Just Janice...

How often have we commented on how strange these times are? It seems to me this has taken the place of discussing the weather. But realizing we are experiencing something no one on earth has experienced. I can’t say this is a good time – too any people have died, have had to be separated from loved ones; vacation plans postponed or cancelled; graduations turned into drive by parades; and on and on. Who would have thought we’d be worshiping looking at our computer on Sunday or Tuesday or ??? I can assure you I never envisioned myself on Sunday morning on my couch conducting worship!!

So, I think we can agree that our normal lives have been turned upside down. However, there are some things that continue: babies are being born, marriages are conducted [have I mentioned I conducted a Zoom wedding?], school continued, even in a very different format.

When I heard the following story, it struck me that while it was tragedy, it had a unique, even positive ending. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did.

David, the Hamilton’s grandson who lives in Florida, fell on a table and cut his head at the hairline above his forehead. There was lots of blood and as Tori and her husband were both at home, one [Tori] stayed home with Charlie who is 3 years old and Ron took David, 8 years old to the Emergency Room. David decided he wanted his mom in the emergency room with him, so Tori was called to come trade places with Ron. Of course, because of Covid-19, little sister Charlie was not allowed to go in so, Ron came to the car to take Charlie back home and Tori went in to be with David. What a scary scenario! David ended up with 12 staples as the cut was pretty deep.

Now, you can imagine how awful it was for Gloria and David to hear all this, being so far away and unable to do anything. But being resourceful, Gloria had a plan. David [grandson] loves bacon and she contacted a neighbor who is a chef and contracted with him to make a very special [surprise] BACON dinner. They hoped to make David feel better and let him know Grandma Glo and Papa David were thinking of him. He was served a bacon meal which consisted of: regular bacon, candy bacon, cheese bacon cookies, bacon/cheese melts, and bacon bits. So, what seemed awful at the time, turned out to be an opportunity to make a special memory and guess what? Since the cut was at the hairline, he won’t even have a scar that shows.

This is a great example of turning lemons into lemonade and it’s a story that I really enjoyed hearing, Gloria and David were able to “be there” for their grandson, and I’ll bet David will never forget how much he is loved – and his bacon dinner!!!!

It’s ALWAYS the right time to do the right thing
New Mailing Address:
First Congregational Church, UCC
P.O. Box 2045
Tulare, CA 93275
For Packages:
340 E. Tulare Avenue
Tulare, CA 93274

July Birthdays
03 Melanie Huerta
05 Jason Fuller
10 Barbara Montgomery
11 Soledad Suastequi
12 Allen Leighty
12 Jean Kirkbride
13 Kristeen Keller
14 Servando Gaytán
20 Phyllis Parker
23 Dave/Susan Burley
23 Scott/Toni Horton
25 Robert Veach
28 Peggy Wahlstrom

July Word of the Month

Each Month we will have a new word to focus on. This month our word is “HUMILITY”. Pray about this word, look it up, think about the various ways we use it; its importance in our lives.
If you have any “ah-ah” moments, share with someone, since we all have the same word. As you think about the various words, I think you’ll find staying positive makes you happier and less stressed.
With so much negativity all around us, it becomes increasingly important to be intentional about our thoughts. This will take discipline but the rewards are worth it. The next word of the month will be in August and it is...Stay tuned.

Christian Fellowship
Christmas in ???
Santa will be coming after
WHO KNOWS??

Prayer Church of the Month
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Humility
Congratulations to our 2020 graduates

Uriah Brandenburg, son of Alex Elliott and grandson of David and Gloria Hamilton.
Graduated from Valley Life Charter where he was involved in drama, school plays, science Olympia. He had received the award for STEAM in science. He will be attending University Prep High School, and focus on college courses and science Olympia. He is hoping to become a special needs teacher.

Login Louis Yenigues, son of Joshua and Emily Yenigues and grandson of Allen and Kay Leighty.
Attended Liberty Middle School where he focused on Ag classes and played soccer. He plans to attend Tulare Union High School and focus on Ag classes and the farm. What a great goal as we are the Agriculture Capital of the world here in the central valley of California.

We are very proud of both of you as you went through an interesting year.
Good luck in High School.

Did you know if someone falls and can’t get up, you should call 911 and tell them you need “Lift Assist”? That will let them know it’s not an emergency but you need them to send someone to help.

Black Lives Matters Rally

We realize that to God, everyone matters and should to us. However, recent events have proven what we’ve known for hundreds of years; some people do not value black lives. A very peaceful rally supported by Tulare United to express our support in obtaining justice for all.
**Taco Tuesdays**

We have been able to offer to our community Taco Tuesdays at the parking lot of First Congregational Church with Emilio’s Taco Truck. He is a self-employed cater and had been out of work since March 15th. We were so happy to help his family of six get a chance to work again. Plus, we are loving the delicious food.

We will continue to do Taco Tuesdays, 4:30 to 7:00 PM. Hope to see you there.  

Susan

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**Bible Study**

We meet every Tuesday at noon for an hour via Zoom. If you would like to join us, let Pastor Janice know. She will send you the information for Zoom. And, if you are unable to join using a computer, you can call in just using your telephone. I think you'll find these enjoyable.

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**Updates**

The fence is coming along - it's close to being finished!!!!! It just looks great and will provide much needed security. Other security measures are in the works details to follow.
From Your Moderator

In spite of our inability to meet for the past several months, a lot is going on at First Congregational Church / UCC Tulare. We have been working on increasing the security of our church property by installing a beautiful wrought iron fence and we are in the process of getting bids to upgrade our alarm system with live cameras around the property. Our 2020 budget is in the black thanks to the generosity of members and friends. Thank you for your faithful giving.

We have a variety of activities and services available to our congregation including:

- Live Sunday worship service on Face Book Live as well as recordings available on YouTube (directions are available for those who need some technical assistance)
- Daily Reflections through One Call Now
- Zoom Bible study at 12:00 pm every Tuesday
- Taco Tuesdays at the church parking lot from 4:30 to 7:00 pm
- Zoom meetings for our Youth
- Ongoing communications through the Spire and One Call Now
- Pastoral calls
- Several groups who meet by phone and Zoom
- Cards and notes from our church office and other members

Is there more that we can do, and can we do it better? Most Definitely! As we reach out to members and friends and receive feedback, we know that we want to continue developing our communication strategies to meet the needs of our congregation. I plan to provide updates on our Council and our Forecast Team meetings in the Spire and possibly on One Call if needed. We know that this is a difficult time for all of us and we need to work diligently to keep everyone informed and to make sure everyone’s needs are being met as we are able.

Council Meeting Update: Our Church Council has been meeting monthly via Zoom. All church members and friends are welcome to join by Zoom or phone. Please let me know if you are interested in participating. The issues we have been addressing include the following:

- In-person church and program services were discontinued on March 19, 2020 due to the Coronavirus pandemic
- Church budget and giving – letter was sent out on March 27th and the response has been very positive – THANK YOU!
- Church workday was held on March 12th to prepare for the fence installation
- Monitoring fence construction and obtaining bids for camera system
- Creation of Forecast Team – letter was mailed to all church members on June 1st
• Looking at ways to enhance our Sunday worship services and obtain a phone number for those who would like to join by phone

• Improve communications with congregation members and friends

Forecast Team: This group has met weekly since March 27th. We have reviewed a number of reports and recommendations from various governmental and denominational resources. We are closely monitoring the pandemic as it impacts us in Tulare County and in the Central San Joaquin Valley. The following recommendations were presented to the Council at the June 24th meeting:

1) Continue to meet virtually for an appropriate time until it is safe to meet in person and we are able to meet all of the health and safety guidelines and recommendations.

2) Due to the continued rise of local cases, we strongly recommend that we do not open our facilities to any internal or external meetings at this time.

3) Continue to enhance the Sunday worship service by using local expertise to provide the technical assistance that we do not have within our Congregation.

4) Provide a call-in option for those who do not have smart phones or computers.

5) Continue to use our resources such as One Call to keep the Congregation informed of church activities and Council meeting updates.

We are monitoring the coronavirus pandemic on a daily basis. As the pandemic continues to unfold, we will respond to any needed changes. Please contact the Forecast Team with any questions or concerns. Team members are: Bill Phelps-Ramos, Peggy DeMuth, John Jordan, and Pastor Janice. Thank you for your support and understanding. Your prayers are appreciated.

Bill Phelps-Ramos, Moderator  (661) 324-2772  williamphelps5356@gmail.com
LET US REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS

Immigrants and refugees
Those impacted by natural disasters & violence
all firefighters and first responders, the Pandemic

Jennifer Allen – Terri Leetch
Yvonne Arend – Karen Arend
Tamika Blackston – Terri Leetch
Judy Bennett – Janice Hill
Cherry Chandler – Janice Hill
-Chantel DiCapo – Terri Leetch
Tim Dole – Randy Phillips
Gary Dunn – John Mansell
Diane Gregory – Peggy DeMuth
David Hamilton
Steve Heilemann – Bill Phelps-Ramos
Sunny Hillmer – Ann Hillmer
Nancy Hoyt
Heather Jenkins – Erin Davila
Heather Jerent – Heidi Clark
Penny Lamonoca – Tonya Pedro
Julie Leighty
Fran Lillyman
Phyllis Lillyman – Fran Lillyman
Ken Nicholson – Fran Lillyman
Allene Parker – John Mansell
Phyllis Parker – John Mansell
Mick Putman – Peggy Wahlstrom
Caity Rooney – Fran Lillyman

**Charlie Phelps-Ramos**
Nina Samoiloff – Heidi Clark
Rose Shaghoian – Susan Burley
Teri Sigley – Bill/Cookie Whelan
Amy Stills – Janice Hill
Lou Tidwell – Barbara Montgomery
Peggy Wahlstrom – Jean Kirkbride
Geneva Whelan – Bill/Cookie Whelan

**Jordan Williams/sister** – FCC Selma
Jonathan Zela – Peggy Wahlstrom

Emoji = improved
Bold = new
Bold = condolences
Underline = updates

### Shut-ins:
Kay Conard, Twin Oaks
Billie Lou Easter Lou
Tidwell, Quail Park

### Our Church’s Ministers:
Rev. Janice Hill, Pastor
Rev. John C. Dorhauer, GMP
Rev. Diane Weible, CM
Rev. Davena Jones, ACM
Rev. Daniel Ross-Jones, ACM

### Our Elected Officials:
President, Congress, Governor, Mayor
Lectionary

July 7
Psalm 30
Isaiah 66:10-14
Galatians 6:7-16
Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

July 14
Amos 7:7-17
Psalm 25:1-10
Colossians 1:1-14
Luke 10:25-37

July 21
Amos 8:1-12
Psalm 25:1-10
Colossians 1:15-28
Luke 10:38-42

July 28
Hosea 1:2-10
Psalm 15
Colossians 2:6-15, (16-19)

First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
P.O. Box 2045
Tulare, CA 93275

Prepared especially for
YOU!