

A JOYFUL NOISE!

May 2020

Hello My Friends,

How are you doing? It has been a very long month and yet the days seem to be going so quickly. Many of us are staying home, tackling new projects, cleaning the house, teaching the children. The day lasts forever as we long to be out and about, doing what we considered to be normal activity. And the month of April has quickly passed by, or did it? We long to be back to normal.

We, the church, have had to stretch and adapt very quickly. We are learning how to do online services. We have written more notes, made more phone calls, and dropped off more soup than many can remember ever doing. We have developed creative ways to stay in touch and show that we care about each other. We have adapted and found a new normal.

In adaptation we also grieve. We grieve that we do not meet in person. We cannot give hugs and handshakes. There is no sharing around a cup of coffee and apple slices. There is no visiting our beloveds in hospitals and living facilities, no saying goodbye to friends, no showering new moms with love and gifts. Not a normal that we want.

Brené Brown wrote, "We will not go back to normal. Normal never was. Our pre-corona existence was nor normal other than we normalized greed, inequity, exhaustion, depletion, extraction, disconnection, confusion, rage, hoarding, hate, and lack. We should not long to return, my friends. We are being given the opportunity to stitch a new garment. One that fits all of humanity and nature."

So, my friends, as we approach May with the possibility that we might be able to gather at some time in the future, what does that future normal look like? I hope that there will be church, a service full of smiles, laughter, and hugs. That there will be friends invited back into our homes. I hope we will be able to travel and see family. But will we go back to what has always been or will we move into what can be anew?

With the outreach of notes and calls there is new relationships. In the porch delivery of soup there is caring. In closed stores and limited resources there is adaptation to helping our neighbors. There is a deeper sense of community and love.

How do we stitch a new normal?

See you along The Way,

Patty

PS: I wrote this piece, sent it to Sam, and then went back to my emails and work for the day. This piece written by Cameron Trimble (see next page) is more like what I was trying to say. This month the Pastor's Page piece is a two for one deal. May you find some inspiration.

A Word for the Day...

The amazing part of the transformation from the caterpillar to the butterfly is that you have this middle space, the cocooning season, where your body literally becomes mush. You disintegrate. You lose shape. You lose everything that defined you as a caterpillar. You become goo. In meaningful ways, you die to what you were.

But here is the miracle: inside that deathly mush are imaginal cells. These cells hold the vision of a future within them. When all seems lost and nothing that was known can be known as it was, the imaginal cells give us the vision for moving forward. They know that with the right conditions and a little time, a butterfly waits to be born.

We are mush right now. We are messy, fragile, unprotected, insecure, unrecognizable, disoriented, developing, transforming, imaginal beings. We are in that liminal space between what was and what can be. Our becoming something better on the other side of this is not guaranteed. But with the right conditions, with the awakening of people to the beauty of our planet and the intimacy of our connection to everyone and everything, we have the chance to become something new.

Don't dismiss this as flowery language or overly optimistic dreaming. If ever there was a moment for you to become who God has dreamed you to be, it's now. Don't miss the chance. Everything is being made new, especially you.



Rev. Cameron Trimble



MAY BIRTHDAYS

1 Dick Henry
1 Trish Manning
6 Trevor Danford
7 Wade Peacock
9 Taylor Johnson
12 Katrina Smith
15 Joanne Appelhof
21 Sally Moss
23 Marilyn Sheets
25 Bill Bos
26 Sabra Danford
26 Rob Wolowiec
27 Kristine Johnson
30 Lawrence Czap



MAY ANNIVERSARIES

5 John and Barbara Riegler
7 Donald and Jean Voight
13 Michael and Nancy Call
17 Scott and Kathy Neveu
23 Wayne and Marilee Strom

What is BIG Sunday?

BIG stands for Bring In Groceries; groceries brought in on BIG Sundays are donated to Benzie Area Christian Neighbors (BACN) to help provide a meal to those in need. BIG Sundays are the first Sunday of every month — as are Holy Communion Sundays — and are a great way for us to share the love and feast of communion and community.



REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Nancy Reynolds	Dan & Trudi Hook
Pat Forrester	Jordan Suchoski
Helen Pickard	Gaylord Jowett
Elisabeth Case	Joyce & Bob
Geri Thornell	Mike Barnes
Harriet Stone	Family and friends of Patrick Trojanek
Peg & Randy	

UCC SISTER CHURCH OF THE MONTH

As part of our continuing efforts to work together as a community of faith, we pray for UCC churches in our United Northern Association. You are invited to pray this month for the ongoing mission and ministries of Ironton UCC.

FLOWERS

If you would like to supply flowers, please sign up on the sign posted on the bulletin board. You may then bring in your own flowers or donate \$30 to the church to make the arrangements with a local florist.

THANK YOU TO OUR MAY VOLUNTEERS

COFFEE

NURSERY

May 3

May 10

May 17

May 24

May 31

HEAD USHER:

MONEY COUNT:

THANK YOU NOTES

"I would like to thank my friends of First Congregational Church of Benzonia, United Church of Christ for surprising me on my 85th birthday, April 5th. Thanks for all the love you have shown me; the cards, flowers and sweets. A special thank you to Chris Jones and Pastor Patty. It was a wonderful party. Wow!!" —Ann Nordbeck

"Dear Church, Happy Easter Greetings and I wish everyone a very safe and healthy springtime. Thank you for the card." —Miriam

"Dear Patty and my friends at 1st Congregational, I miss you all and continue to include you in my prayers. Christ is risen. We have the promise of eternal life in Him. Hallelujah! Happy Easter! Love in Christ, Joan Cooper"

Check out all of our thank you notes on the bulletin board!

Calendar + COVID-19

Currently, everything at the church remains closed and cancelled. As we all know, this is subject to change with COVID-19 developments. Stay home, stay safe, stay tuned — we'll keep you posted!

MI Conference Happenings

Want to keep up with the Conference? Head to <http://www.michucc.org/> and click "News" in the upper right corner.

May's BACN Focus

Our focus this month is Condiments.

All contributions are welcomed, whether they fit the monthly focus or not!

While BACN is not currently accepting donations of physical goods, you may wish to hold onto contributions until donation collection resumes or support their efforts through financial donations.



Attic Treasure Sale

Hope all of you have been getting some spring cleaning done! We will be making a decision on the Attic Treasure Sale in the middle of May. If it looks at all possible, we will have it on June 27th. It will be good to see all of you!

Circle I

Due to the uncertainty of the social distancing order, Circle I will **NOT** meet in May.

We will try to get together in June at the Cherry Hut on Wednesday, June 17th at 1:00.

Returnables Collection

Christian Education is once again collecting returnable bottles and cans this year. The money collected from the returns will



be used in the fourth quarter to purchase winter boots for the Benzie County Baby pantry. Returnables can be placed behind the door in the large Sunday School room.

2020 Festival of Trees

The 2020 tree for the Festival of Trees will have a "Bloom Where You Are Planted" theme. The tree itself will benefit Habitat for Humanity. As we do every year, we will distinguish our submission as a Tree with a Purpose. Throughout the year, Christian Education will be collecting brand new



underwear, tagged or in the package. There will be a bucket under the coat rack for your donations.

Note from the Trustees

As we go through this time of isolation, we hope that you are well and staying safe.

We understand that this can be a difficult time financially for many of us. We may not be gathering as the church, but we continue to be the church. We ask that you continue to support the work of First Congregational Church of Benzonia, United Church of Christ by mailing your contributions to the church, PO Box 234 Benzonia MI 49616.

With God's love and care, thank you.

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A Joyful Noise May 2020

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BENZONIA, MICHIGAN



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