

MISSOULA FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
WELCOMES ALL PEOPLE OF ANY AGE, GENDER, COLOR, ETHNICITY, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, ECONOMIC STATUS,
OR PHYSICAL ABILITY INTO THE FULL LIFE AND MEMBERSHIP OF THIS CONGREGATION.

TOWER TIDINGS

JANUARY 2021

THE RICH GETTING RICHER ISN'T THE ANSWER.

According to the CDC website, as of Dec. 29, 2020, almost 19,000,000 Americans had been infected with COVID-19, and nearly 335,000 had died. You may believe these official counts to be too low or too high, but the effects of COVID-19 are undeniably being felt by those who have been infected and those who have not.

Each morning, and perhaps several times a day, we find ourselves wondering if that little throat tickle or unexpected cough is the result of allergies or COVID-19. Many people are finding the isolation needed to break the cycle of infection to be almost as difficult to deal with as the disease itself. Others worry constantly about how to feed, clothe and shelter themselves and those for whom they are responsible if they cannot work because their employment has been curtailed or because they may become ill from doing essential work. All of these very legitimate concerns have us sleeping less, eating more and watching doomsday scenarios in our heads.

One of the most lasting yet insidious effects of this Pandemic is the wedge our accommodations to it are driven between segments of society. Even before COVID-19, the gulf between rich and poor was widening. The American middle class was in danger. People who were already on the fringe because of race, ethnicity, sexual preference or mental health issues are being affected out of proportion to the mainstream. When we have come out the other side and have learned to live with whatever the new normal will be, what will those of us who remain have lost?

If you are privileged enough to have a good job that can be performed from a safe location, and which provides a living salary, you are truly fortunate. In these days of fewer activities outside the home, maybe you are able to save a little extra money on luxuries like fancy coffee and new clothes. Perhaps, though, your job is considered an essential service. Not only do you have to continue to show up for work day-after-day, but simply by performing your work, you may be putting yourself and your family in danger. If you have children, they may or may not be able to physically attend school. If they cannot, you must make the difficult decision to spend most of what you make on childcare, or trust your children to care for themselves at home. The result is less money in a household that cannot afford its loss, and more stress for all concerned.

Physically, COVID-19 affects people of color at a far higher rate than those of Caucasian ancestry. Add that to the fact that POC are more likely already to have been living on the edge, and the effects of COVID-19 are magnified.



LECTIONARY

- **January 3**

Epiphany Sunday

Isaiah 60:1-6

Psalms 72:1-7,10-14

Ephesians 3:1-12

Matthew 2:1-12

- **January 10**

Baptism of the Lord

Genesis 1:1-5

Psalms 29

Acts 19:1-7

Mark 1:4-11

- **January 17**

2nd Sunday after the Epiphany

1 Samuel 3:1-10

Psalms 139:1-6, 13-18

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

John 1:43-51

Human Relations Day Offering

- **January 24**

3rd Sunday after the Epiphany

John 3:1-5, 10

Psalms 62:5-12

1 Corinthians 7:29-31

Mark 1:14-20

- **January 31**

4th Sunday after the Epiphany

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Psalms 111

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Mark 1:21-28

Continued on page 4

SAVE THE DATE

Mission u

“Finding Peace in an Anxious World”

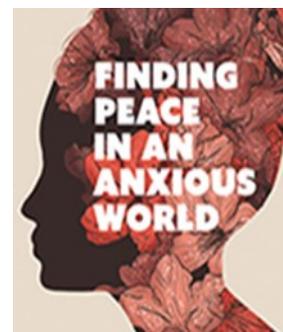
Join Rev. Su Debree for a virtual study that explores ways to discover peace through scriptural and spiritual disciplines.

This four-part study series will begin **Sunday, Feb. 7** and run through **Feb. 28, 2021**. Each Sunday session will be offered via Zoom from **2pm to 4pm**.

No cost to attend. Participants are encouraged to purchase the book “Finding Peace in an Anxious World”, edited by Erin James-Brown and read it prior to the event. The book may be purchased for \$10 at umwmissoureresources.org. The Kindle version is available on Amazon for \$5.95. **Registration will open on-line in January.**

The four study sessions use the book of Proverbs and “The Serenity Prayer” as a guide to help us find our way through anxiety, worry, and fear and move towards God’s peace that surpasses all understanding.

This class is sponsored by your Mission u Committee of the Mountain Sky United Methodist Women and is open to all men and women.



Church Pledges and Donations

The donation page on the church website can be found at: www.firstumcmissoula.org/donate.

There is information for mailing in your checks as well as online donations. If you give online there is now a dropdown menu under the line with the amount that allows you to designate where the money goes. If you are splitting the donation, click *Other* and on the payment page it will allow you to leave a note as to how it should be divided.

Kay Duffield, Financial Secretary

Tower Tidings
February Deadline:
 Tuesday, January 12, noon
 Special thanks to Kay Duffield and Tish Herries for helping edit
Tower Tidings.

HOW TO CONTACT

OFFICE

Weekday Hours

Monday-Thursday 9-12

Phone: (406) 549-6118

E-Mail: FUMCmissoula@gmail.com

Website: www.firstumcmissoula.org

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/1stumcmissoula

PASTOR JOHN

Office: Available Monday-Friday

By phone: 549-6118 or

396-8966 (cell)

E-Mail: john@FUMCmissoula.com

Hospital visits: Please call John or the office if you know of someone in the hospital.

Home visits: upon request

CHURCH STAFF

John Daniels, *Pastor*

Genevieve Padget Slote, *Administrative Assistant*

Nancy Eik, *Administrative Assistant Sub*

Cheryl and Jim Bauer, Pam Sterling,

Laurie Ball, April Padget, Klairaine

Nichwander, Kay Duffield, *Office*

Volunteers

Leslie Lindley, *Treasurer*

Leslie Uhlenbruck, *Financial Secretary*

Craig Gohl, *Custodian*

Greg Boris, *Chancel Choir Director*

Jason Triche, *Hand Bell Choir Director*

Luke Larson, *Organist and Pianist*

VACANT, *Children and Youth Ministries*

Director

VACANT, *Nursery Attendant*

For more information or to reach First UMC staff, please call the church office, 549-6118, or E-Mail us at FUMCmissoula@gmail.com

January is our month to support the Missoula Food Bank. The pandemic and the fallout from it have increased the need for donations to the Food Bank. They have also made it a challenge for us to do our January Food Drive. We are offering you as many donation options as we possibly can under the circumstances. If you are able, please help us do our part to ensure food security for households in our community. Whatever option you choose, please make your donations of food and/or funds some time during January.

Option 1: Use the **2021 Food-by-the-Case Order Form** to order a case of food through the Orange Street Market. Most needed items were identified by the Food Bank and are shown on the form with the price per case. The completed form and your check can be mailed to **Missoula First UMC, P.O. Box 7646, Missoula MT 59807** or dropped off at the office during office hours (9-12; Monday-Thursday). Please make your check out to **First UMC** and put **“Food Bank”** in the memo line. The office will have extra forms if you need them as well.

Option 2: Make a monetary donation to the Food Bank and let the Food Bank buy what they need at wholesale prices. Donations can be mailed to **Missoula First UMC, P.O. Box 7646, Missoula MT 59807** or dropped off at the office during office hours (9-12; Monday -Thursday). You can also give online. If you mail a check, please make your check out to **First UMC** and put **“Food Bank”** in the memo line. For online donations, please select the new **“Missoula food bank”** option from the designated giving options.

Option 3: Place your food donations in the container located outside the church office. If you are not able to enter the church, you may either buzz the office during office hours when you are at the back door or call the office (**549-6118**) during office hours for entry to take your donation from you.

Option 4: Bring your food or monetary donation to the backdoor of the church on **Wednesday, January 13** or **Wednesday, January 27 between 11:30 and 1**. Someone will be there to accept your donation. If you prefer to have your donation picked up, call **Jane Kisselbach at 531-6768** to make arrangements.

Our Sunday School will once again be collecting items to create **Birthday Kits**. They need cake mixes, frosting, candles, cake decorations, party plates/napkins, plastic forks, and tin foil pans. The **Birthday Kits** are very popular at the Food Bank. **Options 3 and 4** above are applicable for these donations.

Grace UMC will partner with us again this year. Together we can make a difference for those in our community who struggle to put food on the table. Thank-you for your support of this ministry.

2021 Food-by-the-Case Order Form

| Food Item | Case Price | # of cases | Total |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Tuna | \$38.69 | | |
| Peanut Butter | \$20.89 | | |
| Tomato Soup | \$19.19 | | |
| Chicken Noodle Soup | \$24.50 | | |
| Canned Vegetables (green beans, corn) | \$19.80 | | |
| Total | | | |
| Name: | | | |

to have been living on the edge, and the effects of COVID-19 are magnified. Those who are barely scraping by are now desperately clinging to the last of their reserves or have already fallen into the abyss.

People who do not identify as cis-gendered are also being affected at far higher rates. Many of these populations suffer disproportionately from health disparities brought on by discrimination, bias, stigma, and systemic oppression. In addition, some businesses and even social serviced not-for-profits are using COVID-19 as another excuse to deny services to those whose sexual identities and preferences they do not support.

Mental illness on its own or added to any of the above multiply the difficulties exponentially. Those already afflicted with anxiety, loneliness, phobias, isolation because of personality quirks, and other problems are already relegated to the fringes of society. Those who need our understanding and our assistance the most are often those we are least interested in understanding and helping. We don't know how. We don't want to make things worse. We just don't know what to do.

We are all in the same storm during the Pandemic, but we are most decidedly not in the same boat. Some boats are big and strong. With appropriate care, they and their passengers can withstand what the storm has to throw at them. Other boats were fragile before the storm began. They were barely able to keep afloat.

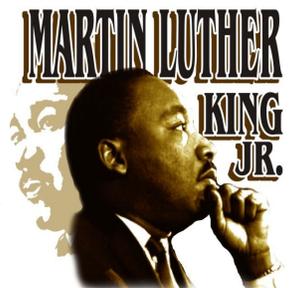
In Mark 4, Jesus and His disciples are together in a boat when a storm comes up so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus had been sleeping, but the disciples work Him and asked if He did not care that they would drown. He calmed the waves by saying "Quiet. Be Still!" but then he asked the disciples why they were so afraid. Did they have no faith? The message seems to be that while we are right to depend upon God to help us set a straight course, we are also responsible for doing what we can to calm the seas for ourselves and others.

If your boat is sturdy and your course relatively smooth, give thanks. More than that, look around for smaller boats, and their inhabitants, and find ways to keep them on top of the water. This is a remarkably generous and supportive church. I am regularly in awe of those of you who spend your lives calming the waves for those in boats less sturdy than your own. We should find ways to help others that do not endanger ourselves or others, but we should be willing both to ask for help and to provide it if we are able.

Blessing to each of you in this difficult time. May you find God within yourself and in service to others.

Theresa Cox

The 2021 Annual Martin Luther King, Jr Day Celebration, on January 18th, is just weeks away. Though it must be held "virtually" this year, we again have an opportunity to help make this the great event that it is by helping to fund it. Please consider a special donation made out to First UMC, and designated for the "MLK Celebration". Questions? Contact Joe Loos. 721-5013.



1929 1968

Foundation Charitable Giving 2020:

Eleven Charities = \$12,400

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Flathead Lake Methodist Camp \$2000 | Intermountain \$2000 |
| Blackfeet UM Parish \$1800 | Wesley Foundation \$1500 |
| Missoula Interfaith Collaborative \$1500 | Tzedakah Pocket \$1200 |
| Poverello \$1000 | Hope Rescue Mission \$500 |
| FUMY Lair remodel \$400 | UMW Mission Giving \$400 |
| BSA Troop 1919 \$100 | |

We began the year with assets of \$403,671.24. We received a bequest of \$32,450. We gave one scholarship of \$1000 and eleven charitable gifts of \$12,400. As of December 9, our current assets total \$430,301.



Foundation Officers for 2021:

President David Slote, Vice President Sue Goss, Secretary April Padget, Treasurer Kay Duffield, Trustee Nancy Eik. Thanks to Pat Mahoney and Teresa Henry after serving six years on the Foundation.

ONE OF OUR OWN

Excerpt from Intermountain.org magazine (unknown year).

George Sherry, Giving Back A Little More , written by Terry Chancy, Development Director
 “A retired school teacher, George doesn’t have great material wealth, But if your measure of wealth is serving others, nurturing healthy relationships, and enjoying the simple blessings inherent in a day, George is a very wealthy man. After graduation from high school, George spent a short time working with the immigration service in Helena. It was through volunteer work at the local YMCA that George recognized his gift at working with children and soon pursued a career in teaching. His first teaching assignment was in 1961 in Boulder. (among his Boulder students was actor Patrick Duffy). George accepted a teaching job in Missoula two years later, and has claimed Missoula as home ever since. From 1965 to 1979, George spent his summers working at Intermountain in Helena, serving in a variety of roles including relief houseparent and summer recreation program. Bob Wix, who was Executive Director at that time, said of George, ‘The Home was benefitted greatly from George being here When measuring the value of his help it must be mentioned that his calm but effective manner with the children has been most helpful to all at the Home.’ He is a regular visitor to the Helena campus and serves on the President’s Council. In response to my question ‘How do you want to be remembered?’ George humbly responded, ‘I guess as someone who gave back a little more than I got.’ His generosity over the years suggests that George has been very grateful indeed for all that he has received.”

IN OUR PRAYERS...

~Healing and Comfort~



- ✚ Strength and health for Tu and Barry Reed.
- ✚ Ralph Picker, Pastor John and Terri's brother-in-law, who was diagnosed with cancer,
- ✚ Continued progress for Nathan Padget healing at home from COVID pneumonia.
- ✚ Prayers for Shirley Herbert, sister-in-law of Sue G., in the hospital undergoing treatment for leukemia.
- ✚ Healing for the family of Blackfeet Parish Pastor Calvin Hill, many of whom are fighting COVID-19.
- ✚ Prayers for continued healing for Don McCammon's cellulitis on his leg and related sepsis, as he recovers at home.
- ✚ Healing and strength for Jeannie B.'s sister, Molly, who was diagnosed with breast cancer.
- ✚ For Rocky Allen's neighbor's daughter Monica, that she may have pain free final days.
- ✚ Continued prayers for Nancy H.'s cousin Linda.
- ✚ Healing for Denise Larette, a beloved Frenchtown bus driver, who recently underwent surgery for her breast cancer and recent infection.
- ✚ Healing for Justine Luebke, who continues her battle with colorectal cancer.
- ✚ Patience and strength and a donor for Gail Burghardt as she awaits a liver for her transplant.
- ✚ Healing for Gail Gilman who under went back surgery.
- ✚ Prayers that Rocky's daughter Margaret and her husband Stephen, who are still job hunting, will be successful.
- ✚ Healing for Tony Beltamo's cracked hip.
- ✚ Prayers for Tish Herries brother-in-law who is having extensive treatment for his rare and aggressive cancer.
- ✚ Courage, strength and healing for Kathie's college classmate Jeff Hamlett, who has pancreatic cancer.
- ✚ Health for Eireena Bay's service dog as he recovers.
- ✚ Healing for Jason Cox's friend Kris Smautz, who is very ill with cancer, and strength for his three children and family.
- ✚ Comfort and a peaceful passing for Shannon Mayfield, pastor of Corvallis UMC, who is now receiving hospice care. Comfort for his family and congregation. Strength for Pastor Barry Padget as he serves the Corvallis church as an interim pastor.
- ✚ Strength for Jeff Miller who is having a heart procedure.

~In Sympathy~

- ✚ For the family and friends of a young man who took his life this week.
- ✚ For the family of Donna McCammon's uncle who passed away on Christmas Day.

~Praises~

- ✚ Thanksgiving for all those who do all the stuff that keeps our church going, including the office, services, decorating the altar and the tree, and those who made the new Chrismon decorations for the tree.
- ✚ Thanksgiving that the Ball's son and family tested negative for COVID.
- ✚ Prayers of Thanksgiving on the birth of Laura and Scott B's third granddaughter.
- ✚ Blessings for the birth of Elliot!
- ✚ Joy for the Ross and Doucette families sharing of Advent.
- ✚ Gratitude for Lorraine sharing info about climate change and our obligation to care for God's world with the congregation.
- ✚ Thanksgiving that Genevieve Padget-Slote only had a cold and not COVID-19.
- ✚ Comfort for the family of George Risi and thanksgiving for his life and work.
- ✚ pastor.
- ✚ That we can reflect on the parts of 2020 that we want to keep as well as what we are ready to let go.
- ✚ Praises and thanksgiving for the vaccine which will be given to all residents of nursing and senior living homes in the next month.



Hogan House



We were notified that the Hogan House and the other two homes on the same block were sold by First Presbyterian Church to someone in their congregation. He and his coalition are clearing the entire block in order to build affordable apartments for seniors. First Presbyterian Church itself is no longer involved and our support is no longer needed. This means the Hogan House, as an extension of the YWCA emergency housing program, has come to an end. First UMC has supported the Hogan House since its inception in 2016. During this time, we helped 32 families including 56 children with almost all of the families leaving for permanent housing. A \$2,000 donation from our congregation each year plus an annual donation by the Missoula First UMC Foundation helped make this success possible. Many thanks to everyone who supported this ministry for so long.

Project Community Connect (PCC)

Project Community Connect (PCC) is normally held in January or early February offering many types of services under one roof for those in our community needing them. First UMC volunteers are usually involved. Because of the pandemic, we are not able to have the event at the usual time. The Planning Committee will reconvene in early spring to determine if we can have the event in late spring or early summer.

Tzedakah Pocket

Your continued support of this ministry makes a real difference for our community, especially now when so many are in need. We continue to see the significant increase in assistance we anticipated as a result of the pandemic, receiving multiple calls for help each day. From the beginning of November through mid-December, we helped a man with a motel night as a break from sleeping in his car while his wife is in the hospital (\$59.24); we helped 5 families with 2 children among them with rent so they could stay in their homes or with security deposits so they could get into housing (\$795.50); and we helped 13 families with 16 children among them with gas cards, phones/phone minutes, power/internet bills, storage fees, insurance payments, etc. (\$1,192.74). The total assistance provided during this period was \$2,047.48 helping 19 families with 18 children among them. There is so much need right now but your donations and a \$1,200 donation from the First UMC Foundation have given us a little cushion between donations and assistance provided. Year-to-date numbers are shown below. Take care of yourselves but, if you are able to support the Tzedakah Pocket ministry, either by online donation through the FUMC website or by sending a check made out to First UMC (PO Box 7646, Missoula, MT 59807) with Tzedakah Pocket in the memo line, rest assured all the money will make a difference for someone in need. God bless you all and stay safe.



A recap of assistance provided by our FUMC Tzedakah Pocket ministry to date in 2020 is shown below.

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Donations: \$13,147.46 | | |
| <u>Type of assistance</u> | <u>Families/Individuals Helped</u> | <u>Assistance Pro- vided</u> |
| Lodging (interim housing assistance) | 17 (17 children) | \$2,105.40 |
| Rent/Security Deposit | 36 (45 children) | \$3,949.54 |
| Other | 82 (114 children) | \$6,090.92 |
| Total | 135 (176 children) | \$12,145.86 |



First United Methodist Church

300 E. Main Street

P.O. Box 7646

Missoula MT 59807

Sunday Worship Service
10:30 a.m. via Zoom and
Facebook Live

PH:406.549.6118

E-Mail: FUMCmissoula@gmail.com

Website: www.firstumcmissoula.org

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/1stumcmissoula

Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

January Events via Zoom

1-31 Food Drive

14 Ruth Fellowship

18 Martin Luther King Celebration

21 Gems Fellowship

26 UMW Book Group

Cancellations

Vespers Circle has suspended meetings

Weekly Events via Zoom

Sunday-Children's Church 10 a.m. Worship 10:30

Monday-Thursday Morning Meditations 8 a.m.

Tuesday- Pastor John's class 10 a.m.

Wednesday evening- FUMY

