

JUNE 2020 OUTLOOK

Unity Hill United Church of Christ

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The Reverend Dr. M. Todd Shipley, Pastor

Diane Henderson, Moderator

Dawn Brezina, Church Clerk

Dorothy W. Pickens, Soloist

Jeffrey Stokely, Music Coordinator

Joanne Wickson, Office Administrator

Kathleen Miranti, Bookkeeper

Calap Brown, Sexton

JUNE 2020 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 Summer 2020 Outlook by Wednesday, June 17, if possible, and no later than Monday, June 22. Thanks!



Please remember our homebound in your prayers or with a note:
Dorothy Barwick, Dolores Colaiacomo, Katie Schneider and Mitch Wein.



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 Rose by any other name would smell as sour ...

‘Rebranding ‘White Guilt’ in America’

I’m not sure why TODAY it became too much. I don’t know what happened this morning to bring me to a tipping point, or maybe I should say that I don’t know why it took me this long to reach a tipping point.

But it happened and I can no longer address the racism in this country using the ‘prayers and condolences’ method. I have to do something new. I’m gonna get to my ‘something new’ below, but first I want to address the forthcoming objections. I’ve been a pastor for 15 years so I have become adept at predicting complaints and arguments.

The first objection will be the ‘We’ve Come A Long Way Baby’ variety. It will sound something like, “Yes, Black people have had it hard in the past but if they would just work well with others now, everything would be fine.” This puts the onus on black people to do all the work, and let me give you an example of how ineffective that sentiment is: Consider Black Entertainment Television, and imagine somebody bemoaning the fact that there is no White Entertainment Television. Isn’t it the case that for the majority of the time there has BEEN television shows, every channel was ‘White Entertainment Television.’ I’m reminded of the story Whoopi Goldberg tells about the first time she saw Lieutenant Uhura on an episode of Star Trek. She remembers saying, “Mom come look! There is a black woman on TV and she ain’t no maid!”

The second objection will probably be the ‘If I can do it, you can do it’ defense. This usually comes from white people whose parents were immigrants. They point out the fact that their parents came here and worked 2 or 3 jobs, learned the language and succeeded in achieving the American Dream because they worked hard and played well with others. Well, they didn’t come here chained to the bottom of a slave ship for a month, and when it comes to Italian and German immigrants their children would obviously learn the English language with little or no accent and fit right in.

The final objection I predict is the ‘That’s not helping’ approach. This is the one I want to spend a little more time on. I have heard this position from many white friends in Texas. They don’t believe that vilifying or blaming current white people for the sins of our ancestors will help the country become less racist. Well, first of all, the violent and hateful acts against black people are not the ‘sins of our fathers.’ Three people have been killed in the last month because they were black. If you disagree with this, consider the likelihood of Ahmaud Arbury being killed while jogging if he were white. To test this hypothesis a white man

jogged through an entire town holding a television without being stopped or questioned. Second of all, simply avoiding overt racist acts like verbal or physical abuse of a black person for being black does not mean you aren't racist. Racism and prejudice aren't the same thing. The system that favors white people over black people (also called white privilege) transcends individual people, meaning it is a problem that is greater than any individual acts. An example of this is the fact that dozens of armed white people entered and occupied a Michigan State Building without a single arrest. Maybe feeling 'guilty' about these events you weren't a part of doesn't help but I would opine that it isn't helpful FOR WHITE PEOPLE because it leads to a defensive posture, and that leads to nothing being done. I ask that you consider holding yourself accountable for doing nothing to change the system. I (Pastor Todd) am accountable for the same thing. So here is how I am gonna hold myself accountable. Here is my 'something new':

Every Monday for the next year I am going to pledge to do one thing that cultivates my own racial sensitivity. For the next year I will focus on my insides. That doesn't mean I won't take any external action but I will do something weekly to heighten my ability to see and experience white privilege. I do this not because I want people to 'look at me' but because it will hold me accountable to putting my money where my mouth is. Please remember 'accountability' is not shame or guilt. Shame is believing that there is something essentially wrong with you: there is nothing biologically wrong with being white. Guilt is remorse over a personal action and maybe you can't remember a racist act (although I bet you have laughed at a black joke.) Accountability however is identifying and owning your action or lack of action to improve an undesirable situation. If you care to join me please watch my weekly mediations on 'Deconstructing My Own Racism' that will be posted on Facebook and YouTube every Monday.

I am the pastor of a Christian church and I am writing an article for the newsletter of that church so it is incumbent upon me to provide a Christian context for these statements and requests. I am sure you can provide your own Christian context but here are a couple of biblical observations to help:

We are called to love one another as God loved us. Love is not passive, love is active. It isn't loving to simply 'not do something.'

"If you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors" (James 2:9). "Partiality" translates prosopolempsia, meaning to show favoritism or prejudice, to treat one person as inherently better than another. Such prejudice is "sin."

God told his people: “You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Leviticus 19:34).

Jesus taught us: “Whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 7:12). We are to “love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:39, quoting Leviticus 19:18).

Peter testified to the Gentiles who sought to hear the gospel: “You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation, but God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean” (Acts 10:28).

The italicized words come from <https://www.denisonforum.org/resources/what-does-the-bible-say-about-racism/>

I'll end with some church info: all church services at Unity Hill UCC in June will be held in our church parking lot. The first parking lot service will be held this Sunday in our cars at 10:30am. The rest will be held outside in chairs six feet apart unless it's raining, then we will be in our cars again ... so the crux of the matter is: drive to church every Sunday in June!

Check out Unity Hill's [www.Facebook.com/Unity-Hill-UCC](https://www.facebook.com/Unity-Hill-UCC) and your email inbox for our daily meditation and news about upcoming worship services and events...

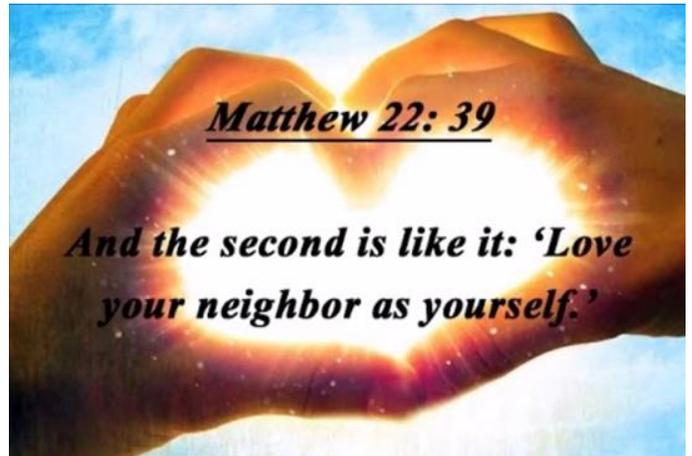
Join me in bringing the kingdom of God to earth by dismantling our own racism in 2020.

Yours, Pastor Todd

PPP ~ PAYCHECK PROTECTION PROGRAM ~ By: Patty Bowman

What is PPP and how does it affect Unity Hill?

PPP is the acronym for the Paycheck Protection Program. The Paycheck Protection Program established by the CARES Act, is implemented by the Small Business Administration with support from the Department of the Treasury. This program provides small businesses with funds to pay up to 8 weeks of payroll costs including benefits. Funds can also be used to pay interest on mortgages, rent, and utilities. These funds are available through local lenders, and Unity Hill applied through People's Bank. We have received \$27,275 to be used according to the requirements of the program.



Impact to Unity Hill

During this time of stay-at-home and social distancing Unity Hill has continued to operate with recorded Sunday services as well as added Daily Meditations and live Zoom events. We are grateful to Pastor Todd and Jeff Stokely for finding ways to keep us nourished and connected. The Office and Accounting functions are also ongoing either remotely or with limited, safely distanced in-person activity by Joanne, Kathleen and Carol Dunn. Although some expenses have been reduced, we have experienced a significant decline in our invested monies similar to most other investors. Combined with lower weekly giving this has put a strain on our finances. We normally meet our ongoing expenses by drawing down monthly from one investment account through selling a portion of the assets to raise cash. This is a difficult time, during a volatile market, to have to withdraw money. The funds received from the PPP will allow us to not deplete our investments over the next couple months and hopefully participate in the market response to the ongoing management of the economy and continued expansion of business openings.

The funds provided are a loan with an interest rate of 1% with no payments due for 6 months. This is a very low cost to borrow money but the program has an additional feature of loan forgiveness that we fully expect to qualify for. In that case no repayment would be required. In order to qualify for full forgiveness of the loan the monies must be used for payroll costs and utilities. Additionally employee hours cannot be reduced by more than 25%. So Council is working to bring back Office and Accounting support to at least 75% as well as restarting the Sexton for cleaning services by the June 30th deadline stipulated in the program.

We are all eager to embrace our full lives once again but in the meantime we carry the faith that God is here for us even in the midst of our struggles. If you have questions or concerns regarding Unity Hill finances or the PPP loan please reach out via email or phone so the Investment Committee can discuss and respond. We are all praying for brighter days ahead.

Committee members: Carol Dunn - chairperson, Patty Bowman, Dawn Brezina

CHURCH UPDATES

All church services at Unity Hill UCC in June will be held in our church parking lot. The first parking lot service will be held this Sunday, May 31, in our cars at 10:30am. The rest will be held outside in chairs six feet apart unless it's raining, then we will be in our cars again ... so the crux of the matter is: drive to church every Sunday in June!

CHURCH COUNCIL ~ By: Diane Henderson, Moderator

Good day Unity Hill members and friends,

Hope everyone is doing well. Now that the days are getting longer and warmer I hope everyone is getting outside some and enjoying the beauty around us. We all need our daily dose of vitamin D. Don't forget the sunscreen.

Looking forward to our drive up/ outdoor services during the month of June. Hope to see many of you there.

Another bit of humor from Two Old Broads on the farm:

“In a hurricane I need batteries and flashlights ... in a pandemic it seems I need XXXL pajamas and double stuffed Oreos!”

I will close with a verse from Galatians 6:9

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up”

Stay safe and healthy.

Blessings and love, Diane

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ~ By: Sharon Brezina

Hey Kids and Parents....

SO how has it been these past few weeks? Easier ... or harder to do your school work? I would love to hear.

Hope all your families are good and healthy. Can't wait to see you all and hear about how you spent these months ;)

Feel free to drop me a line every now and then even if it's just to say 'Hi'. groovy97@gmail.com

Until then, I saw another church doing this and thought it was a great idea...the **BUTTERFLY PROJECT!!!**
Between now and when we are able resume worship together face-to-face and side-by-side, all of you are invited to make one or more butterflies with whatever materials you already have in your home. Using paper, yarn, fabric, crayons, markers, paints, tissues, clay, buttons, or whatever else you may have on hand, everyone is invited to create one or more butterflies to eventually bring to the church to decorate our worship space. You may choose to decorate a butterfly included in this newsletter or start from scratch to create your own of any size or dimension. When we are finally able to resume worshipping together, you can bet that it will be a beautiful celebration! In a church hall decorated with all of these butterflies!

So take some time - relax and make a few - it will look amazing!! You can drop them off at the church to my attention - or gather them until we meet again.

PS. Here's a few things to do online. Try some and let's talk about them when we meet up again!

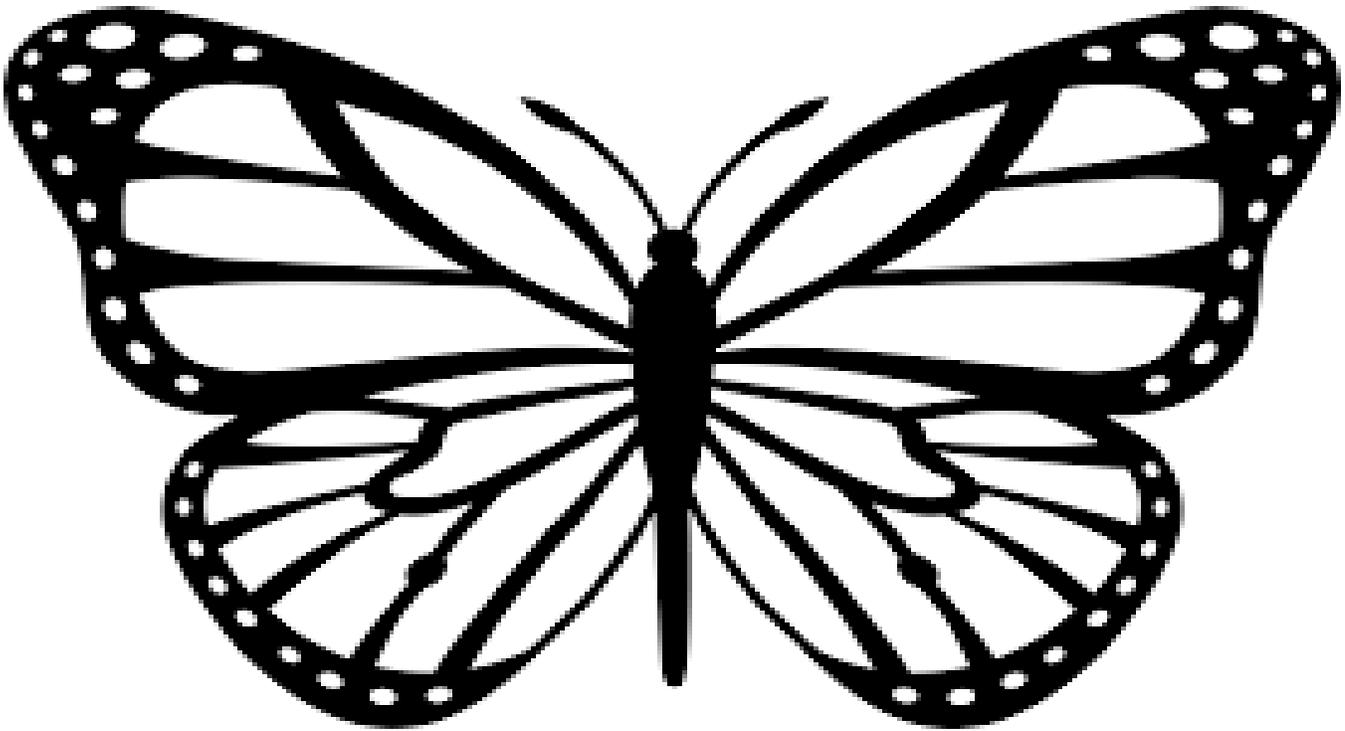
visit museums - <https://www.travelandleisure.com/attractions/museums-galleries/museums-with-virtual-tours>

Pinterest - keeping kids busy - <https://www.pinterest.com/pinterest/stay-safe-stay-inspired/keeping-kids-busy/>

At home - <https://entertainkidsonadime.com/2020/03/13/100-activities-to-do-at-home-during-school-closures/>

Weather school - Weekdays at 9am, Chris Justus teaches weather lessons, does experiments, answers questions and more on his Facebook page

Really cool!!!



Know I am thinking of you - stay safe.
God Bless,
Ms Sharon!

COMMUNITY GROUPS AND HAPPENINGS

SILVER LAKE CAMP AND CONFERENCE CENTER

Dear Friends,

Over the past few weeks, the Silver Lake year-round staff has been hard at work putting together our Silver Lake at Home program. Thank you to all those that responded to our 2020 Summer Survey. Those responses helped shape the conversation and creation of the programs we have developed.

For 2020, Silver Lake at Home will focus on the four Silver Lake "Loves": Love God; Love Your Neighbor; Love Yourself; and Love Creation. This four-week program has a number of options so that you can customize an experience that is the best fit for your family.

Some options have a small cost attached; some are free. Some options include in-person (or in-Zoom) gatherings; some are self-study programs you can do with your family. Do as much or as little as you like! **For the paid offerings, registration is required through our traditional registration system, UltraCamp: www.ultracamp.com/clientlogin.aspx?idCamp=399&campCode=slc**

Registration opens Tuesday, June 2!

Program Dates:

Week 1 - July 6-10: Love God

Week 2 - July 13-17: Love Your Neighbor

Week 3 - July 20-24: Love Yourself

Week 4 - July 27-31: Love Creation

For more details about the variety of programs we have planned, visit www.silverlakeect.org/silver-lake-at-home

We are excited to be able to offer you these Silver Lake at Home programs and bring you a slice of Silver Lake community at a distance. Remember you are not alone, and God loves you just as you are, even when you are staying safe at home out of the physical presence of your friends and your Silver Lake family. We look forward to connecting with you this summer, and for many seasons to come!

Peace, Ruth Choate, Administrator and Registrar

For more info: silverlakeect.org **Office Hours:** Tues - Sat 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Contact Us: **Phone:** 860.364.5526 / **Fax:** 860.364.1000 / **General Email:** slcc@silverlakeect.org

Address: 223 Low Road Sharon, CT 06069



It is with very heavy hearts that we, in partnership with the Bridge Conference Ministers, announce our decision to **CANCEL OUR IN-PERSON SUMMER CAMP MINISTRY IN 2020**. Under the current guidelines for operating camp, Silver Lake will not be Silver Lake. **Building community requires proximity to express the love and acceptance that allows our campers to be their true selves, the hallmark of a Silver Lake experience.**

We understand how much summer camp at Silver Lake means to you and your family. All of the year-round staff at Silver Lake are lifelong camp people; we, too, deeply feel the disappointment of not holding in-person summer camp this year. Please be sure to reach out for support from your networks. If you need help explaining this decision to your young people, we've put together a [brief guide](#) to help you shape your conversation.

In Christ, Rev. Ryan Gackenheimer, *Executive Director*

Support Silver Lake here: www.silverlakeect.org/donate-now Though we are apart, our faith keeps us connected, and Silver Lake is dedicated to continuing to nurture our faith community throughout the summer and beyond. We need your help to make that commitment possible. Your support enables us to continue to offer faith exploration and spiritual renewal for the thousands of people who participate in summer camp programs and retreats each year.

COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF GREATER BRIDGEPORT

CCGB's 75th Annual Meeting~ Thursday, June 18 from 7 to 8 PM via ZOOM.

Closer to the meeting we will send out specific instructions, to help those who may not be familiar with Zoom meetings. We will elect Board members, hear essential reports, and end with a brief worship time. We have important updates to share, so please make every effort to join us.

If you or your delegate can't make it, please designate someone from your congregation to come in your place, and let us know.

Please RSVP by emailing Helen at helenyeotsas@cgb.org or calling (203) 334-1121.

Thank you, Rev. Cass Shaw

46th ANNUAL CROP HUNGER WALK RALLY AND WALK

The **CROP WALK RALLY** will be in September. More info to come soon.

The **CROP WALK** has been postponed until October. More info will be at www.crophungerwalk.org

There will hopefully be a **CROP Hunger Walk Board Meeting** on Monday, June 15 at 7:00 pm at Unity Hill UCC so plans can be made for the Rally and the Walk.

HEALTH CORNER ~ Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a mental health disorder that begins after a traumatic event. That event may involve a real or perceived threat of injury or death. This can include: a natural disaster like an earthquake or tornado, military combat, physical or sexual assault or abuse or an accident. People with PTSD feel a heightened sense of danger. Their natural [fight-or-flight response](#) is altered, causing them to feel stressed or fearful, even when they're safe. PTSD used to be called "shell shock" or "battle fatigue" because it often affects war veterans. According to the National Center for PTSD, it's estimated that about [15 percent of Vietnam War veterans](#) and [12 percent of Gulf War veterans](#) have PTSD. But PTSD can happen to anyone at any age. It occurs as a response to chemical and neuronal changes in the brain after exposure to threatening events. Having PTSD doesn't mean you're flawed or weak.

PTSD symptoms can disrupt your normal activities and your ability to function. Words, sounds, or situations that remind you of trauma can trigger your symptoms.

Symptoms of PTSD fall into four groups:

Intrusion: flashbacks where you feel like you relive the event over and over, vivid, unpleasant memories of the event, frequent nightmares about the event, intense mental or physical distress when you think about the event.

Avoidance means avoiding people, places, or situations that remind you of the traumatic event.

Arousal and reactivity: trouble concentrating, startling easily and having an exaggerated response when you're startled, a constant feeling of being on edge, irritability or bouts of anger.

Cognition and mood: negative thoughts about yourself, distorted feelings of guilt, worry, or blame, trouble remembering important parts of the event, reduced interest in activities you once loved. In addition, people with PTSD may experience [depression](#) and [panic attacks](#). Panic attacks can cause symptoms like: agitation, excitability, dizziness, lightheadedness, fainting, a racing or pounding heart, headaches.

Medical PTSD: A life-threatening medical emergency can be just as traumatic as a natural disaster or violence. People who develop PTSD after a medical event are less likely to stay on the treatment regimen that they need to get better. You don't need to have a serious condition to develop PTSD. Even a minor illness or surgery can be traumatic if it really upsets you. You may have PTSD if you keep thinking about and reliving the medical event, and you feel like you're still in danger after the problem has passed. If you're still upset more than a week afterward, your healthcare provider should screen you for PTSD.

Complex PTSD: a separate but related term used to describe the emotional repercussions of continued and long-term trauma, or multiple traumas. Many of the events that trigger PTSD — like a violent attack or car accident — happen once and are over. Others, like sexual or physical abuse at home, human trafficking, or neglect can continue for many months or years.

Chronic trauma can cause psychological damage even more severe than that of a single event. It should be noted that considerable debate exists among professionals as to the diagnostic criteria for complex PTSD. People with the complex type may have other symptoms in addition to the typical PTSD symptoms, such as uncontrollable feelings or negative self-perception.

PTSD in children' Kids are resilient. Most of the time they bounce back from traumatic events. Yet sometimes, they continue to relive the event or have other PTSD symptoms a month or more afterward. Common PTSD symptoms in children include: nightmares, trouble sleeping, continued fear and sadness, irritability and trouble controlling their anger, avoiding people or places linked to the event, constant negativity. CBT and medication are helpful for children with PTSD, just as they are for adults. Yet, kids need extra care and support from their parents, teachers, and friends to help them feel safe again.

PTSD in teens. The teenage years are already an emotionally challenging time. Processing trauma can be difficult for someone who's no longer a child, but isn't quite an adult. PTSD in teens often manifests as aggressive or irritable behavior. Teens may engage in risky activities like drug or alcohol use to cope. They may also be reluctant to talk about their feelings. Just as in children and adults, CBT is a helpful treatment for teens with PTSD. Along with therapy, some kids may benefit from antidepressants or other medications.

PTSD risk factors. Certain traumatic events are more likely to trigger PTSD, including: military combat, childhood abuse, sexual violence, assault, accident, disasters. Not everyone who lives through a traumatic experience gets PTSD. You're more likely to develop the disorder if the trauma was severe or it lasted a long time. Other factors that may also increase your risk for PTSD include: [depression](#) and other mental health issues, substance abuse, a lack of support, a job that increases your exposure to traumatic events, such as police officer, military member, or first responder, female gender, family members with PTSD.

When to get help for PTSD. If you're experiencing symptoms of PTSD, understand that you're not alone. According to the [National Center for PTSD](#), 8 million adults have PTSD in any given year. If you have frequent upsetting thoughts, are unable to control your actions, or fear that you might hurt yourself or others, seek help right away. See your healthcare provider or a mental health professional immediately.

June 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 10:30am Parking lot Worship Service	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 10:30am Parking lot Worship Service	15 7pm CROP Walk Board Meeting at Unity Hill	16	17	18 7-8pm ZOOM – 75 th Annual Council of Churches Meeting	19	20
21 <u>Father's Day</u> 10:30am Parking lot Worship Service	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 10:30am Parking lot Worship Service	29	30				

Birthdays in June ~ HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

9 Florence Brezina	29 Duane Bailey
12 Eden Shipley	30 Gayle Robles
12 Hayden Cavaleri	30 Aurielus Cole
28 Frank Heffelfinger	30 Mandi Rondon





Anniversaries in June ~ HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

June 22 ~ Robert & Janice Coulson

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

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