



APRIL 2020

During this time of isolation we remember what is most important to Christ - that the children of God are welcomed home.

Deepening Our Discipleship

BY REV. REBECCA LUTER

Dear Farmington Family,

I miss you. I miss hugs and laughter. I miss the high-fives in the hallways. I miss saying “Good morning” to parents and children. I miss looking at artwork and reading children’s stories on the walls. I miss Fellowship Coffee, Wednesday Night Dinners, and on Easter Sunday I will miss brunch together with close quarters, too much chocolate consumption, and smiles all around. I will miss the Annual Bake Sale that was supposed to happen April 1st, and I grieve the uncertainty of summer church camp at Pinecrest. I will miss the Rise Against Hunger packaging event that would have packaged 20,000 meals on April 26th, and I grieve that there are only 3 weeks of food left to distribute to their partner organizations to feed children in developing countries.

As I consider the things that would have happened at Farmington Presbyterian in April, I am reminded of the critical ways we are Jesus’s hands and feet in the world. We love to socialize and be together; we truly are living together as brothers and sisters in Christ. Our missions of Farmington Presbyterian Day School, Presbyterian Women’s Ministries, and the work our Service Committee coordinates are critical to children in Germantown, the Memphis area, and around the world. Farmington Presbyterian is a home for our families with a heart for God’s world.

At first, I was disappointed that this year, there would not be a parade of palms on Palm Sunday, Communion together on Maundy Thursday, the stripping of the church on Good Friday, the youth leading the Easter Sunrise celebration with the dew still in the garden, and

the bright sun streaming into the Sanctuary filled with people festooned in spring colors and Easter lilies and glorious music. OK, I’m still disappointed. However, we are blessed to be able to worship together in this time. I hope that you will participate fully in all of the services of Holy Week and be blessed by them. If you are unable to access the internet, please let us know so that we can provide worship to you in another way.

Session members continue to call weekly to connect and check on our congregation. If there are needs or concerns that arise while we are physically apart, please let us know. We are together in spirit, for the Holy Spirit draws us together and unites us as the Body of Christ.

What else? The youth had a scavenger hunt on Zoom on Sunday. They had a great time! Some of the Lenten small groups have continued to meet via Zoom. If you have a group that wants to get together, or you would like to start one, let me know and we will get you set up! I am working on some short “vlog” (video blog) posts... more to come on that. And, I’m eager to start a weekly Zoom Bible Study. Email me if you want to participate – rluter@farmingtonrpes.org.

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. May the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. Amen.

Blessings,
Rebecca

THIS ISSUE:

WORSHIP

Page 02

DAY SCHOOL

Page 03

YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

Page 04

LENT

Page 05

RISE AGAINST HUNGER

Page 07



How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

-Romans 15:10



WORSHIP ONLINE

While we are apart, let us praise God together.

The Farmington family continues to worship together through services created especially for the internet. Using the gifts of the congregation for photography, video, social media, editing and more, we have created an opportunity for the church to be together, even while we are apart.

Each service is posted to Youtube and premieres at 11am Sunday mornings. This means the service begins at 11am, and we all watch it together from start to finish. There is a chat feature that allows us to share during and after the service. Head over to our website, www.Farmingtonpres.org and click the Worship online button or go to Youtube.com and search for "Farmington Presbyterian" then subscribe to our page so you can join the Farmington family in worship of our great God.



SESSION CALLING

While we are apart, let us fellowship together

By now you should have received a few calls from the session of the church. We are committed to holding the family of God together and lifting each other in prayer and community even while it is safer to be apart. If you have concerns or prayer requests, or if you are feeling alone and need someone to listen, do not hesitate to call on your Farmington friends as we are all in this together.

FPDS

THE LEARNING GARDEN GROWS!

As the majestic yellow daffodils are springing to life in “The Learning Garden”, we are captivated by their beauty. The daffodils lift our spirit and show us God’s beauty. Ms. Holli, preschool science and S.T.E.M. teacher planted the bulbs this fall with our three and four year old preschoolers. The children learned about seeds, bulbs, and plants growing in a garden. They learned about planting and fertilizing and how plants need sunshine and water.

KINDNESS GROWS!

Farmington Presbyterian Day School encourages kindness every day. We promote every Friday as “Kindness Day.” This past week our teachers modeled kindness in so many helpful ways. Preschool teachers came to school on Saturday to clean and disinfect the classrooms in order to help slow the spread of the COVID-19. Teachers demonstrated their kindness for each other by cleaning classrooms of fellow teachers that were unable to help. After their hard work, the building was sparkling clean and had an aroma of Lysol which was just the scent we needed.

Our teachers have emailed parents lesson plans, ideas, fun activities, and educational videos for the children to enjoy at home while not in school. By coordinating special pick up times for the parents, they have sent workbooks and materials home for the children.



Bears came out of hibernation in Ms. Jennifer's class



Ms. Holli stated that “We have found that some things never change. Children love digging in the dirt.”

You will love the fragrance that only the pink and lavender hyacinths possess as they are making a garden border. The tulips are sprouting and soon there will be a rainbow of colorful blooms making their beautiful statement. The children are amazed that the bulbs they placed in a dirt hole are now beautiful daffodils towering over “The Learning Garden.”

From Ms. Courtney taking everyone’s temperature as they enter the building to every teacher’s commitment of going the extra mile, we praise our teachers’ dedication to the FPDS children. We want to thank Courtney Erdman, Jennifer Kauffman, Alexa O’Hara, Laura Rhodes, Cristaldawn Smith, and Andrea Soto. You have spread kindness in Farmington Presbyterian Day School to fellow teachers, our children, and their families.

CHAPEL CONTINUES!



Weekly chapels continue every Wednesday at 9:30AM. Simply head to Zoom.us and use the meeting code #603-671-0393 to join us.

This week we will be exploring the story of Palm Sunday!

One Great Hour of Sharing



Illustrated Ministry LLC

One Great Hour of Sharing is one of our four denominational offerings each year. Farmington Presbyterian traditionally receives this offering on Palm Sunday. We encourage you to give generously to this offering as the funds from it will be the funds that respond to the Covid-19 crisis through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

“You shall be called repairers of the breach.” – Isaiah 58

In Isaiah 58, God issues a call and a challenge—to love one another more deeply by sharing what we have with those in need. Together, we become the household of God where those seeking shelter, food and renewed hope are welcome. Received during the season of Lent, One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is the single, largest way that Presbyterians come together every year to build God’s household and welcome our neighbors-in need around the world by providing relief from natural disasters, food for the hungry, and support for the poor and oppressed.

Each gift to OGHS helps to improve the lives of people in challenging situations through three impactful programs:

PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE :

Works alongside communities as they recover and find hope after the devastation of natural or human-caused disasters

PRESBYTERIAN HUNGER PROGRAM :

Takes action to alleviate hunger and the systemic causes of poverty so all may be fed.

SELF-DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE :

Invests in communities responding to their experiences of racism, oppression, poverty and injustice and educates Presbyterians about the impact of these societal ills

Through One Great Hour of Sharing, we become the household of God. We extend shelter to those who have no place to stay, offer compassion to those who have pain—be it physical, emotional or spiritual—and we set a feast, with God, for those who lack access to enough food to eat. God’s household filled with love and everyone is welcome.

God's Word for Our Time

“I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”

ROMANS 8:18-28

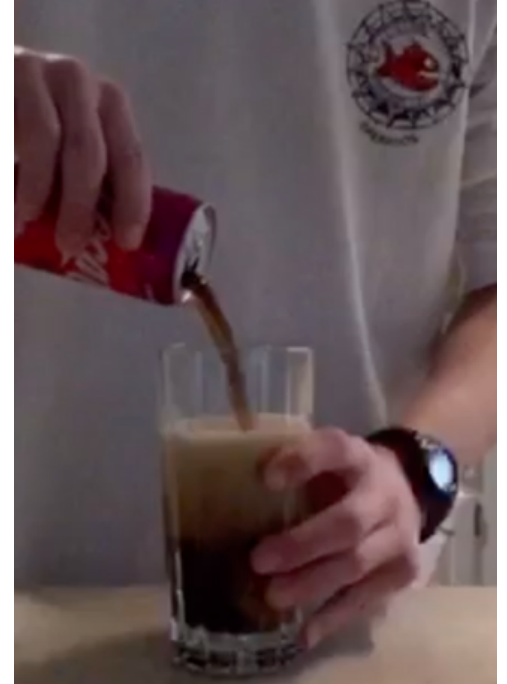
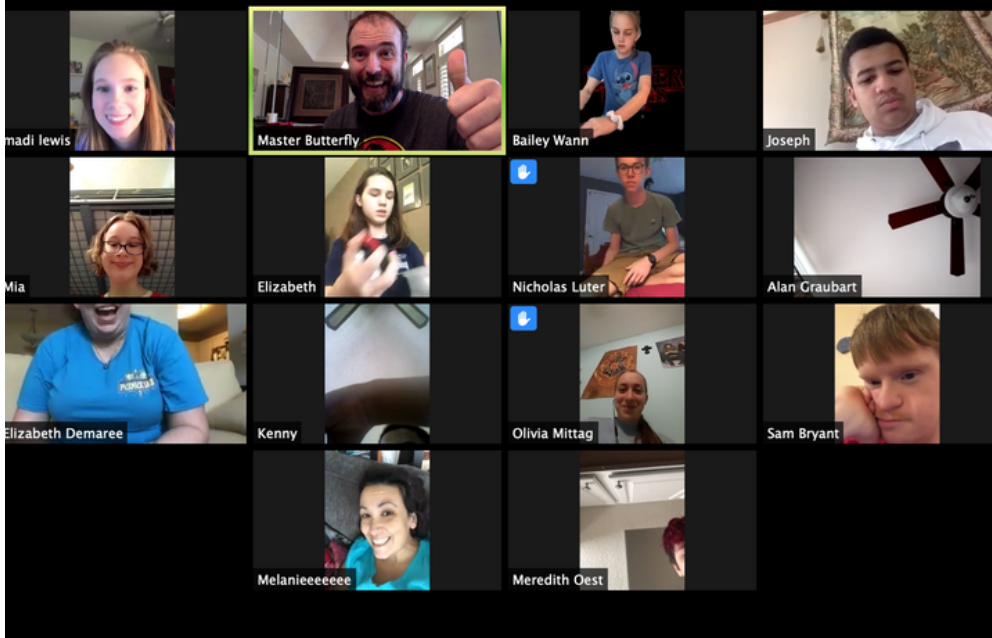
The End of the World?

In the midst of social isolation and Covid-19, I have been asked “Do you think this is the end of the world?” Jesus was asked the same question. His response is recorded in the 24th chapter of Matthew. Bad things are going to happen; wars, famines, earthquakes are just the beginning birth pains. These are not indicators that the end is near. Our efforts to predict the end of the world are futile. Jesus says even he does not know when the Son of Man will return, “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”

My friends, I do not believe that this pandemic is a sign of the end of the world. I do believe that it is a moment of transformation, though. It is a time to consider our priorities and the use of our time and our resources. It is a time for the healing of our families and reconnecting with our loved ones. It is a time for considering what is truly important. It is a time to realize our interdependence upon one another in our society and consider how important the work of some of those lowest wage earners is. It is a time to appreciate the importance of health care for all and prayerfully consider how that is best accomplished. It is a time when one person’s actions have life-altering consequences for another person.

We don’t know what the impact of the coronavirus will be on our lives, or how long we will be socially distancing. What we do know is that, if we let God use this time and this experience, if we engage in worship and reflection, God will use it for good.





Farmington Youth

Each time the youth gather we do a round of highs and lows - what is something that was great about your week and what was something not so great? Another way to think of it is - when did it feel like God was close and when did God seem absent. As we explore our highs and lows, we are assured that each of us is present for each other. We are not alone even though we are apart. May our faces on the screen be the face of Christ while we are separated, and we look forward to the day we can gather in person again..

Thanks to those of you that sent in photos to be used in worship. Keep them coming! Branches, emptiness, bread, stones, and resurrection are good prompts to get you thinking about Holy Week. Send your photos to me via email or text.

Don't miss youth fellowship on Sundays at 2pm.

And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

ROMANS 5:2-5

FARMINGTON YOUTH FELLOWSHIP
SUNDAY'S AT 2PM AT ZOOM.US
MEETING CODE:603-671-0393



A Time for Everything

The weekdays were packed with work, the weekends packed with activities, and suddenly my household had to discover a new normal. All of the sudden we were all at home together. The usual demarcations of time set by my commute and responsibilities had evaporated, and we had to reimagine everything. But in the shifting sands of our time, I also discovered that we have begun to re-stretch our attention span.

We can now take our time because some of our hurry is missing. I'm grateful for all the posts and links I received on how to fill our kids time, but, the most valuable thing that has come from this "Safer at Home" period is the time we do together. I created an obstacle course and ran it with my children. We have taken family walks each morning, shared a favorite TV program during lunch, and sat at the dinner table enjoying each others company. I have learned Minecraft and how to create play dough creations because I finally have time to listen and learn from my kids.

I know this time is stressful, but our frantic activity and incessant worry will not change it. There is a time for that, and a time for this. Here are a few ways to use your time together:

- Play board or card games.
- Have a campfire cookout in the backyard.
- Play music together or have a dance party.
- Have a craft night.
- Read a book aloud together.
- Sit outside as the sun sets and identify the unique sounds you hear as night comes on.
- Create and film your own movie.
- Have a cooking competition.
- Have a painting night.
- Choose an experience none of you have ever done before and do it together.
- Camp out in the backyard or on the back porch.
- Go for pajama walks—get the kids ready for bed and then go on a walk together.
- Put an obstacle course together and time each other.

Keep it simple, after all, you want your time together to be restful and fun. There is a time for everything under the sun. Redeem this time to the glory of God, for your benefit, and for the joy of those with whom you spend it.

-Doug Barr

The CARES Act & Your Taxes

The CARES Act, passed to alleviate some of the financial hardship experienced across our nation as a result of Covid-19 includes some important tax information related to your gifts to the church and other charitable organizations. As always, please see your tax advisor for more information and advice specific to your situation.

Here are the highlights:

IF YOU DO NOT ITEMIZE, the CARES Act allows an individual to make a cash contribution up to \$300 and deduct the contribution “above the line” when computing adjusted gross income.

This means the taxpayer will receive this deduction in addition to their standard deduction.

IF YOU DO ITEMIZE, the new law temporarily lifts the limits on charitable giving for 2020.

Cash contributions can be deducted up to 100% of adjusted gross income for 2020 (normally limited to 60%).

Excess contributions can be carried over to the next five years.

Corporate donors will be able to deduct donations totaling 25% of adjusted taxable income (normally 10%).



APRIL

2	Bailey Wann	22	Maureen (Mo) Smithers
3	Wendy Korner	23	Emily Rhodes
9	Charlotte Moots	24	John Perkins
13	Jack Ingram	24	Alena Vincente
15	Kasi Wann	27	Elizabeth Williams
18	Henry Webb	29	Ann Erickson
19	Angela Rutland		
20	Gavin Perkins		

Staff Extensions

Rev. Rebecca Luter, Pastor, Ext. 3134
Doug Barr, Director of Christian Education, Ext. 3130
Polly Knight, Financial Records Keeper, Ext. 3136
Shelley Wann, Church Office Administrator, Ext. 3131
Linda Turner, Managing Director of Day School, Ext. 3138
Gretchen Burch, Program Director of Day School, Ext. 3132
Anthony Jones, Maintenance Technician

Session Members

Moderator - Rev. Rebecca Luter
Director of Christian Education - Doug Barr
Administration – Ann Erickson
Christian Education – Susan Bryant
Clerk – Laurinda Ingram
Congregational Care – MaryShelley Ritchey
Fellowship – Becky Hutchins
Property and Grounds – Roland Mittag
School Board – Charlie Smithers
Service – Jinney Hart
Treasurer—Melissa Still
Worship – Sandy Wann

Content for the May New Vision newsletter is due Monday, April 20.
Email articles and event information to Shelley Wann at Shelley@farmingtonpres.org

