



July 2020 | Electronic #4 | FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH | Decatur, Illinois



Upcoming Events

See what's happening this month:

- July 1st begins April Patek's ministry with First United Methodist Church. She will be working as the Pastor for Macon UMC, and part time for FUMC as our Associate Pastor focusing on the Youth & Young Adult Ministries. Her official FUMC email account is: pastorapril@decaturfirumc.org. Her mailing address is: P.O. Box 385, 150 W. Bell, Macon, IL 62544. Please help us welcome Pastor April.
- Just a reminder - Because we have not been able to gather in person, we will be postponing Confirmation until fall. At that time, we will resume the

classes and set another Sunday for confirmation. If there are any students grade 6-12 that want to join the confirmation class, please contact Pastor Camilla: pastorcamilla@decaturfirstumc.org

- Bishop Beard has announced that Annual Conference was postponed. The new date is August 15th, and it will be online. Curt and Elaine Beam are our representatives to Annual Conference.
- Are you getting Camilla's daily emails and evening devotions? If not, you can send your email address to Barbi at office@decaturfirstumc.org

What the next phase means for us

The office of the governor believes that Illinois is on track to enter Phase 4 in the entire state as of late next week (current date being offered is June 26). Illinois has recorded a sustained decrease in the number of people who test positive for COVID-19, and according to at least one report, on Sunday, June 14, only 19 people statewide died from the virus, the lowest 24-hour total since April 2. This is good news!

When the state enters Phase 4, our bishop is expected to move our churches to phase 4 as well. Phase 4 precautions are the same as phase 3 with these exceptions:

- Groups of up to 50 (instead of 10) can gather. This also means there can be multiple smaller groups meeting in the building, as long as the total is 50 or fewer. This includes reopening for worship at 50 or fewer.
- Larger churches can re-open at 25% of capacity, up to 100 people, for worship. Since our seating capacity is about 400, 25% *IS* 100 for us. However, this does NOT mean 100 in the sanctuary and another 30 in the fellowship hall. All of the numbers given are **total building capacity**.

Some things will not change:

- Social distancing of at least 6' with the exception of people living in the same household
- Masks required at all times in the building
- No congregational singing or speaking
- Children's ministries are discouraged
- Multiple touch items (offering plates, hymnals, attendance pads) should not be used.
- No food or drinks can be served
- No fellowship time or unprotected person-to-person contact (like hugs and handshakes)
- Everyone in the building at any time must register

So what does all that mean for FUMC? First and foremost, I am trying to keep the safety of everyone in mind. As Christians, it should be a priority to care for the welfare of others. This is how we love others as we love ourselves. I am fully aware that many churches, including some UM Churches, will reopen on June 28. ***We will not.*** Here's why:

From what I am hearing from those of you I have talked to and Miley has talked to, although you miss your church family, you are not ready to come back together yet. What you are missing is the conversation, the fellowship, the hugs that are

exchanged when we gather. If those things are missing, there seems to be no hurry to get back together.

Many of you have said that if we can't sing or read together in worship, you would prefer to stay home and sing to your hearts content with worship on the computer. Personally, I'm right there with you! There is also the recommendation that when churches come back together, services should be shortened to limit the time of encounter with each other. Some studies are recommending 45 minutes, some as short as 30 minutes. If we can only come together for 30 minutes, with no singing or speaking, no coffee or cookies, no hugging—why not just stay at home!

Many states that have already opened up have seen a strong uptick in cases of COVID-19 about 2 weeks after reopening. In many cases, the transmission can be traced back to worship gatherings. If by not gathering we can keep even 1 person healthy, it's worth it. I want to wait at least a couple of weeks after Illinois opens up a little more until I even consider returning to in-person worship.

Here's what you CAN do:

- If you are a small group leader and your group wants to meet in person, as long as you follow the guidelines, you are welcome—and encouraged!—to gather in the building. Please email Amy at reception@decaturfirfirstumc.org to reserve either the Susanna Wesley room, the library, or room 304.
- Continue to worship through our website and invite others to do so.
- Be intentional about sending emails and cards, and making phone calls to others. Remember that those who live alone are finding this a very lonely time. If you have friends with smart phones, make a Face Time or Zoom call—and see each other!
- Pray for each other, for your church staff, for your state and national leaders. Prayers are never wasted!
- Join me for Bible Study each Wednesday at 6:30 pm on Zoom. If you do not get those invitations, sent on Wednesday, email Barbi at office@decaturfirfirstumc.org to be added to the list.

Thank you all for your prayers, your words of support, your words of strength. I haven't even been with you a year yet, but I feel like I am among family!

Stay strong! Stay Healthy! And most of all, stay grounded in Christ!

Camilla

New Bible Studies

The current Bible study of “Unafraid” by Adam Hamilton will end on July 8. After that, I will be offering two different studies. You are welcome to join either one or both:

Wednesdays at 6:30 pm

“A Faith of Your Own” By Ronald J. Allen. This study will take us into a deeper reflection of many Christian teachings on doctrines such as God, Jesus Christ, the Trinity, and Evil. By the end of the study, the hope is that you will be able to articulate your own faith in ways that is consistent among the various doctrines. *If you plan to participate in the study, please email me at pastorcamilla@decaturfirfirstumc.org so I can send you the (free!) study guide that goes with the book.*

Tuesdays at 6:30 pm

The Gospel of Mark This study will be a little “lighter” than the other one. We will journey through the Gospel of Mark, exploring not just the texts, but the background of the book as well as Mark’s unique purpose in writing. There will be no book, as this is being written and designed by Pastor Camilla. Handouts will be emailed out weekly.

These studies will both begin: Tuesday the 14th and Wednesday the 15th and will go for 9 weeks. Zoom links will be emailed for each study on July 13, and on each subsequent Monday. I hope you can join me!

- Camilla

Let's Get Social

Most of us are missing fellowship time with each other. While we can’t gather at the church yet, we are going to experiment with a social hour on Zoom. On Sunday, July 12 at 11:00 am., you can log in to Zoom at this link:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6490660795?
pwd=VmpUazZWNVleFN6akpQY3NYd3crQT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6490660795?pwd=VmpUazZWNVleFN6akpQY3NYd3crQT09)

Meeting ID: 649 066 0795

Password: 1ZSCGE

to call with phone line: (312) 626-6799 US (Chicago)

Once there, you will be able to join a smaller group for discussion with 6-10 other people. There is no agenda—you can come and go as you like. The Zoom meeting will be open for an hour. If this is successful, we will try it on a regular basis.

- Camilla

Being The Church

As Pastor Camilla said in her sermon on Pentecost, “The church building may be closed, but the church is alive.” The Mission Committee feels this way, too. We’ve all been quarantined at home for 2 ½ months at the time this article was written, but FUMC has been alive and active.

We want to hear from you as to what you have been doing to “be the church” and to celebrate the good works in a future Messenger article.

Just to get the thinking juices flowing, have you done any of these things? – phone calls, cards and letters, Meals on Wheels, helped a neighbor, picked up groceries for others, prayed for missionaries and UMC affiliates (e.g., Cunningham Children’s Home), donations and contributions to organizations, random acts of kindness. We know that “being the church” isn’t limited to these few things that are listed here. What other things have you done to be the church over the past few months?

Send what you’ve been doing for “being the church” to Barbi Gardiner at office@decaturfirstumc.org by July 15. **Please include “being the church” in the**

subject heading to make it easier for Barbi to identify these emails. If you've made donations to organizations, please identify them in your email. We want to see how far we've reached with "being the church".

These past few months have been a time when we can truly say, "The church has left the building." Let us celebrate what we have done while we've been apart.

Mission Committee

Blood Drive

Saturday, July 11, 2020
FUMC, Fellowship Hall
7:00 am - 12:00 pm

Please help us spread the news.

For an appointment call 1-800-RED CROSS | (800) 733-2767
or visit [redcrossblood.org](https://www.redcrossblood.org).

Bring a photo ID or your blood donor card, or two other forms of ID. You can save up to 15 minutes when you donate blood by using RapidPass!
Visit [redcrossblood.org/RapidPass](https://www.redcrossblood.org/RapidPass) for more information.

- Carol Drayton

3rd Quarter Missions Focus

At the time that this article was being written, our country was in the midst of unrest as a result of the killing of George Floyd by a white police officer in Minneapolis. The recent actions lead the Mission Committee to the decision to discuss racism in this quarter.

The United Methodist Church has taken a stance on racism in its Social Principles found in the Book of Discipline ("BOD"). The BOD states the following:

"Racism is the combination of the power to dominate by one race over other races and a value system that assumes that the dominant race is innately superior to the others. Racism includes both personal and institutional racism. Personal racism is manifested through the individual expressions, attitudes, and/or behaviors that accept the assumptions of a racist value system and that maintain the benefits of this system. Institutional racism is the established social pattern that supports implicitly or explicitly the racist value system. Racism, manifested as sin, plagues and hinders our relationship with Christ, inasmuch as it is antithetical to the gospel itself."

We may not be able to avoid racism, but we don't have to accept it. If God's kingdom is to come, and God's will is to be done on earth as it is in heaven, things need to change.

We can be the **agents of that transformation** by changing our beliefs, changing our actions, and working to change the world.

The Mission Committee encourages you to watch one or more of the following movies in July and discuss it or them with family and/or friends. You may be able to meet with

others to discuss them with proper social distancing or meet on Zoom or even on a conference call.

Green Book – A working-class Italian-American bouncer becomes the driver of an African-American classical pianist on a tour of venues through the 1960s American South.

Hidden Figures - The story of a team of female African-American mathematicians who served a vital role in NASA during the early years of the U.S. space program.

Remember the Titans - The true story of a newly appointed African-American coach and his high school team on their first season as a racially integrated unit.

- Mission Committee

Meals on Wheels

Decatur's Meals on Wheels is administered by Catholic Charities. Volunteers deliver about 550 meals each weekday. Since the stay-at-home restrictions, volunteers are no longer able to stop and chat with recipients. For some recipients, the volunteer is the only person they see on that day.

Meals on Wheels would like to deliver cards with short notes of encouragement with their meals to recipients. They are asking for volunteers to write a brief note of encouragement on a card. They ask that you remain anonymous, so you may sign only a first name.

If you'd like to do this, you may take or mail the cards to:

Meals on Wheels Love Notes
Catholic Charities
247 W. Prairie Ave.
Decatur, IL 62523-1220

Here are some sample notes (but you may write whatever you want.):

- I'm checking on you and praying God takes extra special care of you today! Have a wonderful day. - a Friend
- In friendship's fragrant garden, there are flowers of every hue. Each with its own fair beauty and it's gift of joy to you! - a Friend
- (Drawing of the sun with caption): Oh, Happy Day!
- It is during darkest moments that we must focus to see light. – Aristotle
- "Peace be with you." (John 20:21)
- Thinking of you.

- Mission Committee

Easter Offering of 2020

Thank you for your gifts that were donated for our Easter offering. Through your generosity, Habitat for Humanity in Decatur, Baby Fold in Normal and United Methodist Committee on Relief received \$904, \$984 and \$903, respectively. Even though we were quarantined at home, you were still able to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

- Debbie Vandermyde, Mission Committee

UMW Messenger

March 23, 2019, UMW marked 150 years of women in mission with services to and advocacy for underserved women, children, and youth. UMW will celebrate its strong foundation and prepare for the next 150 years, so that their daughters, granddaughters, nieces, and sisters-in-Christ can continue their legacy of faith, hope, and love in action. We celebrate all you have done and will continue to do through your faith, love, and action! May God bless you immensely!

Cunningham Children's Home in Urbana is owned by UMW and continues to be an important mission.

Vision: To see every child thrive.

Mission: To nourish hope through effective solutions, so children thrive and families flourish.

Core Values:

- **Spirituality** - respecting the belief that a greater power guides us.
- **Teamwork** - achieving excellence by doing our part to support one another.
- **Integrity** - being ethical, accountable, and transparent.
- **Respect** - valuing and honoring all people with an open mind and heart.

Cunningham's First-ever Virtual Festival of Quilts was a success!

Decatur First UMW members always support the Festival of Quilts with quilts, sponsorships, and contributions. **Thank you, everyone!**

Net proceeds:	\$55,160
Amazing quilts sold:	110
Sponsorships	\$17,050
Online sales	\$21,844
Arby's promotion	\$12,000
Unbaked sale	\$ 2,116
Monetary donations	\$ 4,850
Expenses	\$ 2,700

- Ruth Cortright, UMW

Noisy Change Offering

Do you have too many coins rattling around your pocket or purse?
Is there a special jar on the dresser or kitchen counter where you drop spare change?
Do you still have those dollar coins you got earlier this year to drop in the Sunday offering plate?

The Mission Team would like to help rid you of this burden! Gather up all that loose change, and start adding to it each day. (This can be a daily teaching moment in your family.)

Throughout this time of isolation from your church family, please continue to collect your change in a dedicated spot. Each time you hear a coin drop into your container, think

about a special person or group that you are missing. Pray for them as you hear the *chink* of that coin joining its fellows.

Later, when we can again join together in worship, we will have an opportunity to bring our **Noisy Change Offering** to church. All of our coins will be donated to a local charity. Let's make a joyful noise to the Lord with our noisy change, and daily reflect on the thought that though our building is temporarily closed, our ministries have not stopped. We can still pray and serve our community.

- Barb Ohlsen, Mission Committee

Food Pantries

We are mostly fortunate in our church that we don't have the food insecurities that many of our Decatur families suffer during this pandemic. There are two places where we can contribute non-perishable food from our pantries. Christ United Methodist Church at 1503 N. Summit Avenue and French Academy at 520 W. Wood St. both have collection boxes similar to Little Free Libraries on their properties. You can drop off food anytime to either one of these places. If the box at Christ UMC is full, you can leave your food in the church office, if it is open. Northeast Community Fund is accepting monetary donations at this time.

- Patty Barr, Mission Committee

Special Birthday Wishes



On June 26th, Evelyn Norris celebrated her 95th Birthday!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY EVELYN!

Where Are They Now?

Oldest son of former FUMC Pastors Kent & Kathy King-Nobles, Haven.

Haven is the Director of Operations for the "Fish Welfare Initiative" which aims to improve the welfare outcomes of



billions of fish through researching and executing targeted, highly-scalable welfare interventions.

For more information, go to:

<https://www.fishwelfareinitiative.org/>

Anyone that has an update on someone who grew up in this church and moved away as an adult, please feel free to send Barbi the information along with a picture to include in future newsletters. Put NEWSLETTER in the subject line and send it to:

office@decaturfirumc.org.

www.decaturfirumc.org



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH | First United Methodist Church, 201 W. North Street, Decatur, IL 62522

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