

The
Season
of
Lent



The Steeple

March 2022



FROM OUR PASTOR

As February draws to a close, I look back at the month with some smiles and a grimace. I smile when I think of another month that we worked together, as a team, for the welfare of our church, our community, and our family of faith. I am so proud of all the work that has (and continues) to be done keeping Fellowship Hall, the kitchen, and our sanctuary looking good. A special ‘shout out’ to Neighbors Helping Neighbors for doing their part in keeping the hallways and the side door clean and organized. When you see what a typical day looks like for them, you can appreciate how much effort it takes – and it is truly appreciated.

I grimace when I think of that ‘Phil’ thing who plagued us with another six weeks of winter. I still feel we should sign a petition to have him replaced with a mole. Wouldn’t it be great since a mole can’t see and would never be able to tell if it didn’t see its shadow!

With March at our doorstep, Ash Wednesday will lead us into the season of Lent; a time to reflect that we only have so many steps on this path before it leads us to our eternal home. To reach out to those in our community, we will be offering ashes curbside from 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM and also 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM.



As the day draws to a close, we invite all into our sanctuary for a special Worship Service at 7:00 PM. For those who are unable to come to church, please join us on Zoom.

As we begin our Lenten journey, may we reflect on the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness fasting, praying, resisting temptation, and growing stronger in His faith and relationship with God. For our 40 days of Lent, maybe we can try to minimize our distractions, our constant connection to the outside world of social media and texts; growing closer to God and doing for others. It’s a time to acknowledge some of the things we could have done differently and that our hearts be changed for the next time. May the Spirit within us use these 40 days to change our lifestyle, our biases, and our weaknesses so that all we do reflects the love that Jesus has shown us.

I’d like to close with a quote: “No act of virtue can be great if it is not followed by advantage for others. So, no matter how much time you spend fasting, no matter how much you sleep on a hard floor and eat ashes and sigh continually if you do no good to others, you do nothing great.” — John Chrysostom

For all those who are suffering, lonely, and have lost their sense of purpose and need, always remember that God loves you for who you are, exactly as you are – and so do we. Should you need someone to reach out to, an ear to vent to, or just a presence to know you are not alone, I am only a call away (413-237-6823).

May grace and blessings be in your path,

Pastor Joe ...

FROM OUR LAY LEADER

When I read a book, I often look to see how the story ends. Does the guy get the girl? Who gets killed? Does the good guy win? I am process oriented and it makes me less anxious to know the book's ending so I can enjoy the story more.

There is one exception, and that is the story that begins this year on March 2. While I am glad to know the good guy wins in the end, the process is not one I enjoy. The beginning is long, but not very hard to deal with. It involves examining our relationship with the story's hero and working to deepen it. We think of the things he went without for 40 days in the wilderness and we wonder how he managed to survive. Some of us try to give up something in our lives as a way of becoming closer to the good guy. We make it through the 40 days mostly unscathed, but is that a good thing?

When something is given to us, especially something valuable, we tend not to appreciate it as much as if we had to pay for it. I know teenagers who have been given cars and after the initial excitement wears off, they begin to abuse the gift, little by little. "Who cares? I didn't pay for it" is the reasoning. Their treasure didn't purchase it. The gift came too easily.

For us, it is by knowing the end of Lent's story that we can appreciate the value of the gift. Who would ever think of a violent death as a gift? Yet, it was. It was a gift to each of us. We should all be changed by the very end of this story. It is easy to allow the gravity of what Jesus did to slip to the background while we go about our lives, but its effect should always guide us and each year we should get back in touch with the full story. We need to remember it was somebody else's treasure that paid for us. As a human, thus in full understanding of the agony that was to come, Jesus gave himself over to other humans to finish the story. He gave his life and people gladly took it. They mocked him and tortured him, yet he stood his ground and he died. The good guy died and he did it willingly.

JOURNEY
OF
Faith

But we know death was not the end of that story. The hero won and so did we. ♪Up from the grave he arose...♪ Jesus lives and now we do too. We just need to always appreciate that someone else's treasure paid for that gift.

Mary Lou



†CELEBRATIONS OF BAPTISM

On February 27th we welcomed Luna Rose Fox into our church family. Her mother, Emma Hudgik presented her for baptism. The proud grandparents are Ellen & Mark Hudgik and great-grand father Mark Hudgik.

CELEBRATION, CONCERNS & MORE

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

† Carol Brunelle, Beth Dietz, Pauline Kiakis, Samantha Snopek, Adele Reynolds, Doug & Dee Brooksbank, Dave Fanaras, Tim O'Donnell, Darlene Dout, Mark Hudgik, Jessica Guarnera, Family of Harry Thomas, Renata Cournoyer, Heidi Barta



STEEPLE LIGHTING

Our steeple is lit during the month of March in loving memory of my son, Jack Felsentreger, and my sister, Sally Kough, by Lois Felsentreger.

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.



LENTEN CHALLENGE

This year, during Lent, the UMWomen challenges each member of this congregation to make a small sacrifice each day to prepare themselves to commemorate Christ's ultimate sacrifice on Good Friday. We challenge you to **make a sacrifice that will benefit others.** (Going on a diet does not count.) Instead, each day decide what you could give up and how that tiny sacrifice could make the lives of others better. Our ideas include donating a gently used item to a charity, donating your time (visiting a shut-in, calling someone who is grieving, volunteering, etc.), or making an unplanned donation. Write your action on the calendar each day of Lent or on a list, and bring that list with you to put in the offering plate on Easter Sunday (or submit it virtually if you are attending church via Zoom) so your small Lenten sacrifices may be offered up that day. Remember, each sacrifice must be something you would not usually do that day. Young or old, we can all make the world just a tiny bit better for others each day of Lent.

Bev for the UMWomen



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

March 2: 8:00 - 10:00 a.m. Curbside Ashes
3:00 - 5:00 p.m. Curbside Ashes
6:15 Choir
7:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service
March 3: 7:00 p.m. Bell Choir rehearsal
March 6: 11:15 a.m. Choir rehearsal
March 9: 10:00 a.m. UM Women on zoom.
March 13: Daylight Savings time — set your
clocks ahead
March 15: 6:30 p.m. Council & Trustees on
Zoom
March 18: Grab & Go supper 5-6 p.m.
March 27: Casseroles for Kate's Kitchen are
due.



United
Methodist
Women
FAITH · HOPE · LOVE

All are welcome
to join us on
March 9 at
10:00 a.m. We

gather on zoom, plan our missions,
support each other, share a devotion,
pray. For a few more meetings we
will continue sharing a F.R.O.G. -
Fully Rely On God - devotion.

Contact Ann at

churchoffice@thesteepinthefalls.org
and she will send you the zoom link.

'Let God's light & love shine.'

NHN FOOD PANTRY A mission project based right in the church. They are always looking for volunteers, food, household supplies, and money which goes the farthest.

CASSEROLES FOR KATE'S KITCHEN Casseroles are due Sunday, March 27th. Join the casserole makers! Help feed the hungry once a month! We provide the pan. All you need to do is cook a pound of pasta, add sauce, ground meat or turkey and cheese. For more information speak with Ann 695-1212.

HATS, SCARVES & MITTENS

It's never too early to prepare for our Secret Santa mission. You can help by purchasing hats, scarves or mittens or you can knit or crochet them. They will be included in the gift bags for the kids.

You are Invited!



Young or older if you experience depression and/or anxiety, either all or some of the time, we can help. Our support group meets weekly, but you may join us whenever you need us. Our meeting times vary according to the schedules of our members. Our attendance varies from two to four, so there is always time for lots of participation. This is a non-judgment group; we know, from our own experiences, that will power and determination can help us get through bad days, but they are completely useless in decreasing either the anxiety or depression. Come and join us once. You don't even need to do any talking; just listen as we share our struggles and pray together. Contact Bev at bpeado31@gmail.com or at 413 335-5335 to let me know possible meeting times. We are very flexible!

- CELEBRATE DIVERSITY -

All are welcome - loved for who you are, exactly as you are.
Join us for worship or join in one of our missions.

United Methodist Church

Of

Holyoke, South Hadley & Granby
30 Carew Street
South Hadley, MA 01075

Worship Sunday 10:00 a.m. in our Sanctuary and on Zoom

Pastor Joe DeGrande 413 237-6823

pastorjoe.steeple.falls@gmail.com

My office hours are Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 to 3:00.

My door is always open so please stop by.

Should something be weighing heavy on your
heart, I'm only a phone call away - no matter what day or time.



Love. Grow. Serve.

Church office: 413-532-0500

e-mail: churchoffice@thesteepelinthefalls.org

Dr. Heather Reichgott, Minister of Music

Neighbors Helping Neighbors: 413-437-7593

Worship Sunday 10:00 a.m.

web site: www.thesteepelinthefalls.org

Ann Felsentreger, Secretary



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

30 Carew Street

South Hadley, Massachusetts 01075-2705

Return address service requested.