



# NORTHWOOD

## UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

P.O. Box 295, 62 West Highway 61, Esko, MN 55733

Pastor Brian Cornell ~ 828-434-6995

bcornell@wnccumc.net

Sunday Worship: 9:00 am

### The little church with a BIG heart.



Reverend Brian Cornell

Check out our website for pictures and upcoming events! Weekly bulletins (current month) and weekly newsletters also are available for viewing.  
[www.northwoodesko.com](http://www.northwoodesko.com)

FIND US ON FACEBOOK @ Northwood United Methodist Church, Esko MN (include *ESKO MN* in the address) for the most current information and event albums.

**DIRECT ANNOUNCEMENTS** to Shirley Brandt for the bulletin by Tuesday by 5:00 pm and/or for the weekly newsletter by Monday afternoon at: [shirleybob15@gmail.com](mailto:shirleybob15@gmail.com).

Please also cc to Ann Butler at: [annonpond@yahoo.com](mailto:annonpond@yahoo.com)



## PUT IT ON YOUR CALENDAR!

### Wednesday, April 8 ~

- Adult Bible Study at 5:45 pm. *Entering the Passion of Jesus* by Amy-Jill Levine. Shane Johnson will send you a Zoom link upon request if you aren't sent the link automatically.
- Virtual Administrative Council Meeting at 7:00 pm. More information to follow.

**Thursday, April 9** ~ Online Maundy Thursday service at 6:30 pm.

**Friday, April 10** ~ Online Good Friday service at 7:00 pm.

**Sunday, April 12** ~ Online Easter service at 9:00 am.

### NUMC OUTREACH SQUAD . . .

Hello Church Family! Do you need: A helping hand; grocery items; prescription or medicine pick up; take-out meal pick-up and delivery; cheering up?

Call the Northwood Outreach Squad to get the help you need! We are "on the ready" to help! Don't hesitate! Our schedule is filling up fast! Barb Lammi, 218-383-9608 or Kora Cavanaugh, 218 310-7380.

### NUMC CHILDCARE CENTER . . .

In the midst of the challenges of COVID-19, the joyous plans for establishing a childcare center at Northwood UMC continue.

Amanda Groth has sent all initial paperwork required for a childcare license to the State of Minnesota office. She is awaiting a response from the Secretary of State, regarding whether any additional documentation is needed. Through communication with the Esko school district, it is a prioritization

to be ready to provide before and afterschool care for 30 school-aged students by the start of the 2020-21 school year. In addition, plans for infant, toddler, and preschool care are also taking place.

Through communication between Amanda G. and Amanda Z., a \$250 grant was received to support these dreams. This funding will be used to purchase a sensory table, fine motor tools for the sensory table, and an art easel for the toddler room.

Amazing things are possible!



## Easter Cannot Be Cancelled!

**N**ever in my wildest nightmare could I imagine asking my ministry colleagues to not hold in-person Holy Week or Easter worship services.

But after much consultation, prayer, processing of data, and seeking to comply with guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and our three-state governments, **I am extending my earlier request and now asking that all our congregations suspend in-person worship until at least May 10**, in compliance with the CDC's eight-week ban on gatherings of 50 people or more and the closure of schools and many public places in the Dakotas-Minnesota Area. I will, of course, continue



to monitor new data and directives, or relaxed restrictions, and update or modify my request as appropriate.

Friends, we need to continue to be the first responders in our communities and lead the efforts to curtail the spread of this pandemic to our neighbors. This is a part of our missional imperative to heal a broken world.

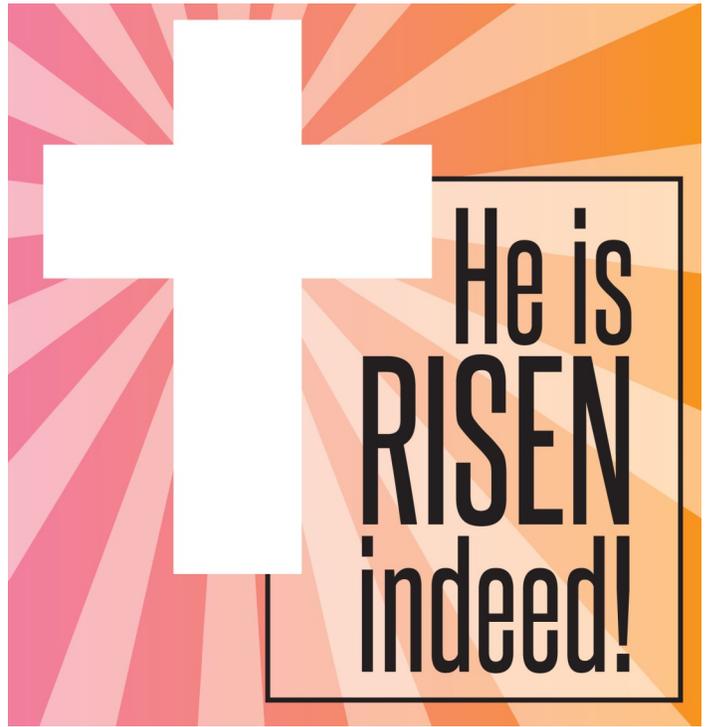
Frankly, I am an ambivalent jumble of feelings. I often find myself joining Jeremiah's lament:

*"Have you completely rejected Judah?  
Does your heart loathe Zion?  
Why have you struck us down  
so that there is no healing for us?  
We look for peace, but find no good  
for a time of healing, but there  
is terror instead."* (Jeremiah 14:19 NRSV)

At the same time, my heart is filled with compassion for those who are ill, our over-worked and under-resourced health care professionals, those losing jobs and businesses and retirement funds, and our most vulnerable neighbors — the homeless, the elderly, those who cannot shelter in place.

My heart also swells with pride. I am humbled, encouraged, inspired by the resilience, speed, adaptability, and innovative spirit of our clergy and lay leadership. You are demonstrating time and time again that canceling mass gatherings does not mean canceling community or ministry. You are bearing witness to the truth that social distancing does not have to lead to social isolation or neglected relationships or interrupted pastoral care. You are demonstrating time and time again that a pandemic does not kill our spirit of generosity. We remain a people to whom much has been given through our salvation and hope in Christ Jesus.

We are also still in the midst of Lent. The novelist Jim Crace authored a book in 1998 titled *"Quarantine."* His fictitious narrative has Jesus



quarantined in the wilderness with others forced or choosing to practice social distancing. This interesting twist on Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness has encouraged me to use these days of adapting my work and relational patterns as a time to listen more deeply to the movement of God's Spirit in my heart and mind and soul. My Lenten journey has become richer as I have come to embrace being "quarantined."

And, here is the most important thing I am hearing: **Regardless of what is happening in our world on April 12, Easter cannot be canceled.** We may not be able to gather in our glorious Easter celebrations in our lily-decorated sanctuaries, but **Easter cannot be canceled.** The resurrection cannot be stopped or delayed or defeated!

As you already know, Easter does not come on the same date every year. Therefore, especially in a crisis, we can celebrate Easter anytime. Indeed, every Sunday is a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus. We are called to live in the joy and victory of Easter every day. Perhaps this is a season to practice new, creative ways to express this resurrection joy and victory through our online worship, our pastoral care, and outreach ministries to those in desperate need of food, mental health care, or even toilet paper and surgical masks. Perhaps this is a season to begin planning for an in-person Easter celebration in July or August or whenever we can gather again.

While we and our practice of ministry are changing, and some things will continue to change for the unforeseeable future, we live in the confidence of the resurrection promise and proclamation: **Christ is risen! Christ is risen, indeed!**

*Bishop Bruce R. Ough is resident bishop of the Dakotas-Minnesota Area of The United Methodist Church.*



## **JOYS, CONCERNS, GRATITUDE & NEEDS . . .**

### **Prayer Requests related to COVID-19:**

- Prayers for all healthcare workers and essential workers.
- Prayers of thankfulness that we still have our heat and lights.
- Prayers of thankfulness for seeing people doing things for others.
- Prayers for those who have had their jobs eliminated or hours reduced.

### **Other Prayer Requests**

- Prayers of gratefulness for all who are sewing masks.
- Prayers of joy that plans for a childcare center are becoming a reality at Northwood UMC, hopefully in August. Please see story on page 1 of this newsletter.
- A reminder to do something nice for our grocery clerks.
- Remember to use Buddy Phone to reach out to neighbors and friends, If they don't have Facebook you can hold the phone near your viewing device so they can hear the Sunday worship. Or just call to say hello!

*Prayer Requests may be texted or called in to Pastor Brian at 828-434-6995.  
Prayer requests also may be emailed to Pastor Brian at [bcornell@wnccumc.net](mailto:bcornell@wnccumc.net)  
If you would like your request to appear in the newsletter, please also email to  
Shirley at [shirleybob15@gmail.com](mailto:shirleybob15@gmail.com) and/or Ann Butler at [annonpond@yahoo.com](mailto:annonpond@yahoo.com)*

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## **PRAYER MINISTRY . . .**

The tea light candles we light on the altar each Sunday remind us of our ministry of prayer to the military service personnel and their families within our congregation. Especially Gavin Day stationed in Fort Campbell, KY, nephew of Dan and Beth Belden and grandson of Dennis and Julie Day, Kevin Jensen, cousin to Daisy Rose and Holly Compo, deployed to Japan and Alex Lammi serving in Memphis, son of Barb and Ted Lammi.



## **SHOUT OUTS TO . . .**

- Pastor Brian for leading us each Sunday in Facebook live worship!
- Pastor Katherine for leading Kingdom Time during Facebook live worship on Sunday, April 5!
- David Cornell for the scripture reading during Sunday's Facebook live worship!
- Michael Cornell for all the behind the scenes tech support he provides to provide our Facebook live worship each week!

See you virtually and until we meet again ...

**SCATTER JOY, INSPIRE HOPE, SHARE LOVE, AND SEEK PEACE.**