

First United Methodist Church  
200 South 6th Street  
Ponca City, OK 74601  
(580) 762-1681  
www.fumcpc.org  
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Ponca City First United Methodist

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# THE FLAME

Volume 50, Issue 6

June 2020

## Welcome Back!



### First In-House Service June 7<sup>th</sup>

#### A new way to worship.

1. Worship only for the immediate future (no Sunday school or coffee time.)
2. Masks are highly encouraged for those over 10 years of age. They will be provided if needed.
3. We will use every other pew. Ushers will assist with seating to ensure safe seating. The balcony will be open and available.
4. Hand sanitizer will be widely available throughout the sanctuary and Welcome Center
5. Please refrain from physical contact (hugs, handshakes, or close contact.)
6. The collection plate will be held by the ushers. As they pass, place your offering in the plate, no need to touch.
7. Ushers will dismiss the congregation from rear to front. Please maintain spacing.
8. Congregational singing is discouraged. Feel free to hum, tap your foot, wave your hands in praise to participate in the music.
9. If you or a member of your family have an underlying health problem, you are welcome to continue to watch the service on Facebook or on channel 68.

The Flame (USPS 17) is published once a month, a total of 12 issues per year, by First United Methodist Church, Ponca City, OK.



Hey youth and youth parents,  
This month we will be starting back with Sunday night youth activities. We will meet outside of the church from 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm. The winners of the challenge will be announced as soon as possible and the trip for the winners will be scheduled as soon as we are able to sit down and plan it. With the church starting back soon, we will not have any youth in the AV booth. We are going to do everything we can to keep everyone safe and healthy during this time!

Blessings to all,  
Heather and Lindsey

**SENIOR PASTOR**  
Pastor Don Griffin  
[smugrad93@gmail.com](mailto:smugrad93@gmail.com)

**MUSIC DIRECTOR**  
Joycelynn Davidson  
[fumcmusic@cablone.net](mailto:fumcmusic@cablone.net)

**CHILDREN'S DIRECTOR**  
Cathie Gilliland  
[cathieg@cablone.net](mailto:cathieg@cablone.net)

**YOUTH DIRECTOR**  
Heather Kubik  
[hl.kubik@hotmail.com](mailto:hl.kubik@hotmail.com)  
Youth Intern  
Lindsey McGee  
[Lmcge346@gmail.com](mailto:Lmcge346@gmail.com)

**MDO & NURSERY DIRECTOR**  
Ruth Harbeson

**ORGANIST**  
Sue Lippert  
[slippert2017@cablone.net](mailto:slippert2017@cablone.net)

**BUSINESS MANAGER**  
Cynthia Wilson  
[cynthiaw@cablone.net](mailto:cynthiaw@cablone.net)

**CHURCH SECRETARY**  
Dianne Clark  
[fumcpc@cablone.net](mailto:fumcpc@cablone.net)

**BUILDING MAINTENANCE**  
Larry Davidson  
[dlarrydavidson@yahoo.com](mailto:dlarrydavidson@yahoo.com)





Pastor Don Griffin

Can you believe it has only been a couple of months? It feels like it is a much longer period since we last worshipped together in March. So much has happened since then, and I am so ready to see your beautiful faces in our sanctuary. I am so thankful for the work that Larry Davidson has done to keep access to worship for everyone. He has been serving as the key component of our online/cable worship presence. He comes and records all the elements and then edits them together and then produces a genuinely nice recording to play on Sunday. When you and I are watching at home, Larry is at the church broadcasting the service for us. Larry, we appreciate you so much for all you have done during this time.

As reported in this Flame, our church is moving toward re-opening our facilities for public worship. The first step will be on June 1st when our staff will begin working part time from our offices. The office hours will be 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Monday through Thursday. If you need anything from our office or need to see one of our staff members, that will be

the time the facilities are open, and you can access them. I do recommend you call in advance if there is one person you wish to visit with because we will not all be at the office at once as we previously were. If there is only one of us at the office at some point in time, we will keep the front doors locked but you may call the church at 762-1681 and we will come and let you in. We are doing this to provide a safer environment for our staff. Masks and germ gel will be available for you to wear for protection.

Worship will resume on June 7th as previously announced. Let me say up front that if you are uneasy with being in a public setting at this point, please continue to worship at home. The service will be broadcast on Facebook and channel 68. We will be spacing the congregation throughout our facility and providing germ gel and masks for those who do not bring their own. It is highly recommended by our Trustees that you do wear a mask when worship resumes. There will be changes that will be difficult for some of us to accept, but they are all being put in place for your protection. We want to gather for worship, but we also want to do it in a responsible manner.

Initially the biggest change to our worship will be in the area of music. Since this virus spreads by droplets produced by us, congregational singing has been a source of infection in many churches. Joycelynn is working to provide a meaningful music experience for each worship service. You can always hum, stomp your foot, or wave your hands in praise to connect with the music. We are still working out all the details, but I assure you that music will be a prominent fixture in worship as it has in the past. Instead of focusing on what

may be different, I encourage you to celebrate and cherish the change for now. We will sing together again soon when it is safe.

Another thing that will be different is in seating. We will be using every other pew and staggering worship participants in such a way that no one will be in front or behind you. This again is for your protection. This might mean you will have to sit in a pew that is not your traditional seat. Again, we can focus on the negative and what we cannot do, or we can see this as an opportunity to experience worship in a new way. Ushers will help with spacing. At the end of worship, you will be dismissed by the ushers from back to front to prevent everyone congregating at the exit at the same time. Again, this is for your protection. Ushers will also bring the offering plate by you for you to place your offering in during the worship service.

We want you safe and healthy! We are celebrating being together again, but we must do it responsibly for your sake and mine. I cannot wait to see you June 7th.

In Christ,

Pastor Don



2020 Annual Conference Update

The session of the Annual Conference scheduled for June 20th has been postponed until November. Our session will gather at Church of the Servant in Oklahoma City on November 20-21st. More details will come as they are made available.



2020

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
	1 Church Staff Returns to Office	2	3	4	5	6
7 10:00 Worship Service 5:00 TYT	8	9 6:00 Trustees Meeting	10	11	12 Friday Evening Fellowship Time to be posted. Tentatively 8:00 PM	13
14 10:00 Worship Service Communion 5:00 TYT	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 10:00 Worship Service 5:00 TYT	22	23	24	25	26 Friday Evening Fellowship Time to be posted	27
28 10:00 Worship Service 5:00 TYT	29	30				

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Dan Petty	06/06	Earl Behara	06/17	Viviane Wells	06/25
Becky Hightower	06/08	Janet Ray	06/17	Colton Grubbs	06/26
Don Nuzum	06/08	Terry Stephen	06/17	Rylee Webster	06/28
Tom Burton	06/10	Ron Matheson	06/18	Jean Jennings	06/29
Dianna Dawdy	06/12	John Gilberg	06/20		
Becky Poet	06/12	Desta Parks	06/20		
Prail Chism	06/16	Jarod Hinch	06/22		
Paul Kuehny	06/16	Diane Cavett	06/24		
Ann Powell	06/16	Kara Wells	06/24		





Juneteenth, also known as Freedom Day, Jubilee Day, Cel-Liberation Day or the Black Fourth of July, is an American holiday that commemorates June 19, 1865. On this day, after almost two and half years since the implementation of the Emancipation Proclamation, enslaved African Americans were informed of their liberation from the slavery present in the former Confederate States of America. Texas was the most remote of the slave states and the Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863, was not enforced there until after the Civil War had ended. The name of the observance is a portmanteau of "June" and "nineteenth", the date of its celebration.

At first, celebration involved church-centered community gatherings in Texas. It spread across the South and became more commercialized in the 1920s and 1930s. Often the centerpiece was a food festival. A third stage was reached in the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s, when the focus became the story of struggle for postwar civil rights. The 1970s saw a fourth stage, which returned the focus to African American freedom and arts. By the 21st century Juneteenth was celebrated in most major cities across the United States. Activists are pushing Congress to recognize Juneteenth as a national holiday. Juneteenth is recognized as a state holiday or special day of observance in 46 of the 50 states.

Observance is primarily in local celebrations. Traditions include

public readings of the Emancipation Proclamation, singing traditional songs such as "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" and "Lift Every Voice and Sing", and reading of works by noted African-American writers such as Ralph Ellison and Maya Angelou. Celebrations include rodeos, street fairs, cookouts, family reunions, park parties, historical reenactments, or Miss Juneteenth contests. The Mascogos, descendants of Black Seminoles, of Choahuila, Mexico, also celebrate Juneteenth.

Check your local area for celebrations.



## PRAYER REQUESTS AND ANSWERS TO PRAYER

Email us at the address listed on our web page

[prayerfumcpc@aol.com](mailto:prayerfumcpc@aol.com)

for your requests and your praises to God for His answers. **If really urgent** call the church office directly (580) 762-1681.



## PRAYER CORNER

Prayer To Become Giving Person  
Loving Father I come to You today with grateful thanks for the gifts and promises that so readily stream in my direction from You. So often Lord my foolish heart is filled with worry and anxiety and I find myself looking at the problem of my supply instead of looking to You as my generous Supplier. Please forgive this lack of trust in You, for I know that You have promised to supply all our needs according to Your riches in glory – for which Lord I thank and Praise You.

Lord I want to be able to hand over each and every one of my worries to You and to develop a generous and outgoing personality – that keeps my eyes on Jesus rather than continuing to be the “worrier” that I have become. I know that this does not honor Your name and I so desire to walk in the paths of righteousness and become a person with a generous heart that flows from Your own generosity– a grateful heart that is full of trust and thanks to You, Who have done so much for me.

Lord, I know that I cannot change my nature myself – but I do know that in the power of the Holy Spirit I can take my worrisome thoughts captive and hand them over to You – and turn my worries and anxieties into purposeful praise, knowing that in all things You are the supplier of all I need. I ask this in Jesus name,

Amen



Hello Kids! Hello Church!

What a remarkable time we live in! We've had some changes—both good and bad... Hopefully we've all had some learning & growing times while staying at home. If you have not heard, Vacation Bible School and Summer Camps are not happening this year. BUT we cannot go for three months without having fun together! I am planning some ALL-CHURCH get-togethers emphasizing good, healthy fun for kids aged 3-103! Although some are still in the planning stages, keep the following Friday nights free on your calendar... June 12, June 26, July 17 & August 7.



We have several options for making donations to the church:

**By Text:** Just text the donation amount to 1-580-324-3101 (no need to include the “\$” sign – just text the numerical amount). You'll receive a text back from Vanco requesting your payment info and the funds will be transferred to FUMC and you'll receive

The first event will be an outdoor movie, shown on the front steps of the church. Coming Soon! A family classic, **Swiss Family Robinson**, complete with popcorn (with contactless popping & serving!) and cold drinks! You will need to bring lawn chairs, blankets, pillows, air mattresses (& bug spray?)... whatever keeps you comfy out in front of the church!

I'm planning to start the movie at 8pm, but I'll be watching the shadows in the front of the building to see exactly when we have enough darkness to project the movie... If there are changes I'll get the word out!

If I cannot have as much up close, one-on-one time with the kids this summer, then I hope that we can have as much Church Family time as safely as possible! Starting with an outside events and working indoors

a confirmation text back from Vanco.

**Online:** On our website,

[www.fumcpc.org](http://www.fumcpc.org)

go to the tab named “Member Info” and click on “Contributions” and you can donate by Paypal, credit or debit card.

**By Monthly Autodraft:** Call my cell 580-763-2196 and I'll get you set up for a monthly draft from your checking or savings account.

**By Stock Transfer:** We have an account with TD Ameritrade for easy transfer of stock to the FUMC account.

**By Mail:** Our FUMC mail is being

as the summer goes on. The June 26 event in planning is a Ponca City Photo Scavenger Hunt! I will be contacting some of you about being photographer/drivers in your cars, keeping each carload to 4-6 people & ending at the church with a viewing of the pictures & ice cream treats (individually wrapped, of course) & announcing our winners! Depending on “re-openings” this event may or may not include any indoor time at the church, but will be a great way to mix & mingle together while still keeping somewhat apart!

Life changes - but family thrives! I'll keep you posted!

Blessings through laughter!

Cathie G



held and I pick it up from the post office weekly. That address is 200 South 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Ponca City, OK 74601.

Please consider these options for what is best for your family and don't hesitate to call me with any questions.

Cynthia



## Music Notes



Hello Church! In these confusing times of what is safe and what isn't, we are looking forward to being together in worship. What does that mean for the musicians? Well, for the time being it is recommended that we not gather as a choir in rehearsal or worship. Does that mean we won't have music? Absolutely not. We can have 1-6 people singing, handbell

By Joycelynn Davidson

ensembles, string instruments, piano & organ; all while keeping safe distance. Although our in-house congregation cannot sing, they can still hum into masks. This is not a forever solution but is the recommendation for the immediate future. In the meantime, keep a song in your heart and thanksgiving on your lips.



*"To stop the flow of music would be like the stopping of time itself, incredible and inconceivable."*

~Aaron Copland

## Handbells



What a difference a year makes! I look forward to the time we can get together again.

I have found a beautiful collection of new handbell music for 2 octaves arranged by Lloyd Lar-

son for bells and piano. Hopefully, by this fall we can come together for rehearsals. Sometime this summer, there are lots of bells that need polished. This can be a group project since we would be able to keep our distance from each other. Any takers?

## Guidelines from the UMC

There are many articles that have been written about the risks of singing publicly. It is not recommended even while

wearing a mask. The UMC guidelines recommend maintaining a distance of 12 feet from anyone singing or lead-

ing singing. This is what I call a "singing congregation" and it saddens me to silence your voices, even for a little while.

*"There's within my heart a melody Jesus whispers sweet and low: Fear not, I am with thee, peace, be still, in all of life's ebb and flow...."*

~Luther Bridgers



## Project Transformation

United Methodist Women choose local and worldwide missions to donate to each year with the money that has been earned in mission projects. Each month we have tried to give you more information about one of those missions we have donated to during the year.

Project Transformation is one of the missions we have chosen. The program invites college students to invest in the lives of underserved children while also exploring their own call to service through AmeriCorps, a volunteer civil society program. Students work in teams, plan daily lessons and lead the program as teachers. For their term of service, students receive a stipend of \$1,800, a \$1,200 education award, and room and board, including most meals. Ricks said the program is for anyone with a heart to serve others and learn more about themselves, their faith and their community.

"Students from all majors and backgrounds serve with Project Transformation every summer, and every summer, students tell us again and again how much it has changed their lives," Kelsey Ricks, Executive Director, said.

"It's hard work, it's exhausting, and it will challenge you, but it will be an experience you will never forget." Project Transformation provides two key services:

1. Leadership development and career/ministry exploration opportunities for college age young adults through summer internships.
2. Community-oriented summer day camp programming for children from low-income neighborhoods.

The young adults provide this second service, giving them authentic, hands-on experiences leading high-quality, structured programs for children and equally important, learning from the children in the program.

Project Transformation is strategically housed in churches in low-income communities. This partnership between the site churches and Project Transformation is designed so that churches can make new connections and form meaningful relationships of mutuality with families in their immediate neighborhood. Those churches are Methodist Churches in Tulsa, Bartlesville, Muskogee, Mangum, Moore, El Reno, Oklahoma City and Enid.

Project Transformation's summer day camp programs for elementary students focuses on enriching the mind, body, and spirit. A unique focus is placed on improving literacy and social-emotional development. Project Transformation operates eight-week summer day camps serving children grades 1-5 in nine high-need neighborhoods throughout Oklahoma. Each day, children read one-on-one with community volunteers and participate in activity-based literacy intervention. Children also participate in daily enrichment activities in-

cluding recreational play and exercise, creative arts, and interaction with our young adults and community volunteers, who inspire and encourage youth daily to make responsible, sound decisions.

## United Methodist Women News

Miriam Group of UMW met in the backyard of Trish Goodman for their May meeting. Trish challenged the group to count their blessings during this time of crisis in our world. In the Flame last month there was an article about Prayer and Self-Denial. Many of us are currently feeling that we are denying many things and are being denied many things. So, instead of Prayer and Self-Denial we are praying and giving each time we feel blessed in our daily lives. If we set aside a monetary amount each time we feel blessed and then when we come back together again we can share our Prayer and Blessings for those around the world who have not been so blessed. 100% of the money we give to Prayer and Self-Denial goes directly to women, children and youth. When we give we are transformed not only by hearing the cares and concerns of our neighbors, but by the opportunity to act within God's plan to create a world where we all thrive.

Martin Rinkart was a Lutheran minister in the 17<sup>th</sup> century whose small town barely survived a severe plague and the Thirty Year's War. He was still able to write one of the great hymns we sing today – "Now Thank We All Our God". We have much to be thankful for.

