

SERVING IN THE LOVE OF CHRIST

Week of May 10 - 16, 2020

Week of May 17 - 23, 2020

Minister on Call

Rev. Dr. Trey Gilliam, 398-7321

Deacons on Call

Penny Rose, 287-3531
Margaret Winn, 209-1495

Sound System—May 10

James Early

Sanctuary Flowers— May 10

The Bazemore children in memory of their mother, Iris Bazemore.

Food Pantry— May 15

Henry Byrd & Margaret Winn

Minister on Call

Rev. Anita Thompson, 395-0061

Deacons on Call

Carolyn Arrington, 395-2175
Buzzy Swain, 395-0255

Sound System—May 17

Henry Daniels

Sanctuary Flowers— May 17

Larry Freeman in memory of his mother, Edith Freeman.

Food Pantry— May 22

Vicky Overman

Worship Flowers

During this time of sheltering in place, we have given persons who have signed up to provide worship flowers the option of continuing in our usual practice, or using the lovely peace lily that one of our families provided. The choices have varied from Sunday to Sunday. At the appropriate time, please let the church office know of your preference. Thank you.

The FBC Ministers

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Anita Thompson, Associate Pastor • anita@fbcahoskie.org • 252-395-0061



The Window

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THE WINDOW

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A Concern

Recently one of our many faithful church members informed me that she wanted to give her stimulus money to the church. She asked me, “Would you prefer I give the money to the general operating budget or to the capital campaign fund?” Under normal circumstances, I likely would have advised this church member to give the money to the capital campaign fund. However, these are not normal circumstances. Therefore, I thanked her for her generosity and requested that she give the money to our church’s general operating budget.

One the one hand, there have been several pleasant surprises that remind us that God is always at work; even during a pandemic when we are unable to gather in the same place. Last Sunday, Isabella Woodard made a profession of faith in Jesus the Christ and joined our church fellowship. With the addition of Isabella, people have made professions of faith and/or joined our church four of the last five Sundays. In addition, I sense strongly that a sizable segment of our congregation misses gathered worship. I am thrilled with this. And I am hopeful that our congregation’s current thirst for gathered worship will continue long after we are able to meet in our sanctuary again. Indeed, sometimes you do not know how valuable something is until it is taken from you. Finally, I am grateful for all the expressions of appreciation showered on Anita and me as we seek to provide solid leadership during our current crisis.

On the other hand, I have one major concern that has lingered since our regular worship gatherings were suspended due to the pandemic. It is the financial health of our church during this time. The concern started as a wait and see item. Would our church’s revenue decrease due to our inability to

gather as one congregation? Our people are usually good about “making it up” when they miss a Sunday under regular circumstances. So, I was optimistic on this front. However, I also wondered: what impact will the coronavirus shutdowns have on our people? Will some of our people lose their jobs? Will their businesses be hurt? In the beginning, I could only speculate. Now, however, we have data to guide us. Our annual budget for 2020 is: \$474,774.42. This means we need to average \$9,130.28 each week to meet budget at the end of the year. There were four Sundays in April. Therefore, in order to meet budget, we needed \$36,521.12 in revenue. For April, we received \$28,974.47. Thus, for April 2020, we were \$7,546.65 below budget. I note that as it stands now we are more than \$25,000 behind budget for the year.

Fortunately, these numbers do not tell the whole story. Our total expenses for April are not available yet. We will have this number in a couple of weeks. However, I am confident that our expenses will be lower for April due to our church’s overall decreased activity. Furthermore, I commend our church leadership for the decision to delay hiring an office secretary. Now is a good time to be short staffed!

Nonetheless, even amid all the good that continues in the life of our church during these uncertain days, I am concerned about our current financial condition. And, as pastor, I need to make you aware of my concern.


Earlier this week, I looked back through church pictures we have on file. Before the pandemic struck I was fond of saying that FBC Ahoskie is a vibrant congregation. Remember, I describe us as vibrant and vulnerable. As I looked back through

the many pictures, I was struck afresh with our vibrancy. So much life. So many activities. So many beautiful faces of all ages. I had a moment of despair, looking back through all those pictures, where I feared that we might not return to that level of vibrancy. However, I have confidence that God is at work in the life of his church in such a way that we will resume worship and mission and broader church activities with even more enthusiasm than before and with higher levels of commitment. Time will tell.

I still do not know the degree to which the pandemic has impacted the financial condition of our church members and regular participants. I do not know the degree to which the pandemic has impacted the businesses represented in our congregation. Nonetheless, I do ask that each church member pay close attention to their financial support of our beloved congregation. And I ask each person, following the example of the faithful church member mentioned in the opening paragraph, to give more during this time if you are fortunate enough not to have been impacted significantly by this crisis.

We are a vibrant congregation. We are also a vulnerable congregation, especially now.

In Christ,
Trey



Worshiping Together
May 10, 2020
The Fifth Sunday of Easter

Therefore
1 Corinthians 15:50-58
Rev. Dr. Trey Gilliam

Welcome New Member

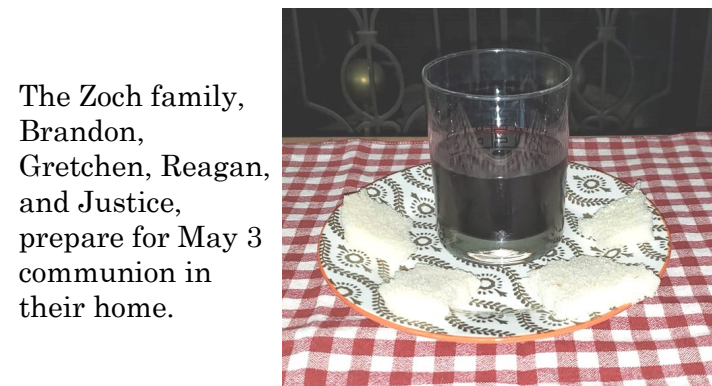
On Sunday, May 3, 2020 we welcomed into our church membership Isabella Woodard. She comes to us upon her profession of faith, and will be baptized when we are able to gather for worship again in our sanctuary. Isabella is the daughter of Andy & Natalie Woodard, and is a student at Hertford County Early College High School. We are thrilled that she has embraced the Christian faith as her own, and are delighted to welcome her as an official member of our church.

Tell Us Your Worship from Home Stories

We've heard so many beautiful stories, and have seen heartwarming pictures of the ways you're being church at home. We'd love to compile your stories and pictures and share them with the church family, so send them on!



Frank & Penny Rose prepare for communion and a picnic lunch on May 3.



The Zoch family, Brandon, Gretchen, Reagan, and Justice, prepare for May 3 communion in their home.

Donna Burden, mother of Jenny, shared this story: "Jenny and I have been watching church on Facebook. In church I always try to explain and have Jenny follow along in the hymnal. She never seems to understand which line you are singing from although she sings. Sunday I noticed she knew the words to every song! She knew more of it than I did. I was just amazed that when you think a special needs person isn't getting it - they really are!"

Wednesday Adult Bible Study

... is still happening each week. Tune in to our church Facebook page for live-streaming each Wednesday from 6 to 7 pm.

Transition Team

Our deacons have appointed a transition team who is studying the particulars of how we will gather once again in our church building when we are safely able to do so. Team members are Betty Joyner, Debbie Magette, and Andy Woodard.

From the Associate Pastor

Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long. —Psalm 25:4-5

Our comforting and forgiving God, for many weeks your church has not been able to worship together side by side in our beautiful sanctuary. We wonder when we will be able to do so again. We are worried. We are anxious. We are afraid. We are tired. And so, we claim the Psalmist's prayer as our own.

In the midst of this mess, make known to us *your* ways, O Lord. Teach us *your* path through this pandemic. For our way is paved with frustration and anger and despair. And our chosen path diverts us from where you desire to lead us. Forgive us, we pray, for our lack of faith. Forgive us, we pray, for our hopelessness. Forgive us, we pray, for our efforts to lay blame where it does not belong. Forgive us, we pray, and be mindful of your mercy, O LORD, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old.

We offer our prayer for others. We pray for peace for the families who have lost a loved one from this pandemic or during it. We pray for rest for the medical personnel who are exhausted from trying to battle this virus. We pray for the scientists who are studying this virus, learning its composition and characteristics so its spread throughout our world will end.

We pray for those whose work . . .

- keeps food on our tables,
- delivers our mail,
- keeps our heat and our air conditioning working,
- cleans our facilities,
- takes away our refuse,
- keeps our technology working.

We pray for teachers who have valiantly kept their classes engaged in virtual classrooms. We pray for students who are trying to finish their school year under circumstances they couldn't have imagined when they began. We pray for parents of students who are trying to do their job at home while also supervising their children's at-home education. We pray for graduating high school seniors who've been robbed of significant rites of passage . . . their spring break trip, their prom, their spring sports

competitions, and, possibly, their baccalaureate and graduation exercises.

We pray for your church who is being church in ways we've not been before. May we not just endure this pandemic, may we thrive within it. May we learn from these experiences lessons that will help us be a stronger, more vibrant disciple-making church when the pandemic ends.

And most of all, we pray that your children all over the world will know that your love was with us before this pandemic began, your love is with us now, and your love will be with us long after this pandemic ends. For the love you have shown us through your Son, Jesus Christ, is steadfast and constant and strong and good.

We pray in the name of Jesus Christ who embodies the greatest love. Amen.

Grace & peace,

Sunday School Materials



For the Sunday School classes who use materials published by Smyth & Helwys, your study guides and *Reflections* books are available in the church library. You're invited to come by the church and pick up your materials when you are able.

Stewardship Statement	
May 3, 2020	
Weekly Need	\$ 9,130.28
Weekly Offering	\$ 5,265.78
Difference	\$ -3,864.50
YTD Needs	\$ 164,345.04
YTD Offerings	\$ 136,164.57
YTD Difference	\$ -28,180.47
Benevolence Weekly Total	\$ 870.00
Capital Campaign Weekly Total	\$ 290.00

Thank You for your generous gifts!