

First United Methodist Church  
625 Fifth Street  
Brookings, SD 57006

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May 2020—Special Edition

### How Long, Oh Lord?

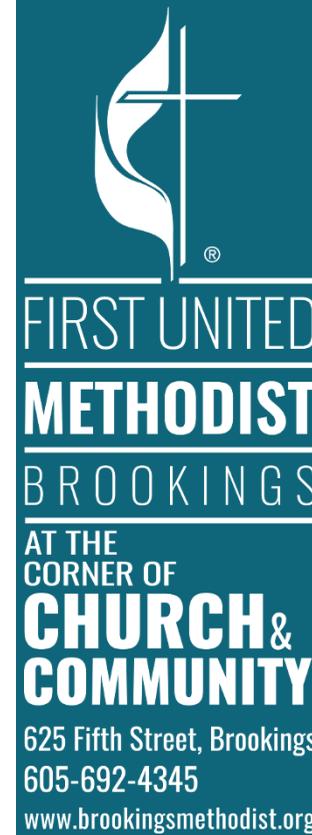
*Psalm 13:1* How much longer, LORD, will you forget about me? Will it be forever? How long will you hide? How long must I be confused and miserable all day?

I read these words and realized that this Psalm could be my prayer for these times of the Coronavirus. Like the writer of this Psalm, this Coronavirus has caused many people to become angry and frustrated, and wonder about the love of God – and about our ability to cope with this strange new life.

However, the prayer of Psalm 13 does not end here—it continues with these words: “*You have been good to me, LORD, and I will sing about you.*” (Psalm 13:6). It would seem that we can recover our spirits through remembering the goodness God has shown us in our past, and then singing out our gratitude. The recent scenes of Italian people on balconies singing despite their lockdown is poignant – and bears out the truth of this Psalm that sorrow can turn into joy. So the next time you feel unhappy and confused, choose to “count your blessings.” And then sing them out loud.

We do not need to be amazing singers to find great joy in singing – and you don’t have to sing religious songs. (A favorite song to lift my spirits is to belt out Queen’s *Bohemian Rhapsody*). Methodist people have a history of being people who could sing – why not gather your family and sing your blues away?

**Pete Grassow, Pastor**



## Farewell Note

It's hard to believe that it's almost May. Never in my wildest dreams would I have imagined that this is how my last few months in Brookings would unfold. It's hard to think about saying farewell to this church I've been a part of for almost 25 years, and even harder to know that we won't be able to say goodbye face to face.

We are in the process of selling our home, with plans to move to the parsonage in Huron at the end of May, and I will begin my appointment as pastor at Huron Riverview-Virgil on June 1. While Chris and I are excited to begin this new chapter in life, we will dearly miss our friends in Brookings. Thankfully, we will be just down the road, and you can feel free to visit at any time. That is, of course, once we are done with this social distancing!

This church has helped me build a solid foundation of faith in Jesus Christ, and I will forever be grateful for the time spent here. You will always be part of my story. Looking to the future, I am excited to see all the good things that will happen here under the leadership of your new pastoral team, Pete and Krista, and I will continue to keep this church in my prayers. One of the beautiful things about being a United Methodist is that we are connectional, and so I will forever be connected to you.

Your sister in Christ, always,  
Teresa Person  
Worship and Music Director



## Mother's Day Pictures

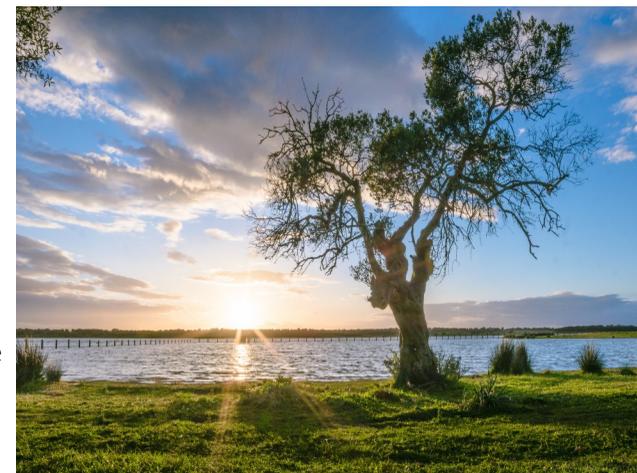
Mother's Day is quickly approaching, and we would like to celebrate the mothers and special women in our lives by sharing pictures during our Sunday morning worship service on May 10. Please share pictures of yourself with your mom, and we will display them much like we did with our virtual Palm Sunday Parade. It doesn't have to be a recent picture – feel free to send one from any time frame. Send pictures to Teresa at [music@brookingsmethodist.org](mailto:music@brookingsmethodist.org) by Thursday, May 7.

## Church Summer Camp

Many of you are probably wondering about church camp this summer. Below is the latest information from the camping office.

Dear Campers, Families, and Volunteers,  
We want to give you an update about summer camp, our plans for possible suspension of on-site summer events, and COVID-19 refund options. We are monitoring the COVID-19 situation daily. Your safety is our top priority, and our staff continue to work closely with local and state health officials and camping industry leadership. We are planning to make a decision no later than May 1 regarding whether or not we will be able to offer on-site programming this summer.

If we are unable to offer programming at our camps, we will provide a full refund of any camp payments. However, we would like you to consider some other options for use of the funds you have already committed to camp this summer. Dakotas UM Camps have always been a place where our campers experience Christ, Creation, and Community. Given the strong possibility of suspending on-site summer camping events, we are anticipating facing financial hardship in 2020. Your donation will help ensure Dakotas UM Camps will come back even stronger than ever once the COVID 19 outbreak is over. We will provide further information regarding re-funds on or before May 1.



Here are the options:

- Apply funds to next year's deposit: Turn your refund into a deposit for a future Dakotas UM Camps event.
- Donate to Dakotas UM Camps: Instead of taking your refund, make it a donation to support the continued work of Dakotas UM Camps.
- Full refund
- Refund and donate: Do both! Consider taking a partial refund and making a partial donation.

## Note from the Financial Secretary

Thank you for your financial contributions throughout March and April 2020. Each and every donation is valued and greatly appreciated as FUMC faces the uncertainty of the long-term effects of COVID-19. Many of you have transitioned your donation from a paper check to electronic giving. Thank you for taking the challenge to embrace technology and continue to offer your tithes to God. If you would rather mail your donation, we are picking up mail from the post office every few days.

Just a reminder of the various giving options—please visit [www.brookingsmethodist.org/donate](http://www.brookingsmethodist.org/donate) for more information.

Download the Give+ app on your mobile device

Text your donation to **605-250-0807**

ACH transfer, free of any charges, through our bank

Mail your donation check to: FUMC, 625 5<sup>th</sup> St, Brookings, SD 57006

First quarter giving statements have been distributed. If you did not receive a statement and believe that you should have, please contact me at [finance@brookingsmethodist.org](mailto:finance@brookingsmethodist.org) so that I can get one printed for you as soon as possible.

With much gratitude as we watch for God's presence and grace in our daily lives,  
JoAnn Lee  
Financial Secretary

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## Worship with Us

Although the church buildings are closed, we can still gather (in our own homes) through technology for worship experiences. You can join us during our long-standing radio station time slot of 9:30a.m. on Sunday mornings on KBRB 1430AM, or you can watch us online by clicking on the Livestream link on our website:

<http://www.brookingsmethodist.org/worship>  
<http://www.605pro.com/UMC>

Worship services are aired at our usual Sunday morning worship times of 9a.m. and 11a.m., and you can also join us for Manna worship on Wednesday evenings at 6p.m. Videos are also archived on our Sermon Archive page on the website.

## Harvest Table Update

Harvest Table is not serving the Monday evening meals until further notice. However, the pantry is still open for food items, personal care products, laundry and dish detergent, and diapers and baby wipes. Some people find it hard to get from paycheck to paycheck and now because of the Coronavirus crisis, some do not have a paycheck and daily lives have been changed.



There has never been any paperwork or requirements to receive items from Harvest Table. The pantry is open to anyone in the community. If you find yourself in need of items, or if you know of anyone in the community that is struggling, please contact Vonda. We can arrange for items to be set outside the Community Life Center door for you to pick up. My email, [communitylife@brookingsmethodist.org](mailto:communitylife@brookingsmethodist.org), will come directly to me and I can assist you. If you prefer to call the church office at 605-692-4345, I will return your call as soon as I receive the message.

Please, do not try to go without if Harvest Table can help. You if are in a position to donate to Harvest Table, monetary donations would be appreciated at this time. Stay safe, stay healthy.

Vonda Kirkham  
Harvest Table Coordinator

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## Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School will not be taking place at the end of May this year. We are looking into a virtual VBS for later this summer - possibly in July. Be sure to watch your emails for further information!



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## Parking Lot Notice

During the construction on 6th Street, there will be no access into our parking lot. Please use the alley entrances. Construction is planned for May-August.

## Loneliness and Social Isolation During COVID 19

Being alone or with very limited social interaction during the pandemic can be difficult. With some effort on your part, there are ways to decrease the effects of the isolation. Please look over the following list and incorporate the ideas that will work for you. Remember that you are loved by your church family and many are just a phone call away. Anyone who needs help - please call Brenda Hieb at 605-691-9395.

- Keep a schedule (our bodies and minds like routine).
- Stay active, including walking in your neighborhood or at the Nature Park - just keep your 6-foot distance. There are also lots of YouTube videos of chair exercises or other indoor forms of exercise.
- Do something meaningful, like working on your genealogy or organizing photo albums.
- Connect with others by letter, email, phone (FaceTime), or Zoom. Try online games.
- Find sources of comfort, such as through old movies, reviewing photo albums, lighting a candle, and having a cup of tea.
- 'Spring clean' your home.
- Create something - write up a favorite memory, write handwritten notes to friends, children, and grandchildren.
- Try a new art project - adult coloring books, needlework, woodworking, drawing, or painting.
- Start (and finish) home projects - organize the junk drawer, your closets...
- Read or listen to audiobooks or podcasts.
- Music - listen to old favorites, challenge yourself to try new genres (classical music can be calming or invigorating)!
- Go on a virtual tour of a museum, such as the Louvre (in Paris) or Guggenheim (in New York).
- Engage in games like Sudoku, crossword puzzles, or solitaire.

Please limit your contact with others and wear a mask if you must be in public. This tough time will pass and we will be together again, hopefully soon.

Stay safe,  
Joanie Holm  
Community Health Nurse

Maintenance issues/projects that are not currently being addressed as we wait for more clarity in our church's financial picture include:

- Purchase of office furniture for guests in Pastor Pete's office
- Replacement/repair of air coolant compressor on one of two air conditioning units that serve the Sanctuary/office areas
- Replacement of hot water heater mixer in CLC (must be done to meet code for Harvest Table and Head Start)
- Cleaning of carpets throughout the entire church campus
- Stripping and sealing of education wing floor
- Deep cleaning of tables, chairs, and the kitchen in the CLC (church basement cleaned recently)
- Landscape clean-up
- Repair/replace light fixtures or ballasts (mostly in education wing)
- Address items on the insurance safety audit "fix it" list we received in February
- Repair the leaking flat roof of the CLC
- Clean the rain gutters throughout the church campus
- Replacement of the downspout on the NE corner of the church building

As the previously provided information demonstrates, our facilities always require much ongoing maintenance and repair needs. We will continue as a Board of Trustees to address these needs to the best of our capabilities.

Thank you, Barb Johnson

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## Meals on Wheels Update

FUMC Meals on Wheels volunteers have gone above and beyond the call of duty during the COVID-19 outbreak. The following people helped demonstrate "GOD's Love" in the mist of a pandemic to deliver meals to about 50 seniors in Brookings this last two weeks. I would like to recognize and thank Bob & Lynette Smith, Charles Schnabel, Ron & Linda Thaden, Keith & Betty Allison, Don & Judi DeZeeuw, Richard Gamradt, Roger Sandness, and Perry Johnson. Keep in mind that vulnerable seniors are at the greatest risk amid COVID-19, and they need FUMC love. FUMC will do another two week round of deliveries August 3-14. Please call Perry or Barb Johnson at 692-1340 and volunteer. You will be assigned one of the five routes for a week that will take about 60 minutes to complete.

Thank you again, Perry Johnson

## Our Condolences

Let us pray for all who grieve the loss of loved ones; we remember especially the families of Dr. Rick Holm (Joanie and family) and Jim Hagedorn (Lynelle and family); and pray for Ann and Ryan Overby as they grieve the loss of their father, Richard.

## Brookings First UMC Board of Trustees Update

The Board of Trustees of First UMC is continuing to meet remotely each month as we carry out our Board's responsibilities. The following is an update of our work for our church family. In recent months we have been involved with these projects:

- Replacement of ceiling light bulbs in CLC
- Refinished church fellowship floor
- Tuckpointed brick on church and education buildings (Together Campaign)
- Replacement of church boiler and temperature control (Together Campaign)
- Replacement of projector bulbs in CLC (Together Campaign)
- Installation of Wi-Fi and hard wire internet in entire church campus (Together Campaign)
- Repair of Sanctuary roof and ceiling
- Painting of office area and replacement of office area flooring
- Striped the parking lot (private donor)
- Installation of shelving and organization of CLC storage (Wednesday Evening Men's Group)
- Cleared the CLC stairway area (Wednesday Evening Men's Group)
- Conducted regular maintenance on heating systems, fire alarms, and sprinkler systems

Maintenance issues/projects we are currently addressing include:

- 1) Soliciting bids for summer lawn service. We have decided to seek bids for lawn mowing and removal of the yard waste only. We are not planning to aerate, fertilize, or do weed control this summer as a cost saving measure.
- 2) Installation of hearing assistance equipment in both the CLC and Sanctuary (Together Campaign).
- 3) Installation of live stream equipment in both the CLC and Sanctuary (Together Campaign).
- 4) Replacement of air handler bearing on one of two units that serve the Sanctuary/office areas

## Greetings from the Grinager Family

Who knew almost 3 months ago when I left that we would all find ourselves in the places we now find ourselves located. When Karen and I left Brookings we were able to go to Hawaii and spend four weeks with Karen's brother. During our time there, we had additional family also come and visit - Rebecca and family and my brother Donn and his wife. I also had the opportunity to preach at the Kona UMC. It was a good time. I even got to do a little golfing.

After we arrived home, we began a search for a new home in Sioux Falls. We found a house much faster than we had expected and closed on the house on April 20. We are now in that wonderful process of packing, sorting, giving away, and throwing away things that should have left our home a long time ago. Being confined to our home has helped us accomplish some of those things much faster.

We want you to know that our Brookings family continues to be in our prayers. We join you for worship every Sunday and Wednesday and greatly appreciate the leadership of Pastor Pete, Teresa, and the musicians that lead us in worship. Our plan had been to come back for worship and for confirmation, but the virus has changed that for the present. When things allow us once again to gather in larger groups, Karen and I will make our way back north to worship with you once again, and listen to the stories of how you journeyed through this wilderness journey and hear of the places where you met God in unexpected times and places. May you know God's peace in the midst of the chaos that is presently a part of all our lives.

Howard and Karen Grinager

PS—If any of you would like to move to Parker, we have a wonderful house we would love to sell you.



## Our People Being the Church - Keeping in Contact

During this time of social distancing and not being able to gather in large groups it is essential that we have contact with fellow church/group members. I have been encouraging groups to stay in contact through phone calls, emails, texts, zooming or other electronic platforms, and have asked them to share how things are going.

Confirmation Groups - There are several groups of confirmation students with two adult leaders for each group. They have done a fantastic job in actually having lessons weekly with Bible readings and games, along with being able to see their church friends. Some confirmation sponsors are sending notes to kids in between their weekly sessions. Other groups are listening to the sermon and discussing it during their weekly meetings. Some of the groups will stay in contact this summer to check in and see how they are doing.

Wednesday Evening Men's Group - They have been zooming weekly to stay in contact. Any male who would like to join their weekly meeting should please contact Chris Person at [cyperson@gmail.com](mailto:cyperson@gmail.com), and he will send you the zoom link.

Open Door Singles Group - They have been calling and emailing on a regular basis to stay in contact with each other.

Wednesday School - This group consists of children in Kindergarten - 5th grade. We meet on Wednesdays from 6:45-7:45pm. We have been meeting via zoom. We have a lesson, read the Bible, and do an activity. For some of these kids it is their time for Christian education, as Wednesdays work best for their families to worship.

Sunday School Classes - I know that some Sunday School classes continue to offer a teaching time for their children and youth. Some of that has been done through Facebook. It's wonderful for the children to be able to see their teachers. Other classes use other electronic platforms to stay in contact with their students.

Sandy and Rich Gamradt have been busy sewing masks! So far the number is over 200! Sandy is a collection point for the home sewn masks. Deb Carlson (of the Brookings Quilt Guild) picks them up and distributes them to folks/organizations in Brookings - this number is over 700! Sandy has shared elastic, fabrics, and patterns to all who have contacted her.

Lois Buus and her quilting group, Sew to Share/Because We Care, have been busy making quilts for Sleep in Heavenly Peace bed kits. This group also makes blankets/quilts for the Ronald MacDonald House in Sioux Falls — each patient (ages 1-18 yrs) receives a quilt/blanket.

Many phone calls are being made to CARE members, circles, Harvest Table volunteers, and other groups to stay in contact with each other.

Gretchen Knutson  
Education Director  
[education@brookingsmethodist.org](mailto:education@brookingsmethodist.org)

\*Please note that due to Covid 19, the 2020 Youth Mission Trip to Colorado has been cancelled.

