

Fremont United Methodist Church

We seek to share the joy of God's love so that all might live with dignity and purpose.

Virtual Worship Every Sunday
10:00 AM

Virtual Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting
7:00 PM, starting Mar 25

Please read this entire Newsletter

Dear Fremont Friends,

It feels like being whiplashed in an accident that never ends. We've been thrown into a new way of life that is disorienting with a future that is uncertain. Figuring out how to cope is daunting. And we can't huddle together to comfort one another.

But that said, we are a resilient people. And as people of faith we are especially so. We know there is a community of people who are thinking about us, praying for us, longing to see us. And we know we are in relationship with a God who has promised to shepherd us through such a time as this.

This doesn't mean we won't feel discouraged or even, perhaps, depressed. But it can mean that we don't need to be caught in that darker sphere. We have resources that can pull us toward and help us keep hope. Prayer, meditation on scripture, recollections of times past when God was faithful, phone calls and facetime with loved ones and members of our church family can fortify us.

And know that we are exploring every means we can identify to help us all feel connected and encouraged. And we are also positioning ourselves to meet specific needs both within our faith community and beyond it. Here is some "news you can use."

First, we are holding a **virtual worship service** every Sunday. We've sent information on how to connect to these services whether or not you have a computer; the information is also posted on our website [fremontumc.org]. Sadly, we need to prepare to hold Palm Sunday and Easter services via zoom as well. We will work to make these particular worship experiences as meaningful as possible.

I am posting a version of the virtual worship service **reflection on Fremont's Facebook** page [www.facebook.com/FremontUMC] each Sunday. The reflection for March 22 is posted now as is Jonathan Robert's interpretation of Amazing Grace.

Second, we are announcing a new **Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting**. This, again, will be a virtual event and you will receive the information you need to connect to it. It will be a short service but we will be able to have more interactive conversation in this, sharing our requests, than we can in the Sunday morning worship service. Please log in at 7:00 pm this Wednesday.

Third, we have organized a team of our folks to make regular contact through **calls and cards** to those of us who may be more vulnerable to this virus than others.

Fourth, we will be setting up a **calling tree** so that we can issue important or vital information to everyone in our number whether they have access to computer and wifi or not. This will be used for emergency notifications only.

Fifth, we are organizing **Bible and book studies** you will be able to join by Zoom. Information about those is below

Sixth, **official COVID notices** will be posted on Fremont's website for you to refer to.

Seventh, and not least, we are linking with other entities to identify and seek to fill needs within our larger community. More information on this will be forthcoming.

What you can do:

Pray for me and your church leaders who are working tirelessly to reorganize how we can be the church at this time.

Let us know if you have a need—an errand you can't run for instance. Please do not hesitate to tell us how we can help you. There are folks in the wings, ready to offer assistance.

Read our e-announcements. We don't want to inundate your inbox, but we do want to keep you informed.

Please **read the Easter Letter** you will be receiving and please, please, give prayerful consideration to the requests it makes. If we are to continue to be an agent for good and be resourced to share the love of God at this time, your support will be essential.

And now, I will repeat what Jocelyn has already posted to our Facebook because it is a verse to hold near and dear right now:

So do not fear, for I am with you;
do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.
Isaiah 41:10

May you feel the God who is our Shepherd keeping watch over you and God's righteous hand upholding you.

Health and the peace of God be with you all,



HOW TO STAY CONNECTED

Log-in instructions for our virtual Sunday Worship Services

Click <https://zoom.us/j/429790924>

Enter Meeting ID: 429 790 924

OR, choose a phone number to call to LISTEN-ONLY:

+1 312 626 6799

+1 346 248 7799

+1 646 558 8656

+1 669 900 9128

+1 253 215 8782

+1 301 715 8592

then, enter the Meeting ID: 429 790 924



Log-in instructions for our virtual Wednesday Night Bible Study

click <https://zoom.us/j/752185399>

Enter Meeting ID: 752 185 399

OR, choose a phone number to call to LISTEN-ONLY:

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US

+1 301 715 8592 US

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

then, enter the Meeting ID: 752 185 399

There's help

If you have questions about how this works or problems connecting, you can send an email help@fremontumc.org. Now this email is not an all-purpose help line, it is for issues relating to the ZOOM feature we are using to conduct these services and other gatherings. Randy Poff will respond to you as quickly as he can to help you out.

Here's how groups within our church will continue

Committees and Teams will meet in their usual times. Your chairperson will inform you if a meeting is scheduled and the instructions for logging into it. This includes other groups that meet regularly or for a duration of time: Sacramental Living, Centering Prayer and Bible and book studies.

Embracing the Uncertain

Our Lenten devotion book "Embracing the Uncertain" is certainly an appropriate title for this very uncertain time. I will be hosting a discussion and prayer time on Zoom starting **Wednesday, April 1st at 7:00 pm**. We will discuss the first week of readings. Then for the next week we will discuss the Holy Week readings. If you want to participate in this 40 minute class, just email me at Clarobb@juno.com and I will send you the Zoom link. The class will run for six weeks

Being Disciples of Jesus in 2020

David Weber will lead a discussion of Rowan Williams' book *Being Disciples* (a terrific little book!). For six weeks we'll be reading together 'Being Disciples: Essentials of the Christian Life' by Rowan Williams. Bishop Williams has more theological knowledge than most humans, but writes of it in ways which God and the people of God are revealed in whole new ways.

Speaking of "whole new ways..!" We are in a time right now where we share with the world both a common threat and shared opportunity. We are all- all of us! - learning about being human AND being disciples in circumstances that we are understanding one day at a time. We cannot be as sure about tomorrow or next year as we once were. That means, I think, that learning anew about being disciples is one of the most important things we can do in this time of times.

We'll **begin Monday, April 6 at 7 pm**. 6 chapters = 6 weeks, and each gathering will last about an hour, or a lifetime. We'll see..

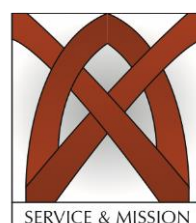
You can order 'Being Disciples' by Rowan Williams from Amazon and have it in a couple days. Reading ahead is OK! And, remember, you can have the first chapter sent for free to your Kindle, right now.



WORSHIP & SPIRITUAL FORMATION

If Ever We Need to Worship & Pray

it is now. You don't need reminding on the scope of what we are facing as a faith community, as a community, as a country, as a world family. It is beyond imagining. And we can be tempted to find a hole and hide but that is not the answer is it? We are people of Faith! We are a people who Pray! So, let us be about our work and let us not give up praying and worshipping together as we can via Zoom. So please take seriously the invitations that have been extended and if you've any difficulty connecting, please, please alert Randy Poff via help@email.com. You'll get an automatic response, but he will indeed reach out to you with due speed.



SERVICE & MISSION

"Giving Counts" at Fremont News from Finance Committee

Fremont has an essential role to play in supporting one another and our community during and after COVID-19. We can, and will, provide real support to one another. We are also a tangible symbol of light, hope, unity and assistance to our community.

How are your Finance team, Pastor and Office Staff responding?

- Continuing to regularly process and deposit funds that are received to assure the continuity of our payroll and other ongoing costs
- Working with Pastor Q and Ministry Council to assure that we assess needs and priorities
- Providing assistance to members and neighbors from our pastoral discretionary funds

- Fremont Trustees have made adjustments to heat settings; and water and other utility usage is down

What can you do to help?

- Keep up with your pledges and other giving, to the extent that you can
- Stay in touch (at a distance) with your Fremont family, friends, and neighbors

What is Fremont's financial picture at this time?

- Pledged and regular giving is lower than budgeted in the first quarter (especially as physical worship services have been curtailed).
- We expect to lose some of our rental income based on shelter in place requirements.
- So... we need ongoing financial support as you feel you are able to give.

Ways for you to give:

- mail a check to the office: 2620 NE Fremont St., Portland
- contribute through our online giving platform: [tithely](https://tithely.com)
- arrange for checks to be sent directly from your bank to Fremont

Together, through God's grace and prayer we can and will get through this and grow stronger as a community. Blessings and stay safe and well!

How You Can Help Feed Hungry Children

Dear friends, far and wide, you can help feed hungry children without leaving your home.

Fremont UMC is partnering with Portland Backpack Program to purchase Grocery Gift Cards for families whose children are on the school lunch program. These gift cards will be channeled through the school principals/ counselors who are in the best position to know which families should receive them. The Columbia District of the UMC has organized this Grocery Gift Card effort and Fremont UMC is one of the hubs for this effort and as such has received a \$5,000 grant to purchase these cards. However, Fremont would like to match this grant with another \$5,000 (at least) to expand this food-assistance effort. Folks who would like to contribute can send a check to Fremont UMC (2620 NE Fremont Street 97212) with Grocery Card on the memo line. You can also make a contribution via the church's online service (www.fremontumc.org, hit the Giving Tab, which will lead to page with a box on the left that says GIVE, another box will appear where folks can process a gift). This gift is eligible for a gift receipt so please provide your name and address.

Lovely stories for you about distributing the gift cards

This photo is me at Cully Albertsons buying the gift cards for Rigler and Scott Schools. The guy in sunglasses is Ben Hilder, the school counselor at Scott School. The man behind the register is Karl the store manager Ben is delivering the Portland Backpack food sacks this week and will also be delivering the gift cards. He met me at the store to pick them up.

I spoke to Myrna Munoz, the Rigler school principal this morning. She started to cry because she is so worried about her families. She said that this is all going to be unimaginably hard on them and it breaks her heart. We talked about the food sacks and the gift cards. She went through the student list and picked the ones to receive the gift cards. They are calling them and having them come pick them up during meal - Grab and Go times at their school.



This morning I spoke to Michele Peak, the school counselor at MLK school She was so thankful to have the gift cards and is positive that the need is going to go up from here.

In appreciation!! Let's match those funds!
Diane Rheos

Update on Portland Backpack

Amid the coronavirus challenge and the closing of all PPS schools, Portland Backpack is very busy packing and distributing weekend lunch sacks to our 330 kids at Scott, Rigler, Woodlawn, and King. Two extra sacks were distributed on the March 13 closure date and last Friday the normal 330 sacks were distributed in connection with the weekday's lunches being provided at our schools. Food supply shortages have hampered the purchasing process, while strict

procedures have complicated but not halted packing. A variety of new volunteers has been welcomed, though at times hard to keep up with. The spring fundraiser was cancelled/postponed, but an on-line campaign took its place and has produced strong results. Meanwhile, Diane Rheos, Executive Director, has also been consulting with community groups to help coordinate special efforts to support the many families who have lost jobs or had hours reduced. The PB tagline, "Communities Caring for Kids," seems more important than ever.

If you are interested, you can go to PortlandBackpack.com for information and opportunities to volunteer or donate (or you can mail a check to the FUMC office, made out to Portland Backpack). The Backpack team hesitates to put any additional pressure on Fremonters but if you are so inclined, we certainly can use both financial contributions and additional volunteers--especially those outside of the most vulnerable age groups. We are operating aggressively with the funds we have but as time passes, the needs of our kids will grow.

Prayer Chain

Do you want to join this wonderful group of folks who have agreed to carry in prayer the requests we receive both those spoken on Sundays and those we learn of through the week. If you are, please contact Kathy Elliott: kdelliott200@gmail.com 503-308-3731



FUN AND FELLOWSHIP

Set up small group fun via Zoom

Anyone can set up a free ZOOM account [[google zoom.us](https://google.zoom.us)] where you can schedule a "meeting." Zoom will give you a link you can share with friends so you can invite them to log into the "meeting" so you all can spend a little time together.

Forward funny (but appropriate) cartoons or videos to friends, now and again.

If you don't want to try ZOOM, **try FaceTime** via your phones to reach out to loved ones and friends.

"Like" FUMC on Facebook & share a story

If you like us, please "like" and follow our Facebook page. This helps people find us. Also, share our posts with your friends! And one last thing: If you would write a review for us on our page, it also helps people find us. Thank you!



Extending Our Gratitude To:

to all of you who have been working behind the scenes to devise and organize the ways and means for us all to stay connected

to those of you who have signed on to serve on our Fremont Crisis Team to keep watch and help us prepare for the days ahead

to our staff who continue to work and take good care of what needs to be done be it from their homes.

to Trustees who are keeping watch over our building and grounds

to those who have already activated their online giving and to those who have made special gifts

to all of our building users for the adjustments they have made for their and our safety. Please pray that their entities and groups will remain viable during this time.