



The Chimes

Date: June 19, 2020
Volume 20 Number 15

Modesto Church of the Brethren

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Continuing the work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together.



This past week Annaliese Hausler-Akpovi, David Messamer, Ann Marie Washington, and I met to talk about what has been happening in the world since the murder of George Floyd, and what it means for us as individuals and as a faith community. But you may be thinking, why do we need to think and talk about this? We are part of an inclusive congregation, we belong to a denomination that is a historic, peace church, and we live in what is viewed by many as a progressive state, California. Just the notion that we could be racist might make us angry. The audacity!

However, as we discussed, each individual has a prejudice of some sort or another regardless of how much we have (or have not) worked at not being biased. Therefore, for individuals and the church there must be an ongoing conversation about bias, systems of oppression, and our role within all of it. Like untangling the Christmas lights each year; all of these issues are complex and take time to process. If you think that you're done, then you probably need to restart the conversation! And that is what we as a team are working at doing.

One way that we can each begin to do this work for ourselves is by taking a few minutes to take the Implicit Association Test from Harvard:

(<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>).

I would highly encourage each person to take at least one of these tests and have a conversation with a trusted confidant about the results.

As a church we need to talk about these things, too, since we belong to an institution, Christianity, that has played a role, implicitly and explicitly, within the system of oppression. We also belong to a denomination which has not dealt with its place in that system or reconciled with the biases that exist in the denomination. Therefore, we need to have these conversations about bias, racism, and systematic injustices as a congregation so that we can be more inclusive and match our welcoming statement to our life together. We will work at this together!

We recognize that these are not easy topics to talk about and that they may stir up feelings and memories that we did not even know that we had. However, as mentioned earlier, we are an inclusive, open and affirming congregation. We have been working at being a safe space where people can be the people that they were created by God to be, and to share openly, weep with one another, and laugh together at each other's blessings.

~Pastor Andrew

A Non-Traditional Blessing

May God bless you with **discontent** with easy answers, half-truths, superficial relationships, so that you will live from deep within your heart.

May God bless you with **anger** at injustice, oppression, abuse, and exploitation of people, so that you will work for justice, equality, and peace.

May God bless you with **tears** to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation and war, so that you will reach out your hand to comfort them and to change their pain to joy.

May God bless you with the **foolishness** to think you can make a difference in this world, so that you will do the things which others tell you cannot be done.

If you have the courage to accept these blessings, then God will also bless you with:

happiness—because you will know that you have made life better for others

inner peace—because you will have worked to secure an outer peace for others

laughter—because your heart will be light

faithful friends—because they will recognize your worth as a person. (continued)

These blessings are yours—not for the asking, but for the giving—from One who wants to be your companion, our God, who lives and reigns, forever and ever. Amen

~

Sister Ruth Fox, OSB

This blessing was originally written by Sister Fox as a prayer for the graduating class of Dickinson (ND) State College, in her role as chaplain.

I received this poem from AnnMarie Washington. She read it in the preface of the book, *Twelve Lies That Hold America Captive: and the Truth That Sets Us Free* by Jonathan Walton, and thought the poem spoke to current events. But it had no recorded author, so I decided to find out who had written it. Thanks to Google, it was easy! The version printed here is the original, written by Sister Fox. May it speak to you in the time of pandemic and protest. ~Luella



June 21 - Acts 13:1-8 - "The Church Begins to Grow, Part III "

June 28 - Acts 13:13-16, 42-49 - "The Church Begins to Grow, Part IV "

THE FUTURE OF OUR CHURCH



A few of the men from our church spent time resetting the sanctuary for the time when we reopen the church for worship. Here are some pictures of how the sanctuary will look. Those who were on hand to do all the moving were: Pastor Andrew, Bill Johnson, David Owen, Russ Davis, Jim Boardman, Jim Costello, Derek Castle and Eddie Hernandez. Energy was supplied with delicious donuts, from "MR. T'S".



As most of you know and expect, everything will change, not just the seating of our congregation. There will be continual sanitizing, masks, no hugging and many other changes to come.

One of the best things that we can take note of is that GOD is still in control. But the



coronavirus is still around, so we are not quite ready

for in-person worship. Watch for more information from Pastor Andrew.



Marion Young, Anita Young's mother, left us Tuesday morning, after a courageous battle against pancreatic cancer. She was 91 years old.

She was a faithful servant of the Lord, and a strong and steady matriarch for our family. She loved singing in the Livingston United Methodist Church choir.

I fondly remember going whale watching with her on her ninetieth birthday in Monterey; Anita's brother and sister and extended family really enjoyed her birthday celebration.

Now we will be celebrating her through stories, photos and rich family memories, especially tent camping on the coast.

She was such a fine lady and we will miss her dearly. Please keep her and our family in your prayers. With you in Christ, Jim Feeney

Please send Joys and Concerns to the Chimes, even if you have mentioned them during online worship. Thank you.



17 Londyn Lapora

23 Margaret Johnson

24 Bill Johnson

New Study Opportunity!



In light of current concerns regarding injustices towards people of color, we are offering a new Zoom study led by Jim Costello based on the book White Fragility and other related readings as resources. Four persons have signed up for this Zoom study, and the books have been ordered.

Please call Jim Costello at (209) 402-9191 for more information. Day & time to be announced.
~Elaine Forcier for the Worship & Spiritual Life Commission

A plea from Stanislaus County Interfaith Council:
"This group has a long and deep history and connection with the Modesto Church of the Brethren. We are currently meeting (on-line via Zoom) on the first Wednesday of each month at 5pm. We are missing having a rep or board member from your congregation. Can you suggest someone who would like to participate? Let me know if you have any questions." ~Rabbi Shalom Bochner, Congregation Beth Shalom



Annual Prayer Supper Event:
Why Pray?
Sunday, June 28th, 2 -4 PM

This year, at this time of physical distancing, you are invited to join us on-line with Zoom for the screening of a brand new, locally produced video featuring many younger people explaining why they pray or meditate in the many spiritual communities represented in our region. We'll break into discussion groups to further explore what these teens and young adults have to teach us.

Go to <https://zoom.us> and enter the meeting ID
#: 882 5008 6819

Please join us, and be prepared to be inspired!

Backyard Gathering

A second event for seniors is planned for
June 24 @ 6:00 pm

We had such a good response from the first gathering that we want to do it again!
A select group of people have been invited (including you) to meet to visit and share time together at a safe distance.

Please meet in the courtyard behind the church
Bring whatever you would like to eat or drink
Bring an outdoor folding chair if you have one
(If you don't have one, we have extras)
Wear a mask!

We will share stories, concerns, struggles, and joyful events.

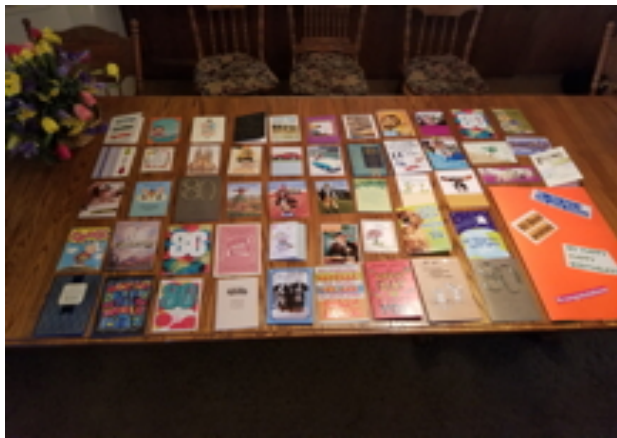
Come on out and reconnect with your church family.

We can get through this together!

Questions: Call or text Peggy @ 209-815-3095
or
Sue @ 209-505-0222 or Sandy @ 209-988-6848
Fellowship and Recreation Commission
Modesto Church of the Brethren



Happy Birthday, Felton!



THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!
It isn't every day that a person has an 80th birthday especially one in the middle of a pandemic. But I did on Wednesday. Thanks to a whole bunch of you and family and other friends I received well over 50 birthday cards pictured here. One was huge, the others were normal in size. Some were sassy, some were serious but, all said in their own way what a great group of caring people you are. I am so blessed, we are so blessed to be a part of such a warm and loving church family. Thank you, Thank you, Thank you for your creative, warm and loving well wishes. Felton, a recent octogenarian



Felton and Karleen have another milestone in June! On June 30th, they will celebrate their 58th wedding anniversary!



Linda Williams is rejoicing over her first successful tomato! It's still green, but it's there, in the middle of the leaves (see arrow).



Jeannie Canter celebrates being with her sisters, Peggy and Judy (Judy's niece Margaret, too!)



Harold Canter celebrates Father's Day in Alaska with and his three daughters, Carri, Trina, and Kathleen.