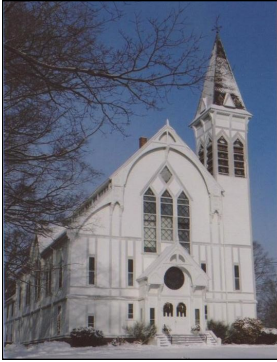


From the Hill



First Congregational Church of Georgetown

**7 Andover Street, P.O. Box 200
Georgetown, MA 01833**

Telephone: 978-352-8443

Email: churchoffice@georgetowncongregational.org

Website: www.georgetowncongregational.org

March 2020

**“The place to which God calls you is the place where your
deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.”**

Frederick Buechner

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The season of Lent has begun, starting with our Ash Wednesday call to turn our hearts again towards God. A season of reflection and prayer may sound solemn when compared to the joyous celebration of Easter, and yet this season holds a unique joy all its own. Please take a moment to read the poem *Lent* by Ann Weems (see below). Savor the language. What words most jump out at you? Why do you think that is? Take a few minutes to reflect on this.

I love the image of touching Jesus' robe. It reminds me that for God, relationship is everything. Throughout scripture, we repeatedly see God pursuing relationship with his people, longing for us to willingly turn to him. Life is filled with distractions, some of them very good and even gifts from God! But when we become too enamored of the gifts, we can miss the wonder and healing of the Giver. Perhaps more than anything, Lent is a call to reorient ourselves toward the Lover of our souls.

As a church family, we'll be exploring the topic of “calling” during Lent. Every person is uniquely gifted and called by God to follow God, just as we are, watching and listening even in the simplest of our daily routines. Calling also describes the lifelong journey of connecting our own stories with God's story. Calling can shift and change over the course of a lifetime and across the seasons of our lives. In its broadest terms, calling is God's compass for us, individually and corporately, in terms of living into God's larger purposes in our generation.

To hear and know God's calling presupposes that God is still

speaking and that we are actively listening. One of the best ways I've found to pursue this kind of conversation with God is to write down my prayers – whether praises or confessions or requests – and then to pay attention and record God's various responses. If you'd like to learn more about this, I invite you to join me for the Faith Journaling class beginning next week. Details are on the next page!

During worship, we'll be focusing on how God called various people whose stories are told in the Bible. Some of the names you will recognize, but others might surprise you! I hope you'll join us for this special journey toward Jerusalem and Easter.

Wishing you a meaningful Lenten season,

Dallas

LENT

**Lent is a time to take the time
to let the power of our faith story take hold of us,
a time to let the events
get up and walk around in us,
a time to intensify
our living unto Christ,
a time to hover over
the thoughts of our hearts,
a time to place our feet in the streets of Jerusalem
or to walk along the sea and listen to his word,
a time to touch his robe
and feel the healing surge through us,
a time to ponder and a time to wonder...**

Lent is a time to allow a fresh new taste of God!

From *Kneeling in Jerusalem* by Ann Weems

Greetings From the Diaconate

Greetings from your Diaconate!

It is hard to believe that we are already at the end of February! We have enjoyed much fellowship already in this new year of 2020 with Dallas' deep dive into the book of Ruth as well as a delicious Italian luncheon – thank you Pesce family! It has been wonderful to see all of the donations of toiletries and paper-goods for recent missions. It is such a blessing to have an outreach team that lives the message that God loves everyone! The season of Lent is upon us and we are transitioning into this time of reflection with a Shrove Tuesday Pancake dinner immediately followed by an Ash "Wednesday" service. We look forward to Dallas leading us in a Lenten book study. And keep an eye out for details of upcoming April services for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Easter sunrise service followed by breakfast and Easter morning service. It is hard to believe that we will be saying goodbye to longtime member JoEllen Fielding who is moving to Texas to be closer to family, especially her beautiful granddaughter, Harper. JoEllen, we thank you for all of your time and service to our church and community and know that we will enjoy more laughs with you when you come back for visits! We wish you all the best!

"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11

Blessings,

Emily, Marie, Pam and Rachel

What's Your Story?



JOIN OUR
STUDY

What does the word "calling" mean to you? Is it more than just a vocational job track we select in early adulthood? During Lent this year, we're going to be telling stories. Stories from the past. Stories from the present. Stories from our own lives. All in the context of the larger story that God is unfolding.

You're invited to join us for a Sunday morning book study of ***The Stories We Live: Finding God's Calling All Around Us***. We'll meet on Sunday mornings after worship in the Guild Room, **beginning March 8** and concluding on March 29.

The book is available at Amazon in hard copy or Kindle format. Or we can order one for you at the church if you prefer; just contact Dallas at pastor@georgetowncongregational.org!

Faith Journaling: Listening to God in Everyday Life



Wednesday mornings 10:00-11:30; Wednesday evenings 7:00-8:30.
March 4 - March 31

Calling is a dynamic reality, a way of life which presupposes that God is alive and active in the world and still speaking to those who dare to listen. It can change across the seasons of lifetime. So, if God is always speaking, the question then becomes: Are we paying attention? Discover a method of intentional written prayer and visual recording of God's responses. Think prayer journal meets vision board! We'll be using visual images as well as writing prompts. Bring a journal or notebook with pages sturdy enough for attaching photos and other images. Contact Dallas for additional information!

Outreach News

Your thoughtful and generous donations to the February mission initiatives are most appreciated! As a result of this drive, the **Georgetown Council on Aging Marketplace** received many boxes and bags of paper products for their ongoing ministry to elderly residents, the disabled, and folks who need assistance due to unforeseen circumstances. In conjunction with the paper collection, we have also helped in an outreach program to aid inmates in the Massachusetts prison system with two very basic necessities: **soap and toothpaste**. Those items were taken to the **Haverhill Council on Aging** where they were distributed through a prison visitation program sponsored by the faith community.

During Lent you are asked to respond to our **Church Finance Team's Lenten letter** that asks for support in maintaining our Church Home. It is also home for other non-profit organizations, and considered one of our Church's missions. **A percentage of the proceeds** derived from our Lenten Offering is designated for outreach, and this year that outreach **will benefit the One Great Hour of Sharing**, an offering that takes place in many church denominations across the United States on March 22. Since March 22 falls within the Lenten Season, it seems fitting to bring attention to the **One Great Hour of Sharing** through our sacrificial Lenten Offering that benefits both our church and outreach program.

The focus of One Great Hour of Sharing, sponsored by multiple denominations, is the **plight of the seventy million world-wide refugees**. Many of these people have fled their homes several times to avoid the ravages of civil war and natural disasters. Food, emergency shelters, and medical needs are distributed to thousands of homeless people impacted by natural disasters. Guns and violence rule the streets in countries where corrupt governments prevail, leading people to believe their only hope is escape. They are the thousands who are displaced. One of the ways we can make an impact in such catastrophic situations is to combine our efforts and monetary contributions with other churches in unity of purpose: to bring compassion and assistance to those who are in desperate need.

Please respond generously to the Lenten Offering Letter this year.

And from our hearts, we thank you,

The Outreach Team: Marion Harding, Martha Lucius, Mary Ann Nelson, Jean Perley,
Carol Sheehan & Joan Chatterton





Palm Sunday April 5 @ 10:30 am

Morning Service with Procession of the Palms

Maundy Thursday April 9 @ 6:00 pm

Choir followed by Service of Tenebrae @ 7:00 pm

Good Friday April 10 @ 12:00—3:00 pm

First Congregational Church Rowley - with six other area clergy offering homilies on "The Last Seven Words of Christ." All are welcome to join for 20 minutes or 3 hours.

Easter Sunday April 12

- **6:30 am** Sunrise Service @ Camp Leslie (weather permitting) located at W. Main St. (Rte. 97)
 - **7:00 am** Breakfast in Fellowship Hall
- **10:30 am** Easter Service followed by Easter Egg Hunt on the lawn



It's That Time of Year!

Have you noticed how much lighter the sky is in the morning? Or how much more daylight we have in the late afternoon? Spring is coming! Daylight savings begins Sunday, March 8. **Be sure to turn your clocks ahead one hour before going to bed on Saturday.**

From the Member-at-Large

The Church Council is very interested in your ideas as to how we can grow spiritually as a church. How can we expand what we do well so that it reaches beyond our own walls? Please share your thoughts with any of the Council members. Other thoughts and concerns may be shared as well at any time.

Your Member-at-Large is Janice Murphy.



Each month we have a group of people who meet to talk about books selected by members. Meetings are held in different houses or at the church. If you are interested in attending a meeting, contact the Church Office or any of the people listed below to get directions to that month's meeting.

All are welcome and you do not have to RSVP to attend. Below is a list of the books they will be discussing in the coming months in case you want to get the book ahead of time or you might just be looking for a good read.

Date 2020	Title	Author	Hostess/Location/Phone No.
March 25	<i>Where the Crawdads Sing</i> ©2018	Delia Owens	Joan Chatterton 9 Bartlett Drive, Georgetown Joan: 978-352-8033
April 29	<i>Ask Again, Yes</i> ©2019	Mary Beth Keane	Peggy Smith & Marie Birdsall Church Peggy: 978-352-8741 Marie:
May 27	<i>The Only Woman in the Room</i> ©2019	Marie Benedict	Alecia Balduf 3 Bayberry Lane Alecia: 978-835-9094
June 24	<i>Summer of '69</i> ©2019	Elin Hilderbrand	Nancy Aberman 199 W. Main St Nancy: 978-352-2793



It's time for spring cleaning at our beloved church! Please mark your calendars for church Spring Clean-Up Day on **Saturday, April 4th, from 8:30 till noon**. Join us in the annual cleaning and freshening of the church for Easter!



After a long season of good service to the community of Georgetown, the Food Pantry at the church will be closing, effective April 1st, per the recommendation of the Mission Team. Traffic decreased very significantly after the Council on Aging moved to its new location, and canned food donations are expiring on the shelves. We will continue to make donations to the Council on Aging, and will direct those in need of pantry items to them. Grocery gift cards will continue to be available through the church office.

Many thanks to all who have supported the Food Pantry ministry over the years!

Stewardship

You will notice that our "Sharing Tree" has now appeared in the Narthex. There are envelopes with various dollar amounts indicating on-going church expenses. You are encouraged to take an envelope and donate as you are able. Simply enclose the designated dollar amount and mail or drop it in the collection plate. Thank you very much for your generous spirit!



Light The Church Fund

Contributions for lighting the church can be made in memory of loved ones or in honor of someone special. If you would like to make a contribution or need more information, please contact the church office at 978-352-8443.

Storm Cancellations

In the event of a Saturday night or Sunday morning snowstorm, you can check with Channel 7 or Channel 56 (CW) for storm closings. Also, we will send a church-wide email and update our Facebook page.

There is also a mobile app that you can download for free by searching WHDH in the app store and view storm status anywhere, anytime.



Nancy Aberman

Cecelia Andrus

George Comiskiey

Chuck Davis

Haleigh Harris

Gladie Kneeland

Carol Lutes

Barbara Morehouse

Cadynce Pesce



Lyla Schneider

Tim Southwick



March 2020



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:30 Bells 10:30am Worship 11:45am Diaconate Meeting	2	3 6:30pm Bells 7:30 Band	4 7pm Boy Scouts	5	6 7pm AA	7
8 Daylight Savings 9:30 Band 10:30am Worship	9	10 6pm Finance 6:30pm Choir 7:30 Band	11 7pm Boy Scouts	12	13 7pm AA Girl Scouts 4-5:30pm	14
15 9:30 Choir 10:30am Worship St. Patrick's Day Boiled Dinner	16 	17 Happy St. Patrick's Day 6:30pm Bells 7:30 Band	18 7pm Boy Scouts	19 6:30pm Council	20 7pm AA	21 Eagle Scout Court of Honor
22 9:30 Band 10:30am Worship	23	24 6:30 Choir 7:00 Bells	25 Book Group 7pm Boy Scouts	26 5:30pm CD Meeting	27 7pm AA	28
29 9:30 Band 10:30am Worship	30	31 6:30pm Bells 7:30 Band				



April 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7pm Boy Scouts	2	3 7pm AA	4 Church Spring Clean-up
5 Palm Sunday 9:30 Bells 10:30am Worship 11:45am Diaconate Meeting	6	7 6:30pm Bells 7:30 Band	8 7pm Boy Scouts	9 Maundy Thursday 6:00pm Choir 7pm Service of Tenebrae	10 Good Friday Girl Scouts 4-5:30pm 7pm AA	11
12 Easter 6:30am Sunrise Service Easter Breakfast 9:15 Band/9:30 Bells 10:30am Worship Egg Hunt	13	14 Women's Guild Lunch 6pm Finance 6:30pm Bells 7:30 Band	15 7pm Boy Scouts 	16 6:30pm Council	17 7pm AA	18
19 10:30am Worship	20 Office Closed	21 6:30pm Bells 7:30 Band	22 7pm Boy Scouts Earth Day	23 5:30pm CD Meeting	24 7pm AA	25
26 9:30 Bells 10:30am Worship	27	28 6:30 Choir 7:00 Bells	29 Book Group 7pm Boy Scouts	30		

Easter Plants: In Memory Of or In Honor Of

The front of our sanctuary will be filled with beautiful flowers on Easter Sunday morning. The Diaconate welcomes your contributions in memory of or in honor of beloved friends and family members.

Donations may be made payable to The First Congregational Church of Georgetown and may be placed in the offering plate or mailed to the church at PO Box 200, Georgetown, MA 01833.

The deadline for your contribution will be **Sunday, April 5.** A listing of those who have contributed will be printed in the Easter Sunday bulletin. Flowers will be delivered to members who are homebound or to those who have recently lost a family member.

Yes, I would like to make a donation (in any amount) \$ _____

IN MEMORY OF or IN HONOR OF (please print)

From: _____



First Congregational Church of Georgetown
 PO Box 200
 7 Andover Street
 Georgetown, MA 01833
www.georgetowncongregational.org
 (978) 352-8443



Inside This Issue

Book Club	5
Calendar.....	7, 8
Diaconate News.....	2
Easter Flowers Form.....	9
Holy Week Schedule.....	4
Lenten Workshops.....	2
Outreach News	3
Pastors Message	1
Spring Cleaning/Food Pantry.....	5

Our Church Mission Statement:

*"To nurture those in our own faith community
 and to act on our faith by reaching out to others."*

We are an Open and Affirming church of the United Church of Christ.