

2020

JULY

AUGUST



OAKWOOD / HEBRON UNITED METHODIST CHURCHES

The Messenger

I was recently revisiting some old books I've read and came across *Think Like a Freak* by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner, the authors behind the widely known, and in some places controversial, *Freaknomics* series. In this book, they aim to help their readers learn to think differently than they always have in order to help solve problems that have been previously unsolvable. They don't promise any magic solutions by any means - big problems still require big work - but they do start off by asking us to consider some simple ideas. The first is that the three hardest words to say are, "I don't know."

One of the challenges we face is that it is so hard to admit what we don't know. We get hung up on thinking we know more than we do, or thinking that what we do know is somehow the most correct way of knowing something, or thinking that beliefs equal facts. I'm always a little stumped by people who think they know it all. With all of the things to ever possibly know, it seems unlikely that any one person really does know all of it. Of course, this doesn't stop us from trying, and curiosity and a drive to know more are good things. But I wonder what things would be like if more of us were willing to admit how much we don't know, which will always dwarf what we do know.

And, church, we're not immune to this - although we should know better. How many times have we seen various church leaders predict the exact date of Jesus' return? How many times have they been right? The disciples ran into this too. In Acts 1, we learn that, just before Jesus' ascension, the disciples asked, "Lord, are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel now?" And Jesus replied, "It isn't for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has set by his own authority." (Acts 1:6-7 CEB). We've been soaking in God's mysteries and trying to figure them out from the beginning, it would seem.

The longer I'm around, the more things it seems that we are simply not meant to know. And I think that's okay because we have this wonderful gift of faith that we can lean on in times of unknowing. Faith is the reality of what we hope for, the proof of what we don't see (Hebrews 11:1 CEB). I'd guess that what we all are hoping for is that God's kingdom would come to earth and that God's will would be done. We'd probably also like to see peace and justice and the love of God and neighbor. Those are not all things that we are seeing right now, but they are indeed things that we hope for and have faith in. And even though we may not understand all of God's mysteries for certain, I believe that we can rest assured in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

There's a lot I don't know, friends. A lot. But I am working hard to keep my eyes open for God's presence so that what I think I know doesn't overshadow what God is trying to show me. I'm working hard to keep my ears open so that what I think I know doesn't drown out God telling me to go and do. And I'm working hard to keep my heart fixed on Jesus so that what I see and hear around me doesn't dwindle my faith in these uncertain times.

Here's one thing I do know for sure: I miss you all very much, and even though church will not be exactly the same as it was in March when we do get back to in-person worship, I am looking forward to being in the same place as you all again. In the meantime, I hope you are able to find blessing in being the church outside of the building.

May the peace of Christ be with you wherever you are!

Pastor Jess

Did You Know?

OUR CHURCHES ARE REOPENING!!!

During the last few months the Illinois Great Rivers Conference of the United Methodist Church has been developing guidelines for how our churches can safely resume in-person worship amidst the ongoing concerns of the COVID-19 pandemic. These guidelines and related information can be found at www.igrc.org.

Now that the Central Region of Illinois has reached Phase 4 in the Restore Illinois plan, we have set a tentative date of **July 12** for returning to our church buildings. **Oakwood will meet at 9:00 and Hebron will meet at 10:30; online worship service will continue for those who cannot or choose not to attend the in-person service.**

Our most important guiding principle is based on John Wesley's first rule for Methodists: Do no harm. Therefore, until the Central Region of Illinois reaches Phase 5, the following modifications to our services are in place:

Masks are a requirement. If you do not have access to a mask, or if you forget one when you come to church, we will provide one for you. Masks must be worn at all times while in the church building.

Gatherings are limited to no more than 50 people and we will follow physical distancing guidelines.

Households may sit together, but will be 6 feet apart from other households. There will be no coffee or fellowship time, and we will not observe our usual physical greetings or farewells.

There will be no congregational singing, unison prayers, or responsive readings.

We will also not be serving Communion during the service; however, we are exploring alternate ways to safely offer Communion so that we may partake in this Sacrament.

If you cannot or choose not to worship with us within these guidelines, we invite you to continue worshipping from home.

People over 65 years old, please decide what is best for you about returning to church services. Those with compromised immunity, those with respiratory illness or injury, others who are at a higher risk of dying from COVID-19, those who have tested positive for COVID-19, and those who have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 days should continue to remain isolated and avoid gatherings of any size until they are given the all-clear. This includes church staff, volunteers, parishioners, visitors, facility users, and guests.

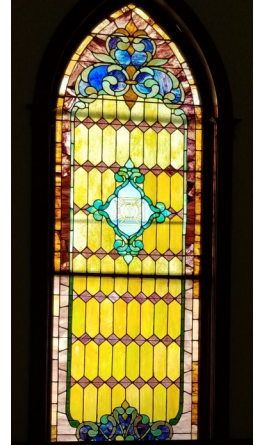
We are working hard to monitor this situation as it continues, and any needed adjustments to our services will be communicated as they arise.

Special News

Update on Stained Glass Windows Preservation

Have you noticed the wonderful job that was done on restoring, cleaning and sealing our windows? They look beautiful!

We have raised over \$17,000 toward our goal of \$24,000 since last fall, but still need your continued support as we pay off this loan. Another \$7,000 will help us break even.



At the end of July, we will begin a 6-week study on Paul's Letter to the Ephesians. This Bible study will be offered in person at Oakwood UMC as well as online. The dates/times are TBA; please contact Pastor Jess if you are interested in participating. More information will be posted on our website and Facebook pages soon.



Water D. Grimes

1941-2020

He will be missed by family and friends.

CONTACT information



Pastor Jess LeCrone's Office Hours
Wednesday — 10:00 am to 1:00 pm
Thursday — 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm
Friday — 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Cell Phone: 217-637-2557
Email: jessicamlecone@gmail.com

We can be found on Facebook at: Oakwood United Methodist Church
And on the Web at: ohumc.weebly.com

WORSHIP SERVICES: Oakwood UMC — 9:00 am
Hebron UMC — 10:30 am

Coming events

PANCAKE
BREAKFAST



Pancake/Sausage Breakfast

We continue to plan for the annual Pancake/Sausage Breakfast for 26th of October.

I hope you have been working on your craft items and planning on what baked goods you could provide.

We rely on this breakfast to provide most of the funds we use to continue our outreach and missions.



It's time to start planning for our next confirmation class!

If you or someone you know will be entering the 6th, 7th or 8th grade class this fall and would like to be confirmed, please contact Pastor Jess at jessicamlecrone@gmail.com by the end of July to indicate your interest in participating. We want to work around family, school and extracurricular schedules as much as possible, so finding the best time frame and meeting day/time is the first step. We have some time to get the details figured out, but now is the time to begin planning.

We're looking forward to this important step in the life of our church!



We are still looking for a way to continue with VBS this summer.

Please stay in touch through our web page and Facebook for more information and updates as we decide how to proceed.



FELLOWSHIP OF THE TROWEL

Please join us every Thursday, 9am to 11 am, (weather permitting) to plant, weed, prune, and care for your flowers around the church.

Enjoy this time of fellowship and catch up on what has been happening during this time apart.

Youth News

COMETLAND YOUTH NEWS

Grades 7-12

Sunday 6:00 –7:15 pm

At: to be announced

Stay in tough with
Josh Hunsberger to learn
about upcoming activities.

Cell: 814-969-1766



The new school year begins for students on August 25th. Please pray for our students, teachers and staff as the new school year begins with some uncertainty.



– ASP 2020 –

Complete, but not finished

"I'm sure about this: the one who started a good work in you will stay with you to complete the job by the day of Christ Jesus." -Philippians 1:6

It is with a heavy heart that ASP and I had to announce that the youth trip for 2020 was cancelled. Stock donations that were given for this trip have been returned.

Please remember the group when we begin planning for 2021 trip.

I thank you for your prayers and support of our youth and adults. I ask that you pray for the homeowners in Central Appalachia as they wait for the needed repairs to make their homes warmer, safer, and drier.

It is still my hope that there will be a 2020 fall adult trip. Dates have been given to me and I will be contacting those interested as to the dates.

If you are interested in joining us, please contact me.

Complete, but not finished.

Deb

Calendar

July 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

JULY—Special Dates

Saturday, 4th

Independence Day

Sunday, 12th

Church reopens for service



August 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

AUGUST—Special Dates

Tuesday, 25th

First Day of School

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

This year's Annual Conference has been re-scheduled from the June meeting in Peoria to a virtual conference in August. Only necessary conference business will be conducted.

The 2020 Jurisdictional Conference has been rescheduled for August of 2021.

The General Conference will be held in the fall of 2021, if the Covid 19 pandemic allows. As you know, United Methodist delegates come from all over the world for this meeting.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

OAKWOOD

July

Birthdays:

- 1 Jan McFarland
- 4 Ben Westfall
- 5 Kyle McFarland
- 6 Patrick Rouse
Claire Trask
- 8 Quinn Miriah Sperry
- 9 Amanda Sperry
- 11 Bailey Westfall
- 16 Amy McFarland
- 21 Nancy Tyler
- 29 Damon Shareef
- 30 Vicki Trask
- 31 Lara Conklin

Anniversaries:

- 1 Tim & Dawn Lee
- 10 Amy & Patrick Rouse
- 14 Tim & Linda Cunningham
- 27 John & Courtney Dudley

August

Birthdays:

- 2 Laura Lomax
- 5 Reed Plawer Sperry
- 9 Kira Conklin
- 10 Bennett James Sprague
- 12 Jason Whaling
- 13 Tim Lee
Hailey Tellier
Natalie Snyders
- 19 Mallory Meade
- 26 Jameson Lee Sprague

Anniversaries:

- 2 Todd & Sonna Lee
- 7 Dennis & Kendra Westfall
- 10 Greg & Amanda Sperry
- 22 Marty & Jan McFarland



HEBRON

July

Birthdays:

- 20 Ryan Parker
- 24 Connor Morton

Anniversaries:

- 18 Leslie & Mike Pouilliard

August

Birthdays:

- 26 Dan Grimes

Anniversaries:

- 12 Dave & Lori Parker

Remember our Church Family

61821

Living Away from their Homes

Laura Lomax
Pleasant Meadows
Christian Village
400 W. Washington Ave.
Chrisman, IL 61924
(217)269-2369

Joyce Okeli
2000 W. John Street, #309
Champaign, IL 61821
(217) 403-0235

Remember those in the Military

Capt. Toby Neal
Stationed—

Somewhere in Germany



Corrections

If you have any additions or corrections to the Birthday/
Anniversary list, please let me know.

melrodmae@gmail.com

Cell: (217) 474-3260

OAKWOOD/HEBRON U.M.C.

P.O. Box 218

Oakwood, IL 61858



COME WORSHIP WITH US... either no-line or in-person



**TUNE IN TO
WORSHIP**

Join your church family for worship on
Sunday.

9:00 am

Go to our web page: ohumc.weebly.com

Click: "sermons" at the top of the page

You are now connected to hear Pastor
Jess lead us in worship.

A copy of the bulletin is available to be
printed so you can follow along.



9:00 am Oakwood

10:30 am Hebron

We are open for in-church worship on
July 12th.

Please return with us for worship with
your church family and praise God for
bringing us back together.