

June 2020

Glimpses of Faith Newsletter

Faith UCC

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Recently President Trump sent National Guardsmen and police to tear gas and use flash grenades to clear peaceful protestors from exercising their constitutional right to protest. This was done so the President could stroll to St. John's Episcopal Church. He did not go there to pray for the country or George Floyd's family. He went there solely for a photo op of him standing in front of the church holding a Bible. Once the picture was taken he left. It was later turned into a campaign style video, complete with stirring orchestral music showing

him striding past National Guard troops, pumping his fist and culminating in him standing holding the Bible aloft in front of the church..

When Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde, senior pastor of the church, was asked about this incident she noted the Presidents earlier inflammatory words and militarized approach to the protests. She went on to say, "He did not pray. He did not offer a word of balm or condolence to those who are grieving. He did not seek to unify the country, but rather he used our symbols and our sacred space as a way to reinforce a message that is antithetical to everything that the person of Jesus, whom we follow, and the gospel texts that we strive to emulate...represent."

President Trump and the First Lady later posed in front of the shrine for John Paul II in Washington D.C. The Catholic Archbishop said he found the President's actions to be "baffling and reprehensible."

When Bishop Budde was asked what the Bible has to say to our current crisis she said, "Our faith has many things to say because it speaks to every dimension of the human experience. And so our texts would offer words of consolation to those who are grieving. Our text would offer words of encouragement for those who are striving for justice. Jesus himself spoke of bringing the kingdom of God, the reign of God, God's shalom and universal love into human experience. The Bible speaks of God's demand for us to walk humbly and to do justice and to love neighbor. And so all of those things are found in our texts, and those are the texts that I would point us to as a way of saying that God stands with those who are suffering. God walks with those who feel they are oppressed. And God has harsh things to say to those of us with privilege and power who us that power to be instruments of oppression for others."

Slumber Falls Camp is Moving Forward with Camps MAY 27, 2020

Submitted by Rev. Jeremy Albers, Director of Outdoor Ministry

This past weekend the SCC Board of Directors approved the Decision Tree presented by the SCC COVID-19 task force on Slumber Falls Camp. For the past three weeks the task force took into consideration the many facets of offering or not offering camp this summer. The findings were that a simple Yes or No was not adequate because new information continues to come out and that circumstances outside of our control could have major impacts.

From this came a decision tree that encouraged Slumber Falls to move forward. Support for camps to move forward came from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), American Camping Association and YMCA, state and local health agencies, and the Texas Department of Health which oversees our state licensing as a recognized youth camp.

The decision on whether SFC would move forward was based on recent events, our ability to mitigate health risks, and enact our health and safety protocols if needed. The overall well-being of our youth and the challenges they are facing, as well as our ability to acquire necessary supplies and support from third parties which are vital to offering camp were also accessed. We also outlined the risks to the camp and conference.

Since there is a financial component to offering camps and the fact that we are offering worry free camping this summer, the burden of costs will initially fall on the camp until the camps occur. If camps do not happen, then the camp and conference will bear the burden of covering these costs if an exit strategy is enacted.

The other section of the Decision tree contained exit strategies if our current resources and supply chains changed, the government and experts pull their support, or if we do not get a critical mass of registration by June 10th of 180 campers. We believe that summer camps are vital to the wellbeing of our youth, but health and safety concerns of our campers, staff, volunteers and families remain a priority. Changes will be enacted this summer to many of our practices and procedures, and we will be asking our volunteers, camper families, and churches to help by following our suggestions for creating a “camping bubble” that minimizes risks. **This information is being finalized and will be uploaded to the SFC website** and sent to parents with their camper letter.

Parents are encouraged to sign up their campers before the June 10th deadline. Registration costs this summer are worry free meaning that parents can change their minds at any point. They can move their child to a different camp, roll their registration to the 2021 camping season, donate their registration money to the ministry of Slumber Falls Camp or receive a full refund (including the deposit) this summer. The camp will bear the risks in order to provide our parents a peace of mind. Parents have the choice. More information on worry free camping will be posted online.

[Register for Camp](#)

Please keep the camp in your prayers, lift us up in your churches, and consider becoming a **Friend of the Camp**. If you wish to volunteer, **please sign up**. Slumber Falls is committed to sharing God's love to all!



If it were not for the covid 19 virus we would soon be hosting Family Promise families but that is not to be this year but the work of Family Promise still goes on. Currently two families are being housed at the Family Promise Day Center itself. On a recent zoom call Family Promise said they have tentatively set September 1st as the date they will start hosting families in churches once again, although this could change if there is strong second wave of covid 19.

Since we will not be hosting families at the church or at the camp this summer the Faith Church council will be voting to donate funds from our Family Promise fund to Family Promise. The amount will be determined at the June Council meeting on June 9th.

We are also encouraging Faith Church members to consider making a donation to Family Promise directly. This would in lieu of providing gift cards, or food for the families we would normally be hosting. You can donate to Family Promise through the church or go directly to the Family Promise website and donate there. Here is the link <https://www.fpgnb.org/> The later will get your donation to them quicker. You can also use the above link to sign up for the Family Promise Newsletter. Simply go to the very bottom of the web page and sign up.



Reopening Task Force Formed

The Church Council has formed a Reopening Task Force to identify schedules and conditions to begin worshipping in the sanctuary and scheduling groups meeting in our facilities. The Task Force will identify policies and practices for reopening. They will make recommendations to the Church Council. The Reopening schedule and guidelines will be well communicated to the congregation. Our thanks to the following three persons who agreed to serve on this Task Force: Jim Gossett; Judith James and Mary Owen. The first meeting is Tuesday, June 16th.



We held our first all online Heart of Texas Association meeting on Saturday, May 16th. It was, of course, with regret that we had to change to this format instead of gathering at Weimar UCC. However, we rejoice that we had 51 attendees representing 17 churches. While we have had more people attend an Association meeting, we had the highest number of churches ever represented, and we voted with joy to welcome Friedens United in Gay Hill back into our Association. Each church gave a short report about their life and activities, which is always a vital and great part of our meeting. I appreciate your efforts to join together at this time to continue our reach across churches for ministry in Christ's name. We have all learned a great deal very quickly about being the church in cyberspace during the pandemic.

At our spring meeting, we had Ecclesiastical Councils for Kerry Kirtley and Arlene Turner, approving both for ordination. Kerry and Arlene have both come to the UCC from the United Methodist Church. Kerry was welcomed to the UCC by Bethany Congregational in San Antonio. She is a pastor, along with Billie Watts, of the vibrant new congregation Touchstone Community Church, in Boerne. Arlene was welcomed to the UCC by United Christian Church, where she has had many opportunities to serve in ministry during the church's interim period. We look forward to Kerry's ordination to her call at Touchstone when that can happen, and we offer our encouragement and support to Arlene as she starts her search for a call to ministry.

At our meeting, we also extended a call until Labor Day to gather supplies for Back Bay Mission hygiene kits or to send in donations to our Association to allow us to buy supplies in bulk for these kits. In early September, we will find a way to pick up any kits our churches have assembled, to buy the supplies most needed using monetary donations, and to transport these out to Biloxi to Back Bay Mission for the homeless folks they serve. If you have kits to be picked up, contact Liz Nash at lizknash@gmail.com or Linda Coats at linda_coats@msn.com. If you wish to donate money, send it to our Association treasurer, Joe Ward, with an indication that the gift is for Back Bay hygiene kits. To find out the supply list for the kits and where to send money, go to our website at <http://hotaucc.org/index.html> and click on "Report on the Spring Meeting" and "Back Bay Mission Hygiene Kit Info." You will also see Glen Schoeneberg's extra verse for the song "Pass It On" that he and Dottie sang for us during worship, a gentle and fun reminder about how to pass on God's love in this pandemic.

Finally, I want to share a word of caution with you. I recently have encountered several "phishing" attempts via email and text -- many more than usual. As you may know, "phishing" refers to attempts to commit fraud by impersonating a friend, company, or organization in order to obtain personal information such as your credit card number or to get you to send money or gift cards. These attempts have mainly come as emails or texts that look like legitimate contacts from our pastors, often with church information on them. Others ask you to click on a link. If you receive a message that appears to be from a minister but you aren't absolutely sure, check the email address or phone number, and also check in a different way with the person who appears to have sent it. Do not click on a link and do not send gift cards, money, etc. if those are requested. Many people are working for the good of all during this time but, sadly, some are not.

Blessings in Christ, Liz Nash, Association Minister

June/July Birthdays

6-1 Shannon Simpson

6-4 David Reed

6-6 John Stark

6-12 Kyle Kramm

6-13 Cade Perry-Clark

6-3 Jill Mata

6-4 Stephanie Phillips

6-10 Jim Gossett

6-12 Hays Marlow

6-16 Jo Ann Brown



July 4 Chrissy Gossett

July 10 Karen Kramm

July 20 Mary Jean Owen

July 23 Robynne Martinez

July 9 Kai Perry-Clark

July 13 Adam Gossett

July 21 Shirley Manning

July 24 Lana Spiess

July 13 Will Gossett

July 22 Karen Booth

July 26 Sam Ward



South Central Conference
of the United Church of Christ

The South Central Conference will be holding its annual meeting on Saturday, June 13th. Originally it was going to be held in Houston but because of the covid 19 virus it was decided to hold it via zoom. The deadline to register was this past Friday, June 5, unless they extend it. Along with the usual voting on nominees for conference positions, voting on the budge, etc. a vote will be held on by law amendments.

The Conference is not collecting Back Bay Mission Hygiene kits this year. If you wish to make a donation to their Hygiene Kit fund please use this link: <https://thebackbaymission.org/give/#give-now>

If you wish to donate to the South Central Conference, please use this link: <https://sccucc.org/donate/>

Our Three High School Graduates at Faith UCC!



Kai is looking forward to graduating, even though it hasn't gone quite as he planned. At present, he is planning on attending Northeast Lakeview in San Antonio to take his introductory college credits, and possibly attending Texas State after that. He is considering a career in physical therapy, but wants to get out in the world and see where life takes him. He recently bought his own small travel trailer so that he can have his own space, while staying on the family property, until he moves on to bigger and better things.

Camdyn is proud to graduate as a Unicorn, just like her Grandpa Martinez. She will be starting at William Edge Institute here in New Braunfels in June to pursue her cosmetology certification.



Elly Beauchamp will be going to UTSA and majoring in Anthropology.



These are our 2020 graduates. If you would like to send them a card or note here are their addresses:

Kai Perry-Clark 28330 Oak Creek Dr. New Braunfels, Tx 78132

Camdyn Martinez 376 Paradise Alley New Braunfels, Tx 78130

Elly Beauchamp 3522 Martesia San Antonio, Tx 78259

Our congratulations to all three of them. God bless them as they move forward in their life journey!