



**Easton Place United Methodist Church**

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**December 2020**

**Cephas's Corner**

**Sunday school**  
For all ages  
Gathers at  
9:00 am

**Worship Service**  
Every Sunday 10:30 am

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**What are you Thinking?**

As you read this reflection what are you thinking? Asking questions or making self-reflection statements? Are you thinking on the gathering for in person worship or being the church where you are at? Are you thinking about Christians meaningful days like advent and Christmas or about Christ's liberation power and how you can be God's hands and feet? Are you thinking about COVID-19 and how it has taken away more than 260,000 fellow Americans? Are you thinking about those who claim Christianity but are refusing to wear masks even though wearing masks is showing compassion, which is center to the Christian faith?

Thus, I do at times reflect on these questions as well. One of my deep thoughts during this time in our country is Christians and their political mis-Christian ideology and their loyalty to a political institution. Imagine if those who claim to be progressive or conservative Christian had the passion to make disciples for Christ just as the passion they have for issues on abortion, marriage, religious freedom, churches would have had more growth than decline. This is happening because many American Christians do not know how they have created idols which continue to drive them away from the mean mission of the Church "your come-on earth as it is in heaven." Proclaiming God's liberation to a dying world and making disciples to join them in the mission.

I am thinking about how we Christians can be and live out Matthew 25:35-40 during this time in our country as millions are without food and a job...all because an American idol (political ideology) and the sad thing is when you ask them they will claim Christianity as their religion or faith. This brings me to the central theme of my reflection: Christianity vs. Culture Christianity. To simplify them both, Christianity/Christian those who came to the church and continue to experience regeneration or what we Methodist call sanctifying grace on the other hand culture Christianity/Christian, those who came to the church because it was a culture thing to do in America's religions history. Those remain in church because being part of a church added to their social status. I told my fellow clergy during one of our zoom meetings that one good thing about COVID-19 was it will kill and is killing culture Christianity. It was difficult to say, but it is a reality. I also told them they should not be surprised when their membership is half of its number when we enter post COVID-19 seasons.

It is also fair to argue that country club churches are in the high percentage of culture Christianity/Christian; and one of its fruits is entitlement and the sad thing about this is when their entitlement reduces, they reduce or stop giving to the work of God. And most people

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wonder where this came from? It comes from one of America's idols-political ideology. I was surprised when I first came to Iowa, I was a delegate to a political convention and to my surprise a political offering plate/basket started to go around and each political issue had an offering basket, a lot of money was raised and about 99% of the people in the room claim Christianity. It is also fair to say a majority of those people hardly tithe at their places of worship, at the same time do not give much when their entitlement is threatened by their pastor or minister or others. Again, what are you thinking about? Let me close with these words from the most educated apostle in the history of Christianity, "Let each of you look to your own interests, but to the interest of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus". Philippians 2:4-5 (NRSV)

Rev. J. Cephas Z. K. Davis. MDiv. MDR.  
Pastor

## The Mission of Easton Place UMC

To Make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Gather in a safe, nurturing Christ-centered way in worship, meetings, and small groups as we...Grow in relationship with Christ; and Go into the world, to share the love of Christ with others.

**As members of the Easton Place UMC,  
we vow to faithfully participate  
in its ministries**

### Asking Jesus into your life:

O God, without you, I am lost-a sinner in a sinful world. Jesus, I believe in you. I need you. Be my Lord and Savior? Receive me-your child. I ask for forgiveness. I ask for guidance. I accept you as my God, my Guide, my Help, and my Hope from this day forward into the very light of eternity. I lift this prayer in the power of Jesus' mighty name. Amen

God's Promise of Forgiveness-1 John 1:9  
God's Promise of Salvation-John 3:16  
God's Promise to You-Romans 8:15b-17a  
All you need to do-Romans 10:9

### EASTON PLACE WOMEN UNITED

December 2	1:00 pm	EPWU General
December 9	6:30 pm	Deborah Circle
December 10(?)	1 pm	Easton Service Group
December 11	1 pm	Esther Circle
December 16	1 pm	Mary Circle

### UNITED METHODIST MEN

December 12 (?) 8:00 am

Arlene Poole would like to  
thank everyone for their  
prayers and cards after the  
death of her Son-In-Law  
and Brother.

**Mission Report**

November was a busy month for the Missions group. On November 7<sup>th</sup>, we took 25 Health Kits and 30 School Kits to the Ingathering-thank you to all who helped with this.

On November 14<sup>th</sup>, we had our 1<sup>st</sup> Drive-Thru Pantry, we had 23 cars, 2 bicycles and 1 on foot, for a total of 26 bags given out. We also had an anonymous donation of bread from a local sandwich shop-thank you to all who helped with this. Our next drive-thru pantry will be December 12<sup>th</sup>.

On November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 4 turkeys and 4 \$25.00 gift cards were given out, plus turkeys to our renters. Thanks to Romona Moore and Bruce Tillotson for heading this up. God is Good! All the time!

In Christ's Love,  
The Mission Committee



**PRAY FOR**

**LOST A LOVED ONE:**

**Thomasson family**

**(Virginia Kimberling's grandson)**

**Taylor Webb**

**719 46<sup>th</sup> St**

**West Des Moines, IA 50265**

**HOSPITAL:**

**RECOVERING AT HOME:**

**NURSING HOME AND ASSISTED LIVING**

**RESIDENTS:** Nadine Layton (Brio, Johnston), Anna Mascaro (Mill Pond, Ankeny), George & Jenny Schultz (Afton IA, assisted living), Keith Mascaro (assisted living, group home in DSM)

**KEEP IN PRAYERS:** Ray Olson, Kim Cox, Dennis Bishop

**Keep in Prayer for Healing:**

(Remember to let the office or the Pastor know if you are in the hospital)

**To start prayer chain:**

**Call Romona Moore 515-262-9489**

**Trustee Notes**

The Trustee's Committee is looking for someone to plow the church parking lot this winter.

If anyone knows of someone who does this, please contact  
Mike Hoffman (515-979-2911)

*DRIVE-THRU  
FOOD PANTRY*

*SATURDAY  
DECEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup>*

*1:00-2:00 PM*

*\*\*Or until we run out of food\*\**

**Worship Committee Report**

November minutes not submitted

**Finance Report**

9/6/20 - \$1,908.69  
9/13/20-\$1,423.00  
9/20/20-\$2,116.00  
9/27/20-\$1,073.00  
Total \$6,520.69

10/4/20 - \$2,032.97  
10/11/20-\$1,785.00  
10/18/20-\$1,364.01  
10/25/20-\$1,677.00  
Total \$6,858.98

11/1/20 - \$2,869.23  
11/8/20-\$1,507.00  
11/15/20-\$ 725.00 (\$500 from house acct.)  
11/22/20-\$ 985.20  
11/29/20-\$2,024.70  
Total \$8,111.13

God is Good! What a time this has been the last few months, we know we are all wondering when will it be “normal” again? The people of Easton Place have been very faithful through all of this, and we are so very thankful for this. As we move forward with the rest of the year, lets continue to be faithful. As everyone knows, we will not be meeting for church until **after** January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Every year we light Christmas lights in the Sanctuary. Even though we will not be there, we are hoping to continue this tradition. So, when you send in your tithes and offerings, you can write down who the lights are for, in honor or in memory (\$10 a light, and when we get back to church, the lights will be lit, and the names will be printed. Let us keep this tradition alive!

In Christ's Love  
The Finance Committee

**Gifts -Tithes and Offerings Received**  
**November \$8,111.13**

**Presence:**  
**November 79 (met 2 Sundays only)**



**December**

Jeremy DeYoung	12/8
Marlys Cruchelow	12/10
Midge Tillotson	12/10
Mike Hoffman	12/11
Rhonda Gillaspy	12/13
Ryan Faux	12/18
Rick Langill	12/21
Christie Rus	12/30
Bob Bishop	12/31

**Lectionary Scriptures for December**  
**Personal Devotions and Study**

**December 6 Communion-**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent**

Isaiah 40:1-11  
Psalms 85:1-2, 8-13  
2 Peter 3:8-15a  
Mark 1:1-8

**December 13**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent**

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11  
Psalms 126  
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24  
John 1:6-8, 19-28

**December 20**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent**

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16  
Luke 1:47-55  
Romans 16:25-27  
Luke 1:26-38

**December 24**  
**Christmas Eve**

Isaiah 9:2-7  
Psalms 96  
Titus 2:11-14  
Luke 2:1-20

**December 25**  
**Christmas Day**

Isaiah 52:7-10  
Psalms 98  
Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12)  
John 1:1-14

**December 27**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Christmas Day**

Isaiah 61:10-62:3  
Psalms 148  
Galatians 4:4-7  
Luke 2:22-40

**December 31**  
**Watch Night**

Ecclesiastes 3:1-13  
Psalms 8  
Revelations 21:1-6a  
Matthew 25:31-46

**Worship Helpers for December 2020**

**December 6, 2020**

**Worship Leader:** Romona Moore  
**Liturgist:** Bruce Tillotson or Jeannie Staton  
**Sound:** Mike Hoffman/Dennis Bishop  
**Ushers:** Amanda Faux and Aaron Brinda  
**Offering Counters:** Mike Parsons  
Kay Dilks  
**Communion Stewards:** Mike Parsons

**December 13, 2020**

**Worship Leader:** Romona Moore  
**Liturgist:** Bruce Tillotson or Jeannie Staton  
**Sound:** Mike Hoffman/Dennis Bishop  
**Ushers:** Amanda Faux and Aaron Brinda  
**Offering Counters:** Mike Parsons  
Jeannie Staton

**December 20, 2020**

**Worship Leader:** Romona Moore  
**Liturgist:** Bruce Tillotson or Jeannie Staton  
**Sound:** Mike Hoffman/Dennis Bishop  
**Ushers:** Mary Jo Cook and Kathy Fedson  
**Offering Counters:** Mike Parsons  
Ellen McFadden

**December 27, 2020**

**Worship Leader:** Romona Moore  
**Liturgist:** Bruce Tillotson or Jeannie Staton  
**Sound:** Mike Hoffman/Dennis Bishop  
**Ushers:** Mary Jo Cook and Kathy Fedson  
**Offering Counters:** Mike Parsons  
Bryan Dilks

## **Circle Reports October**

### **EPWU General**

On November 4, 2020, the EPWU General meeting was held at 1:00pm with 7 members present and was opened by Romona with devotion and prayer.

Reminding us that our minds should be set on heaven; in this view we can be of service here on earth. Love God first and then others! Connie asked the question, "What is the difference in saying earth and not world?" Because Romona made the distinction of those two words-her reply, "the earth is God's creation, and the world is from the political/human standpoint."

The Treasurer's report was given and approved. Midge recommended that the budget for 2021 be approved and it passed. Janice stated that the parsonage dishwasher is not working properly so she has the measurements and will get some quotes for a new one (this dishwasher is quite old and has been repaired before). No secretary's minutes for October were available, but Diana stated that the Bees had it humming with awards and honey treats!

Circle reports were given. Janice recommended that as Deborah Circle is the only night circle that when they host general the time would either be 6:00pm or 6:30pm. We wanted this to be brought to Deborah Circle first before any further action.

There will not be any board meetings for November or December. Except that there will be a short Board meeting on December 6, 2020 after church service.

There will be a drive thru food pantry on November 14, 2020 from 1:00pm-2:00pm or until all the food has been distributed. Vendor sale is being planned for March 27, 2021 at the church and if the Women would like a table the price will be as before-two tables for the price of one.

Thanksgiving baskets will be filled on November 23, 2020 that includes a small turkey and gift card. The church will take 12 (twelve) names only for the baskets; please provide the names to Merry. This year the people named will have to come to the church to pick up their baskets as we do not have the means to deliver it.

On November 28, 2020 we are asking for volunteers to help in putting up the Crismon tree, the nativity set and the advent candles. Janice and Mike have volunteered to string the Christmas lights around the sanctuary. There will be no other decorations this year.

Diana (in an emergency situation) came up with the most delightful program based on Romans 8:28!

All the wonderful Ladies surprised Connie with a great and awesome "virtual" Birthday Party! We adjourned with laughter and joy in our hearts and smiles under our face masks!

Submitted by Connie

### **Easton Service Group**

As the hostess listed in our Circle books, Mary Christie Rus invited us to her home November 12, 2020 for Easton Service Groups meeting. Only business we accomplished was to vote \$15 mission money to the Thanksgiving baskets. Then we just enjoyed being spoiled with delicious food and gifts and love from Mary Christie and her wonderful family. Thanks Mary Christie!  
Diana A.

### **Esther Circle**

Esther Circle met Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> of November 2020 at Connie Bishops. It turned out to be an incredibly lucky and blessed day for the five members in attendance. We elected officers for next year and also prepared for December General, which we hope you will all be able

to attend. We voted money for Thanksgiving baskets and also a Christmas light in memory of Virginia Kimberling. The best part is always when Romona gets us thinking spiritually, the discussions always helps us to grow in our walk with the Lord. Our program ended with Romona leading us in singing "I Surrender All"! Connie then treated us with Lunchables, some of us had never even had one, so we thought it was a clever idea, tasted good too. We all got to meet Chunk, what a treat. Thanks Connie!  
Diana A.

### **Mary Circle**

On Wednesday, November 18, 2020 at 1:00 pm on a beautiful sunny afternoon, six members of Mary Circle met at Arlene Scharf's lovely home. We had a great time on her sun porch. We had our business meeting then Arlene had a great program. We talked about faith, then learned about Thanksgiving as a legal holiday. Arlene even gave us packets of Thanksgiving puzzles to take home and do. She also served us delicious lemon cake, drinks and goodie cups. It truly was a blessed afternoon.  
Diana A.

### **Deborah Circle**

November minutes not submitted

## Mark your Calendar December 2020

1. 9:30 am Women's Bible Study  
(Romona Moore's home)  
6:00 pm Education (?)  
7:00 pm Worship (?)
2. 1:00 pm EPWU-General  
(Romona Moore's home)
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
6. 11:00 am Worship Service  
**Facebook Live and Zoom**
7. 6:30 pm Bible Study  
(Romona Moore's home)
8. 9:30 am Women's Bible Study  
6:00 pm Trustee's
9. 6:30 pm Deborah Circle
10. 1:00 pm Easton Service Group (?)
11. 1:00 pm Esther Circle
12. 8:00 am UMM (?)  
1:00 pm-2:00 pm Drive-thru Food Pantry
- 13.
14. 6:30 pm Bible Study  
(Romona Moore's home)
15. 9:30 am Women's Bible Study  
(Romona Moore's home)  
6:00 pm SPRC
16. 1:00 pm Mary Circle
17. 4:30 pm Missions (?)
- 18.
- 19.
- 20.
21. 6:30 pm Bible Study  
(Romona Moore's home)
22. 9:30 am Women's Bible Study  
(Romona Moore's home)  
6:00 pm Finance  
6:45 pm Ad Council
23. 6:30 pm Bible Study  
(Romona Moore's home)
24. **CHRISTMAS EVE**
25. **MERRY CHRISTMAS**  
**Office Closed**
- 26.
- 27.
28. **Star Articles DUE!**  
6:30 pm Bible Study  
(Romona Moore's home)
29. 9:30 am Women's Bible Study  
(Romona Moore's home)
- 30.
- 31.