



# JUNE



First United Methodist Church ~ 134 W. Pearl St. Goliad, TX 77963 ~ 361-645-254

Our June Communion Rail Offering supports Methodist churches in our district struggling to make ends meet.



Friends, we have experienced an unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic in recent months. One result of this pandemic was the recommendation of “social distancing of greater than 6 feet space between persons, and limiting gatherings to no more than 10 persons”. In order to “flatten the curve”, and save lives, many churches suspended worship services, and offered alternative worship experiences. For many churches, giving plummeted.

After speaking with many clergy, forecasts are that many churches will remain closed, with virtual worship or alternative worship, until the end of May – at least 12 Sundays closed – minimum. Although online worship seems to have some popularity in measuring the number of “views”. It has not translated into sustainable giving.

The district is looking to offer a love gift to 5-7 fruitful yet financially vulnerable congregations. I hope to offer \$500-\$1000 to each congregation. I invite churches in our district to pray for one another, and for those who are able, to collect a love offering for their sister churches in need.

I am simply looking to offer support and encouragement during these unprecedented times. The District Strategy Team Chair, district staff, and I will work to identify the most appropriate congregations. The psalmist writes "I have seen the Lord's doing, and it is wonderful!"

Blessing,  
Robert

Rev. Dr. Robert Lopez  
Coastal Bend and El Valle Superintendent  
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Rio Texas Conference  
United Methodist Church

From the Pastor

Wow. The last 3 months have been a whirlwind. I have been so impressed with the agility of the Church. In April, Bishop Schnase asked me to share with 300+ of my clergy colleagues what I've observed in the life of the Church during the pandemic. After I overcame the panic of "Why me, Lord?!" (ha!), I shared with them that I was impressed by the Church's flexibility. That's a word that I would have never used before this time to describe the Church. She has many gifts, but the ability to quickly adapt hasn't been one of them, right?!

However, in less than a week's time, churches all across the nation learned how to continue to be the Church beyond our buildings. At this critical moment, we seized the opportunity to reclaim our identity as the Body of Christ and it turns out that it had very little to do with our doors being open. Although our buildings were shut down, we continued to worship, we continued being generous, we creatively found ways to still be community for one another.

Now, we are in a different place. Restrictions are slowly lifting, and businesses are reopening. Coronavirus statistics in Goliad County are positive. So why, you might be asking, is our church waiting until July to resume in-person worship?

First and foremost, Jesus gave us our top priority: to love God, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. As such, our own "rights" take a backseat in order to look out for the needs of the most vulnerable - the orphan, the widow, the immigrant, the poor, the sick, and those on the margins. So, yes: our government officials have given us the green light to gather in person again. And yes: we have plenty in our congregation who are strong and healthy and who have very little risk when it comes to being exposed to the virus. But what is also true is that by gathering together, we open the possibility of unknowingly spreading the virus and being asymptomatic carriers out into the community.

The Church Council prayerfully considered the weight of this decision, and it became clear in our conversation that we didn't want to rush back and unintentionally do harm to our beloved community. A clergy colleague summarized this decision perfectly when she said, *"We will reopen, not when the government says we can, but when our theology says we should."*

Over this coming month, a task force will be meeting so we can meticulously plan and prepare for our return. Know that our worship practices will be different for some time as we navigate these uncharted waters. We will make decisions prayerfully, using guidance from health experts and government agencies, and will do our best to communicate our plans with you.

God will make a way!  
Pastor Missy



## *Future of Communion*

Many of you have expressed a longing to share in Holy Communion since we have abstained from the sacrament since we have not been able to gather together in person.

Some churches immediately jumped to sharing the bread and juice via their online gatherings, but I admit that I was hesitant. I needed time to work through my theological understanding of the sacrament. True to my personality, I kept going back and forth, weighing the pros and cons, and seeing the validity of each “side’s” arguments.

Now that it appears that it will be a while before we can safely share food and drink of any kind with large gatherings, I feel a sense of urgency needing to share in God’s grace together in a new way.

As such, I want to invite you to join me on Zoom after our normal Sunday School hour on June 7<sup>th</sup>. The lesson time starts at 9:30 and concludes around 10:30. If you do not want to participate in Sunday School, you can join us at 10:30 for us to participate in The Great Thanksgiving. You will bring your own elements - a slice of bread, a roll, or a cracker, and juice or water. As we gather virtually, God will be present to us and will pour out his grace upon us.

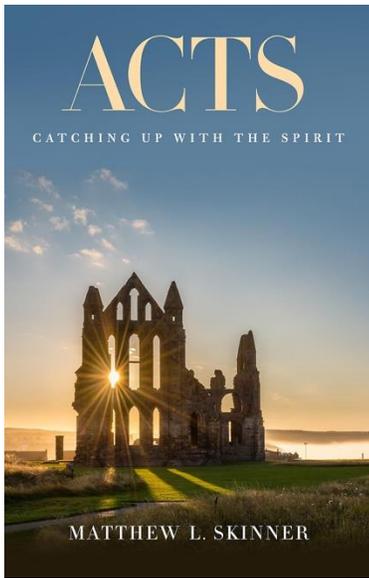
For those who have not participated in Zoom, know that you do not have to have internet, the app, or video capability. You can call in over the phone to listen in and participate that way. After dialing the number, you will be asked to enter a meeting code and then a password. Please call the Church Office or Pastor Missy for the information.

### **Church Office Re-Opening**

Our church office will resume normal hours beginning June 1. We are open Monday - Thursday from 9am-1pm. Please be considerate by practicing social distancing and wearing a mask if you’re able when you visit the campus.

*Pastor Missy will not be back in the office while her children are out of school for the summer. She’s happy to schedule appointments with you for in-person meetings, or visit by phone and email. Wendy does not have her schedule, so you will need to contact her directly:*

*[mjenson@riotx.org](mailto:mjenson@riotx.org) or 512.914.5519.*



**Six-Week Online Bible Study**  
**Tuesdays from 7-8pm**  
**June 2 - July 7**

Learn to experience God's faithfulness and guidance by joining the journey with Jesus' followers.

There is no better explanation for how to live out the Great Commission—following the instruction of the resurrected Jesus Christ to spread his teachings to all the nations of the world—than in the book of Acts. It is a unique and crucial book that chronicles the story of God's grace flooding out to the world through the lives of the apostles in the decades immediately following Christ's ascension into heaven. In *Acts: Catching Up with the Spirit*, author and biblical scholar Matthew Skinner explores six key themes that illustrate the ways in which reading Acts is capable of igniting our imagination about the character of the Christian gospel, the work of God's people (the church), and the challenges of living faithfully in a complex and changing world.

Join Pastor Missy through Zoom meetings on Tuesday evenings as we read this book to reflect on the disciples' experiences of living into Pentecost. You are welcome to order or download your own copy from your favorite book store.

***Please email Pastor Missy to sign up in order to receive the unique meeting link for this group***



## **From the Annual Conference: Postponement of the 2020 Rio Texas Annual Conference Session**

Given the ongoing risk of gathering in large numbers due to COVID-19, we have decided to postpone the 2020 session of the Rio Texas Annual Conference, scheduled for June 10-13 in Corpus Christi. Although some gatherings may be allowed legally by that time, we do not consider it wise or responsible to proceed with planning an event of the size and scope of our conference session. This decision was made by the Bishop and the Secretary of Annual Conference, in consultation with the Uniting Table, the Annual Conference Design Team, and the Cabinet.

This year's work of the Annual Conference will be accomplished by the following means:

- A virtual meeting of the clergy session will be held via Zoom at its currently scheduled time, 2:00-4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 10. The report normally shared at that meeting will be made available ahead of time for questions and editing. The online session will then move through the report, voting on matters of clergy status and recognizing clergy milestones.
- A one-day, in-person session of the Annual Conference has been scheduled for Saturday, October 3, in San Antonio. At this event, the conference will act on the 2021 budget, as well as celebrate retirements, memorials, and ordination.
- Annual Conference nominations that would normally be voted on in June will be handled at a later date. This is due to a provision in the Book of Discipline that requires many positions to be filled by Annual Conference election following the General Conference session. The 2020 General Conference session has been postponed to dates in 2021 that have not yet been announced. A plan for Annual Conference nominations will be developed once more information is available.

Other Annual Conference-related items to note:

- Clergy appointments will be effective July 1, 2020.
- The persons elected in 2019 as delegates to the 2020 General and Jurisdictional Conferences will serve at the postponed gatherings in 2021.





### 2020 Holy Days

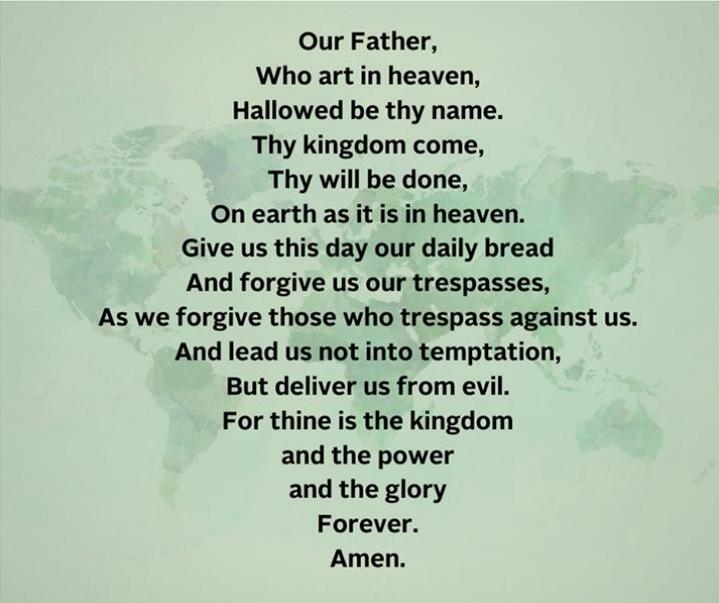
Jan 5: Epiphany  
Feb. 26: Ash Wednesday (Lent Begins)  
Apr. 5: Palm Sunday  
Apr. 9: Maundy Thursday  
Apr. 10: Good Friday  
Apr. 12: Easter Sunday  
May 31: Pentecost Sunday  
Oct. 4: World Communion Sunday  
Nov. 1: All Saints' Sunday  
Nov. 22: Christ the King Sunday  
Nov. 29: 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent  
Dec. 24: Christmas Eve

### 2020 Church Committee Chairpersons

Lay Leader: Hal Davis  
Church Council: Matt Bochat  
Finance: Lee Grimsinger  
Church Treasurer: Wendy Naranjo  
Pastor-Parish Relations: Erika Bochat  
Trustees: Mark Hancock  
Nurture Ministry: Robin Barnhill  
Outreach: Hal Davis  
Worship: Anna White & Cheryl Worley

### 2020 La Bahia Worship Dates

*Sundays at 3:00pm*  
September 6  
November 29

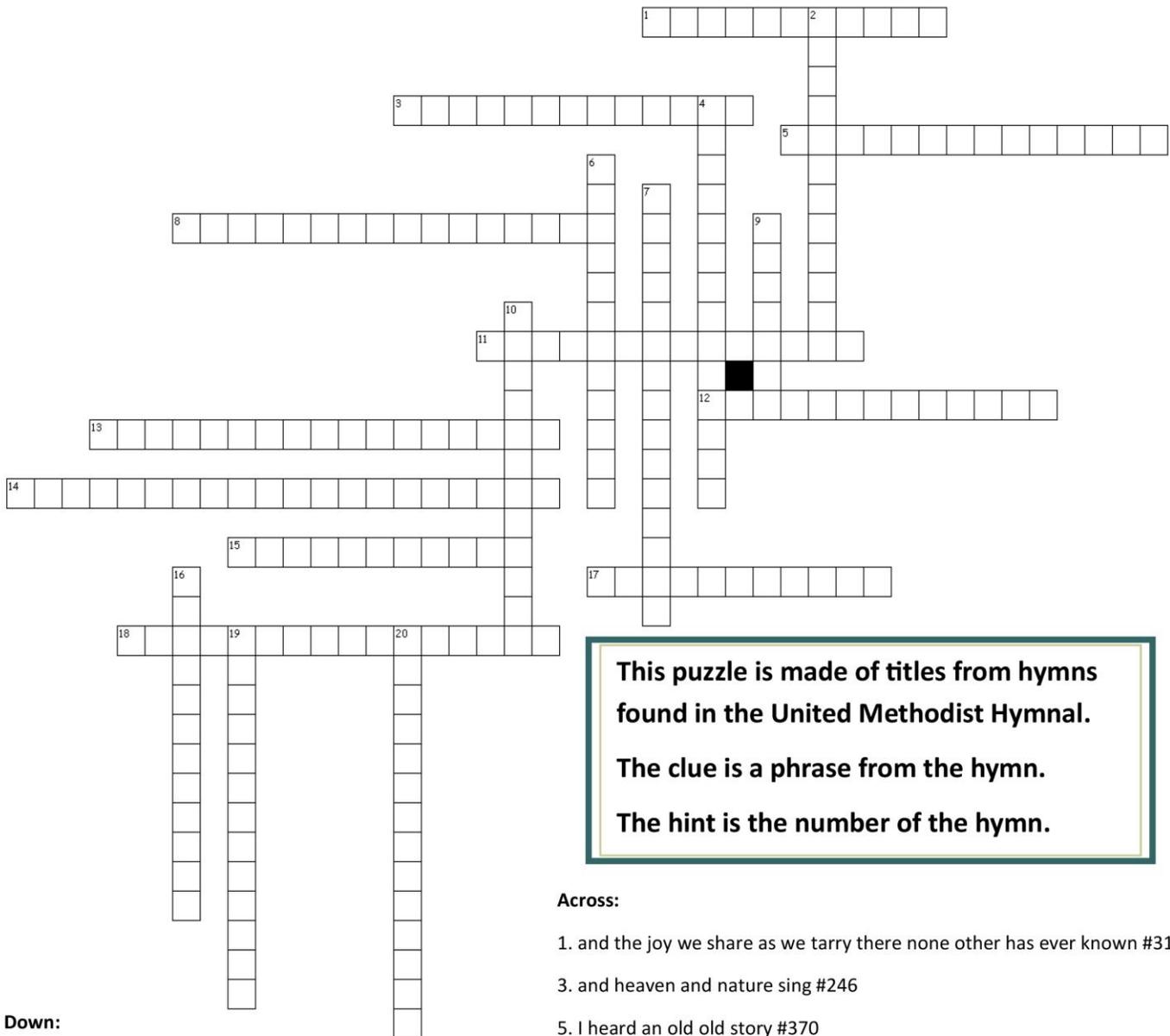


**Our Father,  
Who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done,  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom  
and the power  
and the glory  
Forever.  
Amen.**

### **May Online Worship Attendance**

May 3 – 76, Zoom Sunday School 22  
May 10 – 113, Zoom Sunday School 22  
May 17 – 111  
May 24 — 262, Zoom Sunday School 22  
May 31 — 68, Zoom Sunday School 19

# United Methodist Hymnal Crossword Puzzle



**This puzzle is made of titles from hymns found in the United Methodist Hymnal. The clue is a phrase from the hymn. The hint is the number of the hymn.**

**Down:**

- 2. How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me #378
- 4. and I'll lead you all wherever you may be #261
- 6. was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay #245
- 7. Then sings my soul my Savior God to thee #77
- 9. my country 'tis of thee #697
- 10. The Bible tells me so #191
- 16. sometimes it causes me to tremble #288
- 19. I will ever love and trust him in his presence daily live #354
- 20. waking or sleeping thy presence my light #451

**Across:**

- 1. and the joy we share as we tarry there none other has ever known #314
- 3. and heaven and nature sing #246
- 5. I heard an old old story #370
- 8. praising my savior all the day long #369
- 11. I can face tomorrow #364
- 12. the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay #217
- 13. and exchange it someday for a crown #504
- 14. coming for to carry me home #703
- 15. fast falls the eventide #700
- 17. I have heard you calling in the night #593
- 18. God's recreation of the new day #145

