

Thursday, March 26, 2020

To the Wonderful FUMC (The Church of the Second Chance) Family and Friends:

This week we will live and worship apart on Sunday as we again follow the wisdom of the experts. As I write to you we have no clue how long this will be. We are in this difficult situation in which we find ourselves because we are trying to do our part in containing and defeating a deadly virus while also realizing the problem many families face in which their livelihoods are deeply impacted.

I want to provide a short devotional that is also descriptive of our new reality as it stands now. I am reminded of the passage that we read in the Word of God.

1 John 4:18 (NIV)

There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

We have a choice. We can fear this virus. We can fear what has happened to us, or we can know God who is perfect love is in control and we know that we can trust Him. I believe that we can trust Him through what we are encountering. What has changed?

The plans that we have made have been changed. Our Easter plans to reach our community have changed. We've been talking about the impending split in the denomination that is expected at the General Conference in May. A recent article I saw states that the General Conference will probably not happen until 2021, at least that's what some are saying.

Our worship services have changed. We have had to do our best to go online and try to make it all happen. We certainly welcome your suggestions and comments; however, we do miss seeing each of you each week. After we have gotten through this trial, we hope to invest in some equipment that will help us with our online and social media presence. Some of the elements of our worship have changed. We will explore ways to make prayer, Communion, kids' ministry, and other ministries a real part of our online presence. It has caused us to research and look for opportunities to meet needs in the church and perhaps our community.

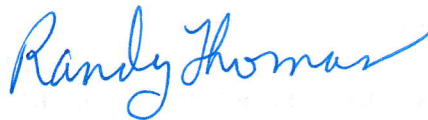
Some elements in worship have been missing. In this mailing, we've included an envelope that's already addressed to our church. We've done it for several reasons. It's to serve you.

First, we've included the prayer and praise card for you to return any prayer requests you may have. With our online service and communication to let all of our church family know how to access it, we've also

recognized there may be those that we don't have the updated contact information. So, if you didn't receive our emails, texts, or other communications; please return that information on the prayer card or send an email to the office at fsfumc.office@gmail.com.

Second, the bishop has canceled the next two monthly tithes the church has to pay to the New Mexico Conference as he recognized the financial pressure that not meeting for church causes. Other churches have suggested that their congregation leave their offerings at their church office. We know that there are probably some in our church now that are already experiencing financial duress or looking at an uncertain future. However, if you feel that God would have you give to the church, you may use the enclosed, already addressed envelope for that purpose. We want to do everything that we can to give our congregation the opportunity to continue to experience the spiritual life of the church during these uncertain days. If you have any recommendations, please pass them along to us.

God bless all of you,



Randy Thomas, Pastor

Listen to this week's sermon at FSFUMC.com

Please keep in touch with us: Call: (432) 336-9777

Monday-Thursday 9am-12pm & 1pm-3pm

Email: FSFUMC.office@gmail.com

Facebook: facebook.com/fortstocktonfumc

Opportunities to help the community:

The Ministerial Alliance is looking for volunteers to sew masks for the Pecos County Memorial Hospital.

If you'd like to help, contact us for more information.