



The LUMinary

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A Message from the Pastor

December 2020

As November comes to a close and December begins, we enter the season of Advent. Traditionally, Advent is the four-week period leading up to Christmas. It is a time of preparation and anticipation of the coming of Jesus. It is meant to lead us into the celebration of Jesus' birth and remind us of the promise that Christ will come again.

The hope of this second coming is hard to grasp when everything around us has been turned upside down. With the number of Covid-19 cases breaking records daily—in our state, nation, and around the world—we find ourselves entering yet another holiday season that will look drastically different from previous years.

The new protocols, issued by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, mean that our church has suspended in-person worship and other in-person gatherings until such a time as the DHHS deems it safe for us to resume those activities. It is my prayer that each of you will take care to abide by these protocols in your own lives and in your own families. These are challenging times and we need each other in order to get through them, but in times like these it also means that being physically present with one another puts us all in danger. As Professor Chris Whitty, England's chief medical officer, states: "You cannot, in an epidemic, just take your own risks. Unfortunately, you are taking risk on behalf of everybody else."

The Bible commands us to love one another as Christ first loved us. This means that we must value each life as precious and valued beyond limit.

If I am being truly honest, there are no words to express how I feel today. My emotions are mixed. I lament that I may not be able to see many of your faces again until after this holiday season. I lament that I may be unable to share these joy-filled moments with my parents and my nieces and nephew. And yet, each of your lives and the lives of my family are more precious than my desire to share these moments in the company of others.

Just as I have shared these past few weeks, our mission continues, just as our relationships with one another continue, albeit in new and different ways. I cannot help but see these times as an opportunity for us to deepen our relationships with one another. For one of my friends, it gave her family an excuse to check-in with one another through a weekly family phone call. My sister and I have begun a tradition of early morning coffee dates over the phone before her kids wake up—although that has become less successful of late because the kids have caught on and started waking up earlier so that *they* could have one-on-one time with me too. I do enjoy my chats with them too though!

I encourage you to be innovative this holiday season. Find new ways to connect with family and reconnect with old friends. But above all, be safe! We are all depending on one another in our fight to combat this virus, as we all anticipate the day when we will have a vaccine and things will return to “normal.” That day will come, but let’s do our part to prevent further loss of life as we prepare for that day.

May God bless you all,

Pastor Tiffany

Getting to Know the Pastor

Hello
my name is

Pastor Tiffany

Getting to Know the Pastor — Keeping the Holiday Traditions Alive

Like with what seems like everything in 2020, the holidays ahead of us will likely look a little different this year. Despite the challenges to our traditional celebrations this year, we can still find ways to keep some of those traditions alive. My family has decided not to gather in-person for Thanksgiving this year, but we will be keeping our Thanksgiving tradition alive. For us, we could live without the turkey, ham, stuffing, etc. What is essential to our tradition is the hubbard squash. Just as many are struggling to find small turkeys, it is a challenge to find a small hubbard squash, so I have prepared the squash this year and some will be dropped off at each household in my family. Similarly, I plan to convince my father to make his traditional Christmas morning aebleskivers in advance, so that they can be delivered to each of our households as well. That way, we can still celebrate our holiday traditions from a distance and keep one another safe! My prayer is that we may all find ways to keep the traditions alive, without putting our loved ones at risk.



Aebleskivers

Hubbard squash



Announcements from the Pastor's Desk



1. This year's **Charge Conference** will be held via Zoom on **Sunday, December 13, 2020 at 5:00 pm**. The SPRC will meet via Zoom prior to that at 4:00 pm. Given current Covid-19 restrictions, this meeting will be limited to the church leadership team and will only cover that business which is required by the Book of Discipline.
2. The Leadership Team voted on November 16, 2020 to **suspend all in-person activities** at the church and close the building to the public effective November 17, 2020. If you need to drop something off at the church, please call the church office (651-5531) during office hours, and Karolyn will meet you at the door. The Food Bank will continue to operate under their current Covid-19 plans and AA will be allowed to continue meeting.
3. **Prayer group** has been moved back online. You may join at 10 am on Mondays and Thursdays by clicking the join meeting button on the home page of our website, or email the pastor to request the link.
4. **Bible Study** is now meeting online on Wednesdays at 10 am. Our Advent study will begin on December 2, 2020. If you do not have a book yet, please stop by the church, call Karolyn, and she will meet you at the ramp entrance door with a book.
5. If you would like a **visit** from me, the pastor, please contact the church office. Arrangements will then be made for a visit at the church or in your home. I do request that masks be worn at all times for those visits. I make this request for your safety as well as my own and the safety of so many others I may come in contact with. I will make no more than one visit per week—for everyone's safety—so please make those requests in advance.
6. At this time, **Tuesdays at Twilliger's** will be suspended.
7. I will be recovering from surgery from November 23-December 2. I will be doing limited work from home during that time, so please do not hesitate to contact me if there is a need.

Online Worship

We continue to offer online worship each Sunday morning at 10:00, on either Facebook or YouTube.

A bulletin is sent out each week with a link, or you can go to our website and click on the link there.

The Core Youth Group is collecting **returnable bottles and cans**. You can drop them off at the church during office hours. Call Karolyn when you arrive.

Update Regarding Holy Communion:

Given the tight timeline and the recent changes to our situation, we will be postponing our next Zoom Communion Service until Christmas Eve. We will celebrate Communion via Zoom at 8:00 pm on Thursday, December 24, 2020 following the regularly scheduled Christmas Eve Service which will be at 7:00 pm via Zoom. If you would like to participate in this celebration, you may collect your elements in one of two ways:

1. Come to the church and call the office. Karolyn will bring the elements out to you at the ramp entrance or to your car.
2. You may also call or email the office and request that your elements be delivered to you at your home. They will be delivered in the evening on Wed., Dec. 23, in your mailbox or left at your front door—this will limit contact with the delivery person. You must collect or request delivery of your elements by noon on Wednesday, Dec. 23, as the office will be closed after this time.

Remember, you can join by phone if you would like.

Although we are back to online worship, your giving is still vital to making sure we, as a church, make it through this time in a financially healthy way. You can set up online giving by going to our website and clicking on the Donate button, or you can mail in your check. If you want to drop it off, just call Karolyn, and she will meet you at the door. We want you to know that your giving is very much appreciated.



UMCOR Hygiene Kit Collection Project:

The Core Youth Group has been eager to engage in some meaningful mission work throughout these unprecedented times. With that in mind, we are inviting our church members to collect items so that our youth can put together some hygiene kits. These kits are given to so many people all around the world in the immediate aftermath of numerous disasters and human conflicts that force people from their homes.

We are putting forward a goal of completing 50 of these kits. We are making great progress and would be delighted if we could exceed this goal! To do that we need your support!

To meet this goal, we need to collect:

Needed:	Pledged:	Received:
50 Hand Towels (15 x 25 – 17 x 27) No kitchen, cleaning, or microfiber towels	50 Towels	50 Towels
50 Washcloths No kitchen, cleaning, or microfiber towels	24 Washcloths	24 Washcloths
50 Combs Must be sturdy with at least 6 inches of teeth No pocket combs or picks Rattail and combs without handles are acceptable but must have at least 6 inches of teeth	25 Combs	25 Combs
50 Toenail or Fingernail Clippers No emery boards or metal nail files	25 Nail Clippers	25 Nail Clippers
50 Bars of Bath Soap (3 oz. or larger) No Ivory or Jergen's soap Do not remove from packaging	25 Bars of Soap	25 Bars of Soap
50 Adult Toothbrushes Must be individually packaged	50 Toothbrushes	50 Toothbrushes
500 Bandages (3/4 x 3 inches)	500 Bandages	500 Bandages
50 Gallon Size Re-sealable Bags	75 Gallon-size Bags	75 Gallon-size Bags

If you would like to pledge to donate any of the needed items, please complete the google form included in this post. This will help us to track our progress toward our goal! <https://docs.google.com/.../1FAIpQLSdJpi7FToe.../viewform...>

For more detailed information regarding the items needed please visit this link: <https://www.umcmmission.org/.../relief-supply.../hygiene-kit>

You can drop your donations off at the church office during our regular office hours Monday-Thursday from 9:30 am - 2:30 pm. Please leave your items by the ramp entrance, and call Karolyn and let her know so she can collect them.

Pastor Tiffany and Carrie will be working closely with one another to find a way for the youth to assemble these kits remotely, and we will be delighted to share photos with you when that happens!