

THE FORECAST

A Bi-Weekly Newsletter

MAY 14, 2020

Rayne Memorial United Methodist Church

3900 Saint Charles Ave New Orleans LA 70115 // 504.899.3431 // www.raynenola.org



PLEASE NOTE

The Rayne Community is moving online!

Worship will be live on Facebook at 10a on Sundays.

Our office staff is working remotely.

We will continue to communicate with you regularly through Newsletters, eNews, Facebook Posts, and updates to our website.

Please see the next page for frequently asked questions.

We are here for you.

ALL IN-PERSON WORSHIP AND ACTIVITIES ARE POSTPONED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

WHAT ARE WE AFRAID OF?

Does it ever make you afraid?

This question surfaced in our "chapel time" a few months back. One of our RECP children asked. Best I can remember, we were wrapping up a conversation about ministry, about "working with Jesus," as one of the very smart children called it. Does it ever make you afraid? She earnestly needed to know.

Hmm, ahhh, errr, I've never thought about it quite like that before, I hemmed and hawed. Afraid? How to unpack all the bags of my own pastoral theology and praxis. How to sum up the wonder of ministry, the enormity of a congregation's passions and gifts, the tremendous beauty of God's mercy and energy at Rayne, along with the truth of how fragile we all are and how a movement for Jesus always seems more glorious and gutsy than a mere museum in his name... Ever had a drink from a fire hose? Does it make me afraid?

Peter would say no. That's what I should have offered those brilliant little ones in that moment. "Remember the disciple, Peter? Peter would say 'Nope. Working with Jesus never makes me afraid.'" Of course, you're probably smirking like I am writing that sentence now. That Peter? The Peter who denied Jesus to the moon and back just to save his own hide? Okay, so I'll refrain from judgments just to say this: by the time Peter helps write his letter to Jewish followers of Jesus spread out amid the Turkish countryside, people who had every right to feel fear of persecution and oppression, maybe Peter has come to grips with his own failure marked by none other than fear... Reconciled relationship with Jesus means renewed backbone for Peter (why can't they transplant those?). Peter gets downright brazen when he says: "Don't fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated" (3:14).

I often hear that doubt is not the opposite of faith, fear is. I feel like that's true. Some of my most despairing and fruitless seasons in life have come when I've acted more out of fear than faith. Fear often factors in faith's fracture. So maybe the question I need to ask myself more often is: In whom am I really trusting? And who's trusting in me?

For the love of God,

Jay

LECTIONARY

A weekly set of Scripture readings.

May 17

Acts 17:22-31 • Psalm 66:8-20
1 Peter 3:13-22 • John 14:15-21

May 24

Acts 1:1-11 • Psalm 47
Ephesians 1:15-23 • Luke 24:44-53

WORSHIP

We worship online together on Facebook at **10a** on **Sundays**. To participate in worship, go to facebook.com/raynenola.org.

If you do not have a Facebook Account - never fear! Push "not now" or if on mobile - push the X in the top right - when it asks you to "sign in."

If you're on a computer and are having trouble finding the live video - try going to facebook.com/raynenola.org/live Sunday's Worship Service will be the top left video! Thanks for your patience and persistence in Worshiping with us.

SENIOR RECOGNITION

Please join us in worship online on **May 17th** as we recognize the hard work of our High School Seniors:

Tomaso DiRe
&
Christian Pannagl

We are very proud of you!
Congratulations to all of the class of 2020!

We will also have a special time of prayer and blessing for all students and teachers as this school year comes to a close.

SMALL GROUPS

If you are looking for connection from a distance, please see the list of classes, Bible studies, and spiritual education. If you are interested in participating, please email Shaun, shaun.darnall@raynenola.org to obtain the link. All are welcome and encouraged to take part in the Rayne community!

A **full** calendar is available on the next page!

NEW STUDY

Leaving Church: A Memoir of Faith

If ever we've needed a beautiful expression of faith, it's now. Please join this small group reflection on the work of Rev. Barbara Brown Taylor. Her memoir invites us simply to behold: to behold God's goodness, to behold Christ's love, to behold our shared image created by God. This 6 week study invites you to share life, faith, and hope - discussion based. No experience needed. Two offerings for small group gatherings - **Mondays @ Noon** and **Wednesdays @ 7:30a**. Starts June 1st. Gatherings are offered via Zoom (digital meeting).

RSVP Pastor Jay (jay@raynenola.org or 225-772-3550).

CHANGE OF TIME

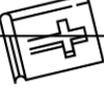
Marissa's Lectionary Study is moving from 9a to **2:15p on Tuesdays**. All of our Lectionary studies take a look at the scripture for the next sermon and use it as a guide for conversation! It's a unique chance to get deeper insight on the scripture and also help inform worship!

All are welcome at all studies! If this time works for you - we'd love to have you join us. RSVP to Marissa (318-564-4879 or marissa@raynenola.org).

RAYNE MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

SMALL GROUP SCHEDULE



MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<p> Leaving Church Book Study 8a with Jay</p>	<p> 20/30 Women's Study 6:30a with Jay</p>	<p> Men's Group 6:30a</p>	<p> United Methodist Men 9a</p>	<p> Pastor's Class 11a</p>
<p>TUESDAY</p> <p> Intercessory Prayer 1p</p> <p> Lectionary Study 2:15p with Marissa</p>	<p> Leaving Church Book Study 7:30a with Jay</p> <p> Methodism 201 6p</p>	<p> Lectionary Study 12p with Jay</p> <p> West Bank Bible Study 5:30p</p>	<p>We Welcome All! We warmly welcome all to participate freely in the life of this community of faith and love. Rayne welcomes and embraces all people regardless of race, class, gender, or sexual orientation with open hearts, open minds, and open doors!</p>	<p> Mom's Group 11a</p> <p> Wilderness Class 11a</p> <p> Kid's Time 1p</p> <p> Jr. High Youth 3:30p</p> <p> Sr. High Youth 5:00p</p>

All classes are offered via Zoom

FOOD PANTRY

Thank you, Rayne Family, for your continued support. Our pantry was fully stocked to open on Tuesday! It was a beautiful sight!

Continued Needs include:

Canned Vegetables
Hearty Soup
Single Canned Meals (like Ravioli)
2 lb Dried Red Beans
1 lb Peanut Butter
Canned Meat
Boxes of Cereal
Pasta/Side Dish

Please leave your donations in the vestibule of the Epiphany House, 3924 St. Charles Avenue, then call or text Jacob Nichols 225-588-0560 after you have left your donation.

If you are unable to bring a physical donation, please consider contributing monetarily to the Food Pantry by mail or online.

Donating by mail: note on your check "Food Pantry" and mail to 3900 Saint Charles Ave. New Orleans, LA 70115.

To donate online: go to www.raynenola.org/contribute.

MOTHER'S DAY CARDS

Once again, Thank you, Rayne!

Almost \$500 was raised for the food pantry through your generous giving of alternative Mother's Day cards. Your thoughtfulness and care of others is truly amazing!

Your gifts will provide our neighbors with much needed food. Thank you, Rayne family.

Be on the look out for our Father's Day Alternative Giving Cards - which will also support the Food Pantry - available for purchase in June.

SCHOOL FOR CONTEMPLATIVE LIVING

The SCL is continuing to offer classes and groups, spiritual direction, webinars, and more!

Go to WWW.THESCL.NET for more information and email William Thiele at william.thiele56@gmail.com for links or help connecting.

Two upcoming opportunities...

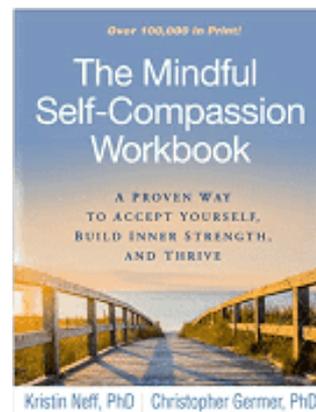
Beginning next week:

During the stress of the pandemic could you use a little self-compassion? Join us as we gather online to explore the three components of self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness through reading, exercises, and meditations from: *The Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook*. Begins **Wednesday, May 13, 11:30a-1p**. Email William Thiele for the class

Zoom link

at william.thiele56@gmail.com

Order your workbook now.



Beginning in June:

Compassion Cultivation Training (8 weeks of online classes). Registration is open now. Classes on **Wednesdays, 5:30-7:30p** or **Sundays 4-6p**. This experiential training will be led by William Thiele, with details on the website of the Compassion Institute at www.compassioninstitute.com. Suggested cost: \$350 (to the School, with partial scholarships available).

Send questions

to william.thiele56@gmail.com.

DEVOTIONAL

Cheerful Givers by Nancy Hopkins

“Everyone should give whatever they have decided in their heart. They shouldn’t give with hesitation or because of pressure. God loves a cheerful giver.”

2 Corinthians 9:6 CEB

When I learned the last sentence of this verse in a long-ago children’s Sunday school lesson or at VBS, it was easy to give cheerfully. The few coins that I added to the offering usually were given to me by my mother on Sunday morning. Even as I grew up, giving was easy. Later, as I married and we started a family, I came to appreciate the entire verse. Each one of us gives as we feel led as an expression or means of grace.

Paul commends the Corinthians for their generosity as they had collected and sent money to the church in Jerusalem. He points out in chapter 8 that it is easier to give when we give from plenty than when we give from scarcity. But all giving is a means of grace, a blessing. God’s love is not dependent on what we give; his love is unearned, grace. Our giving should be a happy undertaking, a blessing.

As the financial secretary at Rayne, serving on the stewardship and finance committees, I have been amazed and humbled by the generosity of our congregation. We have successful pledge campaigns year after year to support our budget and this time last year, we conducted a successful capital campaign. Our congregational support comes not only in the form of monetary gifts but in our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness.

The last two months have been truly unprecedented, unsettling and even scary. We are sheltering in place, working from home, holding school for our children, worrying about our extended families, and trying to find the supplies that we need. Businesses are closed, unemployment has increased, some families do not have enough food and people are dying. And we are not able to gather with our friends and family or even attend services in our beautiful sanctuary.

However, the number of cheerful givers that are at work is also unprecedented. We see reports of nurses, doctors, first responders, food service worker and other essential workers who labor under difficult conditions to care for those who are sick and enable us to have the food and necessities that we all need. Others have volunteered to provide food and supplies to those who are in need.

Within our Rayne are many cheerful givers. While many churches have seen levels of giving fall to community, there 25% or less of usual, our giving has continued at the level we had budgeted. Our food pantry has seen a large increase in those seeking assistance. Our community stepped up, donating almost a ton of food and over \$1000 to the food pantry. Truly, this is cheerful giving. I, along with the pastors and the rest of the staff, want to thank you for your grace of generosity. Giving during this time of uncertainty is truly cheerful giving. You are utterly amazing in your love and support of Rayne. I have been moved to tears by your generosity and your notes of encouragement. You are truly a blessing to each of us.

***The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord lift up his face to you and grant you peace. Amen.***

Love,
Nancy

PRAYER LIST

We pray for healing of —

**Debbie Strickland, Kevin Horne, Dan & Jane Sikes,
Rick Hammontree, Robert Wilson, Jim Jeter,
Andrew McLetchie, Ann Dalton, Roy Watts,
Mary Herbert, Cida Lancaster, Brett Buck,
Ronald Sepanik, Marjorie Lentini,
Emily Chancellor, Robin O'Bannon,
Barbara Everett & Judy Mastainich.**

We share in the joy of —

**Erin and Mario Hernandez in the birth of their son,
Matthew José on May 11th. Erin and Matthew are doing well!
Proud Grandparents are Lynn and Mike Coatney.**



PRAYER REQUESTS

James 4:8 reminds us, *“Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you.”*

In this time of social distancing, comfort is found sensing the nearness of the Creator.

If you would like to share prayer requests,
email them to Pastor Marissa marissa@raynenola.org.
Or mail a note to the church addressed with "Attention: Marissa."

Please indicate if the request is public (shared in the newsletter)
or private (supplied to the Intercessory Prayer Group).