

# THE MESSENGER

The newsletter of Leesburg United Methodist Church

## September 2020

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### Message from Pastor Jim: This Is a Year Like No Other



**Rev. Jim  
Wishmyer,  
Pastor**

I want to thank you, Leesburg United Methodist Church, for your resiliency, commitment, encouragement, and support as we live through these trying times. Your faith, hope, and love expressed toward one another in shopping trips, telephone calls, livestream worship, giving to our Pandemic Relief Fund, volunteer efforts to help and to feed, have borne witness to God's saving grace in Christ. Together, we are getting through this!

Thank you, too, for your patience as we are re-learning how to worship, one step at a time, through COVID-19 realities and

recommended health-protecting stages. We are about to enter a new phase of worship as we move indoors this month (see article on [page 2](#)). As we do so, please know that the health of everyone in our church family is of utmost importance as we all yearn to be together. We are grateful to God that there have been no reported cases of COVID-19 among our church members and constituents – praise God for this!

Continue to pray for our ministry together and our witness for Christ in our

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## Worship in our Sanctuary!

**Good news! We begin our in-person, back-in-the-sanctuary worship on Sunday, September 20. I can just hear some of you cheering!**

As with our worship up to this point – Livestreaming; Neighborhood Group communion; Outdoor Sunday worship, and now this step – our primary concern is everyone’s health and safety. Please consider your own risk factors as you decide whether or not to attend at this point. We will do all we can to keep you safe, but you must decide what’s right for you.

### So, here’s how our worship will work:

- We will continue our regular livestream; AND we will continue our in-person outdoor worship as long as weather and sunlight permit. Our outdoor worship will be moving up to 5:00 PM, starting September 20.
- September 20 will be our kick-off for both in-person, indoor worship and the time change for in-person, outdoor worship. Those who so choose are welcome to wear your favorite team jersey on the 20th for this kick-off.
- Our in-person, indoor worship in the sanctuary will begin at 11:30 am and last about 30-40 minutes. All worshippers must:
  - Register ahead of time because we have a limit of 50% of our sanctuary capacity, with social distancing (about 56 non-related persons; more if we have couples and families).
  - Complete the short health check – temperature prior to coming; no COVID-19 symptoms; etc.
  - Practice social distancing from non-related persons while on church property and parking
  - Wear a face covering. This applies to those leading worship also.
  - Follow the signs indicating traffic flow inside our building – different entry/exit doors, different staircase for entering/exiting the sanctuary, etc., and follow directions of ushers for seating locations.
  - Refrain from physical touch with others
  - Refrain from singing. We will not have our choir, Raising Praise, or soloists singing in-person. All music that includes singing will be recorded ahead of time and shown on screen.
  - Either print your own program at home or save it to your phone/tablet. There will be no paper programs available.
  - Children are welcome but limited to those who are old enough to wear a face covering and keep it on.
  - Hand sanitizer stations are will be available at each entrance and other locations around the building.

As we take this next step toward a full Sunday morning schedule, we envision adding additional worship times as we observe how well this works. Until the time that we have a vaccine, we will be moving forward gradually, deliberately, and safely toward a full-Sunday morning offering of worship, small groups, and Sunday school.

Thank you, all, for your patience the past six months! And, thank you to our Healthy Church Team for helping to guide our steps along the way. We look forward to being together inside, and/or outside, for in-person worship again! – Rev. Jim Wishmyer

[Click Here  
to Register](#)

## September Worship Theme

“All Things New” (Isaiah 43:19) – What new thing is God working in your life? New life? New opportunity? New way of seeing/thinking? New relationship? New appreciation? God is in the business of making things new – and doing new things!

New Creation – Rev. 21:5; 2 Corinthians 5:17 - Jim

New Wine – Matthew 9:17 - Heather

New Eyes – Mark 8:22-25; John 9:1-12a - Jim

New heavens and earth – 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1 - Heather

Action: Each day in September, reflect back on whatever “new” idea, opportunity, way of seeing, learning, healing, challenge, obstacle, deliverance, risk, failure, success you have experienced. At the end of the month, look back at what new thing(s) God has brought into your life?

## Sunday Morning Livestream

We continue the “LUMC Worship Connection,” our 10 am livestream of Sunday morning worship, and we invite you to join us. The music, prayer, scripture and message are designed to encourage, inspire, inform, and empower us to live as faith-sharers, hope-lifters, and love-givers during these unusual times! What a challenge – yet God is with us (Isaiah 41:10).



[leesburgumc.org/livestream](https://leesburgumc.org/livestream)

## Sunday Evening Worship: Time Change

Join us Sunday evenings for outdoor worship and the sacrament of Holy Communion. **On September 20th, the time will change from 7 pm to 5 pm.** We meet in our back parking lot behind Aldersgate (off Liberty Street). This informal time of worship will last about 30 minutes and we invite you to bring your own folding chair or lawn chair. There will be parking for seniors on Liberty Street. Other parking is available in the Blossom and Bloom lot and in the parking lot of Leesburg Presbyterian Church. Remember that we're outdoors - this is a casual event where shorts and sandals are perfectly appropriate!

Basic Requirements:

- Register in advance - which includes health acknowledgement
- At-home temperature check (stay home if temperature is 100.4 or more)
- Maintain Social distance from other people/households
- Face coverings are required; No hugs, handshakes, etc.
- Bring your own communion elements or use our prepackaged
- Bring your own chair or plan to stand (approx. 30 min. service)

**Attendance is limited to 50 people, so sign up now!**

[Register Here](#)



## Blessing the Devices

LUMC has traditionally had a “Blessing of the Backpacks” at the start of the school year, that included prayers for students, teachers, school administrators, and support staff. We delighted to see the many different backpacks, and shared the excitement for school to begin.

This year, we will be holding our COVID-19 version, “Blessing of the Devices” on Sunday, September 13. For morning Worship Connection (livestream), parents, teachers, administrators, staff are encouraged to please have your chrome books, laptops, other learning tools handy for our blessing prayers during the livestream.

Also, for our in-person outdoor worship, all who come are invited to bring their devices and backpacks for the time of blessing. In this time of distance learning and instruction, we give thanks that God is present with us to guide and to bless!

Thanks! Pastor Jim Wishmyer

## Financial Peace University

We’re looking to offer the nine-week Financial Peace University (FPU) course, in conjunction with our Fall Stewardship Campaign. FPU has helped a number of church members and others in our community to learn proven principles for having financial peace.

To begin September 29, 7 pm. Facilitators: Joe DeFranco and Rev. Jim Wishmyer (both FPU graduates). Scholarships are available. [Sign up online](#). Feel free to contact Joe or Pastor Jim via the church office.

From the Dave Ramsey/Financial Peace University website:

### [The Knowledge You Need to Win With Money](#)

Financial Peace University includes nine video lessons featuring Dave Ramsey, Rachel Cruze, and Chris Hogan. Follow along in your workbook as they teach you:

Lesson 1: Build a Starter Emergency Fund and Learn How to Budget

Lesson 2: Pay Off All Debt

Lesson 3: Save a Fully Funded Emergency Fund

Lesson 4: Invest for the Future and Build Wealth

Lesson 5: Buyer Beware

Lesson 6: The Role of Insurance

Lesson 7: Retirement Planning

Lesson 8: Real Estate and Mortgages

Lesson 9: Outrageous Generosity



## Find Your Spiritual Rhythms

If you've ever struggled to cultivate time set apart for God, or your spiritual practices aren't cutting it for you, join Rev. Heather for this 6 week program on Spiritual Rhythms.

This is a 6 week long program (October 2—November 6) with a weekly check in component where we will explore and grow in six different areas of faith formation.

Every Friday, via email, you will receive a video created by Rev. Heather introducing you to one of the areas of faith formation. Within the email, there will be weekly challenges that you can select from to practice as you grow in the weekly faith formation area.

On Thursdays, we will gather via Zoom to discuss how the practice went that week for you and others who are participating in the group. This program is beginner-friendly and it will be up to you how much time you want to devote to it; though any amount will prove fruitful.

If interested please [email Rev. Heather Wray](mailto:heather@methodist.org), sign up online under events on the website, or [use this link](#).

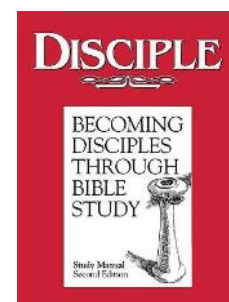


## Disciple Bible Study

Join me, Pastor Jim, for an in-depth journey through the New Testament, this Fall and Winter as we dive into the New Testament portion of Disciple Bible Study, perhaps the most significant in-depth bible study the United Methodist Church has ever produced.

Weekly background videos by various biblical scholars help the stories and people of the bible to come alive. Daily readings help us to engage with the scriptures and weekly discussions help us to better understand and apply the bible to our lives.

Meetings will be by Zoom (Wednesdays at either 3 pm or 7 pm) or in-person (Wednesdays at 3 pm) and you can pick either time that best suits. We begin the journey Wednesday, September 23. [Contact me, Pastor Jim](#), for more details; and sign up online by [clicking on this link](#).

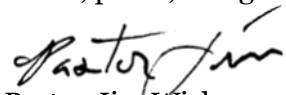


## Message from Pastor Jim:

*(Continued from page 1)*

community. As you read this newsletter, celebrate what God has been doing through all of us, and pray for the activities that are planned to help us grow as disciples of Jesus Christ, who are together becoming Followers of Jesus-One with God and each other-Ministers to all the world!

Grace, peace, and good health,

  
Pastor Jim Wishmyer

2 John 1:2 - *Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.*



**Angela Becek,  
Director of  
Discipleship  
Ministries**

## **Bible Adventure: Wilderness Escape!**

### **Feeling lost in the Wilderness lately?**

Come and experience the story of the Exodus and be renewed by God's promises to guide and provide!

### **The Wilderness Escape is for all ages!**

Each family/household/quarantine bubble will have a designated time to move through the story and you will be the only people in the building (along with your host).

The Wilderness Escape will take about an hour to experience with engaging stories and activities for all!

**Please reserve your time slot in advance by [clicking here](#).**

The Wilderness Escape will run through the month of September, followed by Expedition Promised Land in October.



## Summer Project Youth (SPY) 2020

Our youth continued serving this summer, at JK Community Farm, on-site at LUMC, and spent time at Camp High Road making improvements to the facilities and clearing brush.

Camp High Road is the Arlington-Alexandria UMC District Camp located in Middleburg. As they have been mostly shut down, they haven't had staff with idle hands in months to go take care of small projects, and they have built up. Ironically, CHR is also the last place our youth gathered for a "normal" event the weekend of February 28—March 1.

JK Community Farm is a non-profit farm that grows produce for local food banks, including Loudoun Hunger Relief. On our most recent visit we harvested over 700 pounds of carrots, tomatoes, and kale!

**We will be returning to the farm on Saturday, October 10, (9–10:30 or 10:30—Noon) and all are welcome to join us! Please [pre-register here](#). (registration opens Sept 23)**



Setting posts for the high ropes course.

Passing on the fun with our Club 45 friends!

A couple of them got to drive the tractor at CHR to pull out roots.

## Distance Learning...

You get to do distance learning again this fall, whether you signed up for it or not. As one who has worked with kids and teens for many years, mostly in other settings, but with some classroom experience, here are a few tidbits to keep in mind:

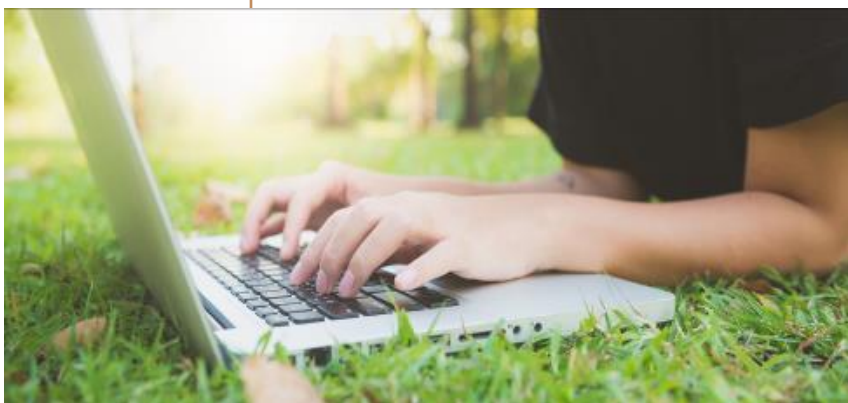
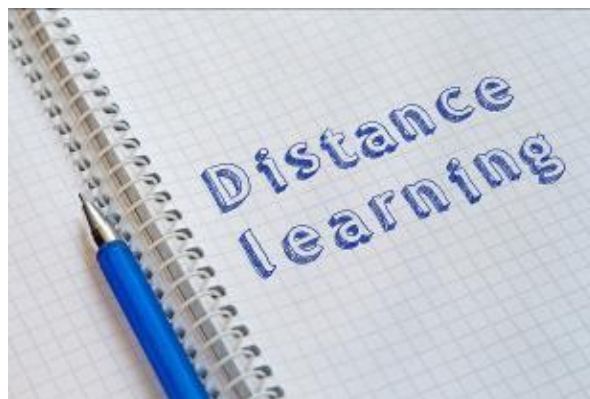
- Be flexible. Each teacher and each kid has a different style and almost none of them is working in their optimal environment. Some might actually be more productive working on their bed or with music playing or sitting outside—and that's okay. They also might need a change of scenery; the living room for math, the basement for English, etc. They are used to different classrooms for different subjects.
- They need peers. They need socialization, work groups, ways to let off steam. School is supposed to be social, let them work on their assignments while they chat with their friends, that's what makes school take all day, instead of only a few hours.
- They're probably normal. They might experience loneliness, depression, anxiety—just listen and don't try to fix everything. Listen more than you advise. Watch for warning signs and make sure they (and you) are spending time with peers.
- They need breaks. They need to get up and walk to their next class, they need exercise and they need to shift gears from one thing to the next. Those breaks normally involve other people.
- They need structure. Keep in mind that for most kids and teens that doesn't mean a minute-by-minute itinerary, it means a basic routine that works for them.
- Offer grace. Your child is not falling behind. It's not a race. Everyone has been dealt the same hand. A few will find that they truly excel with this freedom to work more on their own terms, but most will struggle. If this was optimal, it would have been normal. It's not. You will get tired and frustrated, so will your kids and so will their teachers. Some days are going to be hard. Let it go. Declare a snow/sick/personal day, just not too often.
- Don't compare yourself or your kids or their teachers to others.

I was reminded recently that when Cortes and his men arrived in North America, he

burned their boats so that his men would let go of any fantasies of returning to Europe and they would move forward with their mission. It's not a perfect analogy, but we have to remember to keep moving forward. We are all explorers and pioneers now. The road before us has not been mapped; no one has gone before us.

Embrace the adventure!

~ Angela Becek





## Backpack Buddies Is Back!

LUMC Backpack Buddies is partnering with The Backpack Buddies Foundation of Loudoun, a private, non-profit organization that helps alleviate weekend hunger among students in our schools. This program assists school children in Loudoun County who are uncertain where their next meal is coming from, by providing bags of food to the children to take home for the weekend. The bags include meals, milk, juice, and snacks. The goal is to “help ensure that no student goes hungry ... because hunger doesn’t take a weekend off.”

The LUMC **Backpack Buddies Missions Program** will be assisting children in need at Catoctin Elementary School this school year with bags of food for their weekend meals. We need donations of food and money to keep this mission project active. A donation of \$100 feeds nearly 14 children and will provide about 84 meals over a weekend.

At this time, our Backpack Buddy food shelves are empty, and we need the love and generosity from our congregation to help replenish our food supply and continue our participation in this wonderful program.

- Food donations can be dropped off at the church and placed in the Missions Room (next to the office). We will need: 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.
- Monetary donations can be made thru your gifts to the church by indicating the donation is for Backpack Buddies. Monetary donations allow us to buy in bulk and get more food at a cheaper price.

Also, due to the COVID 19 virus, this year will be different in the way we pack the food. We will have an on-line signup for individuals/families who would like to volunteer to come to Wesley Hall and pack bags of food.

If you have any questions about our Backpack Buddies program, please contact Barbara Luna ([blunalsbrg@aol.com](mailto:blunalsbrg@aol.com)), or Rev. Jim Wishmyer ([jim.leesburgumc.org](http://jim.leesburgumc.org)).

**“The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor.”**  
Proverbs 22:9



**BACKPACK BUDDIES**

For the 2019-20 school year (until schools closed), LUMC Backpack Buddies supplied Catoctin Elementary with 75 bags of food each week.



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

## Mission Central

Loving God and loving neighbor are central to our faith as Christians. Here at Leesburg United Methodist we take that call seriously. In the face of COVID 19, we never stopped serving God and caring for others. Check out what we've done in terms of mission and then see how you can get involved in upcoming opportunities to serve.

### Where we've served:

**The Ampersand Pantry Project:** We've helped feed our hungry neighbors meals with the Ampersand Pantry Project. Your monetary donations to our Pandemic Relief Fund have allowed us to help this non-profit continue to serve the Leesburg community. Some of our members have even been the hands and feet of Jesus, volunteering their time and energy to serve meals multiple afternoons.

**J.K. Community Farms:** Our youth and adults have helped harvest and plant food for our local area foodbanks at JK Community Farm. The youth have been out in the heat, masked, and giving of their summertime to serve others by harvesting tomatoes, planting fall squash, and so much more to make sure our neighbors that rely on local food banks get quality organic produce.

**Loudoun Hunger Relief (LHR):** Collections for LHR have continued throughout the pandemic. Our local Neighborhood Groups have collected for LHR as well as monthly donation drop off events held at church. As LHR serves more clients than ever before, LUMC continues to help meet the needs of this vital community non-profit.

**Heritage Hall:** The United Methodist Women (UMW) have been hard at work encouraging the front line healthcare workers at Heritage Hall. The UMW has shared words of encouragement and purchased snacks and meals for the workers. Heritage Hall had a small outbreak of COVID 19 and the UMW was present to help encourage those who were bringing healing to the residents.

**Neighbors Serving Neighbors:** At the beginning of the pandemic over 50 congregation members stepped up to serve those most at risk during COVID 19 with tasks like grocery shopping, yard work, and other needs. You have made check in phone calls, kept the clergy aware of needs in our congregation, and generously donated monetarily to aid those in congregation who might have been impacted by COVID 19. You all have cared for each other with meals from those who are post surgery, to feeding a family with a child successfully going through chemo, and to helping a family who welcomed their first child, you all continue to amaze us in your desire to serve.

There are many other places we have served during this time, too numerous to mention them all!

### Where you can serve next:

**JK Community Farms:** October 10th will be the next opportunity for anyone to serve alongside our youth at JK Community Farms. You can sign up online or call the church office to register. [Pre-register here](#) (registration opens Sept 23).

**Kits for Conference:** The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) is currently focusing efforts on Cleaning Kits (a.k.a. flood buckets), Hygiene Kits, and School Kids. [Check our website](#) for more information on what to put in the kit, visit

(Continued from page 10)

www.umcmission.org or google "UMCOR Kits". Kits need to be brought to LUMC by Friday, September 11th.

**Loudoun Hunger Relief Drop Off:** The first Tuesday of every month we are collecting for LHR. Please bring non perishable food items to donate to LHR who is in need of healthy food for their influx of clients.

**Neighbors Helping Neighbors:** Keep you eyes peeled for opportunities to help your neighbors. Currently we have two sign-ups for two congregation members who are in need of extra help (one post surgery, the other with yard work). If you'd like to have those lists please [email Rev. Heather Wray](mailto:heather.wray@lhr.org).

**Backpack Buddies:** We resume our Backpack Buddies program this fall, supporting food-insecure children at Catoctin Elementary School. Donations of food and money are needed, as well as volunteers to pack bags of weekend meals for these children. Read more in the [full article on page 9](#).

**LUMC Faith Friends** continues to support our college students during this challenging time. We currently have 19 students, from eight schools, in four different states enrolled in the care package program.

This month they received an encouraging greeting card and a \$25 gift card to Target or Walmart. We ask that you please pray for the health and safety of all our students as they navigate the fall semester in this new normal.

Thank you to all who continue to support this project with their donations and prayers. If you have questions, would like to donate or sign up please contact Erica Dobscha at [dobscha@verizon.net](mailto:dobscha@verizon.net).

## Great Beginnings Preschool

Exciting things are happening at GBP this Fall!

Check out [our Facebook page](#) or email [greatbeginningsleesburg@gmail.com](mailto:greatbeginningsleesburg@gmail.com) for more information on our [Safer at Home](#) Virtual learning models.

Blessings,  
Heather Gonzalez  
Director, Great Beginnings Preschool  
[greatbeginningsleesburg@gmail.com](mailto:greatbeginningsleesburg@gmail.com)  
[www.greatbeginningsleesburg.com](http://www.greatbeginningsleesburg.com)



## Leesburg United Methodist Church

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

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

### We Now Have an App!

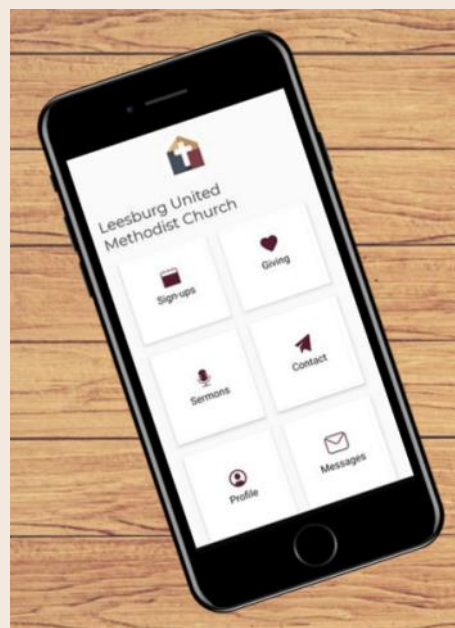
Our new app (available for Android and Apple devices) will help you find event sign-ups, listen to recent sermons, make it easy to give using credit card or direct debit from your bank account, and contact us for general questions or prayer requests.

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 you 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:

