



His Mansion

*A newsletter from
First United Methodist Church
of Southbridge*

"In my Father's House, there are many mansions... I go to prepare a place for you..."

MARCH 2020

*The
Season
of
Lent*



*"Lent is a call
to renew a
commitment grown
dull, perhaps by a
life more marked by
routing than by
reflection"*

Reminder:

We meet for worship
at 9 am and enjoy
fellowship, coffee and
treats afterwards



FROM PASTOR SABINA'S DESK

Dear friends in Christ,

Happy almost spring! Or is it wishful thinking?
We are in New England after all...

January and February were busy months. Our free meals continue to be successful despite the ups and downs and the few incidents (tempers do flare from time to time...). We also started the season of

Lent with Ash Wednesday, a beautiful service of confession and hope. But we celebrated the last day before the period of fasting and abstinence with a bang! We were invited by Rev. Janet Peck of New Hope UCC to a wonderful celebration of Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday) New Orleans-style! A group of us carpoled to Bethlehem Church in Sturbridge and enjoyed a delicious meal of Gumbo, Jambalaya, corn bread and King's cake! Our own Ashley and Freddie got the baby Jesus inside the King's cake and became our King and Queen for the night! There were also games and music.

I have to say that the tri-town (Sturbridge, Fiske and Southbridge) Ecumenical Council has been amazing in coming up with activities and worship services to hold as a united Christian community. In March, we will embark together in a Lenten Bible Study based on Adam Hamilton's book "Unafraid", every Wednesday night, starting March 4, at 6:30 at Bethlehem Church (the only church with a parking lot!). We will share a meal of soup and bread and lively conversation! We will carpool every week for four weeks, meeting at our church at 6pm. On March 18th, we will be the hosts and will need to bring the soup and bread! Volunteers needed! The Ecumenical Council will also have a Easter Sunrise Service on Easter morning, 5:30, at the Old Sturbridge Village! We will share breakfast afterwards before moving on to our own services.

On Friday, February 28, we also started a new event: Dinner and a movie. Every month, on the fourth Friday, we will show a different movie after our usual 5pm meal. On the 28th, Carol Filer shared "A Winter's Tale"

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February

We pray, Lord that we can forgive and be forgiving of others as we would wish them to be forgiving of us when we make mistakes.

Prayer of the month



JOIN US FOR BIBLE STUDY



"Come out of the clutter and clanging of our culture and discover the peace of meeting the God of the Bible in the pages of His Word. Engage Bible Studies take you verse by verse into the richness of the Scriptures in ways that impact your heart and illumine your mind."

"Bible 101" every Monday at 6pm

(dinner will be served)

Come and learn the basics of the Word of God!

FROM PASTOR SABINA'S DESK

(continued)

with us and we had a wonderful time of fellowship and popcorn. On Friday, March 27th, join us for "The Shack", an amazing movie about loss, God and redemption.

I also continue hosting "Coffee with the Pastor" every Wednesday at 3:30 at the Dunkin' Donuts next to the Church.

We have been blessed with so many gifts from God! Freddie will be baptized in the Spring, Brendin and Selena will be married on June 20th and Brendin received communion for the first time during the Ash Wednesday service! God is good!

More will be coming up as we move forward: Church History Day is planned for April 4th. Easter is coming as well!!

Abba, Father, I lift up our church and family asking for your blessing, strength, hope and peace. Amen.

With peace, grace and gratitude,

Sabina



Prayer of the Month

Lord,
Let everything I do this day and in this season
of Lent come from you, be inspired by you.

I long to be closer to you.

Help me to remember
that nothing is important in my life
unless it glorifies you in some way.

It's so easy to get caught up
in the day to day of my life and keep saying,
"Tomorrow, I will spend more time in prayer,"
but now my longing meets your love
and I want to do it now.

Help me to rely on you for help.

The prayer asks you that I reach perfection.

Please, Lord, remind me
that "perfection" isn't the crazy, "successful"
way I try to live my life, but a perfection of my
most authentic, real self.

My "perfection" might be holding
my many flaws in my open hands,
asking you to help me accept them.

Heal me, Lord, and help me
to find you in the darkness of my life.

Let me reach out in this darkness
and feel your hand and love there to guide me.

Amen.

Oh Yes! IT'S
FREE

Hungry?
Lonely?

Please join us for
our free weekly
meals

Mondays—5 pm
Fridays—5 pm

On the menu (examples):
Soups, chili, spaghetti and meat sauce, casseroles, BBQ,
salads, bread, fruits, ice cream and other desserts.

Thanksgiving to:

Viewpoint Church in Southbridge

For catering the meal and volunteering every Monday!

Charlton City UMC

For their bread Ministry, providing us with ample supplies
of bread and desserts!



New Sermon Series during the period of Lent!

Find out about God's plan for us, which started with the
creation and continues today with eternal salvation. The
Bible in 6 weeks!!



Would you like to live

UNAFRAID?

with courage and hope in an uncertain world

JOIN US WEDNESDAY EVENINGS FOR:

**LENTEN
Soup Suppers**

6:30 - 8:00 pm

March 4th - April 1st

FREE

Bethlehem Lutheran/ New Hope UCC building

345 Main Street, Sturbridge MA 01566

Join us for food, fun, and discovery

based on Adam Hamilton's Book, *Unafraid*

**EVERYONE, EVERYONE, EVERYONE
IS INVITED AND WELCOME!**

*This program jointly sponsored by the congregations of:
New Hope United Church of Christ ~ Bethlehem Lutheran
Elm Street Congregational, UCC ~ 1st United Methodist*

FUMC will host the March 18, 2020 supper:

We will need volunteers to prepare the meal!!



Together in Christ

A letter from Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar

Beloved in Christ,

Greetings in the precious name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

As your episcopal leader and a member of the Council of Bishops, I have heard many comments, questions, and perspectives regarding the upcoming 2020 General Conference. There are many proposed plans to restructure and reorganize the United Methodist Church, which are creating many emotions ranging from fear, anger, frustration, and pain to comfort, hope, and joy during these uncertain days.

As I reflect on all I've heard, I wonder: Who will we, who call ourselves Methodists, be the day after the General Conference? Whatever the decision, what distinctive marks will identify us? How will we be characterized by others?

While contemplating what lies ahead, I recalled these words from my 2012 episcopal address in which I reflected on the history of Methodism's impact:

Back when the United States was making an impression on the world with its innovation, technology and advances, the Methodist Church was also making a huge impact in this country and the world. This was illustrated when former President Theodore Roosevelt embarked on a European visit shortly after leaving office.

The United States was on the rise and the whole world was taking notice ... The Methodist Church at that time, around 1910, was a powerful voice shaking the foundations of the world with its witness.

When plans were being made for Theodore Roosevelt's visit to Europe and his meetings with various heads of state, everyone wanted to see him. He was surely one of *the* most popular persons in the world. One of the stops on his tour was the Vatican.

Edmund Morris writes in his biography of Roosevelt that "The Vatican advised [Roosevelt] that Pope Pius X would grant him an audience on the fifth of April 1910, providing that he did not embarrass his Holiness by associating with any Methodists in Rome." Methodists? Really?

Who were these Methodists that the Pope, serving in 1910, would caution a former president against meeting? At the time, the Methodists, including the former Methodist Episcopal, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church, were starting an average of one new church per day.

These Methodists were part of the largest and most influential Protestant denomination in the United States and engaged in mission activities in countries all over the world.

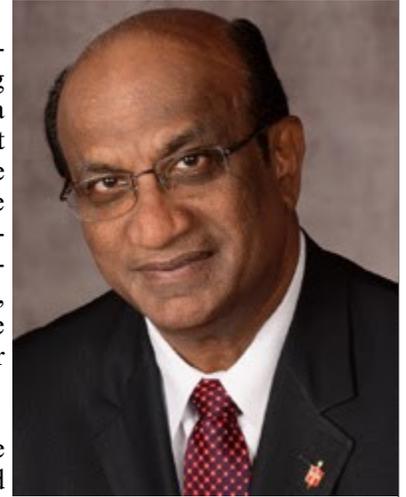
These Methodists were characterized by a fervent and deeply rooted spirituality. They gathered in small groups to hold one another accountable for their faith and celebrated together in worship in cities, towns, and rural areas across the United States.

In a meeting of District Superintendents not long after this period, at which every single District Superintendent was present, the most remarkable thing was that every possible population area in the United States was represented by those gathered in that room.

If someone were to call out the name of the tiniest hamlet in the U.S., one of those Superintendents would have risen and said, "I represent that hamlet. That is in my area." These Methodists were shaking up the world's understanding of what it meant to be Christian and active in the world.

That used to be us ...

Teddy Roosevelt, who was from the Dutch Reform Church, was happy to talk with Methodists and the Pope; and said that he, and he alone, would decide with whom he would visit.



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Recalling Pope Pius X's fear of Methodists and their power, I cannot help but hope that no matter the outcome of the 2020 General Conference, the people of God, Methodists from all theological perspectives, will reclaim our history.

That we will become serious about our Christian witness and our passion for justice and peace to ensure that every child of God has a place in the new expressions of Methodism emerging out of the United Methodist General Conference.

On the day after the 2020 General Conference, and every day following, that we will honor one another as children of God, irrespective of our theological differences, and become serious about living out our baptism as people with Wesleyan DNA, so we may become a powerful movement again.

As we journey through this Lenten season, with these thoughts in our minds, may we recite this version of a Franciscan benediction that is copied from [Brian D. McLaren's website](#):

May God bless us with discomfort
 At easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships
 So that we may live from deep within our hearts.
 May God bless us with anger
 At injustice, oppression, and exploitation of God's creations
 So that we may work for justice, freedom, and peace.
 May God bless us with tears
 To shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, hunger, and

war,
 So that we may reach out our hands to comfort them and
 To turn their pain into joy.
 And may God bless us with just enough foolishness
 To believe that we can make a difference in the world,
 So that we can do what others claim cannot be done:
 To bring justice and kindness to all our children and all our neighbors who are poor.
 Amen.

Let this be our Lenten prayer for the edification of our souls and minds, and let it be our prayer for the delegates of the 2020 General Conference.

And whatever comes ...
 may the plans of God become ours
 may the love of Christ fill us anew,
 may the guidance of the Holy Spirit take us to new roads
 in ministry and mission.
 Have a blessed Lenten season!

In Christ's love,



Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar



186th CHURCH ANNIVERSARY

Saturday, April 4th, 2020

10am to 2pm

Memorabilia

Organ Demonstration

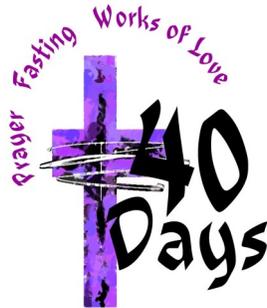
Service of Praise

Reception



Open First United Methodist Church
of Southbridge

449 Main Street
Southbridge, MA 01550
508-764-6501
fumcsouthbridge.org
fumcsouthbridge@gmail.com
Pastor Sabina Terrades
pastorsabinaterrades@gmail.com



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03/4, 11, 18, April 1: Lenten Small Group Study
03/18: Lenten Small Group, FUMC to host
03/27: Dinner and a Movie
04/04: Church Anniversary Event
04/05 to 04/12: Holy Week