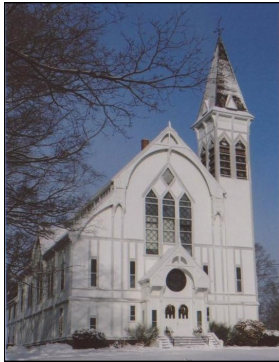


From the Hill



First Congregational Church of Georgetown

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April 2019



In last month's newsletter article, I talked about Ash Wednesday and the season of Lent as a process of clearing the underbrush that can hinder our lives of Love and God. Sometimes

that means giving something up, sometimes that means adding a spiritual practice. At my last meeting with my spiritual director, we were reflecting on how different this Lenten season is for me than last Lent. One year ago I found out my school was re-structuring and would not be renewing my contract for the next year. Last year's Lent was truly a Wilderness experience, a Dark Wood, to use language from our Lenten study. This year, I am coming into Lent from a deeply rewarding, affirming season of serving this church. I am also embracing an unexpected Call to serve a UCC university in Wisconsin at the end of the summer. While we are grieving leaving this church, we are excited (and scared!) about a new chapter that seems to have been written for me.

Thus, I am still in a wilderness time of unknowing, but the path seems much clearer. I

told my spiritual director I was struggling to accept all these blessings pouring in, especially when I consider how much suffering remains all around me. I certainly don't work any harder, am not any smarter, and am not any more faithful than others who aren't experiencing such joy in their work. I have an enormous set of privileges that have supported me along the way, making my work pay off in particular ways. So I found myself feeling guilty about this season of joy that feels so extravagant, especially compared to last year. My spiritual director surprised me by declaring that my Lenten discipline needed to be accepting these blessings without second-guessing them or myself. That was it: absorb the joy and wonder without overthinking it.

This has been a harder Lenten discipline than I thought, and it's made me reflect more broadly. I think perhaps many of us struggle to accept blessings in various forms. How many of us deflect compliments, and in doing so, subtly put ourselves down? How

(Continued on page 2)

often do we dismiss expressions of gratitude by underplaying something of value we did? How many of us have been in relationships—friendship, romantic, work, community—where we worried about being threatening to someone else? I suspect many of us are more comfortable with apologetically diminishing ourselves than with unapologetically celebrating all God has made us to be.

As I was sharing these reflections with a friend, she reminded me of a powerful poem by Marianne Williamson. I will include it below. I invite anyone who needs to join me in this Lenten discipline of accepting God's blessings and of letting our lights shine. It might be harder than you think! I also think this applies to our church. Our Transition Team has an opportunity to celebrate, name, and rejoice in the blessings and gifts of this church. Now is our time to be honest about how God has blessed this community, so that God can continue to bless it with growth and new ways of being Love in this world, even in the uncertainty that lies ahead.

Blessings to you,
Julie

"Our Deepest Fear"

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.
It is our light, not our darkness
That most frightens us.

We ask ourselves
Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?
Actually, who are you *not* to be?
You are a child of God.

Your playing small
Does not serve the world.
There's nothing enlightened about shrinking
So that other people won't feel insecure around you.

We are all meant to shine,
As children do.
We were born to make manifest
The glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us;
It's in everyone.

(Continued on page 3)

And as we let our own light shine,
We unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.

As we're liberated from our own fear,
Our presence automatically liberates others.

--Marianne Williamson

Lenten Worship Schedule

PALM SUNDAY



MAUNDY THURSDAY



GOOD FRIDAY



Easter
CELEBRATION



Palm Sunday—April 14, 2019 @ 10:30 am

Morning Service—Procession of the Palms

Maundy Thursday—April 18, 2019 @ 7:00 pm

Candlelight Service with Music

Good Friday—April 19, 2019 12:00—3:00 pm

First Congregational Church Rowley

The Last Seven Words of Christ - come and hear local clergy as the each speak on one of the last seven words. Come for part of the time or joins us until the end.

Easter Sunday—April 21, 2019

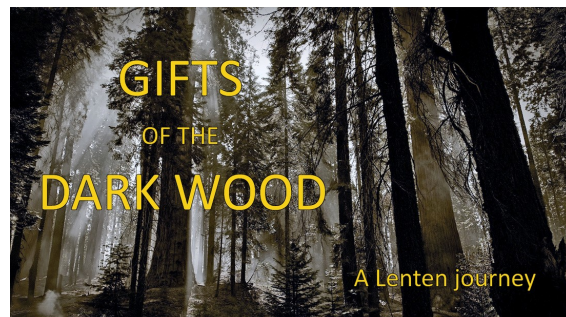
6:30 am Sunrise Service @ Camp Leslie (W. Main St. RT. 97)

7:00 am Breakfast in Fellowship Hall

10:30 am Easter Service followed by Easter Egg Hunt on the lawn.

Lenten Book Study

Each Sunday in Lent, we will have the opportunity to share a soup lunch and conversation about a study called “Gifts of the Dark Wood” by Darkwood Brew ministry.* The study is based on the book *Gifts of the Dark Wood: Seven Blessings for Soulful Skeptics (And Other Wanders)* by Dr. Eric Elnes, and it is accompanied by facilitated video discussions from some of the most prominent, respected theologians today. We will have a few books available at church if you aren’t comfortable ordering online or if cost is an issue. You are also welcome to order the book online.



April Birthdays



Emily Aberman

Robert Davidson

Elizabeth (Kalfin)
Jones

Lee Ames

JoEllen Fielding

Deb Lamoureux

Michelle Brock

Isabel Gammon

Miles Lucido

Zachary Brock

Henry Gervais

Haley Parsons

Betty Davidson

Ella Greenfield

Nola Quigley



New Members

Our New **Member Sunday** will be on **June 2nd**. We have two Sunday classes to introduce you to First Church, the UCC, and to get to know you better; May 5th and May 19th. Contact Pastor Julie with questions or an interest in joining at: pastor@georgetowncongregational.org.



Celebrating Earth Day Sunday, April 28th

Join us on Sunday, April 28th for a special Earth Day worship service. George Comiskey will deliver the message and Kevin Southwick and his Scout troop will have some special Earth Day displays and maybe an activity after worship in the Fellowship Hall.



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.

Apr. 24, 2019	<i>Another Side of Paradise</i>	Sally Koslow ©2018 352 pp.	Pam & Carol Sheehan Church Contact: Carol Sheehan: 978-352-6329
May 29, 2019	<i>A Gentleman in Moscow</i>	Amor Towles ©2016 480 pp.	Dee Wyatt Camp Denison Lodge 84 Nelson St Contact: Dee: 617-957-6090
June 26, 2019	<i>Educated, a Memoir</i> Non-fiction	Tara Westover ©2018 352 pp.	Ruth Soper, Gladie Kneeland & Sylvia Johnston Church Contact: Ruth: 978-352-2500

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 me or with any of the Council members. Other thoughts and concerns may be told to me as well at any time.

Our Member-at-Large to the Council is Ruth Soper.

Outreach News

Clean Water
Fundraiser



SIGN ON FOR YOUR PERSONAL LENTEN WATER CHALLENGE!

Many of us enjoy stopping on our way to work, school, or shopping errands to enjoy a cup of coffee, soda, or other favorite drink. On our way home, after a stressful day, it's soothing to purchase a drink to sip as we wind down.

For the first two weeks in April (April 1st to April 14th) we are throwing out this challenge! Save the dollars and the change that you would spend on that drink and put it in the Coffee Hour Penny Bowl at Church. You will be helping to bring good clean water to a village in Uganda, where every drop will be a precious gift. In our culture it is unfathomable that we would have to walk miles to get water, and then find out that the water we are struggling to get is contaminated!

For only two weeks, let's challenge ourselves! (Drink water instead!) At the end of two weeks, along with making your donation to the Penny Bowl, you will see a basket next to the bowl, along with a stack of cards. Put your name on the card, and the number of times you sacrificed your coffee/drink treat during the two weeks. (Just the number, NO dollar amount!) Some fun prizes will be awarded to the top three contenders!

The Outreach Team

Women's Guild News



BRING YOUR OWN SANDWICH LUNCH
Tuesday, May 7th at NOON

CRAZY NIGHTS WITH GLADIE AT THE BOSTON GARDEN!

Gladie Kneeland joins us for a fun conversation about her career at the Boston Garden. As always, Gladie brings joy to our meetings with her enthusiastic and vivacious personality.

Dessert: Sue Clay & Lilly Townsend

Devotions: Martha Lucius

Light The Church Fund

Our Steeple will be lit in the month of April:

Acknowledging the love and companionship that all pets, both present and past, have brought into our lives.

Joan Chatterton and Dave Clinton

In Loving Memory of Joe Sheehan.

The Sheehan Family

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 JoEllen Fielding at 978-352-6904.

Christian Development

Easter Egg Hunt—Come One, Come All!!

Christian Development would like to invite any and all children in the Georgetown Community to join us Easter Sunday for an Easter Egg Hunt on the front lawn of the church immediately following worship. Here is how it works!. We ask any members/friends of the congregation to bring a dozen or so filled eggs to Easter Sunday Worship. Drop them off in the Fellowship Hall prior to worship. All eggs are counted and "hidden" by our youth helpers.

At the end of worship all children who would like to find the eggs are asked to congregate in Fellowship Hall. After a count of all the children participating has been completed, a total number of eggs the child can gather is given. Youngest children are allowed to gather eggs first. Happy Hunting!



Diaconate News

Philippians 4:4-9

⁴ Be glad in the Lord always! Again I say, be glad! ⁵ Let your gentleness show in your treatment of all people. The Lord is near. ⁶ Don't be anxious about anything; rather, bring up all of your requests to God in your prayers and petitions, along with giving thanks. ⁷ Then the peace of God that exceeds all understanding will keep your hearts and minds safe in Christ Jesus."

The cold and icy days of March filled our church with pancakes, soup, traditional St. Patrick's day meal, and the warmth of friendship! As we remember the season of Lent, we celebrated the blessings and togetherness that God gives us with a pancake supper followed by an early ash service.

We also celebrated the traditions of St. Patrick's day through a delicious meal hosted by Ruth Soper and Rich Brock with many willing helpers such as Steve Desisto, Rich Aberman, Nancy Aberman, Michelle Brock, and many more! We created fond memories as we savored the delicious food, singing songs with fun and uplifting Irish music provided by Mary Ann Nelson and Allan Barlow.

During the Lenten season, Pastor Julie is offering a group discussion, guided by watching thoughtful videos and optionally reading the book "Gifts of the Dark Wood."

The Diaconate is hosting a light meal along with the study. Please join us for physical and spiritual nourishment as we go through reflections on meeting God in times of uncertainty, emptiness, loss, temptation, and loneliness. We reassure ourselves that an omnipresent God is found and experienced in all times - bad and good, as we share and learn from each other's experiences.

We are blessed to have a new Sound System! I am very thankful to the generosity of our contributors as well as the employee from Guitar center who provided a discount and assistance in installing the new system. Also, thank you to Bob Knapp, Paul Nelson, Steve Pinto, and Shayne Balduf for helping to install the system.

I continue to thank God for the time that Julie is here with us to help during the transition and praying for wisdom, guidance, and support as we continue our pastoral searching. We are hanging onto the promise in Philippians, with a peaceful and joyful heart, trusting in God and dwelling in the presence of you all. I am also thankful for our steadfast Office manager Jessica for her diligence in helping with technical issues and for all her hard work!

I am so very blessed for all the Diaconate – Rachel Angerhofer, Marie Birdsall-Chaffee, Kristen Arsenault, and our newest member Pam Sheehan! They each lovingly dedicate themselves to serving our church through worship and fellowship! Every week I am amazed, blessed and grateful for the loving support that each one gives! May God continue to bless us through the Easter season.



2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 6:30pm Bells 7:30pm Band	3 7pm Boy Scouts	4	5 7pm AA	6
7 9:30am Choir 10:30am Worship Lenten Book Study/Soup Lunch	8	9 6:30pm Bells 7:30pm Band 6pm Finance	10 7pm Boy Scouts	11	12 7pm AA	13
14 9:30am Bells 10:30am Worship 11:45 Band No Church School Lenten Book Study/Soup Lunch	15 6:30pm Bells 7:30pm Band Newsletter Deadline	16	17 7pm Boy Scouts	18 Maundy Thursday 6pm Choir 7pm Candlelight Service	19 Good Friday 12pm-3pm Rowley 'Last Seven Words of Christ'	20 Holy Saturday
21 Easter Sunday 6:30am Sunrise Service 9am Bells 9:30 Band 10:30am Worship	22 Earth Day	23 6:30pm Choir 7pm Bells	24 7pm Boy Scouts	25 5pm Christian Development Meeting	26 4pm GS 62977 7pm AA	27 Boy Scouts Ceremony (rental)
28 9:30am Choir 10:30am Worship Earth Day Service	29 6:30pm Bells 7:30pm Band	30				

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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.