



November 2020

Reflections from the Pastor

St. John's United Methodist Church
The Messenger

Most Americans have grown tired of the daily death count of the Coronavirus Pandemic. What was frustrating to many in the early months was our lack of knowledge of the virus we were fighting.

Sadly, there is another statistic that needs to be called to our attention but has gotten little or no data. I refer to the deadly impact of being confined to our homes over a long period of time. My heart goes out to the elderly who have died during this shut-down. I am not just referring to those who died from the coronavirus, but for those who died without the love and attention of family and friends.

In March, the wife of my closest childhood friend died in a nursing home. The children only got a phone call of her death. One of the saddest experiences is to walk down through the “valley of the shadow of death” all alone. Less than two weeks before my father died, I stood beside his bed and asked, “Dad, are you afraid to die?” I asked that question, not as his son, but as a pastor.

His answer was revealing: “I’ve never walked down this path before, so, I have some apprehension.” Then he concluded, “But then I’ve walked down a lot of strange paths in my 93 years and the Lord was always with me!” While I would not be able to be with him when he crossed Jordan’s stormy banks, I knew He was not going across alone. Jesus was walking with Him.

Sadly, many Christians do not have that confidence of the presence of God in their lives. One of the great blessings of

Christian worship is fellowship. In the early chapters of Acts, the first Century Christians thrived amid persecution, ridicule, and threats of death on the strength of having each other.

When we began outdoor services the first of October, we discovered that what drew our people to attend was their desire for fellowship. I observed the lingering of people sitting in proper distance from each other, but con-



tinuing to share and listen to each other. I realized they came to see each other as much as they came to hear me preach.

It is not without reason that on the eve before his trial and crucifixion, Jesus was passionate to have a final supper with his closest friends, “...*I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.*” [Luke 22:1]. Jesus needed fellowship as He prepared to suffer. This meal has become one of the Church’s greatest means of grace. We call it Communion. Dare we neglect it as Christians? Do we not run a great spiritual risk by denying ourselves fellowship and communion?

Pastor Ivan L. Schwenn

“CHRIST IS THE ANSWER”

If one is southbound on I-75 and approaching Lima, Ohio, just as you approach a left hand curve your attention will be drawn to a large building in front of you with a huge cross and large letters, saying



“Christ is the Answer”.

That building is the corporate headquarters of U. S. Plastics Corporation.

Stanley Tam, the founder of U. S. Plastics was born just outside San Francisco, California in 1915. At the age of 9, his family moved to a farm near Lima, Ohio. Following high school, he started his business career selling Stanley Home products door-to-door. At one farm, the housewife invited him in and after making a purchase, asked Stanley if she could share her presentation with him. He agreed and she told him about her relationship with Jesus. Stanley Tam left that home under deep conviction that she had the kind of spiritual reality he wanted.

Some weeks later he accepted Christ as his Savior and began to study the Bible.

During the Depression, he learned that Eastman Kodak Company consumed twenty tons of silver each week to make photographic film emulsion. Most of this silver was simply washed away in the developing process. With the help of an inventor who developed a silver reclaiming device, Stanley Tam contracted with photo studios to reclaim the silver for a royalty.

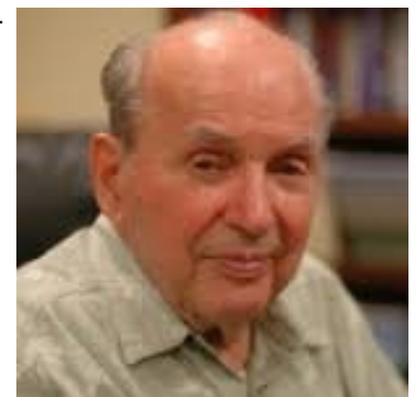
By 1936 Stanley found that he was hardly

breaking even and decided to call it quits. As he headed home to Lima, God spoke to him saying, “Stanley, it doesn’t need to be a disappointment. You do not have to go broke. All you need is to have faith in me. Do you have enough faith to turn your business over to me; to let me run it for you?”

At that moment, Stanley Tam agreed to give God his business and to honor God in every way possible.

For the next three years Stanley traveled through 30 states expanding his business and watching it grow. Finally, in 1940 he completed his agreement with God and founded the Stanita Foundation with God as 51% shareholder. The dividends from God’s 51% ownership were donated directly to Christian Missions

In 1955 he developed an electric collector for the silver and produced a plastic container to go with it. Customers began asking for additional plastic containers for their own purposes. They were also asking for other plastic items such as piping, tubing, fittings, and valves. Eventually the production of plastics produced more income than the silver reclamation project and United States Plastic Corporation was born.

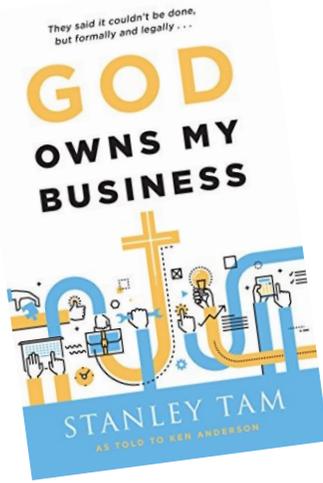


That same year Stanley traveled to Medellin, Columbia as a guest speaker to a large church there. On his way back home, God challenged Stanley to turn over his entire company to Him. To say the least, Stanley Tam was stunned. In obedience, he first talked it over with his wife, Juanita, who wholeheartedly supported the idea.

Together they signed over 100% of their company stock to the Stanita Foundation.

It is estimated that since that time, Stanita Foundation has generated more than \$140 million dollars that has gone directly to the work of the

Lord. More than \$100 million of it has gone to support missions world-wide.



If you wish to read more of the dynamic story of Stanley Tam you can get his book, "God Owns My Business" available through Amazon and other book companies.

As a student at Asbury University from 1964-1968, I sat next to a young lady named Prudence Tam and didn't

know until years later that Prudence was Stanley and Juanita's daughter.

Pastor Ivan L. Schwenn

ST. JOHN'S NEEDS YOU!!

The St. John's Food Panty is in need of all kinds of food products: cereal, rice, noodles, crackers, toiletry products, canned veggies and meat. Please consider picking up a few extra items to help restock the pantry shelves.

Also needed: Clothing for the Clothing Outreach Ministry which is now open on Friday mornings. As you go through your closets, keep St. John's in mind. Thanks!

WORSHIPING GOD

The Coronavirus Pandemic has had an impact upon all aspects of our lives, including the way we worship. For the first time in our nation's history, it was deemed necessary to close our economy, our businesses, our schools, and in-church worship.

St. John's UMC responded in the earliest days with Pastor Ivan Schwenn writing daily Bible meditations which Joe Riegert offered to disperse to all members of the congregation who had email addresses. This quickly has spread until more than

twice the number of members of our church are receiving the meditations in many different states.

Early in March, Mr. Ed Pluess contacted Pastor Schwenn about producing a weekly video message to share. This has been a great enhancement which is also being distributed widely.

As the summer came and we began to learn more about the virus, we began making proposals for limited in-church worship. This required going over our facilities to make changes necessary to prevent unnecessary contact and spread of the virus.



We purchased a fogging device that enables us to sanitize all our church facilities in a matter of minutes so the virus does not linger in the buildings.

In September, our proposal for in-church meetings on a limited basis was approved, but not implemented, as Pima County was experiencing another spike in COVID-19 cases. A second proposal to have outdoor services was approved and on World Communion Sunday (October 3rd) we held our first outdoor service with Communion. We had over 40 in attendance. We organized a portion of

our parking lot, where shade was available, with seating for 40+ persons.

There was no mistaking the fact that we missed seeing one another. While we did not encourage lingering, many did gather into socially distanced groups to share with each other following the services. The words of Hebrews 10:24-25, *“And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”* [NKJV].

What a joy to experience FELLOWSHIP along with COMMUNION.



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD 2020

It’s time to turn in your Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes! Please, we need the shoeboxes returned **no later than November 15th**. Pastor Ivan will bless and pray over them on that Sunday. We will be taking the filled shoeboxes to the Tucson collection site on November 16th.



We had a tremendous season. So many of you took advantage of adding “Operation Christmas Child” to your tithe.



Sunday, Nov 8th is the last day to donate for the “Build a Shoebox” online opportunity. So far, we have 45 shoeboxes to be ordered online on the 9th.

If everyone returns their shoeboxes, added to the number we have given to family and friends, we’ll have a total of 77 shoeboxes!

We will have a grand total by the end of November. Thank you so much for your generosity.

To God be the Glory!! God Bless each of you!

Bob & Mary Jo Gaines

A Little Christian Humor . . .



TWELVE DISCIPLES

B	O	A	T	F	I	S	H	E	R	M	E	N	E
T	I	P	E	S	E	L	P	I	C	S	I	D	W
T	E	A	C	H	I	T	E	O	M	G	D	T	M
I	N	S	T	E	W	T	T	I	I	N	E	H	S
P	S	E	T	F	O	M	O	J	M	I	E	P	I
T	G	L	P	R	L	A	P	O	U	H	L	R	M
H	J	Y	H	E	L	R	P	H	J	C	I	A	O
O	A	S	I	E	O	E	P	N	L	A	L	Y	N
M	M	T	L	A	F	T	P	I	L	E	A	E	E
A	E	E	I	A	D	E	E	I	M	R	G	R	I
S	S	T	P	T	B	P	E	E	R	P	O	A	P
A	J	A	N	D	R	E	W	H	T	N	E	T	S
E	L	F	T	C	M	E	E	S	A	D	U	J	E
O	H	S	W	E	H	T	T	A	M	L	I	L	P

Words can forward, backward, vertical or diagonal within the puzzle.

PRAYER
FOLLOW
NETS
PETER
TEACH
JAMES

PHILIP
BOAT
DISCIPLES
SIMON
GALILEE
JUDAS

THOMAS
JOHN
ANDREW
PREACHING
MATTHEW
FISHERMEN



November 2020 Birthdays

November Birthdays

November 4th	Jan Shoberg's Birthday
November 5th	Kirby Kegans' Birthday
November 5th	Norma Mendoza's Birthday
November 6th	Frank Mendoza's Birthday
November 9th	Deblen Sawyer's Birthday
November 14th	Charlotte Baker's Birthday
November 15th	Darlene Geurin's Birthday
November 25th	Margaret Aguilar's Birthday
November 27th	Doris Butler's Birthday



Sunday Morning Worship is now being held at 9:30 a.m.
in the church Sanctuary --

(a maximum of 50 people can be in attendance)

Please check the St. John's website, watch for e-mail notifications, or
call the church office for changes and/or additional information!

All other events and meetings remain suspended until further notice.

Please stay safe & continue to keep each other in your thoughts and prayers.

St. John's United Methodist Church
60 W. Veteran's Blvd. Tucson, AZ 85713-6128
Pastor Ivan Schwenn
pastorstjohnsumctuc@gmail.com
520-792-6398 E-mail: stjohsumctucz@gmail.com
Website: stjohsumctucson.org
Office Hours: 8:00 am to 4:00 pm (Monday and Friday)