

Joyful Notes



Pastor's Message

Grace and peace be with you!

I know that this past two months has been a trying and deeply frustrating one at times, as well as a time of discovery, as we have learned to live in the midst of a global pandemic. We have been cooped up. We have felt dislocated. We have been bored and comfortable, as well as inconsolable and confused, sometimes at the very same time. After the past two months (plus a little bit) of staying at home, our worlds feel really unsettled.

As I am writing this, we are also beginning to experience and see the growing unrest due to longstanding patterns of police brutality among the communities of color in the United States. It adds to our sense of unsettledness, and, yet, we are called to look the uncomfortable truth in the eye.

Psalm 46 has been one of my favorite comforting psalms in the past of couple of months, in part, due to the images we have in it of the foment of the earth. It is heaving, mountains are disintegrating, the sea is rising, foaming, and retreating again, likely

redrawing coastlines. Things totter and melt, and, yet, the people are held within the city, wrapped in and completely marinated in the presence of God. Marinating is a strange metaphor, but it works. When God's spirit is the very breath in us, you can't help but be marinated in the divine presence. They are grounded. They are in a steady place. They are safe. They are fully in the presence of God.

It has been a difficult time for us to remain grounded and steady, but I have seen you do it. I am proud of how I have seen you rise to the occasion. I have seen those who are not as email fluent, take it up again. I have seen several people start to venture into using social media of few different sorts, both Facebook and its messenger app, and Zoom, for meetings and worship. You guys have been worshiping using YouTube, and calling to check in with each other. I have seen you guys start to find your steady spot amidst the change. God is with you, and will continue to help ground you.

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Please mail in your weekly offering

Keep in mind that the church still has monthly bills to pay during this time of shelter in place.

At this time there isn't revenue coming in from our building use groups as well. Sue Hicks makes a deposit of offerings each week.

Thank you for giving by mail!



Wednesday Webinar with the Bishop Offered Weekly

Bishop Elaine JW Stanovsky, along with other Conference leadership and local church clergy and lay people, offer fellowship, inspiration, and practical guidance for ministry in these days in a weekly webinar on Wednesday mornings.

Join us Wednesday, June 3rd as we continue to explore "Ministry in the New Normal: Our church life beyond the COVID-19 Crisis, part V.

For the fifth installment of this webinar series, we will continue conversations about the guidelines for reopening entitled, "Reimagining Life Together" and some of the questions around implementation.

The webinar is anticipated to last up to 90 minutes. The webinar begins at 9 am PDT. Clergy and laity from across the Greater Northwest Area are invited to participate.

Let's Connect Opportunities with Rev. Tim Overton-Harris, Cascadia District Superintendent

For Cascadia District Clergy and Lay Pastors

Since we are still working through this time of pandemic, these conversations will continue through June (and perhaps longer).

DS Tim Overton-Harris is scheduling an online Zoom gathering at 7 p.m. on Monday evenings for us to be together in real time. Even if we can't be together physically, we can be face-to-face all at the same time using our tech tools.

As before, these gatherings are not mandatory. You are free to participate or not as you deem best for you.

Our conversation will continue to include a brief devotion, information about what is happening in the district, conference, episcopal area and denomination as a whole, time for questions, an opportunity to share prayer requests and God-sightings, and we'll close with prayer together.

Our time together will last no longer than an hour.

The Zoom link for each Monday evening gathering will be the same: <https://greaternw.zoom.us/j/578945668> We will begin at 7 p.m.

Hoping you will be able to join online, but if you need to join by phone, you can call 1-699-900-6833 and enter

meeting ID 578 945 668 when prompted.

These gatherings are currently scheduled for Mondays June 1, June 8, June 15, June 22, and June 29.

For Cascadia District Laity

Our time together will last no longer than an hour.

We will be using an internet service called Zoom. You will need either a computer with internet access or a phone (either land line or cell phone is fine) to participate. If you are unfamiliar with using Zoom, you can read about how to join a Zoom meeting by clicking here. (First are instructions for internet use, and then instructions for phone use.)

The internet link to access each Tuesday evening gathering will be the same: <https://greaternw.zoom.us/j/365818412>

If you will join by phone, call 1-699-900-6833 and enter meeting ID 365 818 412 when prompted.

We will begin at 6:30 p.m.

Gatherings are currently scheduled for Tuesdays June 2, June 9, June 16, June 23 and June 30.

Please share this invitation with your families and others you think might be interested.



JUNE BIRTHDAYS
June 4 - Mary Ann Ylipelto
June 13 - Carolyn Hammer
June 17 - Christine Carpenter
June 29 - Judy Johnson

JUNE ANNIVERSARIES
June 4 - Carol & Dave Prichard
June 18 - Len & Christine Carpenter
June 22 - Thal & Carole Anderson

THANK YOU

On behalf of Astoria School District, I want to thank you for your generous donation of \$1,500.00 towards gift cards to help our community families during this time of need. We have many families in need that will benefit from the gift cards.

Thank you,
Craig Hoppes

Calling & Care Phone Tree

The Calling and Care Phone Tree is intended to check in with church members to see how you are doing. Are your needs being met? Do you need help with someone picking up groceries for you?



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There is a very particular pain in this unusual time, and is the pain of saying goodbye when we cannot do so face to face, or as we would like. I miss

seeing your faces. I miss your hugs, and jokes, and when you talk back during the sermons. Physically distanced is not the way I wanted to say goodbye to

you. Fortunately, Michele Tompkins-Barr and I have been thinking about how to do that. Details will be forthcoming, and we will have some kind of opportunity to say goodbye around June 14th, which will be my last Sunday worshipping with you.

You have the wonderful joy of being able to welcome Rev. Avila when he joins you in July. Remember that, and, as a favorite hymn of ours goes, "in our end is our beginning... in the seed an apple tree..." You are having your own resurrection with

Rev. Avila, embarking on a new life in so many ways. You will be getting to know someone who also loves you. You will be hearing and experiencing new things. You will, at some point start worshipping together again, and it will be very different. Good, likely very good, and still very different.

Be well, and of good cheer. I love you, and am still praying with you.

Blessings,
Pastor Rebecca

Reimagining Life Together: Guidelines for re-opening churches

Bishop Elaine Stanovsky released the "Reimagining Life Together" document for churches to use as they ponder how they will occupy their church space under new COVID-19 health and safety guidelines and restrictions.



"Reimagining Life Together" aspires to provide guidance on the requirements and recommendations for local churches and ministry settings to reopen buildings and return to in-person ministry activities during the COVID-19 crisis.

"Reimagining Life Together" is a living document subject to change as new information is received about the virus and the best practices to mitigate its spread. We will periodically update this document with modest changes in the interest of perfecting this work. Pastoral leaders will be notified if and when significant changes are made. In both cases, the front page of the document will provide information noting the date of the latest revision.

You can download "Reimagining Life Together" document at <https://greaternw.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Reimagining-Life-Together.pdf>

Worship Suspension and Building Closures Extended through June 15, 2020

As bishop of the Greater Northwest Area of The United Methodist Church, I am extending the suspension of in-person worship in United Methodist Churches and other ministries and the closure of church facilities to all but essential services throughout the Alaska, Oregon-Idaho and Pacific Northwest Conferences through June 15, 2020. This early in the phased reopening process, data on the spread of the virus is inconsistent and inconclusive. This date allows two more 14-day periods during which to assess whether COVID-19 cases are declining or increasing. Our churches will be on the leading edge of protecting public health, but not be on the leading edge of reopening at the risk of increasing exposures, infections and deaths.

- Bishop Elaine JW Stanovsky



Astoria First United
Methodist Church

1076 Franklin Avenue
Astoria, OR 97103

Request Service Requested

**Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the governor's stay in place order,
the church office and all activities at church have been suspended until further notice.**

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Pastor Rebecca.

Bishop: *Elaine Stanovsky*

District Superintendent: *Tim Overton-Harris*

Pastor: *Rev. Rebecca Patterson*

Administrative Assistant: *Lynette Vollmer*

Astoria Lay Leaders: *Chuck Albright & Sue Hicks*

Finance Chairperson: *Sue Hicks*

Lay Member to Annual Conference: *Mary Frances Gunn*

Visit us on Facebook!

Web site: www.unitedmethodistastoria.org

Church Office: 503.325.5454