

Newsletter

Howard-Miami Mennonite Church
3976 East 1400 South
Kokomo, IN 46901-8849

April, 2020

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EASTER 2020

I'm going to keep this brief. Just a couple of thoughts about pandemic and Easter.

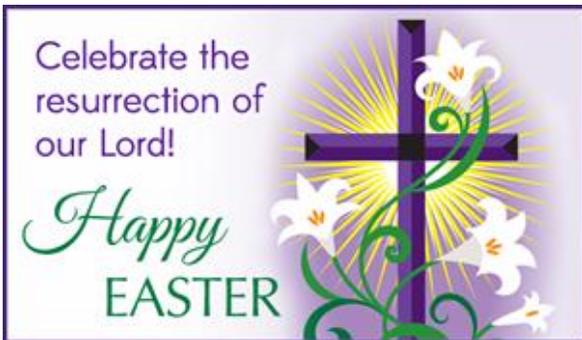
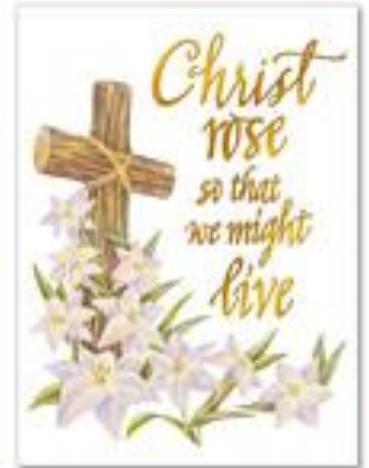
The world around us has shut down. The pandemic has brought an end to our normal way of life, at least temporarily.

But if Easter teaches us anything, it is that in Jesus, the end is really just an opportunity for something new and beautiful to emerge!

The cross was the End of Jesus' life. The darkness that came over the earth and the earthquake signaled that this was a significant ending.

Something terrible had just happened. The next day was this strange time as the disciples "Socially Distanced" themselves from the rest of the world. They were terrified of what would happen to them after their leader and teacher had been crucified.

But on Sunday morning, the morning of the third day, they found out that it was not Jesus' life that had come to an end. What had come to an end was an unceasing system of sacrifice. What had come to an end was the distance between God and humanity.



And after a period of hiding away, the disciples came out and began to joyfully spread the good news of the gospel!

This pandemic we are experiencing is serious, but it is temporary. And just maybe this time will shake up the church and followers of Jesus that will lead to new life! After all, that is the promise of Easter. There are real concerns for us right now, some that are quite painful. Yet I am also excited to see what God will do in the midst of and after the close of this time in the world!

I do want to give a huge Thank You to Lynelle Mellady for all her work taking us from a "traditional" church to an "online" church in less than a week. Her work with the website and Facebook were so helpful!

We have begun a Calling Team to call people in the congregation, just to help us stay more connected. Let Pastor Ben know if you would like to be a part of this team.

We are also looking to prepare a team to deliver groceries and other supplies- "The Ravens," I am calling this team, after the ravens who brought food to Elijah in 1 Kings 17. Let Pastor Ben know if you would like to be trained for this. Training will be pretty common sense kind of stuff. Don't let it intimidate you that you will be "trained" for it!

Pastor Ben

Mennonite Women
Sewing
March 4, 2020



Five ladies gathered for Mennonite Women on March 4, 2020. Even though there were just a few of us, we continued on with knotting comforters and quilting as usual. We did not have a meeting time. We completed two comforters and hundreds of stitches were added to the quilt.

During January and February, we met seven extra times to knot comforters and quilt. We were able to complete twelve comforters. Thanks to all who participated in these extra times. As usual, we had good times of fellowship while we worked. Special thanks go to Verba Engel who prepares the comforts for us to knot. She then binds them. They are taken to MCC Great Lakes at the Depot in Goshen to be sent around the world.

Pastor Ben joined us for lunch as he often does.

Our next meeting is April 2. Jeanie Miller will have devotions. Bring a sack lunch.

Linda Mast, Secretary

EVERENCE NEWS

Sign up for MyNeighbor card.

Everence donated over \$386,000 in January to 497 congregations and charities through its My Neighbor credit card. You can join in the joy of generosity to generate reward dollars every time you use your card. Our faith-based partner, Everence, will donate 1.50% of the total amount of a purchase to our church or a charity of your choice. Learn more at everence.com/myneighbor

INTRODUCTION:

We are excited to introduce you to Adam and Sara Thompson and their family.

Adam and Sara started attending about a month ago. We are excited to have them worshipping and serving God with us!



HELLO!

We are the Thompson's. We live in Peru, Indiana. We've been married for 5 years. Adam is a Greentown native. Adam is a 6th grade math teacher & the high school varsity tennis coach in Logansport. We have three children: a son, Peyton (9 years), and two daughters: Emma (5 years) and Addison (3.5 years). Sara is a stay at home mom-enjoying every minute she can with our children. We are thankful to call Howard Miami our church now! Thank you for welcoming us!



Amigo Centre is a camp and retreat facility that belongs to the IN-MI Conference congregations and is located near Sturgis, MI. In its effort to be good stewards of Amigo's resources and your resources, Amigo Centre heats its three largest buildings with wood from the Amigo property. *Amigo is for all types of groups--families, churches, business groups, and more. Amigo is special every season!*

MARCH 17, 2020

- As of right now our April Scrapbooking is still scheduled (Apr 2-6). All of this may change in the next few weeks and we will communicate with you about our plans. If you wish to make changes to your registration or wish to receive a refund please contact us.
- Our Housekeeping department has already been following recommended protocols and is taking steps to reinforce them. We're also putting additional steps in place to ensure everyone's safety.
- Guest groups who have scheduled retreats in the near future, we will be in contact with your coordinator to discuss the details of your reservations and best steps forward for your group.
- Right now our office will continue to be open but we welcome questions and concerns. Things are beginning to warm up here at Perrin Lake. The first flowers are starting to come out of the ground. We want to be able to share this with folks. We also think that in times of fear and anxiety there is a need to be grounded in God's Creation. Try to (safely and responsibly) find some time to get outside in the next three weeks. Take a moment to listen and observe. Slow your heart and listen. Hang in there. We're praying for you and we'd appreciate prayers too, in this time of uncertainty. If you have questions or concerns, we want to hear them. Please feel free to call us at 269-651-2811 or send us an email at info@amigocentre.org. Matthew Ropp Executive Director

AMIGO CENTRE - WISH LIST

This list has items that would be helpful to Amigo Centre. If you have these items and would like to donate them or would like to donate funds toward the purchase of these items please contact Matt Ropp. info@amigocentre.org

Go Pro - Drone – Point and Shoot Camera - Trip Trailer - Portable Saw Mill - "Pack-N-Play" Baby Changing Station- "Large" Smart TV - Trail Camera

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Treasurers' Update:



2020 Year-to-date: Jan-March 22

Offerings \$40,679.61
Average Weekly giving: \$3,389.96

2020 Worship Attendance

March 01	68
March. 15	56
March 22	no in-church service
Sermon was on-line and Zoom prayer service	



WORSHIP SERVICES FOR NOW!

SERMON'S AVAILABLE ON LINE AT www.howardmiami.org

TILL WE CAN MEET TOGETHER AGAIN

PASTORS: BEN & SARAH SCHLEGEL

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Through the Eyes of a Child Children's Bible in a Nutshell !!!

Adam and Eve had a son, Cain, who hated his brother as long as he was Abel. Pretty soon all of the early people died off, except for Methuselah, who lived to be like a million or something.

One of the next important was Noah, who was a good guy, but one of his kids was kind of like a Ham. Noah built a large boat and put his family and some animals on it. He asks some other people to join him, but they said they would have to take a rain check.

After Noah, came Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jacob was more famous than his brother, Esau, because Esau sold Jacob his birthright in exchange for some pot roast. Jacob had a son named Joseph who wore a really loud sports coat.

Another important Bible guy was Moses, whose real name was Charlton Heston. Moses led the Israel Lights out of Egypt and away from the evil Pharaoh after God sent ten plagues on Pharaoh's people. These plagues included frogs, mice, lice, bowels, and no cable. God fed the Israel Lights everyday with Manicotti. Then he gave them his Top Ten Commandments. These include don't lie, cheat, smoke, dance, or covet your neighbor's stuff. Oh, yeah, I just thought of one more; Humor thy father and thy mother.

One of Moses' best helpers was Joshua who was the first Bible guy to use spies. Joshua fought the battle of Geritol, and the fence fell over on the town.

After Joshua came David. He got to be king by killing a giant with a slingshot. He had a son named Solomon who had about 300 wives and 500 porcupines. My teacher says

he was wise, but that doesn't sound very wise to me.

After Solomon there were a bunch of major league prophets. One of these was Jonah, who was swallowed by a big whale and then barfed upon the shore. There were also some minor league prophets, but I guess we don't have to worry about them.

After the Old Testament came the New Testament. Jesus is the star of the New Testament. He was born in Bethlehem in a barn. (I wish I had been born in a barn, too, because my mom is always saying to me, 'close the Door! Were you born in a barn?' It would be nice to say, 'as a matter of fact I was.')

During his life, Jesus had many arguments with sinners like the Pharisees and the Republicans. Jesus also had twelve opossums. The worst one was Judas asparagus. Judas was so evil that they named a terrible vegetable after him.

Jesus was a great man. He healed many leopards and even preached to some Germans on the Mount. But the Republicans and all those guys put Jesus on trial before Pontius the Pilot. Pilot didn't stick up for Jesus. He just washed his hands instead.

Any way's, Jesus died for our sins, then came back to life again. He went up to Heaven but will be back at the end of the Aluminum. His return is told in the book of Revolution.

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A Father took his son to several baseball games where "The Star-Spangled Banner" was sung before the start of each game. Then the father and son attended a church on a Sunday shortly before Independence Day. The congregation sang "The Star-Spangled Banner," and after everyone sat down, the little boy suddenly yelled out, "PLAY BALL!!!"

LIVING BIBLE

This will sure make you think about how we react to visitors at church.

His name is Bill he has wild hair, wears a T-shirt with holes in it, jeans and no shoes. This was literally his wardrobe for his entire four years of college. He is brilliant. Kind of esoteric and very, very, bright. He became a Christian while attending college.

Across the street from the campus is a well-dressed, very conservative church. They want to develop a ministry to the students but are not sure how to go about it. One day Bill decides to go there. He walks in with no shoes, jeans, his T-shirt and wild hair.

The service has already started, and so Bill starts down the aisle looking for a seat. The church is completely packed, and he can't find a seat. By now people are looking a bit uncomfortable but no one says anything. Bill gets closer and closer and closer to the pulpit and, when he realizes there are no seats, he just squats down right on the carpet. (Although perfectly acceptable behavior at a college fellowship, trust me, this had never happened in this church before!)

By now the people are really uptight, and the tension in the air is thick. About this time, the minister realizes that way at the back of the church a deacon is slowly making his way toward Bill.

Now the deacon is in his eighties, he has silver-gray hair, and a three-piece suit. He is a godly man, very elegant, very dignified, very courtly. He walks with a cane and as he starts walking toward this boy everyone is saying to themselves that you can't blame him for what he is going to do. How can you expect a man of his age and of his background to understand some college kid on the floor? It takes a long time for the man to reach the boy.

The church is utterly silent except for the clicking of the man's cane. All eyes are focused on him. You can't even hear anyone breathing. The minister can't even preach the sermon until the deacon does what he has to do. And now they see this elderly man drop his cane on the floor. With great difficulty he lowers himself and sits down next to Bill and worships with him, so he won't be alone.

Everyone chokes up with emotion. When the minister gains control, he says, "what I am about to preach, you will not remember. What you have just seen, you will never forget. Be careful how you live, you may be the only Bible some people ever read."

Pastor Sarah received this message from Alex in Uganda after he received the news that his parish would be receiving some of our funds from The Cattle Project.

Greetings to you from Uganda, I hope and pray that you and all members of Howard Miami Mennonite church are doing great.

I am so excited to write this email to you expressing my gratitude for the continued spiritual and financial assistance you give towards the success of my ministry. Because of such support, I have been able to reach out to many especially the youth who had lost hope but progressively are gaining meaning in their lives due to a number of activities we are doing with them.

Thank you for the inspiring message concerning the cattle project. I have been touched how a young youth brought forth such a brilliant idea which has benefited many including us here. This special fund we have received from your church is going to help us to expand our scope to reach more elderly in our parish whom society is giving little attention.

Once again thank you very much for this generous contribution. Thank you also for the ministry you are doing for God's people.

Regards to all the members of your church.

Stay well and indeed well!

In prayer, Alex



The Secret Sister sign-up has been delayed like every other event! Hopefully when the time comes that we can gather again, all you wonderful ladies will all be willing participants in this exciting event.

An Update from our friend Alex in Uganda

There has been a major problem of locusts ruining crops in Africa, and Tom and Ruth checked in with Alex, who writes:

Generally the locust invasion did not cause massive damage to the country. The government made a quick response. The damage caused happened only in the Eastern region of the country. We thank God that it was not too much.

However, as the country is recovering from the fear of locusts, there comes the threat of COVID-19. At the moment, the ministry of health claims not to have confirmed any case, however, we are skeptical of their claims since all the neighboring countries have confirmed COVID 19 cases. And there's a lot of relaxation in regulating movements at the borders.

As a preventive measure, the government on Tuesday ordered immediate closure of schools, churches, markets and also banned all social gatherings for 32 days. This directive has caused a lot of panic, confusion and fear among people, since most of them especially the poor depend on the day to day earnings for survival.

It has greatly affected people in rural areas where the majority are farmers. This has come at a time when they were preparing for planting since the rainy season has just started. The little they had saved to buy seeds for planting, they now have to use it to buy necessities to use during this quarantine period.

This has also affected the progress of our youth project. We had saved enough from the sale of last season's produce to cater for the buying of seeds for this season. Now this has to be used to assist the youth to go through this challenging situation. Leaving us with no alternative for buying seeds. We are surrendering these and many other worries to God as you noted.

Alex also shared that ten youth received a pair of rabbits at the beginning of the month. We are excited that funds from The Cattle Project will help him purchase additional animals to feed hungry people.



Michael and a simple rabbit house at his home



Feeding rabbits



Happy youths receiving their rabbits!