



VOYAGEUR *June 2020*

Dear Church family,

This is and has been a very strange season in our life together as a church family. I know this has been a season with suffering and loss as we have all had to dramatically change how we live our lives. It has also been a season where new people are discovering our church for the first time on the internet. As I often say, life is mixed.

Some of you are wondering, when can we have in-person worship in the sanctuary? This has been a difficult question for churches all over the world, including yours. Bishop Bruce Ough of our United Methodist/ Dakota Annual Conferences has identified a plan for us moving forward. Church council met on May 28 to discuss this plan. You will find it in this months newsletter.

It has also been a season for adaptation and change for me as a Pastor as it has been for other clergy in our community. We've scrambled to create worship online when it was no longer safe to gather in our sanctuaries. We've struggled to maintain connections where we haven't been able to gather in groups. Much of my energy for the last couple of months has been directed towards online worship. Michelle and I have been on a steep learning curve, and we've been blessed to have good help.

It's also been a change for us to share in ministry together. Many of you might not have known much about Michelle, and now you have the opportunity to see and hear from her every week. It's also brought our four churches closer together. As I say, life is mixed.

I do want you to know we are making plans for when we will be together in the sanctuary. While we don't know the timetable for this, it does not stop us from planning ahead. Funds have been raised for a new piano. You will likely hear it in person the next time we gather in that way. You may well hear it recorded for online worship.

We also don't want to lose our connection with the church family we've been making online. Live streaming and recording of worship will continue, and this will require some additions to our sanctuary as well. COVID 19 is inspiring renewal in our church.

I hope this letter finds you well. As I reflect on our first five years together, I'm struck by the joy we've been able to share together, the patience we have had with one another, and the hope God has given us as a church and as the community of Bemidji.

May the Lord bless and keep you, and may you be safe.

Pastor Rob

Across our nation, many states are allowing more businesses to open with strict guidelines to minimize the risk of the spread of COVID-19. In this extended pandemic season, we are now at a point where the responsibility has shifted from Gov. Walz mandating that we stay at home to each person and organization determining how to stay safe based on recommendations offered to us.

Many congregations are already well on their way in developing plans to gradually return to in-person worship when it becomes safe to do so. It's clear that our new normal for the foreseeable future will involve wearing masks, staying six feet apart, frequently washing our hands, sanitizing common spaces, and assessing our personal risk and vulnerabilities as we engage in our daily activities.

What does all of this mean for our churches? Religious leaders in Minnesota, including myself, have been working with the governor's office to develop specific guidelines to re-open our houses of worship in smart and safe ways. In the meantime, the Minnesota Conference has developed a Phased Re-Gathering Plan for Churches based on the best information we have right now. I want to remind you that currently, groups of only 10 people or fewer are permitted to gather if each person maintains the proper distance. Drive-in worship services at which people remain their vehicles are also an option.

I urge you to go slow and keep your focus on the health and safety of your congregation and neighbors. I believe we will need to let go of trying to determine a precise date when we will be able fully return to public worship and recognize that we will instead need to be guided by a phased approach that unfolds over the course of the coming months as COVID-19 continues impact our state and communities to varying degrees.

I know how painful this is when we need each other more than ever and we long to see one another face-to-face. But as leaders of the church, we are called to care for the most vulnerable in our midst—and there is no way we can gather indoors, for an extended period of time, without exposing people in our communities to significant risk. What we know is that the virus is spread through the air, and we are contagious before we show symptoms. Gathering for celebrations such as weddings, funerals, corporate worship, and singing, are extremely high-risk activities. There have been several recent reports of congregations gathering for worship and then promptly closing after a coronavirus outbreak caused by an asymptomatic carrier. The stay-at-home order might have been lifted, but the virus is still very much with us.

Additionally, for most of our congregations, what you are able to offer online is of a higher quality than an in-person experience would be right now given the physical distancing requirements, restrictions on singing, recommendation to wear masks, and need for careful cleaning between all activities. Imagine a sanctuary where every family is six feet apart. There is no congregational singing. There are no hugs or handshakes. There is no mingling or fellowship time. The very things that people are longing for in gathering are too risky at this time. Many of our congregants, particularly the elderly, will be unlikely to accept the risks associated with in-person gatherings week after week if what they can experience at home is closer to the worship service they know and love.

I have heard the concerns. What about the church down the road that is open when we are not? Why can people shop at Walmart and Home Depot but not come to church? Of course being the church matters. But we are called to act not out of fear or competition or economic uncertainties but out of love and care for the whole. There is nothing stopping us from being the church we are called to be right now, in this moment, and we can do it in a way that ensures the safety of our people.

So, my friends, I ask you to keep on keeping on. Continue to innovate and seek new methods to help your congregation grow as disciples and serve your community. Invest in online worship and plan to make it an extension of your church even after we can resume in-person gatherings. Take advantage of these summer months by having some 10-person gatherings outdoors while wearing masks and staying six feet apart, or by inviting people to drive-in worship. Plan to not return to in-person worship until the risk of infection is low and in adherence with all state guidelines. Keep developing and refining your congregation's plans for re-gathering based on our Phased Re-Gathering Plan for Churches. Continue to encourage and engage in extravagant generosity because we are open for business, and your support is essential to our mission of making disciples of Jesus for the transformation of the world.

Thank you for your leadership and the tremendous ways you are adapting in this most challenging season. I know how difficult and exhausting it is to live and lead in this time of uncertainty. And yet, we do not do this by our own strength. We are held up by the power of the Holy Spirit, and I have every confidence that God will continue to lead us forward into a future with hope.

In Christ's love,

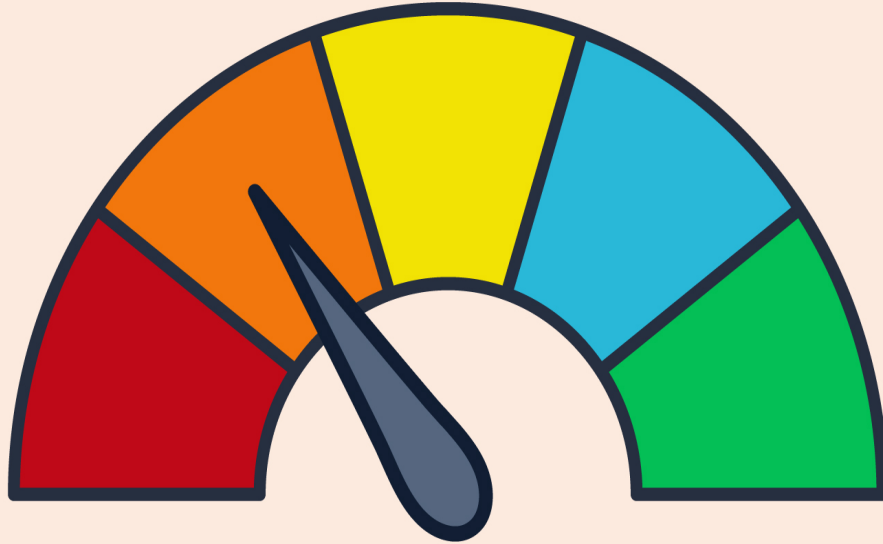
Bishop Bruce R. Ough

Resident Bishop, Dakotas-Minnesota Area

The United Methodist Church

June Calendar

Current Phase: Orange



The Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church is providing this phased re-gathering plan to guide churches during the COVID-19 pandemic. Bishop Ough issued a pastoral letter introducing the plan, which takes into account the phased plan released by the Office of Gov. Tim Walz. The recommendations provided are driven by our Three Simple Rules:

1. We are a people that do no harm. We practice physical distancing to minimize harm to others, especially the vulnerable.
2. We are a people that do all the good we can. We care for the spiritual and physical needs of our neighbors, providing food, emotional support, and supporting our health care system.
3. We are a people that stay in love with God. When we love God through prayer, praise, and worship, we grow in love of our neighbor. Love of God and love of neighbor are inseparable.

Our United Methodist faith communities can and must be first responders in caring for the spiritual, physical and mental health of all of God's people all across Minnesota by actualizing these Three Simple Rules. We have come to understand, like never before, that the church is not a building. It is the expression of God's love made visible through the actions of devoted followers of Jesus.

We offer this plan as a framework to help church leaders make healthy and pastoral decisions, not as a fixed set of guidelines that will account for every circumstance. Although each church will need to make some decisions specific to its context and discernment, it is our expectation that every congregation will operate within each designated phase at any given time.

We are currently in the **ORANGE Phase.**

To find out how we get to **YELLOW**, **BLUE** and **GREEN** phases, simply go to:

www.minnesotauc.org/regatheringplan.com



BEMIDJI UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

10:00 AM – 2:00PM (M – F)

Office Phone: 218-751-3503

Pastor Rob Cell: 218-766-8744

Email Addresses: Church Office umcbji@paulbunyan.net

Pastor Rob: revrmkopp@gmail.com

Mailing Address: PO Box 607, Bemidji, MN 56619

Street Address: 924 Beltrami Ave. NW Bemidji, MN 56601

Meals On Wheels Volunteers

June 22-26, 2020

It's that time for BUMC to distribute Meals On Wheels. Please contact Terry Thomas for the schedule as the volunteer schedule will be made around June 1, 2020.



June Birthdays

06- Marshall Johnston
06- Carol Rieke
06- Kathy Magsam
07- Sandy Kranz
07- Davis Swenson
08- Riley Finnegan
08- Marjorie LeClaire
10- Arle Hagberg
11- Mateo Porro
12- Sue Young
12- Rod Pickett
13- Nicholas Jessen
14- Carol Nielsen
14- Lowell Pommerening
17- Merlyn Wesloh
18- Robert Wagner
19- Gunard Youngdahl
21- LeRoy Morris
22- Michael Dewitt
25- Tiffany Seibel
29- Dorothy Baxter
30- Pam Jorstad
30- Dave Larkin



JUST A REMINDER....

Articles for the July Newsletter are due in to Karen no later than

9:00am on Monday, June 16, 2020.

You may text, email or call her at
(218) 766-9700

Happy Anniversary

June 04- Glenn and Michelle Seibel

June 12- Dave and Angie Dahlberg

June 16- Rick and Margene Parkos

June 20- Rick and Erin Morehouse

June 21- Tony and Carla Nicholson

June 23- Jack and Sharon Israelson

June 24- Peter and Janice Moberg

June 29- Tom and Judy Dvorak



...at Neilson Place: Nelle May and Jean Slinkman
...at Trillium: Judy Comstock, Lorna Sullivan
...at Windsong: Wag Collins, Bert Clark, Dotty Naramore

...at Baker Park: Kathleen Magsam
...at Havenwood Care Center: Patty Boyer, Mary Conner, Vern Ditty and Betty Howard
...at Goldpine: Marjory Beck, Laura Hays, Ruby Hausauer, Dorothy Baxter, Helen LeClaire and Dean Lalone (father of Carol Gilbertson)
...at Tanbark Assisted Living in Lexington, KY: Margaret Skinner
...Noli and family
...Fulton Gallagher
...The Family of George Floyd and all those affected in Minneapolis/St. Paul and the world
...BUMC members, to get through COVID and be able to worship together soon
...For Samantha, who left her cleaning position with BUMC and is finding her way in life

Offerings and Misc. Received for April and May, 2020

April 06, 2020..... \$1,660.00

April 28, 2020..... \$4,755.00

May 14, 2020..... \$4,380.00

May 26, 2020..... \$1,755.00

PIANO FUND..... \$23,275.99 received in April and May
Gale Brooks Memorial.. \$2,415.00

The Bemidji Area Church Musicians have announced the lineup for their 2020 Summer Virtual Recital Series. Each virtual concert will be held from noon to 12:30 pm. each Wednesday from June 3rd through Aug. 26th and may be viewed on their Facebook page or their YouTube channel. The series includes:

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**June 3: First City Hand bell Choir, Carol Johnson and Vicki Stenerson, co-directors for St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church.**

**June 10: Calvary Lutheran Musicians, Mattie Snyder on cello, Amanda Willis on piano, Shar Paquette on organ, Tayler Borders on vocal, Tony Kerr on saxophone and Joel Roberts on tenor saxophone.**

**June 17: Stacy Crystal on piano for First Presbyterian Church.**

**June 24: Shared Organ Recital with Maddy Lawrence, Linda Wagner, Sarah Carlson, Phil Hermann for United Methodist Church**

**July 1: St. Mark's Musicians for St. Mark's Lutheran Church.**

**July 8: Bemidji Brass Quintet with Kyle Reiss, Scott Guidry, Ryan Webber, Brendan Paulsen and Eve Sumsky for First Baptist Church.**

**July 15: Lois Simonson on piano, Kari Miller on flute, Sanna Gustafson on saxophone and Katelyn Tinglestad on violin for Evangelical Covenant Church.**

**July 22: Trinity Lutheran Musicians for Trinity Lutheran Church.**

**July 29: St. Philip's Musicians for St. Philip's Church.**

**Aug. 5: Cheryl Durant on piano, Traci Schanke on soprano and Annalise Aakhus on mezzo-soprano for New Salem Lutheran Church.**

**Aug. 12: Jennifer (Paquette) Ellis on piano and folk harp for Calvary Lutheran Church.**

**Aug. 19: Glenn Seibel on euphonium and Wayne Hoff on piano for United Methodist Church.**

**Aug. 26: Sarah Carlson on organ for First Lutheran Church.**  
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Bemidji Area Church Musicians has never charged for the concerts, however, donations can be made online through their Facebook page or by sending a check to:

BACM, 701 31st St. NW, Bemidji, MN 56601

For more information call Kenneth Wold at (218) 751-2554, Carol Johnson at (218) 751-0415 or Shar Paquette at (218) 766-3211.

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May 27, 2020 edition



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June 2020 VOYAGEUR
Published Monthly

● Happy Father's Day ●

Hello Good People. Deborah here; I miss you all SO much. It's been so good chatting with many of you by phone, seeing your faces on Zoom check in, videos too. And I cherish all your correspondences.

Correspondence is why I'm here today: how many of you want to receive a paper version of the online service? I send it to some, but will happily send it to anyone who wants one. Please let me know? Also, if you DON'T need one, but have been receiving them, let me know to stop. Send an email to msdeborahadavis@yahoo.com or call my cell phone at 218-214-3581.

Also, let us know if we can help you connect to the online services.

Please, please, dear friends, know that you are not alone. The church is here, in you, in me, in all of us. Not one of us is alone. You are magnificently loved by our Great God who knows you through and through. And, any one of us are just a phone call away.

As we move cautiously through this pandemic, Please let me know if you'd be interested in meeting in safe, physical distancing groups of 5 or so. These brief gatherings would be outside, masks worn, with good precautions. My thoughts are that we could each bring our own lunch/snack, sit and catch up a bit. Jan Grimm has offered her yard as first host. We'll do several, so everyone who is interested will be able to take part. If you have a large yard and are willing to host, let me know that too.

Diamond Point bathrooms are still closed for now, so we will utilize our own backyards. It will be fun to chat!

Again, you're not alone. You are loved. Be well!

♥♥Deborah

**open hearts
open minds
open doors**



The People of the United Methodist Church

Church Staff
Reverend Rob Kopp
Pastor

Karen Thompson "Bubbles"
Office Administration

Deborah Davis
Volunteer & Events
Coordinator

Trustees
Custodial

Leisa Bragg
Accompanist

Linda Wagner
Chancel Choir Director



Find your happy place.

TIPS TO REDUCE COVID-19 STRESS

- 1. Focus on what you can control** – including your thoughts, behaviors.
- 2. Remember that you are resilient**, and so is humankind. We will get through this.
- 3. Do what you can to reduce your risk**; take comfort that you are caring for yourself and others.
- 4. Use technology to connect with others** frequently.
- 5. Look for the good stuff**; the helpers, time with family, and opportunities to pull together. Write down three things you are grateful for each day.
- 6. Limit exposure to news** or social media updates.
- 7. Use reputable sources** of news, avoid speculation and rumors.
- 8. Model peaceful behavior** for those around you. Remember everyone experiences stress in different ways.
- 9. Don't let fear influence** your decisions, such as hoarding supplies.
- 10. Be gentle** with yourself and others.
- 11. Create a regular routine**, especially for children and work from home.
- 12. Maintaining a healthy diet and exercise** routines to help your immune system and mental health.
- 13. Spend time in nature** while adhering to social distancing guidelines.
- 14. Reflect on your reactions.**
Many who have experienced trauma may be triggered by feelings of powerlessness. Understanding what you are feeling can help you consider how you want to respond to the triggers.
- 15. Practice meditation**, yoga, or other mind-body techniques. Find apps or online videos to help.
- 16. Reach out if you need to talk.**
There are local and national hotlines and warmlines that can help!

DISASTER DISTRESS HELPLINE
1-800-985-5990
'TalkWithUs' TEXT **66746**

m DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH

health.mn.gov | 03/27/2020

A Dad's Dream:

To have enough money to live the kind of life his wife and kids do.



Happy
FATHER'S DAY



the only thing better
THAN HAVING YOU AS A **DAD**
IS MY CHILDREN HAVING YOU AS THEIR
grandpa