
News from the Hill . . .

Rev. Amanda Ostrove, Pastor

JULY 2020

E-Mail: CChurchEaston@gmail.com

Meditations from the Pastor

"For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."

Matthew 18:20

I know there is quite a few people who are anxious to get together for in person worship again. When it comes to Christian faith, community worship, community fellowship is an intricate part of the expression of Christian faith, especially for Congregationalists. It is how we determine the presence of the Spirit in our community and in our lives. So I understand and certainly feel the frustration at having to continue social distancing. But I assure you that the deacons and I have heard your concerns and desires and are working on plans to do so in a safe manner with multiple phases that will hopefully bring us back into in person worship together.

But safety has to be considered when making these decisions. Safety is foremost in my mind. So when we return to worship together there will still be restrictions that are recommended by the CDC, the State of CT, and the United Church of Christ and worship will look different. But be assured that these changes are not permanent changes but temporary adjustments to be lifted when we are told that it is safe to do so. We appreciate people's willingness to volunteer and will be in contact with people as to roles that will be needed to keep everyone safe as we gather to pray, seek guidance, and to feel the presence of Christ in the fellowship of our congregation.

In the meantime, remember that though we continue to meet online through Zoom that fellowship is still available though from a distance. You can reach out to one another through telephone calls, setting social distancing visits outside, and socialized picnics outside at a distance. Reach out to one another and offer fellowship, just remember to be safe about it. Remember to wear your masks, keep 6ft of distance, and wash your hands frequently. And remember that Christ is wherever there are one or two of us gathered in his name. This applies to online and gatherings at a distance.

If you are like me and need music to feel the true power and presence of God, then you can find anyone of the hymns on YouTube and join with the singing from the comforts your home. And if you need to come in to have some counseling to help you with this time please know that I am in the office Sunday through Thursday from 9 to 2:00. You may call or schedule an appointment to speak with me. I hope to see each of you soon. And we will keep you up to date on where we are in regards to reopening for in person worship and hope to welcome you to worship in person again very soon.



Sunday Worship

10:00 am

Via Zoom



Council Chair—Phillip A. Doremus Deacon Chair—Nathalie Taranto

Sexton—Sara Scoran Secretary—Laura Tulley

Phone — 203-261-2527

Website — www.eastonchurch.org

Email: CChurchEaston@gmail.com

Boards and Committee Reports

Facilities

Council met and approved by consensus replacement of the failed hot water system with a new heat pump hot water heater at \$1,370.00 plus plumbing and electrical contractor fees which are to be determined.

Christian Education

This year we will not be offering VBS because of the virus. But we are hoping to offer Sunday School at some point in this the coming year once it is safe to do so. Until then please find children's activities on the church website on the Christian Education page.

We finished up Bible Study for the Spring on Zoom. Because of the use of Zoom, we were able to have people join us for Bible Study who have long ago moved away. We study 1 Corinthians and will be continuing our study of Paul and the Corinthian Church in the Fall with the study of 2 Corinthians. We are looking to offer this study on Zoom to allow as many people as possible to join us and to bring their friends. I will keep everyone up to date on plans relating to when and where this study will be happening.



UCC and CT UCC

So on the conference level, they have offering advice and suggestions for worship and ministry during the pandemic that the deacons and I have been reading and using for making plans. They still highly recommend continuing with online worship until the fall. But if you are interested in their suggestions for those who do choose to open for worship you can follow this link: <https://www.sneucc.org/phasingforward>

On another note the our conference minister Rev. Kent Siladi is resigning from his position effective on July 30, 2020 as he is moving on to working with philanthropies on the national UCC level.

Boards and Committee Reports

TAC Turnaround

TAC will be discussing postponing our annual tag sale until the fall as we wait for Corona virus to subside and for people to be able to gather together safely again.

Next TAC Meeting: July 19, 2020 following worship and coffee hour

Stewardship



Even though we are not meeting in person on Sundays, your gifts are essential to keeping the church running in this unprecedented time. So please mail in your pledges and your weekly gifts to the church office.

We appreciate your support in this time.

Quarterly Statements should be coming this month. If something seems off please contact the church office.



Instructions for Zoom

Zoom worship will continue even when we start in person worship in the hall. You will still be able to join from online if you are not quite ready to join us in person yet.

To join us on zoom follow the link or call the phone number that I will email to you before worship. To follow along in worship open the files posted on the church website or emailed to you earlier in the week. You do not need the files to join. All are welcome to come and feel the community at worship, to join us in prayer, and to hear the scriptures and feel the word of God.

Come and Join us for worship on Sunday mornings online at 10:00AM. Come just as you are giving new meaning to the hymn "Just as I am, without one plea". Come with your tea, with your coffee, in pajamas and comfortable clothes and still worship God and seek support and a word of hope.

What Might Worship Look Like?

Worship in the era of Covid-19 will look very different. These are the recommendations made by the CDC, the State of CT, and the United Church of Christ.

- Unison and Responsive readings and prayers would be done by the pastor with the congregation encouraged to read along silently
- Hymns will be sung by a soloist (likely Rev. Amanda) from the pulpit
- Offering will not be taken in the traditional way but offering plates will be located at the doors for people to drop their donations on the way in or out
- Pews will be roped off
- Bulletins will be located in the pews or on the chairs in the fellowship hall
- People will be asked to leave slowly allowing each family to leave one at a time
- Communion will be observed but individually wrapped communion will be picked up on the way out to be taken in each person's car
- Everyone will be required to wear masks at all times
- Coffee hour will be virtual and at a later time in the day on Zoom
- Temperatures will be taken at the door - temperatures of 100 degrees or more will be asked to seek medical attention and we will offer up prayers for you
- Prayer requests must be sent into the church office in advance of worship. There will be no sharing from the floor.
- Announcements must be made by email to the church in advance of worship. There will be no sharing from the floor.

The CDC believes that in person worship will be risky because of the prolonged period of time so many people are in one room together and the size of the room and distancing doesn't make a huge difference. So if you have compromised health please stay home and join us online.



What Do I Need to Do to Join In Person Worship

- Come wearing a mask
- Be willing to have temperature taken at the door
- Hand sanitizer will be offered at the door for use upon entering and leaving
- Let us know in advance if you plan to join us and with how many people
- If you are able volunteer to help with needed volunteer positions



Volunteers Needed

- Setting up the hall
- Taking temperatures at the door (thermometer will be provided with gloves)



"If you want to touch the past, touch a rock. If you want to touch the present, touch a flower. If you want to touch the future, touch a life."
—Author unknown



Ways to Stay Connected to the Community

Just because for many of us social distancing is continuing this doesn't mean that we can't stay connected. This would be a great opportunity to pick up your directory and to call people and develop relationships just through a conversation. If you would like a directory, please contact the church office.

Phases of Reopening

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Zoom Worship in Church Hall	Zoom Worship in the Hall People Present	Worship in Sanctuary with Zoom Option	Return to Normal Worship
Carole and Amanda Present	Carole and Amanda Present	Carole and Amanda Present	Return to Normal functioning of church
No Parishioners yet	Open to those who want to join 18 or fewer	Roped off pews	
No Coffee Hour	Temperature taking at the door	RSVP	
Send out survey	Flow of traffic to be directed using signs	Temperature taking at the door	
Figure out what we need for next phase	No hymn singing/just soloist	Flow of traffic	
Office reopens with Appointments	No collectors/ushers	Sanitizing following worship	
	Chairs will be disinfected by Sara Scoran	Offering masks at the door/all people wearing masks	
	RSVP before hand	No Communion/ individually wrapped to be taken in cars	
	All people need to wear masks	No Coffee Hour	
	Prepackaged communion	Zoom option either during church or following church – No music	
	No Coffee Hour	No hymn singing/soloist	
	No passing of the peace/ hugs/hand shaking	No passing of the peace/ hugs/hand shaking	
	<u>Office Open- Call first, masks, appointments</u>	Office Open- Call first, masks, appointments	

Right now we are currently in Phase 1 and working towards Phase 2.

We are looking to reopen in person worship with a limited amount of people on August 2nd in the fellowship hall.

We do not have any dates for additional phases because this is changing by the day as we learn more about this illness and see how the state fairs with reopening.

Please note that if Covid-19 has a come back church may once again revert to zoom worship with stay in place procedures. This plan will change as we learn and tweak things based on



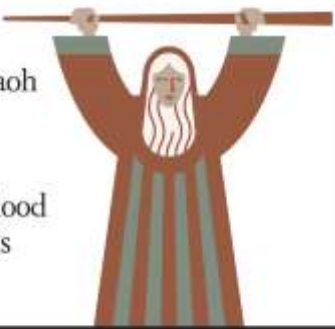
Willow

The billowing branches of the "weeping willow" symbolize mourning, especially of the Israelites as they endured captivity. The willow, which grows well in marshy areas, is associated in the Bible with fruitful, well-watered land (see Ezekiel 17:5). In descriptions of Old Testament festivals of praise, God's people were told "to take branches from luxuriant trees — from palms, willows and other leafy trees — and rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days" (Leviticus 23:40, NIV).

?? ? Bible Quiz ? ?

Which of these was not one of the 10 plagues God brought against Egypt to persuade Pharaoh to let the Hebrew people go?

- A. an abundance of frogs
- B. the Nile River turned to blood
- C. the collapse of the pyramids
- D. thick darkness

An illustration of Moses, an elderly man with a long white beard, wearing a red and white striped robe. He is holding a long wooden staff horizontally above his head with both hands. The background is white.

Answer: C (See Exodus 7:14-12:32.)



**Back to School
Backpacks and Supplies
for
Covenant to Care**

Jorge Ball, our adopted Social Worker, has given us the names of children in need for backpacks and supplies for going back to school.

We will need backpacks and supplies for 8 children. Please call or e-mail the office if you are interested in signing up.

**Back packs and supplies should be dropped off by Monday, August 10th.
Please call ahead to arrange a time.**



Merton House

We continue to collect sample or travel sized toiletries for Merton House. Please drop them off any-time and place in the basket at the entrance to the church hall.

Your donations are greatly appreciated.





Confirming Deacon for July 2020

Nathalie Taranto

Confirming Deacon for August 2020

Leon March

Upon Reopening

If you would like to participate in worship by handling the offering or hosting coffee hour, please call a member of the Board of Deacons or call or email the church office.






Altar Flower and Coffee Hour Hosting for 2020



Please see our **Flower Calendar** if you would like to celebrate a special date of a birthday, anniversary or other special occasion. You may order or provide the flowers yourself or have the office order them.



July 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5 10:00 AM Online Worship with Communion Deacon's Meeting	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 10:00 AM Online Worship	13	14 12:00 PM Online Outreach Meeting	15	16	17 	18
19 10:00 AM Online Worship 11:30 PM Online TAC Meeting	20	21	22	23	24	25
26 10:00 AM Online Worship	27	28	29	30	31	

August 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 10:00 AM Online Worship with Communion Deacon's Meeting	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 10:00 AM Online Worship	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 10:00 AM Online Worship	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 10:00 AM Online Worship	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 10:00 AM Online Worship	31 					



NEWS FROM THE HILL . . .
THE CONGREGATIONAL
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