

The Carversville Christian

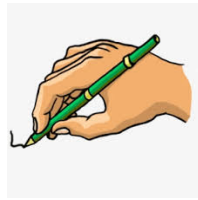
Vol. XXXVI No .5

Carversville United Church of Christ

May, 2020

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, we welcome you here."

FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN



Sabbath Economics and COVID-19

Occasionally (well, more than occasionally, actually) I come across other people's words that express important things better than I can. This is one of those instances. The author is Susan Taylor, vice-president of the Faith and Money Network Board of Directors. The Faith and Money Network is a ministry of Church of the Savior in Washington, DC. Its purpose is to "equip people to build honest, just, community-centered relationships with money."

"Fear not!" the angels are recorded as saying throughout Scripture. "Fear not!" is easier said than done during a pandemic, in my opinion. To ease the fear, I find myself looking for comforts of the soul.

Three things that comfort my spirit during the pandemic of 2020.

The Sabbath economy is at work everywhere.

People are picking up groceries for their neighbors, creating sidewalk art, and putting bears in windows for neighborhood kids to find on their family walks. If you share a need on neighborhood social media, people respond by sharing from their stash of disinfecting wipes or lending a tool or other supply to help people be able to stay at home.

People are creating ways to support local businesses, while businesses create ways to safely continue to serve their customers. Artists worldwide share their music and theater online. People are literally risking their lives to deliver milk and toilet paper to our neighborhood stores.

Medical professionals show up day after day, facing down their fears to take care of others. Most people are sacrificing to stay home to keep each other healthy.

In "normal" times, our ways of daily living are too often antithetical to the vision of God's economy, but when a crisis arises, we look for ways to make sure everyone has what they need. We know how to do this Sabbath Economics thing!

Sabbath for our planet

Our planet gets a sabbath, a rest from human production and consumption and travel and extraction.

I delight in pictures from cities around the world—cities I will never see in person—restored to health and beauty because human pollution is on hold. Wild animals are exploring suburbs because human activity has almost stopped, leaving space for them in space that was once theirs to roam. I take great comfort in how quickly our earth can heal herself.

We are not in this alone

Even in the isolation of our households in lockdown, we know that across the globe, people share this vulnerability—physical separation and

grief forced on us by the pandemic. We are videoconferencing and texting and throwing kisses from car windows as we drive by the houses of our loved ones we cannot see in person right now.

When the physical distancing restrictions began and I felt my fear start to ramp up, I thought about my precious church community and remembered that I am not alone. If I need something, people will help me, as I will help them. Friends, families, and congregations worldwide are imagining new ways to reach out to each other. Community, community, community.

These comforts may not help me tomorrow, as my fears seem to shift day by day. They may not feel like comforts to you at all; our comforts are as personal as our fears. But in the naming of them, I have found some comfort, some reminders of what matters most to me. “Fear not!” say the angels. I respond, “I’m working on it.”

— Pastor Fogal



SEE YOU IN JUNE!

The Pastor's Cabinet has determined that we will continue to suspend worship services in the church sanctuary throughout May. Too many of our congregation qualify as being vulnerable to Covid-19, and all indications are that Pennsylvania and New Jersey will continue shelter-in-place mode for several more weeks. This means we will not hold our annual Memorial Sunday ritual in the cemetery, since we will still be doing Virtual Village Church that Sunday.



COMMUNION SUNDAY, MAY 3, 2020

Our Virtual Village Church will include a brief communion service on Sunday, May 3. This will follow the prayers.

Observing communion online feels very different from the experience of sharing communion together in person. Tens of thousands of churches are doing this, however, to wide appreciation.

Obviously, ushers will not distribute the communion elements. Viewers simply obtain before the communion ritual their bread and wine (this can be wheat crackers and orange juice, if you like—the symbols are what we want them to be), which we will all consume “together” at the right moment in the liturgy.

We hope this will be a meaningful opportunity for us to be spiritually together while we are physically apart.

Jingles is practicing social distancing! Please continue to save your coins for the Jingle Jar until we’re together again in person.



TREASURER'S REPORT

Submitted by Cheryl Costella

YTD as of 3/31/20

Receipts	\$ 26,488
Expenses	<u>(39,441)</u>
Surplus/(Deficit)	(12,953)
Investment Income	<u>731</u>
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	<u>(12,222)</u>

The church is currently running at a deficit for the year. This is not atypical for the first quarter and compared to last year's (\$14K) deficit we are actually 7.51% better than last year.

Compared to last year at this time, a few items to consider:

1. Overall giving is up **40%**!
2. Our renters have left so we will lose \$1.2K per month

TREASURER'S TROVE

Submitted by Cheryl Costella

I hope everyone is healthy and following social distancing to protect themselves and stay healthy.

I wanted to remind everyone that the church can take donations through Paypal. There are two ways you can do it:

1. Sign in to Paypal and send money using our email. carversvilleucc@gmail.com
2. Simply go to our awesome website at www.carversvilleucc.org and there is a "Giving" button in the very top right. It will take you to a page to enter your Paypal info.

I also wanted to let everyone know about the PPP and EIDL loans that you have heard about on the news. Although churches do not typically qualify for Small Business Administration (SBA)

assistance, the CARES act allowed for 501(3)(c) non-profit organizations (including religious orgs.) in the funding.

I applied for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) the first day the program opened which was April 3rd. As you have probably heard on the news, the funding was used up quite quickly and before many businesses benefitted. Congress and the President are working on a) getting more funding and b) pulling some of the money back from larger companies that probably shouldn't have benefitted.

That being said, our bank Univest, is continuing to process the loan requests so if/when more funding becomes available, the applications will already be finalized. The great thing about this funding is it won't have to be paid back, as long as we continue to pay our staff. The amount requested was based off payroll information I had to provide so we shouldn't have any issues.

The other loan I applied for is the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL). This one I applied for directly through the SBA. They are offering an emergency loan advance of up to \$10,000. The advance will not have to be repaid.



It's been hard not greeting each other with a smile in person on Sunday mornings as we practice social distancing and are physically apart. However,

through the hard work of many we have been able to gather for a virtual message each Sunday and be spiritually together.

We thank Pastor Fogal for his weekly trips to our beautiful sanctuary to share an inspiring weekly message with us. Pete Putman's taping and editing talents have allowed us to be visually connected. Our web designer, Wayne Anderson of Time for Design, has donated his time and talents to make the necessary hook ups possible. Elizabeth Richardson has been our liaison and coordinator. A bonus has been the beautiful music recently provided by Susan Whiteneck and Lynn Bullock. Our office manager, Chris Ochadlick, gets out the reminders to let us know that the service is ready for viewing, and also mails hard copies of the service to those who do not have computer access.

A heartfelt thank you to all who have kept us connected spiritually until we can celebrate the time when we can once again share a Sunday morning smile in person!



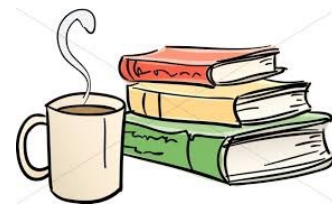
MAKING PRAYER REQUESTS FOR OUR VIRTUAL VILLAGE CHURCH

One result of the pandemic we are living with is that no one has escaped the need to alter their habits of daily living. We have practiced new patterns of behavior to the point that, in many ways, we have established a new "ordinary." Anticipating and

"attending" our Virtual Village Church is an example of a new pattern that helps us still feel connected to each other.

At our recent Pastor's Cabinet meeting, we reviewed our online worship. Two suggestions from that conversation have become part of our worship beginning on Sunday, April 26: including prayer requests and adding the Lord's Prayer.

We traditionally make prayer requests on the pew cards provided for that purpose. Obviously, that won't work now. So Pastor's Cabinet resolved that we should contact Pastor Fogal directly with our prayer requests. We should use his personal contacts to request prayers: 610-945-4955, or bobfogal31@gmail.com. He will be pleased to hear from you.



WHAT'S THE BOOK GROUP DOING?

The Book Group will NOT be meeting face to face until the coronavirus is under control. But through the miracle of modern technology we will be having a ZOOM Book Group on May 11 at 3 p.m. to discuss *The Girl Who Wrote In Silk*. We'll be emailing you the ZOOM connection info closer to the discussion date.

Our June discussion book will be *It All Comes Back To You* by Beth Duke. Yeah, a new, light, upbeat book to enjoy while staying at home!



BRIARLEAF ∞ APRIL, 2020

**Briarleaf Nursing & Convalescent Center
252 Belmont Ave in Doylestown, PA.**

Congratulations to Sean & Melissa Kraus who welcomed Vanessa Jane, their second daughter, on March 18 at 2:11 P.M.. She weighed 5 pounds and 9 ounces and joins big sister, Leah.

“I might have known,” said Eeyore. “After all, one can’t complain. I have my friends. Somebody spoke to me only yesterday. And was it last week or the week before that Rabbit bumped into me and said “Bother!” The Social Round. Always something going on.” Attributed to Eeyore by A. A. Milne.



Briarleaf is currently closed to all visitors and will be reviewing this policy on a week by week basis.

A big THANK YOU to Jeanne Brown for allowing us to have some beautiful Easter flowers to enjoy- at home!

During April we wrote 30 cards to cheer the residents at Briarleaf. We are making plans to replace our visit with a shower of cards again during May and will be compiling a list of recipients through the Briarleaf Activities Director. If you would like to write a short note to a Briarleaf resident on behalf of Carversville UCC, contact Catherine Halper at chalper@aol.com. The small investment of your time will yield rich rewards!

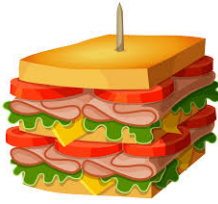


“To write is human, to receive a letter: divine!”
-Susan Lendroth

KNOW A GRADUATE?

If you have a child or grandchild who is graduating from high school or college, please submit a paragraph about the graduate to Cathy Price and Sue Wulf by May 20th so we can recognize them in the June newsletter.

During our church closure please remember to send your church offering to Carversville UCC at P.O. Box 26, Carversville.PA 18913.



MEN'S LUNCH

Please contact John Price for information about Men's Fellowship. Replace Jim Hale's name with John's contact information -215-348-4229 on the inside cover of your church directory.



MODERATOR'S MINUTE:

EVERY BREATHE WE TAKE

About the end of March this year, photos of distant mountain ranges seen for the first time in years on horizons began to pop-up on social media. The dramatic reduction in pollution is large enough to be seen from space!¹ By mid-April, an estimated 2 billion people (one quarter of the world's population) were under stay-at-home orders.

This is not the first time an epidemic has left its mark on the atmosphere. Throughout history, the spread of disease has been linked to lower emissions – even well before the industrial age.

Scientists² measuring tiny bubbles trapped in ancient ice cores found that epidemics such as the Black Death in Europe in the 14th Century, and the epidemics of diseases such as smallpox left subtle marks on atmospheric CO2 levels.

Times of change can foster insights about our own habits. Perhaps travelling less or cutting down on waste is worth it to improve the health of our planet.

It wasn't so long ago that we returned milk bottles, soda bottles and beer bottles to the store to be washed and sterilized and refilled. Our communities were designed for walking and bicycling. We washed and boiled the baby's diapers because who would put paper on a tender baby's bottom? We pegged clothes on a line to dry, letting the sun bleach the sheets and the wind dry the clothes.

Containers and clothing were made to last far longer than one use. We refilled writing pens with ink, and we replaced the razor blades in a razor. There was one electric outlet per room and labor-saving devices used manpower. Pride of place in the living room went to the piano. Dinner was a time for conversation, for listening as well as savoring home-cooked meals.

- Catherine Halper

¹ Scott Collis, Argonne National Laboratory, <https://news.wttw.com/2020/04/02/environmental-impact-covid-19-lockdowns-seen-space>.

² Julia Pongratz, professor for physical geography and land use systems at the University of Munich, Germany.



LOOKING FOR A PROJECT?

In 2019, the One Warm Scarf charity sent 300 scarves to men's homeless shelters in Phila and the Lehigh Valley. The need for men's hand knit or crocheted scarves continues. Scarves should be 7 to 10" wide and 60" long. Washable worsted weight yarn is best and can be of any color (s). Use left over yarn or purchase on line and fill some social distancing time knitting or crocheting for those less fortunate. Scarves can be brought to church when we can once again gather together to worship. Call Barbara Burger 215-345-1548 if you have questions.



NEWS FROM TROOP 64

from Samantha Johnson

Despite not being able to meet in person, we are having much success in keeping the Troop connected. Scouts have been meeting virtually for the past several weeks through Zoom. We welcomed four new scouts to the Troop just before we stopped meeting in person, so the virtual meetings have helped us get to know each other. The boys are working on requirements and making plans for a few upcoming campouts. Yes, campouts!! In the beginning of May the scouts will participate in their first virtual campout. Each family will set

up camp in their own backyard and we will connect online periodically over the weekend to complete requirements. The boys are excited to try this! We are also hoping that the scouts will still be able to attend summer camp in July at Camp Ockanickon.

We hope that all Carversville Church families are healthy and know that we are thinking of you all and can't wait to be able to hold our meetings at the church once more. Stay well!



PRAYING HANDS

Here is a list of those who cannot attend services and would benefit from receiving cards. We encourage you all to reach out to these people by sending them a card.

Card List for May

Charlie Furst- PO Box 221, Solebury, PA
18963-0221

Pearl Howard - c/o Future Care Chesapeake,
Room 208, 305 College Parkway,
Arnold, MD 21012

Jack King- 503 Windrush Bay Dr., Tarpon
Springs, FL 34689

McKenna Family- PO Box 223, Carversville,
PA 18913

Jim & Sally Seeton- 1850 Lower Mountain
Road West, Furlong, PA 18925



WANTING TO HELP ?????

“Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you a drink?”

(Matthew 25:37)

“Hunger” is an evocative word. Everyone understands what it feels like to be hungry. Our stomachs start rumbling. We get irritable. It becomes hard to think straight. To make those symptoms go away, we eat something.

How would we feel if we were standing in line with others, waiting for our turn, to pick up the bag of groceries that we hope will keep us and those we love from being hungry this week?

Our congregation’s leaders have directed \$500.00 each to two local organizations that are giving a bit of hope to the folks standing in line: the Central Bucks School District Farmer’s Market at Barclay Elementary School in Warrington, where Sue Wulf taught for 10 years; and Rolling Harvest Food Rescue that we have now supported for four years. We are making these gifts from the budgeted amount for mission and outreach the congregation approved earlier this year.

We have learned that many vendors are dramatically reducing prices for Rolling Harvest, which enables them to purchase more food for distribution at the Emergency Food Markets they are operating in our local communities.

So we are asking our members and friends to contribute to our church’s Rolling Harvest Fund. By doing so, we will help strengthen Rolling Harvest’s ability to purchase the food they need for distribution to people who need it.

Anyone can send a gift via check to Carversville UCC, PO Box 26, Carversville 18913, earmarked

for the Rolling Harvest Food Fund. We will forward those gifts to Rolling Harvest in a timely manner.

Articles for the June newsletter should be sent to Cathy Price at cathyprice2@verizon.net and Sue Wulf at slswulf@comcast.net by Wednesday, May 20. Thanks!

CONTACT US!

Dr. Robert Fogal, Pastor

- Tues. & Fri.: Office- 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. and by appointment

Cell: 610.945.4955

Email: bobfogal31@gmail.com

Chris Ochadlick, Office Administrator

- Tuesday and Friday: 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Catherine Halper, Church School Supt.

Cell: 215.285.0670

Email: carversvilleucc@gmail.com

Website: www.carversvilleucc.org

Church Phone: 215.297.5166

LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE!

**DUE TO MY ISOLATION, I FINISHED 3
BOOKS YESTERDAY AND BELIEVE ME
THAT’S A LOT OF COLORING!**

**Does anyone know if we can take
showers yet or should we just keep
washing our hands?**

CUCC FAITH FORMATION

HOPE / LIVING WATER

" *Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord;
Lord, hear my voice.
Let your ears be attentive
to my cry for mercy.*"¹

Psalm 130:1-2

English is a glutton. It has gobbled up words from all the languages in the far-flung British Commonwealth. There are separate, unrelated words for all occasions. In contrast, Hebrew is economical. Most Hebrew words are built on three letter root words.

This gives an interesting twist to bible study. If the same Hebrew root is used in two different places, the words and their meanings are probably related. If you see the same English word in two different places but the corresponding Hebrew words have different roots, the English translation is not reflecting part of the original meaning.

What has this to do with Hope?

English speakers often use the word "hope" to express speculative desires: "I hope that I get the job," or "win this game." We close our eyes, cross our fingers, and wait for the best.

This is not what the Bible means when it speaks of hope. In Hebrew, "hope" expresses confidence, not in a future outcome, but in a *present* divine strength.

The Hebrew word for "hope" has the same root as the word for a "pooling" or "gathering together" of waters (מִקְוֵה; miqveh).

The Bible uses mikveh when God gathers together the waters at creation:

"God called the dry ground 'Land,' and the gathering (מִקְוֵה; miqveh) of waters (מַיִם; mayim) he called 'Seas.'" (Gen 1:10).

In the Book of Jeremiah, the word mikveh is used in the sense of "hope", but at the same time also associated with "living water":

Jeremiah connects this gathering of waters with his hope in God:

"Lord, the hope (מִקְוֵה; miqveh) of Israel, all who forsake you shall be put to shame... for they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living waters (מַיִם; mayim)" (Jer 17:13).

The "hope" that Jeremiah has in God recalls God's strength as the Creator: just as surely as God gathered (mikveh) the "waters" (mayim) in the past, Jeremiah describes God as his present "hope" (mikveh) and living "water" (mayim).

Here "hope" is not a wish, but rather a complete assurance in God's strength to sustain all things.

According to the Psalms, hope is decisive because it comes from God:

"Only for God does my life [wait] silently, for from him comes my hope (תִּקְוָתִי; tiqvati). He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken" (Ps 62:5-6).

The psalmist is already certain of his deliverance since God is the one in whom he puts his "hope."

We are living through perilous times. It is this kind of Present Strength – this Hope – that will carry us through.

FAITH FORMATION STORIES & READINGS

DATE	EASTERTIDE
05/03/20	Psalm 23: <i>Walking in the Shadow</i>
05/10/20	Psalm 31:1-16: <i>My Rock of Refuge</i>
05/17/20	Psalm 66:8-20: <i>Truly God has Listened</i>
05/24/20	Psalm 68: 1-10: <i>A Parched Land</i>
PENTECOST	
05/31/20	John 20:19-23: <i>Out Into the World</i>

¹ Canticle of the Creatures, in Francis of Assisi: Early Documents, vol. 1, New York-London-Manila, 1999, 113-114.