

**First Church**  
Middletown



**UNITED CHURCH**  
O F C H R I S T

Dear First Church in Middletown Community,

March 13, 2020

Grace and Peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ. Love and blessings to each of you in this unusual and unprecedented time of global pandemic COVID-19 outbreak. I have been praying for each of you and for our whole community. I have been in close conversation with an emergency preparedness team comprising of members of the Executive Committee and we wanted to share the outcome of our most recent conversation. I am so grateful for this team in helping think through how to “be church” in this moment. It is a learning curve for all of us and we appreciate your patience and prayers.

Following the advice of the CDC and the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ, beginning immediately we are **holding worship online only and canceling all in person church events**, including rentals, for the month of March then reevaluating closer to April. We are committed to protecting the most vulnerable among us and believe this is the most wise and compassionate decision we could make.

The recommendations to prevent the spread of this pandemic are for continued social distancing, and we are modeling this social distancing with our leadership and **having all the staff work remotely** and **encouraging you to do the same**; stay home and rest. If you need access to the building or need help in your life with practical matters such as food or groceries, you may reach out to [lindachoser@gmail.com](mailto:lindachoser@gmail.com) 860-550-3187

Worship:

At 10am on Sunday morning Rev. Julia or Rev. Mahogany will release a video of a short sermon and scripture reflection along with written prayers and devotional in the form of a bulletin. This will occur either on Facebook live or a pre-recorded video sent out over email and/or put on Facebook. We are still working these details out and Shari will get creative with music.  
March 15, 2020, March 22, 2020, March 29, 2020.

At 10:30 on Sunday mornings you are invited to a Sunday Morning Prayer Zoom meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/169803097?pwd=b3dQVGpTZm02bzZpNjJNQ29qbUk0Zz09>

Meeting ID: 169 803 097

Password: 699686

Call: +1 646 558 8656

Meeting ID: 169 803 097

Pastoral Care:

All pastoral care will be done remotely, so if you are looking to have a phone call or set up a meeting for pastoral care, please reach out to [revjuliaburkey@yahoo.com](mailto:revjuliaburkey@yahoo.com) or call our office 860 346 6657 and Kortney will contact me and the Care Team led by the Deacons along with Rev. Jim Silver.

Wednesday 10am-12pm Community Tea Time Zoom Meeting with Rev. Julia  
Drop in to say hello virtually! We want to make sure we are not socially isolating so swing by virtually with some literal tea or coffee in your hand from home to check in and share how you're doing. Mar 18, 2020, Mar 25, 2020, Apr 1, 2020

<https://zoom.us/j/605442012?pwd=bHV3a3BjdnBXNkEra2lyMGNBakIEUT09>

Meeting ID: 605 442 012

Password: 012399

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Community Care:

Although we are practicing the new and holy art of social distancing, we can still reach out to each other in love and care. We are beginning to put together a buddy system or community clusters where we hope most people will have connection from the church throughout the week. This moment is an opportunity for us to "be church" beyond our walls, to love and care for each other. If you or someone you know or love has become sick, please do alert us so we can care for you and pray for you.

Do stay alert for more updates from us over email, phone call and Facebook. All information will be posted on our website as well.

Love and blessings,

Rev. Julia