



Chapel Hill

United Methodist Church

January 11, 2021

Pastor's Message



Chapel Hill UMC
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I was working in the church office last Wednesday when the noon hour rolled around. As I continued to work, I turned on the congressional proceedings because this was not a normal year for a transition of power. As the first hours progressed, I watched in horror as I saw the events unfold before the nation's eyes. I was filled with deep sadness at the destruction, the terror, and the loss of life. Mostly, however, I was appalled at the presence of a cross being erected near a hangman's gallows and Christian flags and other symbols and messages among the crowds storming up the steps and into the United States Capitol.

I was appalled at the irony of the cross on the US Capitol lawn, a symbol and tool of the Roman empire used to threaten, intimidate and execute its opponents transformed by Jesus into a sign of hope revealing the death-dealing powers of this world will ultimately have no power. The gallows' presence on the capitol lawn was quite likely an allusion to the plot of the Turner Diaries, a white power novel which depicts a day when a mob storms the US Capitol, apprehends those they consider traitors, and hangs them publicly. The events of the day seem to have mutated the cross back into a tool of force to be used against one's enemies. Sadly, those who identify as Christians have committed this treason against the Reign of God far too often in the history of the Church.

Do not get me wrong. I do not believe every person in the mob supports white supremacist and white nationalist extremism. Nor do I believe every person there on Wednesday condoned the attack or is responsible for what happened. However, we would be naive to not acknowledge that Christians, historically, are at the very root of white supremacy and white nationalism as well as the use of such force. It is also clear in recent years extremism is growing based on propagandic lies which seek to dehumanize those who disagree or are in the "wrong" political party. And, yes, violence and rioting is to be condemned no matter the cause. However, the incitement of this attack came from the very top of the government and Christians justified and supported it.

Yet our hope remains in the cross, our most prominent symbol of faith. It is the finger that points us to God to show us what God is like. Recently, some have hosted Jericho marches suggesting their version of Christianity and politics must be instituted with force read in scripture as the Israelites take Jericho in the Promised Land.

Continued on the back...

Prayer List

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| CHUMC Home Bound | Amy Swanson |
| The Gee Family | The family of Brenda Smallwood |
| Jocelyn Barnard | Melissa Hatch's mother and sister |
| Jennie Leamons | Elda Brandt |
| Tom Sanders | Judy Charvat |
| Peggy Shoemaker | Sylvia McFalls |
| Jordan Hammett | Those affected by COVID-19: |
| Neal Ellis | Nurses and Doctors |
| Project Transformation After School | All patients in hospitals |
| Elina Bunker | Families who have lost people and cannot have funerals |
| Margaret Ellison's Family | First responders |
| Alex Kaplinsky | Medical personnel who are working |
| Kay Randall | Parents of students |
| Scott Bandy | Senior citizens in nursing homes |
| Jean Walters | Students and teachers taking classes online |
| Ruth, Neal, and Darren Ellis | Those who have lost jobs |
| Wayne Boshier | |
| Norman Duren | |

Pastor's Message Part 3

I pray today that our faith will no longer be associated with false conceptions of reality. I pray today that we see the hope of the cross which points us to God. Points us to truth. Points us to love. Points us to life.

Grace and peace,

Rev. J.D. Allen
Senior Pastor

Pastor's Message Part 2

However, the cross reminds us that the God incarnate in Jesus did not seize the power of the Roman cross. He suffered from its power and, through that suffering, defeated it.

There is no clearer way to know God than to see God revealed in Jesus, a far different vision than how God is depicted in Jericho. The coming of Jesus reinterpreted, by word and deed, everything humanity and creation thought they knew about God. Jesus embraced the meek, with whom he identified. He brought good news to the poor, oppressed, and the captive which kings and other wealthy and powerful people, and those who aligned with them, received by accepting that good news and having their blind eyes opened by the hope of Jubilee, the year of the Lord's favor. Jesus called his followers to love their enemies. That love led Christians, like Jesus, to refuse to take up the mantle of violence until Constantine lured them into the power offered by the Roman Empire.

Please Note:

The CHUMC Reopening Team has decided to continue worshipping online only for the time being. The church office will be closed for in-person visits during this time.

Tithes and offerings can be sent to the church address or directly to our treasurer, Jan Wooldridge, at 12930 Mitchwin Road, Farmers Branch, TX 75234.

Please send prayer requests to Alec and Adam at office@chapelhillumc.org. Please note that although the office is closed to in-person visits during the week, we can still be reached at the above email and by phone at (972) 241-3491.

In the case of a pastoral care emergency, please contact J.D. at (972) 467-7756.

BIRTHDAY REMINDER: Please let our church office know your birthdate, mm/dd/yyyy, so your church family can acknowledge your special day. **Your 'year' will remain private:** office@chapelhillumc.org



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|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Janie Fuller 1/10 | Judy Charvat 1/13 |
| Margarita Figueroa 1/15 | Glen Womble 1/15 |
| Archie Shivar 1/16 | Amy Swanson 1/18 |
| Janis Cogshall 1/22 | Alex Young 1/23 |
| Logan Stansell 1/28 | Barbara Tatum 1/29 |
| Sarah Bandy 1/30 | |

Join Us for Online Worship!

YouTube: bit.ly/CHUMCYouTube

Facebook: www.facebook.com/chapelhillumc