



THE CORNERSTONE

A Newsletter to provide information & inspiration for the members & friends of First United Methodist Church

We at First United Methodist Church come together to be a Christian community guided & empowered by the Holy Spirit to:

- Make disciples for Jesus Christ,
- Serve our neighbor,
- Enjoy our fellowship.

Blair First UMC
1656 Colfax Street
Blair, Nebraska 68008

Phone:
402-426-2165
E-mail:

office@blairumc.org

Pastor Gina Gile
ggile@greatplainsumc.org
620-794-1345

Website
View the Video
Sermons online
And find the Current

Newsletter
at: www.blairumc.org

Church Office Hours:
Monday thru Thursday
9am-Noon

Online/Outdoor Worship Times

9:00 - Worship
Facebook Live

10:30 Zoom Sunday School

6:30 PM Outdoor Worship

Register on
www.blairumc.org or contact the Office or Pastor Gina (see above) to register your attendance and read the guidelines.

Online Sunday School

Options for Elementary
Ashley @
education@blairumc.org
MS/HS Amy @
youth@blairumc.org

August Special Addition

Psalm 23:1 *The Lord is My Shepherd*



It's hard to believe that it's been almost five months since the pandemic became a reality. Since then our daily way of living has changed, for sure. It seems like in the beginning there was more cooperation and collaboration, everyone was doing their part to flatten the curve. However, as time has worn on, we are worn out, which has resulted in less cooperation and collaboration. In addition, opinions are all over the place as to which measures should be taken to safely navigate the pandemic.

One measure or approach, that I've been seeing a little more about in the news is something called Herd Immunity:
"Herd immunity occurs when enough people become immune to a disease to make its spread unlikely. As a result, the entire community is protected, even those who are not themselves immune. Herd immunity is usually achieved through vaccination, but it can also occur through natural infection. People develop antibodies when their body's immune system responds to an infection. These antibodies can be found in the blood of people previously infected whether or not they had signs or symptoms of illness."

Herd immunity seems to make sense except for that last sentence in the definition which troubles me the most. A person may have the virus and not even know it. We also know there are differing levels of symptoms that require differing levels of treatment. Symptoms can be as mild as a slight headache with minimal treatment to as severe as a lung collapse and needing intubation. Not everyone in the herd fares the same.

So, of course, that got me to thinking. What would Jesus do? Jesus was all about the herd or flock, wasn't he, and said it best, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength;" and, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Mt. 22:37-39). Jesus also said, "do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (Mt. 7:12).

Would Jesus wear a mask and social distance?

Jesus was also all about health and healing for the most vulnerable in society. In the first verse of the 23rd Psalm we are told, "The LORD is my shepherd." Jesus is our Shepherd and cares. We are the sheep in his flock and find comfort in him during times of still waters or the darkest of valleys. We find comfort that we are not alone in the flock and we are assured if one of us strays Jesus will come and find us.

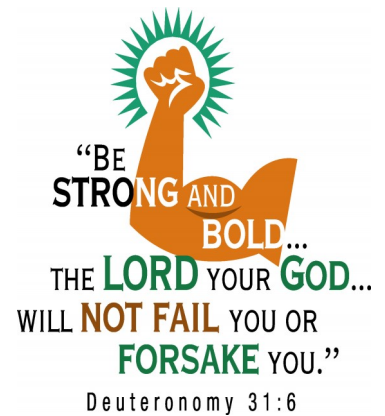
My prayer of late for me and for you has been one of endurance. I believe the pandemic will be our reality for a while and we may have to reach deep into our spirits to continue to cooperate and collaborate in a Christ-like manner. It will surely be necessary to draw near to the Shepherd who will help us to endure whatever is next.

Praying for and with you, Pastor Gina

Tithes/offerings: Thank you for your continued financial support of Blair First UMC. Please continue to mail your tithes/gifts to the church at: 1656 Colfax St., Blair, NE, 68008. Also, we currently have an electronic giving option. You may sign up via our website: www.blairumc.org. You may also sign up by contacting the church office. **Thank you for your commitment and generosity during this difficult time.**

Vanco Online Giving Option

We invite you to consider our VANCO online giving option. You will find the link on our website: www.blairumc.org. Scroll to the bottom of the home page and then click on the "Give now" tab. It's secure and easy. Also, the church office is happy to assist you.



Worship Schedule Will Remain the same during August

Church Council met Tuesday, July 14th, and decided that the Sunday Worship schedule will remain the same during the month of August.

9:00 AM Facebook Live Worship; **10:30 AM** Zoom Sunday School; **Sunday School** for Elementary and Middle School/High School will continue online. Contact Ashley Bacon for Elementary: education@blairumc.org to be included on emails for log in information and Contact Amy Larsen for Middle School/High School: youth@blairumc.org for log in information through emails. **6:30 PM Outdoor Worship:** Information to register attendance can be done by calling the Church Office: (402) 426-2165 office@blairumc.org or website www.blairumc.org; or calling Pastor Gina (620) 794-1345 or ggile@greatplainsumc.org.

August 16th - Outdoor Confirmation Worship

On Sunday, August 16th, Outdoor Worship Service will include the 2019-2020 Confirmation Class. Pastor Gina will be sending out details soon to the Confirmands and their families. We look forward to welcoming this wonderful group of last years 8th Graders into our church community as full members.

Building Use For Outside Groups

During this time of limited access to the Church, outside groups, i.e. Scouts, WIC, TOPS and Fellowship Hall rentals will be suspended until a future time. These non-profit groups use the building free of charge except for minimal donations, so this is not a loss of income to us.

WIC, who has suspended their visits during the pandemic and other groups are guaranteed their place with us when it is again possible. We regret that we are unable to host these groups at this time but since the climate and direction of the pandemic could shift we prefer to not schedule any building use until we can guarantee that we will not have to cancel their scheduled activities.

Committees and Small Groups have been conducting business through emails and Zoom Meetings online. Reading groups have been conducted with Social Distancing, meeting outside and other practices. We appreciate your patience and understanding of the Church Councils decisions on these matters.

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. " James 1:2-3

Church Has Left the Building Postponed

Church Has Left the Building was scheduled for Sunday, August 30th. The morning is devoted to reaching out in the community for mission work outside of our church walls. We are hoping to reschedule later this fall. Be thinking of ideas and ways to serve the community or contact the church office if you have a project we can include for this church event.

Worship Committee Requests Donations of Altar Flowers

Worship Committee has begun to use fresh floral arrangements on the altar for Worship during online services and hope to continue when we return to the sanctuary. If you are able to serve the church in this way please contact Linda Howland, Chair of Worship, (402 690-2196) to schedule a time for your gift.



Thank you for those who participated in our VBS staycation! We had fun on the Rocky Railway!!

We will continue to have Sunday School via Zoom throughout the month of August. Please let Ashley Bacon know if you're not receiving emails or having trouble connecting to our meetings. Each week there is a bible story to watch online and a fun craft or project to work on to show off on Sunday during our Zoom! So far we've built boats and watched them float, showed off our best talents, and performed magic tricks... all while learning about Jesus!!

For now Sunday School will continue to meet online until we are able to meet back at church together as a congregation. We will keep you informed as far as fall activities go and when we will have in person Sunday School.



VBS is online this year. (Blakelee, Will and Rhett)



(Finleigh and Blayton)

Men's Book Club

Men's Book Club is a small group that meets mostly monthly through the year. They read a variety of books and meet to discuss and have fellowship. If you are interested in joining them contact Craig Folkers- folkersca@gmail.com for more information or to join the group.

August/September read will be *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay* by Chabon, Michael and will be hosted by Kevin Poling. Currently meetings are conducted through Zoom. Meeting time and method TBD.

United Methodist Men Need Volunteers for the Recycling Center

On Saturday, August 8th, the United Methodist Men will be serving at the Washington County Recycling Center located at 440 South 3rd Ave. in Blair. This is an All- Church Volunteer Opportunity for our con-

gregation. The UMM is asking for volunteers to sign up for 2-hour shifts (8-10 and 10-Noon) or as long as you wish to stay. The center is open from 8am-Noon.

Everyone is welcome - adults and children. Children under 12 years of age need to be accompanied by an adult. Please contact the church office 402 426-2165; or email: office@blairumc.org or call Roger Howland 402 690-9908 to volunteer.

Volunteers will need to wear masks and gloves. Roger said that when he was there with the Lions only 3 cars were permitted in at one time.

Thank you to everyone for dropping off your donations for Cruise for Food. It is greatly appreciated and needed by the Washington Co. Food Bank. We collected 545.5 lbs. of food and \$565 in cash donations.



Direct Your Dollars

We Have Received
\$110,000 towards \$150,00 goal
for our next \$1,000!

Thank you for your support!
Keep up the Great Work!

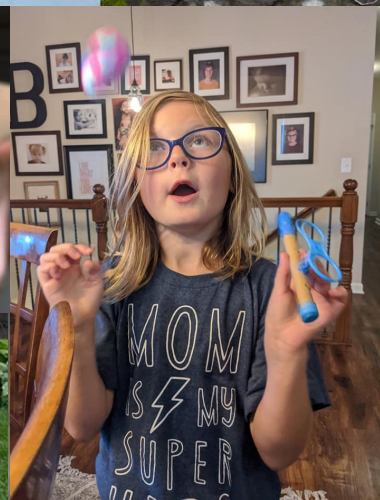
If you shop at Family Fare, please save your receipts!
(the whole receipt is needed)

Washington County Food Bank Needs:

Canned Green Beans and Corn
Breakfast Cereal
Boxed Individual Instant Oatmeal Packets
Macaroni and Cheese
Spaghetti Noodles & Spaghetti Sauce
Boxed Instant Potatoes

The pandemic could not stop sharing God's love during VBS this year. This years theme was very appropriate - Jesus' power pulls us through! During the week they also learned:
 Jesus' power helps us do hard things.
 Jesus' power gives us hope.
 Jesus' power helps us be bold.
 Jesus' power helps us be good friends.
 Enjoy the images shared by the VBS families.

Rocky Railway - Jesus' Power Pulls Us Through







AUGUST 2020

Blair First UMC Vision Statement : “We are a faith-centered, welcoming congregation that serves God, our community, & the world through our diverse ministry & mission work. We are real people, with real lives, & real faith. We dig deep into the Word so that we are prepared to work in the world & to help change lives in the name of Jesus Christ. We are Blair First United Methodist Church.”

First United Methodist Church
Office Hours– M-Th 9am-3pm
Church Office: 402.426.2165
Church Website: www.blairumc.org
Email: office@blairumc.org

Outdoor Worship
 Register to attend online or call Church Office
 402-426-2165
 Website www.blairumc.org has more information on Safety Guidelines.

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--------|---|---------------------------|---|---------------------|--|
| | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 9:00 Facebook Live Worship 10:30 Zoom Sunday School 6:30 PM Outdoor Worship, RSVP and bring your own chair or blanket. | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 Office Closed | 8 8:00 AM-Noon All Church Recycling Center. Call Church office to sign up. Shifts of 8-10 or 10-Noon. 402 426-2165. |
| 9 9:00 Facebook Live Worship 10:30 Zoom Sunday School 6:30 PM Outdoor Worship, RSVP and bring your own chair or blanket. | 10 | 11 9:30 Faithful Bookworms meeting outside on the green space. | 12 | 13 | 14 Office Closed | 15 |
| 16 9:00 Facebook Live Worship 10:30 Zoom Sunday School 6:30 PM Outdoor Confirmation Worship RSVP and bring your own chair or blanket. | 17 | 18 | 19 Newsletter Deadline | 20 6:00 Trustees 7:00 Finance | 21 Office Closed | 22 |
| 23 9:00 Facebook Live Worship 10:30 Zoom Sunday School 6:30 PM Outdoor Worship, RSVP and bring your own chair or blanket. | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 7:00 PM - Church Council Meeting TBD Zoom or in person | 28 Office Closed | 29 |
| 30 9:00 Facebook Live Worship 10:30 Zoom Sunday School 6:30 PM Outdoor Worship, RSVP and bring your own chair or blanket. | 31 | | | | | |