



The Steeple

March 2023



PASTOR'S PAGE

Welcome to March and our journey through Lent. The word Lent is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word "lencten" which means "spring". When I think of "spring", what comes to mind is the beauty of creation as it renews itself through pallets of dazzling colors, buds peeking forth from the branches of trees, newborn wildlife basking in the warmth of the sun. And as our physical world is renewing during the season of spring, so should our spiritual life be renewed during the season of Lent. It's a time to reflect - and prepare for the death - and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We need to separate ourselves from the kingdom of us with all its temptations and refocus on the Kingdom of God; the path Jesus showed us. Let us move past those wishing to divide us by political ideologies and embrace our diversities as we journey hand-in-hand toward the celebration of our risen Lord; Easter. We pray that you will join us either in person or virtually as we gather together to give glory to God in our Worship Services.



I was touched last Sunday by George Kiakis' tribute to Angels Without Wings; the legacy of Kay Washburn. As he said so eloquently, she personified the true meaning of what a Christian is. While others plagiarize the word Christian as a political brand to solicit votes, Kay's servant ministry showed the world the true light of Christ. We are so blessed that Kay lives on through her daughter Kathy and son Duncan, as they continue to offer Blessing Bags to those at home and the Holyoke Medical Center chapel, daily prayer vigils for those suffering, and outreaches to those in need. May the inspiration of the passion and depth of their faith, empower us in helping them continue Kay's legacy of loving God and loving thy neighbor as thyself.

We had our first 'family talk around the table' to discuss the gifts we've been blessed with and how they can serve the body of Christ; our church. Unfortunately, the majority of those that attended were the ones already on committees. I feel discussions where we can share a bite to eat as we open our hearts and minds to each other are critical to the survival of our church. As our church, it is important that we all know the struggles we are facing. With diversity as our strength, we need to use our collective backgrounds and experience in finding creative approaches to the issues at hand. As you've all heard me say so many times, this cannot be done without you.

After Easter, we will schedule a 'talk around the table' to share the obstacles we are facing and their repercussions. We all love this church, its legacy, and the saints that found refuge and peace here throughout the years. We are now at a crossroad that will decide its future. I will be sending out a personal invitation to all once a date has been set. If you have any questions or would like to talk about this personally, I would love to hear from you.

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.

May grace and blessings be in your path,

Pastor Joe ...

DO YOU WANT TO HELP YOUR CHURCH?

There are small ways – buy a bag of small green bags, some coffee, a bottle of Swiffer cleaner, a ream of paper.



A bigger way – when you see the invitation to join the rest of your church for a conversation about its/our/your future, decide to be there. Make it a priority. You will want it to be here when it's time for a wedding, baptism or funeral.

FROM OUR LAY LEADER

So, the journey to the cross has begun. I do not enjoy this annual walk; it is very difficult for me. I hate thinking about the awful things Jesus endured. As we journey through Lent, we know where we will end up, just as Jesus knew. We know love would succumb to a nasty crowd mentality. We know the government feared Jesus and needed him dead, for fear his intent was to take over the secular government. Even as the crowds loved him, Jesus knew his time was near. His human self must have been in turmoil as he contemplated what was to come. We need to remember he was human, and as such he experienced all the earthly feelings we do. You have been exhausted? Jesus experienced that. You have been scared? So was Jesus. You have loved? As a human, Jesus felt human love. You have had pain? Jesus knew excruciating pain.

Even though Jesus knew he was to endure more pain than most of us, he stayed on the path. How could he walk toward such a violent and painful death? I wonder if it was his humanity that helped him. Do we not walk toward something we fear? Contemplating surgery, for instance, we know there will be pain and we are likely scared, maybe terrified, but we submit to the process anyway, knowing we will feel better after we recover. Even though we know there will be pain, it isn't real in the moment we anticipate it, and as a human, that must have been how Jesus was able to move through the journey of Lent. His eye was on the end result, which was saving all of mankind.

Imagine the humiliation, the mocking and the physical beating. Think of the man who had been surrounded by love, now tortured. Consider the nails...

Jesus' last moments on the cross show how very human he was. The bodily pain finally overcame him and he felt abandoned by God. He knew he was to die and rise again, but in those final moments, that, and all the good his death was to do was overshadowed by his earthly pain and he wanted to give up. He cried out in his last human suffering. The end of his time on earth was as human as it gets, and mercifully, he died.



We gratefully accept the gift of Easter, with its joy, hope and promise of eternal life, but let us remember what the human named Jesus had to endure to provide that gift.

Happy Easter!
Mary Lou

CELEBRATION, CONCERNS & MORE

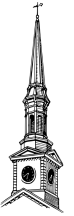


PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Carol Brunelle, Beth Dietz, Marion Winters, Samantha Snopek, Adele Reynolds, Jessica Guarnera, Dave Fanaras, Doug & Dee Brooksbank, Tim O'Donnell, Lily Marion, Kathy Washburn, Darlene Dout, Heidi Barta, Renata Cournoyer, Lucy Huegli, Bill Guarnera, Andrea Schlachter, Kelly & Steve Camp, Dulude Family, Dot Lambert & Family, Nancy Uhl & Family, Dottie Douglas, Bob Falgares

STEEPLE LIGHTING

Our steeple is lit during the month of March in loving memory of Pauline Kiakis by George Kiakis & 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.

Birthdays in March

3 Dawn Stevenson
5 Cody Goncalves
7 Joshua Clark
8 Stephen Grout
10 Rob Barnett
13 Kathy Brunelle
14 Nicholas Marshall
16 Mary Lou Guarnera
19 Beverly Pead
23 Alyson Barre
 Shane Heckethorn
 Summer Deren
24 Jonathan Herbert
25 Emma Hudgik
 Alan Dout
26 Carol Deren
27 Adam Cote
 Elinor Walsh
29 Claude Gaudett
30 Janet Tilligkeit



ANGELS WITHOUT WINGS

A word of thanks to the United Women of Faith Angels Without Wings who send cards and notes to those in need of a kind word.



I wish to tell you how important these cards are to those who receive them, they are filled with Scripture and words of kindness and inspiration. I'm sure the cards have put a smile on their face and they look forward to receiving them.

For those of us who receive them you are Angels With Wings because you bring hope and joy for a better future. We say thank you and God Bless you Angels.

-George Kiakis

LENTEN CHALLENGE - FORTY DAYS – FORTY ITEMS

This year for each day of Lent, remove one item from your closet that you no longer wear or need and put it into a trash bag.

At the end of the 40 days, donate these items to the *SHED* in our parking lot so that they can be shared with someone who can really use them! Remember we only take textiles, shoes, and belts.

FLOWER ORDER FORM



One of the visible reminders that Easter has arrived is the beautiful profusion of flowers that greets us Easter morning in the sanctuary. The more that are ordered, the more beautiful the display! It is a glorious and very appropriate way to honor a special person and to remember departed loved ones.

To order, please fill out the form below and return it to the church office by **April 2**. All plants may be taken after the service on Easter Morning. If you would like to deliver a flower to a shut-in, please contact Ann at 695-1212 or email at office@umcsouthhadley.com.

Your Name: _____

Please order: _____ Tulip _____ Hyacinth _____ Lilies _____ Daffodils

Please indicate your wishes: _____ I will pick up my plant after church

_____ Donate to a shut-in _____ I will deliver a plant to _____

Please complete for listing in the bulletin:

In Memory of/Celebration of (CIRCLE PLEASE) _____

Given by/from/love (CIRCLE PLEASE) _____

Listing will read "in memory of ... by..." if nothing is circled.

ALL FLOWERS ARE: **\$8.00 each**

Amount Paid _____

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

March 8: 10:00 a.m. United Women in Faith on Zoom

March 12: Set your clocks ahead 1 hour

11:15 a.m. Worship committee

March 17: 5-5:30 p.m. Grab & Go meal pick up

March 19: 11:15 a.m. Education meeting

March 26: Casseroles for Kate's Kitchen are due.



HOLY WEEK

April 2: Palm Sunday

9- 11:30 a.m. UWF Bake Sale

9- noon Gathering to make cards & more for our Friends at Home bags

Easter plant orders are due.

April 6: 7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday service

April 7: Good Friday

April 9: Easter service at 10:00 a.m.



So. Hadley Methodist Church

Grab & Go Reuben Sandwiches



March 17 5:00 to 5:30 p.m. \$12.00

Menu: Reuben Sandwich Dessert Beverage

To order: Call: 413 532-0500 Text 413 695-1212
Email: office@umcsouthhadley.org

Meal will be delivered to your car. Pull into the church driveway and you will be directed on where to line up, pay for your order and it will be brought to your car. Easy peasy!

If you will help prepare the food call or email the church.
It's fun and help is appreciated.

'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 26th. 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.

Hope for the Homeless

Once a week, help bring a cup of hot cocoa & a muffin to some homeless folks. Needed each week someone to make muffins or make and deliver the muffins & hot chocolate. If you will help text or call the church office or Pastor Joe.

- 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 and YouTube

Pastor Joe DeGrande 413 237-6823

Pastorjoe.umcsouthhadley@gmail.com

My office hours are Tuesday & Thursday 10:00-2:30 p.m.

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.



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
30 Carew Street
South Hadley, Massachusetts 01075-2705

Return address service requested.