



THE SPIRE

THE FEDERATED CHURCH NEWSLETTER

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

April 2020

Dear Friends,

As we take this strange journey dealing with the worldwide onslaught of COVID-19, along with you I continue to grieve the losses that have beset so many. We lament the deaths and debilitating illnesses that have assaulted so many. We also sorrow at the constrictions on daily life that have become necessary in its wake. For many the social distancing necessary to help stave off the threat has become a social isolation or cabin fever that can be wearing. I hold you all in my heart, and pray for God's peace for you.

We approach the days in which we celebrate the core of our faith, and church leadership has followed recommendations and decided to cancel live worship in our sanctuary for at least Palm/Passion Sunday (April 5), Maundy Thursday (April 9), and Easter (April 12). It's difficult for us to imagine: no joining together to greet Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, no shared marking of his grim last days, no raising our voices together to celebrate God's immense resurrecting power? Something will be missing. For all of us, these decisions make for a disconcerting time.

So I invite you to let these days of upheaval evoke the dashed hopes and shattered dreams of those earliest followers of Jesus. They had thought the arrival of the Messiah meant that everything would now fall into place. They had trusted that the world would now be in good order, its problems resolved, its tensions erased, its suffering relieved. Instead, the one they saw as Savior died a gruesome death. It must have seemed like the end.

Instead, what happened on the third day was that the one in whom they had placed their hopes was raised from death. And, in a nutshell, what they learned was this: nothing, not even death, could remove them from the realm of God's care. As the apostle Paul wrote, "Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" (I Corinthians 15:54-55). Even that God-awful event turned out to be a God-blessed event. Christ was risen! Christ is risen! All shall be well!

In these days of disruption and turmoil, I pray that we remember that Jesus has been through the worst life has to offer, and that Jesus is walking with us through these challenging days. We are not alone! I pray, too, that we are able to remember and celebrate that God's resurrecting power can and does make new life out of what can sometimes seem to be a totally lost cause. God will turn things around. God will provide grace even, and especially, in the challenges. God will make all things new! Thanks be to God!

May God tend to you and hold you in these fraught times. And may you know the deepest blessing and peace.

Yours in Christ,

Hamilton

UPCOMING WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday, April 5—Palm/Passion Sunday

Rev. Hamilton Throckmorton preaches
10 am Online Worship*
11:30 am Nature Hike at Frohring Meadows

Thursday, April 9—Maundy Thursday

Rev. Hamilton Throckmorton leading
8 pm Maundy Thursday Online Worship*

Sunday, April 12—Easter

Rev. Hamilton Throckmorton preaches
10 am Online Worship*
11:30 am Nature Hike at Frohring Meadows

Sunday, April 19**

Rev. Hamilton Throckmorton preaches
10 am Traditional Worship & Sunday School
11:30 am RISE to Shine Modern Worship

Sunday, April 26**

Rev. Michael Howard, UCC guest preacher
10 am Traditional Worship & Sunday School
11:30 am RISE to Shine Modern Worship

** In-person worship has been canceled through Easter on April 12. You can access livestreaming of the services at 10 am on our YouTube channel: [YouTube.com/TheFederatedChurch](https://www.youtube.com/TheFederatedChurch). There is also a link at the top of the Federated Home Page: www.fedchurch.org.*

*** Worship on April 19 and beyond is tentative, depending on recommendations from the Ohio Governor and the CDC. Stay tuned to your emails and the COVID-19 updates on www.fedchurch.org.*

If you are not currently receiving the weekly Thursday email from Federated, please contact Melinda at smithm@fedchurch.org to be added.

Please forward prayer requests to Kiersti Critchfield kcritchfield@fedchurch.org or 440.247.6490 x103. Our Pastoral Care Team and our Prayer and Praise Team will pray for your requests.



News & Info

Capital Campaign Update

With the crazy winter weather we had in February and March – sunny, then ice, then snow all in one day! – it was great for our custodial crew to have access to a new gator to salt the parking lot and sidewalks.

In addition, the Properties Committee recently commissioned an engineer to survey the lot and create a design of the new parking lot that the capital campaign will be funding. This initial work needs to be done to prepare for the Request for Proposals that'll be sent out later this year.

There is more rejoicing as **the green stripes are no longer part of our parking lot rules as of March 23!** Given the fact that we are hosting so many more programs at our Bell Street facility, the church keeps running out of usable parking lot spaces. The Properties Committee will let the Village of Chagrin Falls know that we can no longer be a part of the Chagrin Falls Employee Parking Permit program. Parking in the lot will be for our own congregational use or by groups who rent out space in our building.



TOS Spotlight

Sensory Lap Pads

Last month, Lesley Humpal, Executive Director at Hamlet Village, called the church office to thank Federated for the Sensory Lap Pads that were donated there. She was very grateful and said the timing was perfect! As it turns out, Carol Grubb was the person who had dropped them off and TOS got a chance to speak with Carol about this activity.



3 overlapping sensory lap pads

Several years ago, Federated's Tapestry Circle began making the sensory lap pads after a member of Hospice of the Western Reserve spoke to their group. Their residents love the different textures that are sewn into the lap pads; so to encourage sensory-rich activities, Carol assembles lap pad kits with fabrics that feel very different from each other; for example, flannel, cotton, burlap, felt, silk, upholstery fabric, ribbons, lace, and rickrack.

In the past, the lap pads have been delivered to church members, as well as to Arden Courts and Hospice of the Western Reserve for their residents. This was the first time that Hamlet was a recipient because more Federated people and church groups are getting in on the act. The lap pads are cut, assembled, and sewn by Carol and her neighbor, as well as Joan Elliott, Mari Hageman, a Primetime group, and the new sewing group coordinated by Lynne Kessell called Helping Hands. It's been a real gift for Carol's neighbor, as she has been dealing with the ramifications of a lung cancer diagnosis. Sewing the kits that Carol assembles allows her to focus on something other than herself during her difficult days. This program relies on donated fabric and notions which can be sewn into the lap pads. Carol loves to combine the various donations to create thematic lap pads: pets, zoo animals, patriotic, seasonal, holiday, etc.

In addition to helping with the lap pads, this same Primetime Group also sews and stuffs Hospice Pillows for patients at the Hospice of the Western Reserve. Phyllis Ference coordinates the group now and mentioned that they were originally organized by Eva Jean Trace about 20 years ago. It's so touching that some of the current recipients of the pillows have been previous members of the group. Recently, the Hospice of the Western Reserve expressed their gratitude for the regularly-donated pillows by coming to a group meeting at church and bringing cookies to thank the members in person!

It is such a blessing to have members of our faith family who are so willing to gather in spirit and serve in love. God's word in action!



This Primetime group meets every month to finish making the pillows

Federated Happenings

Social Justice Advocacy Ministry (SJAM) News

SJAM is a group of Federated folks learning about and taking action on a wide variety of societal justice issues such as gun violence, criminal justice, LGBTQ+ rights, environmental issues, racial justice, voter registration and immigration as well as other areas of concern. Sound interesting? We welcome you to join us at our next meeting. Bring a friend. SJAM is open to all in the community who are looking for ways to work for social justice. If you would like to learn more, please contact Kathy Franz (440.543.4086 or kfranz17114@gmail.com).

New Bulletin Board!

As you enter Fellowship Hall look to the right to see the Bulletin Board highlighting the Social and Environmental Justice activities at Federated and become involved. You are Welcome and Needed.

Next SJAM Meeting — TBA.

Environmental and Creation Justice

Why do we focus on Environmental and Creation Justice at Federated Church?

Global warming will hurt the ones we're told to love: the poor and vulnerable....Climate change will strike hard against the very people we're told to care for and love, amplifying hunger and poverty, and increasing risks of resource scarcity that can exacerbate political instability, and even create or worsen refugee crises. Then there's pollution, biodiversity loss, habitat fragmentation, species extinction: climate change makes all those worse, too."

— Katharine Hayhoe, Climate Scientist and Christian, *New York Times*, November 3, 2019.

The global theme for Earth Day 2020 is "climate action." The enormous challenge — but also the vast opportunities — of action on climate change have distinguished the issue as the most pressing topic for the 50th anniversary of the Earth Day Celebration, April 22. Climate change represents the biggest challenge to the future of humanity and the life-support systems that make our world habitable.

100 Things to do to Protect, Care for, and Save the Earth

Be looking for the document inviting you to explore 100 things you and your family can do to protect, care for and save the earth. We all can do our part. We created this 100 Things To Do, in honor of Federated Church's 100th anniversary.

A Note of Thanks

To our Federated Church Family,

This community of faith has been the biggest part of the Foley Family's life for over 50 years. Bill would have loved experiencing all the love and appreciation that was shown on Saturday, February 22 (his 81st birthday)! Thank you to all the many people who made this day a celebratory service! The Federated Church is much more than a building. It's the people who join together to create a community that takes care of each other!

When Bill came home under hospice care, Hamilton and Mark were here to give us support and offer comfort to our entire family. Along with the hospice nurses, the church reached out with pastoral care from Kiersti Critchfield-Carty, Peggie Jo Shinagawa and her many volunteers, plus our dear friend and colleague, Larry Trace! And thank you to the Chancel Choir and Joshua Konow and Marcia Snavelly for singing Bill's anthem! It meant a lot to me!

I am so grateful for everyone's help with preparations for Bill's Celebration of Life! Your expertise and love took so much stress away from the many decisions that had to be made. Thank you for being there for my family and me! God's blessings are right here at The Federated Church!

Love,
Carol Foley

Mission & Service

Parish Nurse Corner

Mary has bipolar disorder and has difficulty staying on her psychiatric meds. In the past, when I first knew her, she couldn't pay for them, or she would forget or refuse to take them. Self-medicating was a problem as well. Somehow, she got romantically involved with Bob and they started coming to the clinic for basic supplies, encouragement, and acceptance. They were unemployed and lived in a "bando" (abandoned building) with no utilities. Bob often expressed to me his frustration with Mary's mercurial personality and bad temper, and I told him it would be his job (for a while) to make sure Mary got the right meds at the right time. Then, Pastor Doug agreed to marry them in February 2019 and I attended their sweet but rag tag wedding. For the bride's bouquet, Lynne Kessell donated some of her husband's origami flowers which Mary carried proudly. Mary and Bob honeymooned at a Red Roof Inn, and their wedding dinner was pizza, funded by St. Paul's.

A few months later, Mary was pregnant and we all were skeptical about the health of the baby, living conditions of

the parents, their coping skills, and income. But through social services arranged through St. Paul's, these issues were largely addressed before the HEALTHY baby girl was born. Both Bob and Mary were thrilled but they also needed to prove that they could be good parents before their daughter was released from foster care. This process included frequent mandatory classes, steady employment, and visits with their baby. Their vows were renewed on Valentine's Day, 2020, and the Kessell flowers were carried once again. Baby Lizzie was in attendance. They plan to bring their beautiful daughter home in Sept.

Your donations enable the clinic's mission to flourish. Bringing folks in is just the first step. To that end, donations of men's and women's underwear and socks, hygiene products, and cash for shopping are always appreciated. Thank you for your generosity!

Kathy Kolcaba, RN (volunteer two mornings per week)
440.655.2098

Family, Youth, and Children's Ministry

GROUP Work Camp 2020

Rev. Mark Simone is delighted to share that the Sr. High Youth have been invited to return to the Mackinac Band of Chippewa and Ottawa Indians in St. Ignace, Michigan for work camp the week of **July 11 to 18**. Lisa Powers, the head of the tribe, has asked us to come and continue the work we began in 2018, when we replaced windows and doors, resided the building, firmed up the foundation and the roof line among other jobs.

This trip we are being asked to install kitchen cabinets, insulate and dry wall the great room, and maybe roof the building. Lots of cool things to do.

The cost of the trip will be under \$600 and it is open to any Federated High School youth and their friends. Day off will be to explore Mackinac Island.

For more information or to have a registration packet emailed to you, please contact Mark Simone at msimone@fedchurch.org. FRIENDS WELCOME!

South Africa Work Camp 2021

After a number of requests from youth and adults, Mark Simone is testing the waters with hopes of offering a work camp and cultural exploration trip to South Africa approximately in the range of **March 15 to 30, 2021**. It takes a year to plan these trips, so I am looking for those who would be seriously interested. For youth, the trip would fall over the 2021 Spring Break schedule but would require missed days from school. In the past we have arranged this with schools with no problems. The trip would be open to all Federated members and friends.

We would be working with a professional hosting company called Pride of Africa Tours and the costs would be inclusive (with the exception of airfare.) The trip would occur in the off season and likely be less expensive than during the summer. Our target cities will be Johannesburg and the Cape Town region. Our missions would be to work in establishing a childcare facility in Joburg and assisting in a school setting in Cape Town.

For now, if this sounds like something you would like to be part of, email Mark at msimone@fedchurch.org.