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# The Beacon

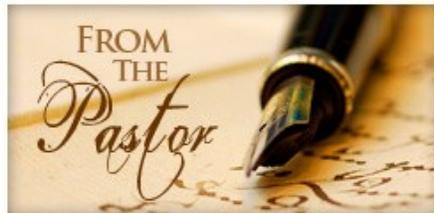
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**University United Methodist Church**  
Welcoming all to grow as disciples of Christ as we  
worship, learn, and serve in community.



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Web Site Address: [universityumctopeka.org](http://universityumctopeka.org) Like us at [jpotter@greatplainsumc.org](https://www.facebook.com/UUMC>Topeka</a><br/>Pastor Jeff's information: Email Address: <a href=) or phone 785-580-5468



Greetings in Christ's Peace,

I pray that you have been well over the last several weeks. These have been strange times indeed! In the midst of our challenges, God is with us! In the midst of our challenges, God is good! In the midst of physical distancing, I pray that you have found ways to be in connection with God and with others and to be blessed as well as to be a blessing. Undoubtedly, we still have a long way to go as the body of Christ, as a community, as a nation, and as a world to keep the most vulnerable amongst us safe as we seek to begin to gradually and safely come out of the shelter of our homes. Let us pray together for God's guidance and safety along the way.

Please know that the safety of our church family and our community is our number one priority and we will be moving with an abundance of caution. This means our plan to reopen will likely be more restrictive than the plan the state has outlined and we will make adjustments as necessary as everything unfolds. At this point, we will continue to worship and meet through online channels only.

Like many of you, I have missed being able to gather together, and at the same time I am inspired by everyone's resilience and willingness to adapt. We are a people of hope and new life through Jesus Christ and that is as true today as it has ever been! You will continue to be in my thoughts and prayers.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Jeff



## CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) AND THE CHURCH

Greetings people of God,

It's been eleven weeks and counting since we have been able to gather together in the building for worship. It has been a trying time and we are so grateful for the ways that you have continued to be the Church during this unprecedented time. We are writing to announce that the Vision and Action Team of the church has approved a plan to re-enter the building for worship and business in the office beginning Sunday, June 28th. Below is an outline of the plan detailing what we will be doing together to keep each other safe. All ages are welcome to worship but in the first phase of returning to the building, we won't be offering the nursery or Sunday school for any ages. Please contact Tammy Call or Pastor Jeff with any questions you may have. God bless you and we look forward to seeing you on June 28th!

### **Beginning Sunday, June 28th**

#### **Worship**

Everyone may attend in person (those feeling sick or with a fever should not attend)

Some form of online worship will continue (likely a livestream)

#### **Safety Guidelines** (will be updated according to guidance from state/county)

- We will sanitize doors, surfaces in the narthex, bathrooms, and the sanctuary before and after worship
- Participants must maintain 6 feet of distance between households at all times - we will have tape in the Narthex to guide
- Sections of pews will be blocked off to ensure the 6 feet of distance is maintained
- Hand sanitizer will be available for everyone upon entry and exit
- Masks will be required for everyone in attendance (except for children under two years of age)
- Masks will be provided for those who arrive without them (please bring your own if you have one)
- Attendance will be taken by computer sign-in by the authorized greeter only
- No shaking hands or physical contact

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- No bulletins will be used
- No congregational singing will take place
- No passing of offering plates (there will be a basket for offering at the entrance of the sanctuary)
- No nursery
- We will exit worship by recessional, dismissed by row (Pastor Jeff will remain in the chancel to direct)
- No fellowship time
- No Sunday School

#### **Building Operations**

##### Pastor Jeff

Working from the church office

Available by appointment only - all sanitization and distancing guidelines must be observed

##### Church Office

Open 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Monday-Friday - sanitization and distancing guidelines must be observed

##### Small groups/Committees

No small group meetings in the building without VAT approval

##### Ministries

Doorstep and Fellowship and Faith donations at the church building resume

Grace and peace,

Tammy Call, VAT Chair & Pastor Jeff

*"So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.*

*God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them." (1 John 4:16)*

## **FINANCE**

Thank you good and faithful servants! We are pleased that so many of you have been able to keep your pledges current during this unusual time. Your efforts are proof that we have a congregation committed to keeping the church **open** with ministries, bills and salaries paid even though the doors are **closed**. We are appreciative of the essential workers of the church who keep up the daily business of the church. Most of all Pastors Jeff, Christine, and Andrew who keep us all connected with sermons, devotions, bible studies, Open Spaces, and community updates. Also, the numerous members who make phone calls, write notes and send cards keeping everyone connected. We are working together as a church, even though we are apart.

Thank you to everyone.

Blessings,  
Karen Myers,  
Finance Chair



## **2020 GREAT PLAINS ANNUAL CONFERENCE (GPAC)**

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, a one-day GPAC business meeting, via a 3-hr conference call, was held on May 30<sup>th</sup>. More than 1,000 clergy, lay, and conference staff individuals, throughout Kansas & Nebraska, participated.

During the call, from time to time, participants were asked to vote on a number of items, each time using their phones by pressing “1” for “yes”, “2” for “no”, or “3” for “abstain”, when prompted by the bishop. Prior to each vote, lines were opened so that participants could make comments or ask questions. After an initial test vote that went as expected by returning more than 1,000 responses, subsequent votes initially returned far fewer results. It was soon determined that, due to the technology, there was a delay in receiving voting results. But, eventually, an appropriate number of votes were recorded. Items that were voted on and approved included:

1. Adjustments to the report for nominations to GP conference committees
2. Action to set minimum compensation amounts for clergy for 2021
3. Pension and health benefits items for conference clergy
4. A proposal regarding the criteria and steps for approval of clergy renewal leave
5. Approval of resolutions to close about 14 GP conference churches
6. Approval of resolutions for the disaffiliation of 6 GP churches, all in Kansas

This meeting was to take care of business that could not be delayed. A GPAC special session to take care of other annual conference business has been scheduled for October 1-4, 2020. If you have any questions about annual conference, please let me know.

Mike Peters, UUMC Lay Delegate to AC

## **CELEBRATE OUR GRADUATES**

**Joshua Cooper**, son of David & Stacey Cooper, from Topeka High School. Josh will be attending The Next Step program through Topeka Public School.

**Natalie Crimmins**, great niece of Larry Farrell, from K-State with a BA in Hospitality Management, Minors in Business Administration & Leadership Studies.

**Andrea Crimmins**, great niece of Larry Farrell, from K-State with a BA in Business Administration, Major in Marketing & Minor in Hospitality Management. Andrea will be attending the University of Nebraska for a Master of Arts in Business.

**Carter Hepworth**, great Nephew of Nancy Farrell, from Washburn Rural High School. Carter will be attending KU for Engineering.

**Chole Holt**, granddaughter of Shirley Holt, from 8th grade at Washburn Rural Middle School. Chloe will be attending Washburn Rural High School.

**Riley Holt Kessler**, grandson of Shirley Holt, from Washburn University with a BA in Psychology. Riley will be seeking employment.

**Maura Langland**, granddaughter of Gary & Jenay Weekly, from 8th Grade at West Middle School in Lawrence. Maura will be attending Free State High School in Lawrence.

**Banks Lear**, son of Kyle & Abby Lear, from 8th grade at Landon Middle School. Banks will be attending Topeka High School.

**Sway Schmelzle**, granddaughter of Jim & Virginia Schmelzele, from Valley Falls High School. While working as a CAN, Sway will be attending Washburn Tech for a degree for Surgical Technician.

**Lainey Schmelzle**, granddaughter of Jim & Virginia Schmelzle, from Oskaloosa High School. Lainey will be attending Fort Hayes State University.

**Shelby Scholz**, Great niece of Nancy Farrell, from Atchison County Community High School. Shelby will be attending Bellus Academy in Manhattan.

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**The Beacon** is published  
monthly for the members  
and friends of University  
United Methodist Church.

**\* SUNDAY SCHEDULE \***  
**9:15 a.m. Worship Service**  
**10:15 a.m. Sunday School**

May the Lord **ble**ss you  
and **pro**te**ct** you.  
May the Lord **sm**ile on you  
and be **gr**acious to you.  
May the Lord **sh**ow you His favor  
and **give** you His **pe**ace.  
Numbers 6:24-26