



# The Methodist

Burnt Hills United Methodist Church News

July 2020

Greetings to all, and welcome to summer!

I hope everyone is doing well and that you have been adjusting to the new normal that we have all faced over the last several months. As we enter July, we see that some parts of the nation are doing well, while others are still struggling with Covid-19. In our area, NY state is just beginning to “open” again and I ask you to join me in prayers that the process goes well and the relative success that our area has seen in “flattening the curve” continues.

As part of that process, churches in our area have been approved to begin re-opening at 25% of capacity (the approved occupancy level of the sanctuary), if they are ready. In order to do that, each church must review state guidance, prepare a plan that is in accordance with that guidance and then verify to the state that it is aware of and working with those guidelines. None of this is a simple process, or something that a pastor, or even the church staff can accomplish without greater input from the congregation. Aware of that, we created a Re-Opening Team in May, which has been looking at the guidance provided by the state, evaluating our facilities, our needs and the issues that such a structured “re-opening” involves. As you may have seen already, this team put steps into place to allow small groups (10 or less) to begin meeting on church property, in outdoor areas and with a number of conditions being met. That team continues to meet and to consider the many issues involved. Among those safety concerns are: How do we insure continued cleaning of all areas of the church as needed? How do we insure compliance with the conditions of building use? How do we track building use to assist in contact tracing should it be needed? How do we open for and conduct worship if we are only allowed to use 25% of capacity? What will the worship experience look like if we cannot sing, cannot have Coffee Fellowship, etc.? Can we do worship outside for the summer, and perhaps beyond? And so much more. I would like to thank all those who have been part of these discussions to this point and reinforce that our main goal has been to “Do No Harm”. To that end, the team is currently not planning to conduct in-person worship until we have had time to evaluate how the “statewide” re-opening is going and evaluate if it will be safe to gather. The experience of some churches that opened too soon, and have seen Covid cases in their congregations as a result, has led to our desire to be cautious in returning to in-person worship.

Among the realities we are currently examining is that whatever form worship will take, it is clear that there will be a need for enhanced ushering. That is, we will need to train some to help guide the congregation in the new realities of attending worship; of insuring proper spacing; of helping with traffic flow; and more that will be part of the experience which we will need to incorporate to meet that goal of “Do No Harm”. To that end, the Re-open team is beginning to develop guidance for that enhanced ushering and we are looking for volunteers who are willing to serve in that role and willing to attend some training to prepare them. This will be an important role, and one quite different from traditional ushering, if we hope to be able to gather for worship in the future. If you feel that you might want to help our re-opening efforts by joining that “enhanced usher” group, please contact the office, Pastor Holly or myself, and we will add you to the list and let you know what the next steps will be.

Thank you all for your patience and continued faith as we navigate these unusual times.

*Pastor Doug*

To all our Friends and Neighbors in Christian Love,

While we all have been dealing with the upheaval to our daily lives caused by the pandemic, your church has continued to be a source of worship and connection by means none of us could have envisioned four months ago. Every Sunday, service becomes available to view at 10:30 on Sunday morning by visiting <https://www.nybhmc.com/sermons.html>. “Coffee Hour” happens after the church service in a Zoom Room every week at the same Zoom address, <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/484088803>. You can see faces, share a laugh, find out what’s going on, even talk about ways to help out your friends and neighbors. Bible Studies, book clubs and “pub talks” continue to happen as Zoom meetings. As of now, we are actively exploring how to safely and wisely return to in-person activities. It’s going to be different for a while. All attendees will need to be acquainted with rules that the church needs to follow to protect one another, and those are still evolving. Thank you for your patience and understanding while best practices are sorted and settled.

In the meantime, because we are not in the building and you don’t have the option of placing your offering in the plate, we have developed some new ways to present your tithes to God. Of course you can use electronic transfer by direct deposit, and write checks or use cash and put them in your envelopes and mail them or drop them off at church. But now there’s something new as well. Through an electronic banking service named Vanco, that serves over 22,000 churches nationwide, you can now go to the church website and click on the Online Giving button on the home page. You will be routed to the Vanco donation page and you can fill in your personal information, decide on which category of gifting you want to direct it towards, decide on a one- time gift, or a recurring gift (pledge), and even offer to defray the expense of using that service so that the church receives 100% of your gift. (Vanco receives 2.75% of what is donated). Vanco makes the deposit into the church’s account and immediately sends the documentation of that gift to the church’s financial secretary and records it in your personal account record for tax reporting. The systems are seamlessly integrated.

There is also an App for your smartphone called GivePlus Church, which you can download from the App Store or Google Play. This will allow you to load your donation information in the same way you would use Venmo or PayPal. To see a two-minute video on how to do this, follow this link: <https://vimeo.com/262292774>.

In addition, there is an option for you to text your donation to the church. Here is the ten-digit number you would enter into your text address: 833 915 2499 If you would like to view a one-minute video explaining how to do this, please follow this link: <https://vimeo.com/262291796>.

We also have the option of adding credit card transactions with a card reader that could be used for donations, but also can be used at the Lord’s Acre Fair, Winter Sports Sale and other functions where money is taken in. Pretty cool, huh?

Our church was able to apply for and received a loan to help cover the salaries of our pastors and staff through the Paycheck Protection Plan that was created by Congress in early April. This loan is forgivable and becomes a grant after review and approval by the SBA of the way the money was used. While this money is a lifesaver and helps us keep our employees working, we need you to know that church giving is currently significantly reduced. We know that this is unavoidable for some during this crazy time, and if there is a way the church can help you or someone you know, please reach out at 518-399-5144. For any who can catch up on their pledges or (even better) make an additional donation, please use one of the old or new methods outlined above to do so. In spite of all the changes in the way we have had to operate, church expenses have remained the same. May God continue to bless and keep us all safe in these uncertain days. —Pete Farrell, Finance Chair

Following is a list of our Confirmation Candidates for this year. Because they were not able to be confirmed and join the church in May, they will be given the opportunity to do so sometime in the coming months, when we are assembled.

*Nicholas Bailey*  
*Tessa Block*  
*Anna Darling*  
*Brooke Felix*  
*Kaelin Fish*  
*Kenadie Fish*



*Cesarina Mazon*  
*Abigail Miller*  
*Patrick Nyhan*  
*Margaret Peterson*  
*Liam Wolf*

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The Memorial Committee has awarded a \$1,500 scholarship to graduating BH-BL senior, Stephen Peterson. We wish him the best of luck at SUNY Canton this fall.



The Scholarship Fund was established by Mary Wolfe in memory of her husband, Dr. John K. Wolfe, who considered post-secondary education essential for a successful life-long career. Other families have designated this fund when setting up a memorial for their loved one, making it possible for the Memorial Committee to award scholarships to graduating high school seniors going on to college.

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In July, Sunday worship will continue to be available online every week, via our website ([www.nybhmc.com/sermons](http://www.nybhmc.com/sermons)) or our Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/BurntHillsUMC](http://www.facebook.com/BurntHillsUMC).)



There will not be a Community Lunch in July. As always, volunteers are available to help with shopping/food deliveries and other needs. Please do not hesitate to contact your pastors with any of these concerns. Call the office and we will provide you with their phone numbers. Email addresses are: Pastor Holly at [hn@nycap.rr.com](mailto:hn@nycap.rr.com) and Pastor Doug at [pastdm@gmail.com](mailto:pastdm@gmail.com)

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### **NEWS FROM STAFF PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

Our custodian, Mindy Kinney, has resigned her position. Given her increased responsibilities as a teacher's aide in special education, she had to cut back. So her resignation was understandable and she will be missed. Fortunately, word was put out immediately about the job vacancy, and we received numerous responses. Joe Tangrady has been selected to be our new custodian, and has already begun his new position with us. Joe also works as a custodian at Global Foundries, so he is well versed in the current pandemic-related cleaning requirements. Welcome, Joe!

Our Financial Secretary, Peter Pransys, has also decided to step down. Peter has worked diligently for three years in this position, as well as working as our audio/visual technician. We appreciate all of Peter's faithful and selfless dedication to his positions at our church, as well as all the time and effort that he has given these past years. His "retirement" is well deserved! He and his wife, Terry, plan to do some traveling now, with their new free time. Paula Miller has been selected as our new Financial Secretary. Paula has been a very dedicated disciple at BHUMC for years, and we know that she will do a great job. Welcome, Paula!

## **An Update from the RE-OPENING Team** by Nancy Down

As our state moves into Phase 3 of Re-opening, many people are no doubt wondering, when will our church begin to hold in-person worship services and meetings? Be assured that we all look forward to that time, and church leaders are meeting weekly via Zoom to thoroughly discuss and consider the safest and healthiest way for this to happen.

We all value the importance of being well-informed, following state mandates and the Centers for Disease Control guidelines. To adapt to this “new normal”, the custodian, as well as any of us using the building, will have increased cleaning responsibilities. Guidelines are being established for all to follow and necessary supplies are on order (though some are difficult to obtain).

As announced recently, outdoor meetings of up to ten people can be held in the courtyard tent. Please schedule with the church office, bring chairs and masks, and submit attendance list.

We are aware that not all members are able to access the worship services that our Pastors and worship team create and upload onto YouTube each week. Our team is concerned about this, and we are exploring ways to provide viewing opportunities to those who may not have computer connectivity at home.

We are thankful for all the ways you all have reached out to stay connected with one another during these months of change and disruption. Please know that we are working hard to envision the best way to move forward, and we welcome input and questions. BHUMC is so blessed to have such caring and devoted pastors and staff. Let us pray for our congregation and staff, and for the hope of better times ahead.

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### **Food Drive**



The BHBL Area Summer Lunch Program is having a Food Drive, on June 24-26, and July 6-17. Items may be dropped off at either the High School main entrance or the District Office main entrance (which is also at the High School), from 8 AM-3 PM.

Items requested: Ritz crackers (regular family size box); chips/pretzels: individually wrapped multi-packs; 100% fruit juice (boxes, bottles, or pouches: 4, 6 or 8 oz); pizza sauce, fruit snacks; individual size fruit cups (applesauce, peaches, pears, etc., 6 or 8-packs); cereal, any variety, without nuts (full size box).

We would also be happy to accept any monetary donations. Checks can be made out to “BHBL Area Church SLP” and can be sent to Linda Martin, 2003 Cook Rd., Ballston Lake, NY 12019.

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*God Bless America*