

ADVOCATE

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September 2020

RALLY DAY 2020 **September 13**

Rally Day Signs

A pandemic may be going on, but that doesn't mean we can't rally. In fact, we are asking you to help us rally the church! This year, our theme for Rally Day is "Hope." We are asking you all to send a photo of yourselves holding a sign that says what you hope for. Below is a sample:



You can make your sign as simple or as ornate as you like, and you can take the photo any place you choose. If you need someone to take the photo, please call me, and I'll arrange for a photographer to take that photo. You can send your photo to pastormark@fpcw.us. Our creative crew will combine the photos into a montage that will be posted on our website on Rally Day.

Rally Day Picnic

Sunday, September 13, 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

We are not having a full-fledged Rally Day this year, but we are celebrating the beginning of fall with a Rally-Day-inspired picnic. Like our other picnics this past summer, we will meet out on the church lawn, and we all will bring our own picnic items, including chairs and blankets. The church will provide the lawn and access to the restrooms. Masks and social distancing will be required. If the weather doesn't cooperate on the 13th, we'll postpone the picnic until September 20.

Rally Day Bibles

One of the traditions of our church is to hand out new Bibles to our three-year-olds and fourth graders on Rally Day. This year, we will announce the names of children who will receive Bibles during our on-line worship that day and deliver the Bibles to their homes later that week.



First Presbyterian Worship Update

Because of the high rates of infection in Franklin County, the Session voted not to hold in-person worship through at least the end of October. The Session considered several factors in its decision, including these:

- The current rate of infections in Franklin County is still unacceptably high;
- The results of our member survey indicate that most of our members are cautious about returning to in-person worship;
- The advice from the Presbytery, including its legal counsel, urges churches to wait to resume in-person worship until the infection rates go down;
- The Session also felt that it would be good to wait and evaluate the impact the reopening of the Ohio State University and other local colleges and the reopening of Westerville City Schools on the infection rates in the county.

Overall, the Session felt that our church needed to be cautious about resuming in-person worship, thus the decision to wait. The Session will continue to prepare for resuming in-person worship and will consider the issue again at its October meeting. In the meantime, we will work to improve our worship experiences for all our members.

A Reminder: We are continuing to livestream our worship service on our Facebook page at 10:15 a.m. every Sunday. An audio recording of the worship service is placed on our website shortly thereafter, and Rev. Gauen's sermon is sent in the daily emails on the following Tuesday. Please join us!

Join the Zoom Coffee Hour



We will continue our Zoom Coffee Hour for the month of September.

Each Sunday morning, Diana Westfall will post a link on Facebook for a coffee hour gathering that will start right after the worship service ends. Bring your own cup of coffee and your own cookies and spend 5 minutes or 30 minutes conversing with your fellow worshipers on Sunday morning.

Sanctuary Flowers

Unfortunately, many are not able to see and enjoy the flowers while the worship service is being livestreamed. These loving gifts grace the sanctuary during the worship service and then are delivered to a church member as we continue to try to keep all of us feeling connected. Donors can also choose to have the flowers delivered to themselves. Please consider making a donation to support this caring aspect of our church life. Call Olivia at the church office to place an order. The cost is \$33.00. Questions? Contact Mary Lee Jones.



August 9 Church Picnic

On Sunday, August 9, many of us were happy to gather for a socially distanced picnic on the church lawn. After the picnic was delayed from August 2 due to rainy weather, many of us looked forward to this opportunity to share news and catch up with our church friends. We were delighted to have Todd and Kim Wise entertain us with sing-a-longs, after which Holly Harvey and Rev. Gauen described the kinds of birds you might see at church. (You had to be there.)



Event Update

Still on hold:

Reaching out to Refugees
Backpack Bounty
Manna Café
Vegetarian Dining Group
Ladies' Night Out



Dine In with Nine: Friday, September 11

On the second Friday of the past three months, we have had a great time, eating at home but still gathering together, thanks to Zoom.

On Friday, September 11, we will do the same. On that day, we will each order from our favorite restaurant and pick up our meal or have it delivered at home (or cook at home). Then we will have a Zoom gathering to discuss our choices and catch up with our church friends.

Zooming is easy – at 7:00 pm on September 11, click on the email link that we will send you. Then click on “Open Zoom.” It helps if you have a camera on your computer, but you do not need to have one. You can also attend a Zoom meeting using a smart phone. Contact Jim Hines or Bob Place to get help or to say you’re in!



August Golf Outing



Several members of our church enjoyed a wonderful time in the sunshine at our annual Golf Outing at the Big Walnut Golf Course. The event was organized by Lane Hough and the Membership, Evangelism, and Events Committee.

Pike and Perry County Donations

Dear Friends,

We trust this finds all of you doing well. It's certainly a very strange time for all of us.

Speaking of time..... It is time to start collecting scarves, hats, gloves, mittens, sox, coats, sweaters, boots, and any and all winter-type items for our friends in Pike and Perry Counties. Of course, food is always welcome! The week of Nov. 1st will be our date for delivery, but as always, any time is great for donations!



Many, many, many thanks from all of the recipients! And of course, our thanks also. Just bring your donations to the church or drop them off at our home.

John and Sharon Davis

Youth Activities

Kids' Zoom Sunday School **Sunday evenings, 6 pm**

We will be starting a Zoom Sunday school on Sunday evenings at 6pm in September. We are unsure of official dates, so please make sure to keep an eye on the weekly e-mails. We look forward to seeing the kids and enjoying some quality time online learning about God.



Activities for Kids

Understanding faith begins at home. However, we know that not all families have faith traditions or practices that they follow, so the Christian Education Committee will be supplying resources and activities in lieu of Discovery Zone this semester. The kids can do these simple and fun things alone or with parental supervision. We will offer supplies that will be delivered to your home at the beginning of each month. You can expect your first bag at the beginning of September. We will knock or ring the doorbell so the bag does not sit on your porch for too long. We will wave to anyone who answers the door from a distance. Please enjoy these activities at your leisure.

Ladies Night on Zoom

Tuesday, September 15, 7 pm, or Tuesday, September 29, 7 pm



Are you tired of being at home with no girlfriends to talk to? Are ready for a night away from the kids? I think we could all use a get-together SOON! Unfortunately, COVID-19 has kept us apart, but we are not going to let that stop us. Heather Hicks will be hosting a Zoom Ladies Night. Bring your favorite beverage and prepare to have some fun as we fellowship together and possibly play some virtual games.

Heather can host only 12 ladies at a time, so we will be splitting it up. Please choose a night to join us:

Tuesday, September 15, at 7pm or Tuesday, September 29, at 7pm

Please RSVP to Heather by September. We want to make sure we have enough in each group, or we will have to reschedule. Can't wait to see all your lovely ladies! Watch for Zoom instructions in the daily message.

Putting Plastic Lids to Work!

Please save your plastic lids and bottle caps, such as those on water bottles, laundry soap, and mayonnaise jars. Vicki Moon's granddaughters need them for a Girl Scout project. The lids will be made into sturdy benches!



Our Traveler Makes Friends

Leaving the sand and surf of central Florida, our furry traveler headed west and ended up in the Cornhusker state, where it met a “biker dude” named Sassy. Upon introducing itself to Sassy as a lamb from Ohio, the astute biker commented, “They must really have some strange critters in Ohio --- you look more like a llama.” Sassy was quick to suggest that since it didn’t know what it was and still didn’t have a proper name, perhaps the biker should show it the sights and sounds of Omaha and Bellevue.

With that, the duo set out on an excursion to Omaha’s world-class Henry Doorly Zoo. Then they visited Offutt Air Force Base, home of the United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM), one of the eleven [unified combatant commands](#) in the [United States Department of Defense](#). USSTRATCOM is responsible for strategic deterrence, global strike, and operating the Defense Department's [Global Information Grid](#). It also provides a host of capabilities to support the other combatant commands, including integrated missile defense; and global command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4ISR). This command exists to give national leadership a unified resource for greater understanding of specific threats around the world and the means to respond to those threats rapidly.



Having spent about two weeks in Nebraska, the “lamb” was escorted back to Westerville by its friend Sassy. There, the duo made another new friend, a bear named Joshua. Much to the “lamb’s” chagrin, Joshua confirmed that the “lamb” was indeed a llama. Still, Joshua decided to join the duo for more adventures. The important part of this message is that you never know who will befriend you if given a chance. Stay tuned for the upcoming travels of the three amigos. To suggest new adventures and a name for the lamb/llama, contact John McElhaney.



Offered by Janet Withers:

No Better Time to be Happy

We convince ourselves that life will be better after we get married, have a baby, then another. Then we are frustrated that the kids aren't old enough, and we'll be more content when they are. After that, we're frustrated that we have teenagers to deal with. We will certainly be happy when they are out of that stage. We tell ourselves that our life will be complete when our spouse gets his or her act together, when we get a nicer car, when we are able to go on a nice vacation, when we retire.

The truth is, there is no better time to be happy than right now. If not now, when? Your life will always be filled with challenges. It's best to admit this to yourself and decide to be happy anyway.

Alfred D. Souza said, "For a long time, it had seemed to me that life was about to begin—real life. But there was always some obstacle in the way, something to be gotten through first, some unfinished business, time still to be served, a debt to be paid. Then life would begin. At last, it dawned on me that these obstacles were my life. This perspective has helped me to see that **there is no way to happiness. Happiness is the way.**"

So, treasure every moment that you have. And treasure it more because you shared it with someone special. Special enough to spend your time with—and remember that time waits for no one! So stop waiting until you finish school, until you go back to school, until you lose ten pounds, until you gain ten pounds, until you have kids, until the kids leave the house, until you start work, until you retire, until you get married, until you get divorced, until Friday night, until Sunday morning, until you get a new car or home, until you are on welfare, until the first or fifteenth, until your ship comes in, until you've had a drink, until you've sobered up, until you die—to decide that there is no better time than right now to be happy.

Happiness is a journey, not a destination.

John Harder
Habitat Care-A-Vanner
Ontario, Canada



To brighten your day, courtesy of Olivia Hodorowski:

If you answer the phone with, "Hello, you're on the air!" ... most telemarketers will quickly hang up

When one door closes, and another door opens, you are probably in prison.

When I say, "the other day," I could be referring to any time between yesterday and fifteen years ago.

I've had my patience tested. I'm negative.

If you're sitting in public, and a stranger takes the seat next to you, just stare straight ahead and say, "Did you bring the money?"

Sixty might be the new forty, but 9:00 PM is the new midnight.

I finally got eight hours of sleep. It took me three days, but whatever!

When you do squats, are your knees supposed to sound like a goat chewing on an aluminum can stuffed with celery?

Don't bother walking a mile in my shoes; that would be boring. Spend thirty seconds in my head; that'll freak you right out.

The older I get, the earlier it gets late.

Adult Growth and Development

ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN			
Activity	When	Where	What
The Sunday Adult Class	Mondays 4:00-5:00 p.m.	Zoom Meetings -If interested contact Tom Jonard at tjonard@usa.net	The Sunday Adult Class, now meeting on Monday afternoons, is reading and discussing Richard Rohr's book <i>The Universal Christ</i> .
Shelter-in-place Bible Studies	Tuesdays, 9:30-10:30 am Wednesdays, 7:00-8:00 p.m.	Zoom Meetings -If interested email Pastor Gauen at pastormark@fpcw.us	We are continuing our study on the Book of Jeremiah. Jeremiah was a prophet during some of the most tumultuous times in the history of Israel, which makes his message particularly important today. Both sections will cover the same passage each week. (no classes the week of Sept. 13)
4th Monday Discussion Group	4 th Mondays, 7:30 – 9:00 pm	Zoom Meeting -If interested, email Pastor Gauen at pastormark@fpcw.us	This group meets monthly to discuss matters of faith and life. Our next gathering is Monday, Sept. 28.
Circle 4 Women	3 rd Thursdays, 11:00 am	Zoom Meeting -If interested, email Pastor Gauen at pastormark@fpcw.us or call Elaine Foley.	Our Presbyterian Women's group meets monthly for fellowship and Bible study. Led by Elaine Foley. Our next class will be on Thursday, Sept. 17.



Pastor's Page

*"But ask the animals, and they will teach you,
or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you;" - Job 12:7*

Dear Friends:

Awhile back, I saw a picture on the internet of two coyotes walking down the street in front of Wrigley Field in Chicago. Wrigley Field in the middle of urban Chicago. Stores, restaurants, and apartment buildings surround Wrigley Field. There are no woods, forests, fields, or even parks nearby. And yet, the two coyotes were there, probably hunting for pigeons and rodents. *(As an aside, the expert quoted in the accompanying article was an Ohio State University professor.)*



Coyotes are fascinating animals. They are quick and cunning, and moreover they are one animal that can adapt quickly to changes in their environment. Whereas most animals have suffered under the changes brought about by human activity, the coyote has flourished. Animals such as the bear, the cougar, and the wolf have almost disappeared because of humans, while coyotes have increased in numbers. Where many species have gone extinct in the last hundred years, the coyote has expanded its numbers and its range. The coyote is the poster child for flexibility and versatility in the animal kingdom.

This got me to thinking. Maybe we need to be a "Coyote Church." This pandemic has changed the environment for churches so significantly that they are having to change to survive. I like to think that we are a "Coyote Church," one that can and will adapt to this new environment and be successful in doing so. What will we need to do to make these adaptations? That is what we are trying to figure out. What will have to change? Much of what we consider normal for our church will have to change in one way or another. I think that the coyote might be a model for us—we will need to have the same sort of flexibility that the coyote has. We will need the ability to adjust our thinking and our actions to meet the challenges caused by the pandemic. If we can do that, we will be a church that not only survives the pandemic, but thrives in this new environment. Just like the coyote!

Yours in Christ,

Mark

Presbytery Activities this month: On September 15, I will moderate the first Zoom Presbytery meeting. Your prayers will be greatly appreciated.