



The Steeple

October 2019



FROM THE PASTOR

"All are welcome." Some version of this statement appears on thousands of church signs all across America. But how serious are we about it?

Here are stories from my Minnesota parishes. In one church, members opened their newspapers one day to discover that a fellow church member had pleaded guilty to sexually molesting an elderly dementia victim at the nursing home where he worked as an aide. This man served a month in the county jail and then resumed attending worship with his wife. Some members suggested that I should discourage him from doing so. I replied that elderly ladies at the church were in no real danger, so he shouldn't be excluded. (I did ask him to discontinue serving as Sunday School secretary.)

At my next church, a man joined who was emotionally disturbed. He sometimes burst out with loud comments or laughter during worship. Some folks wanted me to tell him to listen to the service in another part of the building. I wouldn't do that. (I did suggest he not bring his coffee cup into the sanctuary.)

There are persons whose presence disturbs others. What would happen here if a registered sex offender started attending, one who had abused children? I'm sure there'd be serious discussions about whether our desire to be welcoming and inclusive was as important as protecting our youth.

Then there's the question of what kind of Christians we want to be--and if we truly want people who clearly aren't going to be our kind of Christian. Churches send subtle signals about who's really included. Conservative churches don't conceal where they stand on important issues. They'll actively invite people who don't share their views—yet. If you keep attending but express disagreement with them, they'll find ways of letting you know you're not really one of them. How about us? Do we subtly give the impression that our church is really just for progressives? If we encourage others to "celebrate diversity," as our sign says, are we willing to extend that beyond the diversity of race and class and "whom you love" to include ideological diversity as well?



Does it seem ever like including some means excluding others? It's hard to avoid doing that. The closer we come to being like the Episcopalians, the farther away we move from the Pentecostals (who, by the way, practice racial inclusiveness much better than Methodists but don't make a big deal about it). The United Methodist Church has tried for many decades to be a "big tent" denomination, a church that offers a welcome for all kinds of Christians. It's not working any more, and most observers now expect a schism to occur next year. What the shape of that will be is far from clear right now, but I am happy to report that there are now more leaders working seriously on plans for an amicable separation than there were a few months ago, so we may hope to avert a bitter split where one group walks away mad.



What about our congregation? Whatever happens at the international level, I suspect we'll do our best to continue offering an open door while also calling people to share a distinctive way of being God's people.

APPLE & PEACH HAND PIES



Be sure to visit our church's booth at the Columbus Day Craft Fair October 14 at the 2nd Baptist Church. We will be selling apple and peach hand pies.



Join us on October 13 at the church to make these delicious icons.



Prayer List: Carol Brunelle, Carol Szulc, Prescott Grout, Eunice Mittler, Harry Thomas, Barbara Ryan, Doris Gagnon, Beth Dietz, Pauline Kiakis, Samantha Snopek, Adele Reynolds, Frank Northup, Bev Pead & Family, Doug & Dee Brooksbank, Frank Hudgik, Viola Mortimer, Dave Fanaras

Open Faced Turkey



Menu:

turkey sandwich with gravy
stuffing
mashed potatoes
cranberry sauce

dessert & more

Cost: \$10 for adults \$5 for children
6-10 Children 5 & under free

Reservations: Call 532-0500
Take outs available

at the So. Hadley Methodist Church

Sandwich Supper!

Friday November 1, 2019

continuous seating 5:00 until 6:30

ANNUAL CHARGE CONFERENCE

Official Notice: The regular annual session of the charge conference will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, November 18, 2019. Rev. Byungmoo Lee has been assigned to preside at this session.

The Annual Charge Conference is the annual meeting for our church. Every church member is invited to attend. During this meeting we will review what has happened during the past year, consider the Nominating Committee's work of forming committees, consider the recommendations of the Staff Pastor Relations Committee and look ahead to 2020. The charge conference is our church's form of democracy. All church members can vote at it and all are invited to attend.

FROM OUR LAY LEADER

In the summer of 2010, your Missions Committee was ready for a new project and rather than do something the church wanted to do, we knew the right thing was to discover what the community needed. In the end, Neighbors Helping Neighbors was created to address the growing issue of food insecurity. From the beginning it was evident that God agreed, for as obstacles appeared, they mysteriously were overcome. Feeding his sheep as Jesus admonished us to do has proved to be a blessing to the entire community.

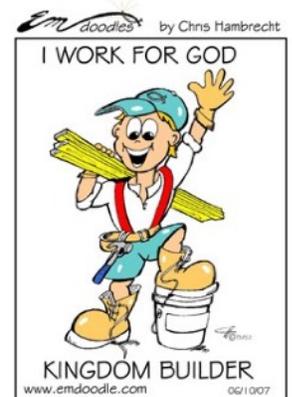
If we were to begin a new project, would you help in some way? There are more ways than the obvious to provide assistance to any endeavor. Energy, money and in-kind help are obvious, but there are others, too. Prayer is critical; see how God intervened in NHN. You can recruit relatives, friends and neighbors you know who have a heart or a talent for a given project. You can spread the word.

Am I hinting at something? Not really, but I ask you to think and pray. What does God want from us in 2019 and 2020? We know that while worship services are pleasing to God, we don't need to stop there. We should be making disciples, and that is done through community service. Our younger generations want to make a difference in peoples' lives.

John Wesley is the example we should be following. What he did for community service made a huge difference. He had what was called the New Room, which was a sanctuary during worship and changed to a health center the rest of the time. Wesley was a health nut, writing and preaching about the importance of being healthy.

How, besides feeding people, might we follow Wesley's example? We could begin a health initiative of some kind, we might provide meals for students in the summer, when they are not receiving free lunches, we could consider offering free sit down meals on a schedule, maybe a legal clinic periodically, or a support group.

The urge to gather in and nurture more of God's people is nagging at me. I see so many people who are empty spiritually and the call to help is strong.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Sundays: All are invited to share coffee
downstairs before & after worship.
Thursdays: Choir rehearsal 7:00 p.m.

October 7: Education meeting 6:30 p.m.
October 8: Women's Group 9:00 a.m.
October 12: 2nd Saturday Fun 4:00-6:00 p.m.
October 14: APPLE & PEACH HAND PIES 9
a.m. to 4 p.m. Be sure to visit our
church's booth at the Columbus Day
Craft Fair at the 2nd Baptist Church.

October 
27: Casseroles for
Kate's Kitchen due.

November 1: Turkey Supper 5:00-6:30 p.m.
November 3: All Saints service 10:00 a.m.
November 4: Trustees 6:30 p.m.
November 5: Church Council 6:30 p.m.
November 10: Worship committee 11:15 a.m.
November 18: Annual Charge Conference
6:30 p.m. All are invited to attend.

The Bible speaks of "feeding my lambs" & "take care of my sheep". Help "spread the Word".

MISSION PROJECTS FOR ALL OF US.

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A Little humor

A kindergarten teacher gave her class a "show and tell" assignment. Each student was instructed to bring in an object to share with the class that represented their religion. The first student got up in front of the class and said, "My name is Benjamin and I am Jewish and this is a Star of David." The second student got up in front of the class and said, "My name is Mary. I'm a Catholic and this is a Rosary." The third student got in up front of the class and said, "My name is Tommy. I am Methodist, and this is a casserole."



Casseroles for Kate's Kitchen: Make at least one casserole and bring it to church. These are delivered about 9:30 on the last Monday of the month. The October casseroles will be due Sunday October 27th. Our goal each month is 15. In September we delivered 13 casseroles. The UMW provides pans and you fill with: pasta of your choice and sauce of your choice. You may also add ground beef/turkey and/or cheese.

Food For Friends (FFF) Once a month a group of 3 or 4 of the churches in So. Hadley/Granby deliver food to about 90+ shut-ins. We help by delivering meals. Kay Washburn can tell you about driving. Other churches do other weekends.

NHN Food Pantry housed right here at our church. You can give non-perishables, money, and/or time volunteering. The pantry is open Wednesdays from 12:30 – 3:30 and 6:00 – 7:30 and Saturdays from 10:00–12:00.



Feeding Children Everywhere will hold a Meal Assembly Project on Saturday, October 26, 2019 at The MacDuffie School and THEY NEED OUR HELP. Jackson Skibel from Faith UMC is inviting us & other groups to help. They need to raise money in order to bring Feeding Children Everywhere to us which includes healthy meal ingredients for 30,000 meals, shipping, logistics, meal distribution, advertising and t-shirts. They have already applied for two grants but grants alone won't get them to our goal.

We can help:

1. Put your spare change in the Spare Change for Hunger basket at the back of the sanctuary.
2. Help assemble the meals on October 26 - you can email or call our church office or add your name to the sheet in the sanctuary.

PRAYER SHAWLS Wanted knitters, crocheters or sewers to make prayer shawls and prayer lap robes. There is yarn available for you to use. There are only three shawls left. The shawls or lap robes are given to anyone who is in need of our prayers.

2ND SATURDAY FUN DAYS



October 12 from 4 to 6 p.m. is the next Fun Day.

You will make: Popsicle stick spider webs; friendly ghost hanging spinner; make witches hat cookies and candy scarecrows. I am told there will be small jack o lantern pepperoni pizzas, meatball mummies; potato chips and broom stick cookies to eat. Bring the whole family, friends and neighbors too.

The September Fun Day was about dogs!

Made dog ears to wear & barked a few of songs or I should say barked & laughed through a few songs. Made dachshunds (or → monster dogs) and apple s'mores... ↓



And did a word puzzle.
Made puppy chow to take home and
↓ ate 'beagle bites'.



All are welcome! Join us for worship or join in one of our missions.

South Hadley Methodist Church
30 Carew Street
South Hadley MA 01075



Love. Grow. Serve.

Rev. Peter Milloy: 413-310-5027

Worship Sunday 10:00 a.m.

Sunday School 9:00 a.m.

Church office: 413-532-0500

e-mail: churchoffice@thesteepinthefalls.org

web site: www.thesteepinthefalls.org

Dr. Heather Reichgott, Minister of Music

Ann Felsentreger, Secretary

Neighbors Helping Neighbors: 413-437-7593



SOUTH HADLEY METHODIST CHURCH

30 Carew Street

South Hadley, Massachusetts 01075-2705

Return address service requested.