

**A Prayer for More Face Time
(No, not that one)**

Whether in churches, schools, or family reunions, I think we could use more time to gather long and often enough to reconnect as community. Even before the devastation of COVID (BC – before COVID) we found our pace of life at times frantic but “normal” busy. With COVID and in the flux of it now, we find a frenzied (frantic with heightened anxiety) “ab-normal”: that is, we can gather but not without protocol forethought; we cannot greet one another with abandon or spontaneity. Oh, we can, of course, but one of us could pass along the COVID virus to another. Even in worship, we gather (vaccinated), we sing (with masks on), we “Pass the Peace of Christ” (but without an option to leave our chairs). Our “face time” has been and often still is mediated by the internet software called “FaceTime”. We are grateful for it, but it is not the same as being together where we can sense the measure of our breathing, the pace of our speech, music can be sung with a full breath, to notice the physical space and emotional tone of facial gestures, to offer a handshake of welcome or an embrace of comfort and support.

Our current languishing (long term angst) is about more than the impact of COVID, however. Daily we lament the signs that contribute to it as democracies around the world – including our own - live under the threat of authoritarianism (or, as in the case of Ukraine, suffer war because of it). Just as we were emerging from a four-year experience of it, COVID robbed us of the air we needed to inhale again. Now, we are living into another episode where even our institutions of faith are being weaponized in the name of empire. Add to that the constraint on our purchasing power due to economic inflation and the gaps in commercial supply chains that provide everything from computer chips to baby formula. We are being required to “tighten our belts” just as we need opportunities to loosen them to take a deep breath and enjoy a meal without the worry of indigestion!

But, we are not the first to face such times - if only we could be the last! These are the times that require connection in the ways that we can or in the ways that we will create; our imaginations and faith will find adaptive ways to be human. In fact, last week, we read together in worship a poetic reflection that likely was born from dismal times: Psalm 23. You know the words. And, if you can't recall them, find them, on the internet or in the family bible or the one you received in Sunday School or at your confirmation. Read the words very slowly. You may even find a video of some sheep with a shepherd on YouTube. In a pinch, watching your pet cat or dog can have nearly the same effect. Let the Spirit of God connect with what aches within and let it refresh you. Drink deeply from the water of the stream, eat fully at the Shepherd's table, even though you may be walking through the shadows of death, even though you may be surrounded by enemies. Let the experience refresh you. We are not alone. We can gather and know ourselves as God's children; we are the Church; we can be Good News for one another and a patch of hope in a quilt that is fraying at the edges.

In late spring and throughout the summer, there will be chances to gather, to enjoy some “face time” in the same space; to share what we notice about ourselves and the larger world, individually and collectively; to wonder at what may be coming together, what is being mended, even as the reality we have known or expected seems to be coming apart. Let us pray for the “tikkun olam”, which is a Hebrew phrase that means “the mending of the world.” I wonder just what God is weaving together through us these days?

Praying and Serving in Christ with You! – Pastor Brandon

MAY & JUNE CALENDAR

Office Visits with Pastor Brandon

Sundays after worship & Wednesdays 10 AM to 2 PM

Make your appointment now by contacting Pastor Brandon in person, by email, by text or phone call! Other times for a pastoral visit are available, so please call or email our church office or Pastor Brandon directly.

Pastor Takes A Break before Annual Conference

Each year, United Methodist pastors are appointed to serve in congregations from July 1 through June 30th. This year, I am completing year six with Davis UMC. How time flies! So, as the season of spring gives way to summer, I'll step away for the remaining two weeks of my vacation – May 23rd thru June 4th - before the next Annual Conference Session – **see announcement below**. Those available to assist you during those two weeks will be posted in the May 19th newsletter and in the May 22nd worship bulletin.

California-Nevada Annual Conference Session: “Let Love Be”

June 10th – 13th at the SAFE Credit Union Convention Center – downtown Sacramento, CA

Conference Special Offering: Tonga Earthquake Recovery

See this link for additional information: <https://www.cnumc.org/eventdetail/13134569>

As was the case last year, Carol Jewell, John Castelfranco, and Pastor Brandon will attend the annual conference to vote on matters of legislation that allow for the direction of the various ministries of our conference churches, to worship, and to ordain new clergy to serve with our congregations. Please be in prayer for the gathering and for the decisions that will be made there. They'll report back to us upon their return, but you may follow much of what happens by live stream! All the information and links you'll need to follow the proceedings can be found at the website link above.

Memorial Services

Saturday, May 21st @ 11:00 AM – Paul Castelfranco @ DUMC with reception to follow

Saturday, June 11th @ 1:00 PM – Don Zeek @ University Retirement Center

Saturday, June 18th @ 11:00 AM – Lois Misfeldt @ DUMC with reception to follow – *Rev. John Oda, officiant*

WORSHIP SERVICES

May 15 th @ 10:00 AM	Children's Choirs sing - Megan Houpt, director.
May 22 nd @ 10:00 AM	Guest Organist, <i>Sue Miller</i>
May 29 th @ 10:00 PM	Guest Preacher, Name
June 5 th @ 10:00 AM	Reconciling Sunday with Communion Speakers: Susie O'Bryant, Helen Roland, Patti Nelson, Janie Knudsen
June 12 th @ 10:00 AM	Worship
June 19 th @ 10:00 AM	Worship
June 26 th @ 10:00 AM	Worship
@ 11:15 AM	Pastor Brandon's 25 th Year of Ordained Ministry – Ice Cream Social

Pledge Giving – Please Check Your Records!

Our Finance Committee noticed a lower-than-expected level of giving in the first quarter of this year. We have heard from a few church members who have reported that they simply forgot to monitor their giving during the new year. As we live into the summer months, when many of us will take some time to relax and refresh, please check that your pledge giving for the ministry of the church is current. Steady as we go! And, thank you!