



The Messenger

Monthly Newsletter of
Hillcrest United Methodist Church

May 2020

From Pastor Kerry

My dear congregation,

It has been so long since we have met together. I miss you! I pray that you are able to connect with friends and family during this time; physical safety is important, but so is spiritual safety. It is not healthy for us to be alone - God's decree (Genesis 2:18). If you find yourself feeling despondent, unattached, or hopeless, please reach out - you have people who want to hear from you.

I have been thinking about all the ways that Jesus reveals himself to us. 1 John 2:28 says, "And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming." I think that sometimes we get so caught up in our loneliness or in our trouble that we forget that we do abide in him. When we abide in ourselves, our problems, our sense of abandonment, our loneliness, we are, in essence, stepping out of the abiding presence of Jesus. I am not making light of the seriousness of isolation; I am calling us to see Jesus through the isolation.

I mentioned in the worship service this past week that you as a congregation have been increasing your donations to our foodbank, Church Community Services, every month this year. In January we donated five pounds of food, in February, twenty-eight pounds of food, and in March, forty-two pounds of food. I do not know the numbers yet for April, but I know that we donated well over a hundred pounds of food which we dedicated Sunday. Furthermore, you brought a heaping shopping cart full of supplies for the Grace UMC Paper Pantry as well as over seventy facemasks. Oh, and six members of Hillcrest who had struggled to find masks were able to receive the masks that you skillfully created. Thanks be to God! These are some of the concrete, observable ways that we can see Jesus at work. This is how we know that he abides with us, and likewise, we abide with him.

Be watching for information from the Ministry Council soon on the procedures for reopening our building for worship.

In Christ's Abiding Presence,

Pastor Kerry

**From State Representative Doug Miller:
Scammers use COVID-19 fears to steal personal, banking info**

During this public health emergency, scammers are preying on virus-related fears to obtain personal or banking information from victims.

Fraudsters are offering work-at-home schemes, student loan repayment plans and debt consolidation offers. Small businesses are also being targeted with calls about funding or loans and online listing verifications. There are reports of hoax text messages and scam robocalls offering free home testing kits, promoting fake cures, and selling low-priced health insurance.

Federal stimulus checks have brought out scam calls, texts and emails about verifying personal or bank account information so the bank may release funds. It's important to understand that no one from the government would ever call or text for that information. During this public health emergency, scammers are preying on virus-related fears to obtain personal or banking information from victims.

To protect yourself and loved ones from potential scams, be mindful of these tips provided by the Federal Communications Commission:

- Do not answer calls or texts from unknown numbers;
- Never share personal or financial information via email, text message, or over the phone;
- Be cautious if you're being pressured to share any information or make a payment immediately. Hang up and call the utility company directly to verify it is one of their representatives; Scammers often spoof phone numbers to trick you into answering or responding;
- Do not click any links in a text message. If a friend sends a text with a suspicious link that seems out of character, call them to make sure they were not hacked; and
- Always research a charity (for example, by calling or looking at its actual website) before donating.

Hoosiers who believe they have been a victim of a coronavirus scam should contact law enforcement immediately. They may also file a complaint with the Indiana Attorney General's Consumer

Redirecting our thoughts

What am I grateful for today?

Who am I checking in on or connecting with today?

What expectations of "normal" am I letting go of today?

How am I getting outside today?

How am I moving my body today?

What beauty am I either creating, cultivating, or inviting in today?

Message to Lifestyles Class Members

No one would have imagined when the Standard Lesson Quarterly for March, April, and May on "Justice and the Prophets" was started the first Sunday in March that we would only be able to meet for two of the lessons. Now "BC" has another meaning . . . Before Corona!

During my time in Florida, I heard great reports that you have all been communicating with each other and offering support and encouragement during this unprecedented time. Many prayers have been uplifted on behalf of others and God has heard our every prayer!

We are all extremely anxious to get back to church and fellowship; however, we also know that it must be in a very different manner for the safety of all. So what does it mean for the Lifestyles class?

The Ministry Council will be meeting sometime the first week or so of May to determine the guidelines that will be used for worship attendance, once it starts up again. That will be the first step of the process. Thereafter, upon recommendations by the Ministry Council, we will address if, and how, our Lifestyles Class can meet again . . . either in a different location to allow for proper social distancing or through an online Zoom meeting. If so, class members will be given specific instructions on how to participate. In the meantime, I'm looking for a new study to use when we can begin meeting again.

Remember to be in His word through your daily devotions and in prayer for the future days of dealing with COVID. In an e-mail I received from Rev. Saneta Maiko, our Conference Superintendent, he shared:

The world has experienced numerous plagues/pandemics and epidemics throughout history. Whenever faced by a pandemic or epidemic, we tend to think this is the first one or we will never get through this. That is not true. The alternative is possible. Our history shapes how we respond to current circumstances. Let us respond with what the Bible teaches us "For the Spirit God gives us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline."

(2 Timothy 1:7 NIV)

I encourage all of you not to be timid, but to allow the Holy Spirit to give you the power, love, and self-discipline to face whatever is needed to get through this difficult time. We must trust God's plan, as He remains in control. Together, as believers, we will conquer this and give all honor and glory to Him!

Blessings to all,
Patty Moore

May's Mission of the Month

LOT 2545

The name Lot 2545 comes from Matthew 25:45. It says, "He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for the least of these, you did not do for me.'" Lot is an abbreviation for "least of these" and 2545 is from the chapter and verse in Matthew.

Amanda Jones is the founder of Lot 2545. After spending ten months in Uganda, she realized God's calling in her life to help older boys living on the street. As a result, she returned to the US to begin the paperwork needed to establish Lot 2545.

Vision: They hope for a Uganda where every child is loved and valued by his family in a self-sustaining household.

Integrity: Their aim to always do what is best for the boys. God has brought these boys to them and entrusted them with their safety and well-being and will keep their best interests in mind when making all decisions.

Service: They are built on the foundation of serving the least of these in Uganda and dedicated to doing so, for whatever we did not do for one of the least of these, we did not do for him (Matthew 25:45).

Justice: True justice is a significant need in all of Africa, including Kampala. They seek justice for the oppressed. They seek a more sustainable future for the boys by providing education, vocational training, and employment. Their hope is for each to become happy, fruitful members of their community (Matthew 25:22-23).

Thank You,
The Missions Committee



Thank you to all who have been so gracious regarding the guidelines we've had to put in place during this COVID-19 situation. We are committed to providing as safe and as healthy an environment as we can for those families we are serving. They have expressed to us their appreciation. At the time of this printing, we are still unsure of our reopening date.

Please pray for wisdom, health, and strength for us as we maneuver through this challenging time.

—Lori Loucks, Director

Scoutmaster Minute

by Ronn Foster

Although we are social distancing, our Scouts still wanted to camp out (in the rain, I might add.) They decided to camp virtually with each Scout camping in their own back yard and meeting via video chat. When it came time for the campfire program one Scout sang "Scout Vespers" for the group. I want to share the lyrics with you.

Softly falls the light of day,
While our campfire fades away.
Silently each Scout should ask
Have I done my daily task?
Have I kept my honor bright?
Can I guiltless sleep tonight?
Have I done and have I dared
Everything to be prepared?

Such powerful words! "Have I kept my honor bright?" "Can I guiltless sleep tonight?" Wow! Imagine living by a code that is so powerful that the last thoughts before turning in for the night is whether we lived by our code.

We as Christians have a code, too. We need to protect our honor as well. Matthew 22:37-40 tells us:

37 And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. 38 This is the great and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. 40 On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

This evening ask yourself. . . Have I kept my honor bright? Can I guiltless sleep tonight?

May Birthdays

2 Stuart McGowan
5 Donna Evans
15 Diane Lewandowski
16 Lind Harman
17 Julie Lininger
21 Gilbert Clear
31 Mike Woodworth
Morgan McGowan

May Anniversaries

2 Carol and Mike Woodworth
3 Sharon and Dave Teeter
Jackie and Ray Squires
5 Kay and Arthur Kentgen
27 Bev and Larry Slaughter
30 Martha and Harry Sims

Please let the office know if your special day was missed.

HILLCREST WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Circle of Friends Stamping Ministry

Due to the situation we are experiencing, our group has not been meeting. We miss meeting on Tuesdays, but hope we can get back together soon and bring you some new greeting cards. We had enough in our account to be able to send a \$200 donation to Church Community Services which, I'm sure, was a help to them. It's a reminder that when you buy one of our greeting cards, it helps somewhere within our own community.

Some of you might remember Kathie Pickering. She was the one who introduced us to stamping. Please keep her family in your prayers as she passed away last week. And please continue to pray for our small group, our church, and our country. And be sure to check out some new cards when we all get back together.

—Marilynn Anson

The Mat Makers

(Sleeping mats for the homeless made from plastic bags.)

2nd Wednesday each month

9:00-app.-11:00 a.m. in the HeBrew Café

Martha Sims and Mary Herschberger, Co-Leaders

Our 33rd sleeping mat was donated to Guidance Ministries in April. Congratulations to all who have contributed!

Thanks to all who worked at home in April, trimming and flattening used plastic bags, cutting 2-1/2" strips, looping the strips together and loosely winding them into balls, and crocheting the strips into mats.

I now have a large supply of trimmed and flattened bags, ready to be cut into 2-1/2" strips. If you would like to cut some strips, please let me know, and I'll deliver a stack of trimmed bags to your doorstep (and smile at you from a distance).

I'll also bring you a supply of strips if you'd like to be looping and making balls at home.

I'm sorry that we can't be sure when we'll be able to meet again, but I'm grateful that we have a valuable project to keep us busy during this "down time," however long it may last. Stay well, everyone.

Martha Sims

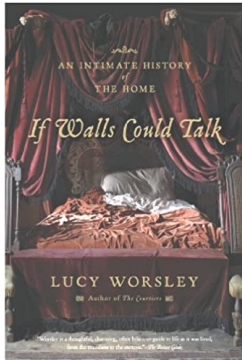
(574) 264-9740 (home) or 596-4918 (mobile)

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Hillcrest Women's Book Club

Thursday, May 28, 6:00 p.m.

Diane Lewandowski, Leader

*If Walls Could Talk**An Intimate History of the Home*

by Lucy Worsley

You who watch *Downton Abbey* or others (Victoria!) of the English historical pieces on PBS will recognize Lucy Worsley as the woman who leads us on tours of houses. History and houses and manners of living are her specialty. When she talks or writes, it is with friendly humor, so that the viewer or reader is present in whatever century or within whatever walls.

The reader of this particular book will be obliged to stop ever so often to proclaim, "Wow, I didn't know THAT," or "Oh, so that's why we do that...." Much of the book is about English customs and house history, of course, but Americans get their turns, too. After all, our house history doesn't go back to the 1200s or thereabouts.

The subtitle "An Intimate History of the Home" lets the reader know early on that the intimate details of living in the centuries we can catalogue are included....some the reader may laugh at....Henry VIII seems overly concerned with his chamber pot, but, it seems, so were his courtiers, who were to report to the people whether Henry was in good form.

The status of women through the ages, the class distinctions felt necessary to maintain the houses of gentry with serving people, the rise and fall of decor, the problems of heat and light....all are described with just enough detail to never become boring.

Housebound as we have been these months, this may be the book that will suit the moods.

All readers are welcome to participate in the Hillcrest Book Club meetings. We talk and laugh, like and dislike the books....but we listen to all opinions! A fun hour on a Thursday evening in the Hillcrest welcome center (narthex). (While that statement is usually true, in these times we are "talking" by email. Join us by checking out our email addresses with Diane.)

L.I.F.T. (Ladies In Fellowship Together)

1st Tuesday of each month – 9:00 a.m.

Perkins Restaurant (107 N. Pointe Blvd., Elkhart)

As you know, L.I.F.T. is temporarily suspended due to COVID-19 restrictions. We will let you know when we're able to meet again in person.

Hillcrest United Methodist Church

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Trustee Co-Chairs:

Gari Lewandowski, Harry Sims

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Lori Loucks, Director

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WEEKLY SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:30 a.m. Traditional Worship

10:30 a.m. HeBrew Café fellowship

11:00 a.m. Adult Studies

12:00 p.m. El Refugio Church

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

JUNE NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: *May 15*