



first CHURCH



the
LIGHT
newsletter



August 2020

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Worship Sundays at 10:30 AM

Mabaan at 12:30 PM

Is There Any Hope?

That is the question many of us have been asking during this time of global pandemic and social unrest.

- Is there any hope that I will be able to visit my family and friends again?
- Is there any hope that I will once again be able to shake hands or hug a friend?
- Is there any hope that I will be able to worship in-person with my church family?
- Is there any hope that I will be able to go a movie, a play, a restaurant?
- Is there any hope that I will ever be able to stop wearing a mask?
- Is there any hope that I will be able to return to my office?
- Is there any hope that someone will find a vaccine?
- Is there any hope our economy will rebound?
- Is there any hope that my children will go back to school and if so what will that look like?
- Is there any hope that we will all love our neighbor as ourselves?
- Is there any hope that all of God's children will be able to share in the riches of this world?



These and so many other questions are difficult to dismiss. Several months ago I preached a sermon about Ezekiel and the dry bones. The children of Israel said their bones were dried up and their hope was gone. God asks Ezekiel if those dead bones can live again to which he replies "O Lord God, only you know."

I think many of us feel a little like the children of Israel right now; we are feeling a little dried up and without hope but as people of faith we must have hope. Proverbs 23:18 reminds us "Surely there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off."

Continued on next page.

Our Christian hope is and will continue to be the antidote and antithesis to despair. In Dr. Martin Luther King's sermon, "The Meaning of Hope" he says that hope is the refusal to give up despite overwhelming odds." Nearly 50 years after that sermon, Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann wrote in his book, *Gospel of Hope*, that "Hope is the deep religious conviction that God has not quit."

My friends we are facing what seems overwhelming odds but we can be assured that God has not quit. God is still in control of our world even though right now it seems to us to be spinning out of control. Our God who made us and loves us is a God of hope.

In his letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul instructs us to *rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, and persevere in prayer*. The promise of God's future is better than our current condition. **HAVE HOPE!**

May God continue to offer to you sustenance for the journey.

Christine



Opportunities to Give and Receive

On August 14 from 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM DMARC is distributing produce boxes with Capital City Fruit through a USDA program. The distributions are taking place in the parking lot at Southridge Mall (1111 Army Post Rd. DSM). Boxes are available until the supply runs out so get there early. All are welcome to receive a box, simply by providing the number of people in your household along with your zip code.

DMARC is also seeking volunteers to direct the cars that show up and to hand out boxes of produce to our neighbors! Members of First Church are signing up to volunteer. If you would like to assist in this effort, contact Christine as soon as possible.

You may sign up at www.dmarcunited.org/volunteer.

Thank you!



Branson, Missouri is known for its more than 50 theater venues, including live music, variety, magic and comedy shows. World famous entertainers perform there. During my recent visit to Branson, I attended the musical NOAH, a Bible story brought to life on stage at the Sights & Sound Theater. The story of Noah and the

Ark, with its massive sets, special effects and live animals is a magnificent musical production. I also attended the God and Country's Cowboy Church at the Presley's God and Country Theater. Superb country gospel music followed by a message from Pastor Ron Boldman. The bass gospel singer, Jamie Layton, and a band made up of musicians from various local Branson shows were excellent. These two different types of music formats brought me great enjoyment. It is the emotional power of music that I love. It can bring joy, or at times sadness. Whenever you can, enjoy music, feel the music and let it communicate with you.

Article submitted by Cookie Major, Chamber Choir Member

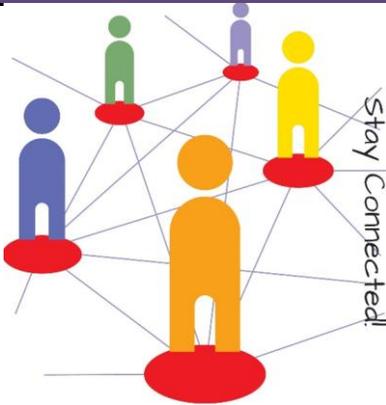


Dorothy Strayer Memorial Scholarship

Again this year First United Methodist Church is offering college scholarships to church members and their families. If you are interested in applying for one of these scholarships for the 2020-2021 year, please contact Ned Johnson at 515-771-8875 for information and application forms. The deadline for applying is September 15.



Even though you may not be present in worship on Sundays, the church still has expenses. We still need to continue to do ministry, pay the bills and the staff. Did you know that you can give online? Go to the church website www.dmfirstchurch.org. On the left hand side of the page you will see online giving. Click there and you will be directed to the giving page. If you would rather, please feel free to mail your weekly check to the church. The address is 1001 Pleasant St. Des Moines, IA 50309. Thank you!



For those who don't have the internet we are offering worship services over the phone.

If you would like to join us by phone, call 1-301-715-8592. Enter meeting ID 210 393 5046. The password is 1. This number will be used each week.



AMOS | A Mid-Iowa
Organizing Strategy

AMOS Seeks Your Input

AMOS (A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy) is a broad-based organization of 39 faith and community institutions in Central Iowa. During the 2008 Recession, AMOS organized a listening campaign in Des Moines' African American congregations and poorest communities. It led to the creation of Project Iowa. Nearly 10 years later, AMOS is again listening to understand the challenges communities of color and low-income Iowans are facing when trying to access a living wage.

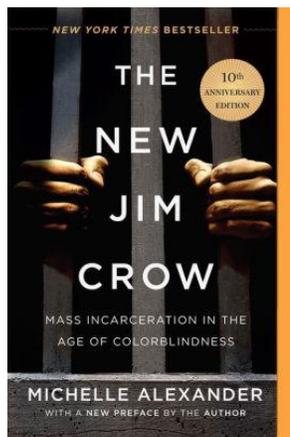
Perhaps you have been thinking about how you would make positive changes if you had a voice in the decision-making process. If so, your chance to potentially make a difference is coming!

AMOS has developed a presentation to help us all consider possible ways to improve our society by looking back in history to see what has worked in the past and what didn't work. Taking those lessons from the past and considering them in light of today's issues is a great way to get creative juices flowing and share. The church can provide a safe space to give opinions and have thoughtful, respectful discussions as part of a friendly small group.

Right now, we are planning to arrange those small groups online through virtual sharing, but eventually we hope to bring folks together in person.

Watch the *CrossNotes* for more information about these "Consider-Connect-Create" small groups happening in August.

Book Discussion to Begin



As we each start to examine our ideas about race, we will begin a Zoom discussion using the book *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander. The discussion will begin at 7:00 pm and end no later than 8:15 pm on the following dates: September 2, September 16 and September 30. The discussion will be directed by Kathleen McQuillen.

Here is what Amazon has to say about the book.

Once in a great while a book comes along that changes the way we see the world and helps to fuel a nationwide social movement. *The New Jim Crow* is such a book. Praised by Harvard Law professor Lani Guinier as "brave and bold," this book directly challenges the notion that the election of Barack Obama signals a new era of colorblindness. With dazzling candor, legal scholar Michelle Alexander argues that "we have not ended racial caste in America; we have merely redesigned it." By targeting black men through the War on Drugs and decimating communities of color, the U.S. criminal justice system functions as a contemporary system of racial control—relegating millions to a permanent second-class status—even as it formally adheres to the principle of colorblindness. In the words of Benjamin Todd Jealous, president and CEO of the NAACP, this book is a "call to action."

Called "stunning" by Pulitzer Prize-winning historian David Levering Lewis, "invaluable" by the *Daily Kos*, "explosive" by *Kirkus*, and "profoundly necessary" by the *Miami Herald*, this updated and revised paperback edition of *The New Jim Crow*, now with a foreword by Cornel West, is a must-read for all people of conscience.

If you would like to participate, please email or call Christine 515-244-6209 ext 3 or discipleship@dmfirstchurch.org and you will receive a Zoom invitation. If you know of someone else who would be interested in joining us, please offer them an invitation. Be sure to purchase the 10th anniversary edition. It is available on Cokesbury and at other booksellers.



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DEADLINE FOR FUTURE LIGHT ISSUES IS THE 20TH OF EACH MONTH

Worship
with us
from


Online Worship

You can watch the service live on facebook
at 10:30 AM
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