

August 2020

Faith UCC

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New Braunfels, TX 78130

Glimpses of Faith Newsletter

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We are all familiar with the apocalyptic image from the Bible of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, one of which is pestilence. In the Bible the Apocalypse is the end of life as we have known it. We get caught up in the gory devastation of apocalyptic imagery in the Bible: Armageddon, blood red moon and other signs, the Four Horsemen I mentioned, etc. but ultimately apocalyptic writings are about hope.

The word apocalypse means "to reveal" or "to unveil". In a recent Christian Century article Martha Tatarnic points out that "horrifying and beautiful truths are being revealed to us in these apocalyptic days of COVID 19". The systemic injustices around us that affect minority groups and economic polarization is on full display. We have also seen all across this planet how human beings can work together and change radically in response to an emergency. We have seen how this world on which we live is inextricably bound together. The air I breathe becomes the air you breathe. We can distribute wealth more justly. We can find housing for the homeless. We can change our entrenched routines when it is necessary to do so. We have seen how our choices affect the whole planet's ecosystems.

Tantric concludes her article with these words, "We can choose to align our lives with the God of compassion and healing. Or we can choose to keep trying to cobble together the teetering house of cards that is this claim that we can operate outside the bonds of relationship. We can choose, but the truth that one of these paths leads nowhere but to death is now impossible to ignore." What will this crisis reveal about the human race? What choice will we make? What choice will each of us make?

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Scott



On behalf of the Board, staff, and guests of **Family Promise of Greater New Braunfels**, I want to express our heart-felt appreciation for Faith's gift of **\$500.00** received on 7/7/2020!

Your donation truly is a blessing to families struggling with the challenges of homelessness. Your support has given 52 families with children in our community the opportunity to move from homelessness into a secure, stable home. Thank you for helping to ensure a bright, hopeful future to families in need!

Sincerely, Sarah Dixon. Executive Director
Family Promise of Greater New Braunfels



Thank You from Back Bay Mission

Thank you for your generous gift to Back Bay Mission! Your gift makes it possible to ensure help for the low-income and homeless people that are being seriously impacted by this pandemic.

As we move through this pandemic to a place of relative stability, the needs of the people we serve will be deeper. Many will not be able to return to their old jobs due to the loss of businesses and we will be assisting many new clients looking for restorative resources to resume their lives. As demonstrated after Hurricane Katrina and the Deep Water Horizon Oil Disaster this is a resilient community that will need support to find new pathways to sustainability. So, with your help, we can be there for people struggling to keep a roof over their heads, food on the table, the utilities on. Homeless residents will continue needing basic necessities such as showering, having clean clothes, respite space as well as access to case management..

The vast majority of the people we serve do not want to live in poverty and they don't want a handout. They want the chance to move forward. And your gift provides that chance.

Thank you for your generous gift!

Rev. Alice Graham, Ph.D., Executive Director

Heart of Texas Association News

Jewel Johnson, our brother in Christ and Pastor Emeritus of St. Peter's Church of Coupland, died Thursday, July 2nd. He served St. Peter's for 17 years, starting in 1955 for four years and returning in 1968. In this Association, he also served as pastor of St. John's UCC in Burton, St. John's in Richland, and Trinity United Church of Niederwald. Beyond the Heart of Texas, Jewel pastored churches in Dallas, Illinois, and Nebraska. He and his wife, Mary, who passed away in 2016, lived a rich life of service and commitment. Jewel was a committed peace and justice activist, a beloved pastor, a joyous singer, and a devoted husband and father. He has given all of us a marvelous example of Christian ministry and faithfulness. We give thanks for Jewel and for the rich and full life he lived as we commend him to God's eternal love and life.

This month, we say farewell to our brother in Christ, Ron Trimmer, and his sons Ben and Aaron. Ron has accepted a call to Lake Ozark Christian Church in Lake Ozark, Missouri. He has served as the founding pastor of Hope United in Georgetown for the past 10 years and served at Friedens Church of Washington for several years before that. He and Jan married in Washington, and they moved together with the boys to Georgetown with the shared commitment to the work of starting Hope United. We are grateful, too, for all he has given to the wider church and community. He has been the chair of the Brazos Association Committee on Ministry, has served for a number of years as the chair of the South Central Conference New and Renewing Churches Committee, and has connected in many ways in the Georgetown community. Ron is a good friend to many of us. We send the Trimmer family off with love and prayers as they go to serve at Lake Ozark and to be closer to Ron's family in the St. Louis area.

Our prayers are with the churches in the Heart of Texas Association who are in transition at this most challenging time. These include Hope United, United Christian in Austin, Evangelical UCC in Lyons, and Weimar UCC. We have others that have had pastoral changes this spring since the pandemic began, including Bethany Congregational in San Antonio and Church of the Savior in Cedar Park. I know all of you are working to find the path God is calling you to follow, and we pray that the ministries of all of our churches will continue to be full and faithful.

Blessings in Christ, Liz Nash, Association Minister



Birthdays

August

8-1 Joshua Coble	8-2 Jan Ziegler	8-7 Donna Myer
8-14 Karen Dietz	8-19 David Lamensky	8-19 Reed Hoke
8-25 Grace Perry-Clark	8-25 Peter Bauer	

September 9-6 Kimberly Kramm 9-13 Joe Ward 9-14 Kate Bauer



The Cactus at Church Were in Full Bloom on Monday, August 3



Come By and Sign the Habitat Stud

Come on by the fellowship hall and sign the Habitat stud. They will be built into the next Habitat House this fall. You have until September 15 to come by. Share your prayers and best wishes for Gary's new house and his two young boys.

More Kiva Loans Confirmands Help Choose



Veronique [Cameroon](#) / Fruits & Vegetables \$25

A loan of \$350 helps to buy more stocks of fresh foods (plantains, taro, and cassava).

Abisunzekristo Cb Group

A loan of \$3,500 helps a member to increase the stock of various types of food in her restaurant.



Jeremy Rafael

[Alpha, Gutierrez Brown, Coto Brus, Puntarenas, Costa Rica](#) / Cattle \$25



A loan of \$525 helps to purchase calves to raise so he can take advantage of his land.



We Measure Our Serenity By Coffee Spoons



Rev. Peter E. Bauer

Our lives make imprints I have a good friend that I meet with every couple of weeks for coffee. We have known each other a long time. It's wonderful to be together to discuss our work, our mutual intellectual interests and family. Right now, of course, with the ongoing quarantine, there are no opportunities to meet. Instead there is the occasional E-Mail or telephone call, but it is not the same as seeing the person in real time.

As I have noted before, more and more of our time is being devoted to digital space. We do our work online, maybe go to church online, meet with chat groups online, or go to a happy hour online. Many of us are noticing different interiors of rooms. Maybe we are getting some ideas for home decorating or renovating by observing the living spaces of others. Then there is the altered perception of having a conversation digitally with people in unexpected places. **I have had people talk to me from their cars, their bathroom, sitting against a headboard talking to me while sitting up in their bed.** Depending upon the conversation and the depth of material, the experience can feel disconcerting. You can feel like a voyeur, that somehow you are not in the right place, that this may not be what you need to see.

Where is the comfort of having someone else in the same room sharing time with you ? The pleasure of another's company can get obliterated in the pursuit of making as many digital contacts as possible. **All of the Emojis that one can use will not necessary replace the connection of a handshake or the warmth of a smile in real time.** This pandemic has forced people to get very creative. New opportunities for contact over the internet are emerging all of the time. Churches are also experimenting with new offerings including the digital coffee, tea and conversation hour.

Former Secretary Of State Madeleine Albright has noted in her book: "Hell And Other Destinations: " We all, in our own way, search for fulfillment, happiness, or a general sense of well-being. Many-by far the majority-are too busy coping with life's complications to allocate to this quest more than a series of passing thoughts; **We measure our serenity in coffee spoons.** Perhaps we hope to find time in the future to sit on a mountaintop or recline beneath a banyan tree and figure everything out. " (P. 318)

For now, I will settle for being able again to see people, those I love, friends and family who are important to me, in person and in real time. It's important to be in the room and know it again as if it were the first time.

May it be so.

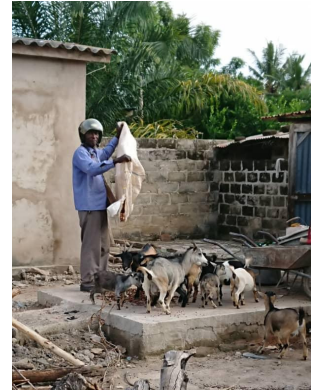
Confirmation Class Helps Pick Kiva Loans



Each of the four confirmands chose criteria to help pick some of the church's Kiva Loans in July: location, man or woman, type of business. Here are the 8 loans that were made using their criteria.

Jovita [Honiara, Solomon Islands](#) / Bakery

A loan of \$725 helps to buy flour, cooking oil, sugar, butter and a baking oven for her bakery.



Sanvi [Sanguéra, Togo](#) / Poultry

A loan of \$875 helps to purchase 25 goats, 10 pigs and 65 chickens.



Mujeres Guerreras Group

[Encarnación, Paraguay](#) / Crafts

A loan of \$5,600 helps a member to buy thermoses, leather, glue, imitation leather, and other products.

Sreytouch [Kandal, Cambodia](#) / Farming

A loan of \$1,000 helps to buy basil seeds and fertilizer for her farming business.



Serghei [Ungheni, Moldova](#) / Transportation

A loan of \$4,100 helps to procure a new bus to expand the business capacities.