

# THE WORD

UNIVERSITY BAPTIST CHURCH

March 24, 2020 Vol. 72, No. 11

Little Reminders of  
Faith

## NWATCH

Maintaining Connections in a Time of COVID-19

The church is a family. It is the embodiment of God's work in the world. The church is not an institution, like any other nonprofit or charity. People come together with the common denominator of Christ Jesus, and God transforms us. We become greater than the sum of our parts.

In normal times, worship encapsulates the high point of maintaining our connectedness. Week after week, we gather to sing, pray, and hear God's word. We see each other, and before and after the service, we visit and catch up with friends. During Bible studies, we learn, grow, and share ideas. We see each other at committee meetings and during work projects. In normal times, we also connect on social media, via texts and phone calls, and by writing notes.

These are not normal times. No one ever knows the future, yet in days like these, uncertainty dominates the news cycle. Does the U.S. have the courage to truly practice social distancing? Will we flatten the curve? Can the aid package working its way through Congress help the economy? The truth is: we don't know.

What do we know? God loves us. God is present. And, we can continue being the church. We can maintain our connection with one another and with Christ.

We cannot gather together in the same space of the sanctuary, but we can connect via the live

**SERVICE OF HOLY  
WORSHIP**

March 29, 2020  
11:00 AM

**Sermon:**

"I Bring My Hopelessness"  
Dr. Matthew Tennant

**Scripture:**

John 11:17-27

**Anthem:**

"Dem Bones"  
*arr. Knickle*  
Sanctuary Choir

**Solo:**

"Blessings"  
*by Laura Story*  
Lydia Erbaugh

## CALENDAR

**SUNDAY, MARCH 29**

9:45 Online Bible Study

11:00 Morning Worship (join us from home!)

Other events and activities are being canceled or modified to be online-only when possible. Please contact the Church Office with any questions.

stream. I watched last Sunday's service and enjoyed the comments as they appeared during the service. Between Facebook and YouTube, the service streamed nearly 700 times. Since some people watch together, the electrons that move together over the internet transcend space and bring us together. We can still connect through worship!

We can also connect by calling each other. AT&T had a 1987 commercial with a catchy jingle that went, "Reach out and touch someone." Texting, messaging, and liking people's posts on Instagram are fine. They keep us connected, but the connections maintain some distance. In normal times, we can combine digital connections with in-person connections. These days, we must adapt to maintain connections.

Calling someone on the phone has, for some people, become passé. To stay in touch, we have to be intentional. Pick the phone and call. Yes, still text. Yes, still message. Yes, still like and comment on friends' posts. To truly hear how someone is doing and maintain a safe social distance, we can make the effort to listen and be fully present with our church family.

We need each other more than ever. If you need something, do not hesitate to reach out to the church office. We will do what we can to help. We anticipate receiving requests for help, and in times of uncertainty like this, contributions to the church naturally decline. If you can help by making a donation, please do. If not, we understand.

We can share prayer requests and provide mutual support to one another. If you have a prayer request, please share it with me. Let me know if I can share it with others. Our combined voices will not reach an absent God. God is present and listening.

The church is a family. Together, we can face the future no matter what lies ahead.

Peace,  
Matt

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### Prayer Concerns

Sympathy to Ray and Nancy Gaines and family, after the death of Ray's mother, Dudley Gaines, on March 13.

Pray for our world, as we all face the reality of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pray for those infected with the virus, for people who are taking care of them, and for all who are especially at risk.

Pray for our church family, that we may draw closer, even as we keep a physical distance from one another.

## Sunday Mornings Online

Even though we are not gathering in person, we are still joining together each Sunday morning for worship and Bible study. We hope you will join us!

### Bible Study

At 9:45 am, we begin an interactive Bible Study that is broadcast via [YouTube](#). We invite you to join in the conversation by adding comments during the session. We are able to see the comments in real time, and they are incorporated into the discussion. It's not quite face-to-face, but it's as close as we can get! To download the study handout ahead of time, visit [universitybaptist.org/live](http://universitybaptist.org/live)

### Worship

Our Sunday morning worship service will begin, as usual, at 11:00 am. We encourage everyone in the congregation to join us from home. As always, you can listen by radio on WINA (1070 AM and 98.9 FM), or you can join us online for our live broadcast. To view the live video broadcast, visit our [Facebook page](#) or click [this link](#) to watch on YouTube.

## Need Groceries?

If you need groceries or medicines and don't want to go out shopping, let the church office know. Healthy volunteers with a lower risk of serious infection are willing to bring the needed items your door.

A few people have already volunteered to help with this, but please also let us know if you're willing to be added to the list of healthy shoppers. You can contact the office or email [pbrown@universitybaptist.org](mailto:pbrown@universitybaptist.org)



### The Ministry of a Parking Lot

How can a parking lot reflect God's love?

We were contacted last week by a member of the coronavirus testing team at UVA. Many hospital employees park each day in distant parking lots and then ride buses to the hospital. As you might imagine, crowded bus rides are a potential time when disease can spread. UVA is taking steps to address this, but they are also asking local businesses to donate spots if possible. We have talked with the Piedmont Virginia Parking Company, which manages our lots, and have agreed to assign 13 additional spots temporarily for hospital employees. We will continue to monitor the situation and do more as we can, but for now we are pleased to be able to help, even in this small way.

## Changes to Upcoming Events and Regular Programs

Because of the current outbreak of COVID-19, we are choosing to postpone or cancel many upcoming events. This decision is a painful one, as each of these events is important to who we are as a church. The [Richard E. Myers Lecture Series](#) stimulates our minds and deepens our faith. The [Easter Egg Hunt](#) is a cherished tradition, enjoyed by children and adults alike, which draws us closer as a church family. [Operation Inasmuch \(OIAM\)](#) is a way that put our faith in action to serve our community. Nevertheless, we must refrain from gathering for these events right now:

- [Lecture Series](#) - with Remi Brague - postponed until a later date, TBA
- [Easter Egg Hunt](#) - canceled
- [Operation Inasmuch \(OIAM\)](#) - canceled

In addition, many of our regular group meetings are on hold for now. The following regular activities are not meeting:

- Acoustic Vespers
- Youth Real Life
- Rosewood Bible Study
- Sanctuary Choir
- Jubilate
- Tuesday Work Team
- Wednesday Night Dinners and Programs
- PBJ Bible Study (meeting via email)
- Sunday Bible Study (we have a joint online study at 9:45 am each week)
- Other group/committee meetings: confirm with your group leader

How are we the church without these events? We are the church because we follow Christ. As unsettling and disorienting as this season may be, we remain centered in our identity as God's people. We remember that our calling as a church is more than any single event or program; it is who we are, not just what we do. So, as painful as it is to make these decisions, we do what we must to protect our church family and all who live in our community. This is in itself an act of compassion for our neighbors. We look forward to the time when we can resume our regular church programming, and we will keep you posted in future editions of The Word.

Looking ahead to the summer, we keep these activities on the calendar as we wait to see how the coronavirus situation unfolds:

- Church Picnic - June 14
- Vacation Bible School - June 15-19

### **Pandemic**

A poem by Rev. Dr. Lynn Ungar

What if you thought of it  
as the Jews consider the Sabbath—  
the most sacred of times?  
Cease from travel.  
Cease from buying and selling.  
Give up, just for now,  
on trying to make the world  
different than it is.  
Sing. Pray. Touch only those  
to whom you commit your life.  
Center down.

And when your body has become still,  
reach out with your heart.  
Know that we are connected  
in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.  
(You could hardly deny it now.)  
Know that our lives  
are in one another's hands.  
(Surely, that has come clear.)  
Do not reach out your hands.

### **Memorial Lilies for Easter**

Easter will be April 12, and we would like to decorate our sanctuary with an abundance of lilies. If you would like to dedicate a lily in honor or memory of a loved one, please contact Lexi

at [lwoodson@universitybaptist.org](mailto:lwoodson@universitybaptist.org) or call the church office to let her know the wording that you would like to appear in the Easter bulletin. The cost of each lily will be \$10. You can mail a check or drop it in the offering plate earmarked "Easter Lilies." The last day to order is Monday, April 6. You may pick up your lilies after the 11:00 am Easter service.



Reach out your heart.  
Reach out your words.  
Reach out all the tendrils  
of compassion that move, invisibly,  
where we cannot touch.

Promise this world your love—  
for better or for worse,  
in sickness and in health,  
so long as we all shall live



## Construction Continues

Progress continues on the benches in the UBC Pocket Park, the outcome of the Design Contest last fall. It is exciting to see these developments taking shape



## Mission Moment

Each Spring UBC has participated in the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's National Missions Offering. This emphasis helps support our missionaries right here in the US. For many years, our Offering has gone directly to Paula Settle in Nada, Kentucky. With Paula's December 2019 retirement looming, she made us aware of another CBF field missionary in a county in southeastern Kentucky. Our Missions Council reached out to this missionary, Scarlette Jasper. She is enthusiastic and excited to create a partnership with our church. First, a bit about Scarlette. . . .she was commissioned as a field missionary by CBF in 2014. She serves in areas of persistent poverty in McCreary County, one of the poorest counties in the United States. She is married, the mother of three children and two grandchildren. She is also a student at Baptist Seminary of

Kentucky pursuing her Master of Divinity with a concentration in pastoral Care and Counseling. Scarelette is the Director of Olive Branch Ministries, Inc. ([olivebranchministriesky.org](http://olivebranchministriesky.org)) Some of the many needs that Scarlette helps address are: working with the homeless, coordinates children's' literacy projects, allocates funds for rent and utility deposits, assists with transportation costs when families must travel for appointments to distant medical centers, provide heaters or propane in the winter, supports local schools with clothing, school supplies, food, hygiene items, and helping veterans get needed services. She maintains a small mission house that serves as an emergency shelter and place for pastoral counseling. Like the majority of our field missionaries, Scarlette must raise her own program and project support.

Now, that you know a little more about Scarlette's work, won't you prayerfully consider being apart of our National Missions offering that will go directly to Scarlette's numerous community needs? Please use one of the envelopes in the pew racks **to donate** with cash or by check, designated " National Missions".

## Lenten Series: Reminders of Faith

This year, our theme for Lent is "Reminders of Faith." What reminds us of our faith? Some coins? A few stones? A bucket? A pair of eyeglasses? Some bones? A palm branch? A towel? Each of these items will appear during our Lenten worship services. Each one connects to one of the central scripture passages of Lent. These common items can serve as a prompt for us to start seeing reminders of our faith in Christ daily. Then, the Lenten journey





can continue beyond Easter. Reminders from everyday items can become a significant part of our faith journey.

### Available for use

Do you know someone hearing impaired that could use an attachable phone unit that amplifies sound and lights up to signal incoming calls? If so, contact Jeanne Nye at [jpnye@hotmail.com](mailto:jpnye@hotmail.com) or call the church office.

## DID YOU KNOW?

### Offering Envelopes

If you use offering envelopes and need more, please contact the church office. We print them in the office and will happily print more if you have run out. Please come by anytime to pick them up or contact the office and we will send them to you.

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