

His Mansion

A newsletter from
First United Methodist Church
of Southbridge

"In my Father's House, there are many mansions... I go to prepare a place for you..."

JUNE 2021

JOIN US FOR OUR
SUNDAY WORSHIP
@ 10.00 AM

HAPPY
Fathers
DAY

"Sometimes I think my papa is an accordion. When he looks at me and smiles and breathes, I hear the notes."

Markus Zusak,



twitter

@Pastor_Sabina

Pastor's Corner

Dear friends in Christ,

Lately, I have had a hive of bees in my head telling me I am not the pastor I should be. I'm not pastoral enough, not caring enough, not enough of a leader, not educated enough, not doing enough. And my soul is afraid that all these bees are correct.

You know what? I am not alone. In the middle of this global pandemic, I find myself in the middle of another pandemic I see amongst my friends: pastor burn out.

As pastors have been trying to rethink the work of the church using new methods and technologies, we find ourselves navigating intense differences of opinions and personalities. Conversations about reopening our churches are more controversial than expected. Conversations about racism have been front and center and passionate. Because of the confinement, we lost our sense of reality and gave in to all kinds of conspiracy theories. The political climate in the country went from bad to horrible, tearing apart families, friendships, congregations, and the whole country.

Dealing with any one of these issues would be a lot to handle for any lead-

er. But all of these issues have happened at the same time. As a result, we, pastors, find ourselves exhausted, frustrated, and stretched thin.

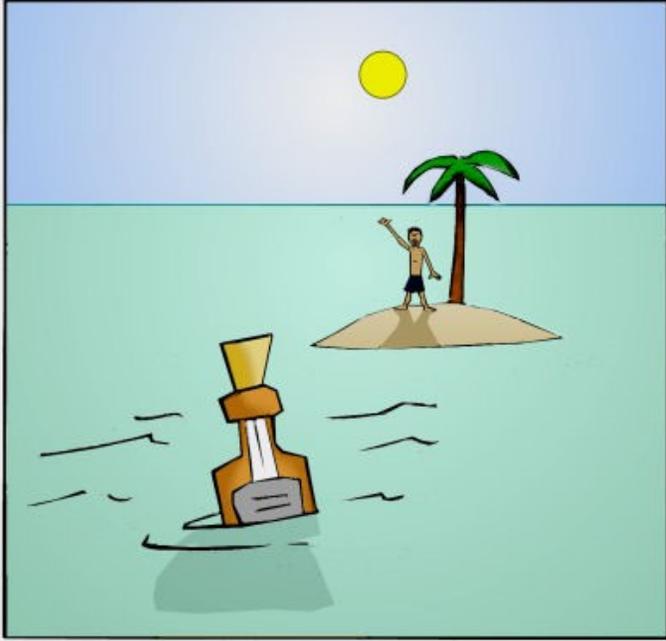
Yes, churches, like any other communities, have always been made up of people who have different opinions. What's changed is the extreme and vitriol-fueled debates. It's demoralizing.

I recently attended a Zoom workshop with Tod Bolsinger, the author of the book *"Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory"*. Bolsinger defines leadership as "energizing a community of people toward their own transformation in order to accomplish a shared mission in the face of a changing world." Notice that it is the community that does the work of transformation. The leader energizes that community. This is a different kind of leadership. Many churches are used to the pastor as the expert who comes in with the answers. That gave me a lot of food for thought, especially during these difficult times.

You know what my friends? This means you need to leave behind the idea that the pastor is your primary problem-solver and even put me on a pedestal.

(continued on page 6)

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



Prayers to anyone besides the One True God of our Bibles provides less hope than a rescue message in a bottle. **Mt. 7:7-8, 21:22, Is 30:19, I Jo 5:14-15**

Verse of the Month

Those who hope in
the Lord will renew
their strength.

Isaiah 40:31

COVID-19 UPDATE

Based on the new CDC guidelines and Governor Baker's mask update, we will start gathering without masks and social distancing optional, starting on June 6, as we start worshipping outside. Refreshments will now be available after the service.

Scheduled events, some of which were interrupted during the Covid 19 pandemic, will resume as follows (all outside in the summer, weather permitting):

- EspresSoul, Wednesdays at 3:30pm
- Bible Study, Mondays at 6pm
- Movie Night, second Wednesday of the month
- Craft Night, third Wednesday of the month

Rolsilda's Kitchen, our free meal ministry, will once again allow guests to stay and eat. We will set up card tables (socially distanced) and chairs.

As we will be taking a break from our Monday meals during the summer, we will offer a Friday barbecue outside.

FUMC of Southbridge believes in personal responsibility. We are very grateful and proud most of our members are now vaccinated. Masks and social distancing will be optional and we respect each individual's right to choose to join or not join any or all activities based on the knowledge that others will be present unmasked.

Please contact Pastor Sabina if you have any questions at pastorsabinaterrades@gmail.com or 508-450-1614.





**Carol's
Closet**

FREE CLOTHING/HYGIENE PRODUCTS/BLANKETS/FOOD
The closet is open!! Donations appreciated!!

Prayer of the Month



Dear Lord,

We give our thanks, Creator God, for the fathers in our lives.

Fatherhood does not come with a manual, and reality teaches us that some fathers excel while others fail.

We ask for Your blessings for them all and forgiveness where it is needed.

This Father's Day we remember the many sacrifices fathers make for their children and families, and the ways--both big and small--they lift children to achieve dreams thought beyond reach.

So too, we remember all those who have helped fill the void when fathers pass early or are absent; grandfathers and uncles, brothers and cousins, teachers, pastors and coaches and the women of our families.

For those who are fathers, we ask for wisdom and humility in the face of the task of parenting. Give them the strength to do well by their children and by You.

In Your Holy name, O God, we pray.

Amen.

- Rev. Chuck Currie

June

30 DAY SCRIPTURE WRITING PLAN

EACH OF THE SCRIPTURES BELOW TAKES TEN MINUTES OR LESS TO COPY OUT. COMMIT TO SPENDING TEN MINUTES EACH DAY LISTENING TO GOD'S VOICE AS YOU SIMPLY COPY THESE TEXTS OUT OF YOUR BIBLE.

Week 1

DAY 1- JOSHUA 4:5-7
DAY 2- JEREMIAH 31:3-6
DAY 3-2 CORINTHIANS 1:18-20
DAY 4-2 CORINTHIANS 1:21-24
DAY 5- LUKE 12:22-26
DAY 6- PSALM 42:1-5
DAY 7- PSALM 42:6-11

Week 3

DAY 15- EXODUS 20:1-6
DAY 16- EXODUS 20:7-11
DAY 17- EXODUS 20:12-17
DAY 18- PROVERBS 22:1-6
DAY 19- PROVERBS 22:7-12
DAY 20- COLOSSIANS 3:18-21
DAY 21- COLOSSIANS 3:22-25

Week 2

DAY 8- PSALM 143:1-5
DAY 9- PSALM 143:6-12
DAY 10- PSALM 150:1-6
DAY 11- PSALM 147:1-6
DAY 12- PSALM 147:7-11
DAY 13- PSALM 147:12-16
DAY 14- PSALM 147:17-20

Week 4

DAY 22- PSALM 103:1-5
DAY 23- PSALM 103:6-12
DAY 24- PSALM 103:13-17
DAY 25- ISAIAH 103:18-22
DAY 26- PSALM 95:1-7
DAY 27- PSALM 139:1-6
DAY 28- PSALM 139:7-12

Week 5

DAY 29- PSALM 139:13-18
DAY 30- PSALM 139:19-24

Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.

Psalms 119:18

SUMMER SHORTS

a look at the shortest psalms

SUMMER SERMON SERIES STARTING ON JULY 11

May Worship Highlights

- ◆ Pentecost
- ◆ Congratulations to our New Member, Christine Arsenault
- ◆ Mother's Day service (all moms got a rose!)
- ◆ "God in the Movies" sermon series!



WEEK 3 IN OUR SERMON SERIES "GOD IN THE MOVIES" SUNDAY: **SAVING PRIVATE RYAN** 10AM IN PERSON OR LIVE ON FACEBOOK!

WEEK 5 IN OUR SERMON SERIES "GOD IN THE MOVIES" SUNDAY: **THE GREATEST SHOWMAN** 10AM IN PERSON OR LIVE ON FACEBOOK!

WEEK 3 IN OUR SERMON SERIES "GOD IN THE MOVIES" SUNDAY: **DEAD MAN WALKING** 10AM IN PERSON OR LIVE ON FACEBOOK!



Juneteenth (short for “June Nineteenth”) marks the day when federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas in 1865 to take control of the state and ensure that all enslaved people be freed. The troops’ arrival came a full two and a half years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. Juneteenth honors the end to slavery in the United States and is considered the longest-running African American holiday.

Confederate General Robert E. Lee had surrendered at Appomattox Court House two months earlier in Virginia, but slavery had remained relatively unaffected in Texas—until U.S. General Gordon Granger stood on Texas soil and read General Orders No. 3: “The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free.”

The Emancipation Proclamation issued by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863, had established that all enslaved people in Confederate states in rebellion against the Union “shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free.”

But in reality, the Emancipation Proclamation didn’t instantly free any enslaved people. The proclamation only applied to places under Confederate control and



not to slave-holding border states or rebel areas already under Union control. However, as Northern troops advanced into the Confederate South, many enslaved people fled behind Union lines.

In Texas, slavery had continued as the state experienced no large-scale fighting or significant presence of Union troops. Many enslavers from outside the Lone Star State had moved there, as they viewed it as a safe haven for slavery.

After the war came to a close in the spring of 1865, General Granger’s arrival in Galveston that June signaled freedom for Texas’s 250,000 enslaved people. Although emancipation didn’t happen overnight for everyone—in some cases, enslavers withheld the information until after harvest season—celebrations broke out among newly freed Black people, and Juneteenth was born. That December, slavery in America was formally abolished with the adoption of the 13th Amendment.



The year following 1865, freedmen in Texas organized the first of what became the annual celebration of “Jubilee Day” on June 19. In the ensuing decades, Juneteenth commemorations featured music, barbecues, prayer services and other activities, and as Black people migrated from Texas to other parts of the country the

In 1979, Texas became the first state to make Juneteenth an official holiday. Today, 47 states recognize Juneteenth as a state holiday, while efforts to make it a national holiday have so far stalled in Congress.

Pastor's Corner

(Conclusion)

The current environment makes this expectation even more unrealistic. No one has lived through a global pandemic, an economic recession, extreme political division, passionate race conversations all while numbers of church goers continue to fall. We've never been here before. No one has the answers. Expecting pastors to fix everything, or at the very least to make us feel better about everything is not fair.

Pastors are doing the best they can right now. Our decisions are being made with the whole congregation in mind. I try to balance the needs of everyone, and that requires compromise. Someone wrote that leadership is the art of disappointing people at a rate they can handle. I have never felt that way more than this past year. This is also called "walking on eggs".

At the end of the day and going back to Bolsinger, what I wanted to emphasize is this is YOUR church, YOUR community. Pastors come and go. You are hopefully here to stay and continue the race. These are YOUR ministries. YOUR worship services. YOUR building. YOUR bills. YOUR money. OK, at the end of the day, all belongs to God so let's say that you are the caretakers of all of this.

Step up, step forward! Together we will use this past year not as a parenthesis in our lives but as a jumping ramp. Take out your skis and start going downhill because the ramp is in front of us, God is pushing us and get ready to fly!!

With peace, gratitude and grace,



Pastor Sabina

Jesus didn't die for us so that we could continue treating people the way people treated Him.

Read. That. Again.



Doesn't it make you feel happy and comforted to know that God sees, hears and knows everything? That nothing absolutely is hidden from him? That God is not deaf or blind, he cannot be bribed, cannot be manipulated and cannot be fooled? Well, only when we fully grasp and understand that fact will we be able to rest in peace or be able to stand still and allow God to have his way in the affairs of our lives and that of the world.

STORY OF AN HYMN

"The Battle Hymn of the Republic" by Julia Ward Howe

We sang this song on Memorial Day Sunday. Here is some more information about it.

1. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
he is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
he hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword;
His truth is marching on.

Refrain: Glory, glory, hallelujah! Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah! His truth is marching on.

2. I have seen him in the watchfires of a hundred circling camps,
they have builded him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read his righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps;
His day is marching on.
Refrain

3. He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
he is sifting out the hearts of men before his judgment seat;
O be swift, my soul, to answer him; be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.
Refrain:

4. In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
with a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me;
as he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on.
Refrain:

After the September 11, 2001 attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Center, a national service of prayer and remembrance was conducted at Washington's National Cathedral. America's most powerful leaders prayed together, listened to brief sermons by evangelist Billy Graham and others, then joined voices to sing the defiant anthem "Battle Hymn of the Republic." Its words seemed to perfectly signal America's intention to battle the forces of terror in the world.

"Battle Hymn of the Republic" was written by Julia Ward Howe, a leader in women's rights and

an ardent foe of slavery. Julia, who came from a wealthy New York family, was married to prominent Boston philanthropist and humanitarian Dr. S. G. Howe. They were both crusaders for progressive political and moral issues of the day. In 1861, during the darkest days of the Civil War, the Howes visited Washington, and Julia toured a nearby Union Army Camp on the Potomac in Virginia. There she heard soldiers singing a tribute to John Brown, who had been hanged in 1859 for attempting to lead an insurrection of slaves at Harper's Ferry: "John Brown's Body Lies a-mold'ring in the Grave." The music was rousing, but the words needed improvement.

Julia's pastor, who accompanied her, asked her to consider writing new and better verses. That night, after the Howes retired to their room at the Willard Hotel, the words came.

"I went to bed and slept as usual, but awoke the next morning in the gray of the early dawn, and to my astonishment found that the wished-for lines were arranging themselves in my brain. I lay quite still until the last verse had completed itself in my thoughts, then hastily arose, saying to myself, I shall lose this if I don't write it down immediately. I searched for an old sheet of paper and an old stub of a pen which I had had the night before, and began to scrawl the lines almost without looking, as I learned to do by often scratching down verses in the darkened room when my little children were sleeping. Have completed this, I lay down again and fell asleep, but not before feeling that something of importance had happened to me."

Julia gave her song to a friend who worked at the Atlantic Monthly. The magazine published it in February, 1862, sending her a check for five dollars.

Scripture:

Psalm: 24 verse 8

Who is this King of Glory? the Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we thank you that we can pay tribute to those who lost their lives defending our nation. May their souls live on in Your gracious presence, and may they experience the full measure of Your love and mercy. We also ask that You guide us and make us worthy of the sacrifices from which we have benefited. We pray we never forget how blessed we truly are as a nation, as a people, and as Your children. Amen.



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Sundays	10 am:	Worship service at the church and live worship on Facebook
Mondays:	6:30pm:	"Bible 101" small group (dinner at 6pm)
Wednesdays:	3:30 pm:	EspresSoul
Fridays:	1 pm—6pm:	Carol's Closet
	5:00 pm:	Rosilda's Kitchen (Free meal)
Saturday:	10 am—2 pm:	Carol's Closet