



Also in this Issue

- Zoom Information.....2
- Upcoming for Fall2
- Regular Events3
- Financial Update4
- Stewardship.....4
- Music Notes5
- Circuit Rider Information.....5
- Caring and Sharing.....6
- Help Wanted.....6
- Reminders from Sandy7
- Church Council Minutes6

Living in Hope

Greetings Dear Ones,

Finally Tara, Xander, and I are here in Hope. We are getting settled and we are learning our way around a new place. We will remain forever grateful for your patience as we grow together and meet you all in different ways than tradition has previously allowed.

As your pastor, I am delighted in the ways that you have learned to reach out and care for one another during Covid-19. I understand how difficult it is not to be able to connect with so many folk who have been influential in your lives. The difficulties in parishioners dying and being unable to give a meal or plan a family fellowship time or even hold the hand of a family member in the sharing of memories is heartfelt. Having these needs and being unable to fulfill can be heartbreaking, yet still there is hope.

I am reminded of 1 Corinthians 13 where Paul lays out the mission of love that the church has. When he states that “Love is patient. Love is kind. Love doesn’t demand its own way... Love is neither arrogant nor rude.” And then goes on to say “of all these things abides these three; faith, hope, and love and the greatest of these is love”. I am filled with renewed optimism in the work ahead of us. By being people of faith, living in hope, and abiding in love we can overcome any and all obstacles that are put in our way.

Being persons who live in hope does not mean that we are “flighty or fancy free” but rather that we trust in the promises that God has made to us. It means that even if the plans that we have laid out are thrown away that we know that we will continue because our HOPE abides in The One Who Loves Us Best. As we live in hope and as

Shepherd of the Valley United Methodist Church Vision Statement

We are Shepherd of the Valley United Methodist Church, a multi-generational Christ community seeking to sing God’s spirit into the world by inviting all, serving all, loving all.

Shepherd of the Valley United Methodist Church, 604 Seven Mile Road, Hope, RI 02831

Worship via Zoom (see inside for details), Sunday, 10A

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday, 9A- Noon

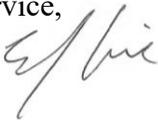
Phone: 821-8217 • Fax: 826-7787 • E-mail: office@sovumc.org • Web site: sovumc.org

Rev. Effie McAvoy

we grow in grace the purpose of our call and lives of obedient service to the Divine will be made even clearer.

So, as the program year begins, let us live in the hope that no matter how we accomplish and move into the goals that God has for us, we will do so unabated. We will rise to the occasion of making disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world because it is our task and our joy to do just that. We will grow in knowledge and understanding in whatever venue or means because we know that we are not alone in this walk of faith.

In His Service,

Pastor 

Zoom Information

In this time of social distancing, most upcoming church meetings and gatherings will continue to be held via Zoom at least for the foreseeable future. Joining information is as follows:

Meeting link:

<https://zoom.us/j/97102295116>

Meeting ID: 971 0229 5116

Password: Ask a church friend or check email mobile :

+16465588656,,97102295116#,

(New York)

+13017158592,,97102295116#,,

(Germantown)

Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Please note that this Zoom “room” is also available to church members who do not have a Zoom account and want to connect with other members, family, or friends. Please check with the Pastor Effie or the church office to be sure nothing else is scheduled.

Upcoming for Fall!

Women in Spiritual Harmony (WISH)

The WISH group will be starting on September 9th at 9:30 a.m. via Zoom. We will just be visiting with each other at that meeting. Starting September 16th we will be doing a study by Max Lucado, *Anxious for Nothing: Finding Calm in a Chaotic World*. The product description is as follows: “Over the past few decades, studies have shown that Americans are the most anxious people in the world. We take the most medication for it, see doctors to treat it, and spend fortunes trying to relieve it. How have we let our fears get the better of us? In *Anxious for Nothing*, Max Lucado leads readers to reflect on the promises of Philippians 4:4-8. This passage from Paul's epistle contains an antidote to anxiety that will help you develop a mindset of resilience. Rediscover the power of prayer and take control of your thoughts. You can rest in "the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding." Due to social distancing and health concerns I am asking all members to buy their own books. As always we welcome new members. Our meetings will continue on Wednesdays from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday Wisdom Seekers

The Wednesday Wisdom Seekers will resume via Zoom on Wednesday, September 9th, at 6:30 p.m. Our study will be “ProFuture Faith: The Prodigal Species Comes Home.” This “Living the Questions” series looks at how we’ve squandered our inheritance on profligate living, making us a “prodigal species.” Industrial civilization and our insatiable appetites have us hurtling toward irreversible consequences – not in some distant future, but right now. The good news is it’s not too late. At the intersection of science, spirituality, and sustainability is a deep love of life and a passion for our posterity – a ProFuture Faith. Join eco-theologian, author, and TEDx speaker, Rev. Michael Dowd in a dynamic DVD and internet-based discussion course that bridges the gap between head and heart, science and faith. Participants will be guided on a journey that accepts what is inevitable, avoids what is futile,

and be inspired to attend to what is urgent. All are welcome to study and discuss this important topic.

United Methodist Women (UMW)

The UMW will have an informal Zoom meeting using the church Zoom room on Thursday, September 17th from 10:00 a.m. to noon. All women are invited to join us to discuss how we can try to be more inclusive and grow in new directions. Please bring your ideas and thoughts to share. Call Barbara Walz if you have any questions.

Sunday School

For our Sunday School families, Family Ministry Coordinator Lisa Marciniak is working on figuring out what our Sunday School will look like for this coming year. She will be in touch very soon and will of course want input to make sure all families feel comfortable with the decisions as they are being made. Thank you and as always, feel free to email her at lhardgrove@yahoo.com

Halloween

Mark your calendar! Since Halloween will have to look a little different this year for our children, we are in the early planning stage of organizing a safe Trunk or Treat at SOV for Halloween night (10/31). We will be looking for volunteers and will provide more information in the next few weeks. Please contact Shyla Mollo or Lisa Marciniak with any questions.



**Circuit Rider
Input due
September 20**

Regular Events

Editor's Note: SOV has a number of regular meetings and events, listed below. Unless otherwise noted, these will occur via Zoom (see the "Zoom Information" article for details). For more details on specific groups, please check out the "Upcoming for Fall" article above. If you have something you'd like included in this section, please email me at belllomb@cox.net. Also please note that some groups are still trying to figure out how best to meet given COVID restrictions. Keep your eye on this section in future editions as the listing may change.

Hannah Bell-Lombardo

- **Sunday Worship**—Sunday worship will continue to be held via Zoom. Pre-worship gathering starts at 9:30, worship starts at 10:00 a.m. The order of service will be emailed in advance. Please contact the office if you would like to be included on this email.
- **Communion Sunday** – Pastor Effie will be offering communion during worship via Zoom on the first Sunday of each month. If you would like to participate, you can pick up some grape juice and some kind of bread which she will bless. If you have questions, please feel free to contact Pastor Effie.
- **Women in Spiritual Harmony**—Wednesdays from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. via Zoom.
- **Wednesday Wisdom Seekers**—This group will continue to meet via Zoom on Wednesdays from 6:30 to 8:00.
- **United Methodist Women (UMW)**—The UMW meets the third Thursday of each month at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom.
- **Men's Breakfast**—The Men's Breakfast will continue every other week (September 4 and 18 this month) at Phenix Square Restaurant in West Warwick. Social distancing and masks required.

Please note that this Zoom "room" is also available to church members who do not have a Zoom account and want to connect with other members, family, or friends. Please check with the Pastor Effie or the church office to be sure nothing else is scheduled.

Financial Update

Through the first seven months of 2020, Shepherd of the Valley's financial results are better than the budget. Revenues for the church are \$118,000 versus a budget of \$111,000. Expenses through July 31, 2020 are \$119,000 compared to a budget of \$118,000. Thus, net income through seven months is a small loss of \$1,000 versus a budgeted loss of \$7,000. Revenues are higher than expected principally due to better-than-anticipated general giving to the church. Expenses are slightly higher than budget. Lower than expected costs for utilities and pastor reimbursement were offset by the \$7,000 pastor relocation which was not budgeted as we were unaware of the change in pastors when the budget was developed and approved.

We began the year with a credible balanced budget. Through all of the turmoil, Shepherd of the Valley's finances are in a very good position as we look toward the remainder of the year. We expect utilities and pastor reimbursement to continue to run below budget as we are not utilizing the church for services and pastor travel is limited. However, two significant revenue items will not be met. The Scituate Art Festival has been canceled and our food booth was budgeted to net \$6,000. Our traditional holiday fundraiser is doubtful and that is budgeted for net income of \$2,000.

Our success in meeting our budget will depend on the wonderful and profound generosity of our church members. The important work of the church continues and with your on-going support we will continue to make a difference in our lives and those of others, both spiritually and physically.

The Finance Committee



Stewardship

World Communion

Sunday: October 4

Nelson Mandela said,
"Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world."



World Communion Sunday began in 1936 as a way to recognize our ecumenical oneness in Christ and to bring Christians together in a spirit of unity and peace. In the United Methodist Church, congregations throughout the denomination will also receive a Special Sunday offering that helps students from around the world reach their full potential through scholarships and mentoring.

For example, the scholarship helped Annie Solis Escalante, who is from Peru, complete a master's degree in social management. After graduation, she put her education to use by developing projects with the Health and Healing Program of the World Council of Churches in Geneva.

The spirit of World Communion Sunday is to come together in Christian unity around the breaking bread and sharing the cup. In our Wesleyan tradition, we extend this practice through our special offering. If this mission speaks to you, please join us in giving generously on Oct. 4. Thank you.

Linda and Howard Gay for Stewardship

Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)

EFT provides a safe and secure way to have your giving deducted from your checking account on a regular basis. Important: Please contact the church office if you'd like to use EFT so your account can be set up properly.

On-Line and Mobile Giving

Our mobile giving option is also available to you for one-time or recurring donations. Go to <https://www.sovumc.org/give-now> on your computer or smartphone.

Music Notes

First, I want to thank everyone who has worked on our Zoom worship services!!!! These services have been so rewarding and uplifting in these troubled times. I have been thrilled by the participation of our talented choir members who have been able to meet to record hymns as small socially distanced ensembles and solos at the church to enhance our worship experiences. We have now recorded music for use through the end of September. In September, we will meet again (please let me know by email at shaunschild@verizon.net if you can participate with us and what days and times work best for you to be able to join in). I am working on ideas for what we can reasonably and safely do for our upcoming holiday season. I'll keep you posted on that.

Also, I want to especially thank Sandy and Mike Knapp for their excellent coordination of our Zoom worship experience. Just Wow!

Sending love to all!
Steve Haunschild



Circuit Rider Information

The *Circuit Rider* is our monthly newsletter and includes a variety of news items, announcements, and other articles of congregational interest. It is the perfect place to publicize any events or programs your group or organization is participating in; mission projects at the church, local, state, or national/international levels; or anything else you feel might be of interest to Shepherd of the Valley attendees. Please note that your submissions may be edited for content, space, or consistency reasons. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about your input.

Please email your input, either as an attachment or in the body of the email, to me at belllomb@cox.net. Deadlines for the next year are listed in the box below for your information. Please note that these deadlines assume continued on-line publication, but may change if we return to publishing a print version.



Hannah Bell-Lombardo, Editor

Circuit Rider Deadlines

Circuit Rider deadlines for the church year 2020-21 are as follows. Please retain for your records. As always, your promptness is appreciated.

<u>Month</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
October	September 20
November	October 18
December	November 22
January	December 20
February	January 17
March	February 21
April	March 21
May	April 17
June/Summer	May 23

Caring and Sharing

Worship Input

The Worship Committee and Pastor Effie want to hear from you. We have all worked hard to be creative and maintain a spiritual worship service through Zoom every Sunday for the past 6 months, but we want your feedback. If you have any questions, concerns, advice, gripes, please reach out to one of your Lay Leaders Meg Davis or Jay O'Connor or the Worship Committee Chair Shyla Mollo at shylamae_88@hotmail.com.

Interested in SOV History?

We had several successful "History Nights" in August where we explored SOV's history from its founding to present day. Many thanks to those who helped put these together, told stories, and contributed information. If you would like to explore SOV's history further, visit our virtual library at SOVUMC.org/library. There you'll find back issues of the Circuit Rider, worship videos, historical photos, and more.

Shepherd's Pantry

Demand on our food pantry is even greater. We need all the basics—cereal, tuna, pasta, mac & cheese, soup, vegetables, and pasta sauce. Healthier food options, including gluten-free and lower sodium/fat free items, are always needed along with computer paper and similar sized boxes—they are perfect for our food pickups. You can drop your donations off under the overhang at the entrance to the Hope Room. Someone is at the church regularly to collect and distribute your offerings. Cash or grocery gift cards are also welcome.

Magazines Needed

Please save your old magazines. AJ, one of our church children, relieves stress by tearing magazines and needs more given the increased tension of these times.

Please drop your magazines off outside the Hope Room door (where the food pantry bins are located). We will be sure to get them to AJ.



Shut-Ins

We have a number of shut-ins who could use a phone call, card, note, or delivery. Contact Pastor Effie or the church office if you can help.

Social Media

Social media sites, such as Facebook, are becoming an invaluable way to connect with others during this time of self-isolation and social distancing. To join (even if only during the current situation), go to www.facebook.com/r.php, input the appropriate information, and click "Sign Up." Use the search function to find the Shepherd of the Valley page and follow what we're posting.

Save Your Pop-Tabs!

All those beverages you're consuming while you're at home?? Save those pop-tabs. Bring them to church once we're back together and put them in the box in the kitchen. These tabs go toward helping with food, supplies, and utilities for the Ronald McDonald House in Providence.

Help Wanted

Project Outreach Food Unloaders

Project Outreach at Open Table of Christ is in need of some strong backs to help with receiving our weekly food delivery from the RI Food Bank. Help is needed Tuesdays from around 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon. This is physical work, unloading cases of food as it gets put into storage. You do not have to commit to a weekly presence. Unloading is done outside, and social distancing and mask wearing is practiced. If you can help, please contact Donna Faria at dffaria@msn.com

Project Outreach Snacks

Project Outreach has a skeleton crew unloading trucks and packing food boxes for our clients. These volunteers work very hard, serving about 350 families each week. As a token of appreciation, the board is providing snacks such as drinks, bars, various finger food, etc. Help is needed bringing these snacks to the volunteers at around 11:00 a.m. on Tuesdays. Help is particularly needed for the middle two Tuesdays

of September. Please contact Donna Faria, dffaria@msn.com, or Theresa Squire squirekt@gmail.com if you're interested.

Reminders from Sandy

For Sunday worship and bulletin, please note the following:

- If you want names added to the prayer request list, send them to me.
- If you want to add dates to the announcements or church calendar, please submit them by the Friday before you'd like them to run.

Thank you!

Sandy Knapp
sknapp719@icloud.com

Church Council Minutes: July 27, 2020

Council members present: Donna Faria, Theresa Squire, Lisa Marciniak, Sandy Knapp, John Lombardo, Jay O'Connor, Loxi Ellingwood, Howard Gay, Sue Dyl, Tom Senerchia, and Barbara Walz. Also present were Pastor Effie McAvoy, Music Director Steve Haunschild, and church members Rob and Marti Bower.

Sandy opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m. with a prayer via Zoom.

The Nominations Report (available on request) was reviewed and proposed for approval, with the exception of Regina Sprague. Someone needs to check to see if she is still interested in being the Communications Coordinator. Acceptance was moved by Hannah, seconded by Sandy, and unanimously approved.

Minutes from the May meeting were approved.

Tom Senerchia noted that he is no longer on SOV ministry teams as he has been appointed to the First United Church in North Attleboro. SPRC will need to identify a new chair. He thanked SOV for our support in his journey to become a Certified Lay Minister.

We will be holding several History Nights at the request of the District Superintendent. They will be on Wednesday 8/12, 8/19, and 8/26 and will cover SOV's history from 1968 to the present. Sue and Rob volunteered to help.

We moved to committee reports, with Sandy requesting that for future meetings chairs send in their reports if they can't be present. Reports were:

- Missions/Ministry – Theresa Squire – There is no formal committee, but projects have included Open Table where we have fed those waiting to pick up food at their food pantry on Wednesdays and Thursdays. During COVID, they are doing emergency distribution only. We also do Thanksgiving baskets and the Angel Tree project at Christmas.
- Worship – Shyla Mollo – There is not much to report though the committee will be meeting on Thursday about in-person vs. Zoom worship.
- Church School – Lisa Marciniak – We normally run Sunday School from September through May and Family Fun Night once a month (a combination of family events and parents' night out). They are still working out what the fall plans should be.
- United Methodist Women – Barbara Walz – This group has been inactive since COVID, however normally meets once a month and performs a number of fundraising activities.
- Website – Rob Bower – We have revamped the website to make it an improved tool for external users; there's not much use from members because of other communications. Rob keeps it up to date, but suggested that he, Hannah, Pam, and Effie meet to review our communications and the best way to use the available media to reach those who have an interest in SOV. He also noted that SOV operates as a small country church while it is really on the cusp of something bigger—are church leaders empowered enough to get us there?
- Circuit Rider – Hannah Bell-Lombardo – This is our monthly newsletter, currently on-line,

and is available to communicate all types of church-related information.

- Finance – John Lombardo – John noted that we are \$8,000 ahead of budget as of the end of June. Our 2020 budget is a balanced one, including payment of mission shares in full. Adverse variances include plate giving (with no in-person services), pastor’s relocation expenses, and the removal of two fundraisers, the Art Festival at about \$6,000 and the holiday event at about \$2,000. We are helped by increased giving, using part of the Pastor’s Discretionary fund toward moving expenses, and utilities savings. At the moment it looks like we’ll achieve our balanced budget. The \$20,000 PPP money has not been spent and is essentially serving as a reserve fund.
- Hospitality – Sue Dyl – This committee is still in the process of being formed. She took on these duties where there was no one in charge of ushers or fellowship hour hosts. She and Rob are serving as informal Zoom hosts.
- Nurture/Outreach – Loxi Ellingwood – Shut-in visits have not been occurring since March, but they are continuing to send out cards and make phone calls. She will send the shut-in list to Effie.
- SPRC – Tom Senerchia – Nothing to report.
- Stewardship – Howard Gay – Focus of this group is the annual fund drive. We have used pre-printed materials but the recent program has been several weeks of talks on local, regional, and worldwide ministries followed by a pledge Sunday with celebratory lunch. There are also six special Sundays we collect funds for. We are emphasizing EFT giving with about 50% of families now participating; about 6% use our giving app.
- Trustees – Jerry Crosby – Though he was not present, this group has been working hard to prepare the parsonage for Effie. He will be preparing a full list of costs, including his time. This group is also looking at a re-entry plan for in-person worship following state guidelines. Outside groups can use the parking lot if they sign a waiver and provide a list of people for contact tracing. Sandy

thanked Jerry on behalf of the Council for all he and the trustees have done.

- Lay Leaders – Jay O’Connor and Meg Davis – Jay (Meg was not able to be there) had no report.
- Certified Lay Minister – Sandy Knapp – The postponed wedding was held Saturday and the brides were very appreciative for all we did. She thanked the Council for support during the transition from Pastor Katherine Mitchell to Pastor Effie.
- Donna Faria – Donna has been involved in the Art Festival, Christmas Fair, and Project Outreach, where she is board chair. Project Outreach recently received a grant to renovate the food distribution area.

Pastor Effie thanked the congregation for the food and love during her transition here. She introduced herself and her style, which is as a collaborative leader who is willing to ask questions and who is depending on the church leadership to guide her and help her. To be our pastor is the gift we give her.

Rob asked how the role of music is handled with Church Council as Steve attended the meeting. It does not have a formal role, but Council meetings are open to everyone who would like to attend and speak; voting is limited to actual members.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:25 with a prayer by Effie.

The next meeting will be on 8/24/20.

Respectfully submitted,

Hannah Bell-Lombardo

