



# Peace Dale

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

*An Open and Affirming Congregation of the  
United Church of Christ*

## E-Light Newsletter

July 1, 2020



### It's Okay To Take A Breath – by Nathaniel Baker

The ancient Greek word for “breath” was *pneuma*, which could also mean “spirit” or “soul.” In the time of Genghis Khan, the Mongols believed that one’s soul was contained in his or her breath. Throughout the bible, we read about the “breath of life” (Genesis 2:7), “a breath of life from God” (Revelation 11:11) and- my personal favorite- “the Spirit of God... in my nostrils” (Job 27:3).

Breath is central to who we are. It keeps us alive. Breath reflects our emotions. We breathe differently when relaxed, or stressed, or angry, or happy, or sad. One of our most profound non-verbal expressions is the sigh and we have a different sigh for practically every feeling. This emotionality of breath is central to singing.

Breath is in the news these days for very negative reasons. George Floyd’s dying words, “I can’t breathe,” have become a rallying cry in protests across the nation and around the world. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands have died of Covid-19, struggling to breathe and often spending their last days on ventilators.

The way Covid survivors describe breathing during their ordeal is the stuff of nightmares. (Literally. I had a nightmare from one of these. Skip this paragraph if you’re sensitive to this stuff.) Tara Jane Langston, a British waitress and mother who was hospitalized for Covid-19, described breathing with the virus as like having “glass in your lungs” and said that “every breath is a battle.” Washington resident Andrew Dumont said it’s “like someone is sitting on my chest.”

For the rest of us, breath has stressful connotations. We wear masks everywhere we go, terrified we might breathe in tiny droplets carrying the virus. Equally terrifying is the prospect that we are the ones breathing out the droplets and could hurt our neighbors, co-workers, or loved ones.

Many of us feel guilty about stopping to take a breath during these times. This is natural. Our fellow human beings are dying, being oppressed, in some cases both. How can we stop and take a breath when for so many others that is not an option?

It’s okay to take a breath. To do so is not to express comfort or solidarity with injustice. In fact, it can better help us to serve our community.

MedicineNet, a health website owned by WebMD and produced by a team of over 70 physicians, put out an article on April 15, 2020 called *Spiritual Health Matters In The Covid-19 Crisis*. The article states:

**“The impact of clinician well-being on patient perceptions and quality of care was substantiated well in advance of this coronavirus outbreak. More than merely a health crisis, the pandemic is also a global spiritual event. Attending to the spiritual well-being of clinicians is well aligned with current recommendations published in *Annals of Internal Medicine* to ‘deploy designated wellness champions in health care systems and practices to field clinicians’ concerns.”**

In other words, the mental and spiritual health of the doctor is just as important as that of his or her patient. Moreover, the doctor who takes care to maintain his or her spiritual health will be better able to serve the patient. We are called as a church to serve and take care of our community. Taking care of our own spiritual needs makes us more effective servants to others.

HuffPost carried a blog post way back in 2011 that is impressively relevant to the crises we are presently going through. In *Spiritual Practices For Times Of Crisis*, Joanna Macy tells us “greatest gift we can give our world is our presence, awake and attentive.” Macy goes on to list spiritual practices that can help us achieve such a presence to bring to the world. Her first recommendation? “Breathe.”

One important way we as a nation like to take a breath around this time of year is by celebrating the 4th of July. This is a much-needed moment of reflection, relaxation and recreation for many of us. Doubly so for me, having been born on the 5th of July.

Much like breathing, celebrating America’s Independence during this time of turmoil is... complicated. In addition to making the backyard barbecue a challenge, Covid-19 has exposed many structural problems and inequities in our society. At the same time, protests continue to rage across the country, raising the question of whether the promises of liberty and inalienable rights were genuine to begin with and whether to this day they extend to all people.

These are indeed important questions to grapple with. As abolitionist and escaped slave Frederick Douglass put it, “This Fourth of July is yours, not mine, You may rejoice, I must mourn.” However, in the same speech Douglas declares:

**“Fellow Citizens, I am not wanting in respect for the fathers of this republic. The signers of the Declaration of Independence were brave men. They were great men, too, great enough to give frame to a great age. It does not often happen to a nation to raise, at one time, such a number of truly great men. The point from which I am compelled to view them is not, certainly, the most favorable; and yet I cannot contemplate their great deeds with less than admiration. They were statesmen, patriots and heroes, and for the good they did, and the principles they contended for, I will unite with you to honor their memory.”**

In pondering these questions and others, I think it will help us all to take a deep breath. This Sunday, July 5th will be a mostly musical service celebrating American Independence in a spirit of unity, prayer and reflection. As Fred takes a few weeks of much needed and deserved time off, we can all take a breath and focus inwardly toward our own spiritual needs, so as to better serve our community going forward.

These considerations have been central to my musical planning for the coming month. This Sunday we will hear staple national songs such as *God Bless America*, *America The Beautiful* and *This Land Is Your Land*. We will sing *Psalm 23* and *The Lord’s Prayer*, along with some favorite traditional hymns. The following two weeks will see a number of traditional and contemporary favorites, to help spiritually center and ground us. I hope these services and the music in them will uplift and provide spiritual sustenance to help us face the days ahead.

# ANNUAL SOUTH KINGSTOWN 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY CELEBRATION

THE TOWN OF SOUTH KINGSTOWN WILL HOLD A FLAG RAISING CEREMONY AT OLD MOUNTAIN FIELD ON THE MORNING OF JULY 4TH. PASTOR FRED HAS BEEN ASKED TO GIVE THE INVOCATION AND READ PART OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE. THE EVENT WILL BEGIN AT 9:30AM AND CAN BE SEEN ON FACEBOOK LIVE. YOU CAN VISIT THE TOWN WEBSITE FOR THE LINK TO VIEW THE CEREMONY.



## Aprons in Action

**We would like to thank Claudia Swain for the beautiful flowers she brings each week to decorate the pulpit for our Sunday worship service. We greatly appreciate the flowers and Claudia's generosity.**

**We would also like to thank Pastor Fred and Wally Young for joining the South County Chamber of Commerce on behalf of the church. This is a great partnership for our church and will help us to reach**

**new residents to the area.**

**If you know of a church member who is helping the church or our community, please let us know so we can highlight them here in our "Apron's in Action" column.**

**Email the PDCC office at [office@peacedalechurch.org](mailto:office@peacedalechurch.org)**

**Virtual (Zoom) Book Club  
Get-Together  
Friday, July 10, 2020  
at 6:30 p.m.**

For more information regarding this virtual Book Club Get-Together for the book "The Hate U give" please see the event flyer at the following link.

<http://www.peacedalechurch.org/wp-content/PDCC/VirtualBookClub.pdf>

## **Make Noise for Juneteenth**

A big thanks to Pastor Fred for his hard work and initiative on the wonderful bell ringing program on Friday June 19th in honor of Juneteenth, a celebration of the freeing of slaves on June 19, 1865 in Galveston, Texas. Nine South Kingstown and Narragansett churches rang their bells that evening, as well as many more across the nation. As Fred said, "It's about death, racism and equality."

Fred did an amazing job of getting the word out about the event. He was able to get coverage in the local papers, local television channels, as well as on the Associated Press news wire. What a great way to spread the word about Peace Dale Congregational Church.

## **SCRIP Update**

**Thanks for continuing to support the SCRIP program. For the month of June we had nearly \$10,000 in sales.**

**Reminder that our next curbside pickup is scheduled for Sunday, July 11th. Please reach out to Deb at [dkshaw5@cox.net](mailto:dkshaw5@cox.net) if you have any questions.**

## **YOUTH GROUP**

**At the link below there is a resource for some free online courses for PreK-12 through the Rhode Island Department of Education**

<https://ride.gosignmeup.com/Public/Course/Browse>

## **July Mission of the Month: T.A.S.K. (Towards an Anti-Racist South Kingstown)**

I talked with one of the founders, Daria Lyric Montaquilla, about TASK, they are a new organization formed by young people in South County. TASK was created after a South Kingstown Black Lives Matter March to seek anti-racist policy changes in South Kingstown and they are currently focusing on education reform. In the future TASK will facilitate policy changes in healthcare, housing, and police departments, among other areas.

I also went to their June 28th meeting where they talked with the chair and vice-chairs of the South Kingstown School Committee about their demands pertaining to the curriculum, representation, discipline, and accountability in SK schools. Both were very receptive and excited to work towards those changes. I'm thrilled to see other young people get so involved in the community and work to make positive changes.

Thank you for anything you can give, having TASK be our mission of the month for July will help boost TASK at the beginning of their important work in our town. Checks can be made out to The Collective with TASK listed in the memo line.

Jami Schafer, co-chair, Board of Missions

The Missions Board would like to remind everyone about Documentary Discussions Week 4 (When They See Us).

Please see previous newsletters for more information, and if you would like to sign up for emails regarding the discussions please do so at the following link.

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfH3cUCF0\\_XNImBEMtiEos2NDqsfUPBjHO6mfo23dppXBRujw/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfH3cUCF0_XNImBEMtiEos2NDqsfUPBjHO6mfo23dppXBRujw/viewform)



**We would like to wish a happy birthday to the following people:**

<b>Lindsey Redmond</b>	<b>07/03</b>
<b>Tawny Beckmann</b>	<b>07/05</b>
<b>Angelita Scott</b>	<b>07/05</b>
<b>Sophie Halloran</b>	<b>07/06</b>
<b>Sarah Algie</b>	<b>07/06</b>
<b>Evan Douglas</b>	<b>07/07</b>
<b>Caroline Bamford</b>	<b>07/07</b>
<b>Katie Cunningham</b>	<b>07/09</b>
<b>Erika Huntley</b>	<b>07/09</b>



PDCC is now signed up with Amazon Smile. To find out more about how it works and how to sign up please see the following link:

<http://peacedalechurch.org/wp-content/PDCC/AmazonSmile.pdf>

*happy*  
**Fourth**  
*of July!*

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**Pastor Fred is on vacation for the next three weeks. Please continue to join us for our YouTube online worship this Sunday for a celebration of patriotic songs and hymns.**  
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## Upcoming Worship Services, Meetings, & Events at Peace Dale Church

Flag Raising Ceremony At Old Mountain Field at 9:30am

Online Worship Service via YouTube on Sunday July 5 \*\*\*\*\*Due to the holiday weekend there will be no Zoom Fellowship Meeting this Sunday\*\*\*\*\*

Zoom Meeting: Wednesday, July 8 at 7:00pm-815pm      TOPIC: "White Fragility"

Upcoming Town Events: South Kingstown Special Election - July 14<sup>th</sup>

Please send Ashley items for the church calendar at  
[office@peacedalechurch.org](mailto:office@peacedalechurch.org)

*If anyone is in need of prayers or a prayer shawl  
please notify the office.*



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# Peace Dale

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

*Our Mission Statement:*

"EMPOWERED BY GOD'S GRACE, WE WELCOME ALL, LOVE ALL,  
AND SEEK JUSTICE FOR ALL. UNITED IN SPIRIT, THE JOURNEY MAKES US ONE."

**SENIOR MINISTER:**

THE REV. A. FRED EVENSON  
[FRED.E@MAC.COM](mailto:FRED.E@MAC.COM)

**MUSIC DIRECTOR:**

NATHANIEL BAKER

**BELL CHOIR DIRECTOR:**

CHERYL VON EHRENKROOK

**TODDLER CARE PROVIDER:**

LAUREL SMITH

**SEXTON:**

MARY DEPIETRO

**VOLUNTEER YOUTH CONNECT ADMINISTRATOR:**

MEG KOLODZIEJ

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**PASTOR EMERITUS:**

DR. LAWRENCE A. WASHBURN

**Be sure to visit our website  
for all sorts of information related to PDCC!  
[peacedalechurch.org](http://peacedalechurch.org)**

*PDCC welcomes your input.*

*If you have anything you'd like included in the newsletter, please forward your request(s)  
to the church office (before noon the day before the newsletter is published)*

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