

April 22, 2020

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor

Rev. Kenneth E. Kovacs, Ph.D.

Associate Pastor

Rev. Dorothy L. Boulton, M.Div.

Director of Music

Greg Knauf, D.M.A.

Organist

Douglas Heist, D.M.A.

Communications Consultant and Messenger Editor

Lisa Roca

Membership Secretary

Peggy Carr

Administrative Assistant

Shirley Winters

Bookkeeper

Virginia Daiger

Sexton

Bernard Lawson

Sunday Sextons

Cecilie Nilsen

Paige Peercy

Sunday Child Care Providers

Roberta Harris

Child Care Center Director

Michelle Hepner

Child Care Center Assistant Director

Heather Hollandsworth

Child Care Center Office Manager

Ashley Graham



Reach Out

By Ken Kovacs

As we continue to move through this season of compassionate distancing and self-isolation, we are learning a lot about ourselves as individuals, as people of faith, as members of a wider community and nation. This is true whether we're eighteen or eighty-eight years old. We're each processing these days in different ways.

[The Springtide Research Institute](#) (SRI) is committed to understanding the distinct ways new generations (ages 13-25) experience and express community, identity, and meaning. SRI recently released a report on how young adults (ages 18-25) are experiencing the pandemic. "Shelter in place and social distancing provokes fear and uncertainty, leading to increased levels of isolation, loneliness, and anxiety. The survey found that the single most important way to mitigate loneliness is for trusted adults to reach out and connect with young adults."

- One in three respondents are sheltering in place alone.
- 63% of all respondents say that they do not feel as alone or isolated when people reach out to them.

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Reach Out

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- Among young adults who are sheltering in place with others, half still say that they feel alone, and nearly eight out of ten report feeling less lonely when a trusted adult from outside their household checks in on them.
- About 58% say they feel scared and uncertain, and 66% of those who feel this way say they don't have anyone to talk to about their emotions. Thus, they feel isolated because no one is reaching out to them.
- Respondents are not experiencing a decrease in their faith; in fact, 35% increased their faith and 47% stayed the same.
- Nearly 46% have started new religious practices, and 43% have participated in at least one religious service online.
- Yet 50% of those who have attended an online service report that they don't have anyone to talk to about how they are feeling, and 44% report feeling isolated because no one has reached out to them.

Regarding online worship, in particular, they found that “Seven out of ten people who watched an online service say that interacting with people, even virtually, makes them feel more connected. Yet, nearly half of those people still report feeling isolated because no one is reaching out to them individually. Despite some young adults finding value in churches and religious or faith communities providing online rituals and virtual spaces during this time of social isolation, the survey found that what mitigates their experience of loneliness is the act of caring adults checking in and connecting with them.”

I suspect that the young adult experience has a lot in common with how people of all ages are experiencing the pandemic. We were all created for connection, for communion, for deep meaningful, caring relationships—with God, with our neighbors, and with ourselves. One of the paradoxes emerging in this pandemic is that isolation is revealing how much we need and want to be close to the people we love (and maybe even people we never thought we could ever love or be close to again).

Envision Fund Spring Awards

By Alex Hall

Like so many other aspects of the life of our church, this year's Envision awards have been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. I'd like to take a moment to share with you an update from the Envision Board on where we stand and our next steps.

For our March 1 application deadline, we received nine applications for a total of \$370,213. To most of us, March 1 feels like a lifetime ago, before the time of social-distancing, school closures, and stay-at-home orders. When we met later in March to begin our deliberations, it was apparent that the world was already a much different place than when we initially received these applications. Even a month later, much uncertainty remains, but what is apparent is that the priorities and operations of

CPC and its partner organizations are not the same now as they were two months ago.

Given this level of uncertainty, the board chose to focus our attention on mission partners involved in giving direct assistance to our neighbors in this time of crisis, and to defer making any further decisions until the needs of our church and global community in light of this new reality become more clear. In response we have awarded funding to Catonsville Emergency Assistance and we are accepting new applications as well as reconsidering existing ones for a June 1 deadline. For more details on the process please visit our website to learn more. Wishing you the peace and comfort of Christ in these trying times.



Session Meeting Highlights

The coronavirus pandemic has not stopped the work of the church! Your Session has been meeting more frequently lately, and using Zoom to meet online in view of the coronavirus pandemic restrictions. Following are highlights from the April 16, 2020 Session meeting.

■ Session members evaluated the Holy Week worship services held online, and had the following comments to share:

It was great to see that Children’s Messages were included.

The peace cranes enhanced the worship experience in all of the services.

The worship music was outstanding, from selection to presentation, especially for the Easter service.

Kudos to the technology team for working out the kinks and presenting the services effectively.

It was nice to see so many folks from outside our membership sharing in our worship services.

■ Session discussed whether the policy on in-person worship and church use should be extended beyond April. It was ultimately decided to follow the Governor’s Stay-at-Home order until it is rescinded, and then re-evaluate our policy accordingly. The Governor’s current order extends indefinitely.

■ The Finance Committee reported that church income has remained fairly consistent for the year to date through early April, and there have been no surprise expenses. Online giving has increased, and that will continue to be encouraged. The church and Child Care Center have applied together for loan under the SBA-Payroll Protection Program of the federal CARES Act to cover staff payrolls for two months. The loan is forgivable if used for payroll expenses.

■ Session has called for an online meeting of the congregation via Zoom on May 17, 2020 at a time to be determined. The purpose of the meeting will be to hear a report from the Nominating Committee and to elect church officers. Instructions for using Zoom will be provided to all church members for this important meeting in the life of the church.

Session recognizes the need to continually communicate with our membership, and we welcome your suggestions for communication exchange. Take a few minutes to send a message to a Session member, the pastors, or the church office, and let us know what you think. We want to hear from you!—David Hutton, Clerk of Session

Our Financial Resources

We rely on everyone—especially now—to support what God is doing through this congregation. The vitality of this ministry is secured by God’s grace and funded by the faithfulness and commitment of God’s people. We are counting on the ongoing generosity of our members and friends.

Thank you! —Keith Glennan, Finance Committee

Actual income as of April 15, 2020:
\$ 192,292

Actual expense as of April 15, 2020:
\$-208,800

Total: \$-16,508

Flat Jesus 2020

By Dorothy Boulton

"Flat Jesus" was created from the basis of a children's book called Flat Stanley, (written by Jeff Brown). In the book, a boy named Stanley becomes flattened and is able to be mailed to different places, having all kinds of exciting adventures.

In 2015, CPC shared Flat Jesus during the summer as a way to show one another that Jesus is always with us. In this age of "Stay at Home," we're still reminded of Christ's presence with us – even in unexpected ways. (Check out Luke 24:13-35.) So we're introducing Flat Jesus 2020.

We see Flat Jesus 2020 as one way to keep our church family connected during this time of social distancing. Print out "Flat Jesus" and take him with you as you travel around your house, or create scenes for Jesus too. Take a picture of him doing lots of different things such as eating dinner with the family, watching a movie, hanging out with your siblings or whatever you are doing. It will be an amazing adventure! It is a great way to remember that Jesus is always with us, wherever we go, and with whatever we do. You can even ask yourself: Where am I seeing Jesus bringing hope into the world? And then "be a witness of these things" by sharing that message with others.

Create Your Own "Flat Jesus"

- Print out the template (on heavy cardstock, if possible.) We'll also have some available at the church office in case you are passing by on your way to get groceries.
- Decorate your "Flat Jesus." Be creative!
- Take photos of "Flat Jesus," and email them to dboulton@catonsvillepres.org, or uploading your picture directly to the CPC Family and Friends Facebook page.

Let's see what our church family members are doing during this "stay at home" time, and let's remind one another of this promise of hope: Jesus is with us *always!*



THE Messenger

Our Mission

We seek to find and share God's calling for this community of faith through worship, fellowship and service.

Catonsville Presbyterian Church

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Church Office Hours:

Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

office@catonsvillepres.org



We Choose
Welcome

