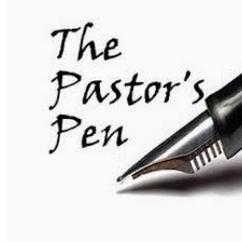


FAIRPLAIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

MAY 2021 NEWSLETTER

Jacob said, "...truly to see your face is like seeing the face of God..."
-Genesis 33:10



Dear friends,

Thousands of years ago, two brothers named Jacob and Esau were estranged. They had been apart for over fourteen years, and when they finally met again, Jacob said that seeing his brother's face was like seeing the face of God.

When we had our outdoor congregational meeting last year before the weather got cold, I quoted that verse. It was so good to see so many of you in person then.

It has been over a year since Governor Whitmer's order moved us to online-only worship, but we are finally back together with in-person worship. It was such a gift to see those of you who felt comfortable coming to in-person worship last Sunday (written April 21, 2021).

Speaking of gifts, by tomorrow (well in the past by the time you read this) it will have been two weeks since I received my second covid vaccine, and I am waiting on guidance from state, local, and church authorities on when I am able to start doing pastoral visits, particularly visits without a mask. I cannot wait.

Friends, we are well on the way to beating this. If you have not yet gotten your shot and have not heard from your doctor that you shouldn't, I would encourage you to schedule one. If you're not ready to come to in-person worship but are joining us online or with our CDs, I'm so glad you're a part of our church family. And if you feel safe coming to worship in-person, I would be tickled pink to see you.

Blessings,
Rev. David Schell

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

PRAYER REQUESTS

If you have prayer requests that you would like to leave as a voicemail to be played on Sunday morning, you can call 269-332-1118 to leave a message, and we will play it on Sunday morning.



Please join our virtual coffee hour at 10:45am Sundays. You will receive a link if you are subscribed to our email newsletters. You can subscribe at <https://www.fairplainpc.com/newsletters/>.



MAY BIRTHDAYS

3: Kristen Robinson	18: John Hodgson
9: Sondra Sheppard	24: David Schell
9: Bud Cornelius	28: Drew Mulligan

BABY ANNOUNCEMENT

Adalaide Elizabeth, born to Meaghan and Theo Viebke, on March 26, weighing 7 lb. 7 oz. and 20 ½" long. Maternal grandparents are Erik and Carrie Gilreath and maternal great-grandmother Leslie Gilreath. Congratulations to the entire family!

DEATHS

Prayers for the family of Orv Harju – Orv passed away April 7
Prayers for the family of Sonja Stormo – recent death of Sonja's mother, Margaret Ann Kangas
Prayers for the family of Jill Wendel – recent death of Jill's grandmother, JoAnne Keuhl

MUSIC NEWS

Page 3

Greetings to all from Psalm 150:3-6

“Praise Him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise Him with the harp and lyre. Praise Him with tambourine and dancing, praise Him with the strings and flute. Praise Him with the clash of cymbals, praise Him with resounding cymbals. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.”

The following music groups and individuals uplifted our worship experience in April:

April 04 – Family Slavujevic Chimes & Bells and Vocal Ensemble

April 11 – The Praise Band “Wherever Two...”

April 18 – Family Urakpayev, voices, guitar and piano

April 25 – Cael and Cavan Johnson, pianists

Even though our Easter Sunday was still on-line “live-streamed” without the congregations’ presence, my family performed extra music to celebrate Christ’s resurrection. We sang 2 vocal songs and 1 instrumental / vocal song.

On Sunday, April 18 after more than one year, we had visitors in our Sanctuary during the service. More about that Sunday you will read from other Newsletter writers. We feel that our lives are slowly becoming more normal seeing familiar faces in the church. Hope the situation will further improve and we will see even more people on Sundays.

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Here is an interesting article about a great hymnwriter Isaac Watts (1674-1748). He wrote the lyrics for the following songs found in our church hymnal: # 40, 78, 100, 101, 126, 172, 210, 229, 230, 253, 288, 362, 423. This article is adopted from Randy Petersen’s book “Be Still My Soul”.

PART ONE

Sometimes it takes the audacity of a teenager to challenge long-held habits. Young Isaac Watts had a problem with the music at his Congregationalist church. This was the late 1600s, and English churches were stuck in the psalms. More specifically, they were stuck in a hundred-year-old psalter that jammed klutzy English translations into awkward rhythms. Isaac loudly complained to his father, who was a deacon in the church. As the story goes, his father said something along the lines of, “Do you think you could do better?”

Of course, the brash young man said yes. He delivered a new song for the next Sunday, and it went over so well that he was asked to write more. In fact, he supplied a new song every Sunday for the next two years. And that was just the beginning of his songwriting career. He is credited with more than 600 hymn texts, many of which remain standards of English-language hymnals to this day.

Continued on Page 4 ...

MUSIC NEWS CONTINUED ...

We can laugh about his youthful bravado, but we mustn't underestimate how courageous Watts was. People were dead serious about their religion. At the time Isaac Watts was born, in 1674, there had been about a century and a half of religious warfare throughout Europe. His mother's family had fled France to escape anti-Protestant violence. His father had been imprisoned twice for his dissenting views against the Anglicans. (His mother stood outside the prison singing psalms, with baby Isaac in her arms.) These struggles were about power and territory and culture and revenge, but they were also about doctrine and ways of worship. Things had calmed down a bit by the time Isaac was writing a hymn a week for his Dissenter church, but there was still some risk involved. People who stood up against the old ways sometimes got burned. Literally.

(To be continued)

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May God bless us all, grant us wisdom, protection, guidance, good health, prosperity, and opportunity to be a blessing to others.

Vladimir Slavujevic
Director of Music



MAY CLERK'S CORNER

It was wonderful to see many of you on Sunday, April 18, when we reopened the sanctuary for worship.

We will continue to wear masks for the foreseeable future, but to not sing as a congregation. We will continue to hum in worship. Session talked about how some of you are gathering in each other's homes, or meeting at restaurants to share a meal, so we decided that we may as well let people sit with whomever they would like to sit with in church. If you are vaccinated, you may sit with vaccinated people.

Some people are not vaccinated, they should not sit close with anyone but other family members. Please monitor yourselves.

We will keep the front pews closed to seating so that Pastor David and the liturgist can go without a mask when they speak. Also, any special music will be from the Chancel so that we have 30 feet between the singers and the people in the pews wearing masks. A singing voice carries up to 27 feet.

Our current membership is 78 people. Orv Harju entered the Church Triumphant on April 7, 2021. Orv and I share a birthdate, so I could always look forward to a birthday greeting from him on the Sunday nearest our birthdays.

We have been given an opportunity to host a program called YouthWorks this summer. The young people are in high school, and come to an area of the country where they work together on projects to help the community and people within that community. I will list some of the high points of their visit.

1. Each week up to 70 young people will arrive on Sunday afternoon by 4:00 and leave Friday morning by 9:00.
2. They must have a Covid test prior to arrival, and now that vaccinations are available to ages 16, I'm going to assume that being vaccinated might be one of their requirements.
3. They will use our entire building as they will be eating, sleeping and worshipping here. At the end of each day of work, they will go to the Y to take showers, then return here to prepare their evening meal.
4. They will clean up everything daily, and will leave the building as they found it at the end of the week.
5. Their supervisors will be college-age adults with a ratio of one adult to seven teens.
6. There will be four staff members who will remain in our building all summer.
7. YouthWorks provides compensation for utility bills like water, electricity, and trash.
8. They have insurance for liability and our insurance company has been consulted.
9. The staff will come May 27, and the first group will arrive June 6. The last group will leave July 30. The staff will leave on August 2.

We have applications for any congregational members that need some work done by a crew.

In Your Service,

Marlene Smith, Clerk

SECRETARY SUPPLY



While Linda is on vacation, the following ladies will be in the church office. The church office will be open from 9 am-noon and closed in the afternoon on the dates listed below and closed on Tuesday, May 4 & May 11, and Wednesday, May 5, and May 12.

Thursday, April 29 – Amy Reutlinger

Friday, April 30 – Amy Reutlinger

Monday, May 3 – Linda Zitta

Thursday, May 6 – Leslie Gilreath

Friday, May 7 – Judy Kuhlman

Monday, May 10 – Linda Zitta

Thursday, May 13 – Amy Reutlinger

Friday, May 14 – Amy Reutlinger

Monday, May 17 – Judy Kuhlman

MISSION STATEMENT

We, the members of Fairplain Presbyterian Church, rejoice in God's grace and redeeming love through Jesus Christ. We believe we have been called as God's children to create an open and welcoming community, to worship and praise God, and to nurture and support each other. We are called to develop our God-given gifts and to equip ourselves to reach out to the world in love and compassion. Thus prepared, we will share our faith, preach the gospel, feed the hungry, and be peacemakers according to God's will.

DEACONS

These Days Request: If you would like a copy of the current January – March These Days devotionals, please contact the church office and speak to Linda.

YELLOW PEW ENVELOPES

The yellow envelopes have been reprinted for your donations toward Deacons General/Funeral Fund and Food Pantry/Soup Kitchen and are in the pews. Since we're not worshiping in the church building until the stay-home-stay-safe order is lifted, you can just make a note in the memo line of a check mailed to the church.

Deacons General Fund:

Goes towards the purchase of communion cups, oil for candles, Advent wax candles, flowers for shut-ins (Christmas and Easter), printed support materials for members: These Days devotional, Care Notes (various topics), greeting cards and postage for members; CD players for shut-ins.

Deacons Funeral Fund:

Goes towards any funeral luncheon expenses that are not reimbursed by the family.

Checks for donations to the Deacons General Fund and/or Funeral Fund should be made payable to Fairplain Presbyterian Church. Include "Deacons" in the memo line.

CHURCH STAFF

The Rev. David Schell, pastor@fairplainpc.com

Linda Cogswell, Church Secretary – church email: office@fairplainpc.com

Vladimir Slavujevic, Director of Music – email: vladimirslavujevic5@gmail.com

Muyu Zou, Pianist – email: Ranking1zou@gmail.com

Jody Pauley, Nursery Attendant – email: jodypauley1@gmail.com

Jenna McAllister, Treasurer – email: jennabetz@comcast.net

Jill Wendel, Financial Secretary – email: jillannwendel@yahoo.com

Bud Cornelius, Custodian

