

*It is the mission of Jackson Center United Methodist Church to: Embrace the needs of all people to bring the love of Jesus, Our Lord and Savior*

March 2020  
Volume 1, Issue 2

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# The Guided Light

## A Word From The Pastor

Stephen Luzader

Hello Beloved,

We find ourselves in some strange times as I am writing this article. We didn't meet for worship this past Sunday and we will not be meeting again until, at least, after Palm Sunday. That does not mean that the life of the church stops, or that God is not working in the midst of a quarantine. I am reminded of the great Christmas time show, "How The Grinch Stole Christmas," and of the quote from the narrator when the Grinch realized that he couldn't, in fact, steal Christmas. "But this...this sound wasn't sad. Why...this sound sounded glad. Every Who down in Whoville, the tall and the small, was singing, without any presents at all! He hadn't stopped Christmas from coming, it came! Somehow or other... it came just the same." We may not meet for Palm Sunday, we may not even be able to gather for Easter Sunday, but Easter Sunday will come just the same. The story will be told, one way or another, that Jesus is Risen, He is Risen indeed!

One of the silver linings that I believe will come from our time apart and this quarantine period is the desire for people to be in community. I know this, because we've had a couple of phone calls

to the church, that people are seeking God, even while, or especially while they are going through this pandemic.

Because the life of the church is still going and people are still working, I did want to finish my three-part article on the SMART goals of the church, and this one is especially timely. Our third goal is to "Prepare our church for growth to better attract new families moving to our community." When we wrote this goal, we saw that our major businesses around the area were expanding or getting ready to expand, which means more jobs. We also see new housing being built around the village, which means, someone, besides us, thinks that we are going to have some growth in Jackson Center. Our current economic downturn might derail that a little, but as I said, I believe that after we are released back into our normal daily lives we might see some new families who are "church shopping", and we ought to be ready. Or as it is said, we plant in the expectation of rain.

To meet this third goal and look at what the future of our church is, we must look at the church through the eyes of a working aged individual, or family, who have children, and see if we are truly the friendly church we claim to be. It means enhancing our Children's Ministry to provide safe, educational/spiritual programs that are fun. We have recruited a new Children's Ministry Director,  
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Morgan Shaffer, who will be overseeing all programs from nursery to 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Morgan is currently studying early childhood education and primary education in college. Morgan has re-established the Bible Buddies program that meets one Wednesday a month, and she also has some very good ideas for adding to our current Sunday morning offerings for children. The number one thing that a family with younger children looks for in a church is the strength of the Children's Ministry.

The second way to meet this goal is through a strong Student Ministry. As I have said, if you are an adult in Jackson Center you have probably made up your church going, or lack thereof, mind. But our teens and pre-teens are just waking up to the fact that something is missing in their lives, there is a "great hole" as the Rev. Billy Graham once said. If we can reach them and let them know what that hole is and what actually fills it, we can not only be growing the Kingdom, but they may also find a church home with us for generations to come. We have put out an ask, that we are very excited about, to an individual (potential team) to be our Student Ministry Director(s) and work with youth in 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades. This is still a passion area of mine, so that position will get a lot of support from me.

Along with new programming comes a new look for the church. We have already received rave reviews from the new coffee bar and its location, which is more inviting. While we are still getting used to the TV screens in the sanctuary, I just read a study that says our brains process images

60,000 times faster than it does written text, and it retains what it sees over what it hears 80% of the time. Will having a new coffee bar or TV's in the sanctuary make people want to start coming to church? No! But, when they do come, because they were invited, they will find a church that is meeting them where they are at in life and not expecting them to conform to how "we like it done." Little things, like adding the coffee bar, WiFi and TV's to the sanctuary might not seem like a lot to the Seniors, but it has been noticed by our younger members.

So, again, what does this mean for you? You can support the third goal the way I hope you have been supporting the first two, with your prayers. While you are praying, be listening for God's still small voice to say, "I want you to do that." We are having more and more serving opportunities in the church, and we need you to answer the call to serve in at least one area. And yes, one way is through your continued, faithful giving. I have been asked several times where all the money is coming from for the changes that are happening and honestly, most of the new things have been donated, along with the labor. People are getting excited about what could be and they are jumping in. There are exciting things happening around the church, and I hope that you can catch the vision and join in the excitement. If you have questions, or want to know more about this vision or the goals that came out of it, I can offer up Kim Voress (SPRC Chair) and/or myself to talk to and hear the vision from us. The Holy Spirit is moving around Jackson Center, and also through our church. We are asking you to join us in following Him.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Stephen Luzader

## JCUMC Officers & Committee Chairs

**Chair:** Ed Maxwell  
**Recording Secretary:** Ann Bell  
**Treasurer:** Wendy Carter  
**Trustees Chair:** Ron Ludwig  
**Finance Chair:** Todd Lotz  
**SPRC Chair:** Kim Voress  
**Outreach Chair:** Amanda Shaffer  
**Lay Leader:** Brent Kerns  
**Lay Member, Annual Conference:** Wendy Carter/Kim Voress  
**Congregational Care Coordinator:** Emily Allison  
**FLC Treasurer:** Jack Toomey  
**Childrens' Ministry Director:** Morgan Shaffer  
**Student Ministry Director:**  
**Worship Chair:** Pastor Stephen Luzader

## God's Promises

**You say:** "I can't go on."  
**God says:** "My grace is sufficient." (2 Corinthians 12:9, Psalm 91:15)

**You say:** "I can't figure things out."  
**God says:** "I will direct your steps." (Proverbs 3:5-6)

**You say:** "I am always worried and frustrated."  
**God says:** "Cast all your cares on me." (1 Peter 5:7)

**You say:** "I don't have enough faith."  
**God says:** "I have given everyone a measure of faith." (Romans 12:3)

**You say:** "I'm not able."  
**God says:** "I am able." (2 Corinthians 9:8)

**You say:** "I can't forgive myself."  
**God says:** "**I FORGIVE YOU!**" (1 John 1:9, Romans 8:11)

## Childrens Ministry

*Morgan Shaffer*

I am super sad that we haven't been able to meet, we've been working behind the scenes on some really neat things for our Children's Ministry. Due to the continuation of social distancing, we will not be having Bible Buddies in April, but hope to resume in May. If for some reason we can't resume in May, Bible Buddies will start back up in September. I will do my best to keep everyone updated via Facebook and the church website. In the meantime, Kathy Lotz and I are working on getting VBS up and running. More information on that can be found later in this newsletter, and there will be more info in the coming months.

We are going to be posting things on Facebook to help keep the kids engaged in church during this time, so be sure to check it out!

## Church Improvements

Because of the new guidelines, church improvements are temporarily paused until we can all come back together to worship. Some of the things we hope to accomplish when we get back together are new sound equipment and finishing the nursery. As always though, if there is an improvement you would like to see in the church, please let the office know.

## Ushers/ Counters/Pew Angels

The Ushers for April are Larry and Bryan Wahrer. The money counters are Karen and Warren Sprague. The Pew Angel is Barry Elliott

## Lay Readers

Lay Readers for the month of April are:

April 19<sup>th</sup> – Karen Sprague

April 26<sup>th</sup> – Bev Suttles

## Card Ministry

Emily Allison has been hard at work sending cards in the name of the church. She usually sends 20-30 cards per month – for encouragement, get well, congratulations, sympathy, and holidays. If you would like to help Emily with this amazing ministry- consider donating cards or stamps to her. You can give them to her at church or drop them off in the church office anytime.

## Prayer Chain

Do you have a prayer request through the week that you would like added to the prayer chain? If so, you can do so by calling Rose Ann Kerns at 937-596-5214. If you are not on the prayer chain, but would like to be, please let Rose Ann know and she will get you added to a chain.

## UMW News

*Sharon Zimpfer*

No report given.

## This Month's Events

**All Activities are on Pause until the governor lifts social restrictions. Please check Facebook often for updates.**

## Online Giving

We are excited to announce that we can now accept online offerings! Signing up is as simple as going to our church website and look for the offering icon. That button will take you to the offering page for our church. Simply sign up and begin giving online today! There is also a link on Facebook as well as a video to show you how to sign up. If you have any questions or need help, feel free to contact the church office and Amanda will walk you through the process.

## Save the Date!

### Blessing of the Bikes

JCUMC will be hosting a blessing of the bikes Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> @ 10am  
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behind the Heidout. Breakfast bowl specials with your choice of sausage gravy or dried beef gravy will be available inside. ALL bikes, motorized and not are welcome!

May 17<sup>th</sup> will be Senior Recognition Sunday. If you have a graduating senior  
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that you would like to see recognized, please let the office know by May 1<sup>st</sup>. We will need their name, picture, and a short “blurb” about them – where they are attending school, what they are majoring in, etc.

## Church Council

*Amanda Shaffer*

The JCUMC Church Council met on Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup>. There were 8 council members present. Jack gave the Family Life Center financial report, things are going very well, rentals seem to be going up. Emily Allison is continuing to send cards from the church. From 2/16-3/12 she sent out 14 cards.

Amanda gave an outreach report on the different activities the committee is planning.

Morgan gave the children’s ministry report. She is concerned about what to do about Bible Buddies given the current situation with COVID-19. After discussion, it was decided that we would continue with the program until we are told we cannot.

The worship committee has decided that for the foreseeable future, we will go to single serve communion cups and wafers for communions. We will continue to have service and activities at the church until we are told by the Bishop or the governor that we can’t. We are still looking into a new clavinova, and are hoping that Grace Lutheran will want to take the organ.

Ron gave the Trustees report, he is working on finding and fixing the leak in the pastors office, and has some other things at the church and the Family Life Center he is trying to get done.

Pastor Stephen talked about the e-giving we are trying to get set up. The company we would like to use wants to

do a webinar with us – we need to find a time that works with Wendy’s schedule in order to get that up and going. It was moved, seconded and decided to move forward with the online giving. We are still looking into the AED for the church, need to see what Kim has found out. There was discussion on what we could do with the tv credenza that’s in the yellow classroom – it was suggested that maybe we move it into the youth room under the tv.

Wanda Kaufman has ordered a new bookcase for the lounge to match the furniture already in there. Kira Klinger refinished the altar in the hallway, a huge thanks to her – it looks phenomenal. The coffee bar seems to be going well. Barry and Deb Elliott are going to donate a tv for the nursery – a big thanks to them as well.

It was asked if we could zoom in on the pastor a bit more for Facebook Live on Sunday mornings, Amanda said that could be done. It was also asked if the words on the tv screens could be enlarged, Amanda said she could do that as well.

Amanda Shaffer and Pastor Stephen are looking into the possibility of adding online giving to our church. This will allow people to still give when they cannot attend church, and open a new way of giving for members who might prefer it.

Kim Voress is doing some checking on an AED device for the church to have on hand.

With no other business, Ed Maxwell closed the meeting with a prayer.

The next council meeting will take place on Thursday, April 16<sup>th</sup> @ 7pm.

## Worship Committee

*Rev. Stephen Luzader*

The worship committee met on Tuesday March 17<sup>th</sup> in the lounge. We discussed the choir – they are planning something special for Mothers Day, and there will not be a cantata for Easter this year.

The new TV screens were discussed. There is a noticeable glare on them, and so we are going to look into screens to put over the televisions that will cut down on the glare from the windows. The print needs to be enlarged for those in the back of the sanctuary.

We also discussed how to get the congregation more involved in the hymns, they are very quiet and hard to hear.

With the social distancing guidelines coming down, we discussed a new way to worship – Facebook Live. We will go live at 11am on Sunday mornings with a message from Pastor Stephen when we aren’t allowed to meet in person. Amanda will try to get them uploaded onto the website afterwards so those without Facebook can still see the sermon. Stephen suggested having a few people over to watch with you – that way there would still be some fellowship.

We also discussed starting a Twitter/Instagram page for the church. Amanda and Stephen will work on that.

Special services during Holy Week were also discussed, palms for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Stations of the Cross, Easter Sunrise service. All will be proceeding as usual unless the governor says otherwise.

The next worship meeting will be April 21<sup>st</sup> @ 7pm in the lounge.



## SPRC News

Kim Voress

The SPRC is continuing to work on the 3 SMART goals set by the Pastor and the SPRC committee. We are hoping to be able to meet sometime soon to see what our next steps are.

## Outreach News

Amanda Shaffer

Due to the new social distancing guidelines and state regulations, the Outreach team has had to make a few changes to our calendar. We had planned on doing a Stations of the Cross on Good Friday at the church. Because of precautions that would need to be taken, we have decided to try and do a *virtual* Stations of the Cross. We will post each station on Facebook beginning at 7am on Good Friday. This will be interactive if you feel comfortable doing so, and there is a “packet” of things for you if you should want to participate. In order to do so, you just need to message or call the church and let us know. We will deliver the packets on Wednesday or Thursday of Holy Week. This will be a completely hands off delivery – someone will put the bag in your door or your mailbox (please let us know your preference). Then all you have to do is check out Facebook on Good Friday and experience the walk from the comfort of your own home. This is a great family activity – an awesome way to teach your kids about Jesus’ last days.

Easter Sunrise service is also off. There will be a message from Pastor Stephen live on Facebook early Easter morning.

We are still hoping to have the Blessing of the Bikes on May 2<sup>nd</sup> at 10am behind the Heidout. Please check Facebook as any decision will be made later this month and we will post it on our page. If we still get to hold it, Heidi will be

offering breakfast specials beforehand. All bikes, motorized and otherwise are welcome to attend.

We are all in an uncharted and new time, and as always, are looking for ways to take the love of Jesus out to our community. If you know of a need, someone who needs errands run, bread made and delivered, anything, please let us know. You can email or call the church or message us on Facebook. You can also reach out to any member of the Outreach team. We would love to assist.

## Vacation Bible School

The theme for VBS this year is Rocky Railway, and as of now will take place June 15-19. Please be thinking of ways that you can serve this outreach, and be watching the different church outlets for updates and opportunities to help out.

## Easter Joy

By Joanna Fuchs

Jesus came to earth,  
To show us how to live.  
How to put others first,  
How to love and how to give.

Then He set about His work,  
That God sent Him to do;  
He took our punishment on Himself;  
He made us clean and new.

He could have saved Himself,  
Calling angels from above,  
But He chose to pay our price for sin;  
He paid it out of love.

Our Lord died on Good Friday,  
But the cross did not destroy  
His resurrection on Easter morn  
That fills our hearts with joy.

Now we know our earthly death,  
Like His, is just a rest.  
We’ll be forever with Him  
In heaven, where life is best.

So we live our lives for Jesus,  
Think of Him in all we do.  
Thank you Savior; Thank you Lord.  
Help us love like you!



# April

## Birthdays/Anniversaries

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<b>1</b> Sheryle Ludwig
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> Jessica Zorn Maissen Akers	<b>4</b> Todd/Kathy Lotz	<b>5</b> Scott/Letha Mann	<b>6</b> Casey Dodds Julia Zwiebel	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> Ross Ludwig Barry/Deb Elliott	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> Madison Hickman	<b>14</b> Sue Ludwig	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> Karen Sprague	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> Kathy Bunke Lori Wahrer April Zwiebel
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> Meranda Doseck Mary Lou Stewart	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> Addison Frye	<b>28</b> Elijah Lyme	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>					



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