

October, 2020

# Still Speaking...

*A newsletter from the Community Church of Atascadero*



**Community Church  
Of Atascadero**

**United Church of Christ  
5850 Rosario Avenue  
Atascadero, CA 93422**

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**[atascaderoucc@gmail.com](mailto:atascaderoucc@gmail.com)**

**[www.atascaderoucc.org](http://www.atascaderoucc.org)**

**Virtual Worship  
10 am Sunday**

**Virtual Fellowship  
3 pm Wednesday**

**Pastor: Heather Branton**  
[ccaucppastor@gmail.com](mailto:ccaucppastor@gmail.com)  
Cell phone (805) 470-9486  
**Office Hours:** by appointment

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## **As I Ponder...**

*The following is excerpted from "Recognizing Reality: The Stress of Pandemic" written by Rev. Dr. Rachael Keefe and posted on the UCC Mental Health Network, <https://www.mhn-ucc.org/2020/09/07/2281/>.*

... As strange as this is, many of us believe we have become accustomed to the "new normal" dictated by pandemic. We wear masks in public, minimize contact with people outside of our "bubble" or take every precaution when our jobs mandate personal contact. We tell ourselves we've adjusted and go on with life.

On the one hand this is true. We get through our days and don't think twice about wiping our mail and groceries with a bleach solution. We cross the streets to avoid those who choose not to wear a mask and try not to judge the cyclists and joggers who don't alter their course to stay six feet away. Some of us have even come to appreciate some of the benefits of working from home if we are lucky enough to be able to do that. We've created a routine for ourselves which might even include new hobbies taking up the time we used to need for commuting.

This is all fine. It's the other side of our days we need to look at. Those moments when the smallest thing brings tears to our eyes or sends anger coursing through our bodies, and we wonder what's wrong with us. These moments reveal the truth of the situation. We are living under a tremendous amount of stress. ... We haven't gotten to the point of dealing with Post Traumatic Stress; we are still accumulating trauma and stress.

... Pandemic has us living at 80% of our stress capacity. This is why those minor things set us off. We aren't going from 0 to 100 without cause. We are going from 80 to 100 with good reason. If there was no pandemic, the dog incessantly barking might cause usual stress levels to go up 20 points. We get annoyed and yell at the dog with a little more volume than strictly necessary. However, given the 80% stress we endure as a result of COVID-19, the same constant barking puts us at or over maximum capacity to cope.

... We need to recognize this and have more patience with ourselves, and be ready with healthy coping skills. ... This is where faith can be helpful.

Prayer, meditation, gratitude, and other spiritual practices can help refocus us and defuse the intensity of a pandemic stress response. Think of the psalmist asking God to turn their heart to focus on God's ways and to have the ability to find life in those ways.

Practicing love of self, neighbor, creation, and God in this time of pandemic can help mitigate the stress we are all living under. ... Those of us with more resources have an obligation to support those with fewer resources. We need to remember that for some of our neighbors, pandemic conditions have

elevated their stress levels to maximum; they are coping the best they can. Now is a time to practice compassion and not judgment. Remember that Paul tells us in Romans that we are to “owe no one anything, except to love one another.” If you are doing okay today, right now, what can you do to help someone else alleviate some of their stress? Reach out and listen before choosing what to do. Remember that people living alone, single parents, healthcare workers, retail workers, delivery people, people with physical disabilities, people with mental health challenges, People of Color, and many others have increased stress, often more than the 80% we can attribute to COVID-19.

For yourself, consider making time for a daily spiritual practice. Engage in something each day that opens you to the Spirit, grounds you in the present, and guides you to a sense of meaning and purpose... – prayer, meditation, journaling, creating, baking, walking or running, gardening, expressing gratitude, true self-care, etc. ... Remember that it is okay to be stressed, to be overwhelmed, to feel what you feel in any given moment. It is not okay to ignore the stress, self-destruct, or take out our emotions on another person. We are not alone. God wants us to find life in God’s ways even now.

It’s okay to take time out to care for yourself in healthy, constructive ways. It’s also important that we reach out to our neighbors when we have the resources to do so. No one is at their best right now, and it may be quite some time before we are able to be functioning better. In the meantime, let’s all do what we can to love and support one another. ... May we all practice compassion with our neighbors and patience with ourselves and those we love.

*Gratefully yours... heather*

### **Some Healthy Coping Skills**

1. Focus on breathing, slow deep breaths in and out
2. Go outside and pay attention to your senses
3. Make a Gratitude List
4. Share your feelings with someone you trust
5. Sing
6. Watch funny pet videos
7. Punch a punching bag, pillow, or mattress
8. Take a virtual tour of a museum
9. Color a picture
10. Aromatherapy
11. Spend time with your pet
12. Dance
13. Contact a helpline or therapist
14. Rearrange a room
15. Perform a random act of kindness
16. Research something that interests you
17. Go for a walk and take pictures of everything you see of a color you choose
18. Send an encouraging email or letter to someone else
19. Attend a virtual support group
20. Memorize a Bible verse, poem, or song
21. Blow bubbles
22. Call someone who makes you laugh

*For more ideas see <https://www.mhn-ucc.org/2020/09/07/2281/>*

### **Moderator’s Report**

We are continuing to have a vibrant and vital ministry as we continue our worship and our meetings online. I am grateful for the work Pastor Heather has done to keep our congregation going and active during this pandemic.

I am excited that the Church Council has agreed to house the Emergency Shelter (formerly known as the Warming Center) in our Fellowship Hall. The Emergency Shelter will be open every evening, from November through March. The starting date will be as early as November 1 st and no later than November 15th. The Shelter is operated by ECHO (El Camino Housing Organization) will be located at the Community Church. There will be a maximum of twenty-five person each night, in addition to a staff person from ECHO and two volunteers.

Marilyn Hamilton has been appointed by the church council to be Associate Financial Secretary to assist Judy Anderson. We will continue to meet online through Zoom for the time being. We do not have a

timeline when we will begin meeting for worship in our sanctuary. The Re-opening Team will be meeting soon and will establish a protocol and timeline for use of our church building, during this pandemic.

We will be receiving a special for Neighbors In Need (NIN) this Sunday. You may contribute online or by sending your offering to the church office. In November we will be having Stewardship Campaign, and you will be hearing more about that. I thank all of you for your generosity to our church's ministry. I am pleased that through these strange and difficult times, we are "Being the Church" and are making a significant contribution to our community.

Blessings,

Larry D. Young

***Community Church Choir: 9 am on Sundays (except for 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays)***

During our weekly virtual choir rehearsal, we learn vocal techniques and have fun singing. Come check us out!

**Fall Bible Study**

We are following the Narrative Lectionary, listening to the BibleWorm podcast and then having our own discussion. Check it out!

Wednesday mornings, 10:30-11:45, Sept 30 – Nov 18 [See below for Zoom link]

***Talking about Race***

Addressing race in our country is complicated and can seem overwhelming. There is no single right thing to do. But we can increase our understanding and, through that, our engagement in transforming our institutions and even ourselves to be more just, compassionate, equitable, and inclusive. To that end we are beginning another weekly discussion on race using the book, *So You Want to Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Oluo. Each chapter asks a question about race in contemporary America and offers suggestions about how to talk about the issues. The goal of the book and this discussion series is to learn how to engage in race-related topics without becoming defensive or getting off track. The book also has some tangible advice on ways we can address racism.

You can purchase the book through a book store online. It is also in our county library system. It gets great reviews for its accessibility, readability, and applicability to our daily lives. As always, talking about race is hard work. It involves listening and vulnerability. But doing this work offers us the opportunity to participate in personal and social transformation. And we have great conversation!

Thursday evenings, 7:00-8:30 pm, Oct 1 – Nov 5 [See below for Zoom link]

**Ways to Give Financially**

1. Send a check to the Community Church: **5850 Rosario Ave.**
2. Online at [www.atascaderoucc.org](http://www.atascaderoucc.org)
3. Mobile app Tithe.ly
  - a) Search "**Tithe.ly**" in the app store (Google or Apple). Download and install the Tithe.ly app.
  - b) Click "Give Now" to start and then, in "Find a church", enter "**Community Church of Atascadero**"
  - c) Enter the amount you would like to give
  - d) Enter a credit card or bank account to link to the app

- e) You have the option to cover the fees: \$.30 for the transaction plus either 1.0% for a bank transfer or 2.9% for credit card.
- f) Click “Give” and you have now successfully given to Community Church! (Oh, and you have the option to set up recurring giving.)

**Thank you for the many ways you continue to help Community Church of Atascadero be financially healthy!**

**KEEPING CONNECTED**

Many within our congregation do not use email or have access to online communication. We have set up a system for communication where someone with email is matched with a non-email person and telephone them to share information. If you do not have email and have not received a phone call, please contact Marth Thomson or Pastor Heather to ensure you are in the loop. Thank you.

**ZOOM LINKS**

We continue to meet virtually. If you join via the internet (computer or smartphone), you simply need to click on the internet link. If you are joining with your telephone (*audio only*), dial **(1) 669 900 9128** and then, when asked, enter the Meeting ID and Password.

Sunday Worship	<a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/937257009?pwd=UGZVRHdoNVRYS09TWEIGcWlXQkVvdz09">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/937257009?pwd=UGZVRHdoNVRYS09TWEIGcWlXQkVvdz09</a>	MEETING ID: 937 257 009 PASSCODE: 528041
Church Choir	<a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81750412891?pwd=K2dtd3lwNmswUmRkOXlwZytiSStCZz09">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81750412891?pwd=K2dtd3lwNmswUmRkOXlwZytiSStCZz09</a>	MEETING ID: 858 1515 0012 PASSCODE: 202869
Midweek Fellowship	<a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81750412891?pwd=K2dtd3lwNmswUmRkOXlwZytiSStCZz09">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81750412891?pwd=K2dtd3lwNmswUmRkOXlwZytiSStCZz09</a>	MEETING ID: 817 5041 2891 PASSCODE: 228391
Fall Bible Study	<a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82952931382?pwd=dFcxN2RtQzVoUit4RXZac2RMbXdZZz09">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82952931382?pwd=dFcxN2RtQzVoUit4RXZac2RMbXdZZz09</a>	MEETING ID: 829 5293 1382 PASSCODE: 303403
Fall Series on Race	<a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84071409388?pwd=TnpEOGc5M3NzZURSNctwcDFZTWJZQT09">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84071409388?pwd=TnpEOGc5M3NzZURSNctwcDFZTWJZQT09</a>	MEETING ID: 840 7140 9388 PASSCODE: 488049

If you need assistance with connecting by Zoom, please contact Candice Hubbard at 805-602-8153 who will try to help you join us.

*Building Our Community*

**WINE WALL FUNDRAISER**

*Because of schedules and busyness at this time, we are headed for November for this fundraiser. We have been collecting wine and donation commitments. Please keep them coming!!*

**COLONY DAYS Oct 3rd**

*There is still an opportunity for exposure with Colony Days. It is a Reverse Parade!! We will park our flatbed in Sunken Gardens for people to drive by and see what we have done. Those who want to walk East Mall with a mask on can do so. David and Chuck are communicating to make this happen. There will be a drive-up fundraiser for chicken or tri tip at the Printery for Colony Days Committee that day. You can go on line and check out the rest that will be happening 2 days before and order your meal.*

**Oct Birthdays & Anniversaries**

1 – Brent Hagen  
 5 – Anniversary Tim & Barbara  
     Cerny-Ryan  
 6 - Catherine Kyle  
 7 – Livia Kellerman  
 8 – Martha Staib  
 10 – Barbara Cerny-Ryan

14 – Izak Kania  
 16 – Ron Staib  
 17 -Timothy Ryan  
 20 – Anniversary Heather Branton  
     & Jeanne Miller  
 30 – Dean Baxter

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
27 9 am CCA Choir 10 am Worship online	28	29	30 10:30 am Bible Study 3pm Fellowship online	1 7 pm Talking about Race	2	3
4 9 am CCA Choir 10 am Worship online <b>Neighbors in Need special offering</b>	5	6	7 10:30 am Bible Study 3pm Fellowship online	8 7 pm Talking about Race	9	10
11 10 am Worship online	12	13	14 10:30 am Bible Study 3pm Fellowship online <b>4pm ECHO meal – please see Celia B to help out</b>	15 7 pm Talking about Race	16	17
<b>18</b> 9 am CCA Choir 10 am Worship online 12 pm Council meeting	19	20	21 10:30 am Bible Study 3pm Fellowship online	22 7 pm Talking about Race	23	24
<b>25</b> 9 am CCA Choir 10 am Worship online	26	27	28 10:30 am Bible Study 3pm Fellowship online	29 7 pm Talking about Race	30	31 Halloween

**Northern Association Fall Gathering is Saturday, October 24, 2020 at 10 AM, via Zoom**

This will be a time to check in with each other to see how everyone is doing and will last as long as you want. Share your innovative worship experiences, difficulties, and find ways that we as an association can help each other during this pandemic.

About a week before the meeting you will be sent the Zoom link.

Please make sure your church is represented.

Thank you in advance.

Sandy Healy

Northern Association Moderator

