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Rev. Carol Cook Moore has been announced as the next superintendent in the Northern Prairie District. She will fill the role currently held by Rev. Tish Malloy, who will be appointed to lead the Crossroads District as Rev. Rockford Johnson returns to the pastorate to lead Norman-McFarlin.

“Carol Cook Moore’s knowledge of the personnel processes of the church have equipped her to serve effectively on the district,” the bishop said in his announcement.

Cook Moore is the pastor at Alva-First and the chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry. Her service in the Oklahoma Conference dates back to 1984. She earned a bachelor’s degree from Oklahoma City University in 1980, a master’s degree from Saint Paul School of Theology in 1984, and a doctoral degree from Drew Theological Seminary in 2009. Over her ministry career, she has served four churches, the Northeastern State University Wesley Foundation, and the Wesley Theological Seminary as an assistant professor of worship and preaching. She said she is humbled by the opportunity, even in light of the uncertainties facing the denomination.

“I think every pastor needs to ask, ‘what is essential?’ I think we’re getting there pretty darn quick with this pandemic,” Cook Moore said. “What is essential to me is to keep the standard before myself, to treat everyone with dignity, to listen, and to seek compassion in whatever discernment and decisions are before me individually, are before the cabinet, before the conference, the general church.”

To read the complete article, go to this website

<https://www.okumc.org/newsdetail/13566055>



Rev. Carol Cook Moore
Northern Prairie District Superintendent

THE FLAME

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Compassionate and Gracious God, all tribes and tongues will one day acknowledge Jesus as Lord. Alongside this, we know the truth proclaimed in Your Word that we are all created in Your image. Too easily we allow division based on culture, language, or race. Change our behavior and make us united. Let us focus on our shared status as Your creation and unite together over what we have in common and not fracture over how we differ. To You, the Creator of all people, I pray. Amen.



We have a new mailing address:

**FUMC
PO Box 71
Ponca City, OK 74602**



Pastor
Don Griffin

On June 20th of last year, Seth and I left our home in Pauls Valley for our new adventure in Ponca City, Oklahoma. There is always uncertainty when starting a new appointment. We found out late in the process and I must admit we were a bit in shock that we were moving. Our visit with the SPRC committee to visit the church and parsonage a few weeks earlier took place during a flood. Some members of the committee couldn't get to the church due to roads being blocked off. The weeks leading up to our move, I was doing both my job and my secretary's at Pauls Valley since she had surgery complications. We had less than a month to pack both my office and our home. The night before picking up our U-Haul, a massive storm hit with hurricane force winds that knocked out electricity for the community and left us in a bind. All the food we had in the refrigerator and freezer was ruined and we sweltered during the day and were in the dark at night. This was not a smooth move at all. When we pulled up at the parsonage in Ponca City that afternoon, we were probably not in the best mental state but nevertheless excited about new possibilities.

Even with the challenges that accompanied our move last year,

our first year at First Church has been such a blessing even though it, like our move, has been filled with challenges. I believe God has accomplished much in our short time together regardless of obstacles that we have faced. First, the people of this congregation are tremendous. We have so many spiritually sound disciples who make ministry a pleasure for any pastor or church staff. I have found a desire within our church family to grow and move forward. Many congregations are downsizing and just trying to hold on if they can, but I truly believe this church has her best days ahead. We will have to be proactive and be willing to leave our comfort zone to reach those hurting in Ponca City, but I believe the Holy Spirit is already paving the way for us to accomplish much for the kingdom. Are you excited about our church's future?

When you inherit a staff, you never know what to expect. I have discovered that First Church is blessed to have wonderful staff of Christian ministers leading all aspects of our church and worship life. Joycelynn Davidson and Sue Lippert bring such beauty and flair to the music of our worship. Cathie Gilliland does such a tremendous job of connecting with our children and helping them grow as young disciples. Heather Kubik and Lindsey McGee have brought new life and enthusiasm to our youth program. Cynthia Wilson is the finest church business manager I've been blessed to know. Dianne Clark is our information hub and does a great job with the bulletin, the monthly Flame and other outreach instruments. Ruth Harbeson and her awesome staff keep the Mother's Day Out running at peak efficiency and bless so many families. Larry Davidson keeps our facilities clean and in tip top shape. Larry also has voluntarily manned

the video/sound ministry of our church and has gone above and beyond leading that important department. I have been so blessed with our staff. If you appreciate the people I have mentioned, why not take a moment to tell them thank you.

Now for the obstacles we have faced. I think our Ministry Teams that were formed in early fall have done a great job so far. We spent time reintroducing our church to our community and looked for ways to help us connect with those within our church family. We had just begun the careful process of evaluating our church ministries when it all came to a dead stop. The Corona virus hit First Church and hit us hard and shutting down for several months was devastating to the momentum we were building. We tragically lost a beloved church member to the virus and saw it devastate many more. Even I had to struggle with this personally and if it were not for my loving church family I'm not sure how we would have made it through. At a time where a pastor would expect to step forward and lead, I was taken down by the virus. I cannot fathom what Seth and I would have done without our church family. When I was so sick, you brought us food and helped us in so many ways. I received messages, cards, and calls and those sustained me when I was at my lowest point. What a testimony to the members and staff of First Church. I know that our other members with this virus experienced the same love and support. It makes me sad for those in Ponca City who do not know Jesus or have a church family to lean on.

(Continued on Page 4)



2020						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4 happy 4th of JULY!
5 10:00 Worship 5:00 TYT	6 OFFICE CLOSED 	7	8 12:00 Finance Committee	9	10	11
12 10:00 Worship Communion Food Sack Sunday 5:00 TYT	13	14 6:00 Trustees Meeting	15	16	17	18
19 10:00 Worship 5:00 TYT	20	21	22	23	24	25
26 10:00 Worship 5:00 TYT	27	28	29	30	31	

JULY BIRTHDAYS					
Joycelynn Davidson	07/04	DeEtte Moon	07/20	Joshua Kirchenbauer	07/28
Arleen Jacobson	07/05	Judy Million	07/21	Dee Kutz	07/28
Suzanna Parks	07/05	Dixie Kuehny	07/22	Glea Means	07/28
Aaron Millemon	07/07	Trent Fry	07/23	Andy Tubbs	07/28
Deanna Cohenour	07/08	Bernice Whitfill	07/23	Geoffrey Cowan	07/29
Ty Otto	07/09	Linda Jantz	07/24	Jan Matheson	07/30
John Davis	07/11	Joey Kirchenbauer	07/24		
Marvin Krepps	07/14	Alberta Stovall	07/24		
Darlene Petty	07/17	Susan Blake	07/25		
Myla Southard	07/18	Kayce Burton	07/26		
Nate Harbeson	07/19	Wayne Moore	07/26		
Reed Jackson	07/20	Gregg Grubbs	07/28		





THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

RED SKELTON: "I remember this one teacher. To me, he was the greatest teacher, a real sage of my time. He had such wisdom. We were all reciting the *Pledge Of Allegiance* and he walked over. Mr. Lasswell was his name... He said": "I've been listening to you boys and girls recite the *Pledge Of Allegiance* all semester and it seems as though it is becoming monotonous to you. If I may, may I recite it and try to explain to you the meaning of each word:

I - Me; an individual; a committee of one.

Pledge - Dedicate all of my worldly goods to give without self-pity.

Allegiance - My love and my devotion.

To the Flag - Our standard; Old Glory; a symbol of Freedom; wherever she waves there is respect, because your loyalty has given her a dignity that shouts, Freedom is everybody's job.

of the United - That means that we have all come together.

States - Individual communities that have united into forty-eight great states. Forty-eight individual communities with pride and dignity and purpose. All divided with imaginary boundaries, yet united to a common purpose, and that is love for country.

And to the Republic - a state in which sovereign power is invested in representatives chosen by the people to govern. And government

is the people; and it's from the people to the leaders, not from the leaders to the people.

For which it stands

One Nation - meaning, so blessed by God.

Indivisible - Incapable of being divided.

With Liberty - Which is Freedom; the right of power to live one's own life, without threats, fear, or some sort of retaliation.

And Justice - The principle, or quality, of dealing fairly with others.

For All - which means, boys and girls, it's as much your country as it is mine. And now, boys and girls, let me hear you recite the Pledge of Allegiance:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic, for which it stands; one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

(Just a note, at the time Red Skelton was in school the phrase 'under God' had not been added to the pledge.)



Due to the Fourth of July falling on a weekend, Communion will be observed on Sunday, July 12th. If you are watching the service from home, you may want to prepare your elements for communion before the service begins.



I so appreciate your generosity. We can (will) all get through this crisis with faith, prayer and in Jesus name...Amen

Bless all of you,
Mary Arnold

God Bless you!

Thank you for the April MDO check, so nice of you. I am so ready to get back to my little ones.

Thanks again,
Donna Walker

Thank you for exhibiting God's love to me by paying my monthly salary I get from working at Mother's Day Out during this pandemic. Words cannot tell you what it has meant to me.

Our Lord's rich blessing will be on your church.

Cheryl Suiter



Sunday July 12th is Food Sack Sunday. We are still taking donations of non-perishable food items for N.E.R.A. If you would like to make a monetary donation, that can be made through the church or direct to NERA. Checks given to the church must include the notation "Donation for N.E.R.A."



Choral leaders sound the alarm about the fate of choirs after COVID-19

With coronavirus lockdown putting a ban on large gatherings, the joy of singing in a choir is being forgotten. We must not let our great tradition die, say choral leaders Bob Chilcott and John Rutter.

"Singing in a choir is not only about communality, social cohesion and harmony; for many it is an essential source of emotional wellbeing and positive mental health.

"It is a powerful expression of our culture and humanity, and it cannot be allowed to fade away."

Since coronavirus restrictions were lifted in June, members of the public can now visit any type of shop and restaurant, and engage in outdoor attractions, from drive-in cinemas to zoos and safari parks. We need the church government and American Choral Director's Association to show us how we can restart singing together on an equal footing with opening theme parks, shopping and kicking a football around.

It's impossible to know the exact number of choirs in the US, much less the world. Many

Music Notes

by Joycelynn Davidson

churches have choirs, most high schools and colleges have choirs, there are professional choirs who sing with orchestras and opera companies and there are community choirs all across the country who sing just because they love it. All of these singers are mourning the loss of singing together.

Schools and churches alike are scrambling to find a way for music to stay alive in our education and worship. Zoom has filled a gap, but it doesn't replace actually singing together. And online worship will never be the same as worshiping together in community.

The problem with traditional online worship is the fact that the music **never** seems to sound as good as it does live. The very nature of classical/sacred music coming from a pipe organ, grand piano, classically trained singer or instrumentalist is... they were never designed to be amplified or manipulated by a microphone! And when someone sticks a mic in front of them, one immediately loses the richness and fullness of that instrument, and the accompanying reverberations of the room. And much of the subtleties of tone and musicianship are now controlled by the person at the sound board. Larry has done an outstanding job of getting our worship out to you at home and deserves a huge THANKS!

The Bishop of London, Sarah Mullally, has urged their govern-

ment to be "alert to the consequences of our choir's continued silence" and "proactive in ensuring music-making can return to our churches", adding that we need to "safeguard our choral tradition."

The revised guidance on singing from the CDC now states only that faith-based organizations should: "Promote social distancing at services and other gatherings, ensuring that clergy, staff, choir, volunteers and attendees at the services follow social distancing, as circumstances and faith traditions allow, to lessen their risk." But our guidelines from the UM church have not changed.

Until we are cleared through the UMC or medical research leading to a vaccine, singing will continue to be considered a leading cause of spreading COVID-19. You have seen me singing from the Lectern without a mask and may wonder about that. I have had the virus and have tested positive for antibodies in my system. So for now, still keeping a 20' distance in mind, I am singing. I hope in the near future, you will be singing with me. Until then, keep a song in your heart and know that I will continue to search for ways to include music in our worship services.



(*Continued from Page 2)

On June 7th we returned to public worship in our sanctuary following guidelines of cleaning, adequate spacing and encouraging a face-mask. Many faithful are still exercising extreme caution and continuing to worship via Facebook or Sparklight channel 68 each week and we encourage you to be safe, especially those with underlying health conditions. This two-month hiatus from public worship has caused us to experience a tight cash flow at our church. Many wonderful projects and ministry plans were suddenly put on hold. It is a fact that this pandemic will be the death of many congregations in Oklahoma, but not First Church! To overcome this obstacle, each of us will have to make a dedicated effort. The primary thing must be to renew our commitment to God through Jesus Christ. I believe God is calling First Church to be a beacon of hope in Ponca City and for that to happen each must do their part. Are you ready to join me in bringing God's kingdom to life in the heart of our community? Are you ready to recapture the momentum and lay claim to the great calling God has placed on our church family? I pray you are like me in believing the best is yet to come.

Thank you for a great first year, warts and all! Now let's get to work!

Seth and Pastor Don

PRAYER CORNER

Almighty God,

We come to honor you this day. We come to acknowledge that you are the only one who can rightly lead and guide our country. Lord, we lift up prayer for our country. We ask

that you would bless our country with your wisdom, your love, and your compassion. May we be a people who are pursuing you and your plans for us - individually and corporately.

Lord, we lift up prayer for our leaders. Lord, we ask for blessings on our leaders. May these servants who are in positions of authority take that responsibility seriously and do their very best each day. May they realize their need for you and for your direction. May they hear your voice as they make their decisions, and may they follow your guidance. May they have a passion for people, for truth, and for righteousness.

Lord, we lift up prayer for our troops. Lord, we ask for blessings on our service men and women. We ask protection for all our men and women in uniform both here and around the world. We are grateful for their service and their dedication to keeping our nation safe. We pray that you would keep them safe.

We thank you for our blessings of life and liberty. May our country continually show love and honor to you. May our dedication to you cause us to reach out to all the other nations and people groups with a strong desire for peace and harmony to be displayed whenever possible.

We ask all these things in the name of your beloved son, Jesus Christ. Amen

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**The Finance Committee
will meet Wednesday July
8th at noon.
Lunch will not be served**

Hi Friends!

We have a new mailing address for FUMC: PO Box 71, Ponca City, OK 74602. So if you are mailing your donations to the church be sure to use the new mailing address.

We gave several other options as well:

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.

ONLINE: On our website, 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 AUTO-DRAFT: 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.

If you need help with any of these, please do not hesitate to call me at (580) 763-2196.

Cynthia



UMW NEWS

One of the Missions the local UMW donated to this year was the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference. Following is a very brief history of the Conference.

Under the Indian Removal Act, commonly known as "The Trail of Tears" whole tribes were moved from the Eastern and Southeastern states to Indian Territory. Many among these tribes were converted to Christianity through the Methodist church. They were able to rebuild their

communities and with the help of missionaries organize congregations and churches in what came to be known as Oklahoma.

In what was then the Indian Mission Conference, Methodists offered a Christian ministry sensitive to the languages and cultures of more than 30 tribes. The 1972 General Conference acknowledged the importance of the Indian Mission Conference and designated it the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference (OIMC) with "the same rights and powers as an annual conference."

Today the OIMC continues to minister to the needs of Indian people. The present membership is approximately 6,000 with 84 churches, several of these congregations being over 100 years old, five fellowships and a Church & Community center. Oklahoma is home to the majority of our con-

gregations; however we have one church in Dallas, Texas; three churches and one fellowship in Kansas. Presently there are two districts, Northern and Southern, with the conference headquartered in Oklahoma City.

While OIMC is unique and composed of mostly Native Americans, the churches are open to all people. Ministry initiatives include: Children, Youth and Adult ministries; Local Church Revitalization; Conference and District wide training events; Continuing Education Events for pastors; UM Women and UM Men; building and church extension. Efforts are also being made to preserve Native languages, traditions and songs.

(copied from the <http://www.umc-oimc.org/> website)

Work Day

July 8, a Wednesday, at 4:30 pm in the church kitchen, we will be making casseroles to freeze and then pass out to people in our church and community just to say "we care". If you want to be part of this mission and are willing to wear a mask and gloves while we cook, we would love to have you join us. If you are interested please call, text or email Becky Hightower at bjhigh5@gmail.com or 580-716-1625 so we can schedule you in. The spaces will be limited so we can keep everyone apart while we are together. We will also need people at a later date to help distribute the food that is made. Hope you can plan to join us.

A BRIGHT IDEA

Several months ago someone suggested I include a recipe each month in the Flame. If you have a recipe you would like to contribute, just send it to me by email. This month I'm putting in two of my favorite recipes which are just a little different.

Dianne

Potato Candy

1 small potato
Powered sugar
Peanut butter.
Boil the potato with skin on. Once it is done, peel the potato and mash it up. Start adding powdered sugar until it reaches a consistency that is easily rolled. Roll the potato mixture into a rectangle. Smear the peanut butter over the potato mixture and then roll up like a jelly roll. Chill, slice and eat.

Homemade Sherbet

5 Cans of soda pop (any flavor)
1 Can Eagle Brand Milk
1 Cup frozen or canned fruit.
Freeze in a churn style freezer.

You can use your imagination, strawberry pop with frozen strawberries or orange pop with crushed pineapple, etc.

