



# The Steeple

A Publication of St. Paul United Methodist Church  
of Rosewood Heights, Illinois

APRIL 2020



## GREETINGS!

Dear friends, this is an unusually long article for me, but it has multiple parts and it's all important information. Since we cannot see each other in-person and some of our dear members do not use the Internet, there is a lot of good information here. Please help pass it along to those who do not use the Internet.

## PEOPLE OF INFINITE WORTH,

Please know that you are in my prayers as we go forward during this time of isolation. This is a serious situation and I hope you are taking all the measures, you can realistically take, to protect yourselves and others. In all of this, do not forget to look for the creative ways people are connecting and caring for one another. I have always enjoyed creativity! Probably because it reminds me of the great Creator himself! God will see us through this challenging time, and we will be different people when this is over. We will be more grateful, compassionate, and resilient.

Let me share a couple of great examples of creativity. Last Sunday, I looked out the kitchen window and I saw three mini vans parked in the church parking lot. They were parked in a circle with the hatch ends open and pointing toward the center. I decided to go and talk to them, (keeping the socially appropriate distance). As it turned out they were three friends who missed each other's company. Really there were *four* ladies; one was chatting via Face Time from Chicago. They were all lonely for their friends, so they came up with this creative way to meet and chat. Each lady was sitting in the hatch of her van, drinking coffee and wrapped in a blanket. I introduced myself and let them know they were welcome to continue their meeting.

Here's another example; the neighborhood behind the church, Airwood Manor, has been in the news a couple of times in the last week or so. A local photographer wanted to get out and take pictures, so she invited her neighbors via Facebook, to go out into their yards and she would take pictures of them. She took pictures of kids waving, riding bikes, making sidewalk chalk art. Several families participated in this event and it made the newspapers. What a joyful sense of community!

My point with all this is that if we use our creativity and common sense, we will get through this challenging time. And of course, the practice of prayer will keep us connected to the Creator who is our God. We will make discoveries about ourselves and about him as we remain faithful. Use this time of quiet and solitude to dig deeper into God's Word; find the treasures we often forget to notice in the Bible.

## SERVICE PROJECT

As your pastor, I have been wracking my brain to find a service project that will help those who most need it. Many people have been making surgical masks for our hospitals and nursing homes; it occurred to me that with all our creative and crafty people, we could make masks! It's good to have friends in high places. I have such a friend and her name is Angel; she works at Alton Memorial Hospital and I asked her if they needed surgical masks. She dashed my joy when she told me they were well supplied with masks; they didn't need them. This made me very discouraged that we could not help in that way. I urged her to keep us in mind if there is some other way we can help. In prayer time later that day, I asked God to give us some other way to serve. Twenty minutes later, God answered that prayer. Angel called me back and said they really needed scrub hats. I was so excited, scrub hats, of course! Then I thought, what are scrub hats? Scrub hats are close fitting cloth caps that tie in the back; nurses and doctors wear them while caring for patients. The hats protect their hair and keep it contained. They are very simple to make.

Pinterest offers several sewing patterns for these hats; I made a pattern and a sample hat. My friend Angel at AMH is showing it to her co-workers to see if it is what they want. When I get the approval, I will be glad to share the pattern with anyone who wants to make scrub hats! The fabric needed for these hats is a cotton weave, a quilting type of fabric. They need to be light and washable. If you have a stash of this type of fabric and do not want to make these hats, please consider donating some fabric to the cause; we could help so many people in this way! I love it when God's people come together to be the hands and feet of Jesus!

## WORSHIP SERVICES

Bishop Beard has told us not to hold in-person worship services until May; so for this month, we will pre-record our worship services. The services will be blended, including elements of both traditional and contemporary services. I am thankful for the group of talented people who have come together to join the elements of our online service. We have a person at the sound board, someone at the camera, video editor, musicians and singers. Parts of our service are pre-recorded in the homes of our group members; their parts are added to the service by our video editor. We are a blessed church to have these wonderfully gifted people. We are taking the health precautions that love and wisdom dictate during our recording time;

**Pastor's Reflection continued on Page 4**

REFLECTIONS...



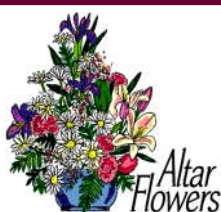
# OUR CHURCH FAMILY & THANK YOUS!

- The Illinois Retired Teachers Association of Madison County Unit #2 would like to express our appreciation for the excellent meal provided by the St. Paul “Church Ladies” at our March meeting. Outstanding job as always!! Thank you! -*MCRTA Unit #2 President, Jim Herndon*
- Our deepest sympathy goes out to each family that has recently lost a loved one. This includes the family of **Debra Reins**, cousin of Lori Felts (our neighbor in the old Jr. Parsonage); the family of **Dick & Lucy Mann**, who were current members of the Sweet Sounds; the family of **Joyce Lockwood**, cousin of Lois Mitchell & Ruth Bell; and the family of **Ginger Vandiver**, mother/mother-in-law of Lori (Mike) Tappy. **May all touched by a loss know God’s comfort and peace now and in the days ahead.**



The 2020 Women Of Worship Spring Rummage Sale will hopefully happen in the month of May! Watch for more information!

**VBS 2020  
JUNE 15-19**



You have been so wonderful this year at filling in the flower chart and we hope to see the 2 Sundays in **MAY**, the one in **NOVEMBER**, and the one in **DECEMBER** completed soon!  
Cost is \$10.  
If you are interested please call the office.



**Happy Administrative Professionals Day - April 22nd!**



## Five ways to neutralize the noise

Joe McCormack says the coronavirus is bad for your health. What makes him different from the many experts with their grim statistics and scary projections is that he's not talking about exposure to the virus. He's talking about the dangers of tracking too many updates on the subject. And that's not hard to do, considering the near-constant news coverage and social media chatter around infection rates, death tolls, travel restrictions, stock market swings, and ominous predictions on how dire the pandemic may get.

Don't get him wrong. He's fully aware the coronavirus poses a serious threat. It's just that he believes we shouldn't let it consume our waking lives. "We've moved beyond information and are now generating a swell of noise," says McCormack. "The messaging around the coronavirus is amplified to deafening levels. People are consuming hysteria, and it's not doing us any favors."

"Noise" is McCormack's name for the dizzying onslaught of information from work emails, app notifications, the 24/7 news cycle, social media updates, and other forms of screen time that leaves us unable to focus, listen, or do deep work. He says most of us consume it all mindlessly, and it keeps us in a constant state of distraction. And while noise is never good for us, noise based on such a fear-inducing topic has even worse consequences.

"Events like the coronavirus show us how vital it is to own our mental bandwidth and manage our attention," says McCormack. "We need to know what's going on and to react appropriately, but coronavirus coverage is not the only thing that matters. Overconsumption of bad news will affect you. It will feed anxiety and fear. It will eat up your thinking space. It will keep you from living your life."

**How can we cope with coronavirus hysteria and neutralize the noise swirling around it? McCormack offers 5 tips:**

**1. Understand how overconsumption of bad news affects you.** When something becomes the only thing, it becomes everything, says McCormack. The temptation to sit in front of the TV and consume all day long is huge. You hear all sorts of things that aren't relevant, timely, or accurate. You start believing the world is coming to an end. And when all your waking hours are spent anxious, nervous, and anticipating the worst, you start to miss all the other stuff in your life.

"Plus, when you consume too much noise, you start to vibrate at the lower energy frequency associated with fear," says McCormack. "Others around you might 'catch' your low vibrations. You pass fear on like a virus. This is how panics can start."

**2. Don't confuse predictions with certainty.** You've probably heard the adage that FEAR stands for False Evidence Appearing Real. That's important to remember at times like these, notes McCormack. People tend to make dire predictions with such certainty that you start to believe them, but really, they simply do not know. Remember all the past flus and viruses that were supposed to decimate humanity—but didn't.

"There are lots of people out there who personify the saying 'Often wrong, but never in doubt,'" notes McCormack. "And the fact that there are no repercussions when people make erroneous claims and predictions only emboldens them to get louder and more insistent."

**3. Temper your consumption.** Thanks to the 24/7 news cycle, you're likely to see the same story reported 17 times and said 17 slightly different ways. It's not healthy to dedicate all your bandwidth to one fear-producing story. But if you're tempted to blame the media, don't. It's their job. It's your job to manage your consumption: to decide when to watch, what to watch, and when to turn off the TV, shut down the computer, and walk away.

"Create filters for what's information and what's useless noise and live by them," advises McCormack. "It's not all useful."

**4. Focus on the facts, not wild speculations or possible domino effects.** Find one good source you trust and stay abreast of the situation. Pay attention to what you can control: regular handwashing, reasonably stocking up on bottled water and other supplies, postponing flights to coronavirus "hot spots," and so forth. If you can't impact it, don't focus on it.

"Just don't give your attention to 'domino effect' fears like worldwide pandemics or economic collapse," advises McCormack. "There's nothing you can do about what 'might' happen and it only spreads fear."

**5. When others are talking, change the subject. Don't pile on.** Be the voice of calm and reason. If they won't drop the subject, have a few reassuring talking points in reserve to help put things in perspective and defuse fear. The CDC website is a good source for this. For example: "The risk of getting the coronavirus in the U.S. is currently low," and "There are simple things you can do to help keep yourself and others healthy." Above all, know we need to be at our best in challenging times. That means it's crucial not to allow ourselves to get caught up in fear or—worse—to spread that fear to others.

"Noise drowns out clarity, and clarity is critical during times of crisis," says McCormack. "When we lose clarity, we start doing impulsive things and making bad decisions. It's bad for our mental and emotional health, and it's bad for our relationships. We need to spread facts, not fear. Rather than adding to the noise, we need to be part of the solution."

**So remember... that our God is bigger than any virus, to not be afraid because He goes before us into whatever is ahead, and to turn down the media most of the time!**





## Sundays from St. Paul in APRIL 10:30 A.M. Services

**INFORMATION:** *Currently we are unable to meet in-person for our usual services at the usual times. But we are able to bring the message each Sunday to you on the Facebook Pages and the Website until we can meet in-person again . The Facebook Pages are: St. Paul United Methodist - East Alton, IL and AwakeningWorshipSTPUMC The Website is: stpaulwired.org - look under Sermons for the link.*



**5th:** Palm Sunday. Holy Week Begins. **Worship Message:** The Triumphal Entry! **Scripture:** *Matthew 21:1-11*



**12th:** Easter Sunday.  
**Scripture:**

**Worship Message:**

**Theme:**

**19th:** **Wor-**

**ship Message:**

**Scripture:**

**Theme:**

**26th:** **Wor-**

**ship Message:**

**Scripture:**

**Theme:**

*We will let you know as the Sundays come around!*

### Pastor's Reflection continued from Page 1

we have fewer than 10 people in this group, we have available hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes to help protect us, and of course, we maintain the proper distance. We are using great care in our production of the online worship service.

### ACCESSING WORSHIP SERVICES

We have two ways to access our worship services. As I mentioned, we are pre-recording them and making them available at 10:30 a.m. on Sundays. If you use Facebook, you can access the services through that medium from either Facebook page, we have two: **St. Paul United Methodist Church – East Alton, IL** or **AwakeningWorshipSTPUMC**. They can be viewed at any time later if 10:30 a.m. is not convenient. Many of our members use Facebook, but some of them have not joined either of our pages. It is easy to join a page. Search for the page by entering the name of the page in the Facebook search bar. When you find the page, you can join by clicking the join box. It's that easy. If you have trouble with that, you can contact me via Facebook, and I can send you an invitation to the page.

Some of our members use the Internet, but do not use Facebook. For those people, we are placing the recorded services on our church website. Here is the link, <http://www.stpaulwired.org/>, if you are unfamiliar with it. If you are viewing this newsletter online, please click on the link and it will take you to our website. If that doesn't work, you can copy and paste it into the browser bar, then hit enter and it will take you there. The worship services will be listed by title under the "Sermons" tab.

If you are viewing this newsletter as a printed copy, you will need to type the link above into your computer browser bar and it will take you to our website. Again, you will find the service by title under the "Sermons" tab.

**Pastor's Reflection continued on Page 5**



## Hickerson Scholarship 2020

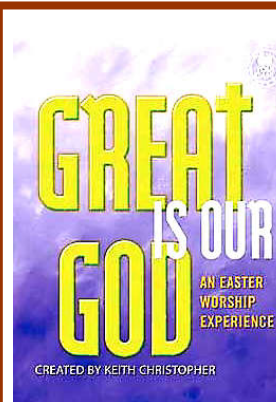


Graduating seniors from the three area high schools (East Alton-Wood River, Roxana, and Civic Memorial) or any who are a member of St. Paul UMC may apply for the \$500.00 scholarship.

We encourage members to notify any student that may qualify and have them complete the application process. Application materials are available through the counselors at the above mentioned schools or directly from the church office.

**→ NEW DEADLINE for completed application is: FRIDAY, MAY 1, 2020**

If you have any questions, please contact the church office at 259-5210.



## 2020 EASTER CANTATA

No, we will not get to present the Easter Cantata on Palm Sunday as planned, but we are an Easter people who celebrate Easter every Sunday we gather. Once we can be together again we will do this!

### WATCH FOR IT!

### Pastor's Reflection continued from Page 4

#### GIVING

Generosity is a big part of being a Christian, especially during Lent. Giving, Praying, and Fasting are the heart of the Lenten season. With our online services, we cannot pass the plate or even have a noisy offering! Our financial situation is suffering as a result. We are aware that many of our members are temporarily laid-off or working fewer hours, which affects their family finances. We ask that you, as much as possible, continue to prayerfully give what you are able.

#### **There are a few ways to continue your giving:**

- US Mail
- Automatic payments through your bank/credit union Bill Pay
- Online through the St. Paul website ([www.stpaulwired.org](http://www.stpaulwired.org))
- Drop it by the office

Many of our faithful givers mail their offering every week; the US Post Office is still doing a great job! Consider mailing your offering. Most banks/credit unions have a system for automatic payments; contact your financial institution and see if that will work for you. And of course, our church website has an Online Giving tab through which you can give to the church. Lois and I are on limited hours at the church. If bringing your check to the church works for you, please call first so that you know we are here and we can meet you at the door. Together we will weather this storm; we know God always provides and the people of St. Paul have always risen to the occasion in times of need. God bless you all as we work together.

#### OFFICE HOURS

Office hours are minimal during this crisis. We are here most mornings, but please call the church 618-259-5210 before stopping by. If you need to talk to me and the church is closed, here is my cell phone number, 618-406-5244. For emergencies, or if you just need to talk, I am here for you. I will be glad to pray with you over the phone. If you have some other need I can help you with, please let me know. I will do my best.

#### PALM SUNDAY

This Sunday, April 5th is Palm Sunday. Since we won't meet for worship, we will not see our wonderful children parading and waving palm fronds. This makes me very sad; children are always such a joy to have in worship. Here is a way for us to celebrate our children. Included in this newsletter (in the middle) are a couple of coloring pages (printed back-to-back) related to Palm Sunday. Please have your children/grandchildren color them. Take pictures of the artist and art work; we will post them on our Facebook pages for all to enjoy!

**Blessings!**

**Pastor Debra**



# APRIL BIRTHDAYS

“Before you were born, I set you apart for a special work!”

- 01-Apr Amy Hartman
- 02-Apr Jarod Foiles
- 03-Apr Karen Challandes
- 03-Apr Mike Voorhees
- 04-Apr Donald Ford Jr.
- 04-Apr Payton Hartman
- 04-Apr Tom Martin
- 05-Apr Jason Mayer
- 05-Apr Kelly Moore
- 05-Apr Rohland Pruetzel
- 06-Apr Barb Sitze
- 06-Apr Jessica Winchester
- 07-Apr Vicki Acton
- 07-Apr Ashley Bunt
- 07-Apr Jaxson McBride
- 08-Apr Patrick Bottorff
- 08-Apr Florence Nelson
- 09-Apr Abbygail Skjerseth
- 10-Apr Bryan Clark
- 10-Apr Virginia Croxford
- 10-Apr Lizzie Dawson
- 11-Apr Jennifer Roberts
- 11-Apr Alyssa Tite
- 14-Apr Terry Inman
- 14-Apr Mindy McLain
- 14-Apr Rilyn Wesley
- 14-Apr Nora Toner
- 15-Apr Alexander Lair

- 16-Apr Nathan Bishop
- 16-Apr Lauren Davis
- 16-Apr Peter Laufersweiler
- 17-Apr Lauryn Decker
- 17-Apr Brittney Harlan
- 17-Apr Brooke Harlan
- 17-Apr Vivian Sands-Franklin
- 17-Apr Scott Tillery
- 17-Apr Cathy Toner
- 18-Apr Michael Bunt
- 18-Apr Luke Dawson
- 18-Apr Brandon Plummer
- 19-Apr Ilona Natsch
- 19-Apr Madison Scroggins
- 19-Apr Patsy Scroggins
- 20-Apr Kay Gwaltney
- 20-Apr Rosalind Hovan
- 21-Apr Edith Mayer
- 21-Apr Ryan Parker
- 24-Apr Leona Hendricks
- 24-Apr Mike Plummer
- 25-Apr Logan Laufersweiler
- 25-Apr Madison Williams
- 26-Apr Logan Eyster

- 26-Apr Andrew Garrison
- 27-Apr Jaden Henderson
- 27-Apr Bob Kissack Jr.
- 27-Apr Keith Sheppard
- 28-Apr John Bailey
- 28-Apr Tabatha Barclay
- 28-Apr Taylor Scroggins
- 29-Apr Jacob Giddings
- 29-Apr Stacey Kathriner
- 29-Apr Darin Redden Sr.
- 29-Apr Rita White
- 30-Apr Chase Cameron



# APRIL ANNIVERSARIES



- 05-Apr Rohland & Susie Pruetzel
- 08-Apr Bill & Ronda Crain Jr.
- 10-Apr Adam & Stephanie Schroedter
- 11-Apr Phil & Vicki Acton
- 11-Apr Joe & Linda Tillery
- 14-Apr Joshua & Brooke Toner

- 20-Apr Jim & Betty Burns
- 20-Apr Jake & Jessica Toner
- 21-Apr Eric & Heather Decker
- 21-Apr Peter & Sarah Laufersweiler
- 24-Apr Justin & Jennifer Sandbach
- 24-Apr Frank & Tana Yankovich Jr.

## It is time to UPDATE our Church Directory for 2020!

The church office will be updating the Church Directory for 2020! Please be sure to contact the church office if you have had a **change of address, phone number, or email address since the last printing!** The 2020 Church Directory will be available as soon as possible after we get back to coming to church again! Thank you!



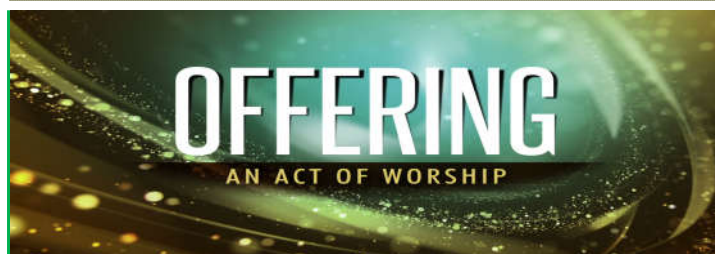
### MARCH Stewardship

Budget Offering:	through 3/31/2020	\$13969.00
Designated Giving:	through 3/31/2020	\$3313.54
	Capital Improvements	410.00
	Loose Change	77.93
	WOW Chicken Dinner	712.61
	Flowers	205.00
	Upper Room	13.00
	Hickerson Scholarship	100.00
	Charles McKnelly	500.00
	Helping Hands	500.00
	Memorials	520.00
	Funeral Dinners	200.00
	UMCOR	75.00
Transfer from Cap. Imp.		1289.78
Transfer from Trust. Res.		1289.78
Easter Offering		60.00
Capital Campaign		950.00
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$20872.10</b>



### MONTHLY LOOSE CHANGE PROJECT

April's Loose Change Project is the Community Hope Center in Cottage Hills. Not only do they run a food pantry which our church uses as a referral source, but they offer free clothing and other programs to help people in need. May God bless and multiply your gifts!



Just a quick reminder... during this time when our in-person services and activities are on hold, please know that our bills are not. *If you are able to send your tithes / offerings you can send it through the US Mail, through Bill Pay with your bank, through our website Online Giving, and by handing it to us at the door to the building. If you plan to bring it by here, please call first to make sure we're here.*

**Thank you so much!**

### Easter Offering

For 2020, any Undesignated Easter Offering received will be divided 50/50 between our Helping Hands account and UMCOR. You of course may designate your offering to a mission or ministry of your own choosing.

**DEADLINE FOR  
MAY 2020  
STEEPLE, Monday  
APRIL 20th!**

