



LET'S ~~NOT~~ COME TOGETHER!!

THIS MESSAGE IS PANDEMIC RESPONSE APPROVED

Dear Parents and Youth!

We hope you are doing well in these strange days of quiet and isolation! We've been each our own way working from home and thinking about you all. We've been social distancing and meeting through videoconference to think about what we can do to begin restarting some youth activities, especially since it seems we are all feeling a bit confined in this time of Coronavirus.

Earlier this year, we published a calendar of the year's activities for the youth. Needless to say, we've had to rip it up and work from scratch. Our fundraising season is canceled, and that means that our summer activities will be less than we were hoping for. We're also aware that many of you parents may be struggling with this economic situation, which may affect what activities your children can afford. We are trying to work with that, and we are planning a great summer with some fun activities outside of our normal worship services.

We're hoping to start the **summer schedule** on **June 12**. We are very attentive to current situations concerning social distancing and quarantine, so our summer start date will officially happen once we have a green light from government and community health agencies and the ok from you, the parents. We feel at this point that June will be a reliable date for planning purposes, but if we need to delay it, we will.

That means we will restart youth worship services after our annual **Start-of-Summer Lock-in** on June 12. Our previous plans to make it into a Disciple Now will have to wait until next year: in the meantime, we are talking through plans to do something outside Lexington as well as the all-night fun and games. We're looking forward to it, and hope it gives you youth something to look forward to as well.

After the lock-in, we will resume normal **Wednesday Night Youth Services**.

Summer youth camp is no longer on for several reasons. That means we are focusing our efforts on the **Summer Service Trip**. As planned, we are going to Branson, but we are rescheduling it for **August 5-8**, in hopes that everyone will feel comfortable enough to travel as a group and Branson's activities will be returned to normal by then. We are currently retooling the itinerary for the trip, but it will still include working with Jesus was Homeless. I'm confident it will be even cooler than last year.

Our canceled **Movie Night** we are hoping to reschedule to July 24, for the release of Disney's *Jungle Cruise* at the Cannonball 6 Cinema. We will still have the costume contest and outreach opportunity!

As for **fundraisers**, we could not expect to plan the Run! Pray! Serve! 5 event this year in these circumstances. We will have the **annual Rummage Sale** on June 6 (again, conditions allowing), and we are adding in two more dinners (one in June, one in July) to raise money for the Service Trip.

We are taking this opportunity, however, to try out a few new features for the Youth Group. We the leaders are going to be sending around **weekly devotionals** to the youth by email and by mail while we are quarantined, starting with this one. We would also like to try a **Wednesday Night Zoom Meeting** this next week, **Wednesday, April 22, at 6:30**. We'll use it to say hi and chat, and maybe try a few games. If it works, we'll start having some online meetings through April and May.

Finally, we were building a new church website before the pandemic, but there's no reason why we can't use it for information. I will start a page where you can find **youth service announcements, devotionals, Zoom meeting links**, and more. Look for it at www.lexmoumc.xyz/pandemicyouth.html.

Everyone stay well and safe – The Youth Leadership

DEVOTIONALS FOR THE WEEK OF APRIL 20

To kick things off, we wanted to bring together a message from each of the youth leaders, to invite them to say something about this grand holiday at home we're having.

Our Comfy Boxes

There is a remarkable story in the book of Acts of the life of Paul. Paul's life was itself extraordinary, and after his conversion he spent the rest of it traveling and sharing the story of Jesus to the rest of the world. In one of those trips, to the Greek city of Philippi, he and his companion Silas were put in jail after being beaten. Prison then was not like our prison today: there was no exercise time, no library, no three meals, no doctors. Toilets were usually a pot, or maybe a smelly hole in the floor. Just a stone box, and in this case, their feet were cuffed. But when they were in jail, instead of crying, or complaining, or cursing their circumstances, they began to sing praise songs loudly around midnight. The other prisoners sat and listened. Then came an earthquake, so strong that it broke the prison wall and gave Paul and Silas a chance to escape. But they stayed there. They stayed because they were sharing Jesus. And their staying saved the guard's life: he would have been executed for failing to stop the prisoners from fleeing.



PERSONAL WORSHIP STUDIO

In this pandemic we're all in our little boxes right now. My quarantine box is a lot different from Paul's stone box. Sure, we can't get out and see friends, or go eat lunch, or play sports, but I have Netflix and Disney Plus and videogames. Sometimes I wonder if these things might distract me from remembering that even in our little boxes we have the opportunity to praise the Lord, and to share the gospel. Sometimes we think that we need to go out to the wilds to share the Good News, but because Paul and Silas stayed in their box, the prisoners and the jailor heard of God's grace and were saved.

In this strange time, when all the world has slowed down to a near stop, remember that as we are all in our little boxes that the Lord still

has mighty plans, and we need only be still to hear them. Paul wrote later back to the Philippians with great satisfaction of his time there (of being in prison!), and told them to

“Rejoice in the Lord always! The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Peace be with you all during this time of isolation. – **Dr. Rowland**

Talking to Animals

We have been missing all of you!! That being said, we would like to stay connected as much as possible. I wanted to let you know that the crosses you colored were a hit with those we mailed them to. I had several tell me they were hanging them in their windows and it meant so much to them. Thank you for your help in reaching out to those who are staying in, especially those who live alone. It is one way to show our love to others!! God Bless.

For this week I am going to suggest we remember to be thankful. The more current saying for this would be to have an **attitude of gratitude**. You might be thinking that it would be hard to do given the situation we're in right now, but if you think about it, there is so much to be thankful for. We can be grateful for the food to eat, a place to live, people to communicate with, etc.

This week I would like for you to think about some things you are grateful for and to write them down. Maybe some other than the usual things such as the sunrise or water. When we communicate next time, share your list with us. I encourage you to read the following scriptures, one or two each day: Daniel 2:23, Matthew 11:25, Luke 18:10-14, Psalms 100:4-5, Romans 1:21, Psalms 95:2-7, and Philippians 4:6-7.

I will share this story with you this week. My dog needed to have her shots for the year and get her heart worm preventive. To do this we had to go to the vets. This is not usually a fun thing to do as Ginger does not like to go, so I had a little talk with her about this. I explained to her what would happen like I would have for a little child. You may think animals don't understand, but I will have to disagree. Often when she has gone to the vet she has resisted going in. I was afraid she would not go with the vet because they were coming to the car to get the pets due to the virus. Well, I guess our little talk did some good, because when the vet came to get her, she dutifully went with him, with her head and tail down, and did not give him a minute's trouble. He brought her back and she hopped right into the back seat, and the deed was done. At that point I said a 'Thank You' to God!! I also believe it is a good idea to talk to your pets! They may know more than you think!



**LAPTOP
EVANGELIST**

Have a blessed week! –**Miss Mary**

Fear or Strength?

What does it mean to keep the faith during these uncertain times? As I have pondered this question all week, I thought to myself what does this look like and how should I talk to you guys about this. I decided I would share a little bit about something that I try to reflect on to stay upbeat and keep the faith during these trying times in the hopes that maybe it will help you too. First of all, if you are anything like me, the COVID-19 virus might scare you a little bit. Whether you're worried that you or someone you know may be impacted by it, it affects us all in some way or another. One of my absolute favorite verses that God reminded me of as I was writing this is:

“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 right hand.”

I love this verse so much because it is a reminder to me that God is with us, He's telling us not to fear, He's giving us strength and He will help us get through this just like He has helped us make it through so many other struggles in our lives. So I ask that when you're fearful, worried, or just feel like giving up, you take a second to pray and reflect on God's teachings.

Have a wonderful week and I hope to see you all soon!

In God we Trust, –**Lauren Foster**

Hello all! What a time this past month has been! A lot has changed for all of us: we've all had to restructure our lives. Our day-to-day routine has changed. School is being done virtually, or for many of you not at all (!), and our offices and workplaces are closed or reduced in some way. Restaurants are all closed or only doing delivery/carryout, and Easter was pretty much canceled! We can't even get together just to hang.



But though these times have all changed, one thing remains, and that is God's love for us. Hebrews 13:8 says

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”

God's love never fails. Though this is a strange time to navigate, take advantage of it! Cherish the time with your family! Start a new hobby. Go for walks. Read the Bible and learn about God's Word! Take advantage of this new-found time!

Be sure to take care of your physically, mentally, and spiritually – those things never change, even if how we do it together has. We can't wait to see you all when we get back!

Be strong! – **Jordyn**