

Dranesville UMC Newsletter



Come worship with us on Sundays at 2:00 p.m. virtually via Zoom
Virtual coffee hour following worship on Sundays via Zoom
Adult Sunday School at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom

May Calendar at a Glance

We remain closed for In-Person worship and activities due to Covid-19.



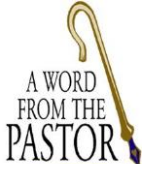
The Bishop directed all churches in the Virginia Conference to comply with the Governor's Stay at Home order; and, therefore all in-person church activities are suspended through June 10. We are checking voicemail, e-mail and the postal mail daily. Please leave a message at the office 703-430-3137 or e-mail office@dranesvilleumc.org.

Starting Easter Sunday, the DUMC congregation has been worshiping online virtually via the zoom video system and others with the call-in audio only option.

*Photo: Easter Sunday at the Rizzo household
(Zoom screen on the t.v. and laptop)*

- Prayer group is meeting virtually via Zoom on Tuesdays at 8:00 a.m.
- Bible Study is held via Zoom on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.
and Thursdays at 1:30 p.m.
- Adult Sunday School virtually via Zoom at 9:00 a.m.

To get connected to any of the virtual meetings, please contact the church office by e-mailing office@dranesvilleumc.org or leave a message at 703-430-3137.



NEW WAYS TO BE THE CHURCH

As I write this, it has been five weeks since we received orders from the Bishop to suspend in-person activities. Her instructions are in line with the Governor's stay-at-home directions which, for now, will carry us through June 10.

Since then, one day has been pretty much the same as another. We have all made adjustments to our routines. For many of you, your dogs may be in the best shape of their lives. There have been opportunities to do some of those chores we have put off until "someday." While many things have shut down, many of us are finding ourselves busier than ever. Candi and her teaching colleagues have been working hard to develop distance learning for their students, while dealing with steep learning curves as they adjust to new technology and the accompanying procedures; all of this as they try to cope with technology that is being stressed far beyond what it was ever intended to do.

I have had to make some big adjustments to how I serve as your pastor. Two months ago, I had never heard of Zoom. Now, it is a primary communication tool. Yesterday, I was on Zoom calls for 2 1/2 hours. Prior to those Zoom calls, I was dealing with one email after another. The minute I left Zoom, I was tied up on two regular cell phone calls for another hour. In one afternoon, I spent more time in electronic communication than I normally would over several days or a week.

As many of you know, we have moved Sunday worship to Zoom; with both a video and dial-in, audio-only mode. The time for worship has been changed to 2:00 pm, in the hope that we will avoid the high traffic times in the morning and keep our signal cleaner. If you miss worship at 2:00, an audio track of the sermon (and a written manuscript), a pre-recorded prelude, a written pastoral prayer and links to YouTube videos of at least two hymns are available on the website. Sermons will be archived for as long as we have sufficient memory.

Adult Sunday school, starting at 9:00 am, has moved to Zoom. If you would like to "attend," please contact Ed Barr, the teacher and webmaster, or me in order to receive directions on how to connect.

In the next week or so, I will kick off Bible study on Zoom - one session on Tuesday evening and one on Thursday afternoon. The study will look in depth at Jesus' teachings in the Gospel of Matthew, starting with the Sermon on the Mount (Chapters 5-7). The Zoom calls will be preceded by some thought questions circulated via email. Once again, if you'd like to participate, please let me know.

With no idea how long these mitigation measures will be in place, we are beginning discussions on how we will reopen in a safe manner. There are many factors to consider.

Will there be an effective treatment for the Coronavirus? Will we have a vaccine? What will be the requirements for social distancing? How will we “do church” under different conditions? These are just a few of the topics we are starting to consider, in order to be better prepared when that day comes (And it will come eventually), that we may resume activities in the new normal that will be with us for quite some time.

I invite you to join with me in praying for those medical professionals who are working tirelessly to treat persons infected with COVID-19; the persons who are infected; the families of those who have lost loved ones to this disease; the essential personnel in the grocery stores, gas stations, banks, power companies, water plants, delivery drivers, and every other job that is necessary to allow the rest of us to remain safely at home. We pray for those who are working around the clock to develop new treatment options and a vaccine. We also lift up our leaders at every level who have the tough challenges of balancing the health of the population with the need to reopen our society. Let’s also pray for one another and seek to remain in touch by whatever means necessary. I look forward to the day when we can gather together for worship, in whatever form. May we all stay safe and healthy in the meantime.

God Bless,
Bill

Dranesville Vision Statement Status

Submitted by Bill O.
Church Council Chair

The group tasked with developing our vision statement met on March 7th. The initial part of the session involved a review of the results of our churchwide discussion groups, as well as a discussion of what makes a good vision statement. The group then spent time developing a description of the context for our vision, including church and community demographics, physical resources, strengths of our church and obstacles to our growth.

Based on these contextual characteristics, the group developed a list of macro components of our vision, and created a rough, first draft of a vision statement. The group was scheduled to reconvene on March 25, with each member having worked on “wordsmithing” the draft. Unfortunately, the coronavirus came along and has disrupted just about everything related to church and church work. Several members of the group have shared their “wordsmithed” vision statements via email, but the process really needs face-to-face interaction to be effective.

As a result, the group will wait until it can meet again in person to complete its work.

Stewardship 102

Jay Link says he can think of no better way to define what stewardship is than with this phrase - **keeping the heart of God at the heart of living**. Stewardship is all about carrying out the wishes of the Owner and the owner is God. We are nothing more than caretakers. In 101 we discovered in Psalm 24:1: "The earth is the Lord's and all it contains, the world and all who live in it."

Which of the following questions should each of us be asking regarding our material possession?

- 1) What do I want to do with my possessions?
- 2) What do I want to do with God's possessions?
- 3) What does God want me to do with His possessions?

Most people answer Number 3 because their minds tell them that it all belongs to God, but this is not the way that most people live. Do we ever seek guidance or direction from the Owner?

- When you bought your last car, did you ask God if this was the car He wanted you to buy with His money.
- The last time you went shopping for clothes, did you ask your Father if these were the clothes He wanted you to wear?

We are all intellectually acknowledging that God owns everything, while we live, spend, and invest like it is our own. The cornerstone of stewardship is full acknowledgement and practice of allowing God to direct what he wants done with what He has entrusted us to manage.

The reality of sin is the result of personal selfishness. We are our own worst enemies. Our life of devoted stewardship is just another example of how "self" gets in the way of God's best for us. We want to be in charge. We want to make decisions. We want to be the one to get things done. We are nothing more than low-level managers and our will and wishes are irrelevant.

Someone once noted that the center of SIN is the letter "I". We will always find "I"-self, ego, always looking out for number one - at the center of sin.

Matthew 16:25 says, "For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for me will find it." Matthew 20:16 says, "The last will be first, and the first last". Matthew 20:26-27 says, "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave." Philippians 2:3 says, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves."

The reason stewardship is so challenging is that we must get "self" out of the way. Remember - **"If you want to be a good steward - you must keep the heart of God at the heart of living."**

** Jay Link is the Chief Steward for "Stewardship Ministries" at Taylor University in Upland, Indiana. To learn more about "Stewardship Ministries" visit their website at www.thestewardsway.org.*

THE QUARANTINED YOUTH UPDATE

Submitted by Karen R.
Youth Group Leader

Karen has checked in with the Smith's and they are all doing well. Mrs. Smith is still working, so that is very helpful. Jarretta said that at first she really missed all of her friends, but now, she has gotten used to the family environment. They all go off to their own 'corner of the house' to do their own thing until about dinner time. Then they come together for the evening. Jarretta is busy with a lot of schoolwork, college shopping, and YouTube. She has been outside for walks and jogs, but nothing else. She calls or video chats with her friends to keep connected.

Constance has been doing schoolwork, drawing, and watching shows.

Michelle is doing better now, after dealing with the fact that school has ended for her as a HS Senior. She has been spending time studying for an AP Lit test, attending school Zoom calls, and researching information on her first semester at George Mason this fall. Outside of school, she has had a new interest in exercise and nutrition, inspiring the entire family to lose weight and count calories. Creatively, she has been singing, painting rocks, decorating hollow eggs, and doing "bullet journal" art.



Rachel has been pretty swamped with school work. It almost seems like the school work has increased, with the thought that the kids have more time on their hands. She really misses being with her friends from school, but has found creative outlets with growing an indoor herb and flower garden, painting rocks, and nature walks.

Picture of "mini-garden"



Youth Quarantine Report cont. -

The Barbers are doing well. Brandon is working from home full-time. Becca is staying busy playing lots of video games, learning to knit, practicing French horn, and learning to play a harmonica. She cooks dinner with her dad now and then and just recently climbed a tree to hang a bird feeder.

Grace has been mostly busy with schoolwork. Both mom and dad are working full time at home, so they each work in their own areas of the house. She jogs about 1.5 miles 5 times a week, bicycles with her dad, and watches Netflix with her mom. She also has painted small canvases and put 1000-piece jigsaw puzzles together.



Clara has been enjoying her family all being at home. She is busy with school work, painting small canvases, reading, and taking walks.



The Phillips family is doing the best they can with Beth confined to her bedroom and fighting Covid 19. Both of her parents have been tested for the virus and are negative! Praise God! She is still presenting a low-grade fever and fatigued. Once she is symptom free for 3 days, then she can reconnect with her family, but until then, she is like Rapunzel and locked away in her bedroom. (Update: Beth is recovering well – continued prayers appreciated)

Julia is just finishing finals week for her college semester. She is very happy to have some free time now to indulge more in the arts. She is teaching herself to play the flute, practicing the saxophone, painting, and spinning rifle (color guard).

MISSION UPDATE

May 24 – LINK Food Drive - Thank you to so many of you who participated in our drive-and-drop Food Drive for LINK in March and April. We collected a record number of items to help fill LINK's pantry shelves to help local families in need.



Our next contactless drop off date for Even-4-Others will be on Sunday, May 24, 2020.

Drop off under the portico by the door between 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

LINK appreciates all non-perishable pantry staples, baby diapers and wipes, paper products and cleaning supplies.

THE CLOSET STATUS: The Closet temporarily closed on Wednesday, March 18, 2020, at 5:00 p.m. due to the coronavirus. The closure applies to both the retail sales floor and the donation intake area. There will be no shopping nor will donations be accepted at The Closet during the temporary closure. The Closet will re-open once the community spread of this coronavirus is no longer a serious concern. Employees are continuing to be paid during this closure. Please check The Closet's website, <http://theclosetofgreaterherndon.org/>, or Facebook page for status updates. The Closet of the Greater Herndon Area, Inc., greatly appreciates your understanding and patience. We are forever grateful for the support we receive from the community for donations, volunteers, and shoppers, and hope to see you when we can re-open.

UMCOR COVID-19 Response

Since the start of the coronavirus outbreak. Now it is clear that the impact of COVID-19 will be far-reaching and demands a greater response.

The new UMCOR COVID-19 Response fund will equip Methodist partners in the U.S. and around the world to assist our most vulnerable populations. Grants from this fund will be disbursed quickly and efficiently to address health concerns, food insecurity, water and hygiene limitations and other pressing needs.

If you would like to make a donation to the **UMCOR COVID-19 fund**, please make a check payable to Dranesville UMC with UMCOR Covid 19 on the Memo Line. You can mail it to the church. Or if you would like to use our online payment option, go to our website and click on the GIVE button in the upper right-hand corner. <https://dranesvilleumc.org/>

FAREWELL TO WENDY

As I write this, it is hard to believe that four years have passed since Wendy Wallace became the administrative assistant at DUMC. By the time you read this, she will be leaving that position within a matter of days. She has rendered this congregation a great service in so many ways. Wendy is leaving us to move with her family to Texas where her husband Bryan's new job will take them.

She has been the voice and face of the congregation for anyone who called or came to the church during weekday working hours. She was always friendly, courteous and went out of her way to provide assistance to anyone who needed it.

Wendy added new features to the worship bulletin to enhance its appearance. Each week there were new pictures (photos, paintings, icons) on the cover to highlight the week's emphases. Clip art was inserted in other places to highlight events, prayer concerns, etc.

In her first week, Wendy was "thrown into the deep end of the pool," as we dropped everything to prepare for the funeral of long-time member Colleen Button. She put together the funeral bulletin and helped to coordinate many other details of the service and reception which followed. The experience she gained would pay off. This was but the first of many funerals and other occasional services for which she provided invaluable support.

We have hosted a number of seminars and workshops to which our neighbors in the surrounding community were invited. Wendy worked with the presenters to ensure their support needs were met, set up the venue, provided refreshments, and made sure that invitations were circulated in as many community publications and electronic bulletin boards as possible.

Wendy used several means to ensure the entire congregation, as well as persons who might be interested in the church, were kept well informed. She reworked the church website and made it much more attractive and timely. It is also much easier to navigate.

Wendy took sole responsibility for editing and producing the monthly newsletter. She enhanced the format and included all ministry areas as contributors. Both the website and the newsletter have garnered favorable comments from members and guests alike.

Much of what Wendy did went unseen by most people. She prepared and assembled the final copies of all the required documents for annual and special charge conferences; prepared and submitted the annual request for registration of our trustees with Fairfax County; prepared and followed the progress of several documents related to property transactions which occurred during her tenure; ensured the data submitted to the Annual Conference regarding attendance, giving, membership changes and many other details was accurate and timely and so many other tasks.

As if this wasn't enough, Wendy had a knack for knowing who among our homebound members could use a card or note. She took the initiative to maintain regular contact with them; something which has, no doubt, been a comfort to them during this pandemic.

The last, and one of the most significant contributions Wendy made to DUMC was to recommend her replacement. Almost as soon as she announced she would be leaving (several months ago), Wendy mentioned Sharon Cantrall, a woman Wendy had come to know through their respective leadership roles in Girl Scouts. After some preliminary conversations and an interview, Sharon was hired and Wendy's recommendation will help to ensure that we have a smooth transition in the church office. You will learn more about Sharon in the coming weeks.

While I, obviously, have worked more closely with Wendy than anyone else, I know I am safe in saying that DUMC is a much stronger congregation as a result of her service. The entire DUMC family wishes you God's blessings in all that life in Texas holds for you and your family.

With many heartfelt thanks,
Bill



Welcome Sharon!

We are pleased to welcome Sharon aboard as our new Administrative Assistant in the front office. Sharon is a long-time member of the Methodist Church and brings a strong skill set to support the church in the Admin position.

*The church office e-mail address has been changed to office@dranesvilleumc.org Please add it to your contacts.



SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS via Zoom begins at 9:00 a.m.
If you would like to join, please contact the church office via e-mail at office@dranesvilleumc.org to get connected.

The Upper Room (Daily Devotional Prayers) is making their May/June edition available for free via download from <https://www.upperroom.org/news/1060>. This is an option for those who are able to access the internet.

Blessings and Thank You

Thanks for the technology that lets us communicate and gather even from afar and to the Barrs that are supporting our efforts for virtual worship.

And now a Special Note from Wendy: *I would like to thank all of the members of this congregation for welcoming me into the DUMC family. It has been a pleasure working in the front office as the administrative assistant. In four years, there was not one day that I did not want to go to work. There were busy days, running late days, tired days, but never a day that I didn't want to go to the office. How many people can say that about their job?*

I am grateful for special help that I received (tech, computer, website etc) from members in the church – you know who you are. And for members who graciously supported my efforts by showing up to morning coffee, a community yard sale or an event that I planned. And to all of you for your wonderful example of what "faithful" looks like.

Most of all, I want to thank Pastor Bill for being a super person to work with every day. I always felt valued, respected and appreciated for my contributions. I have grown personally, professionally and spiritually because of his mentorship.



*Springtime at DUMC!
Photo courtesy of Susan Gray*