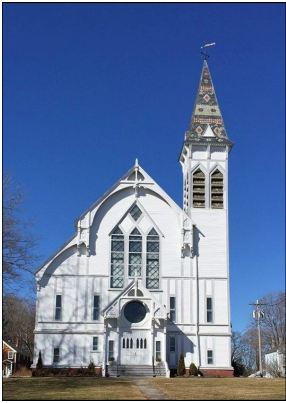


# ***From the Hill***



## **First Congregational Church of Georgetown**

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**June 2019**

**FROM  
THE  
PASTOR**



There is a wonderful video series called "Living the Questions," which explores some of the ongoing, profound questions in Christianity. Biblical scholars and religious leaders take turns reflecting on theological

questions, and they often raise their own questions in this process. What viewers and participants often discover throughout this series is that while sometimes we might come to meaningful answers, this process of raising questions and exploring them together has a great deal of value and faithfulness in itself. Our questions carry their own kind of wisdom and tell us something about ourselves, our times, our contexts, our values, and our faith. Our Jewish kin place great value in asking questions of sacred texts and their religious traditions. This is their tradition of Midrash. They believe that questions and answers are different for different communities and for different seasons and that this fluidity reflects a dynamic God and a growing people. I think this is the spirit of the UCC's foundational affirmation that "God is Still Speaking."

On Sunday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, we enjoyed our first "Instant Sermon" together. I responded to theological questions the congregation had written the week before and that the deacons selected (so the deacons knew them ahead of time, but I didn't). We were able to get to a good number, and there are also a good number left. And while I enjoyed the chance to offer whatever may (or may not!) have been meaningful or helpful in my responses, what I think is most important is the questions themselves. I am so grateful for this church because you have the spiritual maturity and authenticity to pose good, important questions. Questions that tell us something about ourselves, questions that gives

us a chance to wrestle and grow and find God in new places. Questions whose answers may well change in the future and whose answers may be different now than they were twenty or fifty years ago because we commune with a living God in a living creation among human community that also changes.

And so I want to highlight these questions. In hopes that you will continue to ponder them, that you will talk about them with each other, with me, with whomever you choose. So what follows are the questions we got to in worship and the ones we have the opportunity still to explore together.

Questions we explored in worship:

What does IHS on the altar cross mean?

What was Christ's vision of social justice and how would this be applied to the many social injustice situations that currently affect our country and the world?

A few questions related to heaven or life after death.

Do you age in heaven, for example if a child passes will they age?

What is your idea of heaven?

Is there life after death, if so what is it like?

Who selected the books of the bible? Why are there different versions (extra books, not the King James version, etc) What about excluded texts like Gospel of Thomas and Mary, etc?

Do you know what happened to the 10 lost tribes of Israel?

Is there an individual creator's plan for each person on earth, or a world plan, or no such thing? Can

*(Continued on page 4)*



# JOIN US FOR

**Sunday, June 2nd** Graduate & New Member Sunday



**Sunday, June 9th** Children's Sunday

Please join us for a BBQ on lawn after Service.

**Sunday, June 30th** Blessing of Pets



Service will be on the front lawn, bring your pets to church!  
In the event of rain, service will be in Fellowship Hall.

## *Strawberry Social & Band Concert*

*Tuesday, June 25th, 6-8 PM*

*Enjoy the Beginning of Summer on our Church Lawn*



*Strawberry Shortcake  
Strawberries/Ice Cream  
Raffles*

*Help is needed with hulling, serving, set up and clean up.*

*Raffle Items Needed*

*In case of rain the social will be in Fellowship Hall.*

*Any questions contact Emily Knapp or Janice Murphy*



## **Summer Office Hours**

During the Summer, the office will be open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm.

Summer office hours begin, July 2nd and continue through August 29th.

## Greetings From the Diaconate

Luke 12:22-23: "Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Therefore, I say to you, don't worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. There is more to life than food and more to the body than clothing. "

Greetings from the Diaconate!

Reflecting on the season during and after Easter, we are so very thankful for everyone who shared their talents and services bringing us moments of joy, remembrance, and expressions of love. The church bustled with activities from Maundy Thursday, Easter morning worship services, Lenten book study, church Pot-luck, and a Vow renewal.

The Diaconate was busy preparing the Maundy Thursday table, Easter cards, flowers, flower delivery, and the Lenten book study. We gathered to arrange Maundy Thursday's table, which Rev. Dr. Julie beautifully arranged and decorated. We are thankful to all those who read at Maundy Thursday and helped to make a reverent service. Afterwards, we were very blessed to have many helping hands in arranging the flowers for Easter Sunday's service. We are thankful to all those who contributed to the Easter flower fund in remembering and honoring our loved ones. We are very grateful for Janice Murphy for ordering and delivering the beautiful flowers.

As the Diaconate provided light meals, Julie brought us a thought-provoking Lenten study discussions and videos to remind us of God's presence in many circumstances in life.

Easter morning services and meal were an excellent time to worship God and fellowship with each other. We are very thankful to Shayne and Kevin for cleaning the campsite for the Sunrise service. We were welcomed with a warm campfire, birds flying across the pond, music, Bible readings, and bread to remind us of the resurrection of Christ and messages of faith. Moving from the campsite to the church, we are very thankful for the delicious pancake breakfast and all the dedicated cooks!

As people trickled into the sanctuary for Easter

service, we were greeted with beautiful organ music, reminding us of God's presence. We celebrated the news of Christ's resurrection with the band and mini-bell choir, providing a worshipful expression of music.

We are thankful to George for providing an Earth Day observance the Sunday after Easter. Also, we are so very blessed to have a dedicated hospitality team that allows us to share delicious food! We celebrated in fellowship May 5th with a pot-luck lunch after service. May 12th we had a special ceremony after the service to celebrate a 50th wedding anniversary Vow renewal. We are thankful for the Dockstaders for sharing their photos and this special moment with us. And we are thankful for Pam Sheehan who provided delicious cakes to celebrate the anniversary along with Ruth providing mouthwatering desserts.

The passage of Luke 12:22-34 starts with reminding us not to worry. The end of the passage advises on what to do instead of worrying. Luke 12:32-34 reads: "Don't be afraid, little flock, because your Father delights in giving you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to those in need. Make for yourselves wallets that don't wear out—a treasure in heaven that never runs out. No thief comes near there, and no moth destroys. Where your treasure is, there your heart will be too." Every time we reach out to each other to lend a hand, be it a ride to church, a warm meal, or a compassionate ear, we are building up our "treasures in heaven." It is so much pleasure to be on the Diaconate with loving and dedicated people.

As always, we are here to listen and serve in Christ love. Alecia Balduf, Rachel Angerhofer, Kristen Arsenault, Marie Birdsall-Chaffee, Pam Sheehan

### From the Pastor continued...

we by prayer have the creator intervene in a person's life?

What is sin? Please explain.

Who is God? Is God Jesus? Are they one?

Questions we didn't get to:

Why do sad things keep happening to people?

Why do you like God and Jesus so much?

Matthew 11:30 says: "For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" In a small church with a few people doing so much, how do you suggest we accept God's help to make things easy?

Garden of Eden – More info

More info on Mary Magdalene

How seriously should we take the old testament?

Do you feel Paul deserves more "discussion" His teachings and background are so amazing

How can I tell the difference of actual events and parables?

Explore Jesus from the cross: "My God, why have you forsaken me?"

These are beautiful questions. Thank you for being willing to offer them. I close with a quote from the poet Rainer Maria Rilke:

"Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves, like locked rooms and like books that are now written in a very foreign tongue. Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer."

Spring blessings from your interim pastor, who loves asking and exploring questions.

Julie



## 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 JoEllen Fielding at 978-352-6904.



### Summer Hours Begin July 2nd

During the Summer, the office will be open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00am to 12:00pm. Summer office hours begin, July 2nd and continue will continue through Thursday, August 29th.

Remember we hold worship services on Wednesday evenings.

The last Sunday service will be June 30th and the **first Wednesday service will be on July 10th.**

We will conclude our summer worship on September 4th, with our Sunday Services to resume on September 8<sup>th</sup>, which is Rally Day.



Mini Golf Tournament at Nunan's Nursery Ice Cream and Mini Golf!! Sunday, **June 30 th at 1:00 pm**, with a rain date of Sunday, September 8th (Rally Day) at 1:00 pm. The cost for 18 holes of mini golf includes a sundae or frappe and prizes. If you can't join us please consider sponsoring a hole to help raise money for our building fund.

There will be a sign up sheet in Fellowship Hall. Sign up as a team or let us pair you up with other teammates! If you would like to sponsor a hole, Nunan's will provide signage for individuals or businesses. Businesses can provide us with a logo and that can be put on the sign as well. When you sign up, please differentiate between - golfer or hole sponsor. Hope to see you see you there!

### 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 any of the Council Members. Other thoughts and concerns may be shared at any time. Our Member-at- Large to the Council is Ruth Soper.



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 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.

June 26, 2019	<i><b>Educated, a Memoir</b></i> Non-fiction	Tara Westover ©2018 352 pp.	Ruth Soper, Gladie Kneeland & Sylvia Johnston Church Ruth: 978-352-2500
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## Outreach News

We are saddened by the sudden loss of a member of our Team. Ann Kelloway died unexpectedly on May 7, and her funeral was held on May 14. Ann has been a member of our Team for the last fifteen years and was responsible for the Coffee Hour Penny Bowl collection. She dutifully remembered each Sunday to place the Penny Bowl on the Coffee Hour food table, and faithfully she took care of the proceeds. Let us remember Ann's cheerful presence when we drop coins and bills into the Penny Bowl. This tradition has raised hundreds of dollars over the years to help children through the Community Giving Tree, and more recently to raise funds for our Water Project.

### **THE WATER PROJECT.....**

**is still a work in progress!** Recently we counted the **Penny Bowl proceeds** and to our amazement, **the collection amount to \$275.00**, an incredible offering of loose change! Please continue to support this mission. An update, in the form of a poster project, will be available around the first week of June. It will show where we stand in **our water project effort to fund a PROTECTED SPRING for a small village in Kenya. At the present the inhabitants are drinking contaminated water. Let's make it possible to change their future!**

### **THE CHURCH FOOD PANTRY**

**PLEASE DONATE ONLY PAPER PRODUCTS during this next month!** Right now we have an over-abundance of pasta, and canned goods consisting of soup, beans, and vegetables. A portion of this overload will be going to OUR NEIGHBOR'S TABLE, a pantry in Amesbury serving twelve towns, including Georgetown.

**To our Church Family, we say *THANK YOU!*** Thank you for your generosity, for caring about others near and far. We are a small congregation with a big heart!

Marion Harding, Mary Ann Nelson, Jean Perley, Carol Sheehan & Joan Chatterton  
In Loving Memory of Ann Kelloway

## **Thank you from Matthew Fielding** **Mission Trip 2019**

I wanted to give you all a post trip update as to how our mission went. To simply put it - SUCCESS. We spent time doing a few projects for some elderly members of the church/community. This was a great way to demonstrate God's commandment to love our neighbors, even if those neighbors are 1000's of miles away on another continent. God's love has no boundaries and we wanted to show that when you live in Christ our love for one another has no boundaries either.

We also split into 2 groups and did home visits. These home visits were to community members that Pader Community Church (our partner church) had identified as people that have heard some of God's word but needed encouragement to take the next step to start following Christ. These home visits went well. We were welcomed by everyone to come and sit with them, get to know them better, and to further share the

Continued pg.8



Allan Barlow

Jeffrey Fehlmann

Sarah Moore

Michelle Bridges

Marion Harding

Vivian Rasmussen

Rachel Edwards

Michael Kalfin

Lindsay Tobin

## Church Pantry

Tuesday and Thursday 9:30-11:30

**Non-perishable protein foods are appreciated. We have several families and single adults who use the pantry. Pets are cared for too!**

*Gift Cards are gladly accepted to enable families to purchase fresh produce, meat, eggs and milk.*



### Suggestions:

Juice and juice boxes

Canned tuna & chicken

Mayonnaise

Spaghetti sauce

Coffee, Tea, Hot Chocolate

Canned Pasta Meals

Chowders & Stews

Shampoo, TP, Paper towels

**Please, NO SOUPS/PASTA needed.**

## Stewardship

Our “**Sharing Basket**” has now blossomed for Spring and is located in the Narthex! There are envelopes with 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.

Blessings to all, Toni Cassidy, George Comiskey and Sylvia Johnston



gospel. It also gave us time to pray with them and to invite the men of the family to the 2 day conference we were hosting. We did a total of 10 home visits.

God's hand was at work with the men's conference. Our trip happened to coincide with the rainy season which for the men of Pader meant "time to plant your crops!". Weeks leading up to the trip and while we were there the rain didn't come. As a result the men of the community were able to attend the conference. The pastors at Community Church were expecting 20-25 men to show up, but because God held the rainy season off we had 74 men in attendance! The conference was filled with lots of information about God's character and how we as men are to walk with Christ as husbands, fathers, brothers, neighbors and members of the community. At the end of each day of the conference we would break out into small groups where we lead discussions and answered any questions. We all felt that these men got a good grasp on the word of God and we continue to pray that they will apply what they learned and continue to seek God.

The most impactful part of this trip for me was that despite the poverty this community was experiencing, they were filled with such joy and hope. It showed me that these things do not come from money or belongings or anything else except for God's love and promises.

Thank you again for helping to fund this mission trip, a difference was made in this community because of your support and generosity.





# 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 2pm Elisabeth Thomas Memorial
2 9:30am Bells 10:30am Worship 11:45am Band Graduate & New Member Sunday Diaconate Meeting	3	4 6:30pm Choir 7:15pm Band	5 7pm Boy Scouts 6:30 Band	6	7 7pm AA	8
9 9:30am Choir 10:30am Worship Children's Sunday & BBQ	10 Staff Meeting	11 6:30pm Bells 7:30pm Band 6pm Finance	12 6:30pm Band 7pm Boy Scouts	13	14 <b>Newsletter Deadline</b> 4pm GS 62977 7pm AA	15
16 <b>Happy Father's Day</b> 9:30am Bells 10:30am Worship	17	18 Boiler Inspection 6:30pm Band	19 6:30pm Band 7pm Boy Scouts	20 Kaczmarek Studio Rehearsal 4-7pm 5:30pm CD Mtg 7pm Council	21 Kaczmarek Studio Recital 6-9pm 7pm AA	22
23 9:30 Band	24 6:30pm Band	25 	26 7pm Boy Scouts <b>Book Group</b>	27	28 7pm AA	29
30 Animal Blessing Sunday Mini Golf Tournament						

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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.