

Life at Cokesbury

August 13, 2020

A Word from the Pastor

There are those wonderful scenes recorded in all of the Gospels where Jesus feeds multitudes of people from just five loaves of bread and two fish. As those stories are told, Jesus is the ultimate provider but the disciples are the ones who hand it out. That's us! God provides abundantly and the job of the church is to give it away, trusting that our physical resources are like Grace in that God has enough for everybody.

As we've moved through the last few months of the coronavirus crisis, we've not run out of things that we can share. It's been mind-blowing to me that for all that we've done, at just those moments when I've thought we had exhausted our capacity, a new partnership or a new donation or a bunch of donations have come in. God seems to be giving us lessons about provision, trust, commitment to service, and the mystical power of giving our stuff away. I don't understand that physics of it, but every time I think we've hit a wall, a door in the wall opens for us—Jesus keeps saying, “You give them something to eat.”

The bigger Grace for us, however, isn't just that God can use us to get good food to people, but that faith isn't simply believing something is possible. It's more than just belief. Faith is acting on the belief, taking action steps, behaving as if the goal is going to be accomplished, behaving as if God is invested in our success. Faith is acting as if our beliefs are real. That's what we're doing right now. That's the Spirit that has to lead us.

Grace,
Jonathan

Fesh Produce

Every Tuesday and Thursday from 4-6 p.m. we give out bags of fresh produce. The Bulb(<https://www.thebulbgallery.org/>) provides our church with produce they get from local farmers, from local community gardens, local markets, and anywhere that good produce can be found. They then bring it to us at Cokesbury and our volunteers put the bags together for distribution. It's been an amazing experience for us because our church volunteers get to see each other and we are making new relationships with our neighbors. If you are able and comfortable volunteering, let us know at the church office so that we can make sure to have you in the rotation. If you would like to contribute financially, make sure to write “food ministry” on the memo line of your check or on your giving envelope.

Hot Dog Cart

We've been able to serve hot dog lunches almost every Saturday to anyone who comes through. As with the produce, our volunteers have a great time and our neighbors get to know who we are and the joy that we are all about. As a result of how successful we've been with this project, it makes sense that we would want to do this kind of thing as often as we can and to be able to do it in other locations around our community, too. The cart would enable us to prepare a lot of different foods in addition to hot dogs, as well. We have gotten a really good price on a hot

dog cart from Top Carts, the company that built the cart formerly used by Vic The Chili Man (until he sold it when he retired). The Metro District of the WNC Conference, the MoRa (Monroe-Rama) community group, the United Methodist Men, a few church members, and new friends have all contributed financially to making it possible for us to buy our own cart. If you would like to contribute, make sure to write “Hot Dog Cart” on the memo line of your check or your giving envelope.

Outdoor Worship Services on Sunday Mornings—CAMP MEETING STYLE

Think of it as summer camp meeting! Cokesbury will host outdoor worship services in the tent located on the parking lot. Indeed it is sort of an experiment to see how this goes, but it gives us a way to gather in a relatively safe way as long as everyone follows the guidelines of social distancing and wearing their mask. The Western NC Conference of the United Methodist Church has authorized outdoor worship for UM congregations as long as those guidelines are followed. While everyone is invited to attend, it is by no means an expectation that everyone should attend—in fact, for some of our congregation, staying home due to health concerns may be the most responsible choice. We will still provide a livestream worship experience via social media.

The details: (1) everyone who attends should bring your own chair (BYOC); (2) wear your mask (if you forget, we will have some disposable masks for your use); (3) stay six feet apart from others unless they live in your household; (4) use the restroom before you come to Cokesbury as the restrooms will not be open to the public (Conference guidelines); (5) parking will have a different flow from what you might be used to, so be cautious and patient with others when driving at the church; (6) bring some water with you to be prepared for the normal summer heat; (7) dress comfortably for the summer heat; (8) don't come if you don't feel good—we love you and understand, so protect yourself and others and watch the livestream.

The services will be in both English and Spanish, as a way of welcoming neighbors to join us. Please be in prayer for what God has in store for us and for our neighborhood as we worship together.

Bible Study and other Online Classes

We have finished our ZOOM discussion group on the book of Ephesians. We will restart with a whole menu of classes beginning the week after Labor Day. Pay attention to announcements.

Please Keep These People in Your Prayers

Serét Dinkler

Pam Betts

Dan Dumas

Deanna Long

The family of Ray Saito

Ann Dinkler (family member losses)

Flo Sowell (death of her sister, Lillian Pilkington)

Ed & Diane Bolster (death of niece and sister)

JoAnne Gunter's god-daughter, Jeanelle

Steve Kinzler (friend of Jonathan's, diagnosed with Covid-19)

Teachers, staff, parents, and students going back to school