



HILLTOP HERALD-JUNE 2020 MONONA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH & IGLESIA METODISTA UNIDA EL LIBERTADOR

ALL ACTIVITIES CANCELLED

At this time we do not know when we will be resuming regular activities. If you are not receiving our email updates but have an email address, please send your address to secretarymumc@sbcglobal.net. If you need anything at all, please call the church at 608-222-1633 or Pastor Brad at 414-534-8791. We have cloth face masks available in the entryway to pick up if you are in need of one or they can be mailed if you would rather not stop by the church building.

HOW CAN THE CHURCH SUPPORT YOU?

As a small group leader or committee chair, how can the church support your wish to communicate with your fellow members? The church has a Zoom account that can be shared to allow get-togethers lasting longer than 40 minutes. Our Adult Sunday School class is "gathering" to discuss their *Praying the Psalms* book. You are welcome to join the group. Contact the office to find out how to join.

Are you in need of food, financial or emotional assistance? We have our Human Welfare Fund available for anything you may need and people willing to pick up items for you. Pastor Brad and Mark are available by phone and could probably do a Zoom gathering also if you would like face-to-face contact.

Have you filled out your census, or done your taxes, or could you use assistance with these areas? We have people willing to help in any way that we can.

AD COUNCIL REPORT - Moving Our Church Forward

On Tuesday, May 26, the Ad Council met to consider how we move forward as Monona United Methodist Church, amid the current pandemic. We talked about the abundance of information coming from many different sources, our concerns about reopening - as well as our ideas for how to do so safely.

Given the recommendations from the Bishop that we should not reopen before June 21 and with a plan in place that addresses how to do so safely, Ad Council aligned on the creation of a committee to develop recommendations for reopening. These individuals will review information provided to us by the Bishop, as well as local/state guidances, to propose a reopening plan which will be reviewed by Ad Council. This plan will be voted on for approval and we will be sharing details with you as soon as we have something that we feel will give us the ability to worship safely.

As this committee is being formed and has much work to do, we do not expect that we will be reopening before July 5 at the earliest. Pastor Brad will continue offering online worship services in the duration. If you have concerns or questions about the steps we are taking to develop a plan to move forward, please feel free to reach out to Pastor Brad or myself.

Carrie Dillon, Ad Council Chair

PASTOR'S COLUMN

Dear Friends,

Greetings at the end of a month of May that has been unusual, to say the least.

You are aware that some restrictions have been lifted in our state since the legislature overturned the Governor's "Safer at Home" timeline. Also, the U.S. President is encouraging churches to re-open. This may leave you wondering, "What is our church thinking about resuming in-person worship?"

To answer, I would first refer you to the piece in this newsletter written by our Ad Council chair, Carrie Dillon. It summarizes the results of our recent Ad Council Meeting about this question.

And I would add to her description my own impression at the end of that meeting. Looking at each of the people in the squares of my screen on our Zoom call, I felt a surge of confidence about our congregation's future, knowing that we have such an able team of leaders considering important questions like this and helping to steer us into the future God has for us. That future, whatever specific form it takes (and it will be different from the present), is the future Jeremiah speaks of:

¹¹ For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope."
Jeremiah 29:11)

My thought about holding in-person worship is that we will not be doing so any time in the near future. Our Ad Council's wise advice was to allow the progress of the pandemic to determine when we would come together again rather than to set an arbitrary date. That is, we need to listen to the advice of epidemiologists and other experts in the scientific fields of health and medicine, and let those voices guide our decisions.

In our meeting I mentioned the document I received from the interfaith group, Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice. It was a document that a UW scientist, Dr. Gregory Gelebuik, who has two decades of background in virology, sent to city and county elected officials showing, as the title says, "Dane County reopening plan not supported by science."

The document shows convincingly that the Madison area will not be ready for re-opening "until the testing, trending and tracking of this virus reach far better levels and we have very concrete and well thought out guidelines" [this quote is from our own Dr. Dick Van Dreele who read the document]

Also of interest, in a Zoom meeting with our District Superintendent this morning, our D.S. was clear that, before resuming any in-person worship, our congregation will need to develop a detailed plan for doing so (with restrictions and precautions). This plan will cover what will be done to prevent people from bumping into each other from the time they leave their car to the time they get back into it. The plan will then be submitted to local health officials for approval, then passed along to the District Superintendent for his approval.

So we have some work ahead of us, but our Ad Council has given the okay to start assembling a team to review helpful guides from our Conference, the state, the CDC, and the Wisconsin Council of Churches. As one Ad Council member said, "We don't have to reinvent the wheel."

To wrap up, a few years ago we looked at John Wesley's "Three Simple Rules," based on his "General Rules," or guides, for living and growing in the Christian life. (1) Do no harm. (2) Do Good. (3) Stay in love with God. That first rule especially, "Do no harm," can be a sturdy guide for us as we move forward toward safely coming together in some fashion.

I want you to know that I value your prayers for our church during this time. And I thank you for living out your faith, for doing what's needed to continue loving God, yourself and your neighbor.

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."

Deuteronomy 31:6, NIV

Prayers, peace, and health,

Pastor Brad



Congratulations to our high school graduates this year:

- Denzel Bailey
- Isabel Behl
- Kailey Bennett
- Ava Beyler
- Erin Eggers
- Daniel Grady
- Victoria Greer

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Do you consider yourself to be technology savvy? Are you familiar with using Zoom, YouTube, or Facebook? We are looking for a few individuals to provide "Tech Support" to members of MUMC who might be struggling with using many of the online tools that are available to us for meetings or worship services. This would involve reaching out by phone to those who have questions about how to 'get connected'. If you are interested, please email the church office to sign up (secretarymumc@sbcglobal.net).

WORSHIP TIMES

Join us for virtual Worship services on Sunday mornings at 10am. Click the link found on our website: mononaunitedmethodistchurch.org

OUR WEBSITE

Same URL/address with a new look! www.mononaunitedmethodistchurch.org
We now have a **Giving** tab to make a donation with your credit card.

CARING COORDINATOR COLUMN

Here is an update on the weekly Neighborhood Food Box program I wrote about last month. Good news! As of last week, I was informed that this initiative will continue during the month of June. Each Friday afternoon, volunteers pack, sort, unload and deliver food to 60 families in two low-income food desert neighborhoods on Madison's southeast side, Dutch Mill and Owl Creek. Two Men and a Truck provide the truck (and two men!) and Second Harvest Food Bank provides a balanced assortment of food for each box. The Southeast Community Network (SECN) identified these two neighborhoods as the most at-risk in our area during the COVID-19 pandemic. As stated before, this is a multi-faceted effort that coordinates the expertise, resources, and services of local agencies to help serve the most vulnerable residents of southeast Madison. Partners in this effort include Dane County Joining Forces for Families, BLW Neighborhood Center, Life Center Madison, Madison Public Library, Second Harvest Food Bank, Two Men and a Truck, Owl Creek NRT, Madison Metropolitan School District and Monona United Methodist Church. Financial contributions to our Human Welfare Fund will help support this initiative as well as other community welfare requests our church office receives. If you'd like to volunteer on a Friday or have any questions, please let me know!

Thank you to those who have contributed to our Caring Casserole Ministry! We can still use a few more meals, so if you are willing, please make an extra meal, casserole, or other delicious dishes. Then place in a plastic or aluminum container, label, date, and deposit in the church's kitchen freezer. Please call ahead to the church office before dropping off food. Kay is typically there between 9 am and 2 pm, Monday – Friday.

For those interested in Creation Care, there is a Virtual Festival for Our Plant on Friday, June 5th. For more information or to register, go to 350.org

Caring & Coordinating, Mark Buffat

JUNE MISSION OF THE MONTH: The Atwood Pantry

The Atwood Pantry is a Personal Essentials Pantry Partner founded in 2006. The Pantry express love for our neighbors by providing tangible gifts for personal and household hygiene.

Did you know? Over 11% of Dane County households are living in poverty. Wisconsin Food Share does not cover the purchase of paper products, soap, household supplies, grooming items, toothpaste, etc. The Atwood Pantry helps provide these items, which can add up to 25-35% of an average grocery bill.

Our focus is the products essentials for personal and household hygiene. We do not provide food; we provide the other stuff you need that food stamps don't cover -- toilet paper, laundry soap, deodorant, diapers, shampoo, etc. All in need are welcome. Pantry service hours are Wednesdays from 4:00-6:00pm, Thursdays from 11:30 am until 3:00 pm and Sunday from noon 2:00 pm, ONLY. No guest service is provided at other times, although we are open for donations and/or questions.

For further information, feel free to call us at 608-772-3146, or check out the PEPartnership, Inc., website at <http://pepartnership.net>

Please consider helping this agency continue its work in our community. Please mark your check, envelope or electronic giving "The Atwood Pantry".

Thank you for your generous support of this mission. The Mission Team

JUNE 5-7 GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS WEEKEND

On **Friday, June 5**, gun violence prevention advocates, together, with hundreds of thousands of Americans, will turn America orange. Wear Orange Weekend reminds the country that gun sense activists are continuing to fight for a future free from gun violence.

Orange, the defining color of the gun violence prevention movement, honors the more than 100 lives cut short and the hundreds more wounded by gun violence every day.

Wear Orange Weekend is an annual opportunity to make this issue visible. But the work doesn't end in one day's statement. Partner organizations, locally and nationally, such as MOMS Demand Action, Wisconsin Anti-Violence Effort (WAVE) and Everytown for Gun Safety continue to advocate year round for a future free from gun violence.

Common sense gun legislation can protect the safety of us all. Support this movement by wearing orange on June 5.

JAVA JIVE

You folks are AMAZING! Our sales of AFT products are as good as ever, even a little better!! Thanks - Thanks- THANKS. Your purchases are spreading your love of God to God's farmer's and God's planet in 15 countries including U.S. [includes Wisconsin, and working with Wisconsin farmers to help form co-ops]. These farmers, men and women, use the premium from their fair trade practices with EEX to invest in their communities.

And we receive excellent organic products produced sustainably and no child labor in EEX chocolate!

While all church activities are cancelled due to Covid-19 we will continue as follows:

- 1- church is open from 9 a.m.- 2 p.m.
- 2- hand sanitizer by coffee cabinet
- 3- you may shop at display area [thanks Kay D. for making it more accessible]
or if you don't find product of choice may shop in coffee and tea/chocolate cabinet. Place payment in container or envelope marked in front of plastic box. Checks made out to Monona United Methodist Women, MUMW.

FYI: Congo Whole bean is now available again. Whole bean Breakfast Blend available also.

Palestinian olive oil held up in Customs in West Bank due to Covid-19. EEX has small bottles, 250 ml, from another West Bank co-op, so I ordered a case to tide us over for a month or so.

Thanks again for your faithful participation in this UMW Mission.

In Mission together,

Kay Mackie- a Team Coordinator of MUMW AFT Mission

Questions / suggestions welcome. 608-512-2053; if unable to get to church and would like Items call and will try to accommodate delivery.

*If you think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping in a room with a mosquito.
Dali Lama*

WEEDS

If you are looking for a reason to go outside and enjoy the spring weather, stop by the church and pick some weeds that are already growing in the sidewalk and patio cracks. Rest on the bench for a while and check out the beautiful dandelions blooming in the yard. Take a walk through the garden and see if anything has started growing. We have church and community members already committed to growing vegetables.

SECOND HARVEST NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

<https://www.secondharvestmadison.org>

Volunteers are ESSENTIAL to Second Harvest Foodbank. And, Second Harvest Foodbank is ESSENTIAL to the community. **We are in need of volunteers** to help us fill pre-packed Care Boxes. Volunteer shifts are available throughout the day, 7 days a week.

Care Boxes are filled with healthy foods, and are being distributed to those struggling with hunger through our partner agencies and our mobile pantries throughout our 16 county service area. An average of 2,600 boxes are being distributed per day! We need volunteer support to assist in packing these boxes.

We are committed to keeping our staff and volunteers safe by limiting the number of volunteers during shifts as well as adding new measures to maintain a clean and healthy environment.

\$ Financial Report \$

Cash Flow April 30, 2020

<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Month</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Income	\$ 19,422	\$ 107,285
General Operating Expenses	20,321	95,575
Net Surplus (Shortfall)	\$ (899)	\$ 11,710

A STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE - NEW AGE, NEW CHURCH

31but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength, they will fly up on wings like eagles; they will run and not be tired, they will walk and not be weary. (Isaiah 40:31)

After Superstorm Sandy, my brother's church on Long Island became the center for recovery efforts in the Mid-Atlantic. 75% sustained damage to their homes; all had neighbors affected by the storm.

Today, we are in the midst of an unprecedented urgent response and recovery effort in which every church must be a center of recovery. Unlike a hurricane, earthquake, wildfire, flood or famine, the COVID-19 pandemic affects every person and every community worldwide.

As we return to church after quarantine, we should not fall into the trap of thinking, "How do we get back to the way we were?" Rather, we ought to ask, "How can we be a better church coming out of the pandemic, than we were going in?" Economic and emotional recovery is going to be a matter of years. What will your church do to help?

Each United Methodist should be discerning his or her own and their congregation's strengths; praying and preparing to join with a small group of congregants who will identify needs in the community/nation/world. Then each group must create, fund, and carry out a plan to address those needs.

There will be children who have fallen behind in school. They will need tutoring and encouragement. There will be those who will have no job to which to return. They will need help applying for benefits, negotiating with banks, or getting enough food for their families. There will be people who continue to fall ill with the coronavirus. Fear and anxiety will continue to be widespread.

Prepare yourself for the times to come.

Jim Wells, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation, 888-903-9863 or wumf@wumf.org

MONONA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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The HILLTOP HERALD is produced monthly for distribution to the members and friends of Monona United Methodist Church & Iglesia Metodista Unida El Libertador.

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