

# THE WORD

UNIVERSITY BAPTIST CHURCH

June 30, 2020 Vol. 72, No. 25

## Some Thoughts About Regathering

## WATCH

If you feel at all uncomfortable about regathering, please don't feel any pressure to show up on July 12. I am sorry if this sounds abrupt, but "we the people of the United States" are failing at creating a more perfect union. We have not stopped the spread of COVID-19. Even though Virginia appears to be flattening the curve, other states are not. When we first named July 12 as the date we would regather, it seemed far away. Now, it is less than two weeks away. Do we really *need* to be back together so soon? I want to regather. I miss seeing you in person. I want to rebuild some of the ministries that have slowed. We will continue to think about how we can safely reconvene, whether we get together on July 12 or at some future date. The work of the church is evolving and we must figure out how to do it remotely, and we can.

"We the people" are the opening words of the Preamble to the Constitution, and "we the people" have a lot of work to do. We keep falling short of the soaring Constitutional aspirations to "establish justice" and "insure domestic tranquility." Both appear to be a distant dream as we approach Independence Day 2020. As a nation, we are more polarized now than we have been for many years. With [protests](#) and continuing [violence against people of color](#), we have not established justice or insured domestic tranquility. If we reluctantly set justice and tranquility aside, we still have not stopped the spread of COVID-19. Despite [countries around the world reopening](#) after having almost no new cases, we are experiencing [a record numbers of people](#) testing positive. Our ministry in the future includes responding to all of these issues and adapting to a changing world.

In 1 Peter, we read about living in a broken world. "Beloved, don't be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening

## SERVICE OF HOLY WORSHIP

July 5, 2020  
11:00 AM

**Sermon:**  
"Beguiling Faith"  
Dr. Matthew Tennant

**Scripture:**  
Song of Solomon 2:8-13

**Anthem:**  
"In Remembrance"  
(Red)

## CALENDAR

**WEDNESDAY, July 1**  
7:00 Sanctuary Choir (*Zoom*)

**SUNDAY, July 5**  
8:30 Church Council Meeting (*Zoom*)  
9:45 *No Bible Study*  
11:00 Morning Worship (*radio and livestream*)  
7:00 Youth: Real Life (*Zoom*)

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

to you” (4:12). According to this passage, we should not be surprised at our “fiery ordeal,” including a polarized nation, a pandemic, the recession, and trying to figure out when and whether to regather. 1 Peter also instructs us to have a “unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind” (3:8). Despite everything that looks so bad, God is with us and ministry will continue. It will look different than it did in the past, but we will still be God’s people.

For now, we can take tangible steps to grow together as a congregation. First, download the bulletin before Sunday mornings. Read the scripture passages, hum the hymns, and think through the theme. Second, learn about the issues. If you wonder about some new sources, ask me, Alba, or Will. If you come to church on July 12, bring your phone or tablet to download the bulletin, wear a mask, and practice social distancing.

People have wondered aloud to me whether or not July 12 is the right time to regather. I don’t know. We are taking precautions and trying to minimize the risk. More details about our [regathering plan](#) are below. For now, remember that we will continue providing the live stream worship service. For those who have grown in Christ while watching the live stream, please stay home. You can continue joining us via the live stream with our blessing. There is no pressure to physically be back in the sanctuary.

Peace,  
Matt

## Prayer Concerns

Sympathy is expressed to the family of [Evelyn Odell](#) who passed away in Seattle on June 9 at the age of 99. She and Henry were active members of UBC when they lived in Charlottesville.

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 the unrest in our country and around the world. Pray that we could listen to one another and have Christ-list empathetic eyes.

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

## Regathering for Worship

For the past three months, our Sunday morning worship services have been exclusively online and on the radio, without members of the congregation in the sanctuary. While this has not been ideal, we are grateful for the technology that allows us to worship together remotely. Looking ahead, we understand that the danger of COVID-19 persists; this is our new reality. At the same time, businesses and organizations around us have been slowly re-opening, including many churches. Beginning July 12, UBC will open our doors to allow in-person worship for those who feel ready to return.

We expect that many of you will not yet be comfortable returning to the sanctuary in person, and we encourage you to continue worshiping at home via Facebook, YouTube, or the radio if that is best for you. Some may choose to remain at home for now, returning in person later in the fall when they feel ready. Others will choose to continue worshiping from home until a vaccine or effective treatment is developed. All of these are good and faithful choices. No one should feel any pressure or obligation to be physically present when they do not feel safe doing so.

For those who do attend in person, the experience will not be exactly what it was before the pandemic, at least not yet. The choir will not be singing or seated in the choir loft. There will be no hugs, handshakes, or extended times of fellowship. Masks must be worn at all times. We will all keep six feet between us, with pews marked to designate where people may sit. Hymns will only

be sung very quietly under our masks. Two television screens will be at the front of the sanctuary for viewing the pre-recorded choir anthems and readings from people at home.

While none of this is ideal, these precautions are necessary to keep one another and our community safe. You can read these procedures in detail in our [UBC Regathering Plan](#). Please reach out to Matt, Alba, or Will if you have any questions or concerns about our Regathering Plan.

Going forward, we will adjust these precautions based on current conditions and better understandings of how to stay safe. Hopefully this means a gradual return to fewer restrictions, but if conditions worsen, we may need to strengthen our precautions or return to worshiping only from home. Whatever the future brings, we trust and rejoice in God's presence with us, knowing that God's Spirit connects us all, wherever and however we gather for worship.

### Deacon Ballot Reminder

Please email or mail in your Deacon ballots by July 3. If for any reason you have not received one or need another copy, you can find them [here](#) or by contacting the church office at 434-293-5106 or email Lexi at [Lwoodson@universitybaptist.org](mailto:Lwoodson@universitybaptist.org).

### Update from the Search Committee

The Associate Minister Search Committee has been hard at work for several months. The last few weeks have been a particularly exciting time in the search process, as we feel like the pieces of the puzzle are coming together. We believe that God has led us to the person who will help minister with and to our youth and college students. The search committee will be providing more information soon. If you have any questions, please reach out to a member of the committee: Sarah Ames, Martha Ballenger, Daniel Harper, Laura Martindale, Rachel Miller, Amanda Ohlms, Roy Thomas and Kevin Wright.



### National Missions: Scarlette Jasper

Our Spring Missions Offering this year went to support the work of Scarlette Jasper, one of the CBF Field Personnel working to address rural poverty in the U.S. This year we collected \$2,255 and received this response from Scarlette:

*This is so amazing! I will definitely put these funds to good use! There are so many additional needs right now and this will certainly help!! Currently I am purchasing food, hygiene, and cleaning items to be distributed through the*

*Family Resource Centers at the schools in Pine Knot, KY and Oneida, TN. They have their hands full with this pandemic and trying to help the most vulnerable families. We are also supporting them with purchasing items to help with some summer literacy efforts to help some of the students that are struggling the most. We will be providing items for the literacy bags they are sending home as well as some educational games that promote math and reading/spelling for the families to play this summer. We will be assisting those experiencing homelessness with masks, hand sanitizer, food, and other basic necessities as well as emergency shelter and rental assistance for those with extreme medical issues that make them more vulnerable to COVID-19. Thank you all so much for your partnership, prayers, and support!!*

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!

Join us in wishing some of our church family a Happy Birthday this week!

**July 1:** Nettie Chewing

**July 3:** Barbara Murray

**July 4:** Katherine Wagoner

**July 6:** Barry Wilson



May God bless you all with abundant joy on your birthday and always.

Having a birthday and do not see your name here? Please help us update our records. Contact Lexi to provide your updated information at (434)-293-5706



### Need a Mask??

Volunteers in our church have been hard at work sewing beautiful fabric masks. Do you need one? This expression of love from our talented church members is one way that we can take care of one another. If you do not have a mask yet or if you need another, please contact the church office or one of the ministers so that we can get a fabric mask to you. There are also baskets of masks in the church lobby if you'd like to stop by and pick one up!

### Like to Sew?

We extend our deep gratitude to the volunteers in our church who have already made dozens of fabric masks for others who need them. If you would like to share your skills and join in this effort, call Will Brown or email him at [wbrown@universitybaptist.org](mailto:wbrown@universitybaptist.org)

## 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!

### 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.

### Online and Automatic Giving

**DID YOU KNOW?** Online giving simplifies contributing by allowing for a specific dollar amount to be sent to University Baptist Church on a specific date, thus decreasing the number of checks you have to write. You can set this up to happen automatically from your bank account, or make a single contribution on our website or Facebook page. For more information, visit [universitybaptist.org/give](http://universitybaptist.org/give) or call our church office.

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Connect with us



