

Elmwords

PASTOR'S CORNER

"To everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." Ecclesiastes 3.1
"May you live in interesting times." Said to be an ancient Chinese curse.

What a time this is! Way more "interesting" than anyone would wish for. This is season of sickness and uncertainty. The information changes so often that some may wonder what is true, or even if anything is true. Everyone has an opinion about what should have been done weeks and months ago; everyone has an opinion about what to do in the weeks and months to come. As always, opinions vary. As always, these opinions divide along partisan lines. Is it asking too much to expect people to leave the past in the past, and instead, work together to find solutions so we can move into a positive future?

We have learned new phrases; words have taken on new meanings. "Flattening the curve." "The Surge." "Social Distancing." "Self-isolation."

Through all this, we retain our faith in God. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness does not and cannot ever overcome the light. We know that believers have faced worse challenges in the past and have come through with their faith stronger than before. Our faith is every bit as strong as theirs. God is just as kind and loving as ever. Now, as ever, Jesus walks beside us through this dark valley. We rejoice in the power of our Lord come what may. We can and will emerge from this better people, and a better nation.

People will remember these times for years. Years from now they will tell their stories of when they realized how bad this was going to be; what they did to stay safe; how they got groceries; how they worked from home; or how they were out of work. People will remember images of empty streets. They will remember lines of cars a mile long waiting to pick up a box of food. They will recall how it ended; what went right and what went wrong with the process for restarting life as usual.

People are noticing the before and after pictures that reveal how humanity has been affecting the world around us. The pollution clouds over cities have lifted; canals in Venice are clear; in India the Himalayas are visible for the first time in a century. This is humbling and provides much to ponder.

How quickly people have changed their view on who is important. Celebrities filming themselves isolating in opulent homes now look ridiculous. Now medical people, delivery drivers, store clerks, fire, rescue, ambulance, and police are the heroes today. Good!

No one knows when things will return to normal. It is too early to tell what the changes will be, but no society can experience a trauma of this magnitude without undergoing significant changes. Connecticut schools are closed through May 20, but Massachusetts and New Hampshire have canceled school through June. My guess is that a decision will be made to do likewise here.

Church activities will resume at some point. How we long for that day! It is good to know that church folks are calling one another, looking after one another, and praying for each other. Our church sends emails and posts on Facebook for folks who are online. Thanks to Jerry Gray for providing the technical know-how to help me stream a message each Sunday. I have been calling folks on a regular basis.

This too shall pass. This season of sickness and uncertainty will pass. There will come a season of health and joy. On that day we will rejoice in the power of our Risen Savior.

Peace, joy, and health,

Pastor Dave

Elmwood Community Church Moderator's Notes
April 20, 2020

Hi Everyone!

We hope you are all doing well and staying safe during these crazy times. We want to thank Pastor Dave and Jerry Gray for the on-line sermons and the daily messages to keep us all connected and keep our spirits up. Facebook indicates how many views, comments, and shares our posts get. Go to our page and check it out. While you are there, please hit share. Council had a virtual meeting by e-mail this month.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Dave

- Eleanor Mitkoski passed away April 11, 2020. Her private service w/ just family was April 15th. She was born January 5, 1921. At 99 years old, she was a very long-time, active member of our church and even taught Sunday School to Cynthia Carter! She also mentored Barb Hesse on Deacons helping her on her path to being an ordained minister. She will be missed. Prayers of comfort for her family and friends.
- Thanks be to God that no one in the congregation has Coronavirus!
- Continued prayers for Craig Croxall, Charles Shorter & Gene Knorr. Gene will be home 4/28.
- I recommend postponing Elmwood Cleanup Day because of the Coronavirus. We don't need to expose any of our folks to the virus.
- With public schools closed until May 20, I have no idea when to start in person worship. That decision will be made at a later day. BUT when we do meet again, we will be celebrating Easter and having a Pot Luck. An EPIC pot luck.

Deacon's Report: Jerry Gray

- We have been doing the on-line sermons every Sunday on our Facebook page, and even an extra Sunrise Service on Easter. First couple of weeks used the camera on my laptop but couldn't control what was happening on the screen. Purchased a cheap digital camera w/ external microphone and tripod. Took a few tries but now things are working smoothly.
- Pastor Dave has also been sending daily messages with accompanying pictures. Susan Wiley and myself have been posting them on Facebook with good results, lots of likes and shares.
- We have a developing web site at <http://elmwooducc.churchtemp.com>. Give it a try and let me know what you think. It is a work in progress and not everything looks right or works yet. Posting the daily messages and pictures on News at bottom of the home page, and the Sunday messages in the Worship/Sunday Service page.
- Council decided not to add an on-line giving option at this time as they take 2.9% plus a 30 cents fee per donation. PayPal and others also take a cut and charge fees.

Christian Ed Report: Gail O'Connor - No report.

Missions Report: Cindy Gauthier

- Scholarship application deadline has been extended to May 30. Pastor Dave has mailed out copies of the application to past recipients. If there are other people that would like to submit an application, call the office and Pastor Dave will mail you a copy.
- We're serving dinner at south park on 5/17. I need to call and make sure they are still accepting meals dropped off. Not sure if we should ask for sandwiches.

Trustees Report: Chuck Peterson

- Decided to hire Kyle Cunningham as he did a good job at keeping the grounds mowed and his prices are fair.
- Mark Janas is looking into the small business loans from the Federal CARES bill. The loans are for 8 weeks-worth of salaries and utilities. The debt will be forgiven if companies keep all their staff at current pay levels. It is complicated with a lot of red tape.
- Barb T. sent out a letter to all rental/self-help groups about not meeting. It was also necessary to cancel one-shot rentals. May will remain a question.

Controller's Report: Susan Wiley

- Without weekly services, pledges are down.
- Paid quarterly expenses in March so YTD deficit is currently -\$22,271

Members-at-Large Report:

Wendy Leonard: No report.

Daysha Haxton: Thank you everyone on Council for continuing to run the church. Pastor Dave has done an excellent job of calling members to stay in touch with them at home. Thank you for posting the live Sunday worship service on Facebook. We share the ECC video for everything posted. The daily spiritual postings are great too and we encourage Pastor Dave to keep it up.

Suggest that instead of Elmwood clean-up day we all just clean up the trash from around our own neighborhoods. We can take pictures and post them on the ECC Facebook page.

The church vegetable and flower garden beds need tending. After May 1st we can start preparing the soil for planting? My brother Brian would like to donate a few tomato plants that he is growing from seeds now. I have basil seeds and green onion seeds. Should we plant seeds this year? I am not sure if garden centers will be open this year or if they are taking orders for pick up. I have a feeling that with the outbreak people will have to stay home and not work longer than expected. It has been hard to find fresh vegetables and fruit in the stores. The church garden could be a very important resource for us this year. I suggest we make a list of gardening chores to be done and a timetable. Then we can have an online sign-up sheet for volunteers. We can stagger times so people can work alone or in pairs. Which vegetables do we want to plant?

Thank you everyone for your time and hard work on behalf of our church.

Old Business

- Colleen will type up notes from 2nd conversation about status of future of the church. Will put everything together with a brief summary and send to Council members.

New Business

A REMINDER to please mail in your weekly/monthly offerings! Despite these trying times and not being able to get together in person for worship and activities, we still have a church to run and bills to pay. THANK YOU!! ♥ ♥

We miss everyone and pray that you all stay well and safe! ♥

Respectively submitted,
Colleen Peterson, Clerk and Cindy Gauthier, Moderator

ON A PERSONAL NOTE

MAY/JUNE BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES

May

05 Gail O'Connor
09 Johanna D'Ambrosio
10 Mark Janas
14 Daysha Haxton
24 James Coffin
26 Kate Cunningham
Anniversaries
08 Kriss & Layne Brown
19 Charles Shorter & Barbara Hinds
19 Susan & Mike McLarney
19 Edie & Jerry Gray

June

06 Pat Johnson
07 Zoey Cardalico
22 Marissa Lamb
26 Chad McLarney
Anniversaries
11 Lynn & Joe Teodoro
27 Carol & Ron Hunsinger



MISSIONS

The following are the South Park dates 2020.

May 17
July 19
September 20
November 22

Missions WILL be doing the May 17 meal. We are looking for donations of sandwiches or sandwich fixings. If you would like to make sandwiches or make donations, please contact Cindy Gauthier at gauthierc@comcast.net or email Pastor Dave at elmwoodchurch@snet.net

Bible Study

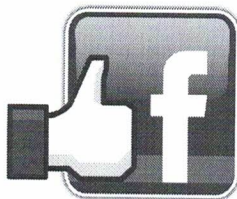


Bible Study is suspended until further notice.



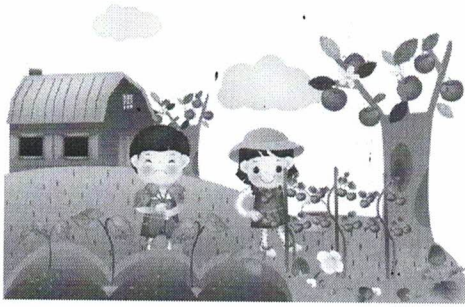
College scholarship forms will be collected during the month of May. Please contact Pastor Dave if you need forms. The due date for applications has been **extended to May 31.**

Carol Alberti



**BE SURE TO LIKE
ECC ON FACEBOOK**

ON A PERSONAL NOTE



Garden Plans

"Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop--a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown." *Matthew 13:8*

It's almost May and the time for planting gardens is nigh. Our church gardens need to be cleaned and prepped for the coming season. Unfortunately Mother Nature is not through with her spring rains, and we still have this coronavirus thing going on. So when the weather breaks and we get a couple of good days in a row, we can get together and get ready for the new season. We will be sending out an email when the time is right to get this done. We will also need to schedule this year. We need people to weed, water and harvest on a regular basis. It really isn't hard work, we can usually weed all four gardens in about an hour (after two or three weeks of weeds).

Looking forward to a great harvest,
Your Deacons

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Colleen wrote the following poem in hopes it will give people a chuckle and help lighten the mood. Thanks, Colleen.

Forever Monday: A Poem by Colleen E.

Peterson 4/27/2020

Viral Depression
spins my head.
It's a wonder
I crawl out of bed.
Mornings aren't my
time of day.
Usually feel like
I woke up dead.
Caveman hairdo.
Zombie gait.
Need hot tea
before it's too late.

Daughter chatters
like a jay
as she bounces
into the day.
Mama bear grunts,
eyes half closed.
Unlike daughter,
she's no rose.
Three cups later
caffeine hits.
Thank you, God
I will survive this.

Viral Depression
ain't no fun.
Lord, can we please
see the sun?
Husband's trying
to teach on-line.
Thinks computers
should be a crime.
Heaven help us,
we're in trouble.
Will we survive
this Covid bubble?

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