

**PURPOSE**  
**STATEMENT**

*"We are disciples of  
Jesus Christ  
committed to making a  
difference in the  
community and in the  
world through service  
and invitational  
outreach."*

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# The Messenger

First United Methodist Church, Chatham

## From the Pastor

June 2020

Volume 24, Issue 6

Greetings, First United Methodist Church Family.

It is almost time. This will be my last pastoral letter for our monthly Messenger. My last Sunday with you will be June 14.

Time is a strange thing. It doesn't feel like it's been two years at all. I feel like I just arrived here only a few weeks ago. But then, I also feel like last two years were longer than any two years of my life.

I am truly grateful for the experiences and lessons that I had and learned in this church. There are happy ones, sad ones, beautiful ones, ugly ones, helpful ones, painful ones, ordinary ones, extraordinary ones and ones that I cannot define...

When I came here two years ago, I was not who I am now. I am so different now that I sometimes hardly recognize myself. I believe my experience here has molded and nourished me. For that, this church will always have a place in my heart.

I hope that I have done the job that God has entrusted me with for this church. I was reading 2 Thessalonian, and saw how Paul (although Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy wrote the letter together) was so happy with the Thessalonian church. Of all things, Paul commends them for growing their faith and loving one another. "We must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing."

If anyone asks me the one thing out of all things that church does well, I will answer that it is to love and care for one another. And I was definitely one of the beneficiaries. I think I know how proud and content Paul must have been to know that the church was standing in love and

faith. Although Paul was writing the letter knowing that the church was in confusion and difficulty, he believed that the church would go through it with their faith and love.

Leaving the congregation in the middle of this world pandemic situation is not easy for me, like Paul could not be with the church because he was imprisoned. However, he had faith in his church. I have faith in you, too. I know this church is standing strong in faith and love and will get through any storm.

I have finished my part and am leaving with a thankful heart. Now I give you the best blessing that I can give like Paul did for the Thessalonian church. Now receive the spirit of peace.

"May the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in all ways. The Lord be with all of you."

Thank you.



This is my calligraphy artwork. In Korean it says "God bless you!"

Peace,  
Pastor Soo

Until further notice, The First United Methodist Church's building is not open for its usual activities because of the Coronavirus. Live 10AM Sunday services may be found at [www.chathammethodist.org/online-services](http://www.chathammethodist.org/online-services). This newsletter is abbreviated, without church and volunteer schedules; if we are able to resume any activities before the next issue, we will send you these schedules. The Church Council will meet again before the end of May to review Conference, State and Local guidelines for resuming activities. We do know that the Town of Chatham has canceled all its summer activities.



Dear Chatham Friends (old and new)!

Several weeks ago, our Bishop called me to ask if I would return to Chatham as of July 1 as your pastor once again. Without hesitation, I agreed! Some of my fondest memories of ministry and mission are tied into the 11 years I was with you. Those of you who were here then will know my interests and inclinations and those of you who do not know me...well I hope you are not terribly disappointed!

It was 30 years ago this July that I arrived from California with my family and dogs (also family). My daughter attended the Laurel School in Brewster and later graduated from Cape Cod Academy. She now has Ph.D. degree and her own clinical practice in Dallas. She also has a two-year-old and a six-year-old! My older daughter never lived in Chatham but is now in Seattle and has a daughter 1-1/2 years old.

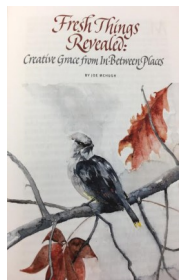
At present I live in Plymouth (my home since leaving Chatham in 2001) with my fiancé and her four children. They are boys, 26, 25, and 14-year-old girl twins. Because of schooling and work commitments, I will commute to Chatham several days a week and stay in the parsonage part-time. I will be available in emergencies on short-notice since my Plymouth home is just a 50-minute drive.

My training includes degrees from Lycoming College, Drew University School of Theology, and a post graduate degree from the Chicago Theological Seminary. I was born and raised in suburban Philadelphia and have lived in several different cities across the country. Following my eleven years in Chatham, I was the Executive Director of the Preachers' Aid Society of New England for 14 years until my retirement from full-time work in 2015.

I am excited to see what a return to Chatham will bring for our ministry together! First UMC has always been blessed with talented and committed disciples, and I know God will give us new adventures in faith and mission as we again work together. God bless, and I will see you all soon!

Thom  
Dr. Rev. Thomas G. Gallen

#### Excerpts from an article by Joe McHugh in "Weavings, A Journal of the Christian Spiritual Life, May/June/July 2015"



Starting in fall and intensifying during winter, the world turns in on itself protectively, struggling hard to hold decay and death at bay in a kind of self-absorbed introversion calculated to keep warm and alive what stingy traces of hope and life can still be found. But when spring and summer arrive, the world proudly, if not arrogantly, turns outward in an extroverted creativity and self-confidence that is both brash and extravagant. Enter into these natural rhythms and we get schooled in the active cycle of death and resurrection at the world's heart. Doing so also lets us soak in the faith and hope that naturally quicken the human spirit and give us access to that mysterious in-between place where death and resurrection meet in a creative moment of grace. Jesus called the dynamic heart of this inward and outward process Abba, a word that hints at the intimacy he shared with God, a relationship shared with us in a spirit that is at once active and passive, present and elusive, mysterious and holy. As Dunne puts it...in the inward and outward drama we Christians see in the death and resurrection of Jesus...[we] turn toward love, [from] isolation toward community, understanding toward contemplation, faith and hope toward love and compassion. [In] the death and resurrection of Jesus...we see [him] turning *inward* in the passion and death of Good Friday, and, after spending time in-between death and resurrection...turning *outward* in the life-giving power of God. Not just rejoining the human community, he redeemed and redefined it at the same time.

***It's God's creativity at work... that finally transforms death and destruction into life and grace.***

***The great temptation of the spiritual quest... is to stay stuck in the movement inward.***

The late John S. Dunne, long-time professor of theology at Notre Dame, frequently used language like this to depict the drama of the spiritual quest. For him, spiritual growth meant constantly living and reliving the solitary process of turning inward to follow our heart's desire toward the source of being and life, and then being led outward over and over again...we rejoin the human community, enriched and empowered to love and serve more faithfully. This transformation is kindled in an in-between place where inside and outside and death and resurrection meet in a creative moment of grace. Jesus called the dynamic heart of this inward and outward process Abba, a word that hints at the intimacy he shared with God, a relationship shared with us in a spirit that is at once active and passive, present and elusive, mysterious and holy. As Dunne puts it...in the inward and outward drama we Christians see in the death and resurrection of Jesus...[we] turn toward love, [from] isolation toward community, understanding toward contemplation, faith and hope toward love and compassion. [In] the death and resurrection of Jesus...we see [him] turning *inward* in the passion and death of Good Friday, and, after spending time in-between death and resurrection...turning *outward* in the life-giving power of God. Not just rejoining the human community, he redeemed and redefined it at the same time.

It's in our personal places of dark captivity that we often rub up against...the ways in which we betray God, others and self...and resist the grace that calls us outward...[to] find God waiting for us, ready to lead us into gratitude and contemplation, the soul's true healers. The healing we find in these creative in-between places (ed. note—like the isolation we have been experiencing) isn't about fixing or mechanically following secret steps guaranteed to yield miraculous results. Instead, it's part of the personal transformation that happens only when we [see ourselves] as good and lovable in God's loving grace.

According to McHugh, with God's help we can have the courage to move from places of hopelessness into places where hope seems possible, even probable." [Are you experiencing] this kind of movement in your life [now]? If so,...what [does] the journey look and feel like?

## ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

by Suzanna Nickerson



Greetings Congregation!

Again this year, I am offering Milkweed seed packets for those who might have a space to grow some amazing milkweed plants. When you plant milkweed seeds you are helping the monarch butterfly, who's caterpillar is only able to eat the Milkweed plant. I have a help-your-self jar, with seed packets in it, under my showcase near the sidewalk at 606 Main St., on the corner of Seaview Street & Main Street in Chatham. Or, I'd be glad to mail seeds to you. My phone number is 774-563-0775. My email is [suzannaan@yahoo.com](mailto:suzannaan@yahoo.com). There are three kinds, common and butterfly weed that both like well drained soil, and swamp milkweed that likes moisture. All need full sun.

On the other side of this amazing native plant is an invasive plant called "garlic mustards". Brought to the United States by European settlers, it now is a top invasive. It will grow well in sun or shade. Not only does it grow quickly, overtaking other native plant species, but it also affects butterfly populations. The plant is tasty and fragrant with a garlic smell. It can be put in salads or sautéed as greens and is high in vitamin C. But, this pesky invasive can overtake your garden and wild spaces. It has a "?" shape stem that means you must follow the stem around the curve, to the root, tighten your thumb and forefinger, and pull while wiggling gently. Apparently, the plant can continue flowering and spreading seeds while in the compost heap, so it is recommended that these weeds be taken to the dump. To see a picture go to [nature.org](http://nature.org).

In my ongoing reduction of plastic use within my home, I have been looking into substitutions of all sorts. Did you know that there are bars of soap for hair washing. They come in a simple paper wrap or box. One is JR Leggetts Old Fashioned Bar Shampoo, another is Chagrin Valley Butter Bar Shampoo. Both come from, "Green Road Refillables," run by Jessica Georges. It is a wonderful traveling household supply store. She offers all sorts of alternative cleaning products for kitchen, bathroom, and the whole house. Much of her product is bulk, you supply the container, and the product is by the pound. She also has extra containers if you don't have one. Jessica is a wealth of knowledge. [greenroadrefill@gmail.com](mailto:greenroadrefill@gmail.com), 774-216-1409.

Please stay well and enjoy our beautiful spring!

Suzanna

## Serving In The Military

Please keep in your prayers all those serving in the military, especially the following members associated with our church:

- Lt. Forrest A. Bogue, U.S. Navy, San Diego, CA, grandson of Olive Bogue;
- Pvt. Jacob Stewart, at Camp Humphreys, Dagou, South Korea, grandson of Elaine & Roger Trexler.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- |                     |                        |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 06-01 Sue Haskell   | 06-28 Keith Bradley    |
| 6-05 Lizzie Haskell | 06-28 Ruth Norman      |
| 06-06 Vera Harrison | 06-29 Frederick Miller |
| 06-09 Jane Brier    |                        |



## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

- |                             |
|-----------------------------|
| 06-07 Dottie & Phil Morse   |
| 06-08 Ginger & David Murray |
| 06-09 Jane Brier            |
| 06-22 Lynne & Nelson Long   |
| 06-28 Ruth Norman           |
| 06-25 Jane & Bernie Powers  |

## STAFF CONTACTS

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## THE CHURCH OFFICE

Hours are less structured than usual during the Coronavirus, but I am in the church office Monday through Thursday mornings. If you have a question/request with which I can help you, the preferred method for the time being is to call the office and leave a message if there is no answer: 508.945.0474. The mail comes every day, so you can feel free to mail in your pledges or anything else you previously would have brought in person.

Miss you all - Joyce

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