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FROM PASTOR PHIL

Dear Church Family,

My counsel is simple. "Continue Your Ministry."

Things are always simpler than we make them out to be. What blocks the clarity needed for resolution is almost always our egos, our anxieties and our vested interests.

The first disciples did not know what to do on Good Friday. They were members of a community and movement set to change the terms on which life itself was lived. They were following Jesus, a teacher showing them what healthy relationships with one another and a sound relationship with God should look like. Jesus gave them a clear message and ministry. On Good Friday, it seemed their message and ministry was taken from them. They had to wonder, "What now?"

After they sat with their anxieties, Jesus came to them and effectively said: 1) relax; 2) continue your ministry; 3) forget what is past; 4) continue to break bread together; 5) continue to praise God together and 6) continue your mission work together.

I am fully aware this is a "hell-ish time" for our church family. This is however, exactly the time for our church to remember what Jesus said to Peter,

"... on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hell will not overcome it." Matthew 16:18

My prayer is for you to continue the work that God has called you together to do. My prayer is that you will lift up the cup of salvation and "Continue Your Ministry." We need one another and the world needs us.

Your brother in Christ,
Pastor Phil

GOOD NEWS! The New Website Has Been Launched!

Our new website is now LIVE! It can be found at the same web address as our old page; websterpres.org. You can find the Zoom links for all of our electronic Fellowship opportunities on the front page. By using Menu button (three small lines in the top right corner), you can listen to previous Sermons or look at any Pathway from 2020! Also, try out the new online giving option. Click "Give" in the top right corner of our website.

The Technology Committee is planning to hold trainings this summer for those interested in learning how to edit the content on our website. This will be especially important for any groups who like to keep their program information up to date. If you would like to be trained, please email Linnaea Nifong at lnnifong@gmail.com or call the Church Office (265-9700) to ask to be put on our training list. Any updates for the website content you have in the meantime can be sent to Linnaea Nifong.

FROM THE SESSION --

During a time when we were seeking words of wisdom and inspiration, a friend advised us to remember Rev. Amy Fowler's sermon on love. Recently retired as Presbytery Leader in the Presbytery of the Genesee Valley, she led us in worship on February 16, 2020, and preached the final sermon of her career. It came as a result of what we have referred to as the "fracture in the relationship of our co-pastors." Rev. Fowler has given us permission to use this material from her sermon.

Scriptures: From *Ruth 1:6-18* is the story of Ruth and Naomi. They were daughter-in-law and mother-in-law. Their husbands, father and son, had died. Naomi urges Ruth to return to her people, but Ruth refuses to leave Naomi alone. *Ruth 1: 16....Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people. Your God will be my God. (NIV)*

1 Corinthians 13:4-8a Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self seeking. It is not easily angered. It keeps no record of wrongs. One does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. (NIV)

John 13: 34-35 A new command I give you; Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. (NIV)

Prayer: Who dares speaks for you, O God? Give me a humble heart and a right attitude that Christ shines forth to perceptive minds and lives in receptive hearts. Amen

Sermon on Love: The 3 scriptures focus on the love of Ruth for her mother-in-law, of Jesus in his great commandment, and in Paul's words about love to the people in Corinth.

Greek words for love – Agape – love in action, given freely in the community.

Love is the most powerful because it alone can conquer the human heart and the most powerless because it can do nothing except by consent.

The three scripture passages each say something important about love. Ruth risks everything, her life, to follow her mother-in-law. That is a huge promise like God's covenant love. In Cor. 13, Loves bears all things, hopes, endures, never ends. Paul spoke to a community, a church in Corinth, and told them how to live together. Jesus teaches his disciples that his end was near. He gave them a new commandment to love one another and out of that people will know you are my disciples.

Quote from a pastor friend, Jason D. Bradley:

"Love is not something we bypass on the way to weightier theological issues. Love is PhD Christianity. In our pursuit of Jesus we will spend the rest of our lives learning to love more passionately, intimately, intentionally and transformatively."

In seminary, my first year was full of introductory courses – Introduction to Theology, Introduction to Christian Education. My professors could speak with such eloquence, but I wanted to know what does this look like. What kind of work will I really be doing? I am an inspired doer. I needed to know what this love looks like.

We had curriculum courses on love and scriptures about love. What does it look like here at Webster Presbyterian Church? Or should look like?

1. Refuse to make assumptions
2. Do not take sides
3. Do not gossip

Allow time for the process - for the Session and Presbytery to do their work. Have patience; trust in your leaders. Uncertainty builds anxiety, but love brings that down. Love means you need to pray for everybody every day. Love means you need to make a decision to care for this church more than you care for yourself or your way. The future of this church is in God's hands. God is ahead of us. How we behave can either build up or tear down this church. The faithful choice here is building up. Show love in action. Faithfully follow Jesus Christ.

I hope you will listen to this advice and take it. Be called to love God and his people as Ruth did. Remember the marching orders that Paul meant for the church in Corinth. Do not insist on your own way. Do not rejoice in wrong doing.

Be patient, kind, and rejoice in the truth. God loves us and will not let us go. The truth is love, bears all things, and love never ends.

You are disciples of Jesus Christ. You are a witness to what love in Jesus Christ looks like. People are watching you and taking you literally. Show each other and this community what love looks like. May it be true here.

We thought Rev. Amy Fowler's words were so powerful that we wanted you to hear them again. God Bless you and this, His church.

WHILE THE LOCK-DOWN CONTINUES. . .

In light of the continuing challenges that we are facing with the COVID-19 virus, this edition of the *Pathway* is bringing you the information you need to know while church services and activities are temporarily suspended and most of us are sequestered at home. We are sending out the *Pathway* digitally and mailing it to members who we know do not have email. Even if you do have email, if you need a printed version, just call or email the office and we'll drop one in the mail.

The Church Office is being staffed on a limited basis to receive emails (preferred) and return your phone messages: (585-265-9700 and office@websterpres.org). We will also be emailing special announcements and prayer requests, so be sure to check your email frequently. Someone will be in the office on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to Noon, and other extended hours as needed.

Once services and church activities resume we will send out an edition of *The Pathway* that will include the usual announcements about all the opportunities for spiritual growth, fellowship, and service that take place at Webster Presbyterian Church, and when and where they will take place.

Sunday Services are being live-streamed:

You can watch them **live** at 9:30 using:

ZOOM <https://zoom.us/j/200521841>

or Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Websterpres/>

Or you can watch is **later** at your leisure using:

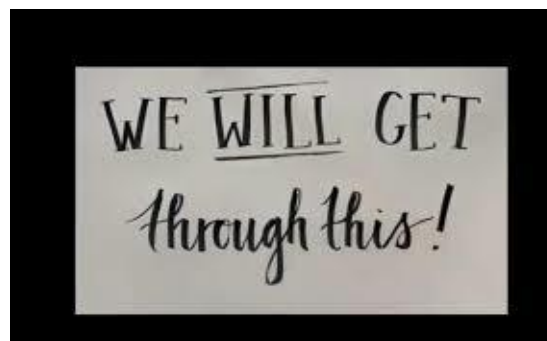
Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Websterpres/>

or YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzM5-thYxua2HQSPF6P71wA>

Virtual Narthex: Every Sunday evening at 7:00 p.m. there is an open Zoom meeting available <https://zoom.us/j/690945403>. This will be the same link each week. There is no program and no agenda - we'll start with a short devotional, but the rest of the time will be free time to talk about whatever is on your minds.

Congregational Care Check-in Groups:

The congregation has been divided into Check-in Groups. Each group has been assigned an Elder or a Deacon who will be in touch by phone with the people in their groups. The purpose is to care for one another in our church family during the pandemic through sharing, prayer, and identifying specific needs. When Jesus was asked, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" Jesus answered, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these." *Mark 12:28, 30-31 (NIV)*



MEMORY VERSE FOR MAY

*"...Neither height nor depth, not anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us from the love of God."*

Romans 8:39



SPIRITUAL NURTURE

Ephesians 3 tells us that God fills us with his Holy Spirit. It also says that Christ dwells in our hearts through faith. How wonderful that the God of the universe is in our inner being! How much love he has for us that he makes his home in us! We can rest in the assurance that he is not only 'out there' but 'in here'.

You may want to ponder this reality of God in you. Understanding that God is within us can help us want to converse with and trust him more. He can strengthen us with power through his Spirit and fill us with more and more of his love.

"I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith." *Ephesians 3:16-17*

WE ARE GOING TO PHILIPPI on Wednesday evenings

Come with us as Ray Vander Laan takes us to Philippi and Thessaloniki to discover how Paul preached the kingdom of God in a Roman colony. In this 5-week DVD series called 'A Clash of Kingdoms,' Ray makes the writings of Paul come alive. He shows us where Paul would have walked and the temples of the Roman gods at which the people he was preaching to would have worshiped. Then we discuss what we have seen afterwards.

This is an excellent study and a chance to virtually fellowship with people from our church. It is from 7-8 PM every Wednesday night in May. Any questions, please contact Connie Rice or Tony Hubbard. The link is <https://zoom.us/j/8020641367>.

MAY LECTIONARY PASSAGES

May 3

Psalm: *Psalm 23*
New Testament: *Acts 2:42-27 and I Peter 2:19-25*
Gospel: *John 10:1-10*

May 10

Psalm: *Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16*
New Testament: *Acts 7:55-60 and I Peter 2:2-10*
Gospel: *John 14:1-14*

May 17

Psalm: *Psalm 66:8-20*
New Testament: *Acts 17:22-31 and I Peter 2:13-22*
Gospel: *John 14:15-21*

May 24

Psalm: *Psalm 68:1-10, 32-25*
New Testament: *Acts 1:6-14 & I Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11*
Gospel: *John 17:1-11*

May 31 - Pentecost

Old Testament: *Numbers 11:24-30*
Psalm: *Psalm 104:24-34, 35b*
New Testament: *Acts 2:1-21 & I Corinthians 12:3b-13*
Gospel: *John 20:19-223*
John 7:37-39

NO SPRING WORKDAY

This spring there will be no church workday. Instead, the Trustees will be drawing up a chart of jobs for volunteers (families, and safe groups) to complete on a flexible schedule. This will keep our church in good shape in our absence.

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER MAY 7, 2020

Members of local communities are invited to a virtual observance of the National Day of Prayer on May 7th at 7:00 pm. Pastor Will Barham, of the Webster Christian Reformed Church, and several area pastors will offer prayers for our government, churches, and families. The National Day of Prayer is an annual observance held on the first Thursday of May, inviting people of all faiths to pray for the nation. It stands as a call for us to humbly come before God, seeking His guidance for our leaders and His grace upon us as a people.

The service will be pre-recorded and available on the church web site (www.webstercrc.com) and in various media forms such as Facebook and YouTube.

MEMORIAL RECEPTION COORDINATOR NEEDED

Barbara Coleman is in her tenth year as coordinator of receptions held for families at WPC following a memorial service. She will continue to the end of this (2020) year. Anyone interested in taking the position and shadowing Barbara for this year can reach her at 585-406-2768

HOW WE CAN HELP OTHERS

During this time of great need, many of us want to reach out and help others in some way. However, it is overwhelming to decide who and where. The Mission Committee is sharing this list of organizations that serve those in need in Webster, Williamson, and Rochester. Several are included in our annual mission giving, but we are familiar with all of them.

Cameron Community Ministries

<http://www.cameronministries.org/>

48 Cameron Street, Rochester 14606

(585) 254-2697

Foodlink

<https://foodlinkny.org/>

PO Box 60766, Rochester 14606

HOPE Ministry (see details across →)

<http://www.holytrinityweb.com/outreach.php>

1450 Ridge Road, Webster 14580

(585) 265-6694

Open Door Mission

<https://opendoormission.com/>

156 N. Plymouth Avenue, Rochester 14608

(585) 454-6696

South Wedge Food Program

<https://www.rocsaltcenter.org/southwedgefoodprogram/>

68 Ashland Street, Rochester 14620

(585) 325-4950

Wayne County Come-Unity Center

<https://williamsoncomeunitycenter.org/>

P.O. Box 73, Williamson 14589

Currently donations will be used to provide boxes of food to families and boxed take-out meals

Webster Community Chest

<http://www.webcommchest.org/>

1000 Ridge Road, Webster 14580

(585) 671-2060



HOPE MINISTRY

HOPE Ministry has been responding to the special or emergency needs of Webster area residents for 21 years. Especially during these uncertain times, they continue to assist residents who are in need of food and other items..

HOPE House, where residents can come for those items, is located at 1450 Ridge Road (west of Holy Trinity Church). *Those in need should bring proof of residency.*

The hours of service are: Monday 4-7 p.m., Tuesday 10-noon, Wednesday 2-5 p.m. If you would like to help by providing donations, all non-perishable food and hygiene items are welcome.

Currently, there is a higher need for -

- Spaghetti sauce
- Cooking oil
- Dish soap
- Crackers
- Feminine products
- Size 5 Diapers
- Clorox and Lysol wipes
- Cleaning products

You can bring the items during the times listed. If you pull up in front of HOPE House, a volunteer will come out to your car to get the bags or boxes.

Watch for updated information on the HOPE Ministry Facebook page or email the Director with questions at margery.morgan@dor.org.

STEWARDSHIP: WHAT ABOUT MY PLEDGE WHEN THE CHURCH IS CLOSED?

We are in the mid-stages of a national health emergency. Although this is not primarily a financial emergency, people will experience financial hardships as the economic dislocations continue. It will be important to continue to meet our mission obligations as the organizations we support figure out how to continue their missions. In addition, most of our own costs will continue even when the building is closed. In other words, your financial pledge is as important now as it is when the church is open.

If you are experiencing short term financial hardships during the emergency, the church has some capability to help in some situations – please contact the office or Reverend Davis as necessary.

But if you are able to continue your pledge, how do you give when the church is closed?

Option 1 – US Mail

Some of us still remember things like envelopes and stamps (ask your parents) – you can always mail a check to the church office. Although the office is operating on irregular hours, we are checking mail, email and telephone messages regularly.

Option 2 – Online bill pay through your bank

Most banks offer some form of online bill payment. If you use this feature, you should be able to set up the church as a Payee, and make payments that way. You can make individual payments, regular weekly payments, or regular monthly payments for no fee to you, the donor, or to the church. See your bank website for details.

Option 3 – Online giving through the web site

Our new church website is now live at **WebsterPres.org**. You are able to make online payments to the church for a small fee to the church. Details are on the next page of this *Pathway*..

Option 4 – QCDs through your investment institution*

Are you over 70 ½ years old, and do you have a traditional IRA? Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) transfers are even more advantageous after the 2018 tax law changes increased standard deductions and fewer people are itemizing. Persons 70 ½ and older can distribute up to \$100K/year to charities from a Traditional IRA by filling out a QCD withdrawal form with their IRA provider.

QCD distributions are not taxable income, yet count toward one's annual RMD (Required Minimum Distribution) required of IRA investors after they reach 70 ½. (Of course, you can't "double dip" by including the QCD amount as a charitable gift if you itemize deductions.)

QCD checks are made payable to the church and, depending on the practices of your financial institution, may be sent directly to the church, or sent to you to forward to the church.

See IRS Form 390-B for more information.

Option 5 – Stock gifts through your investment institution*

Do you have appreciated stock that you wish to donate? Gifts of Appreciated Stock can be made via a signed form from one's broker, and may provide tax advantages to the giver. Please check with your financial institution and the church office for step by step instructions. Make sure to advise WPC secretary Georgia Hubbard so she won't have to guess the donor identity. If the stock value has depreciated, it may be advantageous to sell it, write a check to WPC for the proceeds, and take a tax loss to off-set gains from other transactions.

Stock transfers will typically be made directly from your institution to the church's account.

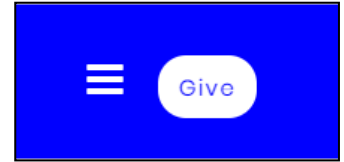
See IRS Form 8283 Noncash Charitable Contributions, Part I for more information.

***We are not offering and do not offer tax or financial advice – please consult your tax advisor as necessary.**

How to make online payments through the new web site

1. Our new church website is now live at **WebsterPres.org**. You are now able to make online payments to the church.

2. At the top right-hand corner of every page are two options. The lines are a drop-down navigation menu that can help you find specific pages you are looking for. The “Give” button will take you to the online giving section.



3. The page that opens up has two options - “Give Now” or “Sign In”. The “Sign In” option gives you an option to create a new account (or use an existing account) – this will make future giving a bit quicker and easier. If you use other on-line services you are familiar with this process.



4. If you have an account and are signed in, the “Give now” page will include an icon in the upper right-hand corner to indicate this. If you choose not to set up an account, you can “Give Now” instead without an account.

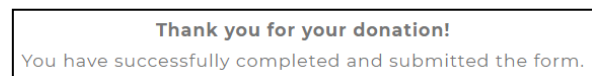


5. In either case, click the dropdown box titled “Choose a Fund” and pick where the money should go within the church. Your annual pledge should go to “General Budget” (which is currently the only one set up). Throughout the year, different funds will be available such as One Great Hour of Sharing, Blanket Sunday, and Summer Mission. Enter a dollar amount, and check the box for “recurring gift” if you want to. Then click on “Submit”.

6. If you want the gift to repeat in the future, click the “Make This Gift Recurring” box. The system will then ask you to Register for an Account. If you do not want the gift to repeat, simply skip that box and continue down the page.

7. There are 2 options, again – you can give by credit card or directly from your bank account. In either case, fill in the information requested and again hit “Submit.”

8. You're done! You'll get an on-screen confirmation and an email confirmation.



Our web site is set up with all of the appropriate security and encryption protocols – this is a safe, convenient and effective way to give.

If you experience any difficulties, please contact Linnaea Nifong (lvnifong@gmail.com) or Don George (dgeorge14580@gmail.com).