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(cont'd from page 3)

Kid's M&Ms

We are excited about a new year with the children at **Kids' M&Ms**. Our first day will be Wednesday, September 16th at 3:30 pm.

If you are not familiar with this program, we offer music, missions, snacks, handbells, Bible stories, field trips, crafts and games. Transportation is provided from the different elementary schools with advance registration. **We need everyone to fill out a new registration card this year.**

This is all contingent on how we are effected by Covid 19 moving forward this fall.



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

CROCK POT ROAST

Arleen Jacobson

Sear a three pound chuck roast

Mix together:

1 envelope of dry Italian dressing mix

1 envelope of dry ranch dressing mix

1 envelope of dry brown gravy mix

2 cups of water

Add roast to crock pot and then pour the above mixture over it.

Cook on high for 4 hours or low for 8 hours.

I add carrots, small potatoes and onion to this, also. (you do not have to do this, it also goes good with mashed potatoes)

When done, pour the liquid into a pan and thicken. It makes a very flavorful gravy.



THE FLAME

Volume 50, Issue 1

August 2020



Sunday, September 13th.

On the street in front of the church

Games begin at 5:00 PM (gaga ball, horseshoes, volleyball, and inflatables)

A boxed dinner and bottled drinks will be provided at 5:30 PM.

Bring lawn chairs and friends. You are encouraged to

wear a mask and practice social distancing.

Hi Friends!

Don't forget, we have a new mailing address for FUMC: PO Box 71, Ponca City, OK 74602. If you are mailing your donations to the church be sure to use the new mailing address.

We have 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 prompting you with the next steps

ONLINE: On our website, www.fumcpc.org, go to the tab named "Donate" 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.

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





Pastor Don Griffin

I have been serving an appointment in either Texas or Oklahoma for 37 years. The ordained ministry has been my life's work and I love it. Though it goes without saying, the last 5 months have been the most unsettled and difficult to navigate in my ministry. The natural rhythms of the church calendar and regular weekly activities have been replaced with uncertainty and confusion. I would imagine you can relate to that statement, too. The world was seemingly put on hold in late March and we are still struggling to find our way. I cannot help but think about David's line "though I walk through the dark valley, you are with me." For me, this has been a dark valley.

Our church is like every other church in the Annual Conference trying to find our way in this difficult time. We recently asked people to complete surveys about gradually adding activities back to our church's regular schedule. What was amazing was how evenly split they were. About half the respondents were for adding more activities and about half were not in favor of it. As our Church (Administrative) Council discussed the issue in our August 12th gathering, we came up

with a plan for the gradual expansion of the ministries of our church. We will have to be very flexible and react to changing situations as they occur.

One major point that we wish to express to everyone is safety. If you are uncomfortable about returning to worship or participating in other activities, we want you to continue to worship at home by joining us on Facebook or Channel 68. Because there are those who cannot come right now, we are expanding our online offerings beginning after Labor Day. We will be offering an online Bible Discussion Group. More details will follow, but this will provide some spiritual food for those who are uncomfortable returning or those who health prevents it. I will also begin posting devotionals a few days a week on our Facebook page in early September.

Sunday School classes, women's and men's in-person Bible studies, and other small group activities will begin when participants are comfortable returning. There will be several requirements. People must wear a mask when within 6 feet of each other and appropriate spacing must be maintained in each setting. We will resume our M & M's on September 16th. The kids will be provided a clean neck gator to cover their mouths and noses and we will follow strict guidelines to make the setting as safe as possible. Each week the gators will be taken and laundered so the children will always have a safe and clean protective cover. The Church Council agrees that the fellowship meal and adult gathering in the evening should not resume at this time. We will monitor the conditions in our area and revisit this decision in the future.

On the afternoon of Sunday, September 13th, we will have our an-

nual All Church Roundup. We will have open air bouncy houses for the children and youth. All church members and visitors are welcome. Bring your lawn chairs. We will practice social distancing and encourage masks. There will be boxed KFC chicken strip lunches provided for those attending. We wanted to limit the handling of food, so this was an effective way to offer a "picnic" type meal. It will be a blast.

In this dark and uncertain time, the church must be resilient and flexible. There are some things that will feel uncomfortable, but the dark valley brings those uncertain feelings. Remember, God is with us. Like the comfort offered David, "His rod and his staff" should give us great assurance that we will get through this moment in time.

Pastoral Care in the time of Covid

In March, the Bishop and Cabinet of the Oklahoma Conference requested that all appointed pastors to be very vigilant concerning Pastoral Care. We were instructed to do our ministry by phone or other appropriate ways (text, facetime) to connect without exposing others to us or allowing ourselves to be exposed. We are still being encouraged to use protocols to ensure our wellbeing and that of our congregation. If you would like for me to visit you, please extend an invitation by phone and we will make a plan to get together. I would ask that you be symptom free and I will make sure of the same. An outside setting is preferred (porch, back yard) and I will wear my mask for your safety. This is not my preferred way to do ministry, but it is what we have at this moment in time.

Pastor Don



SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
		1 8:45 Intercessory Prayer 2:00 Sew-In	2	3 UMW 1:30 Deborah 7:00 Miriam	4	5
6 9:00 Youth Breakfast with the Bible 10:00 Worship Communion Food Sack Sunday	7 OFFICE CLOSED 	8 8:45 Intercessory Prayer 2:00 Sew-In 6:00 Board of Trustees	6 7:00 Chancel Choir	10	11	12
13 9:00 Youth Breakfast with the Bible 10:00 Worship 11:00 UMW Board Meeting Church Roundup 5:00 Games 5:30 Dinner	14 2:00 Handbell Ensemble	15 8:45 Intercessory Prayer 2:00 Sew-In 6:30 Novels at Night	16 3:30 Kids' M&Ms 7:00 Chancel Choir	17 7:30 Stephen Ministry	18	19
20 9:00 Youth Breakfast with the Bible 10:00 Worship	21 2:00 Handbell Ensemble	22 8:45 Intercessory Prayer 2:00 Sew-In	23 3:30 Kids' M&Ms 7:00 Chancel Choir	24	25	26
27 9:00 Youth Breakfast with the Bible 10:00 Worship	28 2:00 Handbell Ensemble	29 8:45 Intercessory Prayer 2:00 Sew-In	30 3:30 Kids' M&Ms 7:00 Chancel Choir			

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Reagan Alexander	09/01	Sharon Millemon	09/21	Todd Harbeson	09/27
Edwina Wynn	09/07	Dianne Clark	09/22	Linda Smith	09/28
Sarah Davidson Trehar	09/12	Grace Davis	09/22	William Slater	09/30
David Parks	09/12	Krista Lawler	09/22	Connie Sheffield	09/30
Will Harbeson	09/15	Connor McQueen	09/22		
David Swanson	09/16	Linda Heitz	09/23		
Ethan Fields	09/17	Emma Hollingsworth	09/23		
Joe Locker	09/18	Mary Howell	09/23		
Wanda Westmoreland	09/18	Riley McQueen	09/25		





PRAYER CORNER

Abba, Father, the trees are ablaze with your glory.

The seasons change, but you never do. You are always beautiful, in the green and freshness of spring as in the golds and reds and chills of autumn. Make me like you. Let my life reflect your beauty, season after season, as the calendar of my life turns and turns and turns.

The trees are letting go of this year's foliage. Help me let go of both blessings and burdens, and surrender them both to your loving care.

Fallen leaves pattern the ground with variety. So design my own fallings and failings into whatever design will please you most. In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen.



Dear Methodist Women, Thank you very much for your generous loving kindness. You went to a lot of work to bless me, and bless me you did. The other day Suzi delivered two frozen dinners from you to me. Since my appetite is small, that is about 8 meals. I already ate all of one of them. It was delicious! Now I have the other one to look forward to when I'm ready for another treat. Your caring and giving warm my heart. I appreciate all of you.

God Bless you,
DeEtte



NOVELS AT NIGHT

Hello Readers,

I am really missing our group discussions. I think we should be able to get together in September. We can start with a book recommended by one of our members; *Running with Sherman: The Donkey with the Heart of a Hero* by Christopher McDougall. When Chris McDougall agreed to take in a donkey from an animal hoarder, he thought it would be no harder than the rest of the adjustments he and his family had made after moving from Philadelphia to the heart of Pennsylvania Amish country. Sherman was in such bad shape he could barely move, and his hair was coming out in clumps. Chris decided to undertake a radical rehabilitation program designed not only to heal Sherman's body but to heal his mind as well. An entire community comes together to help save Sherman and, along the way, Chris shows us the joy of a life with animals.

We missed an animal book last year, so I am glad we found one. Something different from the news we have today.

Let's meet September 15, in keeping with the third Tuesday, at 6:30. Bring your book selections so we can schedule for the year. I am so excited to see you and, hopefully, some new faces!



INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Listen to that small voice you have been hearing in your private devotions - Go where two or three have gathered together...

Tuesday mornings at 8:45 AM in Parker Chapel. This is a vital ministry. Join 6 or 7 others to Praise God and petition Him for others beside yourself. This is "*One of the Days the Lord has made*." Let us rejoice and be glad in it" !



Thank you, First United Methodist Church. We appreciate your donation during these trying times and aiding in the fight to end hunger. During the Covid - 19 pandemic we have continued to remain open. Your help has been critical and is truly appreciated. We are helping over 1000 people every month, providing two weeks of groceries. The number of people in need of assistance continues to rise. The staff here at NERA hope to give people a hand up and not just a hand out. As long as possible, we will be here serving those in need. Remember this, we cannot continue to serve others without your help. Sincerely, Tom Short and staff of the New Emergency Resource Agency.



Music Notes

by Joycelynn Davidson

are supposed to be building a bridge to reach out to the other people, not a wall to keep them out.

Too often, even within our church, we tend to build walls that keep others out rather than bridges that help them to come in. Sometimes the walls are built over misunderstandings of an individual or a group of individuals. One of the hardest things for us to do is to try to rectify a misunderstanding from our side. Maybe we were even right in our thinking but the other person didn't understand it that way. It's our responsibility, Jesus says, to still try to make things right. It may take several of us working on the problem together to be able to rectify the problem. Sometimes the other party or group, refuses to hear us out. Then we have to let them go. We cannot force someone to understand, but we must always be ready to try to work with each other in the most Christian and caring way possible.

During this time of pandemic, we are being challenged as to how we can re-open our doors, to invite people back to worship, Sunday School, children's pro-

record for worship. Reserve your spot.

Carillon Bells will be scaled down to a handbell ensemble this fall. We have music for six ringers and had our first re-

grams, youth activities, and Bible studies...to build bridges from the outside in. It is still recommended that our groups remain small, our space be well ventilated, we keep social distance and wear face masks. That's a lot of walls we need to work around.

I have been encouraging my choir members, and take this time to encourage the whole congregation, to take notice of who you haven't seen or heard from lately. Reach out with a card or call. Some will even love to see you if you can stop by for a visit. We are all ministers and need to take care of each other.

Prayer

Loving Lord, help us to share your love with all those who come into our presence. Help us to be an example within our church and community, that they may see the love of Christ in our care that we share. Amen.



Sing: *Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love, show us how to serve, the neighbors we have from you.*

hearsal August 17th. It is challenging to breathe and count with a mask on, but we had a good time. I'm looking forward to ringing for worship in the near future.

(Cont'd. on page 8)

To the Congregation:

This is from *Devotions for Choirs* by Genevieve and Herman DeHoog. It is really speaking to me and I wanted to share it with you.

James Moore in his book *Yes Lord, I Have Sinned*, tells of a group of people in a play called *Construction* who find themselves in a place they can't identify and don't know why they are there. One of them notices a pile of building materials but no directions. They all begin to argue over what it is they are supposed to build with these materials. Just then one of them sees another group of people coming toward them in the distance. They begin to wonder whether they are safe or not. They decide to build a wall around themselves to protect themselves. As they are building, a person comes up to them carrying a piece of paper. He stops them from their work and tells them they are building it all wrong. They

Chancel Choir:

A few of us met in the Welcome Center August 19th to sing and fellowship. We made plans to meet short term to work on a couple songs to

record for worship. Reserve your spot. **Carillon Bells** will be scaled down to a handbell ensemble this fall. We have music for six ringers and had our first re-



Happy September! With school starting we hope you have a healthy and a wonderful school year. We had so much fun this past month with a cookout and creek time at Heather's house. We swam, fished and enjoyed each other's company. We started *Breakfast with the Bible* on Sunday mornings at 9:30 AM, and we hope to see you all there. Please make sure you are a part of our Remind group to keep updated on all things we are planning.

Heather and Lindsey



We would like to take a minute to celebrate a few of our youth who worked so hard during the time when schools were closed. Many sent us pictures of the things they continued to do. It was such a great way to keep up the positivity and help around the house, do any chores, spend time with family and keeping up with schoolwork even though it was virtual. "Great job" to the following and you have a Sonic Gift Card headed your way.

- Alyssa Cannon
- Makayla Gray
- Seth Griffin
- Oakley Hunt
- Raylynn Kubik
- Addison Kyler
- Haylee Kyler
- Taylor Otto
- Colten Seidel
- Jose Wheeler
- Christopher Wheeler



DAYS FOR GIRLS

Days for Girls' organization was founded in 2008 by environmental educator Celeste Mergens. Back in the U.S. after working at an orphanage in Kenya, she realized she'd never asked what products the girls used when they had their periods and was stunned to hear the answer: Nothing. They wait in their rooms." She soon realized that girls around the world were missing up to a week of school each month and eventually dropping out, and that women were not able to feed their families because they were missing work, all because of a lack of feminine hygiene products. "Having a basic biological function becomes a devastating handicap," says Celeste. Whenever a family has to choose between buying food or buying feminine hygiene products, food always wins.

Celeste was scheduled to return to the orphanage and she and a group of volunteers started stitching. "Some sewed until their fingertips bled," says Celeste, but in three weeks they'd stitched reusable pads for all 500 girls. Each girl now receives a kit containing a colorful cloth drawstring bag that contains a pair of panties, two moisture barrier shields, eight tri-fold pads, two zippered plastic bags, a washcloth, soap, and an instruction sheet. The kits are distributed through organizations like the Peace Corps, Rotary, and educational and church groups. They've been distributed on six continents, in more than 60 countries, including in the United States (the New

Orleans school district contacted DFG for kits last year). Celeste notes that often these kits are the only thing a girl owns and that like girls everywhere, they appreciate bright, pretty fabrics. It's easy to imagine the smiles these beautiful fabrics will bring to girls' faces. She never imagined that something so simple could provide dignity and help break the cycle of poverty for girls and women worldwide. "We all deserve to have what we need for our basic biological functions, and if we don't it affects how we feel about ourselves," she says.



SEW-IN

On Tuesday afternoons in September, anyone interested in helping sew components of Days For Girls Kits is welcome to come to the Fellowship Hall to sew. If you would like to help sew kits please join us from 2 pm - 5 pm. Come when you can and stay as long as you can. If you have a serger or sewing machine you can bring that would be helpful but not necessary. You might also bring scissors, rotary cutters, rulers and cutting mats. We have jobs for everyone, even if you feel you aren't a seamstress. Other materials that are needed if you have some to share would be: 100% cotton quilting type fabric that is at least 11"x 28", (bright patterned materials are requested but cannot have animals on it or monk yellow), new washcloths, women's panties size 5 or 6 in bright colors, safety pins, Ziploc gallon sized freezer bags. (Ziploc brand is requested).

If you cannot come but have materials that can be used please bring them to the church any time. If at all possible, the material should be washed and dried before you bring it. Do not use dryer sheets when drying the fabric.



UMW GROUPS RESUME

The Miriam Group and the Deborah Group will meet the first Thursday in September. The Deborah Group meets at 1:00 in the Fellowship Hall. The Miriam Group will meet at 5:30 at the Susan Blake/Sally Tubbs lake cabin #6 on the west side of Lake Ponca. Both groups would love to have anyone who would like to be part of a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

