

Pandemic puts faith in a different context

By Ralph Villers

DERBY - Prior to March 16 and our days of 'social distancing,' we had plans and routines to which we adhered. In some cases, some might say *religiously*.

Since that date, our usual Sunday journey of faith has been lost to us. The doors to the First Congregational Church have not been opened for all the right reasons.

Given certain issues where our health may be compromised, closing the doors seems the best course of action.

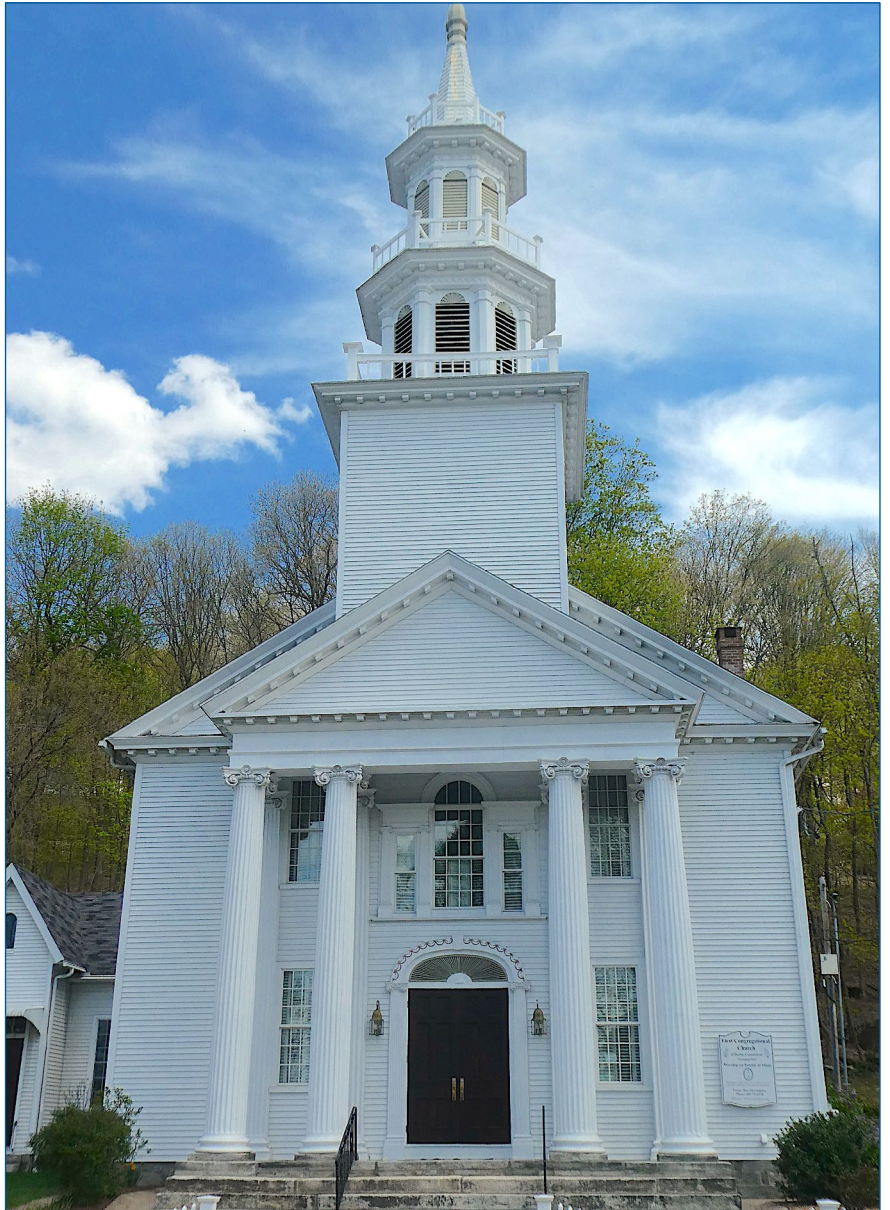
Physically, the closure is acceptable - but how about spiritually? I miss the prayer, the music and the camaraderie of our congregant friends.

So, this past Sunday, we took a ride to the church. The view of the historic white building with its steeple rising to the heavens was cathartic. We pray for an easing of the pandemic, and have the faith that it will.



These photos as a reminder of what was - and what will be as soon as it is safe to worship again.

We didn't come in contact with anyone on the ground, but surely from above...



National Day of Prayer slated at Ansonia High School parking lot

**NATIONAL
DAY OF
PRAYER**

First Thursday of May

THUR., MAY 7 --5:30-7:00 PM

ANSONIA H.S. PARKING LOT

26 PULASKI HWY., ANS.

DRIVE-IN & TUNE- IN: → 87.9 FM ❤️



United Way in state aids those in hardship during pandemic

SHELTON - The COVID-19 health crisis has required philanthropy to respond differently than traditional approaches.

Nonprofits and funders alike knew families that lost their income and resources and were not accustomed to looking for charitable resources.

Through the **Connecticut United Ways COVID-19 Response Fund**, payments are being distributed to residents across the state in need.

For the first round of distribution, the Fund raised \$450,000 to help Connecticut residents facing immediate financial hardship. Donors for that first round include:

- The Aetna Foundation
- The Connecticut Health Foundation
- Travelers Insurance
- Webster Bank
- Newtown Savings Bank.



Since then, an additional \$160,000 has been raised.

Valley United Way is currently working with TEAM, Inc. in Derby to identify those most in need. Initially, recipients will receive \$200 with additional funds may be available as donations allow.

With almost \$13,000 funds raised for the Valley to date, over 60 families have already started to receive funds to help with their most pressing needs.

Learn more about COVID-19 Fund Distribution

By distributing dollars from the COVID-19 Response Fund enables those in need to obtain funds through a mobile wallet in their smartphones. Click [HERE](#) for more details.

Through a partnership with EML Payments Limited (“EML”), the innovative collaboration allows rapid distribution of dollars directly to beneficiaries.

Once a beneficiary is pre-qualified by TEAM, funds are loaded into a mobile wallet on the beneficiary’s smartphone. The funds are used to pay for necessities, such as food, medicine, utilities, and gasoline.

The electronic distribution allows monies to be given to those who need it most, without violating social distancing requirements. This model of expedited delivery gives families the flexibility to address their most urgent needs.

“Valley United Way is grateful for its partnership with the staff of TEAM to bring this state-of-the-art resource to the Valley right now. We knew that so many businesses were going to be closed, we knew we had to work quickly and smartly to help people,” said David Kennedy, Interim President. “Thanks to compassionate donors who treasure system work, we are able to get funds directly to those who need it most.”

Non-profit leaders who have been overwhelmed with requests since the crisis began were grateful to be able to offer relief to those in need.

David Morgan, Executive Director of TEAM, Inc. said, “I applaud the United Way COVID-19 Response Fund for making a meaningful difference in the lives of others affected by the coronavirus pandemic.”

“Each day I continue to witness firsthand the devastating impact on children and families, adults and seniors from all walks of life finding themselves in the most difficulty. Kudos to the United Way for their approach to getting immediate relief to our residents.”

For more information about the Valley United Way, visit its website at www.valleyunitedway.org or contact David Kennedy, Interim President/COO at 203-538-6341.

This is from a press release from Rebecca Toms,
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