

Family—

In February, as we have in previous months, the Time, Talent, and Treasure Ministry and Pledging Committee wrote to relay the work that your pledges had enabled through the Christmas season and the new year. As I re-read that letter in the process of drafting this one, I was shaken. It was full of optimism, exhibiting not a care in the world. How quickly things have changed.

But some things have not changed. The steadfast goodness of this Church and your commitment to it are as strong as ever—just as they are more important than ever. In Romans, Paul wrote:

*We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.*

You have truly embodied those words this past month. It is a pleasure to report just some of the ways that your pledges are providing hope to the congregation and the broader community:

### **Answering a Call to Arms:**

On April 7, we asked you to sign up for online, automatic giving to increase stability for our planning in these unstable times. You answered that call. We are thrilled to report that the number of our members and friends who have done so has **increased from 29% to 40%**!

### **Thank you!**

If you would like to do this as well but have not done so yet, please go to <https://www.rockyhillucc.org/contributions>, click “Donate with your bank account or with your credit card,” click “BANK ACCOUNT,” then follow the prompts.



### **Providing a Place to Worship and Connect:**

Your pledges are allowing us to continue offering live, online worship services every week by, among other things, paying for the Church’s Zoom license. We don’t have to tell you that this is a crucial spiritual and emotional lifeline.

***Our Easter service had over 60 log-ins and over 100 worshippers!*** Our community is clearly responding to our vibrant worship and Rev. Nada’s powerful messages.



### **Providing a Sense of Safety and Agency for the Youth:**

Georgette Huie, our Minister for Children and Youth, has held regular ***get-togethers for our young children as well as confirmation classes online***. I know my eight-year-old has relished those gatherings—because he has told me so.

Our youth, collaborating with Center Church in Hartford, also ***donated chips and bottled water and baked homemade desserts for meals served to people who are homeless as well as elderly residents*** who had been having trouble obtaining food on March 29.

### **Helping to Rebuild:**

***Our congregation put together 25 disaster-relief buckets for Church World Services*** in February. Supplies for the buckets were purchased with your pledged funds, as well as additional member donations.



The importance of Congregational Care has only increased as the pandemic forces us into increased isolation. Our Congregational Care team has continued to acknowledge the great grandparents in our membership on their respective days with a token gift and donation made in their honor.

We have also been working to add options for donating to the Church and to make donating clearer and simpler for everyone. One-time gifts can now be made through PayPal, including by credit card, with *no fees* incurred by the donor or the Church. That option—and others—can be accessed at the Church's donation website, which has been updated and simplified: <https://www.rockyhillucc.org/contributions>. As mentioned above, our giving is now 40% automated online. We would love to cross the 50% threshold by the end of the year.

We have done much, but there is much to do. Rising unemployment has fueled rising food insecurity. In May, the Outreach and Witness Ministry will accordingly be using pledge money to contribute to organizations supporting those affected by the COVID pandemic, including Hands on Hartford, Foodshare, RIP Medical Debt, and Rocky Hill Social Services. Closer to home, our Church's three confirmands will be confirmed virtually on May 31, and your pledges

having paid for their curriculum and mentoring. Georgette is also making plans to organize our high schoolers into a relief team for parents of small children, with books and supplies to be paid for by the Church.

Again, these are just highlights of what we have done and what we have planned.

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We are all in need of encouragement at the moment, and we hope this has been an encouragement to you as it has been to us. All of this would quite literally be impossible without the generosity you have demonstrated. Thank you for having the 2020 Vision to see where we can meet needs, and continuously answering the call to do so.

Blessings,

Time, Talent, and Treasure Ministry and Pledging Committee