



Crossroads

*News from South Congregational Church
United Church of Christ*

*45 Maple Street, Springfield, MA 01105
(413) 732-0117 www.sococh.org*

*We are an inclusive community of faith; courageously following Christ;
serving our neighbors in love.*

June 2020



God's creatures sing! – but for now, God's people take a break from singing, at least together.
The day will come when we will gather together again and raise our voices in song. Until
then, we pray for the health and safety of the entire world.

From the Bridge Pastor

The following is an announcement made in an email by Rev. Lindsey regarding Governor Baker's decision to allow houses of worship to reopen. It was sent on May 21, 2020 to many South Church members and friends and it is reprinted here for those without access to email.

We are not returning to in-person worship!

The health and well-being of our South Church community continues to be the guiding priority in our decision making regarding in-person gathering. Until the safety of gathering in person is more assured, we will continue to be the church while not gathering in person. We have not closed, we are open, we are already the church and we will continue to be, though we will not be together physically.

Gatherings such as religious worship services are a high-risk context for the spread of Covid-19.

The National Leadership of the United Church of Christ (UCC) [states](#): "As leaders in the United Church of Christ, we want to send a clear and strong message to congregations who are considering going back to meeting in-person: We urge you to wait until ALL safety concerns have been addressed."

We are going to wait.

The Southern New England Conference of the UCC of which we are a part [is advising](#) that churches in the Conference should hold off resuming in-person worship until *at least* the end of the summer.

We are going to hold off resuming in-person worship until *at least* the end of the summer; it may indeed be much longer if gathering in person cannot be done safely.

We are cultivating community in different and meaningful ways now. Though we are not in the building, we have not stopped being church! It is beautiful and powerful to know we miss one another and to know how so many of you have reached out, *wanting* to be in each other's physical presence again. We will be together again in-person in the newly-renovated building someday, someday. But not today. Until that day, beloveds in Christ, we can do this!

We can take in some wisdom from scripture to encourage us and help us endure:

Do you see what this means—all these pioneers who blazed the way, all these veterans cheering us on? It means we'd better get on with it. Strip down, start running—and never quit! No extra spiritual fat, no parasitic sins. Keep your eyes on *Jesus*, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed—that exhilarating finish in and with God—he could put up with anything along the way.

- Hebrews 12, from *The Message interpretation of the Bible*

As we let the long-time duration of this new Covid-with-us reality arrive more fully into our lives, we can find opportunity, creativity and connection here, and we can lean into the ever-present, boundary-crossing Spirit to take us to the places of new life.

- Rev. Lindsey

JUNE WORSHIP SCHEDULE (See instructions below for joining Zoom worship services)

All Sundays in June: Zoom worship at 10 a.m. with Rev. Lindsey Peterson.

To access Sunday Zoom worship: from your phone, dial **1-929-205-6099**. At the prompt, enter access code 975 811 240 followed by the # key. Then enter the password: 041663 and the # key again. From your computer, tablet or smart phone, log on to **zoom.us**. Click on "join a meeting" and enter the access code and password.

Wednesday check-in meetings at 11:30 a.m.: The access code is **289 850 5499**. Same phone number as above. No password is needed.

Friday Night Facebook Live: Song and prayer every Friday night at 5:30 p.m. with Rev. Lindsey Peterson on the South Congregational Church Facebook page.

Please pray for: The Farming Community, all Health Care Workers, all Essential Workers, First Responders, Police and Fire Departments, and all those suffering with Covid-19. Also, Karen Buske, Gordon Dodge, Winfield Moore, Marjorie Munroe, Leila Cohen, Timmy Miller, Priscilla Price, Deborah Price, Silvia Walker, Julius Dixon, Jan McDonald, Dick White, Tim Scussel, MaryAnn Scussel, Mike Wright, Rev. Louis Mitchell, Kelleen Weed's friend Jean, Bob Dowd, Jeff Johnson, Jane Closson, Rubin Reyes, Bob Stack, Beverly Lynch, Silvio Vasquez and his family in Venezuela, Peter Nelson, Renee Silva, Pastor Clemmons, Anthony Wysocki, Don Russell, Roland Fenton, Bert Montagna, Dan Myers, Irene Rappa, Stella Boulware, Shirley McCready, Beryl Kress, Carter Pharo (Jackie's nephew), Ginny Robbins, and John Burris.



We are sad for the passing of Teri Wilson-Hinch's son Michael Brown and send our prayers and condolences to Teri and her family.

Scholarship Deadline Approaching: Each year South Congregational Church offers scholarships. To apply, click on the links below, or call Jackie at **413-654-8086** for hard copies. **June 19**, is the deadline for completing the application and returning it to the committee chair, Elaine Lentino.

[Scholarship Application](#) [Scholarship Application Requirements](#)

Happy June Birthday!



1 Dawn Ferrari
3 Ann Southworth
5 Ellen Gallagher
12 Margie Nelson
12 Jamie Wainwright

14 Larry Picard
19 Jamie Buske
19 Merle Olson
25 Linda Johnson

26 Susan Rice

A Condensed June Calendar

- Sundays at 10 a.m. – Zoom worship (see worship schedule on page 3)
- Wednesday, June 3 & 10 at 11:30 a.m. – Zoom check-in (see worship schedule)
- Fridays at 5:30 p.m. – Facebook Live services with Rev. Lindsey
- June 12 & 30 at 10:30 a.m. – South Church Cooks
- Every day except Wednesday – Loaves & Fishes at noon and 5 p.m.
- Sunday, June 28, after worship: **Congregational meeting to vote on the budget!**

Church Office at Jackie's House

If you need to get in touch with the church office, please note that Jackie continues to work from home during this time. The voicemail is checked on the office phone, but please feel free to call Jackie on her cell phone or text her. Her number is: **413-654-8086** or you can always email her at: secretary@sococh.org

Contact information for Rev. Lindsey:

Rev. Lindsey's email is revlindseypeterson@gmail.com, or you can reach her on her cell phone: **978-430-7531**.

Contact information for Larry:

Larry's email is lpicard@sococh.org, or you can reach him on his cell phone: **413-348-3729**.



Transportation Needed

Sue Wood is asking for transportation from Hampden to Westfield. She would be happy to pay for gas and time spent. Please call her for further information: 413-231-3757 or email her at: snogsue01105@yahoo.com

Construction Progresses



The back parking lot is being graded and made ready for paving, while beautiful new tile has been installed on the floor of the north vestibule.

Director of Music

Have you read Rev. Lindsey's letter on page 2 yet? Maybe you read it last week in the weekly email blast. Are you dismayed by the idea that we may not gather together again in the South Church building until the end of the summer, if not longer? I miss seeing you all, I miss making music with our wonderful choir, I miss playing the grand organ and the beautiful Steinway piano in our sanctuary and I miss creating and presenting worship with Rev. Lindsey.

But, as your Music Director, the one who is supposed to have some expertise in certain areas, like singing, it would be extremely irresponsible of me to tell you that it's okay to be together again, even though our governor has given the green light for houses of worship to meet again. Here are the facts: 75 percent of our active congregation is over 65, the age at which the CDC has determined one is at higher risk of hospitalization and death from the disease. Add to that the health issues that some of our members of all ages have that compromise their immune system, and a real danger exists should the virus be transmitted as a result of our gathering together.

And here is a characteristic of our worship service that greatly increases the risk of transmission: singing! The act of singing requires that more air be pushed out of the lungs, air which passes virus-laden mucus in our lungs and trachea and exits the body in tiny, aerosol-like particles. Being so small, these particles don't fall to the ground like raindrops, in fact, they can float in the air for quite a long time.



So, it appears that singing is not a good idea. No gathering songs, no hymns, no doxology, no choir anthems. A soloist might be possible if a spot can be found where the singer can stand far enough from the congregation. It would also not be wise to have volunteers from the congregation walk up to the podium to read scripture or do the morning greeting and announcements, and forget passing a microphone around for prayers. Could we sit six feet apart from one another? Sure, as long as we can get into the church and to our seats without coming close to others. Now, let's consider the spaces we have available to us. The chapel is unusable because space for movement is very limited, especially since you can only get into a pew from one end. There is a bit more flexibility in the sanctuary, but we all know that warm-to-hot weather makes that space pretty unpleasant. We would not want to be in there until mid-September, at least, which is not too long before the predicted "second wave" of the pandemic. The Parish Hall? Maybe, if we have volunteers spacing people at the entryway and chairs set up with plenty of space between them. We would have to exit the space the same way, which would probably mean skipping coffee hour.

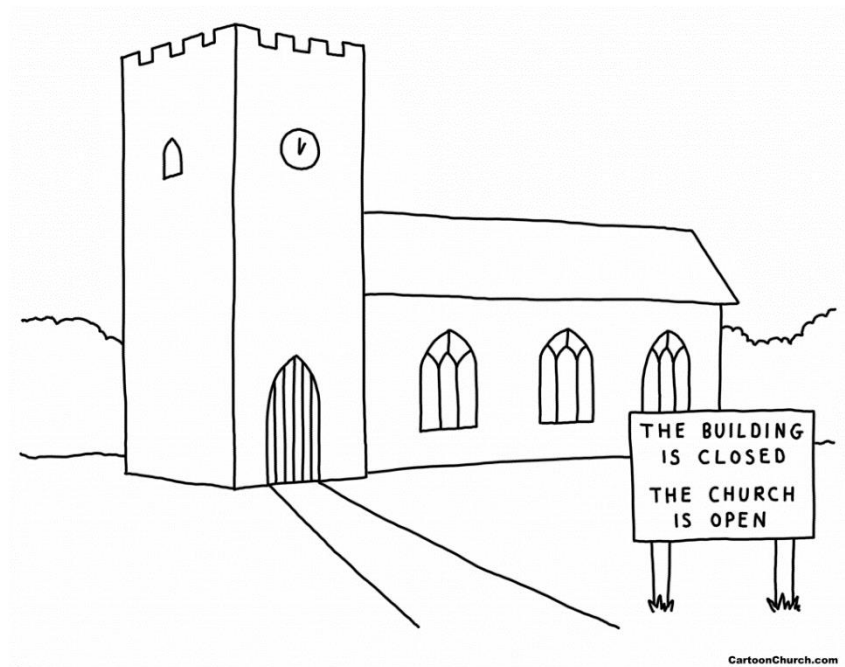
So, a worship service in a plain space with only instrumental music, scripture, sermon and prayers. No singing, no passing of the peace, no touching or breathing in other people's space and no fellowship time afterward. It reminds me of what we do every Sunday now, on our Zoom worship in the safety of our homes. Actually, those of you who are cautious and protective of your health are probably going to stay home anyway, so attendance at church worship could be greatly reduced from what we were used to. At least on Zoom we can include everyone who wants to be part of Sunday worship.

Am I afraid of contracting the virus myself? A little, although I've taken self-isolation pretty seriously so I'm not too worried about getting sick. On the other hand, what if I'm one of the asymptomatic carriers who can pass it along to others in the congregation without knowing it?

News on the singing front is a little scary. Experts are warning that church, school and other choirs and choral groups may have to avoid singing together until a vaccine *and* a cure is found, which could be up to two years. So, even after we venture gingerly back into our space at 45 Maple Street, worship will probably not look the same as it did for some time.

Here's the good news, as I see it. I continue to be impressed by the number of you who log on to our Zoom worship every Sunday morning. The message I get from that is that South Church really is about people, much more so than a historic building. You all care about being with each other in any way possible. With each passing week Rev. Lindsey and I and others hope to learn more about how to enhance our remote worship experience and include everyone who wants to be part of it.

I miss you all, but I want you to be safe! May God keep you well. - **Larry**



Have you made your pledge of support for 2020-21?

Pledge forms were mailed in May, and we hope you will show your support for South Church and its mission by pledging financial assistance in any amount you wish. If you need a form, call Jackie at 413-654-8086 or email her at secretary@sococh.org. Remember, the more money pledged, the more origami cranes will be made by our Moderator, Kim. Meanwhile, enjoy some charity-related graphics:



**SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
45 MAPLE STREET
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01105**

Rev. Lindsey Peterson	Bridge Pastor
Larry Picard	Director of Music Ministries
Jacqueline Fredenburgh	Office Manager
Cynthia Lage	Bookkeeper
Jared Spencer	Custodian
Polly Southworth	Sunday School Superintendent

Crossroads is the newsletter of South Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, in Springfield, Massachusetts. Stories and items of Church interest are welcome and are due by the 20th of the month for the next month's issue. Submissions should be sent to Larry Picard at lpicard@sococh.org or by post to his attention at the church address.

*South Congregational Church UCC www.sococh.org
A Jesus-centered, Open & Affirming Community*