

VENTURES

A place to experience God's all inclusive love



**think.
live.
serve.
faithfully.**

Tea Tim With Tim

I have starred at the blinking cursor for hours thinking about what to write and even if I have words at all. As you know, Monday was a beautiful day. So, I opened all my windows in the office. To my surprise there was the usual little boy riding his orange bike in the parking lot of the church. But this time was different, he didn't have training wheels! I listened to him as he did his imaginary race and thought every speed bump would cause him to soar into the sky. As I watched him, I thought about how a couple of weeks ago his words was not about an imaginary race, but instead "I can do this, I can do this" *deep breaths* "Just believe and trust" My friends, this has been my prayer.

The world looks so much like the orange bike without training wheels for the first time, and we are adjusting our way through, trying to figure out how to sit on the seat right, where to put our feet, and most of all how to balance ourselves.

In this balancing act, may we find a rhythm to still be church. May we be there for one another, as many are having hardships, may we be able to step up with resources to help another. May we continue to prayer and trust God through this, believing God is with us.

I know these are not deep words of thought nor does it answer many of your theological reasons or even questions of why this is going on. But might I quote the great NT Wright from a recent article, *"It is no part of the Christian vocation, then, to be able to explain what's happening and why. In fact, it is part of the Christian vocation not to be able to explain—and to lament instead. As the Spirit laments within us, so we become, even in our self-isolation, small shrines where the presence and healing love of God can dwell. And out of that there can emerge new possibilities, new acts of kindness, new scientific understanding, new hope, new wisdom for our leaders? Now there's a thought."*



Not an actual photo of the boy in the parking lot.

Giving: Tithes and Offering

During these weeks of uncertainty, one of the best ways you can help our Emerywood church family is to give, whether mailing to the church, online, or better yet, to automate your giving. Jennifer is still doing deposits regularly. Even though we are not having our regular events, we still have fixed expenses. Our utility bills, property insurance, internet and phone service, and many other operational expenses are still due each month, whether we gather together or not.

In the same fashion, to keep the ministries of church going and continuing to pay our staff. We want to make sure that their lives are as stable during this unstable time. As we travel this way together and face these challenges, the ministers and I covet your prayers, even as we continue to pray for you, our community, our world, and our leaders.

May It Be So...

An Emerywood Podcast

One of the ways the staff has decided to foster community is through getting to know one another better. We know it is hard to call everyone, so we decided to do a podcast spotlighting individual members of our congregation. Our hope is that this will continue beyond our shelter in place time and become part of our scheduled events. Our first podcast will be put up this week on our website. Get ready, it includes a fun recipe!

EMERYWOOD MINUTE OF MINISTRY

During this pandemic crisis the Emerywood diaconate is emphasizing the importance of being a supporting, caring and worshipful community. The Emerywood Minute of Ministry is one way this is being done. You may have already seen it in a recent email.

Individual deacons are sharing in one paragraph a thought, experience or spiritual insight to help us remember the important things in our lives during a time of concern. It is hoped that these blurbs will help us get through difficult times, create a spiritual focus and remind us of the importance of church community. In a nutshell this is an expression of love within our congregation.



EASTER

Excerpt from *Whistling In the Dark* by Fredrick Buechner

The symbol of Easter is the empty tomb. You can't depict or domesticate emptiness. You can't make it into pageants and string it with lights. It doesn't move people to give presents to each other or sing old songs. It ebbs and flows all around us, the Eastertide. Even the great choruses of Handel's Messiah sound a little like a handful of crickets chirping under the moon. He rose. A few saw him briefly and talked to him. If it is true, there is nothing left to say. If it is not true, there is nothing left to say. For believers and unbelievers both, life has never been the same again. For some, neither has death. What is left now is the emptiness. There are those who, like Magdalen, will never stop searching it till they find his face.

GriefShare

GriefShare at both Emerywood Baptist Church and Caring Services have been suspended until we are allowed to gather again in groups. GriefShare leadership will be keeping in touch with the people who were participating via phone and/or email.

I encourage you to reach out to those you know who are grieving or having a hard time. Friendly phone calls would probably be well received and treasured.

A WORD FROM GARRETT

What is your favorite hymn?

One of my favorite hymns is a song I feel like I've known since I was born. How Firm A Foundation conjures vivid images in my head of my hometown church standing and singing at the top of their lungs. I remember that as I began to study music, being taken by the words of various hymns. How often do we get to say phrases such as:

*When through fiery trials thy pathways shall lie,
My grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply.*

I find, so often, that we sing hymns with a mindless ease. We miss the essence of these songs, the words! *How Firm a Foundation* was written using the text from Isaiah 41:10, "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous hand." What a great text to meditate on these days. There is a trust in God that this music conveys. But.....the hymn also implores us to not forsake what God has given us; maybe it is our church family, or maybe it is a sink with hot water and soap.

What is your favorite hymn and what do its words tell you today?

Project Connect

**Click Below to hear different
renditions of
How Firm A Foundation**



Mormon Tabernacle Church



Chelsea Moon and the Frantz Brothers

Social distancing...don't congregate...stay at home! This first appears to be a directive to put Project Connect on hold. Oh no! The need to reach out in support and love is greater than any time of comfort and success. Likely every member is concerned about some aspect or consequence of the pandemic. We miss the Sunday services; we are unable to meet with people we love and there is a general sense of apprehension. A proven antidote is to create interaction...at a distance. Use your phone to reach out and touch someone. Text, email, Facebook or use your preferred way of interacting. People are pleased and reassured when someone contacts them. Stay connected with fellow Emerywood worshipers. You are doing God's work.

Personnel

The Personnel Committee would like to thank the EBC Staff for the ability to be agile in recent days and future weeks. Their gifts and talents have continued to shine and spread light on otherwise dark and over-anxious times. Thank you for all that you are doing

CHILDREN'S CHATTER

So.... here we are. Smack in the middle of what has to be the most surreal spring that any of us have ever experienced. No fun spring break trips to the beach.... No big community Easter Egg Hunts... no big Easter celebrations....But rest assured – Easter will come. And what a mirror of our current situation Holy Week is. A soul crushing week of despair, fear, and grief – culminating in resurrection and renewal. We are in the midst of what may prove to be a long period of uncertainty and change. You are asked to be all things right now.... parents, teachers, employees...most from the confines of your home (Which I am sure is feeling more confined by the minute). No matter how hard you try, I imagine that from time to time, you are overtaken by feelings of anxiety, fear, frustration....that is when you should make sure you are taking care of yourselves in the same way you are caring for your family....Rest. Eat good food. Get outside and move around. Look for the helpers. And remember – as Christians, we are an Easter People – People of hope for the Resurrection to come. I would like to share this blessing from Jan Richardson –

Hope nonetheless. Hope despite. Hope regardless. Hope still.

Hope where we had ceased to hope. Hope amid what threatens hope. Hope with those who feed our hope. Hope beyond what we had hoped.

Hope that draws us past our limits. Hope that defies expectations. Hope that questions what we have known.

Hope that makes a way where there is none.

Hope that takes us past our fear. Hope that calls us into life. Hope that holds us beyond death. Hope that blesses those to come.

Be a child of the Light,

Kelley



HOPE

Work of art by: George Frederic Watts

"Traditionally the figure of Hope is represented by an anchor. Seeking a more original approach to symbolism and allegory, Watts shows her blindfolded, seated on a globe and playing a lyre of which all the strings are broken except one. Hope's attempt to make music appears futile and several critics argued that the work might have been more appropriately titled *Despair*. Watts explained that 'Hope need not mean expectancy. It suggests here rather the music which can come from the remaining chord'."

Gallery label, November 2016, Tate Muesem

Mission Moment

The whole world just feels eerie right now. It's almost as if the heart, soul and lungs of the earth are gasping for air, while at the same time, it is breathing a sigh of relief at an uninvited yet necessary sabbath. At the same time this is not how we wanted rest to come. Most of us, I believe like to plan our rest. We like an order and a schedule to it, even those of us who like to go with the flow and embrace spontaneity at least like a warning when a global pause is about to happen. And yeah, Ill say it, after the health and well-being of the community at large a major thing on my mind recently has been the local businesses and the individuals who own, work and run them, the economy, and what this could mean for my student loans, and bills and obligations of my family finances. It has been the kind of thing keeps me up at night. What do we do if something happens and suddenly we're caught trying to figure out how to get by. How do we make sure there is food on the table and the bills don't fall behind? I am also stricken by the realization of the privilege that I carry that this has been what pushes these fears to the front of my mind. In most weeks, these aren't the kinds of thoughts that consume my sanity.

A lot of what many of us have felt over the past few weeks, the real hard part, is that for far too many in our community these are daily fears and struggles. What if this month is particularly cold and our gas bill goes up, what if car registration is due or gas prices go up and the money runs out before the bills do? These are the questions on the minds of many of our regular pantry clients. One person I spoke with last week told me they weren't concerned with hoarding and stocking up for the pandemic, they're worried that what they usually buy to get by each week is still going to be in stock in the grocery stores when their shift ends and that the prices haven't jumped because of perception of scarcity. I am, however, finding myself filled with more and more hope as I am finding myself ever more grateful for the church in these days. What better time to exhibit a sense of grace and trust and hope and mercy then right now when the world seems to also be finding a scarcity in these gospel messages as well.



We have had a great response in volunteers and I am ever thankful for the flexibility of our clients and volunteers as we are all trying to figure out the best way to serve one another and protect one another at the same time. We have shifted away from our client choice model just for the time being but have received permission to remain open as an essential service during the shelter in place order for Guilford County. For the next 2 months we will be packing boxes of the most frequently purchased items and essential items. We are still at the mercy of what we can get from the food bank and the grocery stores but we are packing between 50-60 boxes each week. Clients are still making appointments to limit traffic and ensure we can serve all of those who show up, and we are packing the cold items the morning of and many people have reached out to me to ask how they can help in this time. There are still a multitude of ways that you can help in this era of social distancing and quarantine.

(1) If you feel able and would like to give directly to the pantry please feel free to. The most expensive thing we buy from the food bank is .19/lb. Last week we spent \$154.00 for over 1000lbs of food. Even \$1.00 helps as it purchases a minimum of 5lbs of food.

(2) If you are out doing some regular shopping and want to buy some of the things that go in each box, feel free to. We are always searching for bread, chips, crackers, pasta, pasta sauce, Mac & Cheese, low sodium soups, cereal, rice, peanut butter, Jelly, dried beans and canned fruits and vegetables. These can be dropped off in the basket outside the church office or you can call me and I can set up a time to come pick them up from your porch.

(3) Pray. Pray for medical professionals, and first responders. Pray for your neighbors, the ones who live next door, and the ones you have never or maybe will never meet. Pray for teachers and administrators trying to figure out how to teach from afar the best way they can. Pray for truck drivers and grocery store workers as they work to provide and stock food so that we can remember

MISSION MOMENT CONTINUED ...

there is enough for everyone and we are all in this together. Pray for patience and safety and trust in God and one another in these days. (4) If you would like to volunteer to pack boxes or serve on the 1st or 3rd Saturday in April or May please call or email me. As long as we are maintaining safe numbers I will work to make sure you can plug in.

Finally, know how appreciative I am of all of our members of our church and our community. I am thankful for the ways you look like Jesus and the ways you seek to act faithfully when flexibility and uncertainty is a new normal. Let us remember when the world begins to return to something we seem to recognize, our call to love our neighbor and serve those on the margins remains the same.

A NOTE FROM NEVERLAND

When I was a teenager my dad always had this big basket in his office. It was filled with a bunch of half-collar sized plastic coins that said "TUIT" on one side. When you flipped it over it read: "You always said you'd spend more time with God when you got a round TUIT. I always thought they were kind of weird but I carried one with me anywhere. I still have one on my dresser today. I can't help but think about those in these least few weeks. We have been walking through Lent in which we set aside and work at sacrificing things that always seem to draw us away from our relationship with God in an effort to recenter ourselves and return to our roots of faith in community with God and one another. What happens when the community we root ourselves in to learn about God has to be sacrificed for protection?

Over the past week the days have seemed to come quickly and pass slowly, but I've noticed that if I don't make myself find time for it, theological reflection and bible study doesn't just happen. I have been renewed by reinvestigations of the ancient Hebrew idea of Jubilee, and Sabbath and reflection. While there is plenty of unease surrounding the reality we find ourselves in today there is an amazing opportunity to view this as the ultimate TUIT.

*you
are
loved*

*you
are
Welcome*

This is a chance to be even more present together on purpose. To not retreat behind electronic devices or travel sports or music practices or extracurricular hobbies, can be a practice in looking for God in each other. The comforts of laughing on a family game night, or the teamwork and trust that comes from cooking together and sitting at a table where the conversation has to go deeper than what did you do today...because lets be honest, you should know what they did today.

What an opportunity to ask, " what each of us dreams for the world and for each other?" and what a chance to spend time with God by being present in nature and with our families. This is really a moment for the Church to explore why this matters and what we believe. If you need some conversation starters or would like access to the Sunday morning and bible study curriculum please let me know and I will email it to you. While the Church and ministry looks different for the next several weeks what doesn't change is the fact that even when we can gather together in person again, the priorities and habits we set now can serve as a restart to what a faithful and engaged christian life can look like. May you all find rest in this season.



**Look forward to
having you back in
our freshly redone
Sanctuary**



Helpful Talking Points

What NOT to Do When Someone Has Anxiety

Don't...

1. Don't say "Just calm down" or "Relax!"
2. Don't say, "There's nothing to worry about."
3. Don't say, "I've got problems, too."
4. Don't enable an unhelpful coping behavior.

Instead...

1. Try asking open-ended questions about how they feel.
2. Show that you see how upset the person is and empathize.
3. Take a back seat for now and hear them out.
4. Gently and firmly hold them accountable.

Happy Birthday!

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 01 Danneal Whitton | 17 Lynn Crawford |
| 02 Sandy Meisky | 21 Karen Gilbert |
| 03 Kathryn Griffin | 21 Al Purvis |
| 04 Vicki Davis | 22 Hugh Wallace, Sr. |
| 05 Kent Crawford | 23 Timothy Peoples |
| 07 John Foster | 24 Jackson Kiser |
| 14 Ann Dawson | 25 Emma Davis |
| 15 Cara Kiser | 25 Chuck Miller |
| 16 Faye Hedrick | 28 Karen Tucker |
| 16 Nolan Patterson | 30 Tricia Bauman |

Our Christian Sympathy:

Paddy & Chris Fievet, in the passing of Paddy's mother

Nikki & Jay Long, in the passing of Nikki's grandmother

Buren Haggai and family, in the passing of her husband, Dr. Tom Haggai