



The Witness

First United Methodist Church, 1610 Prince St., Conway, AR, 72034

Volume LIII

September 2020

Number 9

In-Person Worship – The Latest Update

*From Dr. Michael Roberts,
Senior Pastor:*

FUMC Family,

Here is an update on in-person worship, with the major change being the number of services and the schedule. Some rationale and expressions of our hopes are below.

On Oct 18th, we will start with two in-person services, instead of three. Our worship schedule will be the Good News Celebration (GNC) at 9 a.m. in the Great Hall, Online Worship will continue at 9:30 a.m., and our Sanctuary Service will start at 11:15.

This change will help us with demands on time as we seek to provide inspiring worship in three different configurations, with a limited pool of volunteers. Please know that the long-term plan is to go back to three in-person services on Sunday morning, and to make these available online, as we continue to develop an active online campus of our church.



We believe this schedule will accommodate those who want to continue with online worship as well as those who want to attend in-person. It will also allow for persons to attend online Sunday School at home and worship

in-person, and for persons or groups to meet at the church during the 10 o'clock hour if so desired.

With the start of school, as well as advances in treatments, evidence showing the effectiveness of face coverings and physical distancing, and from a deep spiritual need, many are expressing a desire to return to in-person worship. Our goal is to honor this and to do so by creating a safe environment. To do this, these services will be 30 to 40 minutes in length, with physical distancing, and face coverings required. We will also follow strict cleaning procedures, using a new spray system, new medical-grade filters, multiple hand sanitizer stations, and more. With all of us working together, we can do this!

At least for the first two weeks, we will ask people to sign up primarily to help us to prepare. There is also a place to volunteer. Many are needed! Please know that this is not a reservation. You may come without signing up. The link to the signup form can be found on the

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World Communion Sunday Activities

Join us this Sunday, Oct. 4, as we celebrate World Communion Sunday!

We will conclude our series on Gospel Discipleship in our online worship at 9:30 a.m. with a reflection on Lukans, disciples who are sent to love people as far as the ends of the earth. Then, at 5:30 p.m. we invite people to come to the church parking lot for a shared communion service.

You can park your cars in the lot shared by the Sanctuary and the Great Hall, or line up in your cars around that lot if you want to drive through to receive communion. Pastors Michael and Michelle will broadcast on Facebook Live a short service that will include the communion liturgy and some reflections on the significance of World Communion.

You can either get out of your car and practice masked and safe physical distancing during the service, or you can stay in your car and watch on a wifi capable device as we stream. Once the blessing of the elements has concluded, you can either walk up to the circle in front of the offices -- again maintaining safe social distancing -- or you can receive under the awning through a drive-through option.

We will also have a place to collect canned meat for our Food Pantry, an offering driven by the service-minded hearts of our United Methodist Women. Again, we will nourish others' bodies while our souls are being fed. Join us as you are comfortable and able for this time when we can gather together and praise God as the Body of Christ.

#quaranscenes

The past few months have been filled with many challenges, but they have also contained joy. We have been facing disruption but we have also had all kinds of moments that we would not have had otherwise, moments of real blessing.

As we approach our new reality of having both in-person and online worship services, we are spending 30 days reflecting on the gifts we have

been given in the midst of this pandemic. Maybe you had more time with your family than you would have. Maybe you have learned a new skill. Maybe you have stopped and taken in the beauty that is God's creation. Maybe you are living your discipleship in new ways. Maybe you just feel blessed to take a breath.

Each day we would love to post a picture or short video that

shares those blessings.

Send your pictures or video and a short description to go with it to Colleen Holt at cholt@conwayfumc.org.

Watch our social media through Oct. 18 for our #Quaranscenes. Here are some examples of some entries that have been shared in the past couple of weeks.



From Bonnie Laycock: Steve and I have had LOTS of time during this pandemic to explore Arkansas and especially have loved "chasing" waterfalls and hiking! Arkansas is a beautiful state!



From Amy Strohm: We haven't worked on our yard in the past. This year motivated us to spruce up!

#lovegrowshere

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SUSAN MULHEARN





Make a 1610 Investment Story Today!

From Zach Schrick,
Director of Youth Ministries:

We know that things look a little bit different this year; we also know that last year's money could not all have been utilized due to the cancellation of trips. We are asking this year if you are already investing monthly with us that you consider continuing that investment. If you are not, then we ask that you consider investing in our C1Youth ministry here at 1610 Prince St. by investing \$16.10 per month for one year beginning Oct. 15 for a total of \$193.20.

We will use all the investments to send each youth to three conference events: Refuge, Veritas, and Assembly. Our own spring retreat, ReConnect, and

one summer mission trip for FREE!!

We are praying we reach the 250 investments that it will take to accomplish that goal each year.

It's not just an investment in the youth ministry, it's an investment in the stories created in the space created in our ministry for God to do what God does. This investment is for 8th - 12th graders only.

It's a commitment ABOVE AND BEYOND the pledges made to stewardship and Blessings to Blessings campaigns. The entire investment is **tax-deductible**. You can pay it all in one lump sum of \$193.20 for one, or \$386.40 for two, or \$579.60 for three.

All month-to-month payments

will begin **Oct. 15**. We can easily add to an existing automatic draft if it's set up through the church already. We can set up a new draft – find our draft authorization form on the church website youth page and attach a voided check to it.

If you have been investing by direct draft over this last year, then you are all set, unless you would like to make any changes. You can make monthly payments – make the check out to Conway FUMC youth, and in the memo line, write 1610 investment.

We hope that you will consider creating your own 1610 story along with us this year.

We Still Need Your Gospel Discipleship Results!

Our sermon series on Gospel Discipleship draws to a close on Sunday, October 4. We still need you to take the Gospel Discipleship Assessment to see how this church understands its discipleship. Currently Lukans, Mattheans, and Markans are in a three way tie! Sharing your type with us really matters so we can accurately share with others who this church understands itself to be!

Take the assessment at ministrymaters.com/gospeldiscipleship and send your results to Pastor Michelle at mmorris@conwayfumc.org. If you do not go online, call the church and we can mail you an assessment for you to complete at home. You are important to helping us know who we are!

Third-Grade Bible Sunday Set Oct. 11



Join us at 5:30 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 11, on Facebook when we stream the 3rd grade Bible Presentations. Check us out at www.facebook.com/conwayfirstumc as we present Bibles to this year's third-graders!

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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The Witness is published monthly by
First United Methodist Church
1610 Prince St., Conway, AR 72034.
Periodicals postage paid at Conway, AR
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
"The Witness," c/o Colleen Holt, editor;
First United Methodist Church,
1610 Prince St., Conway, AR 72034



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In Memory & In Honor

In memory of **Vernagene Moore-Kelley** by: Skeet & Mary Jane Morse, Martha Bumpers, Jean Hoyer

In memory of **Chuck Mulhearn** by: Wayne & Janet Gregory

In memory of **Rebecca Davis** by: Wayne & Janet Gregory, Martha Bumpers, Katherine Brooks

In memory of **Michael Grimes** by: Skeet & Mary Jane Morse, Mark & Rebecca McCuin, Chris & Kathy Cooper, Martha Bumpers

In memory of **Helen Weir** by: Martha Bumpers

In memory of **Bill Ledbetter** by: Martha Bumpers

In memory of **Rev. Dr. Guy Marvin Whitney Jr.** by: Martha Bumpers

In memory of **Anna Horlick** by: Martha Bumpers, Jean Hoyer

In memory of **Frances Clark** by: Martha Bumpers

In honor of **Kish Jones** by: Charles Pittman

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website at www.conwayfumc.org at **THIS LINK.**

It is like the surveys we have used the last few months, so it will be familiar to many.

I ask for your prayers as we seek to offer worship. We believe that this is at the heart of our calling from God. Without regular worship our lives become superficial and empty of the deeper connections we need to live faithfully and fruitfully. We want to fulfill this sacred calling safely and in a way that truly inspires - both online and in-person.

For one more comment. I can't promise that this all won't change again. We are trying to be responsive and to be in alignment with the Guidance from the Arkan-

sas Conference of the United Methodist Church and with the Department of Health. In keeping up with these changing guidelines, our Board of Trustees have recently updated our protocols. The protocols can be found on our website at www.conwayfumc.org at **THIS LINK**, or you may call the church to have a copy sent to you in the mail.

We are currently in Phase 2.5, with the possibility of moving forward or backwards. In this reality, I am thankful for the way this congregation is practicing the calling we have been given to bear one another in love with much patience, kindness and humility. May our continuing journey lead us all into ever-increasing faithfulness and fruitfulness. May Love Grow Here!!!

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH STAFF DIRECTORY

Senior Pastor — Michael Roberts
Associate Pastor — Michelle Morris
Dir., Music/Worship Ministries — Janet Gingerich
Director, Children's Ministries — Pam Lentz
Director, Lay Ministries — Kisha Bumpers
Director, Youth Ministries — Zach Schrick
Director, MidYouth Ministries — Sandra King
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Supervisor, Hospitality Ministries — Ed Spears
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Communications Assistant — Colleen Holt
Kitchen Coordinator — Kathleen Caruthers
Elementary Assistant — Catherine Gatlin
Nursery Assistant — Paula Bruner

Contact staff by email at:
first initial of first name plus last name
@conwayfumc.org

Example: mroberts@conwayfumc.org

Our Core Purpose:

To cultivate faithful and fruitful disciples
of Jesus Christ.

