

# The Messenger

## May 2020

### **SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES IN MAY** **WORSHIP SERVICES & BULLETINS**

Even though we may not be able to worship in person during this difficult time, Pastor Lou is still holding a worship service via Facebook. His services are available to be viewed through the **EMMANUEL UCC** facebook page. Also Worship bulletins are being uploaded for each Sunday via Facebook in the **Emmanuel UCC Worship Bulletins** group.

### **SUNDAY, MAY 24** **MEMORIAL SERVICE**

**THIS IS A TENTATIVE PLAN, DEPENDING ON THE GOVERNOR'S REGULATIONS OF SOFT OPENING AND SOCIAL DISTANCING.**

A joint memorial service conducted by the American Legion Posts and VFW will be held in our Cemetery to honor our veterans and loved ones. It will take place at approximately 12:00 pm after our Worship Service. Please plan to stay after Worship and pay your respects to our fallen heroes.



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## From the Pastor's Desk

Recently into our vocabulary was introduced the words Corona Virus or COVID 19. With the advent of this virus we have seen churches across the world doing church a bit differently. We have experienced our young people not able to go to school. Our favorite restaurants offer take-out-only service. Shopping malls, hair salons, barbers, day cares, etc. remained closed to the public. Thankfully, the opportunity to buy groceries and other sundries remain operative, with the provision being you wear a protective mask. And let us not forget the medical and law enforcement officials who continue to keep us healthy and safe. This all may seem as a bad dream or (to me), an episode of the Twilight Zone, but the threat is real. People are ill and sometimes dying from this dread epidemic.

I have taken notice though to the people in every corner of the world caring for themselves and each other. We have the realization that we are all much more connected than we thought. Are concern has been and remains with those out of work due to this virus as well as the vulnerable population. We continue to encourage each other, trying to find interesting things for our children or grandchildren to do and remain as physically active as possible as we remain sequestered indoors.

One thing that has not changed is our chance to worship, albeit differently. I do enjoy televising the Sunday service although it's not the same without you physically being there. Yet we still can hear the appointed readings for the particular week and hear what I hope is an inspired and uplifting message.

I would like to share a Biblical message with you: "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9).

Now, let me expound on what you have read:

Joshua was the new leader of the Israelites. Moses, his mentor, was now dead, and Joshua was appointed to lead in Moses' place. Well, no one could replace Moses or "fill his shoes" — so to speak. Joshua was a bit unsure how things were going to go from this point forward for the Israelites. In the midst of this uncertainty, God spoke to Joshua. As God spoke to Joshua then, I believe God also wants to speak to us now.

"Have I not commanded you?" — God had put Joshua in his leadership position and God was leading him and would lead him. Before the coronavirus outbreak, wasn't God leading us and directing us? Well, guess what? God still is leading us and guiding us — that has not changed one bit!

"Be strong and courageous." — In his uncertainty of his leadership and the overall future of the Israelite people, God encouraged Joshua to be strong and courageous. We, at this time, are facing what could be an uncertain future. Our present times certainly are uncertain: doing whatever we can to help contain a virus that has spread across the world — school closures for a time; discouraged meetings with a people count of over 10, etc. Yet, in the midst of this uncertain future, God encourages us to be strong and courageous and with His help, we can do just that!

"Do not be frightened" — God knew that this was a normal response to Joshua's situation, but God encouraged an opposite response. Instead of being frightened, God instructed Joshua to be strong and courageous. As the leader of the Israelites, they needed to see a different response from him than the norm — being frightened. It is normal, in the midst of this coronavirus, to be frightened, but God encourages us to respond differently — to be strong and courageous. The people of the world need to see Christ's followers not shuddering in fright, but resting in God with His strength and courage.

"and do not be dismayed" — This is another normal response, but being dismayed over a long period of time can lead to deep depression, which leads to a whole host of other physical and emotional concerns. So, again God encourages the opposite response—instead of being

dismayed and losing hope, be strong and courageous. We can battle dismay with God's strength and courage!

"for the Lord your God" — Here is the reason why God encourages these opposite-to-normal responses—He is our Lord — master, boss, the one calling the shots — and He is our God — we are trusting in Him, not ourselves. I want to encourage you, during these uncertain times, if you are not yet trusting in God as your Lord, now is the time to make that change in your life. God will help you and bring the strength and courage that you need during this time.

"for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." — Here is further reasoning for our strength and courage: God is with us wherever we go. Where are we going right now? We don't necessarily know, with all of what I going on with the spread of the coronavirus. What we do know is that, no matter what happens, our God is with us — and guess that? That can be and should be enough for us to face this uncertain future with the strength and the courage that God commands.

So, how about it? Shall we face COVID-19 with JOSHUA 1:9? Shall we deal with fright and dismay with the strength and courage that God prescribes? Shall we face an uncertain future, knowing that God is with us no matter what? Yes, yes, and yes — we indeed shall! Amen!

Pray often and be safe! Pastor Lou



## UPCOMING DATES

**Spring Turkey Dinner - CANCELLED**  
**300 Club & Silent Auction - CANCELLED**

October 24    Fall Turkey Dinner

## COMMITTEE MEETING CONSISTORY

The next **Consistory** meeting will be on **Sunday, May 31st** following **10:30 worship service/counting**.

## KITCHEN COMMITTEE

The next **Kitchen committee** meeting will be on **Friday, June 10th**, at 9:00 am.

## Sunday School News

Sunday School, hope everyone is well and keeping busy. When we can safely return to church we will plan on some type of party since we could not have our Easter Egg hunt. We miss all of your smiling faces. We will be back together soon. Lisa Rinehimer

## Youth Group News

The youth group mission trip for this year has been cancelled.

**11<sup>th</sup> Annual 300 CLUB and  
SILENT AUCTION  
CANCELLED**