



THE ROLLING STONE

Rollstone Congregational Church

United Church of Christ
199 Main Street, Fitchburg, MA

Pastor: Rev. David B. Hanks 978-821-9571
www.rollstone.org

MARCH 1, 2021

Pastor's View

Confessions of a Pastor

This is a true confession: I am a chronic command-breaker. I have been doing it every week for almost my entire adult life. The fact is my job as a pastor demands it. Every Sunday, I go to work and violate the Fourth Commandment: “Remember the sabbath day and keep it holy” (Exodus 20:8). I’m sure that most of you do the very same in one way or another.

Now it’s true that those of us considered to be on “temple duty” have long been excused from the Sabbath obligation because of the nature of our work, but the irony of Sabbath-enforcers being Sabbath-breakers is not lost on me. Nor is the fact that our Sabbath habits are shared by ever growing numbers of people, who work or shop or play organized sports on Sundays. There are some professions that are essential to human life and thus we all end up working on Sunday. Just imagine if we all obeyed that Fourth Commandment, who would preach the gospel? Who would tend to those in the hospital or long-term care facilities? We’ve lost our day of rest, and this concerns me, because I’m convinced that nonstop activity harms people — it threatens our health as individuals and as a society.

So, what can we do to reclaim the Fourth Commandment? As one season is turning to another, there are some of us that rather than seek rest, we end up increasing the stress-fullness of our days and schedules by loading more into what we are doing. We need to be intentional in the taking of time to rest and relax, to remove ourselves from the hectic schedules we have created in our lives. Unfortunately, this is easier said than accomplished.

The place to begin is to see that a day of reflection and relaxation is a performance-enhancer, not a productivity-robber. A friend who is a church musician and long-distance runner reports that an almost universally recognized training principle is that a runner becomes faster by taking a day off from training each week. “The Sabbath principle,” he insists, “is built into our physical bodies.” There’s also a saying among artists that

you must know when to stop painting — if you don’t, you’ll make one stroke too many and ruin the painting. Overworking can have the same disastrous results as over-painting.

The next step is to assert that we are children of God, not servants or slaves to a particular shop, office, firm, or corporation. The Sabbath reminds us of this fundamental identity, one that we need to share with our kids — young people who may be thinking they are beholden to school and sports and so many other time-consuming activities. The Sabbath is a reminder that we are more than beasts of burden, more than cogs in a wheel, more than students or workers who are valued for our contributions. On our day of rest, we discover we are valuable simply because we exist.

It seems to me that Jewish faith calculates their days correctly — they start each day in the evening and begin with the refreshment of a night’s rest. We would all be well served, I believe, by beginning each week with a Sabbath, a day of peace, and using the serenity of that day as the foundation for our ongoing activities. Call me whatever you want, but I’m convinced that better Sabbath-keeping is a key to rediscovering our God-given identity and enhancing our Monday-through-Friday performance.

So, go ahead: Reclaim a day of rest. For many pastors, it may be a Monday instead of a Sunday, but the important thing is to embrace the Sabbath principle. You’ll be amazed by how much better you feel. I am trying to make this adjustment, leaving behind the six- and seven-day work schedule for a schedule more focused upon my own physical and spiritual needs. Please be patient with me as I make this adjustment, I promise I will get to you as quickly as possible. (If your issue is a matter of grave consequences, call me anyway — I’ll get some Sabbath time later in the week.)

Pastor Dave

The Wayside Pulpit

Remembering to Forget

At the confluence of my reaching seventy years of age, and spending a year in Covid isolation, I find myself spending a greatly increased amount of time reviewing old memories. My propensity to reminisce was intensified by a Zoom meeting last night with college fraternity friends across the country whom I met some fifty years ago, some of whom I hadn't communicated with for more than thirty.

Memory is a wonderfully strange and little-understood gift. We've all

experienced searching our minds for a word or fact, and being unable to remember it. Have we forgotten it? Not really; at a moment when we have stopped trying to remember it, it comes flooding back.

It is easy to see how useful is this effortless process of retaining things in our memories. What is less easy to recognize is the value of effortlessly forgetting things. Our errors, victimizations, losses and injuries hurt less, after time has buried them deep in our memories.

Not lost or discarded, however. These memories do not disappear, any more than the temporarily unremembered word or fact. And it is good that they are not lost. It is the memory of errors and setbacks that allows us to learn from them, and avoid their consequences in the future. The selectivity of memory retrieval is a gift in itself, and an important part of the process of converting experience into wisdom,

Chuck Funk



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Fitchburg, MA 01420
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Ashburnham, MA 01430
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February 2021

Hello Campers!

I hope you are all well and safe. It is only February and I am wishing already for warm weather, sunshine and **Wellville!** If camp opens, then all will be right with the world. Keep those prayers ongoing.

The Board of Directors is being cautiously optimistic about the upcoming summer season, which is the reason we have opened our reservation schedule. The reservation forms are enclosed.

We are in the process of planning programs and activities for the coming summer. If you have an idea for a program or would like to lead one, please contact me at either 978-827-5454 or by email at stowel1@verizon.net.

At the moment, we have no idea what requirements will be in place for us to open and for Covid-19 compli-

ance. We will rely on the guidance from the state and Ashburnham Board of Health. The local community has the final approval to allow us to open.

We cannot predict what the cost will be for sanitation and safety measures for Covid-19 compliance. As a result, there will be an extra fee added to reservations. We will do our best to minimize the impact that it has on campers.

A reminder of the dates for this coming season:

March – Reservations for caretakers and church members accepted.

Reservations by phone – **April 3**

beginning at 9:00 am

Deposits due by **April 30**

Payments due in full **May 31**

Spring work weekends – May 8 & 9
and May 29 -31

Day Camp – June 28 – July 2

Camp season – July 3– August 28

Fall work weekend –September 4 – 6

Mary Ann Fournier and I will begin taking reservations on April 3 starting at 9:00am. Do not assume you have a reservation unless you contact us! Please **call** first to find out availability and then mail a one third deposit and reservation form to me. (I am the collector.)

Stay safe and keep us all in your prayers.

Sincerely,

Kathy Rowe

From the Organ Bench

Hey everyone!

I hope everyone is doing well! It's hard to believe we are coming upon one year of being in the pandemic. It's amazing to think that even though it's been a year, it has gone by so fast! However, the hardships that many are still facing are real, and continuing even with the vaccines. So let's continue to keep our friends, neighbors, first responders, and everyone we can think of in our prayers!

Nothing major has really occurred on the musical side of things. I hope the music in our virtual services has been

up to you liking! As always, please let Paul, or Pastor Dave know if you have

Rollstone Tower Schedule

Chime the hour between
10AM-6PM

Two hymns played at
10AM, Noon, 3PM, 6PM

Peal and toll on festive
and solemn occasions

Bells silent on Good Friday

any special musical requests.

The carillon has been set to play

music for the Lenten season now. The schedule for the chimes are posted on our Facebook page for anybody that wants to know the times it goes off. If you do not have Facebook, I will also just post the schedule here:

As we are in the season of Lent, let's continue to be faithful to our friends and neighbors!

Till we meet again, may God be with you!

Gavin

News from the Church School - March

If we could be together in Sunday School we would read and talk about the time of Lent leading up to Easter. Perhaps an Easter poem will help you to remember the story that starts out very

sad and ends with JOY!

Lent is the time of year when Christians prepare for Easter. Lent begins in February or March, depending on the date of Easter. The word Lent comes

from an older English word (lencten) meaning "springtime."



Beth and Hal



E is for Each of us. God loves everyone.

A is for A broken world, so He sent His Son.

S is for our Sins that Jesus took away.

T is for the Tomb where He lay for three whole days.

E is for the Empty tomb. The stone was rolled away.

R is for the Risen Lord. Jesus is alive today!

Happy
Holidays



Wishing you a wonderful holiday season and
all the best in the coming year!

*We are overwhelmed with the generosity
of the Rollstone Congregational Church. Your
donation will help many families in need
this Holiday season. Thank you and
God Bless your entire Congregation. Stay
Safe, STAY Healthy - ^{best wishes} Memorial Middle School*

Over the past several years our
congregation has joyfully collected
donations for the food pantry at
Memorial Middle School. These
donations have greatly helped many of
the student's families with food and
other needed items.

This year the Deacons reached out to
Memorial Middle School to help with
holiday meals, but how during this
unusual time?..

...With gift cards to buy groceries!

The principal sent the note you see
here and there were others who
personally thanked us when the cards
were delivered.

Love one another as I have loved you.
(John 15:12)

Happy
Birthday

March 16	Don Cloutier
March 17	Roland Larsen
March 20	Tari Piazza
March 22	Kim Bourque
March 27	Linda Haas



***Special Wishes to George and Diane Sammet on your
50th Wedding Anniversary***

Deacon's Valentines Day Project

Happy March Everyone! We are excited to announce that we had great participation in our first ever Valentine's Sweets for Our Sweets Project. With the continued isolation created by the Covid-19 Pandemic, your Dea-

cons planned a surprise project to create Valentines packages that were delivered to those who were shut-ins or generally isolated from the church family. The participation exceeded our wildest and sweetest dreams ever with bags filled

with goodies, treats, reading materials, and even a copy of the Annual Report. These bags were well received based on the responses and cards that have been sent to the church. Some of the responses were.....

"Thank you so much for the Valentines bag of goodies. We enjoyed them. We had cookies for the whole week!!!"

"To all of you, Thank You. What a wonderful surprise. That popcorn was great, ate every last bit of it. Can't wait till church starts up again."

"Thank you to the Rollstone Family for the special surprise of goodies and treats for Valentines Day. They are so appreciated."

"Thank you—thank you—thank you for the beautiful gift bag and all the delicious home made sweets. I truly enjoyed all the goodies. It made my Valentines Day so special—let me say thanks to you again."

"Thank you. Thank you. Thank you for the gift bag. It was so special... everything was delicious. Popcorn and cookies topped the list. I couldn't stop picking at the goodies. The assortment was special. Thank you for this goody bag."

There were also so many phone calls expressing the same sentiments. This project could not have been accomplished without the help of so many people who either baked, drove the

packages to your houses, or worked hard to organize and package everything for delivery. Our THANKS to everyone who made this a success! Looking forward to when we can all once again

gather for Worship and Fellowship. Until then, be safe, praising God for our wonderful church family.

On The Lighter Side

**Dear Lord,
Please don't let Brussel Sprouts
be a part of the cure of Covid-19 Virus.**

