

**CARTHAGE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**APRIL 2020 MONTHLY NEWSLETTER**

**VOLUME #24, ISSUE #4**

In reading Luke 2:41-49 in my devotional time I was left with an interesting parallel and some questions that come to mind. The passage is the one when Jesus as a young boy travels with his parents to the Temple for Passover worship and on the return home Mom and Dad (Mary and Joseph) realize they are missing their little boy. They were missing Jesus!

How many of you, in this time of a virus that has separated us, from church, work and even each other feel like we are missing Jesus? Sometimes I feel closer to Jesus than ever. Some of the noise has been blocked out and I have more time on my hands to reset my priorities toward reading and even just sitting with Jesus. Yet, not being with people, YOU, I feel I am missing the part of my relationship with Jesus that comes from being with the people of this church, the people in the community and others I have come to love and serve (and serve me.)

Mary, I know, was frantic, looking and looking for her son. When they found Jesus he was back at the Temple, impressing all the learned rabbi's with his depth of knowledge of God. And here is where my pondering began. I remembered the passage containing Jesus' remark. "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" In the translation I was reading the verse said, "Didn't you know that I must be in my Father's house?" There was a big enough difference between the two, I felt compelled to go back to the original Greek text to see what Luke really wrote.

What Luke said was intriguing. Luke wrote, Had you not known that in the things of the Father it is necessary for me to be?" Excusing the sentence structure, I read this to be that Jesus is supposed to be in all things, "God."

What a beautiful and comforting thought for these days and the days that lie ahead. It may still be a while before we can assemble, together, in the same building. Ministry looks very different. Pastoral care is almost weird and disconnected feeling. There are days when I am left thinking, "Where is Jesus? I am wondering if he is hiding, has run off or if I am not looking hard enough for him. I have become just like Mary.

But here is the beauty, when I find him, he was never hiding. He is always where he was supposed to be, in the things of God. Jesus is with those that are afraid. Jesus is with those that need to hear his words and his life. He is with those that are suffering. And yes, Jesus is with those that have yet to understand why we are being asked to do the things we are doing.

Like Mary, I never needed to be worried. Jesus is always right where he belongs and I can always find him there and you can too. Go to God. Go in prayer. Go in tears. Go in fear. God will melt away the troubles, brighten the hope and reveal Jesus to us to sustain us.

As we wander the next few days, stay "in tune" with us. That is how it will have to be for a bit.

We are still a body, together, apart.

Be blessed, be a blessing,

*Pastor Monica*

## NEWS FROM LAY LEADERSHIP

Happy April friends! I said last month that the time change and warmer temperatures made me feel a little better. I still believe that. I know current events have changed the way we do things but I also know that John 4 tells me that the one who is in me is GREATER than the one who is in the world. And Psalm 40 tell me that he has set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. In these times where it would be very easy to succumb to all the unpleasant news we hear I hope you will focus on these words of hope and look at what's happening outside. The trees in our yard and the birds in them don't know anything about COVID-19 and neither does the pollen!

There obviously have been some changes to the way we do things over the past couple of weeks and many events have either been postponed or canceled. No different with church events. Everyone is doing a great job of social distancing while also providing means of carrying on as well as possible. There have been some date changes etc. with the "big church" as well. General Conference which was scheduled for early May will be postponed. No changes have currently been made to the dates for Annual Conference which is scheduled for June 3-5. I have included again this month a link to the Bishop's Blog. He is doing a great job leading in this uncertain time. <https://bishopbillmcalilly.com/>

There are many opportunities here at home to be involved and to be the church. One way is to reach out to those that you know of who might not have someone they are talking to every day. Pastor Monica has phone lists available for those that could use calls. You can reach out to her to receive one of those lists and while you are at home without other things taking away your time you could call these folks and find out what needs they have or just talk to them and listen. Please reach out if I can be of assistance to you or your family or if you have questions that maybe I can answer or at least get the answer for. I know it's a strange time. I am definitely an extrovert so not being together is difficult for me but I know it is in the best interest of us all to make these sacrifices so we can get past this as quickly as possible while maintaining the health of the most vulnerable around us. During this time I hope for myself and for all of you to do as James 4 tells us to draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to us.

I love you all, T.J.

## LOST & FOUND:

The following items have been left in the church building. If you see something that you have lost, please contact the church office by **April 27** . All items not claimed by this date, will be donated to the Help Center. We will print a "Lost & Found" section monthly in the church newsletters.



## **YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS**

With each passing year comes the season of spring - the earth's new beginning where all living things are renewed and give birth. Spring has always been my favorite season, when it is time to open the windows and breathe fresh air; the smell of new grass and trees budding and flowering always brings JOY to my soul. Winter's long nights and short days are finally over and the cold biting air that keeps us indoors for many weeks is warm and calls us outside to play. The year 2020 will go down in my history book as the spring that literally turned our lives upside down and inside out; with no warning, an invisible thief came into our world and stole our spring plans: our vacations, our proms, our sporting events and championships, our 5Ks and marathons, our outdoor music and arts festivals, and worst of all... our graduation ceremonies. As a voice for young people everywhere... let me just say it:

THIS STINKS!!! What should be the beginning of ballpark weather and the end of the school year has become a teenager's worst nightmare: no freedom to hang out with friends and a governmental mandate to stay at home and 'socially distance' themselves from each other: like I said: nightmare!

I can't imagine how your teens are feeling - we are adults and we know, though things will be difficult for a while, this is not the end of the world. But, step into your teenager's shoes: school and their friends IS their life; and the older teens are just now starting to experience freedom (driving, jobs, love interests, etc.) for the first time, they are crossing into their future one step at a time. Suddenly, year-long plans are cancelled... life has been postponed...

Like it or lump it, this is our new beginning... our spring... our new normal may not look like anything we've ever known, but here it is and it's ours.

Well I say: BRING IT ON! Let's face this new challenge head on TOGETHER.

My most fervent hope for the Youth of our church and our community is that we will grow exponentially stronger together in the face of 2020's adversity.

Together in FAITH.

Together in HOPE.

Together in LOVE.

I ask your blessing to guide your teenagers into this new beginning. Make sure they know how to reach me. I am honored to be part of their lives and will lead them faithfully toward an abundant life. Things will look different, more 'cyber' meetings and internet worshipping, but I assure you: the same God who has been guiding us all along, is the same God that will continue to guide us through uncharted waters. Have no fear! God is with us always and may He continue to bless us all. Amen!

Humongous THANKS to all who supported the Youth on Fat Tuesday. Through your generosity, we raised a thousand dollars for Youth ministry... and we all got to eat as many pancakes as we possibly could!

*Mia Miller, Director of Youth Ministries*

## **CHILDREN'S MINISTRY NEWS**

Happy April and Happy Spring from the Children's Ministry!

Let's just be honest..... this is a WEIRD time right now! I would love to give you a list of upcoming plans and fellowship opportunities for the children I can't, because we just don't know what the next few weeks will bring. When uncertainty is around us it can make us anxious and fearful and many of us want to turn our head the other direction and pretend like everything is fine but our hearts always know the truth which is why we always continue to feel unsettled to we deal with our emotions..... If you haven't already figured this out I am saying all of this to say that children are the same as we are as their adult family and friends. Those children are smart my friends, and whether we tell them directly or not they know that something WEIRD is going on, they know their days and lives are different. It is our instinct to protect our children and that is such a wonderful thing but we also have to be willing to answer their questions in a way they can understand and listen to their concerns so we keep their hearts settled as best we can. And if they are feeling anxious, sad, scared, let them feel that, it is normal right now to feel those things for all of us big and small alike. Until we meet again in person we will continue to connect and worship together online. At a minimum each week there will be a Wednesday and Sunday lesson posted each week and special additional ones as we are able. I want to encourage you to not just watch these but share in this time, your church family needs to hear from you just as much as you need to hear from them. Engage, share, worship..... TOGETHER even when physically we are apart! I am so excited for when all is settled down and we can go back to seeing each other face to face, hug to hug, smile to smile but until then let's show the world that the church isn't a building it is a people and it is love. As always thank you for being a congregation that loves and supports the children in their walk with God!

**BLESSINGS FROM CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES**

**Ms. Nicole, Mrs. Jodi, and the kiddos**

## **SUBMISSIONS:**

### **Thank you :**

To the CUMC Family – Thank you once again for the use of the Christian Life Center during the weekend of the preschool sale. Special thanks to all who helped make it a success, especially T.J., Kurt, and Zach who provided manpower! **From Everyone at SCPS**

### **Persecuted Christians:**

Please pray for the following.

**Sadiya Amos:** (age 15) was kidnapped, forcibly converted, married to one of her abductors & held under locked guard in January. She was able to escape & returned home to her family. Last week a sharia court ruled the marriage & conversion were valid but, thus far Sadiya who insists she's a Christian, remains at home with her parents. Neither Sadiya or her father were allowed to present any evidence or testimony to the court. Please pray for the safety of Sadiya & her family. International Christian Concern has reported that 350 Christians have been killed in Nigeria this year. (Kaduna State, Nigeria)

**Pastor Abus Taher & Mizan Atker:** The Rohyinga Christian Pastor & his 14 year old daughter were kidnapped from a refugee camp in January when armed militants of ARSA attacked the camp. There are concerns the Pastor has been killed & Mizan forcibly converted & married against her will. Christians make up a very small percentage of the population in Bangladesh.

### **Submitted by:**

**Jill Garner**

In light of new developments, CUMC continues in the effort to be good stewards of the health and welfare of our church family, as well as, the community at large. Echoing the words of our Bishop, Bill McAlilly, "the faith community has a very important role to play in slowing the speed of the COVID-19 virus." We will follow the CDC recommendations and will be limiting our large gatherings through April maybe longer.

You can join us here for:

- Sunday Worship can be found at 10:30 a.m.
- Sunday Children's Church with Ms. Nicole can be found at 10:00 a.m.
- Wednesday Evening Bible Study can be found at 5:30 p.m.
- Wednesday Evening Children's Fun
- Wednesday Evening Youth

Please check out these gatherings at:

Facebook.com – Carthage United Methodist Church

Website – [www.carthagetnumc.org](http://www.carthagetnumc.org)

Youtube.com – Search for CUMCTube and subscribe

We can be reached by email:

- Office – [carthageumcsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:carthageumcsecretary@gmail.com)
- Pastor Monica – [monica.mowdy@tnumc.com](mailto:monica.mowdy@tnumc.com)
- Ms. Nicole – [nicole.harriman@live.com](mailto:nicole.harriman@live.com)
- Mia – [carthageyouth@gmail.com](mailto:carthageyouth@gmail.com)

Or by phone:

Office – 615-735-0343

- Pastor Monica's Cell – 931-510-1922

Of course we love you and this is why we are working to help slow down the spread of the virus.

To Exist  
By Mary Evelyn Key

If I were the wind, which today blew so strong,  
Then, on the morrow, when the air is still, the wind is gone,  
Disappear, disappear, helpless somewhere just out of sight—  
Waiting, waiting, weakly for the wind to blow with it's might—  
That I might exist again...

Or maybe I might be the sun which on this bright day shone so bright,  
But, on the morrow be hidden completely out of sight,  
By dark, dark clouds, which spread out over the sky,  
Then you would wonder just where I could be, when you pass by—  
Oh...that I might exist again.

And even if I was the precious rain which so marvelously fell,  
But, on some days stayed out of sight, so the forecasters could tell  
Of the dry, dry time that was going to be—  
Then you would wonder again, if this person you'd be able see—  
Oh...that I might exist again.

But, I am glad that, by the grace of God, I am none of these,  
That each day, by His strength, I can be as I please,  
That I was made in the likeness of Him,  
And that there does not have to be one day, cloudy and dim,  
Oh! To exist. to exist for Him.



Be sure to like us on Facebook:



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@CarthageUMCtn

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CUMC WEBSITE:

[www.carthageumc.org](http://www.carthageumc.org)

CUMC OFFICE:

615-735-0343



**CARTHAGE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - APRIL 2020**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			<b>1</b> 9 a.m. Women's Bible Study - ONLINE Youth - ONLINE 5:30 p.m. - The Walk Bible Study- ONLINE Children's Activities - ONLINE	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5 PALM SUNDAY</b> 10:30 a.m. ONLINE Worship Service	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 10 a.m. Easter Lily Deadline	<b>8</b> 9 a.m. Women's Bible Study - ONLINE Youth - ONLINE 5:30 p.m. - The Walk Bible Study- ONLINE Children's Activities - ONLINE	<b>9 HOLY THURSDAY</b>	<b>10 GOOD FRIDAY</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b> 10:30 a.m. Easter Worship Service - Online	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 9 a.m. Women's Bible Study - ONLINE Youth - ONLINE Children's Activities - ONLINE	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> 10:30 a.m. ONLINE Worship Service	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 9 a.m. Women's Bible Study - ONLINE Youth - ONLINE Children's Activities - ONLINE	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> 10:30 a.m. ONLINE Worship Service	<b>27</b> 9 a.m. May Newsletter Deadline	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 9 a.m. Women's Bible Study - ONLINE Youth - ONLINE Children's Activities - ONLINE	<b>30</b>		