



Faith Connections

United in Faith Helping
People In Need

Volume 3, Issue 4

April 2020

Our Mission: Serve this community † Revitalize the Church † Celebrate Christian Unity

The Message of Hope

Normally, I would be writing about the third part of our series in our “Faith Connections” newsletter. However, with the evolving changes that have been brought about by COVID-19, I want to share this Message of Hope. (Hebrews 10:32-39)

The first readers of the Book of Hebrews understood struggling. They were facing a great deal of persecution and uncertainty.

The message of hope is given to those who are suffering (Hebrews 10:32-39).

This message of hope was given to those who were suffering severe persecution. They were not only being physically harmed but were also having everything they owned taken from them -- all of this because they claimed to be Christians. Whatever you may be going through, remember that the only person you need to please is God.

God can use your suffering and uncertainty to minister to others. God can use your suffering and struggles to grow you stronger in Him. You must choose whether you are going to allow your struggles to hold you down or grow you stronger in Christ.

The message of hope is given to those who are suffering with others

(Hebrews 10:33-34). These Christians were suffering with one another. The rapid spread of COVID-19 has brought all of us as believers into commonality with each other. Look at what has transpired: 1) Our schools are closed, which means our children are at home. 2) Businesses are closed and their employees are either working from home or laid off. If they are laid off, this means a loss of income. If it is a single working parent, this is devastating. 3) We no longer can worship together. This means that we are no longer able to celebrate with each other.

No one is exempt from feeling the effects of this pandemic. And the news reports offer no glimmer of hope.

However, I want to close this message with the songs of a hymn that I learned to sing at an early age, and now clearly understand the full meaning of these words:

“My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness; I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus’ name.”

“On Christ the solid Rock, I stand – all other ground is sinking sand, all other ground is sinking sand.”

Be safe. Be blessed.

Mel

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April 3, 2020

Dear Churches United Supporter,

We're in the midst of challenging times. We long for our old normal and we are adjusting to a world changed forever by COVID-19. Though life seems to be in flux, the mission of Churches United of the Quad City Area remains the same – to serve this community, revitalize the Church, and to celebrate our Christian Unity. We faithfully continue this mission each day. We need your support.

Churches United has continued to serve our community, though how we serve has changed for the safety of our clients, volunteers, and employees. Please, read our update on page 3.

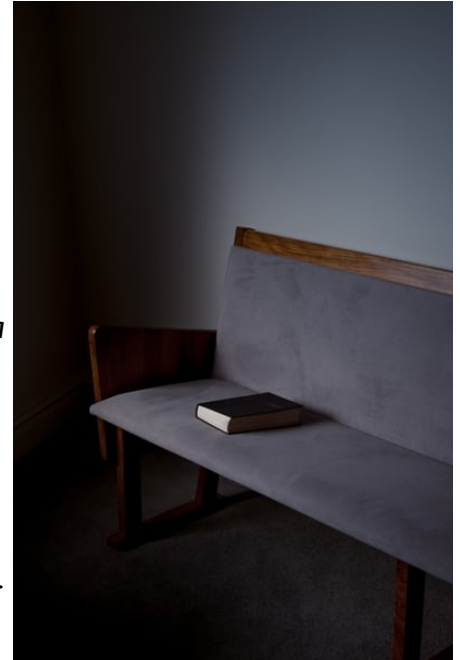
There are parts of our ministry that are on hold. Winnie's Wishes Resale Shop, a revenue source for our shelter, is closed temporarily. Each day that it is closed is a day we need to find other sources to sustain our shelter ministry.

We are also committed to revitalizing our Church and celebrating our Christian unity. It's difficult to feel united when we can't physically unite and be revitalized when each day can feel like a struggle to survive. Churches United will continue to bring churches together by using resources, like Facebook and in our Faith Connections newsletter. In November and January, Churches United hosted ecumenical worship services and we remain committed to hosting more services. When it is safe to gather again, it is our hope that the longing we feel now to join together will be the foundation for a new ecumenical movement throughout our community that will revitalize and unite the Church.

We need your help. Each day, the needs of the community grow and Churches United is responding. We know that you have been impacted by COVID-19. We're asking that if you can give, please do so by supporting our general operations, hunger, and shelter ministries.

Blessings,

Mel



COVID-19 VIRUS RESPONSE UPDATE APRIL 3, 2020

As the COVID-19 Pandemic continues to increase across this country and our community, we at Churches United want to share updates on what we are doing to assist during this time of uncertainty.

Thus far, Churches United is doing the following:

- Winnie's Wishes is closed until further notice.
- Winnie's Place our Domestic Violence Shelter for Women remains open and has room for any woman who is in an abusive situation.
- Closed both the Zion Lutheran and Mt. Zion meal sites.
- Our food pantries remain operational. Each pantry coordinator has the option of changing hour of operations, facilitating curb side pick-up, or shutting down the operation. To date four of our pantries have opted to close down. Those that remain open are following the directives handed down by the CDC along with the Scott and Rock Island Health Departments.
- Churches United Meets weekly with officials of the city of Bettendorf, church pastors, Genesis and Trinity Medical Center representatives, an representatives of the Bettendorf school district. The purpose of these meetings is to access and implement strategies to help our citizens cope with the spread of this COVID-19 virus.
- Meeting with the EMA (Emergency Management Agencies) task force that serves as the central communication and operation link between all social and faith-based agencies.
- Salvation Army has the coordination and oversight of feeding those impacted by the closing of the Zion Lutheran, Mt. Zion Baptist Church, and the Humility of Mary/Kings Harvest Shelters. Churches United assignment is to feed those individuals that have been relocated to the Bettendorf location. Special thanks to Ray and Jen Milem of Smokin Pyro BBQ for handling the evening meals in Bettendorf.



Thank you, Ray and Jen Milem of Smokin Pyro BBQ! You stepped up when we had to close our meal sites and you have adapted how you serve each time we've had to respond to changing conditions.

Thank you, Quad Cities Community Foundation! Your financial contribution helps us to continue our work in the community. We are grateful for your generosity.

Thank you, Asbury UMC LIFT Group for donating purses filled with hygiene and toiletry items. These were given out at our mealsite to women in need. Your kindness made a difference.

Thank you! Whether you are with a member church, supporter, volunteer, board member, employee, or associated with us in other ways, you have assisted in keeping our ministries going and you have helped us to continue to serve our community. We are blessed by you daily and you are in our prayers.



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United in Faith Helping People in Need



Give TODAY to Churches United

Online at www.cuqca.org + Call us at (563) 332-5002

Mail or drop off your gift
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THANK YOU!

Keep up-to-date and check out daily reflections by following us on



Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/ChurchesUnitedoftheQuadCityArea/>

and find out when we are able to reopen

Winnie's Wishes Resale Shop at

<https://www.facebook.com/WinniesWishesResaleShop/>



Support CUQCA by designating us as your charity and by purchasing items from our Wish List.

https://smile.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/19QO2R6L5908/ref=nav_wishlist_lists_4?_encoding=UTF8&type=wishlist

Bettendorf Ecumenical Food Pantry

"We are not affiliated with any church individually. We serve the community of Bettendorf as a whole so being affiliated with Churches United **gives us a community**. It gives us a **moral compass**. We are associated with the city in so far as we are located in a city building and the city has always been supportive of us but they don't try to guide us in anyway and Churches United has been... they're our **polestar**."

Barb Emerson – Pantry Coordinator

