


LoveJoy United
Presbyterian Church


The Observer



*Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love.
The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.*

*When we are called to part, it gives us inward pain;
but we shall still be joined in heart, and hope to meet again.*

This hymn is said to have been written for a difficult goodbye in an 18th-century congregation in rural England. It has a painful honesty about it, one that is rare among the songs we sing these days. Being physically together as God's church in worship and fellowship is how we know to love and serve one another best. Yet in these last several months we have experienced the pain of not being able to hug someone grieving the death of a loved one. We have not been able to offer bereavement dinners that open hearts to healing and peace. We have not been able to celebrate in person together new graduates, babies born, birthdays, and new milestones accomplished. It does fill us with pain, with grief, with lament. How can it not?

But the hymn also expresses something that is every bit as real as the pain we experience from being apart: that there is a blessed tie that binds together our hearts even when we are apart. This tie is nothing less than our baptism, which has grafted us inextricably to the Body of Christ and to one another. None of our hearts break without all of our hearts breaking. When one of us experiences great joy, we carry up the whole community of faith in joy with us. In God's great, mysterious, and merciful ways, we still hold together while we are apart.

The hope to meet again, as the hymn puts it, is really the driver behind our faith. It is the hope to meet again that keeps the church looking out for Jesus' return. The hope to meet again is why we pray that God's kingdom will come on earth as it is in heaven. It is the hope to meet again that causes us to pray for our enemies and work to reconcile with those who are against us. And it is the hope to meet again that releases us from our fear of death and fear of separation from God and one another.

I believe it is that hope to meet again that gives us the energy and creativity to keep connected right now. It has been amazing to watch some of our most technology-phobic church members (you know who you are!) slowly learn how to get online and Zoom with us, adding yet another face to the computer screen during worship. Our Tech Deacons are helping us connect in better ways. Others of us are picking up our phones and dialing in on Sundays. Many of you are calling one another (and calling me, which I love!), keeping the tie that binds us strong and healthy.

And I pray that we all continue, letting the hope to meet again fuel our faith.

If you are feeling disconnected during this time – from God, from church family, from others – if you are losing that sense of ‘hope to meet again,’ I invite you to reach out to me, to a deacon, or another friend from church. Each connection we make - a card, a phone call, an email, a ‘like’ online, a socially distanced front porch conversation - is a place where hope is nourished.

Blest be the tie that binds!
Pastor Daniel

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Variable office hours Tuesday through Friday as schedule permits.

Technology: A Frustrating Gift that is Worth the Trouble (and why you should call a Tech Deacon) by Pastor Daniel.



I’m young enough to be pretty computer literate, but I’m still old enough to remember a time before computers were in the home. My first memory of a computer is not a positive one. Mrs. Hedrick, my kindergarten teacher, sat me down at the bulky computer in the corner of our classroom to show me a “fun game about spelling.” I should’ve known something was up. There’s no such thing as a “fun game about spelling.” I watched as Mrs. Hedrick pointed to the image of a cat on the screen and then the three big blanks below it. She told me to type “C-A-T” into the blanks. I was so frustrated by hunting down the one letter out dozens that I ended up playing this “game” by going row by row and punching every single key on the keyboard. The computer would honk at me until I found the right letter. I detest spelling to this day, but I’ve moved beyond the frustrations of technology to accept it as a gift.

When this pandemic hit, none of us knew how technology would become an integral part of our lives so fast. Some of you are ordering groceries online through an app to have them delivered right to your door. Others of you are checking in with your doctor over a video call from your kitchen table. We as a church have quickly transitioned to online worship, fellowship, education, and stewardship. What has been the slow creep of technology in our lives has all of a sudden become an essential tool for us. I can imagine that some of you feel ‘left behind’ in the way the world and the church are adapting to these changes so rapidly. While the world may seem to be charging ahead without you, please know that your church wants to walk with you through these changes: you are our family! You matter to us!

Through phones, tablets, and computers we are working our way into virtual fellowship with one another despite the pandemic. We can see one another, hear one another, laugh, cry, and we want to do all that we can to make it possible for you to join us. There will be frustrations! Technology is not perfect, and humans aren’t either. But our congregation has a group of patient and resourceful Tech Deacons who are willing to sit beside you as you learn how to call or “Zoom” into worship with us. We can push past the frustration together, and by God’s grace, we can find the gift of community even amid this challenging time.

True to our Past, LoveJoy United holds Courageous Conversations on Race and Justice



Going back to the early history of the Riverbend community, Presbyterians have rarely shied away from difficult conversations on the social issues of the day. The first meeting of the Illinois Anti-Slavery Society in 1837 was held at the Upper Alton Presbyterian Church, which later became College Avenue, and ultimately LoveJoy United. These conversations were doubtlessly difficult given the contentious state of the nation right before the Civil War. But faithful and courageous Christians insisted they could not be silent in the face of the social evil of slavery.

Fast-forward to May 2020: George Floyd, a Black Minneapolis man, dies as a police officer kneels on his neck for nearly nine minutes. The killing is the latest in a long litany of unjust killings of Black people, yet this time feels different. Perhaps it feels different because the killing was caught entirely on film and shared online, giving us more immediate insight into the violence regularly faced by African Americans. Perhaps it feels different because pandemic stress and tension has found a worthy channel for expression. Perhaps it is simply the final straw that broke the old argument that racism is merely a problem of the past.

Individuals, businesses, educational institutions, non-profits, and churches around the country are summoning the courage to look at themselves critically to examine their own participation in racism, past and present. LoveJoy United, along with many other congregations in the Presbytery, is doing the same.

Seeking to wrest the same spirit as did our ancestors of faith, members of LoveJoy United have gathered twice digitally this Summer to hold Courageous Conversations on Race and Justice. Led by our congregation's new Adult Christian Education Committee (ACE), the conversations are a setting for faithful people of good intentions to grow and learn how to confront the reality of racism within ourselves, our community, and our country.

The first session, held Wednesday, July 1 began with a video featuring Sue Borrego, the former chancellor of the University of Michigan-Flint. Borrego, who is white, expressed the defensiveness she felt the first time she encountered the phrase 'white privilege,' and yet described that through listening to the experience of Black people, she was able to move into a new understanding of how racism works today, and how she has participated in it. Conversation participants were then invited to reflect on the video, and share expressions of racism they had seen in their lives. The second session, held Wednesday, July 22, focused on questions around race and racism that were submitted by individuals in the congregations. Questions like, "how do I talk to someone who doesn't recognize their white privilege?" and "Why should we be held responsible for things our ancestors did?" were put to a panel of facilitators.

The event concluded with small group reflections. Upon returning to the larger group to discuss findings, one participant said their small group came to "no conclusion" on the subject, which is a good indication that the conversation is not over! More Courageous Conversations are in the works. The ACE Committee invites you to be a part of these holy conversations.

Resources to be in Touch during COVID-19

Worship Online and by Phone



While we miss gathering in-person for worship, worship by phone and online through most of March and April has brought its own blessings and graces. Members who are homebound and have been unable to worship with us for some time are now able to participate by phone and internet. Children of members who have moved far away have worshipped with us regularly. We have prayed together earnestly on Sunday mornings, Sunday evenings, and Wednesday's evenings through this crisis. We are learning each week how to

incorporate more people into leading worship, so that it is the work of all of us. Most importantly, worship online and by phone has provided much needed connection with one another and with God in a time of isolation and social distancing.

Because we do not know how long this pandemic will last, we plan on keeping online worship going as an option, even after in-person worship resumes. We hope that you will continue to connect with us!

Connect via Zoom: Zoom is a videoconferencing app and software that allows many people (hundreds!) to meet together, see one another, and talk using their smartphones and computers. Worship this way is more participatory than simply looking at a screen. Worshippers light candles, sing, read, wave and smile at one another, and share prayer concerns with the community.

The best way to connect to Zoom is to go to lovejoyupc.org/live and click "Connect Via Zoom" on the right side of the page. If you have a smartphone or tablet, you will need to download the Zoom App from your app store and go to the website above.

Connect via Phone: Zoom allows people on traditional phones and cell phones dial in to hear and participate in the service.

Dial +1 (669) 900-6833 and then at the prompt enter: 611 784 858#

Connect via Livestream: While Zoom or Phone are the preferred methods of connecting—because of the ability to participate—you may also simply watch the service (and many previous services) online. Simply go to lovejoyupc.org/live.

Worship Times

Sundays at 10:15 AM (with Sunday school via Zoom/phone at 9:15 AM)

Sundays at 7 PM Evening Prayer

Wednesdays at 7 PM Evening Prayer

MISSION & OUTREACH



Even in these crazy times, we still want to do mission and reach out to our community. People still need to feed their families and take care of immediate needs. We will continue to do food pantry and our Good Samaritan distributions as there are those who come regularly and depend on us being there. We will just change our method of operation.



Food Pantry: Food Pantry: Our food pantry continues on the 2nd and 4th Mondays each month from 9 'til 10 am. It's a drive-thru with food being brought out to those in need.



Good Samaritan Fund: Those who call the church needing assistance with a gas voucher, utility bill, etc. are asked to come at 2 pm on Mondays. Again, no person has access to the building.

We meet them at the door to determine their need and again, it's a curb service style of accommodating them when and to what extent they can. Usually at this point I suggest what food pantry items are needed to be brought on what Sunday. As we are now (and we do not know for how long), our Sunday morning worship is done online and/or by phone. Expenses continue, so it is our hope that you will continue to support the church financially. When you mail your check, please consider adding an amount for food pantry and/or the Good Samaritan fund, designating that on your check. Thank you for your concern for those less fortunate.

STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship Committee Update



Greetings from the Stewardship Committee. We would like to thank everyone who is continuing to pay your pledge. We understand if your current situation has you strapped and by paying your pledge this would cause you hardship. Please let us know if there is anything we can help you with.

One of the easiest ways to pay your pledge is to go online through our webpage: lovejoyupc.org/give. You can even mark the box and have it automatically come out of your account every month. That is what I do. Now I never forget to pay my pledge.

We also must not forget about our Per Capita. This helps support Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly. I just paid mine. It was super easy. Pull up the Giving tab on our webpage. If you already have an account, just log in and add another payment. If you do not have an account just fill in the boxes. Super easy. If you need assistance let me know or call the church and ask to be put in contact with a Tech Deacon.

God Bless All
Julie Spurgeon
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Youth Quest

Curriculum
2020 - 2021
(Subject to Change)

SEPTEMBER

- 13 Creation Phases *Genesis 1-2:4*
- 20 God's Promise to Abram *Genesis 15: 1-18*
- 27 Rebekah & Isaac *Genesis: 24: 25: 19-28*

OCTOBER

- 4 Baby Moses *Exodus 2: 1-10*
- 11 The Burning Bush *Exodus 3: 1-15*
- 18 The 10 Commandments *Exodus 20: 1-17*
- 25 **TRUNK OR TREAT? NO YQ**

NOVEMBER

- 1 Queen Esther *Esther 2*
- 8 Fiery Furnace *Daniel 3: 19-30*
- 22 Intro to Play with Christmas Story
- 29 **THANKSGIVING BREAK, NO YQ**

DECEMBER

- 6 Play Rehearsal & Connecting Activities
- 13 Play Rehearsal & Connecting Activities
- 20 **CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS**
- 27 **CHRISTMAS BREAK, NO YQ**

JANUARY

- 3 Escape to Egypt *Matthew 2: 13-23*
- 10 John the Baptist *Matthew 11, Mark 1, Luke 3, John 1*
- 17 Jesus is Tempted *Luke 4: 1-13*
- 24 Jesus Goes to Nazareth *Luke 4: 14-30*
- 31 A Storm *Matthew 8: 23-27*

FEBRUARY

- 7 **SUPER BOWL SUNDAY???, NO YQ**
- 14 The Centurion's Servant *Matthew 8: 5-13*
- 21 Walking on Water *Matthew 14: 22-23*
- 28 The Vineyard Workers *Matthew 20: 1-6*

MARCH

- 7 Jesus Heals Two Blind Men *Matthew 20: 29-34*
- 14 Early Believers *Acts 2: 43-47; 32-37*
- 21 Peter & Tabitha *Acts 9: 36-43*
- 28 Holy Week Stories

APRIL

- 4 **EASTER; EGG HUNT???, NO YQ**
- 11 Matthias the Apostle *Acts 1: 15-26*
- 18 The Armor of God *Ephesians 6: 11*
- 25 **YQ FINALE???, TBA**



Prayer Concerns

Please keep these people in your prayers and contact those you know to extend a message of support and love.



Prayer Concerns: JoAnn Moss, Scott Shelton's Mother, Carol, & his sister, Tina, Mary Trudell, Pat Fletcher, Cameron Gurley (6 year old boy with ongoing health issues), Bob Howe, Kate Trudell, Lexie Suerig (Debbie Suerig's daughter), Jim White, Rachel, Ralph Thompson, Kara Carmack, Terry Allen, Ron Franke, Judy Ballard, Alma Cooper, Judy Luck, Mike Harvey (Russ & Lois Thompson's son-in-law), Marian Twigg, Cheryl Strohbeck, Shelly Devore (Brenda & Debbie's niece), Pat Slayden, Jim Laux, Barbara Schultz, (Martha Schultz's mother-in-law), Sebastian Panyik, John Lindquist, Leroy Duncan, Herbert Peel, Darlene Kratz (Jean Day's niece), Terry Tiller (Leukemia), Glenna Donohoo, Katie Davis, Bill Myers, Jama McPeak, Atlas (Paula Blair's great grandson), Lynn Boston. Christian (friend of Humbert's who has liver cancer).

Food Pantry prayer list: Gary, Carolyn, Herbert, Cynthia, Stephanie, Marisa, Tonya

NURSING HOME RESIDENTS: Rosewood Care Center, Alton Betty Rain, Ron Franke, Highland Healthcare, Alma Cooper

RETIREMENT HOME RESIDENTS: Integrity Healthcare, Wood River – Herbert Peel, Evergreen Place, Alton – Shirley Martin, Villa Rose, Bethalto – Beth Forrester; Aspen Creek, Troy – Susanne Randall, Cedarhurst, Bethalto – Cliff & Mary Barnes, Shirley Burris.

Church Building Access



To maintain a safe working environment for church staff and essential ministry functions (food pantry, finance volunteers, etc.), we ask that members **not enter** the church building, even after office hours, even with your own key. If you do need access to the building, please contact the office or Pastor Daniel and relay your request so that our custodian can know what areas of the building have been utilized and when so they can be properly cleaned. Thanks for your cooperation as we seek to be safe and healthy during this time.

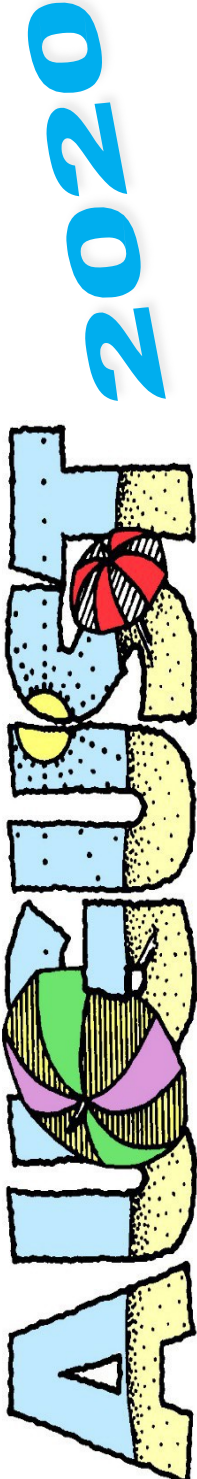











Birthdays of the Month



01 Don Clapsaddle
01 Hannah Klette
01 Joel Freeman
02 Klara Chapman
02 Mason Ballard
02 Derek Lankford
02 Maggie Dillinger
03 James Conn
03 Marilyn King
04 Eva Huff
05 Chrissy Bristow
06 Crystal Shelton
07 Sharon Jenkins
09 Delores Bloemker
09 Gaile George
09 Jeffrey Frankford
12 Jane Sullivan
13 Mary Barnes
14 Carol Foraker
14 Larry Strohbeck
14 Laurie Huebner
17 Sandy Blackford
18 Katie Davis
19 Maurice Musgrave
19 Colten Daily
19 Diana Thompson
19 Kori
20 Anthony Carmack
20 Erica Grigg
21 Shane Lindquist, Jr.
22 Aurora Joellen Hayes Groman
22 Cheryl Panyik
22 Russ Thompson
23 Robert Musgrave
24 Terry Allen
25 Jackson Russell
25 Garrett Jensen
26 Preston Todd
26 Kate Workman
28 Amy Maggart
29 Sandy Monroe
30 Brenda Greml
30 Jaynie Doerr



It starts with a white canvas.
With brush the painter paints a blue sky.
With a brush he paints fluffy clouds.
Up, up, up the mountain grows.
See the beautiful snow on the mountainside.
Down the water comes from the mountaintop to the
valley below.
The green trees watch as the river flows slowly.
The soft grass waves in the wind.
They are joined by the yellow daisies.
For here in Gods world all is peaceful.
The painter puts down his brush.
"God be praised."
Herbert J. Peel

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						
2 9:15am Online Adult Sunday School 10:15 am Online Worship	3 9:00 am Food Pantry 	4 11:00 Staff Meeting 	5 10:15am Bible Study 7:00pm Online Evening Prayer 	6 6:330pm Online Worship Committee Meeting 	7	8
9 9:15am Online Adult Sunday School 10:15 am Online Worship	10 9:00 am Food Pantry 	11 11:00 Staff Meeting	12 10:15am Bible Study 7:00pm Online Evening Prayer	13	14	15
16 9:15am Online Adult Sunday School 10:15 am Online Worship	17	18 11:00 Staff Meeting 	19 10:15am Bible Study 7:00pm Online Evening Prayer 	20	21 	22
23 9:15am Online Adult Sunday School 10:15am Online Worship	24 9:00am Food Pantry 	25 11:00 Staff Meeting	26 10:15am Bible Study 7:00pm Online Evening Prayer	27 6:30pm Session Meeting 	28	29
30 9:15am Online Adult Sunday School 10:15 am Online Worship	31					

September 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
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27	28	29	30			