

# The Steeple

February 2021



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I'm taking few Sundays off due to health concerns. Ask me if you want details. (Not covid.) Bottom line: I'm feeling much better than I was last Wednesday, but I think it's safest to be away for a few Sundays.

Due to mounting health concerns (Joanne's and mine), I decided on Sunday afternoon that **my appointment at S. Hadley Methodist will end on June 30 at the latest.** To oversimplify: Joanne's arthritis and my dizzy spells.

I sent an email to Rev. Megan Stowe, our district superintendent, to tell her of this decision. Then we spoke a bit on the phone.

Currently we have no plans for moving anywhere else. We will stay in our condo here in SH as long as we believe it to be prudent to do so, and we hope that will be a long time. I have found my association with this church to be personally fulfilling, and I give it up with great reluctance.

What will happen after June 30? That is something I cannot control--nor foresee. I may be able to do a few things to help you prepare for whatever is coming next-- after we learn what that is. SPRC will probably have to have a few meetings. I guess they would be Zoom events if they happen any time soon. It will not be up to me to schedule those.

I hope you are all doing well amid the challenges presented by covid, snow, and whatever else gets in our way.



## WORSHIP on FEBRUARY 7

We're going to have a joint worship service with Faith United Methodist Church...but online, of course. The various portions are being pre-recorded, but it will become available on YouTube on Sunday morning at 9:30. You'll see me doing a scripture reading. Our district superintendent will do the sermon. For how to view the recording, here is the link.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGM9G3vAc38Vxv-58kjjqVg/featured>

The link will also be in the Weekly Invitation. I'll be watching it with you!

Peter Milloy

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Dr. Heather Reichgott, Minister of Music

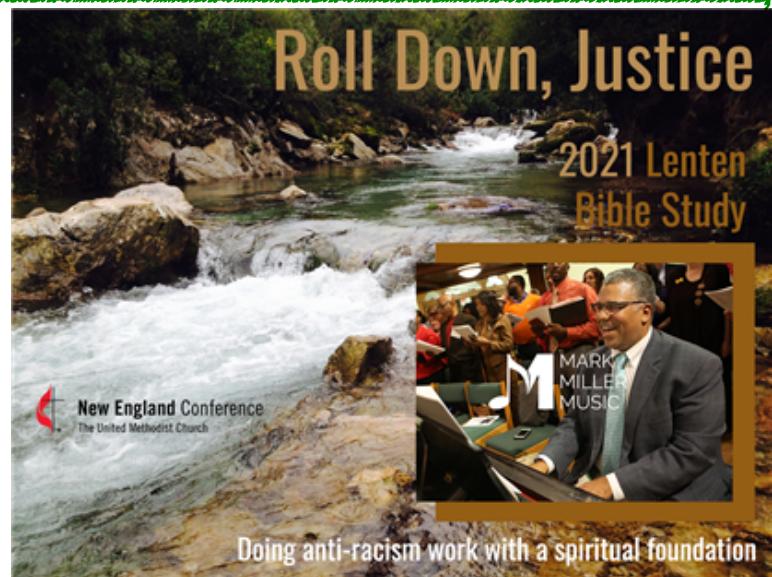
Neighbors Helping Neighbors: 413-437-7593

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Ann Felsentreger, Secretary

## **BIBLE STUDY WITH REV. MEGAN STOWE, OUR D.S.**

In the summer of 2020, I came face to face with the painful history of one of our district's closed churches. Looking in the cornerstone of the Fairlawn Methodist Episcopal Church, I discovered many items related to the Ku Klux Klan. Out of this discovery came a priority to have conversations with churches throughout the Commonwealth West District (and the Conference) about how to be an inclusive anti-racist church. I would encourage you to join me for a Lenten Bible Study (whether you are available for only one week or the entire study) as we start these important discussions. The conversations are based on Biblical texts and hymns by Mark Miller (a favorite United Methodist composer and musician).



### **Join Conference-wide Lenten Bible Study 'Roll Down, Justice'**

You are invited to participate in a New England Conference-wide Bible study for Lent. This study, titled "Roll Down, Justice," was written by the General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR). Study sessions will be held from 7 to 8:30 pm on Sundays from Feb. 14 to March 21, 2021 via Zoom. The study will be led by Rev. Megan Stowe, Commonwealth West District Superintendent. Using biblical passages and Mark Miller's amazing hymns, this study will offer guidance to us as Christians and as United Methodists on how to be an anti-racist and inclusive church. The study is part of the Conference and Commonwealth West District's renewed commitment to engage in anti-racism work that was reinforced by the 2020 discovery of KKK materials in the historic cornerstone of the former Fairlawn Methodist Episcopal Church.

Registration IS necessary; you will be sent the Zoom link when you sign up. Click on the link below to register

Blessings, Megan

You can register here

[https://www.neumc.org/eventdetail/14965583?  
month=2&year=2021&day=1&display=m](https://www.neumc.org/eventdetail/14965583?month=2&year=2021&day=1&display=m)

## CELEBRATIONS & CONCERNS



**Pray for:** Carol Brunelle, Carol Szulc, Eunice Mittler, Harry Thomas, 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, Darlene Dout, Tom O'Dea, Bob & Viola Mortimer, Colleen Mortimer, Rev. Peter & Joanne Milloy



## CASSEROLES

Eight casseroles were delivered in January to Kate's Kitchen. Casseroles will be delivered at 9:30 a.m. on February 21. If you need your casserole picked up call Ann 695-1212 and make arrangements for your casserole to be picked up curb side.



## STEEPLE LIGHTING

The steeple is lit during the month of February:

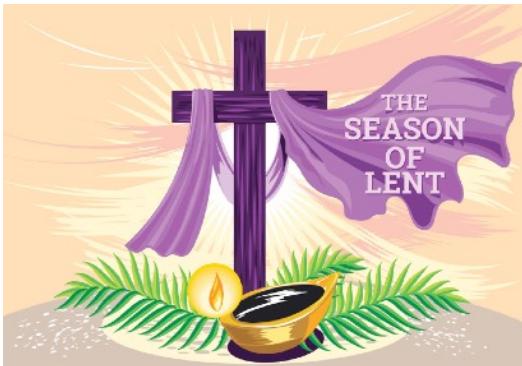


-In honor of Kay Washburn's 90th birthday and Luella June Clark's 6th birthday by Kathy, Tim and family

-In loving memory of my son, Jack Felsentreger, & my sister, Sally Kough, by Lois Felsentreger.

-In memory of Homer Washburn who died on 2/13/04 by Washburn Family

If you would like the steeple lit for one month, the fee is \$25.00. The deadline is the 25th of the month. More than one person/family may participate.



**Lent** is a journey of preparation for following the way of Jesus. Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. Lent comes from the Anglo Saxon word *lencten*, meaning “lengthen” and refers to the lengthening days of spring.

Here are some ideas of what you can do on your journey through Lent. Pick what you would like to do as you prepare to follow Jesus.

- pray for your enemies, for the world, for our country, our community, clergy, church leaders, students, for people who are sick, for guidance in all you do
- make & send a card to a shut-in or someone you know
- call
- act of kindness -
  - do something nice for a family member but don't tell them
  - say something nice to each person in your family or office
- make a list of all the things you are thankful for
- thank God for 5 different things each day
- read from the gospel every day
- how many days can you say only good things about everyone & everything around you?
- write a thank you note
- give away things in your closet you no longer need
- smile & say hello to each person you see all day
- commit a part of a day or several days to no phones or screens
- turn off the tv or radio and see what new things you notice
- Commit to learning something new about a country or culture.
- Commit to a new healthy habit, or quitting an unhealthy old habit.

## **MISSIONS**



The missions of our church are only possible because of you. You can:

- make casseroles for Kate's Kitchen once a month
- make or buy hats an/or mittens for Secret Santa for next Christmas
- make prayer shawls or lap robes
- send card or notes to our shut-ins and other members
- support Neighbors Helping Neighbors food pantry
- volunteer for Food for Friends or Neighbors Helping Neighbors food pantry

## A PRAYER

**"Everyone is searching for you."**

*Mark 1:37*

O, Holy God,  
I have searched for you in the pages of a book, thin pseudo-vellum sticking together, making it hard to find the next verse.  
I have searched for you in the words of a preacher on Sunday morning, with colorful light dancing across the bulletin I hold in my hands.  
I have searched for you in doorways and arches and stones stacked by hands long since fallen still.  
I have searched for you in the sound of an organ so loud that its sound resonated in my bones, voices lifted in song proclaiming "Hallelujah."

I have searched for you, God.

We have searched for you, God.  
We have searched in all of the usual places.  
We have searched in all of the places we expect to find you.  
We have searched for you in all of the ways we expect to find you.  
We have searched for you in worship services live-streamed on Facebook and cast to our phones or our living room TV.

We have searched for you in the crackle of the radio at drive-in services held in parking lots where we cannot roll down our windows or see the pastor from our spot in the back row.  
We have searched for you in zoom meetings of our small groups and in socially distanced fellowship events with faces obscured by masks and always the fear of not knowing exactly what six feet actually looks like.

We have searched for you, God.  
And when we don't find you, we decide that it's because you're simply not there.

You are not in our google searches for "positivity rates" or "excess death calculations."

You are not in the temper tantrums of five-year-olds and fifty-five-year-olds who have decided that they have just had it with online school today.

You are not in the moments where the PA feels overwhelmed by all of the death he has experienced in ten short months that feel like an eternity.

We feel like you are not there.

Like you have forgotten us.

Like you do not know who we are.

You, God. You who spread the heavens like a tent for us to live in.

You, God. You who number the stars and call them by name.

You, God. You who knew us before we knew ourselves.

We are searching for you, God.

But in our search, we have limited who you are and how you are.

We have forgotten that it is your Spirit that dwells within us and cannot be separate from us.

We do not have to search for you, God, because you are here.

Right here.

Always here.

With us.

Heal our broken hearts, God.

Bind up our wounds.

Expand our understanding of all the ways that you are —

That you always are —

So that we might stop searching for you and find our rest in the knowledge that you are the Eternal God of Presence.

Amen.

*By Alyssa M. Densham, Director of Family Ministries for The Kingstowne Communion*

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

**United Methodist Church  
Of  
Holyoke, South Hadley & Granby**



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**Return address service requested.**