

Circuit Rider



The Newsletter of Asbury United Methodist Church
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Jean Evans, Editor

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

July 2020

Dear White Christians

Asbury will join with Memorial UMC of White Plains for a six week study of Jennifer Harvey's book *Dear White Christians*. Harvey is a white minister and professor of Christian social ethics in Iowa. The book provides deep insight into how racism operates in the church and the specific steps we can take to end it. We are asking that participants commit to attend all six sessions as this material is profound and each session builds upon the previous one. We will meet via Zoom or phone from 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. on Thursday evenings July 9, 23, 30; August 6 and 13 and Tuesday evening July 14. Please contact Doug at cunninghamdp@gmail.com to register or with any questions.

Meet Our Missionaries Richard and Alma Navarro

On June 11 the Administrative Council approved a new Covenant Relationship with two United Methodist missionaries: Richard Navarro <https://advance.umcmmission.org/p-1615-navarro-richard.aspx> and Alma Navarro <https://advance.umcmmission.org/p-1614-navarro-alma.aspx> who serve as missionaries in Taiwan. You can use the links above to find out more information about them!

Asbury Worship

We gather each Sunday morning beginning at 10:00 a.m. for worship via Zoom. You can also call in on a phone using the number below. We begin worship promptly at 10:30 a.m. If you don't have the login information please email asburycrotonumc@gmail.com to get all the information about how to join us for worship.

Monday Bible Study

You are invited to join us each Monday evening for Bible Study from 7:15 p.m. - 8:15 p.m. We usually explore the passage from the previous Sunday in greater depth. You are always welcome. Just call 914-765-9010 at 7:15 p.m.

Asbury Gatherings are Online, not In-Person

The Asbury Administrative Council approved a policy at its June 11 meeting that our worship and other gatherings will remain online. During this time of COVID 19 we are prioritizing the protection of the health and safety of our members and the community which at the present time means continuing to gather online and not in-person.

We are grateful that we are able to fully engage in ministry through online gatherings.

- We gather for worship, bible study, UMW, UMM, and other meetings every week online or by phone.
- We continue to serve meals at Jan Peak on the second Sunday, lunch at the Salvation Army on the second Monday of the month, and support the Croton Food Pantry.
- We have continued our youth confirmation process and on Sunday June 7 we celebrated the confirmation of Charlie and Alex Forth, Jack Ter Boss, and Trevor Weisz in a meaningful worship attended by over 70 people.
- We will continue to receive new members.
- Our members continue to send in their tithes and offerings.
- We continue to care for one another, pray for one another, and build our faith community.



“Men Growing in Christ so Others May Know Christ”

ASBURY CROTON ON HUDSON UNITED METHODIST MEN’S FELLOWSHIP ASSOCIATION

ACOHUMMFA

JULY- meeting via telephone 914-765-9010
Saturday JULY 4, 11, 18, 25
9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

AUGUST meeting dates:
Saturday AUGUST 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. sharp
Breakfast 9:00 a.m. at Frankie’s

WESLEY HOUSE 19 Old Post Road So., Croton-on-Hudson

Topics: Work of the Apostles

TBD activities - Summer wild card fun: Trail hikes / Baseball game / West Point concert

Weekly Readings (15 min/day) for personal devotions (BIBLE in a year challenge):

JULY: Psalms 36-77 / Psalms 78-118 / Psalms 119-PROVERBS 7 / PROVERBS 8-31

AUGUST Ecclesiastes 1-12 – Song of Solomon 1-8/ Isaiah 1-37/ Isaiah 38-66 / Jeramiah 1-31/ Jeramiah 31 – Lamentations 5

Intercessory Prayer and events:

JULY

Asbury COH Church Families: M-N
7/4 - Independence Day

AUGUST

Asbury COH Church Families: O-P

More info: Stu Colby call or text 914-330-4104 or Captsea946@aol.com

Inspirational booklets for you to give and share with your family and friends, armed forces service members, and first responders, compliments of ACOHUMMFA.

Request any or all of the following:

1. Three Simple Rules
2. Strength for Service for God and Country
3. Strength for Service for God and Community

Yes, please provide ___ copies of:

- ___ 1. Three Simple Rules
- ___ 2. Strength for Service to God and Country
- ___ 3. Strength for Service to God and Community

As a gift to: _____ (Name of family, family member, service member, first responder)

Send/give to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact (optional) email or telephone: _____

Send request by email to Captsea946@aol.com or call 914-330-4104

Asbury's Covenant Relationship with The Navarros

It's time for the Asbury Congregation again to actively finance and emotionally support the mission of the United Methodist Church - *to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world*. The Administrative Board has approved supporting the Navarros.

Becky Asedillo, based on her work as their supervisor

when she worked for the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) of The United Methodist Church, highly recommends them. The Rev. Alma Jumuad-Navarro and Rev. Richard Navarro are missionaries with GBGM. She serves as minister for administration and Christian education and he serves as minister for congregational development and pastoral care of the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) ministry in Taipei, Taiwan.

The OFW ministry is linked to the Methodist Church in the Republic of China and is conducted in collaboration with the Davao Episcopal Area in the Philippines. There are an estimated 100,000 Filipinos in Taiwan at any given time, a majority of whom are temporary migrant workers. Some 3,000 Filipinos leave their country every day seeking livelihoods abroad. The plan of ministry includes not only worship and social services but follow through as workers return to the Philippines providing spiritual care and pastoral counseling and linking them to congregations at home.

Alma found the answer to a question that had come to her when she was first in Taiwan as a migrant worker. The question was, "What else Lord?" She explains, "In God's perfect time, He brought me back to Taiwan to reach out to Filipino migrant workers. Somehow I do understand the life of being an OFW. My stay in Taiwan as a factory worker was the chance for me to know the needs and struggles of OFWs. And so, I and my husband are dealing with these things among the migrant workers with whom we minister."

The Navarros have active Facebook pages - check them out and send them a 'friend request'.

<https://www.facebook.com/alma.jumuadnavarro> and <https://www.facebook.com/revchardbing.navarro>

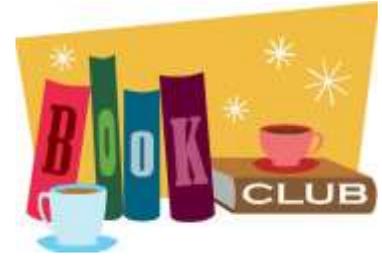
To get a better understanding of the Navarros and their mission PLEASE watch their seven minute video at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YOHhFHZyFEC8UHnW5U0-bS4uB98OjnZo/view?usp=drivesdk>





THE SALLY READ BOOK GROUP

The group meets on the second Saturday of each month. This month we will meet on Saturday, July 11 at 9:30 a.m. via a conference call. The book is *Hallelujah! The Welcome Table* by Maya Angelou. Electronic copies of the book read on Kindle, your computer, tablet or phone are available via download for loan from the Westchester Library System.



“Throughout Maya Angelou's life, from her childhood in Stamps, Arkansas, to her world travels as a bestselling writer, good food has played a central role. Preparing and enjoying homemade meals provides a sense of purpose and calm, accomplishment and connection.

Now in Hallelujah! The Welcome Table, Angelou shares memories pithy and poignant--and the recipes that helped to make them both indelible and irreplaceable.”

We will also be discussing our favorite African American poets so bring your favorite poem. Some of the poets suggested include: Langston Hughes, Etheridge Knight, Maya Angelou, Gwendolyn Brooks, Imamu Aniri Baraka, Alice Walker, Phillis Wheatley and Robert Hayden.

Join us July 11 at 9:30 am.

Dial-in number (US): (425) 436-6302 Access code: 447447#

Local Churches Show Resilience in Crisis

—Heather Hahn, June 18, 2020 | UM News

Thank you Becky Asedillo, for bringing this United Methodist News story to my attention to share with the Asbury family:

The first week East Stone Gap United Methodist Church held online-only worship, the pastor shared the good news of Christ but found sobering news when he looked at the offering receipts. Worshippers gave a total of only \$20.

“I thought that we were ruined,” said the Rev. Brad Stapleton, the pastor of this church in rural southwest Virginia. “I was calculating how many weeks before we would go bankrupt.”

However, in the following three months, the church has seen not only online viewership exceed its usual attendance but also giving exceed its usual collections. Stapleton joins many United Methodist pastors across the United States in being more hopeful about their church finances and the future than at the beginning of the pandemic that shuttered in-person worship around the globe.

“We have a link to give to the church and people are doing it,” Stapleton said. “We have people who used to attend our church but moved and they’re giving. We have people in our community who have given for the first time.” The congregation has used the added revenue, and cost savings on utilities, to provide \$100 grocery gift cards and other financial assistance to people in the community who have lost their income in the coronavirus-battered economy.

While the East Stone Gap congregation is in the minority of churches that actually saw giving go up during the time of online-only worship, other United Methodists report that their congregations are holding their own in the crisis and continuing vital ministries. In a United Methodist Communications survey of 1,016 U.S. churches, about 74% reported the same or higher worship attendance after moving online and 62% reported about the same or higher giving. The survey, intended to guide agency work, was conducted June 10-14.

The June findings showed a marked improvement [over a similar survey taken in March](#). Significantly, churches that are seeing a drop in giving report a less steep decline than before. Some 56% of churches say money is tight but they are managing and another 36% say finances are not a concern. “I think what churches found is that they are much more resilient and capable of adjusting than they expected,” said Charles C. Niedringhaus, United Methodist Communications senior director of marketing, research and evaluation.

The Rev. Daryl L. Williams, senior pastor of St. Paul at Oxon Hill, is among those with hopes that the changes made now will bolster future ministry. His predominantly African American congregation near Washington had long wanted to start online worship but did not make the jump until the pandemic forced the issue. “It has been challenging but great,” he said. “It is a real opportunity for the church in a lot of ways.”

In the crisis the congregation has embraced a range of new online ministries that it plans to continue into the future. St. Paul at Oxon Hill streams its services on multiple platforms. It also has introduced weekly online hangouts each Thursday for people to check in. About five people have joined the church through the digital connections Williams said. “Whatever the new normal is we are going to have a continued digital presence like this,” he said.

The Rev. Martin McCain attests to how online worship has boosted giving at predominantly African American Grace United Methodist Church in Memphis, Tennessee. “I’ve even had people who don’t go to our church

watch the virtual and then come around the corner and drop off a check,” said McCain, the church’s pastor.

The number of churches [resuming in-person worship](#) is accelerating. East Stone Gap United Methodist, for example, held its first in-person worship service with social-distancing restrictions on June 14. “Wearing masks, not singing, and taking communion from pre-packaged packets was different,” Stapleton said, “but did not stand in the way of having a joyful and blessed service.”

However, a number of U.S. churches remain online only in areas that have experienced surging COVID-19 cases. As of June 18 [Johns Hopkins University reported](#) that more than 117,700 people in the U.S. have died of the disease. La Trinidad United Methodist Church in downtown San Antonio is in a zip code where the virus has infected hundreds of people. The Rev. John Feagins, co-pastor with his wife Raquel of this largely Hispanic church, said staying online is the safe thing for now. And like many churches La Trinidad has seen increased engagement even with limited in-person contact.

The church tracks that growth not through online views but in how many receive the sacrament on communion Sunday. People pick up the already consecrated elements at the church curbside on the Saturday before or the pastors deliver the elements to those who aren’t able to make the trip. Worshippers then synchronously celebrate Eucharist the next day during the livestreamed service. Since the crisis began the church’s communicants have increased from about 150 to about 220.

“I actually believe once the pandemic ends—and it will end—a lot of these gains are going to continue because of the relational steps that have been taken,” Feagins said. The monthly kits also include copies of the *Upper Room* devotional booklets, a gift such as roses for Mother’s Day, and a remittance envelope for offering. “Giving has held steady and expenses are down,” he said and La Trinidad has seen no need to seek additional financial assistance.

However, other congregations have. A [United Methodist Communications survey](#) in late April found that 44% of churches that completed the study had applied for financial help under the U.S. CARES ACT.

Among those churches is First United Methodist Church in Flushing, New York which received about a \$100,000 loan through [the act’s Paycheck Protection Program](#). The predominantly Korean immigrant congregation, which in non-pandemic times averages about 2,000 in weekly attendance, is in New York City, [the epicenter of the U.S. pandemic this spring](#).

“The church doors were closed, but the church members have been very active,” said the Rev. Chongho James Kim, the congregation’s senior pastor. “They have been making masks and organized a food pantry for the daily workers in the street.” The congregation, for the first time, also has started using online giving. “We broke the cultural barrier because of this,” he said. Because of the congregants’ faithful stewardship and the loan the church has remained financially sound and has found new ways to reach out to its neighbors.

The church recently held a memorial service for George Floyd, a black man who whose death under the knee of a police officer [sparked protests and calls for racial justice worldwide](#). “Because of the coronavirus every communication we produce is bilingual now,” Kim said. “We want to be intentionally connecting with the larger community. We also want to be a center where people can come together to combat racism.”

Rev. Stapleton of the largely white East Stone Gap United Methodist speaks for many pastors when he talks with relief about how his congregation has responded to God’s call in this time of uncertainty.

“I think our church has done what we can do,” he said. “But the blessings that we’ve received in this time are not due to process. I think it’s due to people who love Jesus and are faithful to the church.”

Hahn is a multimedia news reporter for United Methodist News. Contact her at 615-742-5470 or newsdesk@umnews.org. To read more United Methodist news, [subscribe to the free Daily or Weekly Digests](#)

AMEN, and thank you Asbury tithe and offering supporters for your faithfulness.

Stuart Colby, Treasurer

THE HISTORY CORNER

What does Louis Pasteur have to do with communion in the Methodist Church? In the mid-1860's Thomas Welch, a Methodist minister, lost most of his vocal capacity because of a throat illness. Finding it difficult to fulfill his role as a preacher he left the ministry and got a degree in dentistry. He moved to Vinland, NJ and opened a dentistry practice. As a minister he had upheld the temperance views of many in the Methodist church and would not use wine for communion. He joined the Vinland Methodist Episcopal Church that adhered to the temperance view of no wine for communion and became the communion steward. To have grape juice for communion stewards would press grapes for each service. But fresh grapes were not available year-round and there was no way to store grape juice and prevent it from fermenting and turning to wine. When grapes were not available some communion stewards boiled raisins in water and the raisin water was used for communion and sometimes just plain water was substituted for the juice.

Thomas was aware of Pasteur's work and worked to apply his theory to prevent grape juice from fermenting which would allow the juice to be held through the year until the next crop of grapes could be harvested and turned into juice. He was able to pasteurize grape juice and in 1869 he began selling Dr. Welch's Unfermented Wine to churches but it didn't catch on and he gave up trying to sell it. In 1871 his son, Charles, urged him to try the business again and offered free samples to churches. The temperance movement was gaining momentum and by 1876 members of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, who were largely Methodists, were refusing to receive communion when wine was served. At the 1880 General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church changes were made to the *Book of Discipline* regarding communion—one of the passages saying, "Let none but the pure, unfermented juice of the grape be used in administering the Lord's Supper, wherever practicable." The Welch Grape Juice business took off and countrywide advertising brought the juice beyond the communion service to homes across America. After being sold at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair it was proclaimed "the national drink," and a healthy drink. Soon the business expanded beyond juice to include grape jelly and Niagara White Grape Juice. What had been a sideline business became a full-time operation.

The next time you get one of those little packets of Welch's Grape Jelly remember how it started because of a substitute for communion wine.

Interesting Methodist historical note: Rev. Welch's first pastorage was at the Pound Ridge, New York Methodist Church.