

OUTLOOK ~ FEBRUARY 2021

Unity Hill United Church of Christ

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Facebook: www.Facebook.com/Unity-Hill-UCC



The Rev. Dr. M. Todd Shipley, Pastor

Diane Henderson, Moderator

Dawn Brezina, Church Clerk

Jeffrey Stokely, Music Coordinator

Dorothy W. Pickens, Soloist

Joanne Wickson, Office Administrator

Calap Brown, Sexton



MARCH OUTLOOK DEADLINE

We welcome contributions to our monthly newsletter and invite you to share information, or even something more creative!

Please submit all articles, events or special announcements for the March 2021 Outlook by Friday, February 19, if possible, and no later than Monday, February 22. Thanks!

Please remember our homebound in your prayers or with a note:

Dorothy Barwick, Lucille Baver, Dolores Colaiacomo, Ilse Plitt,
Katie Schneider, Mitch Wein and Wally Yeager.



Lucille Baver's new address: 118 Kelly Cove Court, Mooresville, NC 28117



PASTORAL CARE ~ VERY IMPORTANT!

If you, or someone you know, is hospitalized, please call the church office to let us know (203-374-8822). Hospitals do not notify us when a parishioner is hospitalized.

A SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVE ~ The Rev. Dr. Todd Shipley, Pastor

**The Word became flesh and blood,
and moved into the neighborhood.**

**We saw the glory with our own eyes,
the one-of-a-kind glory, like Parent, like Child,
Generous inside and out, true from start to finish.**

(John 1:14 The Message)

You may recall that I finished a degree a few years ago on body theology. In simple terms that is the study of how these four aspects of Christianity engage the human body (see Venn diagram).



If you are up on your denominational terminology you may have noticed that this image is described as 'Wesleyan' in origin. This is a different way of saying it is Methodist in origin. Even though it stands outside of the UCC tradition it is a great summary of theology.

In a journal article I am working on I have changed the name 'body theology' to 'sarco-theology,' or theology of the flesh. I am using this term to balance another recently minted term 'neuro-theology,' or theology of the brain. This area of study is well articulated in a recently published eponymous book by Andrew Newberg. It is a thought-provoking book, but it runs aground in places that Protestantism does as well. This is the predilection to the 'think' our Christian life as opposed to 'doing' our Christianity. God cares about His children so much He came into our world to heal our bodies and inspire us to seek the joy of using our bodies to heal others.

Another thing you may remember about my study is that one of the outcomes of my thesis was my annual Incarnation Celebration which has been held for the last 2 years on the second Sunday of February. While I hope to resume the celebration next year, for obvious reasons we are going to forego this year's celebration. What I would like to do instead is have a Lenten Incarnation Celebration and here is how:

Do some kind of activity that makes you 'feel' good. I do not want you to only think Christian thoughts or read Christian texts (well read the Bible all you want but maybe not as a Lenten practice this time). Some examples are meditation, walks in the woods experiencing creation, fasting (it doesn't feel good in the beginning but feels great in the end). And if you can't think of one...give old pastor Todd a ring. Celebrate your incarnation!

Yours, Pastor Todd

ASH WEDNESDAY – Wednesday, February 17 ~ 2 CHOICES

DRIVE-UP ASHES - 5:30 - 6:30 pm;

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE - 6:30 - 7:30 pm

CHURCH UPDATES

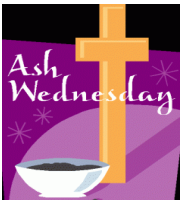


NEXT CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING – Wednesday, February 10 at 7 pm
COMMITTEE REPORTS TO COUNCIL ~ Due by Friday, February 5

DRIVE-UP OPEN HOUSE - Saturday, February 13 from 11 am – 1 pm
will have a Mardi Gras theme



PRESIDENTS' DAY - Office will be closed - Monday, February 15



ONLINE COFFEE HOUR ~ Missing those fellowship hour check-ins with other members? Wondering what others are doing while at home? At these times, more than ever, we need to connect with people. So let's gather for a new

Online Coffee Hour

Starting Sunday February 21st at 7 pm
~ ALL ARE WELCOME! ~



Whether you are attending in person worship, watching the recording afterward or just want to drop in for a chat while Pat Bowman hosts an online gathering each Sunday evening at 7 pm. Please call or email the church office before February 21st to let us know you are interested. No need to attend each week just come when it suits you.

Although we will gather on ZOOM, if you are not familiar with this video conferencing platform have NO FEAR. Just let us know and Pat Bowman will reach out to you ahead of the first session to make sure you are able to connect and are comfortable with how it will work. You can use a computer, tablet or smartphone to participate with video and audio. But you can also call in from any phone to participate with audio only. That's right! You don't need any technology beyond your phone.

For my own Lenten journey, I challenge myself to change one habit - pick up a new good habit or put down one that is not helping me. Since Lent is 40 days long and studies often say it takes between 20-60 days to change a habit this means, if I strive to make the change each day in Lent, I can be well on my way by Easter. So if you are focusing on something new during Lent or maybe giving up chocolate or Starbucks (gasp!), we can check in each Sunday evening and encourage each other along the way toward the miracle of Jesus' resurrection within ourselves and the world.

GOLDEN HILL COMMUNITY SUPPERS - Wednesday, February 24 -
2pm Cook; 5pm Serve. Volunteers always needed and appreciated.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING – Sunday, April 11

Officers, Committee and Delegate reports due into the office by March 7.

**ANNUAL
CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING**



A former member of Unity Hill, Janet King, died in November. Janet & her family were long time members. Our thoughts and prayers are with them.

MESSAGE FROM THE MODERATOR ~ By: Diane Henderson

Good day Unity Hill UCC Members and Friends, Welcome to February, the month of love, Presidents' Day, Mardi Gras, Fat Tuesday and the beginning of Lent with Ash Wednesday on February 17.

Hope everyone is staying safe, warm and healthy. I'm keeping all of you in my thoughts and prayers.

In my family there are several members celebrating birthdays this month. The most important one is my mom, Ilse Plitt, who turns 100 on February 18. She is such a special lady who has endured a great deal in her life. There is so much I could write about her, but I will just mention how important family is to her. She was an only child so having a big family was a dream of hers. She brought up 5 children, has 12 grandchildren (6 boys, 6 girls) and 12 great grandchildren (8 girls, 4 boys) So Happy, Happy Birthday Mom with so much love!

I'll end with a short message by Barbara DeAngelis:

*"Love and kindness are never wasted, They always make a difference.
They bless the one who receives them and they bless you, the giver."*

Blessings and Love to all of you, Diane

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE ~ By: Sharon Brezina, Chair

With [Valentine's Day](#) upon us, we are reminded of God's never-ending and unending love for us. Valentine's Day is used to show those we love how much they mean to us. It's also a time to show you, God's children, how much He loves us. God's love far exceeds any other type of love. Conversation Hearts are a popular candy on Valentine's Day containing messages that you can give to the people that you love on Valentine's Day. Some fun facts about the candy heart...

- The New England Confectionery Company (NECCO – of NECCO Wafers) makes more than **8 billion** candy hearts every year to keep up with the demand for the sweet treat!
- Every day from late February to mid- January, around **100,000 pounds of conversation hearts are made.**

- The entire amount produced during this time **sells out in only six weeks**. Candy hearts are the best-selling Valentine's Day candy.
- In 2010, for the first time in 145 years, the company **discarded all of the sayings** for the conversation hearts and created a new line with expressions selected by the public.
- The **most popular new sayings** for the conversation hearts are "Tweet Me", "Text Me", "You Rock", "Love Bug", "Soul Mate" and "Me + You".
- In order to get the old sayings, you can have them custom made ... but you'll have to buy a full production run **(1.7 million candy hearts!)**
- In late 2018 the NECCO company was sold to a family-owned business Spangler (they also make dum-dum lollipops and Circus Peanuts) and due to timing, there were no conversation hearts to be seen on the shelves for 2019.
- Though there were some production issues, there were candy hearts on the shelves for 2020 but, due to some difficulties, a large number of the conversation hearts lacked printing on them.

What do you think God would have written on those empty conversation hearts if He were to write them to us? Fun Facts....The Bible is full of promises from God to us. Here are some promises.....

1. *Romans 8:39*- Absolutely nothing will ever be able to separate us from God's love.
2. *John 3:16*- God loves us so much that He sent Jesus to die for us. That is a huge sacrifice to make.
3. *1 John 3:1*- Our God is an almighty God who is in complete control of the world. Not only does He love us, but he wants to lavish His love on us and He wants to make us His children.
4. *1 John 3:16*- He loves us so much that He was willing to give up His life for us even though He was completely sinless.
5. *Romans 5:8*- He loved us so much that He died for us before we were even His children. He loved us before we were His children as much as He does now.
6. *Ephesians 5:1-2*- Jesus loved us and we are to try to be like Him in the way we love others.
7. *Jeremiah 31:3*- God loves us with an everlasting love.
8. *Psalms 36:5*- God's love is very big. There is nowhere in the world that it does not reach.
9. *Psalms 89:2*- God's love will stand firm forever and He will never ever let us down.
10. *Romans 8:28*- God will take care of those who love Him and everything will work out for the good of His purpose.

I see a few here that could be placed on the candy..." Everlasting Love", "Absolute Love", "Father's Love", "Forever Love".....

So, this Valentine's Day – when you are eating one or handing them out to friends and family... remember these facts... not only how the candy was made and its history... but all the promises God has made to us in the bible. Remember – God's a pretty good conversationalist and his heart would read... **"God Loves U"**!

Stay Safe! Sharon Brezina

FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP ~ By: Carole J. Fanslow, President

No February Executive Board Meeting or Monthly Luncheon Meeting.

FELLOWSHIP OF UNITY HILL ~ By: Dorothy Pickens, President

GOLDEN HILL COMMUNITY SUPPERS - On Wednesday, February 24, we'll be cooking at 2:00 pm and serving at 5:00 pm at Golden Hill UMC, Bpt. We will prepare the meal at church on Sunday, February 21. Additional help is always appreciated. Our next turn will be on Wednesday, April 28.

COMMUNITY GROUPS AND HAPPENINGS

COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF GREATER BRIDGEPORT

DELEGATES MEETING ~ Tuesday, March 23, 2021 - 6:30 – 8 pm on zoom.

Contact Council of Churches for more info at (203) 334-1121 or info@ccgb.org

VIRTUAL FOOD DRIVE - Our Hunger Outreach Network serves 20,000+ people monthly! We can't do it without your support. **Your donation to the Council's Virtual Food Drive funds our Food Access Program.** Our Food Access program ensures that the 40 food pantries and soup kitchens in our Hunger Outreach Network (HON) can stock their shelves with healthy food throughout the coming fall and early winter. Pantries and soup kitchens in the HON travel far by drawing support from the network to accomplish what they would not be able to do alone. Help support the thousands of people who rely on our pantries and soup kitchens to feed themselves and their families every month. Click to make your donation ...

<https://ccgb.salsalabs.org/virtualfooddrive/index.html> We can do this... **TOGETHER!**

Please contact us if you have questions, need resources or support at info@ccgb.org or at 203-334-1121 – The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport, 1718 Capitol Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06604

WINTER COAT DRIVE until February 15th. Drop off on Tuesday and Thursday ONLY between 9:30am – 1:30pm. Location: CCGB, 1718 Capital Ave. Bridgeport. Please call 203-544-4015 once you arrive. All other calls regarding questions should be to Adilene Garcia at 203-334-1121 ext 13. You must be wearing a mask over your mouth and nose at drop off. Coats dropped off on other days/times will not be accepted until the following drop off day between the times stated above.

SILVER LAKE CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS

Each year the **FAIRFIELD EAST ASSOCIATION (FEA) BUDGETS SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS** to help youth attend events that will help them grow in their faith, learn more about their church, and simply enjoy Christian community.

[Click here](#) to obtain a scholarship application for financial assistance to attend ANY Silver Lake Summer Conferences (SLCC) this summer - including family camp.

The exact amount of the scholarship offered varies from year to year and is based on several factors including the number of applicants as well as any special circumstances relating to an individual application. In the past, the scholarship amounts awarded ranged from \$100 to \$250 per camper.

How does it work? Campers go to www.silverlakect.org picks a week, and registers. Campers must be registered in order to receive a scholarship. If the required SLCC deposit poses a problem, a camper can register without paying while awaiting scholarship help. However, they will need to contact the Silver Lake Registrar directly at slcc@ctuucc.org in order to do so.

The Camper completes FEA scholarship application form, which requires a pastor signature, and emails it to feascholarship@gmail.com by April 15. Receipt of the FEA scholarship application is acknowledged by FEA scholarship administrator. FEA confirms camper registrations with SLCC. Camper is notified of the amount of the scholarship award in a timely manner, after April 15th. FEA disburses funds directly to SLCC.

If you have any questions, contact Kimberly Martinez Cordova, FEA Scholarship Administrator at feascholarship@gmail.com

Please Note...

Silver Lake also offers scholarships (in addition to any provided by FEA). The Silver Lake Scholarship Application is available through the Document Center when the camper is logged in to his or her account.

DAY VISITS ARE BACK! Bring yourself, your family, your roommates, or your friends for some time outside surrounded by the beauty of God's creation at Silver Lake

Conference Center. Available on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays; sign up online for a day (or multiple dates) and enjoy a safe outdoor experience.

We are excited to provide an opportunity for members of our community to enjoy some time at our beautiful site, in a unique and different way.

[Learn more and reserve your Day Visit today!](#)

Questions? Email slcc@silverlakeect.org or call the Silver Lake office at 860-364-5526.

HEALTH CORNER ~ Facts about COVID-19 vaccines ~ by Mayo Clinic Staff.

[You need the facts about COVID-19 vaccines – Mayo Clinic News Network](#)

Vaccines to prevent the [coronavirus disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) are perhaps the best hope for ending the pandemic. But as the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#) begins authorizing emergency use of COVID-19 vaccines, you likely have questions.

What are the benefits of getting a COVID-19 vaccine?

[COVID-19](#) can cause severe medical complications and lead to death in some people. There is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you. If you get COVID-19, you could spread the disease to family, friends and others around you. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine can help protect you by creating an antibody response in your body without your having to become sick with COVID-19. A COVID-19 vaccine might prevent you from getting COVID-19. Or, if you get COVID-19, the vaccine might keep you from becoming seriously ill or from developing serious complications. Getting vaccinated also might help protect people around you from COVID-19, particularly people at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

What COVID-19 vaccines have been approved and how do they work?

Currently, several COVID-19 vaccines are in clinical trials. The FDA will review the results of these trials before approving COVID-19 vaccines for use. But because there is an urgent need for COVID-19 vaccines and the FDA's vaccine approval process can take months to years, the FDA will first be giving emergency use authorization to COVID-19 vaccines based on less data than is normally required. The data must show that the vaccines are safe and effective before the FDA can give emergency use authorization.

The FDA has given emergency use authorization to the **Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine**. Data has shown that the vaccine starts working soon after the first dose and has an efficacy rate of 95% seven days after the second dose. This means that about 95% of people who get the vaccine are protected from becoming seriously ill with the virus. This vaccine is for people age 16 and older. It requires two injections given 21 days apart.

The FDA has given emergency use authorization to the **Moderna COVID-19 vaccine**. Data has shown that the vaccine has an efficacy rate of 94.1%. This vaccine is for people age 18 and older. This vaccine requires two injections given 28 days apart. Both the Pfizer/BioNTech and the Moderna COVID-19 vaccines use messenger RNA (mRNA). Coronaviruses have a spike-like structure on their surface called an S protein. COVID-19 mRNA vaccines give cells instructions for how to make a harmless piece of an S protein. After vaccination, cells begin making the protein pieces and displaying them on cell surfaces. Your immune system will recognize that the protein doesn't belong there and begin building an immune response and making antibodies.

Can a COVID-19 vaccine give you COVID-19?

No. The COVID-19 vaccines currently being developed in the U.S. don't use the live virus that causes COVID-19.

Keep in mind that it will take a few weeks for your body to build immunity after getting a COVID-19 vaccination. As a result, it's possible that you could become infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or after being vaccinated.

What are the possible side effects of a COVID-19 vaccine?

A COVID-19 vaccine can cause mild side effects after the first or second dose, including: Pain, redness or swelling where the shot was given, Fever, Fatigue, Headache, Muscle pain, Chills and/or Joint pain.

You'll likely be monitored for 15 minutes after getting a COVID-19 vaccine to see if you have an immediate reaction. Most side effects happen within the first three days after vaccination and typically last only one to two days.

The COVID-19 vaccine may cause side effects similar to signs and symptoms of COVID-19. If you've been exposed to COVID-19 and you develop symptoms more than three days after getting vaccinated or the symptoms last more than two days, self-isolate and get tested.

Can I get a COVID-19 vaccine if I have a history of allergic reactions?

If you have a history of severe allergic reactions not related to vaccines or injectable medications, you may still get a COVID-19 vaccine. You should be monitored for 30 minutes after getting the vaccine.

If you've had an immediate allergic reaction to other vaccines or injectable medications, ask your doctor if you should get a COVID-19 vaccine. If you've ever had an immediate allergic reaction to any ingredient in a COVID-19 vaccine, the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) recommends not getting that specific vaccine. Also, people who are allergic to polysorbate should not get an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine. If you have an immediate allergic reaction after getting the first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, don't get the second dose.

Is there anyone who should not get a COVID-19 vaccine?

There is no COVID-19 vaccine yet for children under age 16. Several companies have begun enrolling children as young as age 12 in COVID-19 vaccine clinical trials. Studies including younger children will begin soon.

COVID-19 vaccination might not be recommended for people with certain health conditions, such as **HIV**, **Guillain-Barre syndrome (GBS)** or **Bell's palsy**. Talk to your health care provider if you have questions about getting the vaccine.

Should I get the COVID-19 vaccine even if I've already had COVID-19?

Getting COVID-19 might offer some natural protection or immunity from reinfection with the virus that causes COVID-19. But it's not clear how long this protection lasts.

Because reinfection is possible and COVID-19 can cause severe medical complications, it's recommended that people who have already had COVID-19 get a COVID-19 vaccine. If you've had COVID-19, wait until 90 days after your diagnosis to get a COVID-19 vaccine.

Can I stop taking safety precautions after getting a COVID-19 vaccine?

Experts want to learn more about the protection that a COVID-19 vaccine provides and how long immunity lasts before changing safety recommendations. Factors such as how many people get vaccinated and how the virus is spreading in communities will also affect these recommendations.

In the meantime, the CDC recommends following these precautions for avoiding infection with the COVID-19 virus:

- **Avoid close contact.** This means avoiding close contact (within about 6 feet, or 2 meters) with anyone who is sick or has symptoms. Also, keep distance between yourself and others. This is especially important if you have a higher risk of serious illness.
- **Wear cloth face coverings in public places.** Cloth face coverings offer extra protection in places such as the grocery store, where it's difficult to avoid close contact with others. Surgical masks may be used if available. N95 respirators should be reserved for health care providers.
- **Practice good hygiene.** Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover your mouth and nose with your elbow or a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw away the used tissue. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Avoid sharing dishes, glasses, bedding and other household items if you're sick. Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces daily.
- **Stay home if you're sick.** Stay home from work, school and public areas if you're sick, unless you're going to get medical care. Avoid public transportation, taxis and ridesharing if you're sick.

If you have a chronic medical condition and may have a higher risk of serious illness, check with your doctor about other ways to protect yourself.

February 2021						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10 7pm Church Council Meeting	11	12	13 11am- 1pm Drive-Up Open House – Mardi Gras theme
14 <i>Happy Valentine's Day</i>	15 Office is closed 	16	17 ASH WEDNESDAY 5:30- 6:30 pm Drive-Up Ashes 6:30- 7:30 pm Ash Wednesday Service	18	19	20
21 7pm Online Coffee Hour	22 Info for March newsletter due by today	23	24 Golden Hill UMC Community Suppers 2pm Cook 5pm Serve	25	26	27
28 7pm Online Coffee Hour						



Birthdays in February ~ HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

6 Lori Bezina	14 Mary Acri	24 Carole Fanslow
9 Robert Schneider	18 Ilse Plitt (100)	25 Dorothy Vars
10 Patrick Parker	18 Marion Gaetano	26 Marsha Piper
11 Little Eagle Piper	20 Carol Dunn	27 Cynthia Henderson
13 Cooper Shipley	20 Lauren Parker	



***“No matter who you are
or where you are on life’s journey,
you are welcome here!”***

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