



The Steeple

April 2020



FROM THE PASTOR

Life isn't normal now, and part of that is not being able to go to church. It's too soon to know whether we can realistically plan on having our doors open on Palm Sunday, which is only ten days away. Some thought has been given to having a service in the parking lot, with almost everybody staying in their cars. Stay tuned for further announcements for that as well as for Maundy Thursday and Easter.

Some work is being done on bringing our directory up to date, so that we can all stay in touch with each other better. Ann and I think we have current phone numbers and email addresses for MOST of the persons who choose to be associated with our congregation. What we DON'T know is: how many of those are private and not to be distributed.

So **PLEASE REPLY** and give us whatever phone numbers and email addresses you are willing to let other folks in our church have. churchoffice@thesteepelinthefalls.org

Meanwhile, there are other ways to stay in touch with God and with God's people. Here are some:

- Call a church member. If you need a number call Ann 695-1212.
- You may find some interesting things on **our congregation's website**. It's thesteepelinthefalls.org or you could just Google *South Hadley Methodist* and the link to our website should be the first thing that pops up.
- umc.org is the website for the whole United Methodist Church. I went there this morning. The home page links you to lots of different spiritual resources for this time of crisis.
- **FM 99.7** is a radio station that a lot of Christians in our valley listen to often. Check it out.
- **The Upper Room** is our daily devotional guide. If you don't have your March-April issue yet, call me at 413-310-5027 and I'll deliver it to you if you're within 6 or 7 miles of the church.
- The **Daily Prayer** is an email I've been getting from the conference office. I've been passing each one along to Ann so she can send it out to the whole church. Set aside some time to read it *s l o w l y* and make it your own. (One or two are included in this newsletter.)
- Last but not least is **The Holy Bible**. I'll bet you have a copy. Maybe you've been too busy to read it very much during, oh, the last 50 years or so. If you find yourself with time on your hands, now's your chance. Will you find some things that puzzle you? Share your questions with me via email (pmilloy59@gmail.com) or just call me. I have a little more discretionary time now, too.

OUR CHURCH WEBSITE

Our church website is www.thesteepelinthefalls.org. You can copy it or type it into your search and you will find: The Daily Prayer under the title Worship; Prayers & Concerns where you can add a prayer request; *The Steeple*, the church newsletter; and more.

Rev. Peter Milloy: 413 310-5027 Church office: 413-532-0500 Worship Sunday 10:00 a.m. Sunday School 9:00 a.m.
e-mail: churchoffice@thesteepelinthefalls.org web site: www.thesteepelinthefalls.org

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS WE'VE BEEN ASKED

- **Offerings** How can I continue to make my offering while we are closed? Your offering can be mailed to the church office. Checks can be made out to UMC. People who do their banking online can send their offering that way. The mail is checked regularly by Pastor Peter & Ann. The address is
United Methodist Methodist Church
30 Carew St.
So. Hadley MA 01075
- **Casseroles for Kate's Kitchen** Ann contacted Kate's Kitchen and they are in need of food and appreciate all that we do.. You can call Ann at 695-1212 or Carol at 575-1491 and make arrangements for your casserole to be picked up curb side.
- **Prayers & Concerns** If you have a concern or celebration you would like to share you can call the church office 532-0500 and leave a message or call Ann 695-1212.
- **Music From Heather** Thank you to our music director who has been recording and posting recordings of her piano playing for us who miss her music. You can access Heather playing "For the Beauty of the Earth" and "Blest Be the Tie" <https://youtu.be/VmRHLdUC1zM>
- **Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Easter, Easter Plants** You will need to watch for information about these services and ordering of plants. As soon as we know information will be sent to you.



THE FOOD PANTRY, Neighbors Helping Neighbors, is open and is in need of volunteers to help bag food for clients, as well as help with the Mobile Food Bank on the 2nd and 4th Mondays from 9:30-11:00. Mary Lou has met with the So. Hadley Health Director and Emergency Management Director to determine a safe way to distribute food. Clients remain in their cars and only volunteers enter the building. If you would volunteer, contact Mary Lou at mlguarnera@nhnfoodpantry.org or 413-437-7593. Besides volunteers, what is most needed right now are financial donations.

CELEBRATIONS & CONCERNS



The memorial service for Prescott Grout who died on February 28 has been postponed.

† **Prayers & sympathy** to the family of on the death of Tom's brother on March 30.

Prayer List: Carol Brunelle, Carol Szulc, Eunice Mittler, Harry Thomas, Barbara Ryan, Beth Dietz, Pauline Kiakis, Samantha Snopek, Adele Reynolds, Bev Pead & Family, Doug & Dee Brooksbank, Frank Hudgik, Dave Fanaras, Tom Deren, Tim O'Donnell, Vinnie Deitner, Joe Deren

FROM THE PASTOR

At this time of crisis, I cannot do better than to pass along to you some thoughts shared by Elizabeth Macaulay, a pastor in Rochester, Minnesota:

Wowsa.

The disorientation is real, isn't it?

I find myself unsure about what day it is and what it is I should do next and the hum of anxiety is constant companion.

Suddenly those I encounter are potential carriers of harm.

I represent threat to others.

We are all in this together, apart.

So may God grant us the courage and wisdom to learn from this reorientation of life.

Our elders? Our fragile irreplaceable elders? May we always treat them as precious and worthy of cosseting.

Our work colleagues? May we savor the different ways they encounter life and how it is we are wildly blessed to join with them in meaningful work.

Child care workers and grocery store stockers and food service folk and the people who make it possible for our toilets to flush and our lights to be on. May we honor them through the ways we notice and value their work.

Medical personnel who put their lives on the line to swab throats, research cures and dispense accurate information. May we never forget that they are heroic seekers of wisdom that has the power to save lives.

And may we learn, once and always, that what we do and say matters. It matters so much.

We are all leaders.

Stay home. Keep your distance. Practice grace with yourself and with others.

Remember who you are.

Henri Nouwen has this to say about that:

"You are my child.

You are written in the palms of my hand.

You are hidden in the shadow of my hand.

I have molded you in the secret of the earth.

I have knitted you together in your mother's womb.

You belong to me.

I am yours. You are mine.

I have called you from eternity and you are the one who is held safe and embraced in love from eternity to eternity.

You belong to me. And I am holding you safe and I want you to know that whatever happens to you, I am always there. I was always there; I am always there; I always will be there and hold you in my embrace.

You are mine. You are my child. You belong to my home. You belong to my intimate life and I will never let you go. I will be faithful to you."

That. That is who you are.





MARK YOUR CALENDAR

When we are allowed to gather again.

Every Sunday: Worship 10:00 a.m.
Share coffee downstairs after worship..

March 29: Casseroles for Kate's Kitchen due

April 5: Palm Sunday

April 9: Maundy Thursday service 6:30 p.m.

April 12: Easter Sunday

A PRAYER

When we aren't sure, God,
help us be calm;
when information comes
from all sides, correct and not,
help us to discern;
when fear makes it hard to breathe,
and anxiety seems to be the order of the day,
slow us down, God;
help us to reach out with our hearts,
when we can't touch with our hands;
help us to be socially connected,
when we have to be socially distant;
help us to love as perfectly as we can,

knowing that "perfect love casts out all
fear."

Help us, O God,

that we might help each other.

In the love of the Creator,

in the name of the Healer,

in the life of the Holy Spirit that is in all and
with all,

we pray. Amen.

Part of a prayer by the Right Rev.

Richard Bott, originally posted on Facebook

Offered by William V. Burnside

II, Conference Treasurer/Director of

Administrative Services

UPDATES

PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP

Yes! We do plan to have worship Sunday, April 5!

It will be on the **parking lot at 10:00**. You can stay in your car for the entire service. (The building will be unlocked for those who need to use the rest room.)

Heather will bring her electronic keyboard to accompany hymns. We'll roll down our windows and sing.

But what if it rains? If it's just a light intermittent drizzle, we may decide to go ahead with it, since almost everybody will be inside a car anyway. If we absolutely can't do it, we'll plan on doing an Easter service in the parking lot the following Sunday.

BTW, **if you haven't been getting** all the **Daily Prayer** emails and **Weekly Invitations**, check your spam folder every so often. Some email programs send church messages to Spam and other folders which some programs have, such as Promotions and Social.

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SOUTH HADLEY METHODIST CHURCH

30 Carew Street

South Hadley, Massachusetts 01075-2705

Return address service requested.