



# The Fowler Flashes

Volume 61  
Issue 6  
June 2020

My friends, it is my prayer that this letter finds you all well and healthy. We are certainly journeying through challenging times and I am sure that you are all aware of the situation, understanding that this journey is far from over. Nobody at this point can be sure how the coronavirus will respond to the reopening phase of our country. We are surely not in charge of any of that and we have no control over what people will do or will not do.

However, I want you to be sure that the leadership of the United Methodist Church, our conference, our Bishop, our District Sup. As well as all your leadership here at Fowler UMC are taking the idea of reopening our church and returning to in-person worship very seriously. We have formed a team last week that is charged with the when's and how's of doing just that. Of course, we are not making this stuff up, and any plans and decisions we want to make must be guided and affirmed by Rev. Gregg Sealy, our Inland District Superintendent.

I feel that you hear from me enough, and so I am offering this space to our Bishop. I would love for you to read what her thoughts are at this moment and share with you some of the guidelines she has put in place, as well as the 4 + phases we will be journeying thru together over the next few months. Please continue to worship with us, continue to connect, continue to have hope, because we are not alone, and if we are willing to let God use even this stressful and scary time, God will use it for something amazing...That is my prayer.

Peace, René

## **Doing No Harm as We Return We are living through an unsettling time.**

The COVID-19 pandemic has disturbed many of the things we take for granted. It has caused much pain, hardship, and loss, exposing deep inequities woven into our societal fabric. Gathering as a community in-person to worship God, growing deeper in discipleship, and serving our communities in many of the ways we were accustomed may seem minor, but it is profoundly important. We have all sacrificed something for our common wellbeing, and we have worked hard to reimagine both worship and service, ensuring that the critical work of the church continues. People are eager to return to our buildings and the patterns of worship, discipleship, and service so familiar to us. This is natural but we need to walk carefully through the weeks and months ahead. Without a cure for COVID-19, and absent the widespread testing and contact tracing public health officials have repeatedly advised, we all share a new responsibility to not harm. We should also think twice before letting go of all that we are learning these days spent in the wilderness. What new practices and adaptations have we stretched to make? What might God want us to carry forward into this new phase in our lives together? This document is meant to provoke questions and provide guidance for local churches and other ministries as we reimagine returning to our facilities and

|  |   |
|--|---|
| The Pastor's Pen   | 1 |
| Pastors Pen Cont.  | 2 |
| Pastors Pen Cont.  | 3 |
| Birthdays &<br>Anniversaries<br><br>Thank You<br><br>Prayers | 4 |
| UMW News   | 5 |
| Men's Golf<br><br>Church News                                | 6 |
| Music News<br><br>Youth Group News                           | 7 |
| Back Cover   | 8 |

ministry practices. This process will not be akin to flipping on a light switch — it will happen in phases. We won't always move as soon as we are permitted, all activities won't resume at once, and no one should expect things to be exactly how they were. Regardless of where we live, the practices of our local churches will be impacted for at least the next year. Our actions, and those of communities that surround us, can make a big difference in how harmful that impact will be. Creativity and resilience will continue to be blessed resources as we strive to do no harm, do good, and stay in love with God. May God gives us all the spirit of discernment, the wisdom to act with appropriate caution, and the patience to await the good God would have us do. Moving through the requirements for returning States across the United States have adopted phased guidelines for reopening their economies and lifting restrictions designed to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Each of the four states within the Greater Northwest Area is already taking some steps toward easing restrictions, though not at the same pace. The coronavirus has not impacted all communities evenly, and some of this unevenness is outside of science-based guidelines as governors navigate economic, political, and ideological pressures. Reopening and resuming in-person worship for local churches and ministries of the Greater Northwest Area will occur in a four-phase process. Three conditions must be met before advancing from one phase to the next of reopening:

1. Bishop Stanovsky ends or relaxes suspension of in-person worship and building closures, allowing movement to the next phase.
2. State and local public health guidance permits intended activities in the next phase.
3. A local church or organization reopening plan has been approved and implemented by the responsible District Superintendent or Director of Connectional Ministries working under the authority of the Bishop.

Currently, Bishop Elaine JW Stanovsky has extended her "suspension of in-person worship in United Methodist Churches and other ministries and the closure of church facilities to all but essential services throughout Alaska, Oregon-Idaho, and Pacific Northwest Conferences through June 15, 2020." Based upon the best information available, this suspension may be extended further, as necessary to not harm. While this suspension is in effect, local churches and other ministry settings should prepare for the next phase of reopening. Requirement Two The governor of each state is responsible for the decision to reopen their state, easing mitigation efforts and physical distancing requirements as they go. With the governor's consent, some counties or regions may do so more quickly than others, though only with the governor's consent. United Methodist local churches and other ministries must always meet state sanitation and physical distancing requirements of their community, at a minimum. If there is a dispute between local requirements and those required by state officials, the church should err on the side of the more restrictive of the two. If there is significant disagreement between public health officials and political leaders, again, err on the more restrictive side. Requirement Three No United Methodist local church or ministry across the Greater Northwest Area may reopen without the approval of its plan by their assigned District Superintendent or Director of Connectional Ministries working under the authority of the Bishop. Each church and ministry setting needs to prepare a plan for a phased reopening that details how you will address the required ministry and safety-related items identified in this document while also wrestling with other faith-related questions raised by this pandemic. Begin now to plan for reopening and to receive feedback and pre-approval for your plan from your District Superintendent or Director of Connectional Ministries and procure the materials needed for the safe reopening of facilities and return to in-person gatherings.

**The Phases of Safe Reopening** The Greater Northwest Area will be prudent and measured in reopening our churches and ministry sites and returning to in-person worship and gatherings. Four Phases will mark a safe reopening of the local church and other ministry facilities throughout Alaska, Oregon, Idaho, and Washington states. What happens in one location impacts the health of surrounding areas, just as one person's distancing and hygiene practices impact the people around them. While some states may allow faith communities to gather sooner and in larger groups,

than is permitted for other organizations, following our commitment to not harm, United Methodist ministries will not open using this exemption. If infection rates increase in your area, or if you have a high proportion of people in high-risk categories, churches and ministries may need to remain in or move back to a previous phase. While the Greater Northwest Area will continue to closely monitor the statements of public health officials, we may not move into stages as quickly as permitted. We understand that this may create some tension in local communities eager to return to their buildings.

Please know that we are not making these decisions lightly and we review our posture regularly, guided by John Wesley's Three Simple Rules: Do No Harm. Do Good. Stay in Love With God.

### **Phase 1**

Phase 1 began on March 13, 2020, when Bishop Stanovsky suspended in-person worship and other gatherings for local churches and ministry settings. This suspension is in effect through June 15, 2020, and may be extended. A group of 5 or less is permitted to gather in the building to record or produce online worship resources while practicing physical distancing, wearing face masks, and observing other hygiene practices. Each person may remove their face mask while they are speaking during active recording. Consistent with emerging research

(<https://www.wichurches.org/2020/05/08/church-music-covid19>), the production of in-person vocal music is prohibited in facilities. High-touch surfaces must be sanitized after each use. Facilities are closed except for "essential services". Ministries are strongly encouraged to continue or expand creative ways of meeting, serving, and worshipping together, striving to include vulnerable persons making healthy choices to participate in virtual ways.

### **Phase 2**

In Phase 2 in-person worship suspension continues. It allows a group of 10 or fewer to gather in the building to record or produce online worship resources, while practicing physical distancing, wearing face masks and observing other hygiene practices. Each person may remove their face mask while they are speaking during active recording. The production of in-person vocal music remains prohibited in facilities. High-touch surfaces must be sanitized after each use. Access to Church buildings is limited to designated staff, volunteers, meetings, and services. Ministries are strongly encouraged to continue to meet, serve, and worship together, remotely, striving to include vulnerable persons making healthy choices to participate in virtual ways. Phase

### **3 Phase**

3 allows for in-person worship, weddings, and funerals for up to 50 people while wearing face masks and utilizing proper sanitizing and physical distancing. No communion, live singing or food service is allowed, and high-risk populations must continue to worship from home. Outside of worship, access to Church buildings is limited to designated staff, volunteers, meetings, and services. Fellowship and education activities for adults, children, and youth must remain virtual and in-person vacation bible school and mission trips remain canceled.

### **Phase 4**

Phase 4 returns to more "regular" worship and other gatherings with no size limit. High-risk populations are invited to join at their discretion, but churches are strongly encouraged to continue reimagined ways of sharing space, providing meaningful opportunities to participate in the life of the church virtually. With increased hygiene practices communion may be shared and limited "coffee hour" or "fellowship time" may resume. Live singing is still not permitted. Access to church buildings is open while maintaining appropriate safety practices.

### **Beyond Phase 4**

This is a "new normal" that is yet to be determined. This will include monitoring health indicators and guidance from the government and health professionals. It will be important to establish new routines that are more protective of public health and to take forward with us new practices that will make us more resilient if a similar challenge were to (re)emerge. Additional guidance will be provided in the future.

## **June Birthdays & Anniversaries**

1st - Raphael Manirokiza

2nd - Jane Pence

3rd - Wilma Stork

5th - Bev Parrott

6th - Tom Hart

Jordan Thompson

7th - Carol Ring

8th - Lenny & Lorraine Chase

Sam & Marla Cannata

9th - Kim & Jill Berg

11th - Scott & Shannon

Hendrickson

16th - Camden Isabella Ainsley

17th - Tom & Claudia Hart

20th - Wendy Comstock

23rd - Jordan Smith

Vern & Reba Arneson

24th - Tom Knutson

John Vrolson

Bob & Laurie Newell

25th - Sophie Koehler

27th - Maureen Jones

30th - Corbin Walker

Wishing our friends a "happy...",  
a "merry...",  
a "best wishes...",  
and a "blessings..."  
for their special day.

## **Thank You**

Thank you all so much for the Sympathy Cards, My sister, June, and I appreciated your thoughts and prayers for our sister's death.

Sharon Stovall

**If you or your loved ones  
are in need of prayer,  
please contact the office  
to be added to the  
prayer list.**



### **HEALTH/HEALING**

Hillary - health

Family with health issues

Faye Sanford

Linda Stancil - recovering from procedure

### **UPLIFTING PRAYERS FOR:**

Sandy Ballou

Linda, Robert, and Adrian Hammer

Sue Robinson

Our Church and the neighborhood.

The Homebound

All those with Covid-19 and their families.

### **TRAVEL MERCIES FOR:**

Abernathy Family

### **Good News**

Su Walker is in her new home



# Fowler UM Women

Our June Meeting has been canceled due to Covid 19.  
Please take care of yourselves and stay healthy.

From United Methodist Women, a prayer for all of us affected by the coronavirus (continued from the April Flashes):

All seeing God, look upon those who are now living in isolation, those who must be separated from loved ones for safety reasons, those who are single and/or without support systems, the disabled, those who are already living with mental disease, emotional and psychological disorders, those who are poor and already do not have access to health care or social services. Help them know that social distancing does not mean social disconnection. Help us be the community that we seek.

## **Hear us O God of mercy.**

Loving God, hear the cries of those who have lost loved ones to this virus or other ailments and cannot postpone their grief, but must refrain from gathering in order to care for the living, even while mourning their beloved who have died.

## **Hear us O God of comfort.**

Discerning God, touch now those who are in decision-making positions, in governments, churches, corporations, and the like; help them to realize that their choices directly impact the lives and futures of our families, communities, countries and the wider world. Help them choose people over politics and the health of humanity over the wealth of individuals and profiteers.

## **Hear us O God of wisdom**

God of justice, safety and care, we pray for all medical professionals, caregivers, researchers, teachers, first responders, law enforcement, school officials, those making decisions about fighting the coronavirus. For the small business owner, the hourly wage worker, the uninsured, the undocumented and all those who will feel the economic impact of this pandemic on every level. Inspire those in position to develop better tests to diagnose the virus, vaccines to prevent it, and protocols and communication to eliminate the spread. May empathy be our guide.

## **Hear us O God of protection and grace.**

Liberating God, remind us that we are still on the journey with Jesus. Restore our hope, renew our joy and give us your strength and remind us that resurrection will surely come.

## **Hear us O God of grace.**

*By Rev. Dionne P. Boissiere, chaplain at the Church Center for the United Nations.*

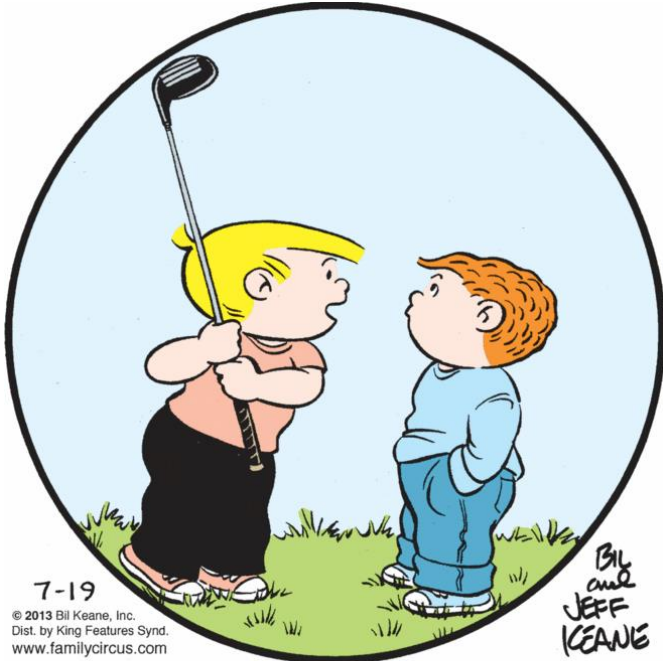
*You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust." Psalm 91:1-2. (NRSV)*

Your local unit of United Methodist Women has given \$250 to the United Methodist Committee on Relief for the UMCOR COVID-19 Response. Since the start of the novel coronavirus outbreak, UMCOR has been working with health boards, medical professionals, disaster management coordinators and faith leaders to prevent the further spread of this disease.

Members of UMW who wish to pay their pledge may send their check to Fowler UMC clearly marked for UMW, or send to our treasurer, Su Walker, 919 W. Glass, Spokane WA 99205.



# YIPPEE Golf Time



**"Golf's pretty easy. You just hit the ball, then lean to the side and say 'FORE!'"**

**We will start on June 1st  
at  
10 am  
At Deer Park.  
Every one is invited.  
We have fun and we are not  
professionals.  
This is our tee time, set in  
stone, until September 30th.  
Hope to see you there!**

Dick Thompson  
Lay Leader



1 Corinthian 6: 19-20

*19 Or don't you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you? Don't you know that you have the Holy Spirit from God, and you don't belong to yourself? 20 You have been bought and paid for, so honor God with your body.*

When I really looked and studied this Scripture it really starts to hit home to me personally. Am I really letting God's Holy Spirit live through me and what's in my way that I can't or will not allow?

Many years ago, I took this Scripture to heart because I smoked and I asked this question to myself if the Holy Spirit is living in me why am I defiling my body with this habit. The other Scripture that helped me was John 14:14

*"When you ask me for anything in my Name, I will do it."*

So I asked, asked, and asked again and after a year the habit left me and I never smoked again. I still ask this question? Is there something in my life that I need to change and if it is in God's will it will be done but don't expect God to do all the work, pray, ask for forgiveness and believe that it will be done.

God Bless



# March Music Notes from Nathan

Greetings, friends,

The Kennedy-Gibbens sends each of you our love and prayers during the time of being apart. Our family misses you all and we look forward to the day when we can safely be back together in person. The past few months for our family has been an unusual blend of being busy in a different kind of way with the reality of fusing school needs for the boys with work needs for Tamara and myself. The boys and Tamara are all now "Zoom" pros (!!!) and are each finding ways to stay connected online with their teachers and classmates. I am so impressed with their resilience and adaptability to learning how to manage their time and responsibilities in the midst of being home all the time! We have kept a spirit of positivity and hope by planting seeds (which are now coming up!), mountain biking on the trails behind the vacant Whitworth University campus, and doing lots of baking! We went through an entire pound of butter in under a week last week! We have also started a family movie list and the next one the might be up for viewing is, "The Call of the Wild."

I want to take a moment to direct attention to two areas of music concentration here at Fowler during this time:

1. Our weekly online worship, and
2. The Songs of Hope music programs on youtube.

## **Weekly online worship:**

I hope you are all finding ways to stay connected with our weekly online worship. Rene' sends a link out to all of us each weekend and all you need to do is click on the link to watch and participate. My thanks goes out to all of you who have participated in this act of worship and in weeks to come I will be inviting some of my music friends to contribute to our worship, as well.

## **The Songs of Hope:**

Session 2 comes out this week so watch your inbox for a link to it. This is a 20 minute music program that I have felt a call to do as another way to stay connected in spirit through this time and to gift you with the sounds of hope through music. Thanks for your support and especially to Pastor Rene' for helping edit and upload our programs to youtube.

God's peace be with each one of you as we continue in faith to look towards a "new day" when we can rekindle being in one another's presence.

Nathan

## YOUTH GROUP NEWS

### **Hi Youth!**



Even though we are quarantines, I can Zoom with some of our youth, once a week. It has been so fun to check in with all of them! Next week we are going on a scavenger hunt! Calling and texting have been a great way to keep in touch as well. We are working on virtual graduation as well! We want to celebrate their graduation and wish them well. I have also delivered boxes of food for our kids' families that are having a tough time making ends meet. I am decorating and rearranging our Sunday School room for children and the hallway. Thank you for your love and support. We have a good variety of kids in our group and we are making a huge difference in their lives.

Shelley

## Fowler United Methodist Church

3928 N. Howard Street  
Spokane, WA 99205  
Fowlerumc@yahoo.com  
509-325-3242



## Fowler Flashes

is published monthly by

**Fowler United**

**Methodist Church**

3928 N. Howard St.

Spokane, WA 99205

(509) 325-3242

Fax: (509) 327-7460

Facebook: [FowlerUnited](https://www.facebook.com/FowlerUnitedMethodistChurch)

[MethodistChurch](https://www.facebook.com/FowlerUnitedMethodistChurch)

[fowlerumc@yahoo.com](mailto:fowlerumc@yahoo.com)

Pastor: Rev. René  
Devantier

Editor: Diane Strobeck

©2019 Fowler

United Methodist Church