Steven Gould |
| Ramsden | 25 Charlie Williamson |
| 3 Jessica Austin | 27 Mary Franks |
| 4 Phillip Wright | Kerry O'Neill |
| 5 Tom Darkis | 28 Eleanor Cuthrell |
| 6 Frances McMillan | Ely Foster |
| Anne Thomas | Cara Mills |
| 7 Bill Fuller | Ruth Waggoner |
| Beth Ranson | 29 Thomas Barker |
| 9 Shirley Bray | 30 Peggy Fowler |



June Birthdays

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| 11 Fran Ramsay | 1 Carol Majors |
| 12 Emily Runyon | Emily Whittle |
| 13 Ann Jeffries | 4 Max Brande |
| Tommy Stephens | 5 Adam Lester |
| 15 Margaret Milam | 8 Berkley Furgurson |
| Lynn Slayton | Max Glass, Sr. |
| 16 Laura Daniel | 9 Ellen Beville |
| 17 David Bray | Newton Ray, III |
| Keith Bray | 10 Alan Adkins |
| Frank Davis | Catherine Bauman |
| Newton Ray, Jr. | 11 Coraline Lutz |
| Joyce Underwood | 12 Rusty Moore |
| 18 Coleman Hylton | Karen Blachura |
| 19 Larry Mann | 14 Pattie Cairns |
| Anne Wood | |
| 20 Carolyn Waterbury | |
| 21 David Sule | |

Tentative Dates Set for General Conference in 2021

After the pandemic-caused postponement of the General Conference – originally scheduled for May 5–15 in Minneapolis – the new prospective dates for The United Methodist Church’s General Conference are August 31–September 10, 2021.

These dates have not been confirmed by the Conference organizers. They must deal with multiple moving parts that must align: securing visas, hotel space, transportation, interpreters, and a large-enough venue for a gathering set to draw 862 delegates and 66 bishops from four continents as well as potentially thousands of others.

The yearlong postponement of General Conference is unprecedented. Under The United Methodist Church’s constitution, General Conference is to meet every four

years, and this has happened at least every four years since 1792. Organizers of the 2020 General Conference were forced to postpone it after the Minneapolis Convention Center canceled events into May to reduce the spread of the coronavirus.

The General Conference — the only body that officially speaks for the entire United Methodist Church — is responsible for many crucial decisions. The 2020 gathering was set to consider multiple proposals to split the denomination and divide assets after longtime debate over biblical interpretation and the status of LGBTQ people. Those proposals are now on hold.

**...and
KNOW
that
I am
GOD**
Psalm 46

May 6 – May 26

Fruits of the Spirit: Peace

21-Day Bible Reading Plan

- ___ Isaiah 9:6-7
- ___ Luke 1:76-79; Luke 2:14
- ___ Philippians 4:4-9
- ___ Mark 4:37-41
- ___ John 14:26-28
- ___ John 16:19-33
- ___ Numbers 6:22-27
- ___ Isaiah 26:3-4, 12
- ___ Psalm 119:165; Romans 8:5-6
- ___ Romans 5:1; Colossians 1:19-20
- ___ Colossians 3:12-17
- ___ Matthew 10:34-39
- ___ Ephesians 6:13-18a
- ___ Galatians 5:22-25
- ___ Psalm 29:10-11
- ___ Psalm 34:13-15
- ___ Romans 14:14-19
- ___ Romans 12:14-18
- ___ Hebrews 12:14; Matthew 5:9
- ___ James 3:16-18
- ___ Proverbs 3:1-2, 13-17

Mount Vernon Church staff and members,

Thank you for all of the care and concern you have given me these last several months. Delicious food, visits, cards, phone calls, emails and most of all your prayers. They have sustained me and given me strength.

I am much better and hope to be out and about before long. I am so blessed to be a member of Mount Vernon for these almost 60 years.

Frances McMillan

I'm home from the hospital now and doing all right. I just wanted to thank everyone for all the prayers, cards, and phone calls.

Donald Turner