



Faith United
Presbyterian
Church
in Farmers Branch

Words of Faith

August 2020

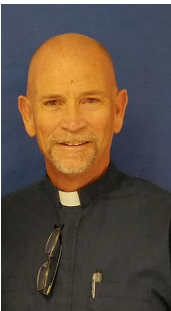
Volume X, Issue 8

*Glorify God, grow disciples, and
meet the needs of our neighbors.*

From the Pastor

Rev. Dr. Ken Ritchie

“The gospel of Jesus Christ reclaims our lost humanity from the grips of death and restores compassion in the hope of life.”



Crises reveal our idolatry of false gods. Think of the Israelites in the wilderness who created a golden calf. The current wilderness of pandemic and racial upheaval is no

exception. The gods of economy, self-sufficiency, independence, power, privilege, status quo, and other gods, are being revealed in all of their false illusions and impotencies. But, they do not let go easily. These gods are jealous gods. They demand our full allegiance. All false gods intone us to dehumanize others. This makes it easier to ignore or attack others, as we see often throughout our society. It also destroys and kills our souls.

False gods despise compassion as a sign of weakness. Yet, compassion is often mentioned as a primary motivator for Jesus. Jesus had compassion for the crowd (over 5000) that was soon fed by five loaves and two fish. There is not a lot of compassion in the wilderness, especially the wilderness through which we journey.

Every day, numbers are reported to us about COVID-19. We are told of the number diagnosed, the number hospitalized, the number who die. It is important for us to be fully informed. Yet, these numbers can be overwhelming to us. They can make us anxious and fearful. They can contribute to pandemic fatigue. Soon we can become numb to these numbers. When we are numb false gods prey. Numbness is an enemy of compassion.

Behind each number is a name, a human being made in image of God, like my friend Peter. In a few days, when the COVID-19 deaths are reported for Texas, Peter will be included in that number. Over 150,000 have died from COVID-19 in our country. Statistically, we are told, this is a low death rate. However, each number has a name. These children of God are mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, friends and co-workers. They are spouses and parents, family members and in-laws. They are workers who serve and customers who help the companies in our

retirement portfolio create wealth for us. They are our neighbors. They are fellow believers in Christ. They are people with varied beliefs. They are rich and poor, people of all colors of the human spectrum. They are powerful and not so powerful; they are famous and unknown. They are human beings, created in the image of God; each has a name.

The gospel of Jesus Christ reclaims our lost humanity from the grips of death and restores compassion in the hope of life. Our source of deliverance is from the Living God, who creates, saves and sustains, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each day when we hear the numbers, take time for compassion and prayer. Do not give in to numbness; each number has a name.

Hope to see you Sunday as we continue our wilderness journey with remote worship on Facebook and YouTube.

In Christ's Love,
Pastor Ken

Ken@FaithUnited-pc.com

VBS 2020: Deep Roots, New Leaves!

God is always doing a new thing! That timely message was the key focus of our Vacation Bible School this year thanks to the wonderful teams at Ferncliff Camp Center who designed and assembled 1,500 take-home boxes for children around the United States. Instead of the typical week-long VBS event at church, this year VBS came as a complete camp-in-a-box with daily scriptures, prayers, activities, and family challenges to be completed at home. Through generous donations and a scholarship from Grace Presbytery, we were able to bring this experience free of charge to 35 children connected to the congregations of Faith United and Iglesia Presbiteriana Emmanuel.

We began our journey on Sunday, July 19th, with a Virtual Welcome meeting to introduce the program and join in song and prayer. We saw several excited faces! On Monday, children began exploring God's new creation by reading Psalm 104 and getting up close to the dirt with their magnifying glasses. They picked out a spot in nature to examine through the week and began painting their week-long mural project. Tuesday, the story of the potter from Jeremiah 18:1-6 led the children to look for ways that God shapes us. Using clay and origami paper, they created new shapes and explored their creativity. Wednesday was all about new life with God and being a part of God's team. Children learned how to live life God's way by reading Ephesians 4:1, 22-32, and gave new life to a bandana with a tie-dye project! On Thursday, children heard in Isaiah 43:19-21 how God can make a new thing out of nothing, bringing water to the desert. Campers designed their God Spotter Sunglasses to hunt for the new things God is doing today and learned a few new tricks using knots, cards, and even sign language. To end the week, children learned that they are part of God's great work to make our communities new and heard the thankful prayer of Paul to his fellow ministers of the gospel in Philippians 1:3-6. Using the provided inflatable globe, children discovered places all over the world and prayed for those communities. All week long, campers sent pictures of their adventures to the VBS team to be presented in a slideshow at our Virtual Closing meeting on Friday, July 24th. The smiles and creativity say it all: God has certainly done a new thing with VBS this year!

Many thanks go to the Christian Education Committee and the Joint Church Life team from Faith United and Iglesia Presbiteriana Emmanuel for organizing and distributing the camp boxes and facilitating the online meetings for campers. As always, thank you to the congregation for your prayers and support!



Happy Birthday!

August 2

- * Terry Stottlemeyer

August 3

- * Tom Duell

August 6

- * Terrie Russell

August 7

- * Jessie Reyes
- * Judy Saunders

August 10

- * Tom Meurer
- * Chris Walker

August 11

- * Renee Wensley

August 12

- * Alan Swope

August 15

- * Helen Bowling

August 18

- * Kathryn Heffler

August 19

- * Betty Russ

August 21

- * Jennifer Tiemann

August 27

- * Gail Crumpler

August 29

- * Jeanne Haben

August 30

- * Grethel Creech
- * Nancy Smith



Next newsletter is September 2020.

Deadline for articles, Friday, August 21.

Contact church office or Brenda

Swindle via email to submit articles.



Rehab/At Home:

- ♥ Margaret Jones
- ♥ Marilyn Rose
- ♥ Jeanne Sawyer
- ♥ Freddie Simmons

Prayers for:

- ♥ Grethel Creech
- ♥ Dale Durcholz
- ♥ Kathie Heffler
- ♥ Roger Jones
- ♥ Sugie Maxfield
- ♥ Betty Runkel
- ♥ Barbara Stein
- ♥ Dennis Van Deventer

Weekly Bible Study class

Rich Lewis

Our adult Sunday School class, **Weekly Bible Study**, is currently being taught by video. Links to these videos are included in the weekly News Brief.

The August 2 lesson will be a review of our study of the books of the prophets. We will not have lessons for August 9 and 16. We will resume lessons on August 23 when we start a series on the letters of Paul. Expect updates and links to be on the website: www.FaithUnited-pc.com or the Faith United YouTube channel.



Outreach & Evangelism

Debbie Rainier

North Dallas Shared Ministries Each year August is the month we spotlight NDSM. They have come to depend on these donations from FUPC each year. In the past our collection table has been full of non-perishable food items. This year we will depend on your monetary gifts only. You can include this donation in your regular pledge. Please note how much is to go to NDSM in the memo section. Or give directly to NDSM by clicking the link (www.ndsm.org)

[North Dallas Shared Ministries](http://www.ndsm.org)





Summer @ Faith United FUPC Worshiping online

Sunday, 8/2 **Adult Sunday school class** at 9:30 a.m.
9th Sunday after Pentecost, Communion Worship at 11 a.m.

Sunday, 8/9 **Adult Sunday school class** at 9:30 a.m.; **10th Sunday after Pentecost**,
Worship at 11 a.m.; Stated Session meeting, via Zoom at 1 p.m.

Sunday, 8/16 **Adult Sunday school class** at 9:30 a.m.; **11th Sunday after Pentecost**, Worship at 11 a.m.

Sunday, 8/23 **Adult Sunday school class** at 9:30 a.m.; **12th Sunday after Pentecost**, Worship at 11 a.m.

Sunday, 8/30 **Adult Sunday school class** at 9:30 a.m.; **13th Sunday after Pentecost**, Worship at 11 a.m.

All worship services and classes available via Facebook Live or on Faith United's YouTube channel.
Worship resources available at www.FaithUnited-pc.com

Online Worship Continues

You will find Worship Guides and resources on our website:

www.FaithUnited-pc.com



You will see the logos (right) on the website and can choose which method you would like to worship with. The Faith United Facebook page is the only "Live" option. The YouTube channel will be updated as soon as possible after the worship or class event.



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