

CROSSROADS

VOL. 70, No. 4

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH (UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST), STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT

APRIL 2014

WORSHIP IN THE SANCTUARY—10:30 A.M.

FROM THE INTERIM PASTOR'S DESK APRIL 2014

- April 6** **Fifth Sunday in Lent**
Holy Communion, Food Trunk and
Deacons Fund Offering
- April 13** **Palm Sunday**
- April 17** **Maundy Thursday**
7:30 p.m. Sanctuary
- April 20** **Easter Sunday**
6:30 a.m. Sunrise Service, Cummings Beach
10:30 Sanctuary
- April 27** **Second Sunday of Easter**

LENTEN AND EASTER ADULT BIBLE STUDY

I have often heard folks say, "Forgive and forget," or "I or s/he should be more forgiving." So just what does it mean to forgive? Our Lenten Bible Study continues as we use the book, *The Way of Forgiveness*, by Marjorie Thompson. We meet every Tuesday evening at 7pm, and we will end on April 22nd. (We will not meet during Holy Week, April 15th. Contact Rev. Susan if you have any questions!

'For surely I know the plans I have for you,' says the Lord, 'plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.' - Jeremiah 29:11

The Vision Task Force reflects on this passage from Jeremiah each time they meet. And so I share this with you, in hopes that you too will begin to reflect on this passage.

Jeremiah prophesied in a time of great darkness for the people of Israel. Many of the folks were in exile, and yearned to return home. And yet, a mere return home would not do it for these folks. These folks' lives have been profoundly changed by this time of exile. Their worship, their relationships with one another, their relationship with God has been irrevocably changed.

As I understand Jeremiah, God's promise was a promise not so much to go home as it was of a new future—a future that will take into consideration the people they have become in the intervening years, a future that would take into consideration what the world had become, and a future that will take into consideration the changing relationship they have with God.

And so I ask you, besides returning to the familiar, what is God calling us to look ahead to. What is different in us that yearns to be reflected in our life together? What is different in the world that needs the presence of God? What is different in us that longs to be shared with the world?

Susan

**April
Birthdays and Anniversaries**

- 3 Marla Heath
- 4 George Heath
- 6 Sam Richardson
- 7 Annie Matthews Nardi
- 8 Will Catchpole and Suma Joseph
- 9 Tara Sileo, Dawn Bruscoe
- 13 Sally Kirklewski
- 17 Logan Peters
- 18 Sophie Papp
- 19 Melissa Warner
- 21 Virginia Atkinson
Becky and Leon Schwartz, anniversary
- 25 Linda and John Peters, anniversary
- 28 Joe Bryan, Ann Bryson, and Laura Bryson
- 30 Bob Signore

SUNDAY FLOWER MEMORIALS



To donate flowers for our Sunday worship service, contact the church office for more information or to request a form. The cost for a bouquet to decorate the chancel is \$60. Checks should be made payable to FCC Stamford with "Flowers" in the memo section and may be mailed to the church or placed in the offering plate on Sunday. Please contact the office for open dates.

LECTIONARY READINGS

April 6: Ezek 37:1-14; Ps 130; Rom 8:6-11; John 11:1-45

April 13: Ps 118: 1-2;, 19-29; Matt 21:1-11; Isa 50:4-9a; Ps 31:9-16; Phil 2:5-11; Matt 26:14-27:66 or Matt 27:11-54

April 20: Acts 10:34-43 or Jer 31:1-6; Ps 118:1-2, 14-24; Col 3:1-4 or Acts 10:34-43; John 20:1-18 or Matt 28:1-10

April 27: Acts 2:14a, 22-32; Ps 16; 1 Pet 1:3-9; John 20:19-31

COUNCIL



CORNER

The Council met on March 19. Part of the meeting was spent reflecting on our progress on the tasks we had set for the Interim Period. Those tasks were: discern purpose and identity, support leadership change and development, commit to new leadership and ministry, and restructure. Rev. Susan recommended two changes she feels we need to work on. The first is to change our financial reporting to a more standard format that will be more easily understood by new members, leaders, and pastors. The second is to develop a personnel policy manual that delineates clearly who reports to who, job descriptions, and an annual review process.

Nominations Chair Bob Godzeno is in the process of preparing the slate of elective positions to be voted on at the Annual Meeting on May 4. The Capital Campaign Committee will give a report on the current status of that project at the same meeting. Also, the Visioning Committee will report on their work so far and begin to engage the congregation in the process. So please put May 4 on your calendar and plan to join us.

***Kathie Laug,
Clerk***

EASTER TEA

*Please see Lynne Koellner
or Jan Fueschel to help
with food donations.*



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PALM SUNDAY - APRIL 13 AT 10:30 A.M.
MAUNDY THURSDAY - APRIL 17 AT 7:30 P.M.
SUNRISE EASTER SUNDAY SERVICE - APRIL 20
AT CUMMINGS PARK BEACH AT 6:30 A.M.
EASTER SUNDAY - APRIL 20 AT 10:30 A.M.

First Congregational Church - Stamford
GATHERED 1635



Keep us informed!

**If you are hospitalized, please call the
church office and let us know.
We would like to include you in our
prayers and visit you!**

SALT
(SERVING ANOTHER IN LOVE TOGETHER)



SALT FOR THE SEASON

If you come to a meeting of the Mission Board, aka the SALT shakers, you will notice a few regular features:

1) We meet in unfamiliar territory. Last month we met at *Domus*, a school that reaches out to vulnerable youth in Stamford. Julia Wade, volunteer coordinator at the school and BOE member, spoke to us about the programs offered and the impact *Domus* has on the lives of kids. They never give up on people. *Domus* believes that everyone can learn and grow from mistakes and that loving relationships change people. Jesus would have loved this place.

On April 7 we will meet at Liberation Program. You are welcome to come with us. Some people have taken us up on the invitation. There is so much great gospel work happening around us. Come and see.

2) We have a theme of the month. March was *One Great Hour of Sharing*. We embraced the campaign's theme of: Different Yet One: unity through servant love. April and May will be devoted to our relationship to the EARTH. We are looking for ways that FCC can connect with this global initiative on our local level. Our annual Spring clean-up will be a part of this. And there will be other opportunities...stay posted!

3) We give away money. You sprinkle SALT around the world and locally through your annual pledge. That becomes the SALT budget and we take this responsibility very seriously. Check the Annual Report to see what your money is supporting. You have made a difference in the lives of many people through the organizations we have supported.

As always, we invite you to spend some time with us. Looking ahead to May, we will be having a Mission Meal together to celebrate our communion with all in need. We would love to have you join us. Let one of us know if you want to come. Our conversation will be 'salty' but the food, not so much.

Peace.

Paul Bingaman, Anne Mochulsky, Warren Richardson, Tephilla Ponnuthurai, Jean Meyer, Rev. Susan Gibson, and Maureen Matthews

HATS OFF!



Many thanks to Anne Mochulsky, Jan Fuechsel and Wilma Ramazzini who worked so well in preparing a wonderful meal this month for New Covenant House.

This is a much appreciated service. We are always looking for members of our church who would be willing to help in either the capacity of chef or helper.

If you are one of those people, please come and see me, Helga Downing, or call me at 203-359-0494.

**Be part of our church's mission,
support *Downtown EATS* by:**

- Volunteering to help on the 2nd Saturday each month (10 a.m.-1:00p.m.)
- Donating non-perishable food and toiletries

This month the following items would be especially helpful:

- Cereal, tuna, individual soup, fruit, pasta
- All small toiletries, deodorant, small hand sanitizer

**Please bring donations on Sunday, April 6.
Downtown EATS this month is April 12.**

**Collections will be ongoing on the first
Sunday of each month.**

Thank you for your continued generosity!

**THE CLASON GROUP
NOW MEETING SUNDAY AT 9:45**

2014 brings a new focus for the Clason Group, our no-commitment and all-ideas-welcome "sunday school class." Through the first part of 2014, we will be exploring together *"Why we Church."* We all have siblings, parents, children or spouses that think churching every Sunday is good thing, and we all have family and friends that think it is a waste of their time. Whichever side you fall on, you are welcome to come and share your understanding of why we church, or to listen to what others might have to say.

Through the spring, the Clason Group will convene upstairs in room 309 on the first and third Sunday of each month, at 9:45 a.m. Talk to *David Vintinner* if you have any questions

SAVE THE DATE



**SECOND ANNUAL ALL-CHURCH
FAMILY SPRING BANQUET
SATURDAY, MAY 3, 6:30 P.M.
DINING ROOM**

BOOK CLUB



On Monday, April 28, we will discuss *The Madonnas of Leningrad* by Debra Dean. In this novel, an elderly Russian woman now living in the United States recalls her youth in war-torn Leningrad and how as a docent at the Hermitage Museum she participated in helping remove the museum's priceless masterpieces for safekeeping.

The May book will be *The Next Thing on My List* by Jill Smolinski. This funny, engaging, and heartwarming novel follows the adventures of a young woman who attempts to complete the "bucket list" of a friend after the friend's death.

The books will be available to borrow from the church library. Everyone is welcome to join our group at any time. See Kathie Laug or Pam Shadford if you have questions or books to suggest. *See Kathie Laug or Pam Shadford if you have questions.*

SECOND SUNDAY WALKS



The April 12 walk will be at Cummings Beach led by Karen Davis of the Unitarian Universalist Society. Karen will come to our coffee hour to meet any of our members who would like to join her. In May we are hoping to plan an environmental clean-up project that will be a joint undertaking of the Missions Board and the Second Sunday Walkers. Date and location still to be determined.

Talk to *Kathie Laug* if you have any questions.

**Annual Reports
Deadline**

Reminder!!

Annual reports are due
on Monday, April 8.
Reports may be sent to
the church email
address.