

# CROSSROADS

VOL. 71, No. 4

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

APRIL 2015

WORSHIP IN THE SANCTUARY—10:30 A.M.

FROM THE INTERIM PASTOR

APRIL 2015

- April 5**     **Easter Sunday**  
6:30 a.m. *Sunrise Service,*  
Cummings Beach  
10:30 a.m. Sanctuary  
*Holy Communion, Deacons Fund*  
*and Food Trunk Offering*  
12:00 noon *Easter Tea*
- April 12**     **Second Sunday of Easter**
- April 19**     **Third Sunday of Easter**
- April 26**     **Fourth Sunday of Easter**

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## 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.

I’ve come to believe that we grow into Easter. The disciples spent their entire life making sense and living into the gift of resurrection, of transformation, of healing.

For the disciples, the gift of the resurrection was the beginning of a new life of discipleship that called them to deeper faith and leadership. They didn’t get it perfect. They had a few failures. They had some false starts. They had some shocking and exhilarating successes. Their hearts burned with the beauty and grace and love they were a part of. They discovered courage and faith and love within themselves they did not know they had. They discovered the depths of God’s love and grace they never imagined. And yet, the full meaning of this gift evolved slowly and incrementally.

And so it is with us. On Easter morning we will sing “Christ the Lord is Risen Today,” and we will spend the rest of the year figuring out how to live into this reality.

Our own church is in the midst of figuring out how to live into this reality. At the end of April you will have your Annual Meeting where you will discern how you are called to live out this gift of the resurrection right now in this place.

Saying “yes” to change, to new life, to healing does not mean you have arrived. It means you embrace the gift of the resurrection; trust in the slow unfolding of this gift in your life as the Body of Christ, and commit to a life of deepening faith and courageous leadership. You will not get this perfectly. You will have a few false starts and failures. You will have some splendid successes. Your hearts will burn. You will grow in love of God and neighbor. Ultimately, I believe that like Paul, you will be blinded by love. Like Peter you will discover forgiveness. Like Lydia you will discover your true calling. Like Stephen you will discover courage. Like Dorcas you will discover the gift of service.

*Susan*

### *Prayers for Healing*

*As a member of FCC, I thank each of you who extended your faith in prayers of healing for my recovery.*

*After spending a month in radiation therapy, your prayers gave me hope and comfort. Thank you and God's blessings for you as well.*

*Lovingly, Mary Franklin*

### **Annual Reports Deadline**

*Please send your report to the church email address by Monday, April 13.*

### **APRIL**

#### **BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES**

- 3 Marla Heath
- 4 George Heath
- 6 Sam Richardson
- 7 Annie Matthews Nardi
- 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
- 30 Bob Signore

### **LECTIONARY READINGS**

**April 5:** Acts 10:34-43 or Isa 25:6-9;  
Ps 118:1-2, 14-24; 1 Cor 15:1-11 or  
Acts 10:34-43; John 20:1-18 or Mark 16:1-8

**April 12:** Acts 4:32-35; Ps 133; 1 John 1:1-2:2;  
John 20:19-31

**April 19:** Acts 3:12-19; Ps 4; 1 John 3:1-7;  
Luke 24:36b-48

**April 26:** Acts 4:5-12; Ps 23; 1 John 3:16-24;  
John 10:11-18

### **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

In the month of March, we welcomed 8 new members: Michelle Chase, Rosemene Francique, Nick and Sara Paccone, Kevin Patterson, Bill and Jill Shepherd, and Corinne Taylor. Thanks to Al Hebert, we have some great pictures from these days posted on Facebook. Here is a little more information about these folks, and I hope you'll introduce yourself, and discover the gifts these folks bring!

**Michelle Chase** was raised Catholic and has participated in the Unitarian Society. She is excited by FCC's ministries—Downtown Eats, the Thrift Shop, the work of the Deacons and Bible Study

**Rosemene Francique** was born in a religious family and attended a Baptist School. She is a nurse and a mother of 4 adopted children. Rosemene loves to sing, and has already joined the FCC choir!

**Kevin Patterson** has been attending Rainbow Café for quite some time, and he began attending FCC, along with his mother (Corinne Taylor) on the invitation of Joe Belisle. Kevin is a dancer, singer actor and harbors dreams of becoming an entertainer.

**Nick and Sara Paccone** are expecting their first child in May! Nick is a CPA and commutes to NYC. Sara is a nurse and works at Greenwich Hospital. They volunteer with a dog rescue organization called "SNORT." (Ask them about this!) They are excited about Downtown Eats, and look forward to raising their child in a community of faith!

**Corinne Taylor** grew up in the Church of God. She is the mother of 3 children (her son is Kevin Patterson) and the grandmother of 1 (Khaia). She works as a Community Bridger for Focus on Recovery-United to provide support for people in the mental health system. Corinne began coming to FCC when Joe Belisle invited her and Kevin (Patterson) to worship. She was excited to learn of the multitude of ways the United Church of Christ has been instrumental in working for human rights. She is excited by the wonderful missions that First Congregational Church of Stamford has going on in the community. She is very interested in Bible Study, Book Club, the Thrift Shop (when it opens on Saturdays) and Downtown Eats. Corinne has a particular interest in human rights for people who have used or are using psychiatry as a way to deal with their human suffering and trauma.

## COUNCIL



## CORNER

The Council met on March 18. Eight new members will have joined the congregation by the end of March. We also have several baptisms coming up.

The Council is in the process of creating a financial task force to recommend methods of simplifying the finances of the church. We also worked on narrowing down the list of suggestions to serve on the Pastoral Search Committee and creating a timeline of tasks to be completed in the next five years. The search committee and timeline will be finalized at the April Council meeting and presented to the congregation for approval at the Congregational Meeting on April 26.

The Council approved the slate prepared by the Nominations Board to be voted on at the same Congregational Meeting. We are still in need of a clerk, and members of the Boards of Trustees and Christian Education. Please see Bob Godzeno if you have any interest in these positions.

*Kathie Laug, clerk*

## BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

On Monday, April 27, we will discuss *The Boys in the Boat* by Daniel James Brown. This nonfiction book celebrates the 1936 U.S. men's Olympic rowing team - nine working class boys who stormed the rowing world, transformed the sport, and galvanized the attention of millions of Americans.



We meet in the church parlor at 7:00 p.m. All books are available in the church library. We are looking for suggestions for future books.

See *Kathie Laug* or *Pam Shadford* if you have questions or books to suggest.

## SECOND SUNDAY



## (URBAN) WALK

On April 12 we will try something different – an urban walk on the new sidewalks in the Springdale section of Stamford. Maybe we'll stop at the Springdale diner at the end of the walk. Meet in the church parking lot at noon. All ages welcome.

See *Kathie Laug* if you have any questions.

## Annual Egg Hunt

Sponsored by Christian Education



**When:** Easter Sunday  
April 5, 2015

**Time:** 9:45 - 10:15 am

**Where:** In the parlor



## Save the Date

Saturday  
May 2, 2015,  
6:30 p.m.  
3<sup>rd</sup> Annual  
All Church  
Spring Banquet





*Serving Another in Love Together  
with  
Love Inspiring Great Hope Today*

As we try to be *SALT and LIGHT* in the world, the Mission Board is exploring all the ways we can serve our brothers and sisters both close to home and at a distance. The plans for the mission trip to the Lakota Reservation in South Dakota are a big focus. In an effort to have the whole congregation participate, we are selling ‘shares’ which give everyone an opportunity to support the people who are physically going. This will help defray the cost for the travelers which are greatly appreciated. There is more information about the ‘shares’ in the Parlor near the Simply Smiles banner.

Closer to home we launched the “Living Voice Chorus” on a snowy Sunday that didn’t deter the participants. The chorus, sponsored by the Music and Mission Boards, offers people with dementia and their care partners an opportunity to sing familiar songs together. Music and singing are abilities that continue long after memory and language are diminished. The group was started by Beth Styles and assisted by Jason Terry from the New World Chorus. The will meet monthly, the next time being May 3rd. Extra voices are always welcome! Children are especially welcome!

*Downtown EATS*, New Covenant House, the Thrift Shop and special offerings like *One Great Hour of Sharing* continue as usual with many hands helping to make the world we live in a better place. We invite everyone to become *SALT and LIGHT* with us. Nobody has a “lot” of time, but together our few loaves and fishes can feed a multitude. Come and see!

*Anne Mochulsky, Tephilla Ponnuthurai, Katie McAllister, Anne Firmender, Warren Richardson, Maureen Matthews, Rev. Susan Gibson, and Jean Meyer*

**CALLING ALL CHEFS!**



*Many thanks to Lynne Koellner, Elfriede Mallin and Kathy West* who worked so well in preparing a wonderful meal for New Covenant House.

*This is a much appreciated service!*

Are you are interested in helping to prepare and serve a meal? 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.*

**FCC IS GOING ON A JOURNEY  
TO A NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY**



Our Mission trip is scheduled for August 1-8 to La Plant, South Dakota

*“Sometimes when God wants to teach you something  
He sends you on a journey.”*

*Unknown*

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

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

**This month the following items  
would be especially helpful:**

- Easy-open cans of tuna fish and meals, granola bars, small boxes of cereal.
- All small toiletries
- White socks

***Please bring donations on Sunday, April 4.  
Downtown EATS is Saturday, April 11.***

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

**Thank you for your continued generosity!**

## **Thrift Shop News**

from Renee Kahn's Blog, March 21, 2015:



“About a year ago, I wrote a blog entitled “Thrift Shop Therapy,” citing psychologist Erich Fromm’s theory that shopping (consumption) reduced anxiety”...

“My favorite thrift shop (only open on Thursdays) is in the basement of the local Congregational Church. It’s a feast for the eyes – and for the pocketbook. \$10 will get you a shopping bag full of treasures – whether you need them or not.”

### **An anonymous response to Renee Kahn's Blog:**

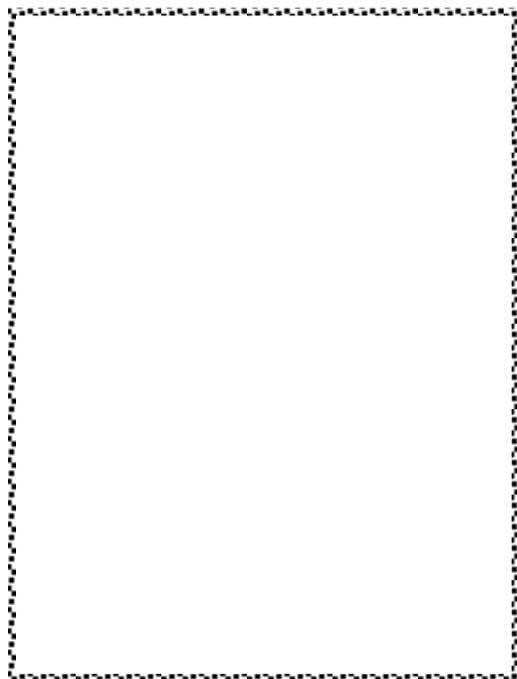
“I too am familiar with the FCC Thrift Shop, & visit it weekly too. It's run by the Women's Fellowship of the church, sourced by donated goods from parishioners & others. It's indeed a treasure, and although an attraction to the needy, as you pointed out, also can be a 'goldmine' for bargain & treasure hunters. Open bet. 10-3 Thursdays,”

*But wait Renee,*

**The Thrift Shop will also be open the third Saturday in April, May and June for your shopping pleasure. That is April 18, May 16 and June 20 from 10:00 to 2:00.**

***Come! Have fun!***

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**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!**

