

“Church”

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For the last ten or more days I have seen and been a part of many different conversations about “closing church,” “not having church,” or doing “online church.” While we have had to make some changes to how we operate, where we operate and what exactly we are doing, nothing closes God’s Church. God’s Church is more than a building or a specific worship time. The Church, from the beginning, was the Bride of Christ – that for which he lay down his life. While we’ve discussed this many times in Bible studies and in sermons, the truth remains that the Church is so much more than a place.

This message may never have been as important as it is now, in a time where doing and being Church requires a whole new understanding. It’s no secret that I love the description of the early church in Acts 2 – how they continue to meet together, dine together, share with each other, and genuinely enjoy the company of one another all the while praising God. The believers in Acts 2 embodied what it meant to be the Church.

But the question is, how do we do this in the midst of a “stay-at-home” order? We aren’t allowed be together, to break bread with one another and meet in the temple courts (church building). So, how can we be the Church, both individually and collectively, in the midst of the pandemic? Here are a few ideas:

First, don’t neglect your spiritual disciplines. Now more than ever we need to make sure we are spiritually strong. During this Lenten season we have discussed trying to incorporate prayer into our daily routine 5 times, read 5 verses of scripture a day or challenging ourselves to do more – such as 5 chapters a week, do 5 acts of kindness each week and to find 5 ways to practice generosity each month. Doing these things will help us individually as we seek to follow God into an uncertain time.

Find a new way to do an old practice – Sara is moving the Women’s Bible Study group this week to an online format. They will meet weekly via a videoconferencing program called Zoom. If this is something you’d be interested in, please let Sara or I know and we can get you the right info to participate. We might start a similar group for any men interested as well.

Show gratitude to those around you. While at the grocery store yesterday, I made sure to thank every employee I saw for being there so I could get my “essentials.” Each one seemed to genuinely appreciate the acknowledgement. Gratitude is an easy way for us to continue our Christian witness even during difficult times.



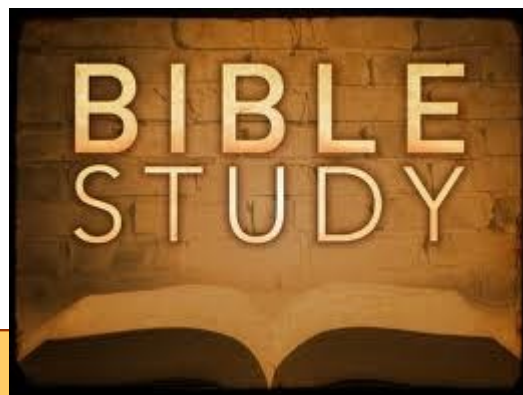
Check on your friends, neighbors, small group or Sunday School class members. Reach out for a conversation. Most people are pretty bored right now. Receiving a phone call out of blue from a friend asking “how are you?” is always a welcome interruption.

Being the Church during the time of social distancing is new to all of us. I encourage you to seek out new ways to serve God and your neighbor in this new reality. Also, share with us ways you are reaching out and being the church while following the community health recommendations. We will share these each week in the newsletter to give more ideas for how we can all participate in being Church, even when the building is closed.

It is an honor to be your pastor and to be a part of the Church with you.

Blessings,

Chris



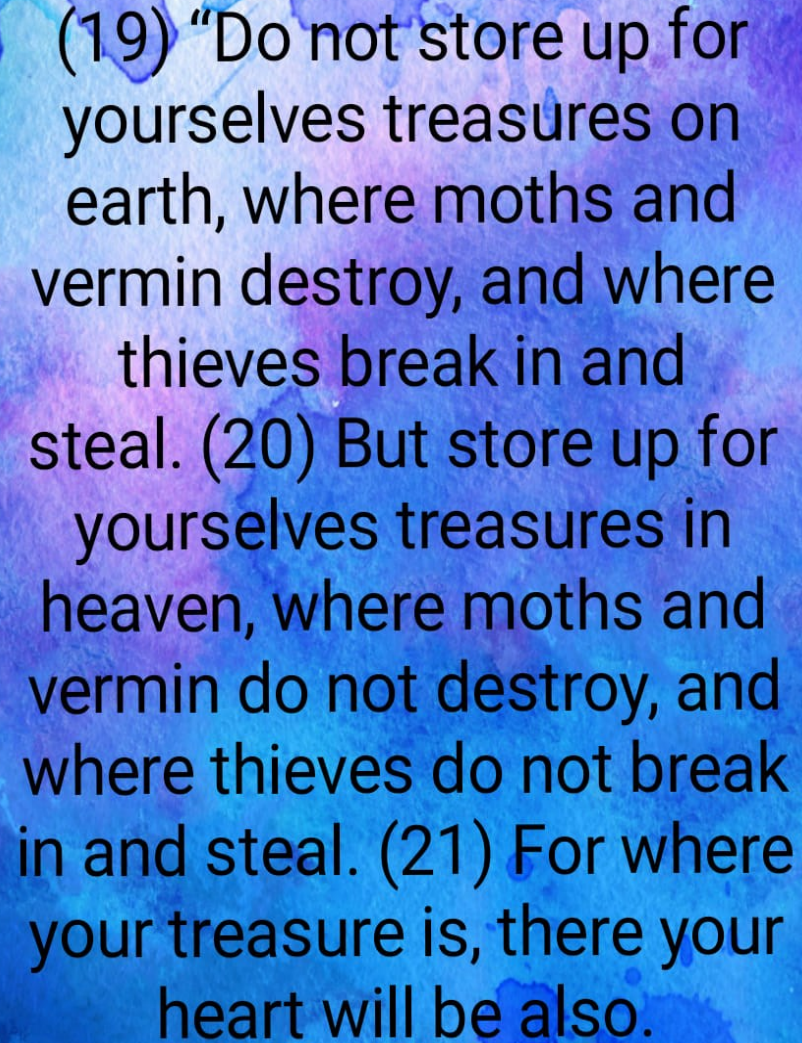
Study resource

Are you missing your Sunday School lesson? The videos we’ve been watching throughout our Lenten Study are now available online for free at this link: <https://my.amplifymedia.com/amplify/series/unitedmethodistpublishinghouse/29224-the-walk>

Also, Cokesbury has made even more content available for free. Go to <https://amplifymedia.com/free-amplify-content/> to see what other studies are available. This material is available at no charge while all the stay at home orders are in place. Please take advantage of these opportunities. If you see one you enjoy and think others would too – pass the word along. Also, let me know if you’d like to try and get a group together (online) to study any of this material together.

Enjoy!

Pastor Chris



(19) "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. (20) But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. (21) For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Matthew 6:19-21

Good Morning ,

I wanted to share with you the message from Pastor Chris at the service on Sunday March 22 at 10:00. With the Social Distancing rules in place we will have services available to you via U Tube and Facebook Live. Actually it is wonderful because you can sit down at anytime of the day and view it and also view as many times as you would like. As of now the uncertainty of life as we know it is a whirlwind, but we promise to do everything possible to keep you informed and be available to answer any questions, concerns or requests you need at all times.

Please feel free to contact Tonia at the office from 7-12 Monday– Thursday and if you have any tithes or offering to drop off feel free to come by, mail them directly to the church or go on Pay pal . We appreciate your continued giving to the church during these difficult times.

Let's all keep one another in our prayers and also remember to pray for all the health care workers, first responders and hard working grocery store employees that are all making it so we can live a protected and healthy life.

Have a Blessed Day and stay safe.

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We are pleased to share that the Rev. Tom Statler has been announced as the new pastor for Lake Lotawana Community UMC. Rev. Statler has deep roots in Missouri and is from a family of United Methodist Pastors. Rev. Statler and his wife Jennifer will be moving back to Missouri in June and their first Sunday with us will be June 28. Below is a bio Rev. Statler has asked to be shared. Please begin praying for Rev. Statler and Jennifer as they prepare for their transition back to Missouri.

Thomas J. (Tom) Statler

Commander Statler hails from Cape Girardeau, Missouri. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Secondary Education in 1982 from Southeast Missouri State University, then taught science and spelling to sixth, seventh and eighth grade students in Perryville, Missouri, from 1984-1986. He began seminary at Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, in 1987, graduated in 1991 with a Master of Divinity degree, and was subsequently ordained an elder in full connection by the Missouri East Conference of The United Methodist Church (UMC) in June 1993.

Rev. Statler was then endorsed by the UMC for extension ministry and was commissioned a Lieutenant (LT, O-3) on 24 May 2000. Upon completion of Navy Chaplain Basic Course and Officer Indoctrination School at Naval Station Newport, Rhode Island, LT Statler completed his expeditionary skills training at Camp Johnson, North Carolina, in September 2000.

LT Statler's first tour of duty was with 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division at the MAGTF Training Center, Twentynine Palms, CA. He deployed with the battalion to Okinawa, Japan, from February-August 2002 and did exercises in mainland Japan and Thailand.

He next served as a staff chaplain with Chaplains Religious Enrichment Development Operation (CREDO) Marine Corps West, directing the detachment office at Twentynine Palms, CA, from 2003-2006. There he received several certifications, including MBTI®, and led numerous marital and resiliency retreats and workshops.

LT Statler was then assigned to Destroyer Squadron 23 at Naval Base San Diego, CA, from 2006-07 and deployed with the USS Nimitz (CVN 68) Strike Group to the CENTCOM area of responsibility (AOR). As a squadron chaplain, he was responsible for the men and women on five different ships as well as the Commodore's staff on the aircraft carrier. He visited the countries of Dubai, Bahrain, and Oman while deployed with DESRON 23.

In 2007, LT Statler was selected for the Navy's Funded Graduate Education program and promoted to LCDR (O-4). After reporting for duty under instruction, he earned a Master of Theology degree from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, IL, in 2008. As a result, the U.S. Navy awarded LCDR Statler a naval professional code in ethics and sent him to the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) in Monterey, CA, in 2008. At NPS he taught two alternating ethics electives and earned his certification in Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) Phase I on 17 June 2011.



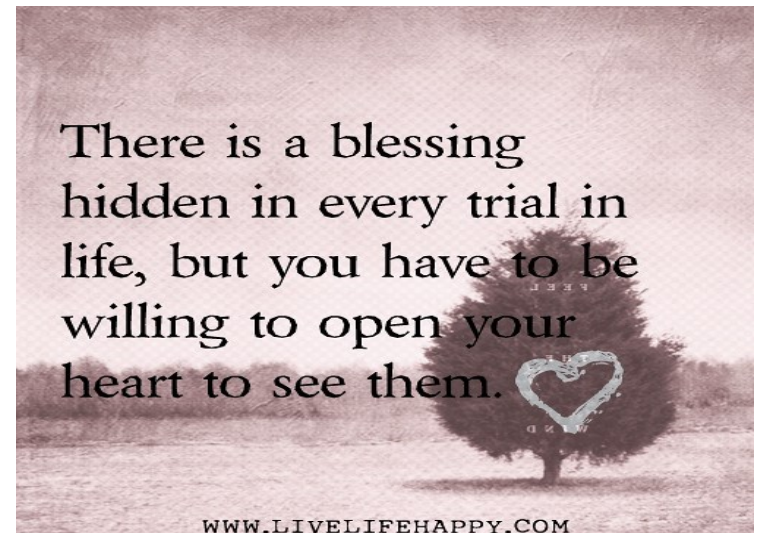
Upon completion of that tour of duty, LCDR Statler was assigned to be the Religious Ministries Principal Assistant on USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (IKE, CVN 69) at Naval Station Norfolk, VA. On board the IKE he deployed twice to the CENTCOM AOR, transiting the Mediterranean Sea and Suez Canal four times and making port calls in Mallorca (Spain), Rhodes (Greece), Marseilles (France), and Lisbon (Portugal).

After a successful tour there, he was assigned to be the Director of CREDO Detachment Mid-Atlantic at the Naval Submarine Base New London in Groton, CT, in 2013, where he planned, funded and led personal and marital resiliency retreats and workshops in an eleven state AOR and managed a \$500,000 budget.

Upon completion of his tour with CREDO, Chaplain Statler reported to the Joint Forces Staff College (JFSC) in October 2016. He was promoted to Commander (O-5) on 01 November 2016 and completed JPME Phase II while assigned to JFSC on 17 March 2017. Chaplain Statler taught a military ethics elective in one of the schools and an ethics and leadership module of their strategic leadership curriculum in another. He was the command ethics advisor and provided pastoral care for students, faculty and staff at JFSC and the Joint Staff South located in Suffolk and Norfolk, Virginia.

His current and final tour of duty before retirement from the Navy is as interim Command Chaplain at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek – Fort Story in Virginia Beach, VA. In that capacity, CDR Statler provided needed leadership and stability to a large chapel staff of three Navy chaplains and five Navy enlisted Sailors. His major accomplishments were re-writing the base religious ministries instruction, and planning and coordinating a large memorial service for a base Sailor killed in the line of duty, where he was the keynote speaker. His planned terminal leave date is 15 May 2020, his planned retirement ceremony is 29 May 2020, and his retirement from the Navy is effective 01 July 2020.

Chaplain Statler is married to Jennifer Gross-Statler, and they have four adult children: Tommy (Fullerton, CA); Michael (Boston); Deanna (Norfolk, VA); and Katie (Arlington, VA). They both enjoy outdoor activities, day hikes, and gardening, and Rev. Statler enjoys playing basketball and softball and eventually wants to get back into refinishing furniture after his retirement.



Since we are not able to visit with one another weekly and share all the Joys, Concerns and Prayer requests we have in our lives, I thought I would start a page during the time away from each other and still keep each other in our hearts and prayers. Please feel free to send me in your requests and I will post them weekly in the newsletter.



Congratulations to Lee & Alice Fuerst on their first grandbaby.

Congratulations to the new baby coming in October to the Banks/Lloyd/Kimbrough families.

March Birthday's

Bob Morlan

Randy Brown II

Norma Silvain

Blake Sellers

Laura Campbell

Jim Cooper

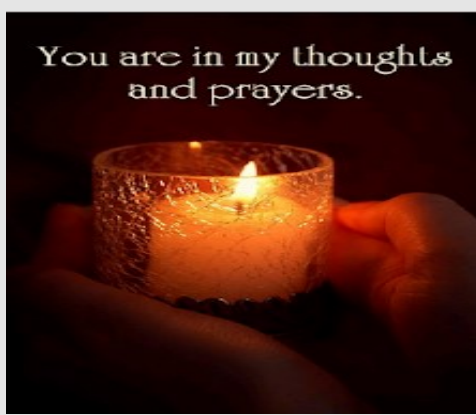
Hope your B-Day was wonderful!

Do you have neighbors that needs a helping hand? If so check in and see if they need anything from the store, pharmacy, Walmart or bank.

**A little bit of Kindness
goes a long way!**



**Nurse came in and
said Doc, there's
a man in the
waiting room who
thinks he's
invisible, what
should i tell him?
The doctor said
Tell him I can't see
him today**



HOME SWEET HOME

We Would like to thank all our wonderful helpers on the Hillcrest committee that prepared another apartment that welcomed our new family Leticia and her son Ethan to their home. We all should be so proud to know that not only are we helping to provide them with a safe and beautiful home, but also there to give our support thru our continuous prayers as a Church full of love and giving. We will continue to update you on their progress and success within the coming months.

**We as a church CAN make a difference
In our communities!**

The Be an Angel women made 13 mats to send over to Lazarus last Saturday. We are so blessed to have these amazing women put so much time and effort into helping the homeless in our communities.

**Please remember to thank them for
their service and loving hearts.**

Roy Ball	Michael Hatfield
Les Case	Leticia and son Ethan
Donald Cohan	Derek Petty
Dorothy Conn	Don Raymond
Wade Davis	Steve Raymond
Chad Elmer	Nancy Rowe
Janet Ford	Erin Scott
Richard Fuerst	Larry Sparks
Winnie Fuerst	Ray Trowbridge
Harvey Geary	Elaine West
	Dorothy Wilson

Congregation de Mellier
Heart and Soul Children's
Learning Center
All Ministries
of the Church

March/April 2020

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	ERI	SAT
22 Services 10:00 Online	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 Services 10:00 Online	30	31	1	2	3	4
5 Services 10:00 Online Palm Sunday	6	7	8			11
12 Easter Service 10:00 Online	13	14	15	16	17	18