



September 2020

The Tumbleweed

EDEN PRAIRIE  UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH
BIG ENOUGH TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE, SMALL ENOUGH TO CARE.

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Let's Connect Groups

Thanks to all of you who responded to our survey! Forty-one people signed up to be part of Let's Connect—several of whom also said they would facilitate a group! This is a fantastic response and a sign that our church family is interested and ready to move toward more personal connections with others, which is a purpose of starting these small groups. We hope that people can reconnect with friends and make new friends through meeting together, sharing “life” and caring for each other.

Our next step is to create small groups from those who signed up. We hope to get these groups set in the next few days and contact facilitators who will then invite their group members to a meeting. You should hear from someone within the next week or two. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Deb Soderholm or Bruce Webster, Co-Chairs, Connect Team. Let's connect!



As a Reconciling
Congregation, we accept
and respond to Jesus'
challenge to love all of our
neighbors.

Eden Prairie UMC
15050 Scenic Heights Road
Eden Prairie, MN 55344
Tel: 952-937-8781
www.prairiechurch.org
office@prairiechurch.org



Join us for...
**OUTDOOR
WORSHIP**
Wednesday, September 2nd @ 7 PM
Reservations Required

Outdoor Worship, Sept. 2

We can safely accommodate 25 families. Find the registration link at www.prairiechurch.org. We ask that you stay in the assigned areas, six feet apart from the next family group, and wear masks. The playground will be closed; children are to remain with their parents. If you cannot access the sign-up, please call the office at 952-937-8781 and Becky Coleman will add you to the list. Provide your own seating.

From the Pastor

Friends,

I graduated from Buena Vista College (now university) after spending my college years on the Storm Lake campus. I didn't even know that there were other places called by the same name across the state of Iowa. What did it matter to me? I was living in Storm Lake, having the dorm life college experience and loving it. As far as I knew, this was Buena Vista College!

When it came to graduation day, my little Storm Lake campus class of between 200 – 300 students suddenly morphed into a graduation class of about 1000 Buena Vista College graduates from several campuses across the state of Iowa. I had no idea! Where did all of these people come from?

As it turns out, there were several campuses to the one education system known as Buena Vista College. Each of the campuses produced graduates with legitimate degrees and vital college experiences at the same time I was on the main campus. The richness of the diversity of the student body was not lost on me. While my campus was filled with similarly aged students and a stray “non-traditional” student from Storm Lake, the college actually had a diverse student body of diverse ages, races and stages of life, all seeking the same thing: a college degree.

All along I had thought Eden Prairie United Methodist Church was a single campus ministry. But did you know that we are a two-campus ministry? Our main campus is at 15050 Scenic Heights Road, a physical location where ministry is still happening, like Crops for PROP, the labyrinth for spiritual meditation, and recording of various worship and Sunday School elements. This main campus used to house nearly everything that we were about, or at least was the site from which our ministry was launched. But we are now a two-campus ministry.

Five months ago when our first online-only worship experience became the new reality, we launched a second campus for ministry. I didn't understand it at the time. But it has been abundantly clear that the online campus is where the majority of us are gathering and participating in ministry and mission in this season when we are not able to gather in-person in our main campus building.

The online campus of Eden Prairie United Methodist Church houses on-demand Sunday School, Children's Messages and Worship every week. You can count on it! This will not change! We have also learned and become more adept at having “live” events on our online campus. Every Sunday we have a live Bible Study, a live fellowship time and a live time of prayers on our online campus. Our semi-live worship experience has allowed us to share communion together at our online campus. Our online campus ministry is thriving. As we move into fall and offer some new opportunities for engagement, I encourage you to find one new way to participate in ministry on our online campus.

Eventually our main campus will be open to in-person, in-building gatherings again. Our main campus ministry will thrive because of new and exciting things we have learned while we have been gathering at our online campus. I cannot even begin to imagine how God will reshape and form us anew in this process, but I do know that it will be life-giving!

For now, we are working on the infrastructure to our second campus. It isn't brick and mortar. Instead, it is things like computer equipment, programs and services. We are reshaping the sound booth to house live-streaming equipment. Zoom is becoming our go-to live meeting place. Our website will begin to house stories and connections and ministries in new ways. We are thinking creatively and working with what we have to support innovative versions of EPUMC on our second campus. New ways of being church are being devised for our online campus. We invite your prayers for and participation in our online ministry.

We are a two-campus church: one at 15050 Scenic Heights Road and one online. Both are vital. Both are us. I pray for what God might do through our two-campus ministry!

Blessings,



BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH WORSHIP



Join us on Zoom each Sunday for ...

8:15 a.m. – Bible Study on the scripture for worship

9:30 a.m. – Fellowship Time in small group format followed by community prayers

Zoom ID # 445 569 4215

Recorded Worship and Children’s Message ALWAYS available on the website
www.prairiechurch.org

September 6

Running with Giants: Abigail

“Courageous Action”

Portions of 1 Samuel 25

Communion blessed during recorded worship – have a piece of bread and a cup of juice (whatever you have on hand) available



Reckless Love

Learning to love like Jesus so that we can
BE LOVE

Jesus invited his followers on a journey that mirrors what happens to the Grinch. The Grinch started out with a heart that was “two sizes too small” but in the end, his heart expands “three sizes” as he begins to love others. Jesus challenges, teaches, agitates and equips his followers to love like he loved. Our task is to let Jesus expand our “two-sizes too small” hearts so that we can love like Jesus loved, with a reckless love that knows no bounds.



Lavish Love — Sept. 27

BAPTISM

Luke 6:27-30; 1 Peter 4:8

Baptism of Leo Knapp (recorded earlier)

Special Music by the Bell Choir

Openhearted Love - October 4



Luke 8:1-3; John 4:3-30

Bibles given to Preschoolers and 3rd Graders (recorded)

Communion blessed

during recorded worship – have a piece of bread and a cup of juice (whatever you have on hand) available for communion
 Special Music by Chancel Choir

Begin with Love — September 13

Mark 12:28-34; Galatians 5:22-26

Special Music by Children’s Choir

Expand Love — September 20

Luke 5:1-11, 27-29

Semi-Live Worship with Communion at 10am (on Zoom) – have a piece of bread and a cup of juice (whatever you have on hand) available for communion

Value the Vulnerable — October 11

John 15:1-7; Luke 7:36-39

RAINBOW SUNDAY – Celebrating

Inclusiveness



Emulate Christ

— October 18

John 13:14-17, 34-35; Luke 9:23-25

Semi-Live Worship with Communion at 10am (on Zoom). Have a piece of bread and a cup of juice (whatever you have on hand) available for communion

Special Music by Praise Band

Music Director's Notes

By Megan Peterson

Over the last five months, the sentiment "It Takes a Village" has never felt so true. While we are worshipping online, it may be hard to see our village but they are still here! With the dedication of so many musicians, we have been able to enrich online worship with several virtual choirs. It may be hard to see all of the people that are moving behind the scenes, so I am excited to highlight these amazing musicians in our new newsletter feature, "Get to Know Your Musicians." I hope you will enjoy learning more about this special group of people. If this time of isolation has been challenging for your musical soul, I hope you will consider joining one of our many opportunities to share music in online worship. There are opportunities for every skill and comfort level. Come and join our village!

Fall Music Groups

Below is an overview of the groups offered this fall. If you have questions or are interested in joining a group, please send me an email (meganp@prairiechurch.org).

Chancel Choir: Zoom Rehearsals start Sept. 16 (Men 7-7:35 p.m.; Women 7:25-8 p.m.), virtual choir first Sunday of every month. In-person, outside welcome back celebration Sept. 9, 7-7:30pm.

Hand Bell Ensemble: Outside Rehearsals starting Sept. 10, 6-7pm. Anthems for the fourth Sunday of each month recorded at rehearsal. (A virtual option will be available for those not able to rehearse outside.)

Praise Team: Rehearsals scheduled as needed, virtual choir third Sunday of every month.

Soloists/Small Groups: Instrumentalists and vocalists record anthem or lead worship hymns.

Get to Know Your Musicians:

Name: Kathy Jarvis



What is your musical background?

I took violin and piano as a child. Not very good at either. I am enjoying

taking piano lessons now. I enjoyed singing in our Junior High and High school choirs. I played handbells in our youth handbell group.

What other hobbies do you have?

I love biking, especially on our tandem. I love camping and being up in the BWCA.

What music group(s) have you participated with at EPUMC?

I have sung in the choir and I still like to play handbells.

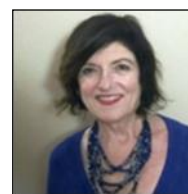
What is your favorite hymn/anthem?

My favorite hymn is the "Hymn of Promise." I heard it for the first time a week before my mother passed away and knew that it would be wonderful to have us sing it at her celebration of life. It is also the hymn that when we were visiting, looking for a home here 20 years ago, was sung at the church we were visiting. The hymn is more a resurrection song, and it was being sung in October. I knew then that God was giving me a message it was time to come back to the states from Ireland.

What does sacred music mean to you?

Sacred music to me is music that brings me closer to God and the Holy Spirit that is within me. It moves me to a place that makes me feel calm.

Name: Kim Palmer



What is your musical background?

We grew up singing harmony with my father while washing the dishes and on road trips. I started piano lessons at age 8, and guitar lessons at 13, but vocal music is my passion. Singing with choirs has been part of my life since childhood - at church and at school. After college, I sang in bars and at weddings with a country-western band.

What other hobbies do you have?

Singing is (was) my No. 1 hobby. Before the pandemic, I was singing with five groups at once, including two gospel choirs.

Continued on next page

Children's Ministries

By Rachel Casper, Director

No sew mask event

The no sew mask event in August was so much fun. I made 15 mask kits. We had enough kids that we worked with two different groups. It was wonderful to see the kids' faces and hear them interacting with each other.

Sunday school

Jody, Kay and I had so much fun teaching the kids about Esther and Jonah in August. We learned that God can use anyone to make a difference, and the smallest acts can make a big impact.

In September we will learn some very important lessons about loving our enemies.

As the kids are starting school whether it is in a classroom or learning online, I ask that we all pray for peace. Peace in our world, peace in our school and most importantly peace in our souls. We should always take the time to sit with God and find that peace. Our kids need that just much as us adults do and sometimes we need to remember to help them with that. I also ask that we pray for patience as we adjust to this new normal. We are all in this together.



Save the Date

Rally Sunday — October 4, 2020 — 1-1:45pm

Details to come

Get to Know the Musicians

from previous page

I also like gardening and hiking in beautiful nature.

What music group(s) have you participated with at EPUMC?

Chancel Choir and Praise Team.

What is your favorite hymn/anthem?

"Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying," "The Lamb Has Overcome" and "He Never Failed Me Yet."

What does sacred music mean to you?

Sacred music to me is a powerful portal to the Divine and all that is good in humanity. I feel closest to God and to others when I am experiencing spirit-filled sacred music!



Youth Ministry

By Terri Myers

Many of us are familiar with the “Serenity Prayer” and the poem “Footprints.” If not, you may want to “ask” your smart device. I find both of these to be reassuring, as there is so much that seems out of control.

Hebrews 13:8 reminds us that “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” That is true for our church and our youth program as well.

When we talk about our church and our youth program, we do not describe the building or the youth room; instead, we describe the people, the activities, and the fellowship. This fall we will not start out in the building, but we will continue with people, activities and fellowship. I will be sending meditations, discussions and activities via email and text through an app called GroupMe. We will have live discussions via GroupMe as well as speakers via Zoom.

I am super excited about what is coming this fall beginning the first week in October. I look forward to the challenges of staying connected, apart, bringing us closer while we are separated.

If you have not joined the EPUMC Youth group on GroupMe, please send me your phone number so that I can add you to the group. This is for Youth entering Grades 7—12 only.

My heart is with you, your teachers and your parents as you begin the school year in a new and challenging way. My prayers go with you as you navigate a “new world,” something that none of us has experienced before.

My “door” is always open. You can reach me via text in the GroupMe App – EPUMC Youth or email at terrim@prairiechurch.org. (I am even willing to talk out a math problem. — Terri)

GEMS from Our Past — shared stories

Hi, I’m Deb Soderholm. I am privileged to be the “leader” of Eden Prairie UMC’s GEMS (God’s Exceptional Methodist Seniors) group here at EPUMC. During this crazy time when we cannot be together, it has been hard to connect in some meaningful way and still be safe. I struggled with different ideas, and several weeks ago I came up with a potentially engaging project.



The idea was to email all of the GEMS and give them a topic. The first one was “Share about an item from your childhood.” ANY-ONE who wanted to could write their story and send it to me. No pressure; whoever sent me their story, it was included. I sent out the email request on a Monday and asked the stories be sent to me by Thursday. I then compiled the stories into a document and sent

it out to everyone on Friday. We have just finished our sixth topic. I can’t tell you how fun, informative, amazing and joyful these stories have been for us!

We have had many people share how much these stories have meant to them and what a gift they are. We are learning so much about each other; it connects us in ways I had never imagined. **There are 56 people in our email group, and 27 of them have contributed one or more stories—amazing, right?**

If you are interested in reading these great stories, email me debsoderholm@gmail.com. I will then add you to the email list to get our next issue. You can also request previous issues and I will send them. AND, if you wish to share YOUR stories with us, let me know and I will send you the topic emails. We welcome you to join in the fun!! Blessings, Deb

A page full of 'thank you's'

For your faithful generosity

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

We, the leadership of the church, are beside ourselves with joy and pride in this congregation. You have collectively kept up and surpassed your commitments to pay your pledges. Not every church can say that about their members.

In this uncertain time, it is a real gift to be able to be certain about our monthly finances.

So...THANK YOU!

Beth Holland, member of EPUMC Administration Team

For fresh produce and other food

Dear Friends,

During this time of unexpected crisis, we are so thankful for your support. Your recent donations of 382 pounds of food came at exactly the right time to help insure that we could get food safely into the hands of those who need it.

It is a scary time and we are buoyed by the grace of our clients who are grateful for the services, and we feel truly humbled by the outpouring of support from people like you.

"Thank you for the greatest act of kindness which is greatly appreciated," PROP senior client.

Stay safe. Be well. And thank you for helping others.

With warm gratitude, Janet Palmer,
Executive Director, PROP

For creating connections

Back in March when we closed our doors and began our new church life remotely, we wanted to keep our church family connected. So we started a shepherd program. We (Diane Bancroft and Deb Soderholm) were asked by Pastor Becky Jo to secure shepherds and assign them "sheep" to connect with and see to any needs they might have. We were blessed by many people who said yes to being a shepherd, and we began our connecting.

When we started, we had no idea how long this distanced church life would continue. Shepherds were asked about mid-way in this time if they were open to continuing their role as shepherds, and almost all said yes. We were so grateful for the time they gave us and that most were able to continue to shepherd.

Now, after more weeks have gone by with no foreseeable change in our situation, we felt it was time to move from this form of connection and look to another, deeper and long-term way of connecting our church family. We want to take this opportunity to thank our shepherds for the time, effort and care they gave to us.

Shepherds

Kathy Bowman
Jim Kern
Gwen Pickering
Wrenetta Dietz
Bob Kratz
Don Prestly
Kristin Duxstad
Deb Lind
Drake Talbert
Ginger Eddy
Bob Lindberg

Kay Wall
Jackie Engel
Vicki Lindquist
Art Weeks
Sherry Harms
Lil Lindsey
Nancy Weeks
Connie Hauswirth
Pat Nash
Patricia Williamson
Kathy Jarvis

Drive-Thru Blessing and Birthday Celebration Aug. 23

Sunday, August 23, Eden Prairie UMC staff safely greeted guests as they rode or drove by. It was a celebration of August birthdays: Pastor Becky Jo, Rachel Casper and KT Thompson.

We collected 428 pounds of food and requested supplies to bless Eden Prairie neighbors served by the PROP Food Shelf.

See the next page for a photo of all that was collected.

Photos: (clockwise), Pastor Becky Jo's birthday greeting, Flat Jesus was present, conversations from a safe distance and LeAnn popped up.



COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL ACTION

Partnering with Simpson Housing Services



Eden Prairie UMC has signed up to provide meals at the Simpson Shelter in 2020. Our next scheduled serving dates are September, October and December. We hope to fully fund the cost of catered meals, as that is currently the Simpson Shelter policy for food service. It costs about \$400 to do this. To help us continue to support Simpson Shelter as they feed the folks who are staying with them, please make your donation at <http://www.prairiechurch.org/online-giving> or the Give+ App (choosing "Simpson Shelter"), or mail a donation to the church indicating the gift is for Simpson Shelter. Thanks for your ongoing attention to be a church that is "big enough to make a difference!"

PROP contributions

At right, requested items for the PROP Food Shelf weighed 428 pounds after the Aug. 23 Drive-Thru Blessing. Lower right, onions harvested in August from the PROP Garden at EPUMC.



The garden is outdoing itself this year! Many thanks to all the garden volunteers for their work.

If any home gardeners find themselves with an overabundance, PROP will accept your donations, too! You can deliver directly to PROP, drop your produce off at church on Sundays (11 a.m.—noon) or Wednesdays (6-7 p.m.) or contact Kristin and we'll arrange a porch pickup, kjduxstad@gmail.com.



Adult Small Groups

All in-person, indoor gatherings at Eden Prairie UMC are cancelled until further notice. The Core Team continues to evaluate when it is safe to open, with guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health and the Minnesota Annual Conference. Groups may meet outdoors at Eden Prairie UMC, following the church's guidelines. Contact office@prairiechurch.org if you have questions.

Men's Discussion Group meets Wednesdays from 8—9 a.m. in the Gathering Room.

Women's Evening In Home Book Group meets about every other month in a home to discuss the book we are currently reading. We are planning a September meeting outdoors at Eden Prairie

Cheers (Men's Fellowship Group) meets Saturdays at 8 a.m. at Lund's/Byerly's, Eden Prairie.



Cheers Too! (Women's Fellowship Group) Meets Saturdays at 8 a.m. at Kowalski's Market, 16500 W. 78th Street.

GEMS (God's Exceptional Methodist Seniors) Breakfast Group Please see page 6 for an article about how this group is staying in touch.

3Fs Food, Fun & Fellowship is an informal gathering that meets in people's homes several times a year. If you are interested in participating in events this fall, email Kathy Jarvis and Nancy Bollweg at epumcdinner@yahoo.com, and they will answer your questions.



Yoga meets Thursdays at 8:45 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Terri Myers leads this group, and it is free. Please check the weekly schedule for dates.

Feed My Starving Children
Packing sites are now open to groups of five people. If you have questions, please talk to Dave Zuelke.



Prayer Network – Praying for the church family's concerns and joys on a daily basis. Please contact the office at office@prairiechurch.org or 952-937-8781 to be included in the Network or if you have a prayer request.



Women's FaithShare meets Thursdays from 10 –11:30 a.m. fall through mid-May. All women are welcome. Together we read books and watch videos as springboards for discussion.

MOMS Group — This group meets regularly for fellowship and support.

United Methodist Women meets on selected dates during the month. Please contact Ginger Eddy at 952-974-2092 or vfellingner@gmail.com for more information.

Inter-Knits Prayer Shawl Ministry meets the second Monday of the month at the church at 7 p.m. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Sherry Harms at 952-658-6868. We meet in Room 6.

Tuesday Book Group — This group meets at 6 p.m. about every other Tuesday, September through May.

Block Party Quilt Group meets the first Thursday of the month. Use your time at home to make cozy crafts that will warm your family or others in this troubled time.



Eden Prairie United Methodist Church
15050 Scenic Heights Road
Eden Prairie, MN 55344



Pastor:	Becky Jo Messenbrink	BeckyJoM@prairiechurch.org
Director of Children's Ministries:	Rachel Casper	RachelC@prairiechurch.org
Young Family Engagement Specialist:	Jody Veatch	JodyV@prairiechurch.org
Director of Music:	Megan Peterson	MeganP@prairiechurch.org
Director of Youth Ministry:	Terri Myers	TerriM@prairiechurch.org
Organist/Accompanist:	KT Thompson	ktt@prairiechurch.org
Office Manager:	Becky Coleman	office@prairiechurch.org
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Custodian/Building Manager:	Rick LaMothe	rickl@prairiechurch.org

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Church office hours:

9 a.m.—1 p.m. Monday and Thursday
9 a.m.—5 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday.



Don't forget to "like" our page
Eden Prairie United
Methodist Church