



ROYAL LANE BAPTIST CHURCH

Diverse People United in Christ

May 6, 2020

The Mosaic

Volume 34, Issue 9

Alley Hiking, Kicking Rocks, and Feeding Ducks

What activities have you been doing during this time of sheltering in place and being at home? Have you been walking more, eating more, or reading more? Have you found the time to tackle those home projects? Have you used your time to reach out to the community and help those in need? Maybe you have simply tried to survive this frustrating pandemic and look forward to the day when you can be with family and friends. I know for those of us with kids, our responsibilities have grown as we teach them, take care of them, and keep them entertained every moment of the day.

My daughters have been spending a lot of time outside. One of the things we do together is go alley hiking. What is alley hiking you ask? Well, for the first time in my kids' lives they live in a city with alleys. And since we can't really get out to the trails to hike because of social distancing, we put on our tennis shoes and walk for miles along the alleys of our neighborhood.

And in the alleys around our house are a lot of stones and rocks. On a recent alley hike, Annaleigh and I spent almost an hour kicking a round rock up and down each and every alley we traversed. That round stone was fun and gave us something to do as we walked, talked, and invested in each other. Beatrice doesn't want to kick the rocks as much as pick them up and take them home. Bea thinks rocks are beautiful: all rocks, every rock has character. Every rock has a story. Sometimes every pocket of hers is filled with stones from our hikes. Once she gets the rocks home, she empties her pockets outside and she and Annaleigh use the rocks and sticks to build intricate homes for fairies and bugs. They've recently added both a playground and hospital to their city as they process their longing for regular life and their mama.

While alley hiking during the pandemic we have begun to name the alleys like J.K. Rowling does in the Harry Potter books. There is Bear Alley, with the dog that looks like a bear; Cow Pasture Alley for the alley that is grassy and smells like fertilizer; and Duck Alley where, believe it or not, there are ducks residing near our house. There is a creek at the far end of our neighborhood where five or six ducks and ducklings take up residence during the spring and summer. While hiking Duck Alley, the girls and I came upon a Mallard family with a hen and two ducklings. Annaleigh and Bea named them Big Mama, Duckle, and Bongo. We also saw a Drake and Hen whom we named Dean and Beauty. This kind of wildlife up close was so spectacular and out of the ordinary in the city that my daughters sat for hours, watching them swim, sleep, and clean their feathers.

We all have huge events going on in our lives as we learn to live amid crisis. We have family members dying, our personal finances might be depleting, the stress of work and home or maybe of not having a job or a home is causing unbelievable hardships. Yet, with these moments of crisis, we are called by God to notice the moments of joy and hope. Those moments might be out of sight, down some obscure alley, but they are present. It might mean letting the crisis be what it is and knowing that God is calling us into alleys to feed the ducks or to kick rocks. Whatever moment God has you in, I continue to pray you find places of wonder, laughter, and hope. Maybe I'll see you from a distance on our next alley hike.

Pastor Mike

The next issues of The Mosaic are scheduled for May 20 & June 3, 2020.

The deadline for submissions will be 5:00 p.m. Monday prior to the date of publication.

*****Pastoral Memo about Reopening Royal Lane Baptist Church*****

May 1, 2020

Dear RLBC Congregation,

It would be an understatement to say that I miss you. I miss our cherished, in-person gatherings for worship, fellowship, and study. But we are Baptists, Baptists who value the freedom and responsible practice of religion, as well as the autonomy of the local congregation. And it is these values that guide us as we ponder the timing of resuming our in-person activities together. Beginning Friday, Phase One of Texas's plan to reopen gathering places will commence. Phase One reopens restaurants, movie theaters, malls, and churches at 25% capacity. With this in mind, I want to share an update on the re-opening of Royal Lane Baptist Church.

The Royal Lane staff has been meeting weekly to assess the safety of our members and the continued virtual connection opportunities we have with one another. I continue to meet weekly with the Deacon Chair, Paulette Harrison, to discuss and consider our current situation and the possibilities of reopening. In all my conversations with staff and leaders, we believe it is faithfully prudent to rely upon the expert opinions of our scientific and medical community, such as the CDC and the Texas Department of Health Services, and not reopen the church, even at a reduced capacity, at this time.

There are almost 28,000 cases of Covid-19 in Texas and 776 people have died so far in our state. According to a widely used model circulated by The Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), an independent population health research center at UW Medicine, part of the University of Washington, Texas is now experiencing its peak of cases and should not relax containment strategies until June.

At this point, with no reputable public health professions endorsing reopening churches in Texas, as well as Judge Clay Jenkins clearly stating that lifting the sheltering in place rule is premature, we have no clear signal that it is safe to resume in-person worship. If we reopen now, we believe we run the risk of spreading the virus within the congregation and out into the community. It will always be the purpose of Royal Lane Baptist Church to protect all who are vulnerable, including those at risk of catching Covid-19.

So, where do we go from here? How will we know when it is time to meet again for worship? Honestly, I don't know. What I do know is that the time has not yet arrived. However, like you, I want us to be prepared, flexible, and in constant communication with you as we move forward. To accomplish this, Paulette and I, in consultation with the staff and the deacon officers, and with a unanimous vote of the Diaconate, have created a Reopening Task Force to gather information, consult professionals, and answer the many questions we might have as we reopen the church. We are fortunate to have the medical and congregational skills of Melissa Walker-Luckett and Jamie Luckett as co-chairs of this newly developed task force. Melissa and Jamie will communicate with us in the coming days about the makeup of the task force, the informed decisions being made, and how those decisions affect you and the reopening of Royal Lane.

In the meantime, I hope we can stay connected and bring God's house into your house. Many of you have already joined me for Wednesday Bible study, Midday prayer on Fridays, various ministry and Sunday School meetings, and our virtual worship service on Sunday mornings. Our Missions Committee also remains committed and supportive of local service organizations which provide "frontline" help to those most in need during this crisis.

The day will come when we will be together again, face to face. Until then, I want everyone to be safe and protected. I know that the Holy Spirit and the bonds of community will connect us from afar and that the love of God will continue to hold us together in the days ahead. I am praying for each of you daily.

In this together,

Pastor Mike Gregg

The Royal Lane Reopening Task Force

Melissa and Jamie Luckett, co-chairs

Terry Berrier

Bettie Meachum

Alan Greider

Sandy Washington

Harry Hunter

Cathy Webb

Greg King

Jacquie Wooten

Coming Events

Sunday	May 10 – Fifth Sunday of Easter
10:00 am	Foundation Stones — Zoom 895-6836-0166
10:55 am	Morning Worship — Virtual Worship
4:00 pm	Formations Class — Zoom 570-930-216
Tuesday	May 12
12:00 pm	Pastor's Book Group — Zoom 171-949-220
	New Book starting this week – "Take This Bread" by Sara Miles
Wednesday	May 13
6:30 pm	Midweek – IN FOCUS — Zoom 401-030-657
	Beloved Community: Spiritual Care During Covid-19
Sunday	May 17 – Sixth Sunday of Easter
10:00 am	Foundation Stones — Zoom 895-6836-0166
10:55 am	Morning Worship — Virtual Worship
2:00 pm	Faith & Film – "Groundhog Day" — Zoom 830 6223 2976
	We invite you to view the movie prior to May 17 and join us for discussion via Zoom (Available on Netflix, Redbox Demand and for rent on Amazon Prime)
4:00 pm	Formations Class — Zoom 570-930-216
Tuesday	May 19
12:00 pm	Pastor's Book Group — Zoom 171-949-220
Wednesday	May 20 – Mosaic
6:30 pm	Midweek Bible Study — Zoom 401-030-657

The deadline for the order of service, the Midweek, and the Mosaic is Monday, 5:00 p.m. prior to publication.

"Like" RLBC on Facebook or "Follow" RLBC on Twitter

Please be in prayer for the Family & Friends of

Ed Bright

who passed away May 1, 2020.

A Memorial Service will be scheduled when all can gather to celebrate his life.

In Focus:

Beloved Community: Spiritual Care During Covid-19

Join us on Wednesday, May 13, at 6:30 pm for the Education Committee's May **In Focus: Beloved Community: Spiritual Care During Covid-19**. We will gather virtually (ZOOM 401-030-657), to hear from a panel of three professional chaplains – Mellissa Walker-Luckett, Reann Tiemann, and Blake Miller.

The panel will focus on care of the spirit during the challenge of social distancing and the coronavirus. The chaplains will address issues such as coping through grief and loss, the difficulty of living with unknown timetables and loss of opportunities, and the rise of worries and anxiety amidst uncertainty. They will share their wisdom for being good listeners and a strengthening presence when we reach out to support family, friends, and church members and advice on how we might utilize our faith to find peace or encouragement in crisis and what spiritual care tools and daily practices are recommended during these strange times. The Zoom chat feature will allow participants to ask our panelists their own questions. We hope to see you there!

John Stuart, Artist

During the first several weeks of our “shelter-at-home” we have been using the work of one of our favorite artists, John Stuart – “Quarantine Rose”

Rev. John Stuart is the pastor at Erin Presbyterian Church, Knoxville, Tennessee. John grew up in Glasgow, Scotland, and served several small churches for nine years in S.W. Scotland before accepting the call to Erin. He is an honors graduate of Glasgow University, Scotland.

His religious art has been used by various denominations for missions, conferences, worship, and educational materials. His art has also appeared on the front covers of national and international religious magazines. You can view his latest works at this site: www.stushieart.com. Charles Rennie Mackintosh is one of the major influences on his art and he likes to start the year drawing a Mackintosh Rose.

Pictured are images used in 2019 and 2020 at Royal Lane that have incorporated the Mackintosh Rose in the design.

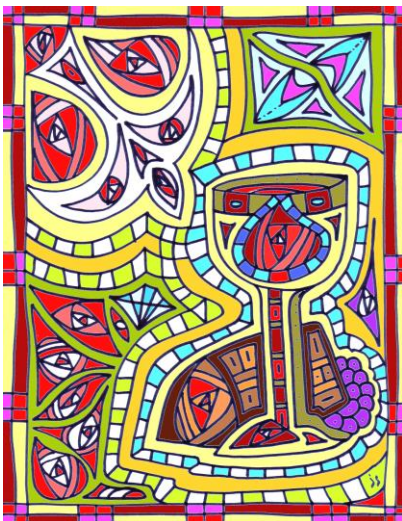
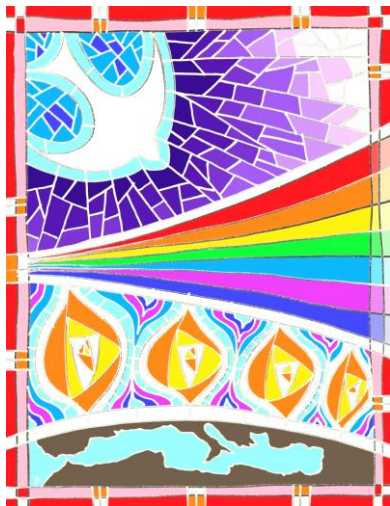
Top left: Pentecost Sunday – *Spirit 2019*

Top center: Trinity Sunday – *Blue Trinity*

Lower left: Communion Sunday – *Epiklesis*

Lower center: Easter Sunday – *Bright Star*.

Right – *Quarantine Rose*



Deacons of the Week

May 10

Melanie Ferguson
Garey Wisdom

May 17

Terry Berrier
Karen Miller

Scriptures of the Week

May 10

Acts 7:55-60
1 Peter 2:2-10

Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16
John 14:1-14

May 17

Act 17:22-31
1 Peter 3:13-22

Psalm 66:8-20
John 14:15-21

All In-Person Midweek Services & Fellowship Meals Temporarily Suspended

Zoom Meetings:

6:15 pm

May 13 & 20

Midweek Bible Study
Meeting ID - 401 030 657
with Mike Gregg

Happy Birthday!

May

Linda Collier	9
Sarah Steward.....	9
Sharon Vickrey.....	9
Andy Cavins.....	11
Stephen Lewis	11
Jaclyn Ramirez	12
Deanna Green.....	13
Jim Bush.....	15
Alexander Gitlin.....	15
Linda Hueston	15
Wayne Meachum	15
Michael Knight.....	17
Karen Miller	18
Samuel Quesada	18
Greg King.....	19



The Box Gallery
Is temporarily closed.

To change mail or email preferences for *The Mosaic*,
contact Barbara Merry, bmerry@royallane.org.

A Letter to a Church in Crisis: 1 Peter
An Eastertide Sermon Series

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!
By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into

A Living Hope

through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

1 Peter 1:3

royallane.org

#RLBCLive



Royal Lane Baptist Church

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The Mosaic is published twice a month

Office Hours:

Monday - Friday: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Wednesday Midweek: 6:15 pm

Sunday School: 9:45 am

Sunday Worship: 10:55 am

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Ray Vickrey, Pastor Emeritus

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