

Clergy Conversations: Pastoral Care
Monday, March 30, 2020

Presenters: Rev. Eric Park, Butler District Superintendent; Rev. Brad Lauster, Washington District Superintendent; Anne Huntsman, Funeral Director at Huntsman Funeral Homes

ANNE HUNTSMAN, HUNTSMAN FUNERAL HOMES

- Funeral Homes are like the church: during this pandemic they are figuring it out as they go
- Funeral homes were given guidelines on 3/15/2020 from their association that are effective through 5/13/2020.
- Offering private visitations to families, although some Funeral Homes are still providing public visitations.
- Huntsman and others doing arrangements over the phone.
- Anne expressed that often the pastor has the hardest time “staying away” or providing a safe social distance. As clergy, we need to be aware of how we are leading others.
- Services now are at graveside, as long as the cemetery allows it. She acknowledges it’s a struggle to stay under 10 people.
- Encourages the use of ZOOM, Facebook Live and other technologies during services to allow others to participate.
- Anne shared that there is a delay in paperwork handling. In other words, death certificates are slow to be received and this may impact life insurance issues. This would be something that we could inform our folks about to ease their stress.

ERIC PARK, BUTLER DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

- We are experiencing new and different levels of grief.
- We are encouraged to live into pastoral care by:
 - Creating risky and vulnerable spaces to talk about grief
 - Consecrate technology. Set it apart as a sacred space. Think of its use as a sacred moment and not just accomplishing a task
 - Risk probing and invitational questions. Don’t minimize.
 - Help grieving people to reframe their story.
 - Help loved ones understand that their loved one’s legacy is honored not by a widely attended funeral service, but through the well-lived lives of those that follow.
 - Preach Jesus. Teach Jesus. Share the whole of the story.

BRAD LAUSTER, WASHINGTON DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

- Need to practice good self-care. Self-care is not selfish.
- Set yourself apart to pray and listen to the voice of God.
- Get in touch with your fears, thoughts and emotions. Be real with God.
- Use this time to develop new disciplines and healthy habits.
- Don't judge or dismiss what others say they are going through.
- Prioritize what kind of care you can give.
- Enlist the help of others.
- Know yourself. Know that there are limits.
- Be kind to yourself.
- Be understanding of others.
- Remind yourself and others that you are not alone.
- Remember who you are and whose you are. You are a child of God.
- Resist the temptation to allow others to tell you how to live.