



Black Lives Matter

I have been thinking a lot about race and the mark that it has made in this country. I've also been thinking about this phrase Black Lives Matter. This little phrase has been used by individuals to cause harm as well as try to bring about justice. So what is it about this phrase that is so controversial?

As Christians we believe that all life is important. We are called to love our neighbor and we weep when there is any loss of life. But what if for centuries your life didn't really mean what someone else's life meant. What if because of something that you could not change, your life was looked on as being less than?

What if because of who you are, you were forced to live in neighborhoods that were less safe than other neighborhoods? What if you were asked to go to schools that didn't have the same materials and equipment as other schools in your town. What if you were asked to present additional qualifications at job interviews because of something that you had absolutely no control over. And what if you were treated differently because of that difference. What if because of your difference you were stopped by police more often. Or followed by store personnel when you go into certain stores? What if life for you was never quite up to the standard that it was for everyone else in the place that you live?

Black lives matter because individuals who are black and brown are not given the same opportunities in the country as white individuals. They are not treated the same. They are thought of as being less than by many. Or they are thought of as different. And different doesn't get the equal treatment. When we have different we make accommodations. We tolerate those individuals we don't accept them or treat them as equal.

For many the very phrase suggests that blacks are asking for different treatment. People want to say that they don't see color and don't understand what the problem is. The reason that you are not able to see the problem is because you are not in a position to be treated differently because of who you are.

As a black individual, I have had the opportunity to go to college, to live in nice homes, to be able to be who God has called me to be. But the one thing that is always present is that I am black. I cannot change that about myself. And when you see me whatever preconceived ideas you have about that always comes to your mind, whether they are good or bad.

Black lives matter because those thoughts that come to mind determine how we treat one another. And unfortunately for people with black and brown bodies that means in the mind of many they are expendable. In the United States having black and brown skin means that you are not trustworthy until you prove otherwise. It means that you are not as pretty, not as intelligent, not as capable. You are just not. And those of us in this situation have grown weary of just not being enough in the eyes of one group of people.

The phrase black lives matter is our way of letting the world know that we are worthy. That we shouldn't have to prove ourselves more than white bodies do. It means that when you gun us down that we have mothers and fathers and family and friends that grieve our death just as much as you would grieve when someone you love was gunned down. We are saying that we no longer want to have houses and water filled with lead. We no longer want to be restricted where we live because the systems that are in place have fixed it so that we cannot get the needed money to purchase a house in whatever neighborhood we want. We no longer want our schools to be the ones that have the least equipment and materials and the teachers that are not as qualified as the ones in your schools. Black lives matter because we are made in the image of the same God that you worship every week. Black lives matter because ALL people have the right to walk down the street and know that they will not be singled out because of the color of their skin. Black lives matter because as long as any of us are not seen as the beloved children of God we cannot begin to bring about God's kin-dom.

Black lives matter because we as Christians must do all that we can to end racism in this world and as children of God this must be all of our prayers and tasks to bring about this change.

Grace and Peace - Jackie

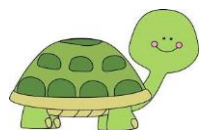


In Person Worship **Beginning September 6**

1. We will be requiring masks to be worn upon entering the building. We are asking that everyone wear a mask during the entire service. We will have masks available for those who may have inadvertently forgotten their masks. As members of the family of God we want to do all that we can to stop community spread and masks are one of the ways to do that.
2. We will be practicing social distancing. We have marked off pews that are not going to be used. We would ask that only families that live in the same household sit together. Please remember that we need to sit at least six feet apart. That could mean that larger families may need to sit on a bench without anyone on the other end. We will be assessing attendance and I will recommend adding services if attendance dictates that response.
3. We will not be passing offering plates, we will limit congregational responses and we will not have congregational singing. We will have music, but would ask that you sing in your heart rather than out loud.
4. We will be doing virtual passing of the peace. Those who would like to may use their smartphones and text or email members who are in the sanctuary with us or those who will be worshipping online. We will NOT however be passing the peace physically and would ask that you refrain from hugging, shaking hands or anything that would put you closer than six feet apart. Waving for now will be a welcome and encouraged gesture.
5. We will have hand sanitizer available at several places around the building.
6. We will be taking part in communion on the 6th. We will have a table set up with individual packaged communion elements. We will also be providing napkins. We are asking that each person who plans on taking part during the liturgy pick up a container of elements. When the time comes we will take the bread and the wine together. The pastor will lead us when to take the elements.
7. If you would rather continue to worship with us online you will be able to find us on either our YouTube or Facebook channels. If you are worshipping online September 6th, please have bread and juice or the items that you are going to use for communion so that you are able to participate with us virtually.

Church Office News

- **Office hours**
Mon. – Thurs.
9am – 3pm
(Closed 12-1 for lunch)
- **Face Mask Required**
- **All Pastor visits need appointments**



Leadership Council Meeting



Monday, September 14th

@ 6:30pm

In the Fellowship Hall



Adult Sunday School

To be announced

Children Sunday School

To be announced

L.I.F.F.T.

September
No Meeting

October
TBD

UMW Meeting

Monday, September 21

@ 6:30pm

In the Fellowship Hall

No Meal

Morning Devotionals

Beginning Friday, September 4th Pastor Jackie will be posting a brief morning devotional. These will include a short scripture, a song and a short devotional. We are hoping that these will be inspiring and help you better deal with all that is currently going on in our world.



We will be doing a screening of the Sunday morning worship services on Sunday afternoon at 5:00 PM beginning September 6th. This screening will be for those who are at high risk and do not feel comfortable attending regular Sunday morning worship due to the pandemic. We will be in the sanctuary. We will be wearing masks and social distancing. The church will open at 4:45 PM each Sunday afternoon. If you are interested in attending this service, please call the church office and let us know. This will be a time for the most vulnerable to attend worship. This will begin on September 6th at 5:00PM.

**Sunday
September 13
After Worship**



**Trunk-or-Treat
To be
Determined**

**Pumpkin Patch
Cancelled**



Last night I bought a sunflower to put on the windshield of someone I'm smitten with. After some consideration I decided not to since we had only been on one date, the night previous. Don't want to come off too strong, right? Anyway, I grabbed the flower on my way out this morning with the intention to give it to someone on my way to work so it didn't die alone. What happened next has left me changed in ways I don't even have words for yet.

While I was sitting and drinking my morning joe at the coffee shop (which I typically take to go), I saw a woman reading something with tears quietly and quickly sliding down her pale face. It was like there was a magnet in the sunflower that was being drawn to her, because I knew in that moment she was who I was going to give the sunflower to; she was who I had to give it to.

When I got to her table I said, "hey, pardon me. I have this sunflower that I was hoping to give to someone special and that someone I had in mind didn't work out, but I can feel that you're special too, so I want you to have it."

Before I could even hand her the sunflower, this complete stranger flew into my arms with tears flowing, and gratitude spewing, as if I was someone she once loved, and lost. It's what she said next that I'm still trying to grip.

She was crying because her fiancé had died the week before, just months before they were going to get married. On their first date he brought her a sunflower and from then on, got her sunflowers, never roses, because she was the light of his life.

Today, through me, he was able to show her that she'll always be the light of his life and how we as humans have a message to carry that goes far beyond words.

I'm shaken, awoken and feeling raw. You never know how much a simple gesture of giving someone a \$5 flower will change their life, as well as yours. Life is about giving and being of service to others. I challenge you all to find a way to make someone else's life just a little bit brighter today and be of service. You never know the impact you could have.

I dare you do the same and give a sunflower to someone you don't know. Be a part of the good.

September Birthdays

Macie Haferkamp	1 st
Nicolas C. Price	5 th
Sandra Carnes	7 th
Billie Wagner	10 th
Scarlett Moeller	11 th
Bob Wood	12 th
Lisa Langton	17 th
Monica Daigle	18 th
Jairus Eldridge	20 th
Bobby Barth	27 th

September Worship Volunteer

Schedule

Date	Liturgist	Ushers	Children's Sermon
9-6-2020	Bob Wood	Tom & Emily Cheatham	Sarah Ritchea
9-13-2020	Bobby Jones	Mildred & Stayton Weldon	Colette Barth
9-20-2020	Colette Barth	Sean and Sheldon Wolf	Pastor Jackie
9-27-2020	Shirley Simpson	Dorothy Brown Jeanine Calliham	Charlotte Wolf

**C.A.M.A.L. House
September
Collection:
Canned Meat**



*First United Methodist Church
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