



The Messenger

United Methodist Church – 2210 Sixth Avenue East, Alexandria, MN 56308

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Mission: To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world

Vision: To Grow and Live in the Spirit of Christ

April 2018

Editor: Kali Kaeter

A Note from Pastor Craig

Life and death have been on my mind recently. With Spring hopefully just around the corner I am eagerly looking for signs of life returning to the west-central Minnesota countryside. Watching my grandchildren grow and develop I am amazed by their energy and vitality. I also make a point of watching carefully for the many signs of life in our church and the people here.

Yet death is always present or as the hymnwriter says: “Change and decay in all around I see.” As many of you know my mother recently entered hospice and the end of her life gets ever closer each day. Recently a number of people in our congregation have died and others are experiencing rapidly failing health.

How are we to think about life and death and especially during the next ten days when we will commemorate the death of Christ and celebrate his resurrection? I recently stumbled across some words by Thomas Merton, which help me to put things into perspective.

Here is what I understand him to be saying in *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*, pages 233-235:

- We are born into a wonderful and amazing world. It is an existence we have not chosen, it may seem (at times) to be meaningless, and it includes a death we cannot evade.
- Humans respond to this ambiguity in a number of ways. Some flee from ourselves, falling into a world of distraction and busyness – an “aimless immersion in public opinion or action.” Others pretend to live as though we will not be touched by death, seeking to remain the master of our own destiny and of the world – “spending one’s life evading the reality of death.”
- To respond in either of these ways is a refusal of life. It is an “abdication from the difficulties and sorrows of living, a resentment of (true) joys. Those who fear death or who long for it (a pathological death wish) admit they have not lived.”

So then, how to respond, to the reality of life and death? Merton’s answer is full of hope. “At the heart of the Christian faith is the conviction that, when death is accepted in a spirit of faith, and when one’s whole life is oriented to self-giving so that at its end one gladly and freely surrenders it back into the hands of God the Creator and Redeemer, then death is transformed into a fulfillment. One conquers death by love – not by one’s own heroic virtuousness, but by sharing in that love with which Christ accepted death on a cross.”

And this isn’t just about how we die, it is about how we live as well! “The Christian is not concerned really with a life divided between this world and the next. He is concerned with one life, the new life of Christ in the Spirit, both now and after death. We do not ask for the blueprint of the heavenly mansion. We seek the face of God, and the vision of Him Who is eternal life. (John 17:3).”

It is snowing as I write this, but I saw a robin just now, so Spring is out there waiting somewhere! Our life in Christ and with Christ means we experience the “Spring of New Creation” in all seasons of our life. I hope you have a joyous Easter!

Pastor Craig

Published by Alexandria United Methodist Church

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Custodian: Denise Dropik

Organists/Pianists: Alli Prestby

Nursery: Karen Murphy and Emma Reilly

Worship Attendance

	2018		2017	
Service	1st	2nd	1st	2nd
Feb. 25	32	44	52	79
Mar. 4	66	75	62	66
Mar. 11	41	67	52	61
Mar. 18	72	84	43	67

Office Hours

Pastor Craig — M-W-F (9:00-1:00)

T-Thurs (9:00-1:00)

Kali — Mon-Tue-Wed-Thurs-Fri

Office is open (9:00-1:00)

Kayla—Tuesday (9:00-3:00)

Wednesday (11:00-5:00)

Thursday (9:30-2:30)

Brenda—Wed (5:30—8:30)

Thurs (12:00-4:00)

Reminder that we are following our Safe Sanctuary Policy—the church entrance doors will remain locked unless there are two people present in the building. Please call ahead before you come to church, as there are times when we are not in the building, even though we are working. Also, most days someone is in the office before 9:00 a.m. and later than 1:00 p.m.

Parish News

Happy Birthday to:

Gerry Olson, who will be celebrating his 80th birthday on April 9th!

Joyce Martin, who will be celebrating her 80th birthday on April 30th!

Publication Date for the next *Messenger*:

is the last week of March. Articles for the May issue need to be in the office by NOON on Friday, April 20th.



In your prayers, please remember all in positions of leadership, people serving in dangerous and difficult settings, returned and returning service people and their families, all who seek and await peace.



Nursery is available on Sunday morning during worship services and coffee fellowship time. Nursery is for children 5 and younger. If you have an older child and need a place to go with them during worship time, the Youth Room is available. There is a speaker in the room to listen to the sermon. Toys are available in Cart Two.

CARE TEAM VISITORS are available to provide personal support to church members in times of special need.

These may include hospitalization, rehabilitation, family crisis, or senior home visitation. The **CARE TEAM** is a compassionate, volunteer ministry of our congregation. Call the church office to request a visit (763-4624).

Annual Spring Rummage Sale: Saturday, April 28 7AM—2PM

The annual rummage sale will be held a bit later than usual this Spring—MORE TIME TO CLEAN OUT YOUR CLOSETS, CUPBOARDS, DRAWERS, GARAGE, ETC.

Everyone is encouraged to donate clean spring/summer clothing, games/toys, small household and other miscellaneous items. Computers, printers, monitors, TV's are not accepted. Please bring items in small/average size boxes/bags. Clothing may be on hangers.

Tables will be set up in Fellowship Hall on Wednesday night after the children and youth events conclude at 7:30. Items for the sale may be brought to church on Thursday, April 26, from 8 AM – 8 PM and on Friday morning until noon. Please try to place your items close to the tables where they will be displayed (signs will be on the tables). If you are unable to bring your items Thursday or Friday, there will be a few tables set-up along the back wall starting Monday, April 23, for your drop off convenience.

Donations and help from church members are very much appreciated. We especially need volunteers to help pack up after the sale and set up for Sunday morning. Proceeds from the sale support local, national and worldwide missions of United Methodist Women. Contact Sally Vano (846-0661) or Sue Rishavy (763-7991) if you have questions or wish to volunteer. Thank you.

You may notice a price change for the bag sale this spring. The price for a filled grocery bag from 7:00-11:00 will be \$7 for the first bag and \$5 for each additional bag; from 11:00-1:00 the first bag will be \$5 and \$4 for each additional bag; from 1:00-2:00 each bag will be \$1.00. Items in the entryway that are individually priced will be reduced at a graduated rate after 11:00. Any items left after 2:00 will be donated to Someplace Safe and Disabled American Vets.

Native American Ministries Sunday: On **April 15th**, we will be collecting a special offering for the Native American Ministries Sunday. The gifts to the Native American Ministries Sunday provides scholarships for United Methodist Native American seminarians, strengthen and develop Native American ministries and communities, both urban and rural, and support Native American outreach at the annual conference level.



Monday, April 16th is the Adult Fellowship Group Spring Social. Meeting at Fat Daddy's at 5:45 PM. Order from menu as before. Need at least 25-30 to reserve the private dining area. Please notify Helen Glade if you wish to attend.



Saturday, April 28th is the Mother Daughter Luncheon at the Alexandria Senior Center, 414 Hawthorne St., at 11:30 AM. Lunch, fellowship plus music by Missy Radermacher and Daughter Catherine. It's HAT DAY this year. Wear one if you have one. For more information, please contact Helen Glade 763-3031. Tickets are \$13.00 for adult, 10 & under tickets are \$6.00.



CALLING ALL GARDENERS! Fellowship Gardens is once again offering their 4'X8' raised garden beds to church and community members for the 2018 growing season. Our 2017 gardeners have had first chance at reserving a bed; we open additional beds up to any new gardeners interested. Feel free to contact Heidi Ryan (theryanfamily@charter.net) or call 320-815-2275 if you or someone you know is interested.

Health Kits: Health Kits provide the basic necessities to people who have been forced to leave their homes because of human conflict or natural disaster. They are distributed by UMCOR to people in over 80 countries including the United States. The need for the kits is on going and there are times when UMCOR's supply of health kits has been depleted. Last year, thanks to your generosity, we delivered 216 health kits to Annual Conference. So once again, we bring this need to the attention of our congregation as a missionary giving opportunity. By purchasing the items for the kits in larger quantities, we are able to maximize your giving. Therefore, rather than having you purchase items for the kits, we encourage you to make a monetary donation. We will then purchase and assemble the kits for delivery to the Annual Conference on May 30th. If you would like to make a monetary donation, make your check payable to Alexandria UMC and note "Health Kits" in the memo section of your check. All donations need to be received by Sunday, April 22nd.—Missions/Social Concerns Team.





VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Family VBS is back this Summer! It will be held from 5:30PM to 7:30PM on June 25th & 26th and July 2nd & 3rd.

Kick-Off Sunday is April 22nd. We will share more about the Shipwrecked theme and the children will be singing during the 10:30AM worship service.

Supply requests and volunteer opportunities for youth and adults will also be posted on April 22nd.



EASTER EGG HUNT

Our annual Easter Egg Hunt was on Saturday, March 24th. It was a HUGE success because of your generosity!

Thank you to everyone who donated candy and trinkets for the eggs, brought food for the brunch following the egg hunt, gave their time stuffing the eggs or helped at the egg hunt, and for your prayers. We couldn't have done it without your help.



KIDS FIGHTING HUNGER

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our packing event on Saturday, March 17th. We were able to package 4,104 meals that will be sent to Sierra Leone. The children's Sunday school offering, youth group offering, and congregation donations totaled over \$750! This check was brought to KFH during our packing event.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

In April we will begin our unit called *Go and Tell* where the children will hear the stories of Paul and the early church in preparation for Pentecost in May.

Anchor Point: Go and tell about Jesus.

Bible Verse: *"He began to preach about Jesus in the synagogues.*

'He is God's Son,' he declared.

Acts 9:20



FAMILY FUN NIGHT

Save the date for our next Family Fun Night on Friday, April 20th. We will have supper at 5:30PM with activities to follow.

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

After Easter we will resume Wednesday night activities for children in 3rd-5th Grade. We will have supper at 5:30PM with activities to follow until 7:30PM.

April 2018 Youth Ministry Newsletter



Youth Group Pizza Fundraiser will be April 13th from 5 pm –7 pm.
Pizzas will be made in the Community Bread Oven.
Cost will be \$8/pizza. Invite the whole family!!

We are having a Lock-In on April 13th from 7 am to 7 pm. There will be food, games and other activities. We are still looking for adults to help with the lock-in. You do not need a child in the Youth program to be able to volunteer! Let Brenda know if you can help out.

SAVE THE DATE



The Spring Bake Sale is April 28th in conjunction with the UMW Rummage Sale. Watch for sign up sheets!!

Just a reminder that Confirmation Retreat is on April 21st and Confirmation Sunday is May 6th.



As part of a fundraiser for Kids Fighting Hunger the Youth were challenged to raise \$100 in three weeks so they could get to pie Brenda on Pi Day (March 14). They met the challenge and had a messy but fun time being rewarded!

APRIL VOLUNTEERS

Liturgists:	8:00	April 1 & 8 —Darlene Lunemann	April 15, 22, 29—Tom DeWitt
	10:30	April 1 & 8 —Marsha Haugen	April 15, 22, 29—Shawn Reilly
Ushers:	8:00	April 1, 8, 15—Pat Vickerman, Scott Johnston, Vickie Johnston	
		April 22, 29—Carol Meyer, Dave Morgan, Karen Morgan	
	10:30	Kim Tryggeseth, Julie Schmidt, Greg Dropik, Lars Dropik	
Greeters:	April 1	8:00—Aaron & Brenda Thomson	10:30—Bruce Jordan
	April 8	8:00—Ted & Geri Zabrosky	10:30—John & Lori Mingus
	April 15	8:00—Jerry & Jeanne Miller	10:30—Helen Glade
	April 22	8:00—Roy & Connie Good	10:30—Jim & Marge Jensen
	April 29	8:00—Dennis & Helen Dischler	10:30—Rick & Nancy Christensen
Acolytes:	April 1	8:00—TBD	10:30—TBD
	April 8	8:00—Payten Kor; Abigail Kor	10:30—Lars Dropik; Jolie Tung
	April 15	8:00—Grace Evink; Abby Evink	10:30—Carter Erlandson; Lars Dropik
	April 22	8:00—Colton Cavers; Jackson Cavers	10:30—Brooke Stender; Gavin Olson
	April 29	8:00—Abby Evink; Desiree Galbraith	10:30—Chloe Loch; Olivia Reilly
Coffee Servers:	April 1	Easter Sunday	Organists/Pianists:
	April 8	Jim & Kathy Bridenstine; Tami Miller	April 1— Gale Maxwell
	April 15	Darren & Tess Evink; Brad & Jackie Vogt	April 8—Alli Prestby
	April 22	Richard & Nancy Christensen; Bob & Jackie Olson	April 15—Margaret Kalina
	April 29	Rolly & Kay Kortlever; Chuck & Sharon Holm	April 22—Deb Parrott
			April 29— Lonnie Kriel
Nursery Workers:	April 1—TBD	April 8—Emma Reilly	April 15—Emma Reilly
	April 22—TBD	April 29—Alex Anderson	



3 Mel Nomsen	12 LaVonne Goodell	21 Bill Glade
4 Brynne Pass Kelli Stember-Tung Bryce Vogt	13 Mike Bristow Todd Dirkes Larry Mills Riley Runnoe	22 Isabella Vogt Kaylee Vogt Bridgitte Witt
5 Ann Heydt Tony Primus	14 John Rolin	24 Nevin Brede Gale Maxwell Muriel Smith
9 Gerry Olson Marti Stember	15 Keith Mounsdon Bea Swenson	25 LaDonna Schake
10 Betty Springman Maureen Winger	17 Phyllis Mounsdon	27 Easton DeGier
11 Nicholas Schlapkohl	18 Jim Jensen Dean Lindstrom	29 Bob Rishavy
	19 Tehya Haburn	30 Joyce Martin Heidi Ryan
	20 Dave Battey Donna Phillips	



April Parish Health News

Combine spiritual practice and exercise for a healthy heart

People often look to maximize the benefits of their diet and exercise regimens to make every minute they spend in the gym as beneficial as possible. A new study says that combining two common exercises can drastically help do just that, at least when it comes to lowering heart disease risk factors.

The study by the American College of Cardiology, says that when people with heart disease practiced yoga in addition to aerobic exercise, their blood pressure, body mass index and cholesterol levels went down twice as much as patients who practiced either one alone.

In total, researchers looked at 750 patients who had previously been diagnosed with coronary heart disease. Each was assigned yoga and/or aerobic exercise sessions. Those who did either exercise alone saw similar reductions to the various risk factors, but both were dwarfed by the combined group.

As people of faith, we know that our spiritual practices of prayer, meditation, and centering are powerful ways to connect with our God and find peace. Turns out that these practices help protect and heal our hearts, as well!

Current life expectancy in the United States is 79 years. Only about 20 percent of our genes determine how long the average person lives. This means that our lifestyle and environment will greatly shape our health and happiness in later years. While we cannot control our genes, we are in control of how our genes express very often by our habits and certain environmental factors.

One key thing that we can do to keep our hearts healthy is to keep our stress levels down. Exercising, staying engaged, eating a healthy diet and spending time with friends and family are all ways that people can relieve stress, as stress can exacerbate health issues.

She offers these additional four tips for keeping stress in check:

Learn to accept that life brings constant change and that there are many things that you cannot change or control.

Don't let fear take over and control your life.

Be aware of your limitations. Don't overextend yourself.

Know what you cherish in life and make those things a priority.

Prayer: *God, who is bigger than anything we can imagine, may we connect ever more deeply to the peace and stillness that we find in you. AMEN*

(Some information taken from Advocate HealthCare)

Judy Lightowler, MS, RN, CLM PN
North Star District Parish Nurse
metlight@eot.com
(218)298-0786

Mark your calendars for
May 1, 2018 for the
Annual May
Day Salad
Luncheon!



If you have a couple hours a month to give to your church, consider helping our Finance Team by assisting in counting the weekly offering. For more information, please contact the church office.



April 2018

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

<p>1 Easter Sunday</p> 	<p>2 Office Closed</p>	<p>3 9:30 B&P 2:00 Prayer Group 3:00 Bible Study 4:30 Book Study</p>	<p>4 5:30 3rd-5th & Youth Supper 6:00 3rd-5th Grade Activities 6:00 Confirmation 6th-8th & Youth Group 9th-12th 7:30 Youth Advisory Meeting</p>	<p>5 1:00 CARE Team 6:00 Worship Meeting</p>	<p>6 12:00 Staff Meeting</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10 9:30 B&P 9:30 Coffee Group 2:00 Prayer Group 3:00 Bible Study 4:30 Book Study 5:30 BHNP Open House</p>	<p>11 5:30 Trustees Meeting 5:30 3rd-5th & Youth Supper 6:00 3rd-5th Grade Activities 6:00 Youth Group 6th-12th</p>	<p>12 9:00 April Seminar Streaming 6:30 Children's Ministry Team Meeting</p>	<p>13 12:00 Staff Meeting 5:00 Youth Pizza Fundraiser Youth Lock-in</p>	<p>14 Youth Lock-in</p>
<p>15</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17 9:30 B&P 2:00 Prayer Group 3:00 Bible Study 4:30 Book Study 5:30 Missions Team Meeting 6:30 Church Council</p>	<p>18 5:30 3rd-5th & Youth Supper 6:00 3rd-5th Grade Activities 6:00 Confirmation 6th-8th & Youth Group 9th-12th</p>	<p>19 9:30 Joy Circle</p>	<p>20 5:30 Family Game Night</p> 	<p>21 9:00 Youth Confirmation Retreat</p>
<p>22 VBS Kickoff Sunday Children Sing at 10:30 Service</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24 9:30 B&P 2:00 Prayer Group 3:00 Bible Study 4:30 Book Study</p>	<p>25 5:30 3rd-5th & Youth Supper 6:00 3rd-5th Grade Activities 6:00 Confirmation 6th-8th & Youth Group 9th-12th</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28 7:00 Spring Rummage Sale/ Bake Sale</p> 
<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>					





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Return Service Requested