

# Easter's Not Cancelled...

# & Neither is Christian Living!

Happy Easter, Beloved Church Family,

While we won't get to celebrate Easter the way we normally do, Easter has not been cancelled. We who trust in Christ choose faith over fear. We choose hope over despair. Let us claim the joy of the Lord, rather than dwell with a spirit of heaviness. May God help us to spread the message of HOPE that the resurrection of Jesus Christ gives us with a "spiritual contagion" more effective at spreading the Gospel than even the strongest virus.

We must be even more creative in these days to draw strength from each other and to find new ways to reach out to one another and others. The Amplified version of the Bible says in **Philippians 2:2**, "**Make my joy complete by being of the same mind, having the same love [toward one another], knit together in spirit, intent on one purpose [and living a life that reflects your faith and spreads the gospel-the good news regarding salvation through faith in Christ]**. While it is more fulfilling and Biblical to be with one another, this can still be accomplished with the required social distancing we are experiencing for safety.

Strengthening Christian living today includes learning to use online tools like ZOOM. It's a tool that helps us when we are apart to be "knit together" and to help us in "spreading the gospel". I am slower than most of you with technology, but these tools are becoming the way of the present and soon to be the way of the future. They are extremely necessary for Christians to be the most connected and effective during these times. I simply typed, "Learning the basics of zoom" into the search line of my computer and discovered that there is a wealth of information for us that is easy to access, with visual tutorials, etc. Friends will help you, and you can call or email any of the church staff to begin to get help.

I hope you are learning to use our website more effectively. Please go to [fantasticfirst.org](http://fantasticfirst.org) and start pushing buttons to see the growing opportunities we EASTER PEOPLE have to stay in touch. Again, after you explore and try, call one of us for help. I am usually one of the first to call others for help with technology. I have tried to never be ashamed to admit my weakness and ask for help. Also, read our Newsletter very carefully (see Page 3).

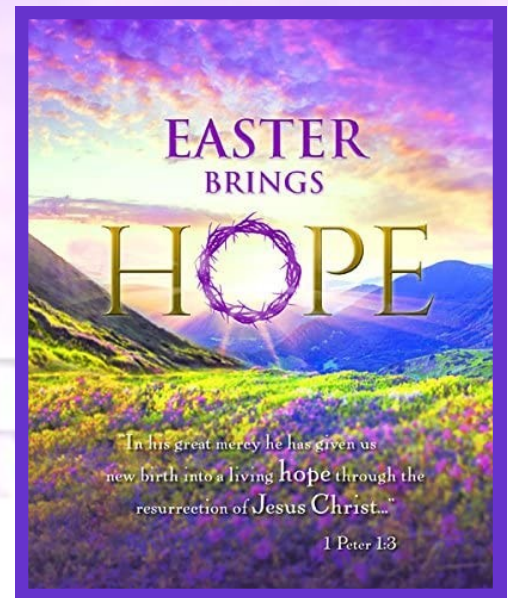
Please, for the sake of Christ, through the contagious power of the resurrection, I urge you to move forward in this. Let's all at least try. And for goodness sakes, let's at least call one another other. This Easter, we can all try to call non-church friends also, to love on them, and just wish them a happy Easter.

Funny, I was just at this point in this letter (typing in the room furthest from the sound) when I thought I heard someone at the parsonage carport door. By the time I got there, I saw a car driving off and found a bag with nice juicy tomatoes, with a beautiful scripture reference on the front. It put a HUGE SMILE on my face, and it reminded me that there are so many ways to reach out to others. How about dropping off an Easter basket filled with some things that might delight a "friend, relative, associate or neighbor". Maybe it will just take a bag of tomatoes to show the love of Christ in us and point to our risen Savior. We have used this F.R.A.N. plan in other ways in the past. (Remember to wash hands and items left or received.)

As always, you are loved,

*Pastor Rick*

P.S. These are extremely difficult times for everyone, and you must also know that our offerings have been less than 50% of our budgeted need. Please make your most generous Easter offering ever to First United Methodist Church of Lutz. Help us stay strong for enduring ministry, forever reaching, teaching, caring and sharing. (You won't want to miss the testimonies in this newsletter of your Cuba Team's mission trip (they begin on Page 2).







**See your team with some of our Sisters & Brothers in Cuba**

