



THE CROSSWORD

Manahawkin United Methodist Church
116 Stafford Avenue
Manahawkin, NJ 08050 (609-597-7666)
www.manahawkinmethodist.org

May/June 2020

Open Hearts
Open Minds
Open Doors

2020 WALK WITH JESUS



I think that I shall never see.

A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest.

Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,

And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in Summer wear.

A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;

Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me

But only GOD can make a TREE

By Joyce Kilmer

NOTE: DUE TO THE CURRENT COVID-19 HEALTH SCARE,

ALL SCHEDULED EVENTS ARE TENTATIVE.

PLEASE CONTACT THE EVENT COORDINATOR FOR VERIFICATION.

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2020: Walk with Jesus

To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they

do not know the voice of strangers. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; (John 10:3,4,5,27)

I am sure you would agree with me. Pets, either bird, cat, or dog, would recognize their owner's voice. Once I watched a video of about 12 dogs, all quietly seated in front of their own food dish. It's dinner time. They are patiently waiting for the owner's call, *You can eat now*. As soon as they heard the owner's voice, *Go*, they all started eating. Not only that, when done eating (seems only a minute), they all, one by one, in line, brought back their empty dishes to the owner. What a training, I thought!



I too have a pet in my household. A cat. A 5-year-old feral cat that we adopted a couple of years ago. Her name is Sunny. She was very sheepish and cautious when she came to my family, especially with me. My family thinks that she might have had a bad experience with a male figure. It could be. Anyway, over time, she began to loosen

up with me. She gradually allowed me to pet her on the head (only for a few seconds, though). It gets better. Now, she recognizes my voice. When she is upstairs in her own bed, as soon as she hears my voice calling her name, she jumps out of her nest and comes down running. It delights everyone in my family. Especially, me. Now, I can say that I know my cat and that she knows my voice and listens. That delights me.

Jesus talked about the same thing two thousand years ago. The relationship between Him and His flock (the followers of Christ). He says that His sheep know His voice and follows Him whenever He calls them. They listen and follow Him wherever He leads to. They don't know anyone else's voice and never follow the stranger's call.

The question each of us must ask is this: Do I know His voice? Can I tell His voice from that of strangers? Do I follow His will and not the voice of the world?

Let's be assured once and for all. Christ is our Shepherd who laid down His life for us. Everyone who belongs to Him knows His voice and follow Him. They don't follow any others. Let's not be deceived, because there are many voices out there calling us to follow them. We do not know, recognize, or follow them. We only know Jesus our Good Shepherd and follow His lead every day.

See you at church.

Kyewoon



MUSIC NOTES BY VEL

Thank you for my many notes of appreciation. My thanks to all who have been willing to provide special music for our on line services. If any of you would like to volunteer to do so, please contact me. My prayers go out to all of you, your families and friends, that you will remain healthy and that we will soon be able to worship together. I especially ask you to pray for our Bell Choir Director, Joe DelVecchio, who has contributed many many years of service to our congregation by directing the Holy Spirit Ringers. He and his family are in our constant thoughts and prayers.

May the Blessing of God Almighty: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with each and every one of you. Till we meet again.



A Coronavirus Prayer

Jesus Christ, you traveled through towns and villages "curing every disease and illness." At your command, the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love.

Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care.

Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbors from helping one another.

Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders.

Be with the leaders of all nations. Give them the foresight to act with charity and true concern for the well-being of the people they are meant to serve. Give them the wisdom to invest in long-term solutions that will help prepare for or prevent future outbreaks. May they know your peace, as they work together to achieve it on earth.

Whether we are home or abroad, surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or only a few, Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare. In place of our anxiety, give us your peace.

Jesus Christ, heal us.

(From America magazine, 3.20.20)



Past Events:

We miss all our children and their families from the Sunday School! Being apart has certainly not been easy, but we are doing our best to stay connected to one another! Normally, we would share past and upcoming events and provide updates on all the fun things we have been doing. However, we decided to switch it up this time, and reflect on the kids themselves, and what they have been doing since we have been apart! It goes without saying that we have the most thoughtful, caring, loving and AMAZING kids in our program, but when we heard what some of them have been up to, we couldn't help but to burst with pride!

So, we'd like to share what a few of our students have been doing over the past few weeks!

Alexa and Brenna Seubert have been staying connected to family by making signs and having a window Birthday celebration for their Aunt who is in Tallwoods Care Center!



- Jared and Lucas Files have reached out to residents and staff at Mystic Meadows Nursing Home by sending them pictures and fun messages of support!



- Kyle Prusik made origami crafts for **ALL** 110 residents at the Mystic Meadows Nursing Home!
- It took him 12 hours!

And these are only a few of the incredible things our kids have been doing to help others and to stay connected. We are so proud of all of our Sunday School children and how they continue to make people smile and bring joy into the lives of others. They are all shining examples of God's Love!

Stay tuned as we continue to share other stories and examples of what the kids have been up to!

Hello again to our families!

Every few months, I make submissions to the Newsletter of our church called "The Crossword", which normally includes all the fun and exciting things we are doing in Sunday School or other important information.

For our latest publication, I'd like to ask you to please share with me anything you may want to include which your child (ren) may have done or are working on since we have been apart!

It could be as simple as them reading the Bible or doing Bible Study, watching the sermons online or reading a Bible story, saying their prayers or even lending a hand around the house. It could be that they have sent a letter to a nursing home or made something to say "thank you" to those on the front lines. It could be that they wrote a letter to a friend or a loved one whom they haven't see in a while to simply say "hello" and stay connected. The list goes on...

If there is something special or helpful or kind or thoughtful which you would like me to share in the newsletter, please let me know in any format (picture, short paragraph, etc...) and I will compile and submit.

If you could send it to me over the next day or two, then we will be able to get it in for the next publication. I apologize for the short notice, and if it doesn't make it into this publication, we will certainly put it into the next one!

Thank you all and keep sharing away! I'd love to hear from all of you and send out a slide show of our own so that we can continue to feel connected while we must remain apart. I miss all your smiling faces! Sending love and hugs to you all!

Normally, events of May and June would be attached, but due to the situation, all I would say is "All meetings are suspended due to the Covid-19 lockdown until further notice."

God Bless,
Marissa Barry



Manahawkin United Methodist Women

Because of the coronavirus epidemic, all meetings and events have been cancelled through June, which include the Annual Sub Sale, the Vendors Fair, the Annual Mother/Daughter Covered-Dish Supper, and End of the Year Indoor Picnic. Our speaker for April 14 Marian Whetstone, has been tentatively rescheduled for October 13.

The MUMW Executive Board is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, August 11 at 10 AM. This meeting might be done by Conference call. Stay tuned for an update over the summer.

By all means, stay well.

In CHRIST's Love
Eileen G. Mahan, President



The Scholarship Committee met via phone April 27th to review three applications and to set the amount of the scholarships. The applications were accepted, and each recipient will receive \$550 on or about June 21, "Scholarship Recognition Sunday", pending receipt of "proof of admission" from their respective college/university by June 12th.

Congratulations to Danielle Basland and Rilley Kalsch, recipients of the Emily Eismann memorial Scholarship. Also, congratulations to Krista Paciello, recipient of the Edward W. Jones Memorial Scholarship. We wish our young scholars much success in their chosen fields of study.

Many thanks to all who have contributed to the Scholarship Fund. Your on-going support is very commendable.

Submitted by
Eileen Mahan and Phyllis Woehr
Scholarship Co-Chairs



There are several options for sending in your offering during this virus crisis.
A. Take your pledge to the Church during office hours Monday, Wednesday, Thursday between 9 AM and Noon.
B. Mail your pledge to the church
C. You can also give online through Conference Giving portal at <https://www.gnjumc.org/onlinegiving/>. District is "Northern Shore" and Church Number is 5041.)

Help Wanted



**Greeters,
Ushers**



**Candle
Lighters**



Readers

Contact: Don Estelow dhestelow@aol.com
kyewoon choi pastork.choi@gmail.com

**Please make a special effort to keep your
Offerings up to date. Send to MUMC
116 Stafford Ave, Manahawkin, NJ 08050**

RETIRED

(Thoughts to live by)

by Kenneth Schorr

Some years ago while still working, I was what may be called bi-vocational; I had two careers at the same time. One was in engineering the other as a licensed Preacher and Lay Pastor with another denomination. Now retired, while I have the time to do what I want and when, there is still a career that is never ending, that needs to be done in some way; every day. Bringing the love of God through Jesus Christ to the community; addressing their hurts and needs with both mercy and grace!

On the Cross, nearing death, Jesus looks to heaven and says, "It is finished." His mission here on Earth was over. That's when your job and mine, if we call ourselves Christian began, and will not end until we go home to be with Jesus. There is no retirement from serving the Lord no matter who you are or how old or whatever your past. We all have been given a gift from God; there is something that you can do no matter how small it may seem. Now! It is not about what you did for Him yesterday! What are you going to do for the Lord today and in the tomorrows? And just because we give financially to the church, letting someone else do what we (you) should be doing is not being the Christian we claim to be! Try reading Mt. 25:31-46; there is a lot you can do! A lot that still needs to be done!

When a person retires it is important that goals be established. I do not mean sitting in front of the TV 24/7 or playing golf every day. Without goals, no hope; without hope, no future. Sadly there are those who, without goals, seem to retire from life. This can lead to other problems such as depression or other medical issues, impact even their marriages. They exist, not living; often blaming others for the problems they themselves have created! Still others become so self centered, thinking only of themselves, that they ignore the real world around them; even their spouse and family. That's not what God intended! God has a plan for them and you (Jer. 29:10! You have a God given gift; use it! What if God were to "retire" from loving and forgiving us; from not wanting to have a relationship with us? There would be no hope, no future; only despair beyond more than we can imagine!

No one knows when their time will come but when it does and we (you) stand before God as we all will, what would you rather hear God say, "What have you done for Me and for the Least of These (no exceptions), or well done good and faithful servant; welcome?" Your choice! The clock is ticking for all no exception!

IT'S UP TO YOU

One song can spark a moment,
One flower can wake the dream.

One tree can start a forest,
One bird can herald spring.

One smile begins a friendship,
One handclasp lifts a soul.

One star can guide a ship at sea,
One word can frame the goal.

One vote can change a nation,
One sunbeam lights a room.

One candle wipes out darkness,
One laugh will conquer gloom.

One step must start each journey,
One word must start each prayer.

One hope will raise our spirits,
One touch can show you care.

One voice can speak with wisdom,
One heart can know what's true.

One life can make the difference,

You see, *It's Up to You!*

(Source Unknown)



SEE US ON YOUTUBE

KYEWOON CHOI



DOWNLOAD THE BIBLE ON YOUR PHONE:

<https://play.google.com/Bible App> (free)

Matthew 5:45

"That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

King James Version (KJV)



Poet's Corner**COVID-19 AFTERNOON**

Norma Paul

Fifteen minute trading halt
All time record losses
Wash your hands.
Pantry open at SPCA
Wash your hands frequently
Supplemental spending bill
Making sure our first responders
have everything they need.
Wash your hands.
Navigating your health
Err on the side of caution
Wash your hands.
If we under-react it could cost us
suppressed immune system.
Wash your hands.
No large gatherings
Relays cancelled.
Feeling uncertain, even anxious
Wash your hands.
Important to balance that
with stress reduction.
Presidential debate between two men
No audience
Avoid gathering in groups of ten or more
Take-out service only.
Wash your hands.
Halt all non-essential business activities
Live day to day.
We do not make these changes lightly.
Happy hours all cancelled.
Mobile testing sites not equipped for the masses.
Developing grant and loan programs.
Working from home.

Message from Bishop Schol | A Hard Fought Hope: A healing and a thriving GNJ during COVID-19

We know that affliction produces perseverance, and perseverance produces character and character produces hope, and hope will not disappoint us. -Romans 5:3

We have hope! Hope in Jesus Christ; hope in the disciples God has gifted GNJ with; hope in the clergy and congregational leaders who have stepped forward and said, here I am, use me during COVID-19.

COVID-19 is an affliction, an affliction that requires perseverance. Perseverance fuels innovation, which produces resiliency and progress. Progress produces hope and together, with that hope, we will spread the Good News of Jesus Christ while working together to flatten the impact of COVID-19 and ensure zero infections from United Methodist activities.

Amazing Hope, Amazing Grace.

Look at what hope in God has done in six short weeks.

1. Moved more than 500 congregations to worship online.
2. Enabled every congregation to give their offering online through the GNJ website. Presently 40% of our churches are using our online service.
3. Increased GNJ worship attendance by 15%.
4. Provided to our congregations a two-month holiday for shared ministry apportionments.
5. Helped more than 300 congregations apply for the CARES Act Pay Roll Protection Program that has already raised more than \$6 million in funding for GNJ congregations.
6. Moved all GNJ staff to work remotely except three essential employees.
7. Expanded the Miracles Everywhere Campaign to include COVID-19 to assist congregations and their ministries and to provide food and other emergency services for people in our communities. On May 5 I shared with you a \$5 million expansion plan of the Miracles Everywhere campaign and the path to feed people and sustain mission and ministry because when people hurt, United Methodists help. Our perseverance, our innovation, our resiliency produces a hope, a hard-fought hope. God is counting on us to be difference makers in our communities. God has a future with hope through you and me!

This hope takes flight on the wings of leadership. Already during the early weeks of COVID-19, we witnessed one of the greatest moments of clergy and congregational leadership in the history of United Methodism. We witnessed pastors fighting through insurmountable challenges, persevering to embrace technology, moving people to meaningful online experiences to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ and engage people in worship and ministry.

We saw congregational leadership that stepped up to learn new technologies and systems to help spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We witnessed disciples stepping up to try new ways of worshiping and serving.

With God, all things are possible for those who are willing, in the midst of affliction, to persevere, innovate and practice resiliency so that hope comes to the afflicted, the anxious, the lonely, the unemployed and the grieving.

Friends, we grieve. We lost two of our clergy to COVID-19 and more than 100 members so far. We remember them. They will live with us in our hearts forever. They fought the good fight and today their souls have taken flight into the everlasting where there is no more pain, no more suffering, and no more COVID-19. Let us continue to pray for their families, colleagues and friends.

As we remember those who have died, we recognize that more than 600 of our members were diagnosed with COVID-19 and so we remember those who live. They are here because of the heroes who go to work every day to do their job. These heroes are doctors and family members, nurses and first responders, janitors and scientists, police officers and maintenance people. Make no mistake about it, they are the incarnational grace of God and the living hope of God.

In the midst of our hope as a people, there are great challenges ahead of us as a church. How do we facilitate pastoral transitions? How do we reopen our buildings? Deal with financial losses? How do we serve the people in our communities who are in great need right now?

After consultation with retiring pastors and pastors scheduled to change appointments, the cabinet made the decision that all appointment changes will occur as scheduled so that churches will receive their new pastors on July 1, 2020. We recognize that most likely we will be social distancing or possibly still live under stay at home orders but retiring clergy have already made plans and families with young children want to enroll them in their new schools. We recognize that farewell services may be scheduled following July 1 and that clergy may return for such a service.

We all long for the day when we will be able to worship and do ministry in our buildings. In our region, we must have a realistic hope that takes into account the significant challenges of stamping out COVID-19. Scientists and medical professionals are saying that the ultimate cure is a vaccine that may still be a year or more away. Until then, we can control the virus by staying at home and practicing social distancing.

We anticipate that even before a vaccine is developed, we will begin to worship in our buildings. When the death rate and new infections decreases substantially for two or more weeks and the governor lifts the stay at home orders, we will begin to reintroduce worshiping communities in our buildings. There will be limited numbers of people that can gather together initially, but as new cases of the virus decreases, we will also be able to increase the number of people who may worship in our buildings at the same time.

We are working with other United Methodists conferences, other denominations, health care officials and governmental leaders to establish the procedures we will use. We will release these once we are satisfied that we have looked at all issues and developed procedures that will ensure there will be no spread of the virus by United Methodist activity.

Some are saying COVID-19 is not as bad in our community as in other communities or that we believe God will protect us. Such thinking is not consistent with United Methodist beliefs and values. We believe the scripture when Jesus shared, we should not assume that God protects some people and not others (Matthew 5:45) and as a connectional body we believe we discern things like this together and not individually. As United Methodists, we also act as one. When one hurts, we all hurt, when one is sick, we are all sick, when one suffers, we suffer with them as a sign that we are one in Christ and connected, bound together to help all rise together.

In the area of finances, we have seen many of our congregations rebound from the decline in giving experienced in the first two weeks of COVID-19 stay-at-home orders. Acclimating to new forms of worship, ministry and giving took some time, but many of our churches are not experiencing the significant financial losses they experienced after the first two weeks. In our most recent survey, 12% of our congregations are reporting their income is up from the same time last year, 36% report their income is the same and 52% are reporting income is down. Initially, 72% of churches reported their income was down. Fifteen percent, 78 of our congregations, are concerned that they will not be able to make payroll, pay basic bills including shared ministry, health insurance and pension for clergy. These churches include our largest and medium size congregations.

We also know that the unemployment rate has now reached 15% and some predict it will rise to 20% or more. At the height of the Great Depression in the 1930's, the unemployment rate was 25%.

As of May 5, 46 of our full-time clergy appointments were right at the minimum salary required for a fulltime clergy appointment and 147 clergy appointments were within \$10,000 of minimum salary. This means that if these congregations are unable to pay minimum salary, clergy will lose their health insurance. This is the last thing we want to happen during a pandemic.

Further, both GNJ and a number of our congregations' income decreased because of a significant drop in the stock market which caused the congregations' investments to decline.

Based on rising unemployment, the number of congregations struggling at this moment about their finances, the loss of income from investments and the number of vulnerable congregations, GNJ leadership has developed a \$5 million plan to sustain the mission and serve the people in our communities.

This plan will be a part of our Miracles Everywhere COVID-19 Relief Fund and includes the following:

1. \$500,000 to be made available for food security. There are people in our communities who need food. We are working with state officials, community organizations, Hope Centers and our congregations to target where we can bring the most help and relief, not duplicating services but ensuring the most vulnerable have food. We are seeking to increase this by raising another raise \$1 million to further advance our food distribution through our Hope Centers and congregations. You can make a gift right now. It's simple. Text the words Miracles Everywhere to 77977 or go to gnjumc.org and make your contribution. No gift is too small or too large to help feed someone during this crisis.

2. We have offered a two-month shared ministry apportionment holiday for April and May for ALL of our congregations who need relief from shared ministry giving at this time. Based on what we understand at this moment, we will be extending the holiday for another two months, June and July as needed by congregations. These holidays will impact the GNJ budget by \$2.8 million. You may be asking, what is a shared ministry holiday? It means your congregation, as needed does not have to give your shared ministries for up to four months. Yes, forgiven. Not a loan but a holiday from giving. Even with this holiday, more than 100 of our congregations paid their April shared ministries. Thank you. You are hope for us all.

3. \$1.5 million has been set aside to provide grants to congregations in three areas:

a. Grants to assist our low income racial ethnic, rural and urban congregations to pay necessary bills.

b. Grants to sustain full time appointments. We will work with our vital missional congregations to ensure that they continue fulltime and that our fulltime clergy maintain health insurance during this pandemic.

c. Grants to assist congregations that applied for the CARES Act Payroll Protection Program (PPP) funding but did not receive it. The majority of congregations that have reported receiving PPP funding are disproportionately larger and suburban congregations. I have a big ask for some of our congregations. Those who have received PPP funding, I invite you to consider, not from your PPP funding but maybe from other funds that might be freed up, a tithe equal to 10% of your PPP funding to this COVID-19 fund to help other congregations. It will be a testimony and witness to your generosity and connection as United Methodists.

This \$5 million plan helps sustain strong, healthy vital congregations that makes for a strong GNJ, and a strong GNJ helps to make a strong United Methodist Church.

Where will the funds come from for such a bold outward plan.

1. We are borrowing \$1.4 million from our Harvest Mission Fund.

2. We are using the sale of a church property.

3. We have reduced our budget saving money or underspending because of COVID-19 to support our congregations and to serve our communities.

4. We anticipate giving proportionately what we receive in shared ministry to the General Church apportionments.

5. Our Wespeth Board of Pensions has reduced pension payments for three months. This reduction will not affect clergy and lay pensions.

6. We will not fill four staff positions that are currently open, and we will furlough ALL staff. I have already committed a month of my salary; executive staff will furlough for three-quarters of a month and the rest of staff will furlough for one-half a month. This equates to laying off 20% of our GNJ staff for six months. I am proud of our staff. They all recognize that sacrifices must be made for the good of the mission and they would rather see all staff be affected rather than just a portion of the staff being laid off. Our staff gives me hope!

While we do not anticipate the stay-at-home order to be lifted in New Jersey in May, in the next few weeks we will share with you further about protocols for when congregations can begin to worship in their buildings again as well as how to apply for emergency grants and how to continue or begin food distribution in your community.

The most important things we all can do right now are to seek and pray to God, to remain outward, focused on those in our communities who are without a job, without food, those who are lonely, sick, grieving, and anxious, those whose hope is The United Methodist Church, and to stay focused on our mission, making disciples of Jesus Christ and growing vital congregations for the transformation of the world. I call upon each pastor and congregation to find ways to improve your online ministries, to connect your congregation with the needs in your community and to inspire generosity during COVID-19. I also call on all of us to pray about how we will be the church of Jesus Christ following COVID-19. COVID-19 has helped us realize that the world is changing, the world has changed and that we, the church can change to reach new and younger and more diverse generations of believers.

In this most challenging season, we will thrive creating the next church for the world because we are a people in the midst of challenge and claim that affliction produces perseverance, and perseverance produces character and character produces hope, and hope will not disappoint us. —Romans 5:3

Thank you for all you are already doing and thank you for helping to innovate and create the next United Methodist Church for the transformation of the world.

Additions or corrections to the Crossword:

Contact Edna Winans at 609-304-3403

Note New Email:

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Crossword Newsletter
MAY/JUNE 2020