



Decatur First

United Methodist

The Messenger

August 2020 | Electronic #5 | FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH | Decatur, Illinois



Upcoming Events

See what's being offered this month:

- **Worship:** Complete worship services are recorded each Friday and posted to our website, www.decaturfirumc.org, by Saturday. Watch when it is best for you. You can also watch any past services.
- **Study:** Pastor Camilla is offering Bible Study online via Zoom every Tuesday and Wednesday. You can join with video on the computer, a tablet, or smart phone. You can also join by telephone only. If you are not on the list to receive an email with the study links, contact Barbi at office@decaturfirumc.org. You can also ask her questions during her office hours at 217 423 9711. (see staff office hours [HERE](#) or see below.)
- **Daily Devotions:** Pastor Camilla sends an email devotion every morning and evening. If you are not on the lists, you can add your name by contacting Barbi. This is a great way to stay up to date because Pastor Camilla will often give updates on what is going on through these emails.
- **Annual Conference:** It's on August 15th, and it will be online. Curt and Elaine Beam are

our representatives to Annual Conference.

The Social Principles from the UM Book of Discipline:

“In many cultures white persons are granted unearned privileges and benefits that are denied to persons of color. We oppose the creation of a racial hierarchy in any culture. Racism breeds racial discrimination. We define racial discrimination as the disparate treatment and lack of full access and equity in resources, opportunities, and participation in the Church and in society based on race or ethnicity. Therefore, we recognize racism as sin and affirm the ultimate and temporal worth of all persons. We rejoice in the gifts that particular ethnic histories and cultures bring to our total life. We commit as the Church to move beyond symbolic expressions and representative models that do not challenge unjust systems of power and access. We commend and encourage the self-awareness of all racial and ethnic groups and oppressed people that leads them to demand their just and equal rights as members of society.”

New Office Hours to begin August 1st

Pastor Camilla: Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday | 12:00—3:00pm

Pastor April: Tuesday | 12:00—3:00pm

Barbi: Tuesday | 12:00—3:00pm

Nysa: Wednesday | 12:00—3:00pm

Amy: Thursday | 12:00—3:00pm

The church office will be open Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday from 12:00—3:00pm with social distancing rules in place. No more than one visitor in the office at a time. There will be a table just inside the door for members to stop at. Please go no further than that. And masks will be required at all times while in the building.

From the Desk of Pastor Camilla

Happy August!

- It's the time of year that most of our children and youth would be planning to go back to school. This year is different.
- It's the time of year that we would be planning special back-to-school worship events. This year is different.
- It's the time of year that we would be starting to clean out closets for Trash and Treasure. This year is different.
- It's the time of year that we would be making our prayer lists for the teachers, students, administrators, and other adults who will be with our children each day. This year is NOT different.

We don't know exactly how things will work out in the next few weeks or months for our schools. We can't make things happen in the way we want to in this case. But we can pray. We can pray for our teachers and teaching assistants who are willingly going back into the classroom, unsure of what they might be exposing themselves to. We can pray for the administration as they make lots of difficult decisions. We can pray for our students who might be learning online, might be in a classroom. They might be at school every day, might be on a new type of alternating schedule.

Whatever is decided for the school year, we can be the prayer warriors for our schools. God is with us. God is waiting to hear our prayers so that God can speak to us and allow us to be God's active hands and feet in our community.

Ok, prayer warriors! Go to it!

Camilla

MMDC Projects

Have you thought to yourself over these 4 months about what you could do as a mission activity or

project from your home? The Midwest Mission Distribution Center has a number of projects that can be done from the comfort of your own house. Here's a sampling of what is mentioned on their website:

- Sewing projects – face masks, girl and boy outfits, quilts, baby gowns, receiving blankets, diapers
- Crochet a sleeping mat with yarn
- Crochet or knit baby sweaters

For more information about these projects, go to www.midwestmission.org and click on “Kits, Projects & Patterns.”

- Mission Committee

Bible Studies

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.

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.

There will be NO Bible studies on Tuesday, August 4 or Wednesday, August 5. They both will resume the following week.

- Camilla

Being The Church

These past few months have been a time when we can truly say “the church has left the building.” We haven’t worshipped together for 4 months. The church building may be closed, but the church is alive.

The Mission Committee heard from some of you as to what you have been doing to “be the church”, and it’s time to celebrate these good works:

- Kept prayer chain going
- Loaned/shared books with others
- Kept church committees and UMW going with Zoom meetings and emails
- Donated blood
- Gave thread and material to friends making masks
- Delivered eggs from Mrs. Hoey to several people
- Packaged and delivered Snack Attack bags to Kids Club children
- Donated hand sanitizer, face masks, thermometers and wipes to Decatur hospitals
- Visited a friend after surgery
- Delivered pizzas for the crew helping Matt and Marilyn Stevens load their moving truck
- Delivered DQ ice cream treats to some church friends and neighbors on Mother’s Day and Northgate Pet Clinic staff
- Made a quilt for Cunningham Quilt Fest
- Baked cookies for my nurse neighbor and the roofers who were roofing our house
- Fixed dinners for friend going through cancer treatments
- Sent a list of books that to someone he/she may like
- Organized Meals on Wheels and volunteered for our week in August
- Made baby prayer blankets for Prayer Shawl Ministry
- Made calls and sent letters and cards to church members, friends and family
- Called small group members

- Donated American Airlines miles to NYC hospital to be used by medical professionals
- Hosted 3 neighbor girls for a painting party in our backyard
- Prayed for so many things – church family, family, friends, our country, Covid-19 (doctors, nurses, first responders, mental health professionals, researchers, people with Covid) and the list goes on
- Conducted worship services
- Telephoned and wrote to people, particularly those who are shut-ins
- Called to the hospitals
- Continued to pay our offering which supports both local church and global church work

We have reached many others during this time with donations to organizations, including the following:

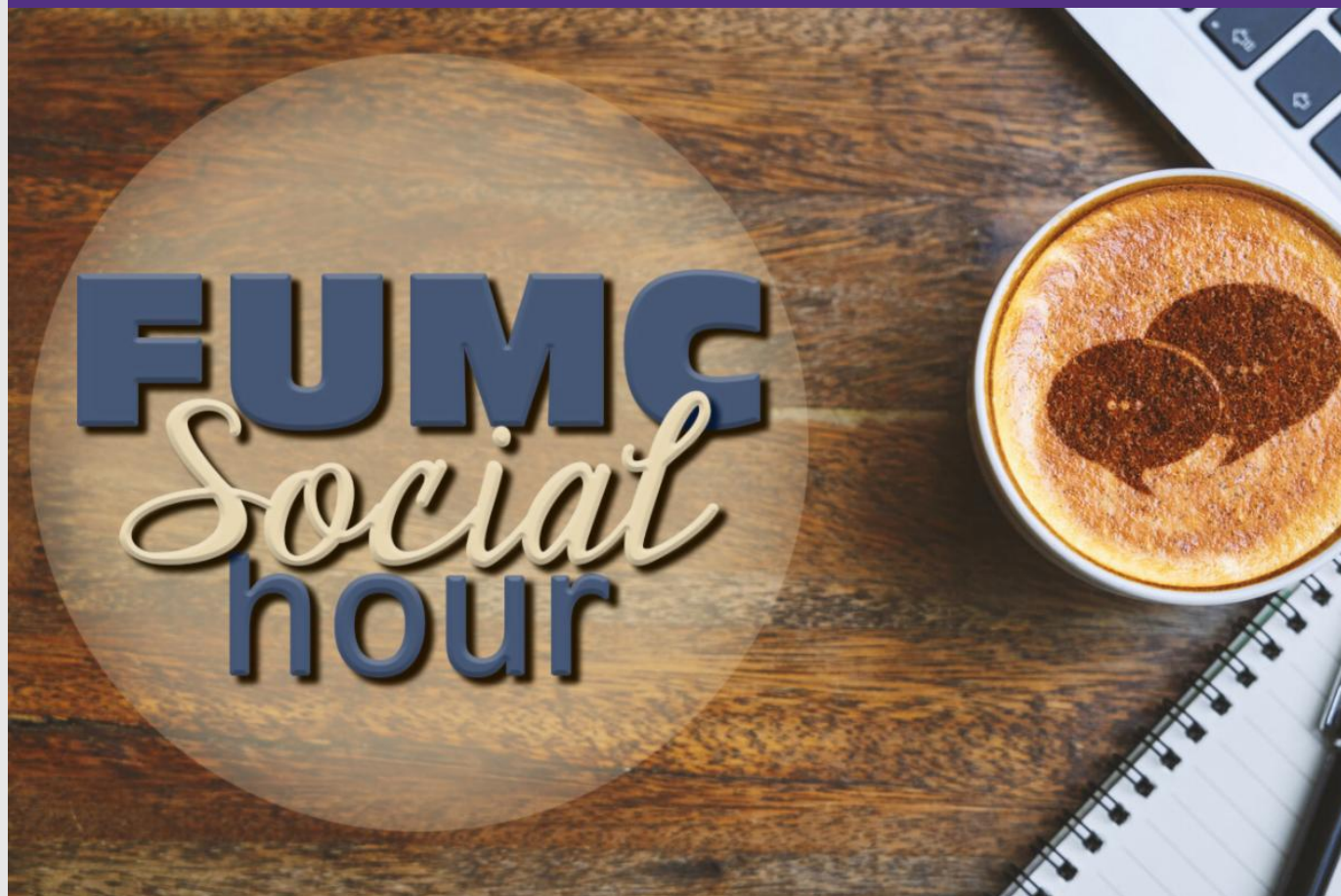
- Cunningham Children's Home
- Good Samaritan Inn
- Chaddock Children's Foundation
- Easter offering – Habitat for Humanity, Baby Fold and UMCOR
- Northeast Community Fund
- Compassion International
- Heifer International
- Our Conference Our Kids
- Kids Club
- Wildlife Conservation Society
- RCC Foundation

We haven't captured everything that our church has been doing. Maybe the above list will spur us to do even more. Let's keep the church alive and active even though we aren't together.

Thank you for sharing your love, time and talents with those near and far.

-- Mission Committee

Let's Get Social



We had a successful attempt at an online social hour on Zoom on July 12. We are going to try it again beginning in August on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month at 11 am. We will email the online link

closer to the time. If you want to join via phone instead of computer, the instructions are simple and easy to follow. Here's the schedule for August and the link that can be used each time.

August 2 and August 16 at 11am

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6490660795?pwd=VmpUazZWNFVleFN6akpQY3NYd3crQT09>

Meeting ID: 649 066 0795

Password: 1ZSCGE

to call with phone line: (312) 626-6799 and follow the instructions given.

Once there, you will be able to join a smaller group for discussion with 6-10 other people if you want, or we can all stay in the same "room". There is no agenda—you can come and go as you like. The Zoom meeting will be open for an hour.

- Camilla

Thank You

Thank you to Pastor Camilla, Pastor Miley, Pastor April, John Rasche, Bill Brown, and all the musical participants who have made it possible for us to worship each Sunday. Your dedication is greatly appreciated. Having the service in the sanctuary and having a complete service make a meaningful worship experience. Thank you so much!

Elaine Beam, Lay Leader

Dear Decatur First UMC,

Now more than ever, your generous gift means so much to The Baby Fold. During this time of "distancing" your connection and support helps to continue our work in creative and safe ways. You matter to us and our families!

Especially grateful, The Baby Fold Team

Larry & Jane Kies, UM missionaries

Our congregation and the Great Rivers conference support two United Methodist missionaries who are serving at Africa University in Zimbabwe. We support them with monetary contributions, and our concern and prayers.

Larry Kies serves as technical advisor to the Africa University Farm. His duties involve working with the farm manager to develop an agricultural program that makes the university farm more efficient in its roles of teaching and research. In addition, he is involved in student agricultural practicals, and teaches classes in crop production and farm management.

Larry says, "I am in mission with the African people...and many of them will be leaders of the future. By so doing, I hope to obey Jesus' command, implicit in Matthew 25, to feed the hungry."

Jane Kies teaches Intensive English to students from non-English speaking countries at Africa University. Jane says "Fluency in English equips the students to study for a degree that will enable them to carry out their particular ministries and use their gifts."

Please continue to pray for their important work, especially in this time of global pandemic and uncertainty. If you would like to send a card or word of love and encouragement, Larry can be reached at lkies@umcmmission.org, and Jane at jkies@umcmiccion.org. Mail will reach them c/o Africa University, PO Box 1320, Mutare, Zimbabwe.

- Mission Committee

United Methodist Women

To the disappointment of many, the UMW Leadership Team has made the decision that we will not have the annual Trash and Treasure sale in October. We carefully considered the restrictions regarding the use of the building relating to COVID-19, the protection of the volunteers as well as that of our potential customers, thus determining that it is not feasible to hold the event.

So you will not have the opportunity to clear your stash of “treasures” which you’ve assembled from cleaning closets and basements during the stay-at-home, but the Leadership Team will be working with organizations such as Central Illinois Christians in Mission to provide outlets for donations of furniture such as tables, chairs, night stands, etc. The organization also accepts bedding, kitchen supplies and lamps. Details TBD.

If you have clothes to donate, contact Northeast Community Fund and Grace UMC’s Economy Shop. (Some organizations are overwhelmed right now, so make a call before taking your donated items.)

We will also be working to provide opportunities for you to make monetary contributions to support the missions of United Methodist Women as well as those of the church. Watch for further details in September’s “Messenger”.

We must thank those who have helped in past years. Dian Rand has been our faithful coordinator scheduling drop off times and places, directing volunteers who would sort, price and arrange the donations. We thank the many volunteers who assisted at the sale and helped organize the unsold materials for distribution to other non-profit organizations. We thank the many volunteers who organized and contributed to the bake sale. And of course, Jim and Susie, who always assisted in so many ways.

So “chin up”. There will be another Trash and Treasure sale in the future. As with so many other events right now... we just don’t know when that will be! PEACE AND BLESSINGS TO ALL!

- Virginia McQuiston, UMW President

UM Special Sundays

The United Methodist Church designates six Churchwide Special Sundays throughout the year as opportunities for recognizing and supporting particular ministries. These Sundays include an offering used to fund the work of these programs. The six Special Sundays are as follows:

1. **Human Relations Day** – encourages social justice and work with at-risk youth in the U.S. and Puerto Rico
2. **UMCOR Sunday** – recognizes UMCOR’s worldwide ministries of food, shelter, health and peace
3. **Native American Ministries Sunday** – nurtures mission with Native Americans and provides scholarships for UM Native American seminarians
4. **Peace with Justice Sunday** – enables the UMC to have a voice in advocating for peace and justice through a broad spectrum of global programs
5. **World Communion Sunday** – provides scholarships for U.S. racial- and ethnic-minority students and international students
6. **United Methodist Student Day** – furnishes scholarships and loans for students attending UM-related colleges and universities

Through your giving to our church, FUMC gives an offering to each of these Special Sundays during the year.

Mission Committee

Get to Know Pastor April Patek

I grew up in Metamora, IL, a town just outside of Peoria. I was introduced to the faith through a neighborhood friend inviting me to Sunday School and VBS. As a young adult, I chose to become Methodist and was baptized at Kingswood United Methodist Church in Buffalo Grove. I graduated from Northern Illinois University with a Bachelor of Music Education with the emphasis of flute. I have experience in teaching band, orchestra, chorus and general music in grades K-12 in a small town, a suburb and an inner city. I also had a private flute studio and was hired by many high schools as a marching band instructor and drill designer.

While at Kingswood UMC, I attended Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, IL, part-time while continuing to teach. I graduated in 2012 with a Masters in Christian Education. During this time, I completed Clinical Pastoral Education (chaplain intern) at Rush University Medical Center, Chicago, as well as completing two field educations at Trinity UMC, Mt. Prospect, and Prince of Peace United Methodist Church, Elk Grove Village.

After graduating, I served as a part-time Director of Family Ministries at Christ UMC, Algonquin, and then full-time Director of Family Ministries at Rochester UMC. At Rochester, I also chaired the mission team, served on leadership, and finance, assisted in worship, funerals, and did pastoral care visits.

I am passionate about reaching out and caring for the community, education of all ages, and pastoral care. Beyond the mission work I do with the church, I also volunteer with a homeless dinner and the local cat shelter. I love music, listening and performing. I enjoy playing many types of games (especially a great game of spades or euchre!), puzzles of all kinds and competing on trivia teams. Much of my free time though is relaxing with my favorite kitties.

I am excited to get to know each of you and serve as your Associate Pastor.

-- Pastor April

Mission Education Focus

The Mission Committee is continuing its mission education focus in August on racism. The Social Principles in the UMC Book of Discipline state the following:

"In many cultures white persons are granted unearned privileges and benefits that are denied to persons of color. We oppose the creation of a racial hierarchy in any culture. Racism breeds racial discrimination. We define racial discrimination as the disparate treatment and lack of full access and equity in resources, opportunities, and participation in the Church and in society based on race or ethnicity. Therefore, we recognize racism as sin and affirm the ultimate and temporal worth of all persons. We rejoice in the gifts that particular ethnic histories and cultures bring to our total life. We commit as the Church to move beyond symbolic expressions and representative models that do not challenge unjust systems of power and access. We commend and encourage the self-awareness of all racial and ethnic groups and oppressed people that leads them to demand their just and equal rights as members of society."

Each of us are in control of changing our beliefs on racism and need to allow God to shape and change our inner thoughts and attitudes toward race (and anyone who is different than us). Consider making these suggestions part of your daily lives. Pray for guidance to change your beliefs. Broaden your education with thinkers and authors whose racial and cultural backgrounds differ from yours. Develop consistent, thoughtful relationships with people of color. Support racial equality through your shopping and donations.

The Mission Committee encourages you to watch one or more of the following movies in August 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.

1. **Amazing Grace** - The idealist William Wilberforce maneuvers his way through Parliament, endeavoring to end the British transatlantic slave trade.
2. **Twelve Years A Slave** - In the antebellum United States, **Solomon Northup**, a free black man from upstate New York, is abducted and sold into slavery.

3. **Loving** - The story of Richard and Mildred Loving, a couple whose arrest for interracial marriage in 1960's Virginia began a legal battle that would end with the Supreme Court's historic 1967 decision.
4. **Just Mercy** - World-renowned civil rights defense attorney Bryan Stevenson works to free a wrongly condemned death row prisoner.

Julia Livingston, director of CASA, has started a book club to help others learn more about racial issues. To learn more and join the group, go to www.bit.ly/discoursebookclub. You will be directed to Facebook to join the group.

-- Missions Committee

Where Are They Now?



Dr, Rachel Vandermyde graduated from University of Illinois Vet School in May 2019 and started working at Coyne Veterinary Center in St. John, IN, in June. She sees and treats primarily dogs and cats and has a particular interest in surgery.

In her free time, Rachel enjoys reading, traveling, baking and cooking, as well as the antics of her two Persian cats (April and Kiwi) and Honey, a mature Yellow Lab mix.

Anyone who 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@decaturfirstumc.org

www.decaturfirstumc.org

