



The Rolling Stone

Rollstone Congregational Church

REFLECTIONS DURING UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Greetings! How are all of you doing?

We are certainly living in times that we have never experienced, nor thought were possible with every medical and technological advancement in the 20th and 21st centuries. These times must have each of us pausing and pondering about what information and the source of the information can I trust. There is so much information that is coming out multiple times a day that I am sure you are now overwhelmed by all that you are seeing, hearing, and experiencing.

Where should I turn? That is a great question to ask and to reflect upon. What are the resources that you trust? Are they the newscasters, the media, your neighbor, a friend, your doctor, the government, the church? We are receiving so much conflicting information that it has become difficult to discern what and who can I trust. There are sources that are more reliable than others, but when choosing what and whom to believe you also need to draw upon a faith that they will provide you information that is accurate and does not contain any type of twist or spin.

I have continued to receive information from multiple resources which do contradict the information provided by others. Some of it might be spin while it also might be updated information, be careful and rely upon trusted and proven reliable resources. Trust in your own doctors and medical facilities because they want this to go away without endangering anyone. Follow their advice and recommendations because they are on the front lines fighting this pandemic.

The last source to rely upon during these times is GOD. Throughout scriptures we hear about feeling lost and abandoned, that God no longer cares about His people. This is absolutely false and I must say that we need to use these days as a way to be drawn back to God as we pray and reflect upon the future. These are difficult times to be sure but they offer us that time to slow down and reflect upon how we can be community, how we can be the church, and how we can be better people to all around us. I have observed some of the worst behaviors as people are panicking, but I have also witnessed people being more Christ like with their words and actions. This is a moment to grow and to also teach. How are you going to deal with all that is happening and how will you be seen? A suggested way to be more Christ like is for every one of us to create a prayer partner or a friend whom we can call regularly to see how each of us are doing.

We do not know when we will be able to gather together, but be assured that I and the church leadership are working diligently to keep us connected. We continue to work towards bringing our services to you via digital devices and printed editions to those without technology devices. Reach out to us if you have trouble connecting digitally.

During this time if you have problems with digital access please reach out to Paul Stansel, Andy Lipasti, or myself and we will attempt to be helpful where we can. Should you find yourself in need of items because

they are unavailable in the stores, we are working to create a supply that will be available to our members and friends in need. If you need items, we suggest that you be in touch with a deacon who will help make the connection possible. If at all possible, we would request that you send in your pledges, tithes, and offerings to the church at 199 Main Street, Fitchburg, MA 01420.

Blessings and peace to each of you until we meet again.
Pastor Dave

Dear Members of Rollstone;

Since the annual meeting not much has transpired for the Board of Trustees. We have been discussing the potential organist and are in the process of reviewing the contract proposed. We have installed new light bulbs out back so hopefully our exterior will be brighter. Right now, due to the current situation, the Trustees will not be having face to face meetings but rather have conference calls. Stay safe, be well, and God Bless.

Amy Larsen

Chairperson Board of Trustees

Deacon News

Hi everyone, well things have certainly changed since I last wrote in the Rolling Stone . This virus we have is certainly challenging the whole country. I hope everyone is staying home except for the grocery store, pharmacy, and doctors .

It seems funny not being able to go to church but we are doing some things to keep in touch.

Kathy is doing the Rolling Stone and Pastor Dave is mailing the Sunday service and emailing it. Paul Stansel is putting messages on email and mailing them. If you see a message that says moderator open it. He is trying to do this twice a week. He is also updating the web site. He will put in his message the names of 3 people you can call if you have a problem or need something. Please don't hesitate to call.

The deacons will call members to see how they are. It is tough to feel isolated.

You can mail your offerings to the church.

Easter will soon be here. That is such a wonderful and meaningful service. The church looks so beautiful with all the flowers. We will have to wait until next year. There will not be a Maundy Thursday service.

I heard something on tv the other day. If you get up in the morning and say something you feel grateful for you will have a better day.

When it is good weather get out and take a walk or just enjoy the fresh air. Stay 6 feet away from people.

Stay well, Linda Haas

Family Virtual Bonding

As most of you know our family extends from Maine to New Jersey to Washington State. Getting together, even in "normal" times is a real challenge. With the pandemic it is impossible. With that in mind we had a "virtual family gathering" last night with the whole clan on Google hangout! For a hour we had all 4 boys with most of their kids/spouses on the computer and miracle of miracles they behaved! For those who know them, Tim is working from home and extremely busy. He is doing everything by conference calls, unfortunately some are with China that take place late in the evening. Jon is doing all he can to stay busy, helping a friend set up a large greenhouse and even working on his own house! Chris is working in a lumber yard and tells us that they are getting a lot more individual home owners in doing home projects. Dave & Troy are both working out of their home. Troy is still doing safety inspections for the state of Washington.

As we are all in the early stages of 'cabin fever' I suggest that you look into some of the ways you can stay in touch with family and friends. You can write letters (Marie actually wrote an old friend she hasn't seen since the early 1970's yesterday). There is always the telephone, hopefully your subject isn't call screening too seriously. And if you are adventurous try video conferencing. The 3 most common free video conferencing applications are:

- Zoom (www.zoom.us)
- Skype (<https://www.skype.com/en/>)
- Google Hangout (<https://hangouts.google.com/>)

All of these have free options. They require you have an internet connection and a PC, laptop or tablet with a camera. If you don't have a camera you can do just audio. They each allow multiple people to participate, Zoom can have up to 50 people on for 45 minutes at a time.

OTHER NEWS FROM ROLLSTONE CHURCH:

- This weekend we will be sending out the Sunday service as a pdf.
- Additions to the Prayer List: Lewis Pacheco who lost his father to cancer several weeks ago
- I am planning to rework the church's website in the near future. Hoping to include some special audio and video content.

That's it for now, stay safe, reach out to a friend!
Paul Stansel, Moderator Rollstone Church

Dear Friends of Rollstone,

I am so impressed by the work of so many people at Rollstone! We are a congregation, a community of souls who come together to worship and pray. (Apology to the anthem the choir sang the last Sunday we were together.) So many people are trying to keep us connected in this difficult time. Reach out to someone, share a laugh or a story, offer comfort. Make that phone call! Brighten someone's day.

Kathy Rowe

Hello All!

Many blessings to you all at this moment in time! I hope all of you are staying safe during this crisis and continue to be well.

I would like to say thank you for having me a few Sundays ago! Your hospitality was amazing, your kindness meant the world to me, and you welcomed me with open arms. I'm so glad to be able to serve you all through music, and I am sure Rollstone will be a highlight of my musical career, and most certainly as a teenager! And I was amazed at how well the congregation sounded from the organ loft! Everyone sang, and it truly did seem like a huge choir behind me.....and it was a glorious sound!

I'd like to let everyone know that with the help of my good friend Kevin Mathieu from the Andover Pipe Organ Company, the Carillon System in the steeple is functioning once again! It is set to ring hymns at 10 AM, Noon, 3 PM, and 6 PM. If anybody might have a request for a certain hymn to be played, I can try to make that happen. We have a limited number of songs that can be played, but I will do my best to find anything. It's set to play seasonal hymns, so right now, it is playing Lenten hymns. So, keep your ears open if you're nearby, or just happen to be passing the church!

As most of you know, school is canceled until May 4. So, during this time period, I've spent some time going through music in the choir library, and my hope is to plan ahead for next year's music and come up with a schedule of anthems. My hope is to use anthems we have already been singing and introduce some new ones. I would also encourage anyone and everyone, musical or not, to come along and join the choir!

With this, I want to leave you with one more thing. As this pandemic unfolds, we find ourselves at the mercy of God. Every day, we wake up not knowing what will happen to us. We wake up not knowing if we could be affected by this virus or not. We even wake up not knowing if there will be any Toilet Paper at the store! But find God in your life in these crazy times. It could be through prayer, taking a walk in the woods, or playing a board game with your family. But always remember that God is everywhere. Remember that God loves each and every one of us. Remember that even in the darkest of days, God is with us. And remember that God will guide us through life if we place our trust in him.

So, keep strong in your faith. Keep strong within one another even if we can't gather together on Sunday mornings. Keep strong in yourself. Keep strong in love for one another. And pray. Pray for one another. Pray for our first responders. Pray for the world. And here is a hymn for you to think about. "Be still, my soul, the Lord is on thy Side". It says it all right there! Be still my soul. Stay calm. Stay patient. Never forget, the Lord is on thy side each and is with us every day of our lives.

I hope to see you all very soon, and I look forward to playing for you all again. Continue to stay well, take care of yourselves, and until we meet again, God be with you.

Blessings,

Gavin Klein

Wouldn't this world be better,
If folks whom we meet would say,
"I know something good about you,"
And treat you just that way?
Wouldn't it be splendid,
If each handshake, good and true,
Carried with it this assurance:
"I know something good about you?"
Wouldn't life be happier,
If the good that's in us all,
Were the only thing about us
That people would recall?
Wouldn't our days be sweeter,
If we praised the good we see?
For there is a lot of goodness,
In the worst of you and me.
Wouldn't it be fine to practice,
This way of thinking to;
You know something good about me,
I know something good about you?

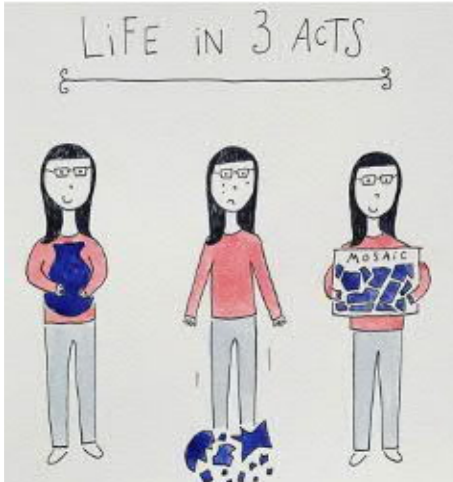
Since we can never know or tell the full story about any other human being, why not just skip to the good highlights?

Sent in by Pat Goguen

Church School News

I hope our youth and young at heart are well and keeping busy.

I sure am looking for many things to do while I am home. My daughter and I have set up our old "Wii-Fit" for working out and fun games on the TV screen. We dug out a 1,000 piece puzzle that we are putting together – it is taking a long time but really fun. What kinds of activities are you finding that keep you busy, crafting, cooking, Sudoku, crosswords, reading, helping others?



Here is a "make lemons out of lemonade" kind of photo that I found! Reminds us not to get too upset when we make mistakes but instead see if there is a positive in there somewhere? Pick ourselves up and make the best of it!

We are going to get more frustrated when we are at home so much- kids see if there are toys you put away long ago, puzzles to make, old games to play that were fun when you were younger, think of people you can help, phone a friend, and most of all be kind to yourself and others.

I include a lesson that I would have shared in class and thought folks might like it also!

Have Faith for Things I Don't Understand

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Hebrews 11:1

"I have a bag full of things I don't understand".

CD's: I don't understand CD's. When I look at them, I can't see any songs in there, but when I put one in my CD player, I hear beautiful music. I don't understand it, but I know it works!

I don't understand how He did it, but God put a song in my heart. When I am sad, there is a song to cheer me up, and when I am happy, there is a song to praise Him. I don't understand how He did it, but I know it's there.

TELEPHONES: I don't understand how I can pick up a telephone and talk to someone hundreds of miles away from me and they can talk to me. Oh, I know about telephone lines and fiber optics, but I still don't understand how it works, but I know it does!

I don't understand prayer. I don't know how I can talk to God in Heaven and He can talk to me. I don't understand it, but I know it works.

MEDICINE: I don't understand how medicine works. When I take a pill, how does it know where to go and what to do when it gets there? I don't know how it works, but I know it does!

I don't understand how God can heal the deepest hurt and pain in my life. I don't know how He does it, but He does!

CALCULATORS: I don't understand how I can push some buttons on a calculator and it will give me the answer to a problem. I don't understand it, but it works!

I don't understand how God has all the answers to the problems of my life. I don't understand it, but I know He does!

FLASHLIGHTS: I know this seems pretty simple, but I don't understand flashlights. I know there is a bulb and batteries, but I still don't understand why it works, but I know it does!

I don't understand how, but I know that in the darkest days of my life, God is my light. I don't know how He does it, but He lights every path I take!

REMOTE CONTROLS: I don't understand how I can sit in my easy chair and control my TV or VCR all the way across the room. I can change channels, adjust the volume, fast-forward, or reverse. I don't understand it, but I am in complete control!

I don't understand how God can sit on His throne in Heaven and control everything here on earth. I don't understand it, but I know that God is in control!

Thank you, God that I don't have to understand your ways. I only have to know that you are in control. Amen

Keep the FAITH everyone. Faith that we will all be well and safe is most important.

I will also keep the faith that Day Camp can somehow be offered. If it is as planned we will enjoy the Theme: **Kindness Counts** over the week of June 22 - 26.

Beth and Hal

