

THE MESSENGER

The newsletter of Leesburg United Methodist Church

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Message from Pastor Jim: Hope... Springs Eternal



**Rev. Jim
Wishmyer,
Pastor**

In his poem, “Essay on Man,” the English poet Alexander Pope wrote, “Hope springs eternal in the human breast.”

Hope. Springtime. Declining COVID cases. Increasing numbers of those vaccinated. Students back in school, at least partially.

It has been almost a year since we first went into lockdown. I remember making the decision that we were cancelling in-person worship, programs, and activities for the foreseeable future. I naively thought we might be back together soon. And March 14 will mark a year of COVID and the church. Everyone is fatigued – worn out by all of the recommended precautions and restrictions. Week after week, day after day of climbing cases, increasing hospitalizations, and the rising death toll took their toll on our spirits, our emotions, our psyches, our family relationships, and even our faith. Where do we turn

(Continued on page 7)

Sunday Worship

“Your word, O Lord, is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (Psalm 119:105)!

We’re continuing our 8-week journey of reading through the New Testament using the Immerse Bible: Messiah. Check out the W-Info, our “Church” app, or the “Immerse” blog to find out more and begin reading. It’s also not too late to join a Bible Book Club, or to simply read on your own with the Immerse Bible, or follow the weekly Trail Guide scripture references each day. We read, reflect, remember, and apply God’s Word that we may “grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior” (2 Peter 3.18).

3/7 “Invited to the Table” Scripture: Matthew 26:26-30, *Holy Communion*
6th week readings – Matthew

3/14 “Hungry Again” Scripture: John 6:25-35
7th week readings – Hebrews; James; John

3/21 “Hope in Tough Times” Scripture: Revelation 1:1-8; (21 & 22)
8th week readings – John; 1,2,3 John; Revelation

3/28 Palm Sunday “Holy & Whole” Scripture: Matthew 9:1-8

Palm Your Door - decorate your door with real or paper palms, take a picture and send to us or post in the church FB group.

4/1 Maundy Thursday – Holy Communion Service via Zoom, 7 pm

4/2 Good Friday – Tenebrae Service online, 7 pm

4/4	Easter Sunday:	SonRise worship	6:30 am
		Easter Worship	10 am Virtual worship
			11 am In-person worship

Flower the Cross - stop by church on Easter to add flowers to our outdoor cross. If others are present please respect social distancing and wait to place your flowers. Take a picture and share it with us!



**Sanctuary
Worship:**

**[Click Here
to Register](#)**



**The
Worship
Connection**



**Sunday
Livestream:**

**[Click Here
for Webpage](#)**

New Member Orientation

For those new to Leesburg UMC, those with questions about faith, and those wanting to learn more about Christ and the church – **come experience our virtual New Member Orientation on Sunday, March 21, 3:00 pm, via Zoom.**

Please contact the church office or Rev. Wishmyer to sign up!

Wednesday Worship During Lent

Our Lenten worship on Wednesdays follows the theme of Jesus' ministry of healing in the Gospel of Matthew. Our title: "Holy Vessels – Season of Recovery"

Our scripture foundation:

"We have this treasure in jars of clay..." 2 Corinthians 4:7

"He took our infirmities and bore our diseases" Matthew 8:17b

"Come to me, all who are weary and weighed down, and I will give you rest..."

Matthew 11:28

Each of us is created a precious and holy vessel of embodied love. We have been through a harrowing time since last Lent that has shattered our sense of wholeness—body, mind, and spirit—like a glass vessel fractured into pieces. In this Lenten "season of recovery" for our physical, communal, mental, intellectual, and environmental health, we will explore the healing narratives of Jesus that tell of divine solidarity with human suffering and remind us that we can begin a journey toward making something beautiful from that which is seemingly broken. Beach glass offers us a multifaceted symbol of this transformative process. www.worshipdesignstudio.com/vessels

(2/17 *Shattered* – Matthew 11:28-30)

(2/24 *Treasure* – Matt 8.1-4; 16-17)

3/3 *Safely Kept* – Matt 8.5-13

3/10 *Stories* – Matt 9.27-33

3/17 *Portraits of Life* – Matt 9.18-26

3/24 *Restoration* – Matt 8.18-27

Our anchor image for this series is sea glass (also known as beach glass). Actual authentic sea glass is hard to find so you'll probably be playing with recycled tumbled glass (which is awesome because it is recycled and it looks so much like sea glass). Every week there will be an opportunity to do something symbolic with this glass in worship but you can also imagine how the crafters in your congregation could do other things with it. This series comes with lots of ideas for engaging visually with the central theme!





**Rev Heather
Wray, Director
of Connect
Ministries**

Egg Cartons Needed

We need empty egg cartons.

Rev. Heather is collecting clean egg cartons (12-count/one-dozen size) for a Neighborhood Group activity in late March.

For contactless collection, we've placed a clear bin outside the AG (under the front windows) to collect your egg cartons. Cartons can be dropped off through March 18th. Both foam and cardboard types will work for this project.



Thanks for helping the Neighborhood Groups with this activity!

Homeless Services Center

In February, the Missions team collected men's sweatpants and boxer briefs for the Loudoun Homeless Services Center and we are happy to report that all the items on the Amazon Wish list have been purchased and will be delivered to the Center the first week of March. A big thank you to all of you who purchased these items!

LUMC will also be providing a pizza dinner for approximately 30 people at the Center on Friday, March 5. The dinner will be paid for from the generous donations our congregation has made to the pandemic relief fund.

Thank you all for your generosity in supporting the homeless community in Loudoun County. If you have any questions, please contact [Vicky Weaver](#) or [Natalie Hartmann](#).



Backpack Buddies

"The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor." Proverbs 22:

Backpack Buddies is continuing its mission to deliver 80 bags per week to Catoclin Elementary School for the children in need.

Now more than ever we know there is a great need in our community for assistance, and we are very grateful to the LUMC congregation for their monetary contributions and their help in packing the bags of food for the children. With your continued support we will be able to carry on the work of this mission and assist families in our community.

Food items to donate:

milk (shelf stable), juice boxes, fruit cups, applesauce cups,
Cheese crackers (not peanut butter), granola bars (without nuts), instant oatmeal,
cereal (individual size), Chef Boyardee single serving cups or cans,
Mac n' Cheese single serving cups, and Ramen Cup-O-Noodles.



BACKPACK BUDDIES

CLT Corner: Highlights from your Church Leadership Team

This Month: Finance

LUMC will not be submitting a request for the second Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) loan as we believe that although we will have our struggles this year, there are others more deserving.

Giving and expenses were less than projected which resulted in a loss of approximately \$3,000 for the month. (See table below.)

FINANCE SUMMARY					1/31/2021			
	Monthly				Annual			
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>\$ Delta</u>	<u>% Delta</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>\$ Delta</u>	<u>% Delta</u>
Operations								
Giving Income (Non Designated)	57,861.00	51,882.40	(5,978.60)	-10.3%	57,861.00	51,882.40	(5,978.60)	-10.3%
Rental Income	4,589.00	4,589.17	0.17		4,589.00	4,589.17	0.17	
Total Income	62,450.00	56,471.57	(5,978.43)		62,450.00	56,471.57	(5,978.43)	
Expenses	63,850.89	59,460.29	(4,390.60)	-6.9%	63,850.89	59,460.29	(4,390.60)	-6.9%
Increase/Decrease to Reserves	(1,400.89)	(2,988.72)			(1,400.89)	(2,988.72)		
Mortgage								
Designated Giving	6,969.00	9,580.00	2,611.00		6,969.00	9,580.00	2,611.00	
Payment	8,000.00	8,000.00			8,000.00	8,000.00	0.00	
Interest	0.00	0.00			0.00	0.00		
Principal	8,000.00	8,000.00			8,000.00	8,000.00		
Loan Balance (Est.)		99,145.22						
Estimated Pay off date		February 2022						

Giving in Response to Recent Natural Disasters

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) responds to natural or civil disasters of such magnitude that they overwhelm a community's ability to recover on its own. Through UMCOR, United Methodists extend loving care to people within the United States. When disaster strikes, it is local churches that provide the first response to their communities. This basic understanding—that disaster response is local—forms the foundation for UMCOR's U.S. disaster training and response.



To assist people in Texas and other states, you can send a check to the Virginia Conference (PO Box 5605, Glen Allen, VA 23058) earmarked Advance 901670. Or you may make an online donation at <https://advance.umcor.org/p-620-umcor-us-disaster-response-and-recovery.aspx>

Third Breakthrough Prayer

In the midst of this pandemic, with news of natural disasters affecting so many, and personal losses affecting us all, we've turned to the Immerse Messiah volume of the Bible for a new Breakthrough Prayer. On the inside of the front cover, the first page contains this prayer which our CLT approved as recommended by our Outreach/Evangelism Team:



Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, grant we pray
that we might be grounded and settled in your truth
by the coming of your Holy Spirit into our hearts.
What we do not know, reveal to us;
What is lacking within us, make complete;
That which we do know, confirm in us; and
Keep us blameless in your service,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

As with our previous Breakthrough Prayers, we commend this one to all in our church family for prayer at 7:14 in the morning, and/or 7:14 in the evening (see 2 Chronicles 7:14). Also, we encourage all of our ministry and administrative teams/committees, small groups, etc., to begin or end their meetings with this prayer.

From the Library

Walk with Jesus on his final day.
Sit beside him at the Last Supper
Pray with him in Gethsemane.
Follow him to the cross.
Desert him. Deny him.

The above heading is a perfect synopsis of Adam Hamilton's book, "24 Hours That Changed the World." Its chapter titles include The Last Supper, The Garden of Gethsemane, Condemned by the Righteous, Jesus, Barabbas, and Pilate, The Torture and Humiliation of the King, The Crucifixion, and Christ the Victor. Each is preceded by scripture relating to the chapter's message. The author states that the book's aim is to "help you better understand the events that occurred during the last twenty-four hours of Jesus' life, see more clearly the theological significance of Christ's suffering and death, and reflect upon the meaning of these events to your life. To do this we will look at the geographical and historical setting of the events, reflect theologically on Jesus' death, and look to see ourselves in the story."

Something that interested me was Hamilton's discussion of several theories of Atonement. This reminded me of a long-ago conversation with a retired pastor who related how she agonized and stumbled over explaining Atonement to a Methodist examining committee of pastors.

What a perfect way to progress through the Lenten season -- reading the unfolding of Christ's crucifixion on to the Resurrection -- and to do so through Adam Hamilton. Visit the church library and see this book on display for check-out.

Those who knew Sharan Hill will remember that she completed seminary and was a pastor. A few of her books are in our library on a shelf (in the corner behind the chair). We believe Sharon would love to share, should you find a book to take home.



Amber King, Library Team

Message from Pastor Jim

(Continued from page 1)

for hope when our current hope fades?

The director of an oncology clinic told of a terminally ill young man who came in for his usual treatment. A new doctor who was on duty said to him casually and cruelly, “You know, don’t you, that you won’t live out the year?”

As the young man left, he stopped by the director’s desk and wept. “That man took away my hope,” he blurted out.

“I guess he did,” replied the director. “Maybe it’s time to find a new one.”

Commenting on this incident, Lewis Smedes wrote, “Is there a hope when hope is taken away? Is there hope when the situation is hopeless? That question leads us to Christian hope, for in the Bible, hope is no longer a passion for the possible. It becomes a passion for the promise.” God’s promise. A promise not to remove our trials but rather, a promise to be with us, and to see us through our trials.

Many centuries ago, the prophet Isaiah recorded this assurance from God:

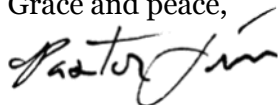
“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.” (Isaiah 43:1b-3a).

Yes, God does save. We think God comes to save us from – our trials, our troubles, our hardships. No, God promises not to save us from, but to save us through. And, to save us for. We do not walk alone. We do not live despairing of the future (or the present) because our plans and programs are gone... As we journey through these days of Winter’s finish and into Spring, trust the One who walks with you to bring rains of refreshing, increasing sunlight and warmth of God’s presence and love, new growth and ways of bearing witness to the saving grace of God. Our passion for the promise is that God will see us through tornados, ice storms, hurricanes, earthquakes, and even the disasters of our own doing; God will see us to the healing of our divisions, the hope for racial reconciliation, a vital and vibrant witness to God’s saving grace in Christ Jesus – Christ who endured the cross before rising again.

Hope springs eternal in our hearts – because we serve a risen Savior.

Grace and peace to you as we continue our Lenten journey. Keep praying for those suffering from COVID and other diseases; for our frontline healthcare workers; for researchers and manufacturers of vaccines; for all who struggle to live with hope.

Grace and peace,



Rev. Jim Wishmyer



Angela Becek,
Director of
Discipleship
Ministries

Bible Adventure: Following Jesus

Our next Bible Adventure to take over the AG will be *Following Jesus*. The space has been transformed into Jerusalem during Holy Week.



Come and experience Palm Sunday, the Last Supper, prayers in the garden, trial before Pilate, the cross, and the tomb. Be immersed in the story as you go through this adventure. A new escape room (optional) will challenge you as you build community with others who pass through.

[Click on this link to reserve your slot.](#)
Available March 7 through April 3!



Health and Safety Precautions

- Each family (household/bubble) will schedule a timed entry.
- One group at a time, with a minimum of one hour between groups to clear the air.
- All frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned between groups.
- Hand sanitizing stations are placed within, and sinks are available for hand washing.
- Head of Household will affirm adherence with the [Health Acknowledgment](#) poster on behalf of all household members upon entry.



Special Thanks to:

Rev. Heather Way

Brad Skillman

Chris, Kyle and Conner
Pepin

Heather Klein

Janice Webb

Sabrina Becek

Jarrell Jerry

Victoria Becek

Jarrell and Shon Jerry

Ken Eliezer

The Herrmann Family

Have you checked out our Bible Adventures?

They're not just for kids.

Walking with Jesus provided background and introductions to the four Gospels from the time of Jesus' baptism through the bulk of his ministry through video presentations.



Alicia, Baxter, Waverly and Kim share their Escape Room time. Way to Go!

Heather, Ian, Carsten and Nikki climbed the mountain as they learned about the Gospel according to Matthew.



Wyatt, Sawyer, Colt, Trevor and Heather made it to the end!

Ben and Charlie navigate across the Sea of Galilee.



Katrina working the lock on the Escape Room, while Matt looks on.



Kyle and Conner crossing the Sea of Galilee to get to the sea shore



2021 Georgia Bange Scholarship

**Have a graduating high school senior this spring?
Headed to college or vocational school in the fall?**

The Leesburg United Methodist Women award the Georgia Bange Scholarship each year to a graduating high school senior pursuing college or vocational school.



If you are a member of Leesburg UMC and graduating this spring, please see the scholarship guidelines and application posted in the United Methodist Women section of the Leesburg UMC website: leesburgumc.org/umwscholarship

Do You Have Our App? Have You Tried Text Giving?

We Now Have an App!

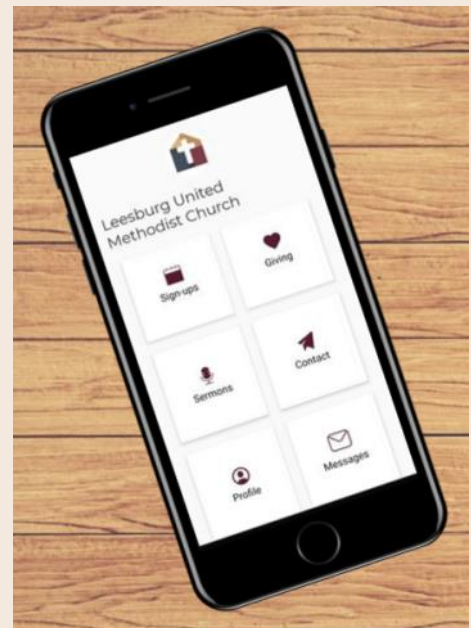
Our new app (available for Android and Apple devices) will help you find event sign-ups, listen to recent sermons, make it easy to give using credit card or direct debit from your bank account, and contact us for general questions or prayer requests.

Use the QR codes to get the Apps. Once it's installed on your device, search for "Leesburg UMC".

Text to Give

Don't want to bother with the app for your online giving? Just use "Text-to-Give"! Simply text GIVE to 703-440-7222. The first time you give this way, the system will return a link to set up your payment info.

After the one time set-up, you're just a simple text away from quickly honoring God through your giving and gratitude.



Apple:



Android:



UMW: Faith, Hope, and Love on Valentine's Day

When our LUMW annual Valentine's Day gift giving to Inova Loudoun Hospital was "postponed to a later time" due to the safety protocols of the hospital, we were surely disappointed. On hearing the news of no Inova Valentines Delivery, immediately ideas began bubbling over via email: How about surprising those special members of the LUMC congregation that are homebound? How about the staff of Heritage Hall?

And so, Valentine's bags and bouquets were created and delivered to those beloved congregation members before Valentine's Day. Mind you, not just sweet treats, but bookmarks, inspirational messages, some practical items, and more, packaged with love. Each Valentine's gift bag was accompanied by a beautiful fresh flower bouquet.



In addition, we honored the medical staff at Heritage Hall of Leesburg. Donations of individually-packaged chips, cookies, candy, fresh fruit, flavored coffee, apple cider, granola bars and other healthy snacks were abundant. All of this, with inspirational messages and a beautiful bouquet of flowers for the center nurses' desk counter, were packaged and delivered on Friday before Valentine's Day to Heritage Hall.



What a blessing it was for our LUMW to have the opportunity to share some positive thoughts, prayers and love, as well as treats, with so many on this past Valentine's Day!

Thanks to all the LUMW members who donated ideas, homemade items, funds for purchases, and purchased food and drinks, flowers, and, of course, delivered to our homebound friends.

You never know, 2021 may be the beginning of a new tradition of Valentine's Bags & Bouquets!

Betsy Creamer, LUMW President

**Leesburg United Methodist
Church**

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Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.
The people of The United Methodist Church®



**March 14th:
Daylight Saving Time
Resumes**



**March 21st:
In-Person Worship
Moves to 11 am**

Starting March 21, in-person worship in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings will begin at 11:00 am, half an hour ***earlier*** than the current start time. Mark your calendar!

