



# ALPHA

## UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

June 2020

MAKING DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST, TRANSFORMING OUR COMMUNITY  
ALPHA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
211 N. SCANDIA ST., PO BOX 607, ALPHA, IL 61413

Volume 2020 Issue 6

*Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. (Romans 12:12)*

Many of us are rejoicing that some of the restrictions are becoming less and less. Some of us are not rejoicing because the restrictions are becoming less and less. This is a strange time and has been now in our country for several weeks. As we get ready to reopen our Church, many are rejoicing, but some are fearful. For those who are in the high risk category or have a loved one in that category, it can be a scary time; it can be a scary time even if you are not in a high risk category.

Starting on June 14 there will be an outdoor service at Alpha UMC at 7pm each Sunday. Families can sit together, but we have to social distance by being 6' away from each other, and it would be great if everyone would wear a mask. I understand masks are hot, uncomfortable and just annoying to wear, especially as it gets hotter! Wearing a mask not only protects yourself, but protects the people (whom you care about) in the congregation. During the outside service if you are not going to wear a mask, please social distance yourself 10' from each other.

Desirae and I were talking in the office and she said to me, "Would Jesus wear a mask?". So of course I had to go to the internet to see what people had to say about that, and this is what I found, "If I know anything about Jesus and how he'd act during this pandemic, it's this: **If Jesus would die on a cross for you, he would also wear a mask for you. He would do everything within his power to protect your well-being — not merely healing the sick, but protecting from future harm ("go in peace," Lu. 14:48).**" ([https://joeljupp.com › why\\_jesus\\_would\\_wear\\_a\\_mask](https://joeljupp.com › why_jesus_would_wear_a_mask))

I know wearing a mask is a hot topic, and each of us have to decide what is best, and I know some people, because of health issues, can not wear a mask, but I ask you as Christians, please wear a mask if at all possible! I will not be wearing a mask during the service, but I will also be a minimum of 10' away from anyone. I pray that soon, very soon, we can come together without masks, without social distancing, we will be able to sing, being able to hug and shake hands with each other. Until that time comes, I do not want us to become too lax and put our family and friends in harm's way. We need to be patient and be in constant prayer.

I hope to see you all on the lawn at Alpha United Methodist Church on June 14! For those who are not comfortable with returning to worship service, I will still be doing a Facebook Live and/or Zoom Church service at 10am. I hope to see you all on June 14 for the outdoor service. Love and Miss you all!! Stay safe and healthy!

## Administrative Council 2020

Chair: Lindi Kernan

Vice Chair: Mary Nice

Church Treasurer: Dean Kernan

Financial Secretary: Linda Lanning

Trustees: Dave Lambin

S/PPRC: Dale Lanning

Outreach: Linda Lambin

Nurture: Kelli Johnson

Worship: Roger Swanson

Christian Ed Chair: TBD

Men in Mission: Dean Kernan

Lay Leader: TBD

Recording Secretary: Desirae Silvis

The church office will re-open July 1st.

Pastor Karna's Contact Information

Phone: 309-337-2700

Email: peteysaunt@yahoo.com

## Finance Update

A BIG Thank You to all who have been continuing to give and to those who gave in response to our appeal last month. Thanks to your generosity, for the first time in many, many months, our church income has covered all of our expenses! Thank you for blessing Alpha UMC.

The church council encourages you to continue to give as expenses have not decreased during the shut-down. Please continue to meet your pledges and pray about your giving.

Thank You!

## June Birthdays

01: Erica Thorstenson

07: Richard Coffey

Lindi Kernan

Leah Reed

09: Hilary (Schultz) Williams

13: Landon Willet

17: Edie Peden

18: Brittney Atchison

Judy Barton

19: Jett Nelson

20: Ann Enstrom

22: Angie Briggs

28: Emily Bradshaw

30: Wendy Swanson

## June Anniversaries

04: Jason & Ronda Lambin

09: David & Angie Althaus

19: Dean & Lindi Kernan

27: Pete & Evelyn Barton

30: Dick & Doris Rutledge

Parris & Desirae Silvis



## Drive BY Shower for Ali & PJ!



Church family and friends,

You are invited to a "drive-by" baby shower for Ali Catey and PJ Mikaele on Friday, June 12 from 7PM- 8PM.

It will be held at the north parking lot of Alpha UMC.

Ali & PJ are having a girl and are registered at Target and Amazon.



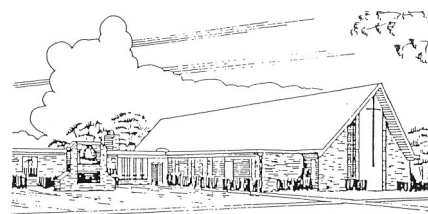
We will still be social distancing, but we hope you can stop by with good wishes for the happy event!

## Outdoor Evening Worship

Sunday, June 14th

7:00pm

Alpha UMC



While we can't gather inside the building quite yet, we can get together outside for an evening worship service on the grounds of Alpha UMC. This service will take the place of our usual Sunday morning service.

A few things to note:

- \* Please bring your own lawn chair
- \* Families may sit together, but groupings need to be 6ft apart
- \* Please wear a mask
- \* Lindi & PJ will be singing, but we may not sing as a congregation
- \* It's a buggy year, so bring bug spray if you would like

Please keep in mind, these precautions, such as masks and social distancing, are in place to protect others. Thank you for respecting and caring for each other.

## From Bishop Beard: Tears from a bedside lament

6/1/2020

I sat on the side of the bed and I wept.

These were emotion-filled tears of relief, anger, joy, pain, and disbelief. The tears I cried that night were not just for me. I cried for the generations of folks that were so broken and systematically oppressed that they never thought a day like today possible.

I cried for my grandmother, on my father's side, whose parents were born into slavery and suffered through reconstruction and the institution of "Jim Crow" laws. I cried for the thousands of teenage boys, like Emmett Till, ruthlessly battered and brutally murdered for no reason, other than racial hatred, and crossing a line of taboo.

I cried for the Civil Rights workers abused, cursed at, spit upon, disrespected, bombarded and soaked with fire hoses, attacked by dogs, assaulted with rocks and bottles, and jailed simply because they were seeking to dismantle a cruel unjust system.

I cried for my own father, who never learned to read or write, who was discouraged and denied access to an education because, in the words of his dad's Mississippi boss, "all he needs is a good strong back, and a willingness to work hard."

Yes, I cried when the projections were all in and it was announced that the 44th President of the United States was a man of African-American descent.

Don't get me wrong. My tears were not because I thought that black folks had finally "arrived" at some mythical place where hundreds of years of racism, animosity, and injustice would magically disappear. I've lived and dealt with enough challenges, in my own lifetime, to know better. But I did think that this historic election was a turning point, a *Zeitgeist* moment signaling a change of direction.

On May 25, 2020, George Floyd, a black man, was arrested for suspicion of using a counterfeit \$20 bill to purchase a pack of cigarettes. Details of his arrest are sketchy, but the nation and the world have seen the video of a man handcuffed face down on the pavement, clearly not resisting as a police officer pinned him down by placing his knee on Mr. Floyd's neck for over eight minutes.

"I can't breathe," Mr. Floyd said repeatedly, before becoming nonresponsive and dying.

It has become increasingly clear that despite the significant gains in race relations, America still has a long way to go. Could this latest assault become the true *zeitgeist that we need*? Will George Floyd's name and story simply become the latest addition to an ever-growing list of African American men that have died because of this nation's racial intolerance? Will our nation continue to unravel and spin out of control because of this recent tragedy?

It's time for THE CHURCH to step-up and to lead the way forward. I know that the church has been more problematic than problem-solving, but I still believe that the Church of Jesus Christ can and should lead our nation and our world into a brighter future. The healing balm that is needed right now has always resided within the church's capabilities. It's time for the church to put on our work clothes and to get busy dismantling racism.

Even as I write this, I am aware that the battle within the church will be harder than the battle outside of its sacred walls. As a black man serving in a majority-based denomination I've seen the underbelly of the church and have experienced institutional racism from within for over 40 years of ministry. God has not given up on the church and I believe and trust that God can and will turn things around and the church will be the instrument used to accomplish the world that we seek.

It's time to confess the sins of our past, repent, embrace reconciliation and begin to chart a new path for moving forward as sisters and brothers rooted in the sustaining love of Jesus Christ. I know that it sounds simple enough, but it is hard work.

I've spent my entire working life around The United Methodist Church, so I know that the work we need to do runs deeper than just singing a few verses of *Kum Ba Yah*, and shedding a few crocodile tears. I am not opposed to *Kum Ba Yah*, because we need a fresh visitation from the Lord. And I am definitely not afraid of tears that flow from genuine remorse and repentance. I am suggesting that to simply begin and then abruptly end when this current crisis subsides is not sufficient.

We need continual, intentional holy disruptions that keep us from returning to our comfort zones. As Christ followers we must stop accepting any behavior that is not Christ-centered. This will mean that we quit normalizing racism and prejudice in the body of Christ. It is no longer acceptable for churches to deny people because they happen to be of a different ethnic origin. It has never been God's intent that racism should exist, let alone thrive, within the body of Christ.

The Holy Spirit, poured out at Pentecost, was given to teach us and lead us in the ways of Christlikeness. Unity is a central core of becoming more and more like Jesus. We were promised that the Holy Spirit, Jesus' powerful presence in a different form, would assist the church in becoming triumphant witnesses and world changers. Let's not settle for anything less.

I cried over the death of George Floyd. I cry today over the mayhem that has ensued. I cry and I pray, "Lord, break my heart with the things that break your heart." I cry knowing that the church, especially the people called United Methodist, have a long way to go before we are where God desires. I cry, but not as one without hope for a better tomorrow.

I cry with the calm and confident assurance, anchored by the faith and same belief in Jesus Christ, as those who have gone before me, that: ***"We shall overcome. We shall overcome. We shall overcome some day. Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe, we shall overcome some day!"***



## Reopening the Church

By Phil Stout

From June 2020 issue of *The Current*

May I have a moment of your time to talk about when and how your church\* resumes gathering? This is not advice to pastors. (I'm sure they're getting plenty of unsolicited advice.) I want to share my perspective for those of you who are waiting for information from your pastors.\*

I'm not currently leading a church, and no one has asked me to speak on behalf of those who are. But I had the privilege of serving as a pastor for thirty years and my life is full of friends who are in that role. So, there are a few things I'd like to share about my sisters and brothers—those amazing souls—who are leading churches.

First of all, for your pastor this is not a partisan political decision. As much as a real, serious, deadly global pandemic has been politicized in the US, your pastor is not opening the doors of the sanctuary based on the cable TV pundits.

I know there are exceptions. Over the past couple of months, we've heard about pastors who made absurd theological or political statements, while endangering the lives of their congregations. Many have contracted COVID-19 and some have died as a result of that ignorance and arrogance. But those few are not representative of your pastor.

Even though we know we shouldn't, pastors carry a heavy sense of responsibility for people's spiritual well-being. We know you are responsible for your own life, but we can't help it. Pastors study, plan, pray, preach, shepherd, counsel, administrate with your spiritual and emotional health in mind. And now they are asked to deal with your physical well-being. They are being asked to make decisions that, for many people they love, could be life or death decisions.

So, no, they're not making this call with the 2020 election in mind.

And they've been listening, conferring and praying about this. None of my sisters and brothers who are leading churches are taking this lightly. No one is winging it.

I'm guessing that most churches are going to take this slow. Church buildings are not designed for social distancing. I was a part of three phases of building a church campus. Believe me, most of our discussions with architects revolved around how to maximize our space—how to allow for large numbers of children, youth and adults on a limited budget where every square foot felt overwhelmingly expensive. We discussed your seating space in inches, not in six-foot units.

Your church leaders don't have the funds or the time to retrofit your church for the new reality. This is going to take time. Mistakes will be made. But your pastor is trying to make sure those mistakes are not fatal.

*Continued on next page.*

So, in my humble opinion, here are a few do's and don'ts for the coming months...

1. Give your advice and opinion only when it is requested. Don't send your pastor YouTube videos about "the real truth" of the pandemic. Don't say, "Did you ever consider..." because, yes, they have. They've been talking to other religious leaders and to physicians. They've been consulting with the lay leaders of your church, reading denominational directives, and asking God for guidance. They've been laying awake at night, praying for you. Again, they're not winging it.

2. When you return, do wear a face covering. Don't argue with the ushers at the door. Don't make this about your rights. Don't make snide remarks. Don't put weird slogans on your mask. Just see it as an act of love and solidarity. You're protecting others. If we can't do that in church, well...

3. Be patient—incredibly patient, more patient than you've ever been—with your fellow worshipers. That young mom, as amazing as she is, has no idea how to keep a face covering on a five-year-old. That young father doesn't know how to keep his toddler from snorting all over the place. That elderly person may feel panicked when she or he can't get big breaths through the mask, and may pull it off.

We're entering a new reality. It may be years before we share the eucharist in the manner we used to. We won't pass the peace like before. And it's going to take each one of us some time to adjust to this new world. So, be nice!

4. Remember that the decisions made by the leaders of the church cannot be specific to one demographic. One size does not fit all. So there may be policies put in place that make no sense to you. But they do make sense to other people with other needs and challenges. This should be a time when the church really feels like a safe place. And it will take every one of us to make it so.

5. And, of course, remember that you are responsible for you. No one is going to make you go back before you're ready. So if the timetable doesn't fit your preference, adjust for what is right for you and your family.

Your pastor is feeling incredible pressure. There were no classes in seminary about pandemic ministry. They've been using their creativity and working extra long and hard to try to keep you connected during social distancing. And now they have to make some very tough calls. Everyone has an opinion. But some people have to make decisions. You can make this a time when grace prevails in the darkest of days.

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\*I'm using the terms "church" and "pastor" because of my background and current context. But I hope my thoughts may be helpful to my friends of other faiths

*(Phil Stout served 30 years as pastor of First Church of the Nazarene in Jackson, Mich. Currently, he is an adjunct professor at a Christian university teaching church leadership and social justice and serves as a pastor to hospice patients. Reprinted from May 23 entry to his blog, [www.philstout.com](http://www.philstout.com))*

# LINC LINE

Quarterly Newsletter for Clergy • Provided by SupportLinc, Your Clergy Assistance Program • Summer 2020, Volume XXXXI

## Upcoming Online Seminars

6/1/20 – Improving  
Self-Esteem

7/1/20 – Building a  
Drug Free Workplace

8/1/20 – Change is  
Constant

9/1/20 – Challenging  
Negative Thoughts

To watch these online seminars, login to [www.supportlinc.com](http://www.supportlinc.com) and click on the 'Monthly Feature' tile. Scroll to the end of the article to find the featured seminar link.

## Finding Motivation in Challenging Times

When life seems unpredictable, you may need some new approaches to get and stay motivated. Check out seven simple tips to use when you are struggling to make progress:

### 1. Track Your Priorities

At the beginning of each day, make a list of the tasks you need to accomplish. Complete the easiest or most important ones first to gain a sense of achievement and start building a positive outlook for the rest of the day.

### 2. Avoid Complaining

Try to catch yourself and stop right away when thinking negatively or complaining to others. Take a moment to think about things that make you happy or share something you're grateful for instead. With regular practice, you can shift your attitude in a more optimistic and productive direction.

### 3. Find a Partner

Setting a time to regularly check in with a family member, friend or coworker will help you stay on task. You will not only feel more motivated, but it will also add some 'normalcy' to your routine.

### 4. Don't Sweat the Small Stuff

If you've fallen behind on a project or task, beating yourself up can make it harder to get back on track. Step away to seek a new perspective. Reevaluating can help you come up with a different plan of attack.

### 5. Find Positivity

Connecting with upbeat people will help boost your morale. Find inspirational quotes. Smile and laugh more. Increasing positivity in your mindset helps you push through obstacles.

### 6. Celebrate Little Victories

Reward yourself by celebrating your success, no matter how small. Pat yourself on the back, take a quick break, or have a healthy snack. Acknowledging each milestone will motivate you to keep moving forward.

### 7. Remember Why You Started

When in doubt, revisit your goals and targeted outcomes. Visualize what you want to achieve. Being mindful of the 'big picture' can help you refocus, find your second wind and cross the finish line.

Source :  
<http://www.wellbeingplace/home/2020/4/22/tips-for-staying-motivated-during-challenging-times/#motivation>

For the services available  
through SupportLinc, call  
1-888-881-LINC (5462)  
or visit [www.supportlinc.com](http://www.supportlinc.com)

## Coronavirus (COVID-19) Toolkit

The COVID-19 pandemic has added new life stressors and increased mental health concerns. This toolkit provides resources you need to stay informed as well as take care of your emotional wellbeing.

To view the site, visit <http://coronavirus.eaptoolkit.com> today.

## A New Way to Boost Your Resilience

Coping with the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic may be difficult on your emotional wellbeing. Developing resilience – the ability to overcome life's challenges while adapting to adversity – will benefit your mental health.

'Resilience Boosters' are designed to help build personal resilience during these times of increased stress, anxiety and depression. Each short, guided exercise will help you cope with negative feelings while also strengthening your overall emotional fitness. Visit your web portal and choose from:

### Relaxation for Coping

Worries, fears and anxieties can often feel overwhelming during a pandemic. Those emotional concerns can also become overwhelming as you adjust to a new 'normal' – both at home and with your work. When this happens, learning techniques to help you relax and cope with those stressors can help get you back to your best self.

### Meditation for Loneliness

Shelter-in-place requirements may have left you feeling isolated and alone as you are away from friends, family and clergy members. This guided meditation was designed to help put you at ease, feel more connected and less lonely.

### Resilience Meditation

Sometimes it may be difficult for you to feel settled and calm due to your fears or anxieties regarding COVID-19. Designed to help you find balance, this guided meditation will allow you to feel more centered and safer whenever you begin to feel anxious.

To contact SupportLinc, call 1-888-881-LINC (5462) or visit [www.supportlinc.com](http://www.supportlinc.com)



# June 2020



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 6:00pm Zoom Bible Study	3	4 1:00pm Zoom Bible Study 6:30pm Prayer Group	5	6
7	8	9 6:00pm Zoom Bible Study	10	11 1:00pm Zoom Bible Study 6:30pm Prayer Group	12 7:00-8:00pm Drive By Baby Shower for Ali & PJ North Lot	13
14 10:00am Facebook Service 7:00pm Outdoor Service	15	16 6:00pm Zoom Bible Study	17	18 1:00pm Zoom Bible Study 6:30pm Prayer Group	19	20
21 10:00am Facebook Service 7:00pm Outdoor Service	22	23 6:00pm Zoom Bible Study	24	25 1:00pm Zoom Bible Study 6:30pm Prayer Group	26	27
28 10:00am Facebook Service 7:00pm Outdoor Service	29	30 6:00pm Zoom Bible Study				

## ALPHA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

### Sunday Schedule:

10:00AM Facebook Live Service

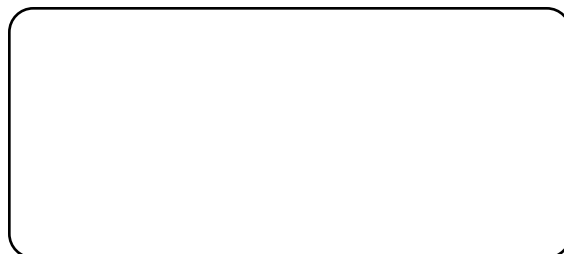
7:00PM Outdoor Service (Weather Permitting)



Have you visited our website?  
Dean Kernan is the creator and manager of our website.  
Our Web address is [alphaumc.org](http://alphaumc.org)



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